



Chosen by God^{Tisha B' Av}

The Jewish Roots of Christianity

Tisha B' Av

The Ninth of Av

Tisha B' Av, or the 9th of Av, is not a familiar phrase to most of us non-Jews. It is a minor fast day, and unless you rub shoulders with the Jewish culture, you are not likely to hear a lot about it. But the significance of what is being observed is huge. So huge it has me sitting back and rethinking, re-experiencing, this God of mine.

On this day, which because of the differences in calendars, falls on a different date on our Gregorian calendar every year, the Jews observe a solemn day of mourning, as this is the saddest day of the Jewish calendar. On its eve, a frugal meal of egg and lentils is eaten. Some even dip the egg in ashes as a recognition of the tragedies of this day. The day follows with no eating, drinking, bathing, shaving, work, or even Torah study. Lights are dimmed in the synagogue and the comfort of chairs or pews is done without. No one greets each other, and the atmosphere is one of solemn mourning. (Robinson, 132) And, with good reason!

So many events, and specifically anti-Semitic events, have happened on the 9th of Av, that it is far beyond coincidence. The chances of two events happening on the same date is 1 in 365. So even if we don't go beyond the destruction of the first temple on the ninth of Av, and the destruction of the second temple in 70 AD, also on the ninth of Av, we still have reason to be filled with a sense of awe. If you add in a third event, the odds increase to 1 in 133,225. The odds of twelve events happening, to the same relatively small group of people, is 1 in 15,318,685,820,000,000,000,000,000! (Riley) I am not much of a mathematician, but I think there has got to be something far more likely than chance happening here!

By the time the second temple was destroyed on the same date as the first temple, the Jews were connecting the dots. With each subsequent event on this date, what do you think the growing attitude would be? _____

What is the meaning of the list of 9th of Av events to you? _____

What do you think is happening behind the spiritual curtain? _____

In what ways do you think the seemingly haphazard events of history actually follow some divine plan? _____

What is the message of hope in Zechariah 8:19? _____

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Events on the Ninth of Av

Date	Jewish date	Event
? 1313 BC	? 9 Av	The Mishna records that the Israelites believed the bad report of the spies instead of the good report of Joshua and Caleb on this date. Numbers 14:1-10
July 29, 587 BC	9 Av 3174	Destruction of the first temple.
Aug. 4, 70 AD	9 Av 3830	Destruction of the second temple.
July 25, 71 AD	9 Av 3831	Jerusalem plowed with salt by the Roman army.
Aug. 5, 135 AD	9 Av 3895	Simeon Bar Cochba was the leader of the Jewish rebellion against the Romans. He and his Jewish army were brutally defeated at Betar.
	9 Av 3896	Temple Mount plowed by Romans.
July 14, 1095 AD	9 Av 4855	First Crusade declared by Pope Urban II. 10,000 Jews were killed in the first month of the Crusade.
July 14, 1190 AD	9 Av 4950	500 Jews, the entire population, died in the storming of a castle in York, England. These were the first known victims of the claim that Jews used the blood of Christian children as part of their religious rites.
July 18, 1290 AD	9 Av 5050	Jews are expelled from England, at the order of King Edward I.
Aug. 2, 1492 AD	9 Av 5252	Jews are expelled from Spain. The edict was signed by Isabella and Ferdinand on March 31, and the Jews were given 4 months to leave.
Aug. 1, 1914 AD	9 Av 5674	WW I declared. Also Russia launched persecutions against Jews in Eastern Russia.
July 10, 1942 AD	9 Av 5702	Germans began deportation of Jews to concentration camps, at a rate of 6,000 to 10,000 PER DAY!

Traditional Tisha B' Av Scriptures

As you read each of the traditional readings for this day of mourning in light of the tragic events of Jewish history, what new perspective do you gain?

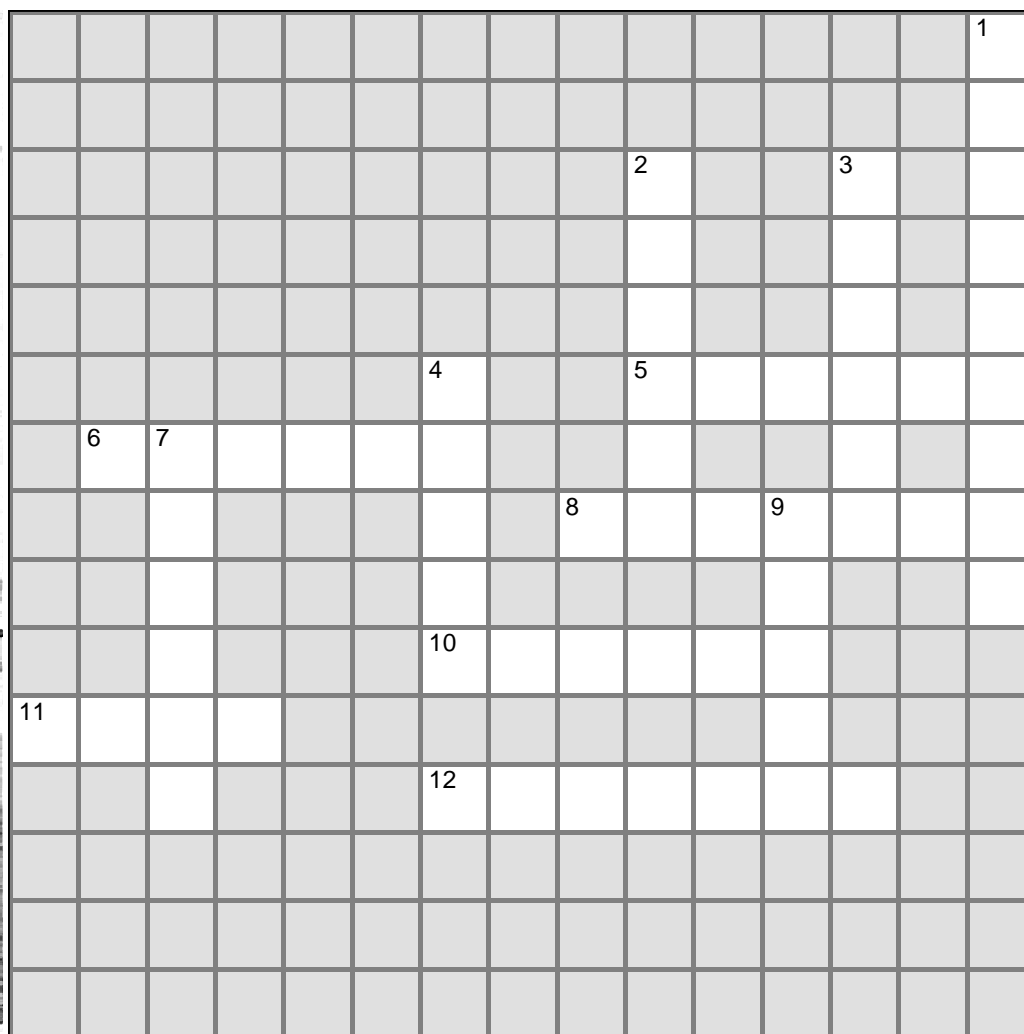
Deuteronomy 4:25-40 _____

Jer. 8:13-9:23 _____

Ex. 32:11-14; 34:1-10 _____

Isaiah 55:6-56:8 _____

Puzzle Page -Tisha B' Av



Across

- 5** records the bad report of the spies (6)
- 6** destroyed on the 9th of Av 587 BC (6)
- 8** killed 10,000 Jews in first month (7)
- 10** began persecuting Jews same day WWII declared (6)
- 11** 500 Jews killed in this English castle (4)
- 12** began deportation of Jews on 9th of Av (7)

Down

- 1** plowed with salt by the Romans (9)
- 2** season in which 9th of Av falls (6)
- 3** leader of Jewish rebellion (6)
- 4** Jewish rebellion defeated here (5)
- 7** king who ordered expulsion of Jews from England (6)
- 9** Jews given 4 months to leave this country (5)

Puzzle Answers

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