

Fast of the Seventeenth of Tammuz and the Three Weeks
Study texts

Mishna Ta'anit 4:1

Five misfortunes befell our fathers on the Seventeenth of Tammuz and five on the Ninth of Av.

On the Seventeenth of Tammuz the Tablets of the Ten Commandments were shattered, the daily offering was discontinued, a breach was made in the walls of Jerusalem and Apostomos burned the Scroll of the Law and placed an idol in the Temple.

On the Ninth of Av it was decreed that our fathers should not enter the Promised Land, the Temple was destroyed the first and second time, Bethar was captured and Jerusalem was ploughed up.

Zecharia, chapter 8:

14. For thus says the Lord of Hosts: As I intended to do evil to you, when your fathers angered me, says the Lord of Hosts, and I did not relent; 15. So do I intend in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear. 16. These are the things that you shall do; Speak every man the truth to his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates; 17. And let none of you plot evil in your hearts against his neighbor; do not love false oaths; for all these are things that I hate, said the Lord. 18. And the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, 19. Thus says the Lord of hosts: The fast of the fourth month (17 Tammuz), and the fast of the fifth (9 Av), and the fast of the seventh (Tzom Gedalia – day after RH), and the fast of the tenth (10 Tevet), shall become times of joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts to the house of Judah; therefore love truth and peace.

Avot D Rabbi Natan, Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai is quoted as saying If you are holding a sapling in your hand and someone tells you, 'Come quickly, the messiah is here!', first finish planting the tree and then go to greet the Messiah.