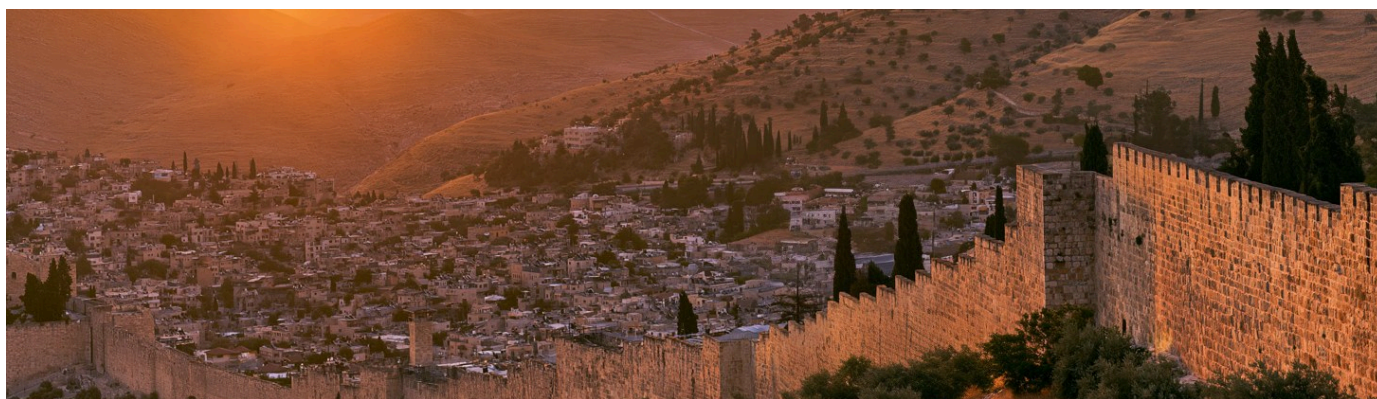


CANDLE LIGHTING 8:32 PM Friday · Erev Shabbos	EREV SHABBOS 10 Av 5786 July 24, 2026	TORAH READING Va'eschanan Haftarah: Nachamu — Yeshayahu 40:1–26	PIRKEI AVOS Ch. 3 Shabbos Nachamu	SHABBOS ENDS 9:40 PM Motzaei Shabbos · Sat night
---	--	--	---	--

PARSHAS VA'ESCHANAN · SHABBOS NACHAMU · COMFORT, DOUBLED

Consoled by Erev Shabbos



The walls of Yerushalayim at last light. The Shabbos that follows Tisha B'Av takes its name from the first word of its haftarah — *nachamu*, be comforted — and opens seven straight weeks of consolation that run to Rosh Hashanah.

On Thursday afternoon, on Tisha B'Av, the saddest day of the Jewish year, a fifty-year-old Jewish man was walking on the Upper West Side of Manhattan in his kippah, on his way to or from shul. A man crossed toward him and drove a screwdriver into his chest. A block away, minutes earlier, the same attacker had stabbed a fifty-seven-year-old Asian man in the back with a knife. According to the victims and witnesses he shouted “Allahu Akbar” during both attacks. New York’s police commissioner said the department is weighing whether to treat it as a hate crime, and that mental illness may also have played a part. Both men are expected to survive, and a suspect is in custody.

It was not the only place a Jew was hunted this week. On Monday night in Salford, outside Manchester, three members of the local Jewish community were shot at with a BB gun fired from a passing car on Leicester Road and suffered minor injuries. By Thursday British police had arrested two people on suspicion of religiously aggravated assault.

On the very day the Jewish people sat low to the ground and mourned the burning of Yerushalayim, and in the days on

either side of it, Jews in two countries were attacked for nothing but being visibly Jewish. And the very next day is Erev Shabbos, with the Shabbos of comfort coming in tonight.

The Comfort Came the Next Morning

The fast ended Thursday night. Tonight we enter Shabbos Nachamu, named for the opening words of the haftarah — *nachamu nachamu ami*, comfort, comfort My people. There is no waiting period. The mourners are still sitting on the floor when the prophet is sent to console them.

**The tears of Tisha B'Av are not dry yet.
The comforting has already started.**

This Shabbos opens seven straight weeks of consolation, seven haftaros of comfort read one after another from now until Rosh Hashanah, each one a step further out of grief and toward the new year. The calendar refuses to let the mourning harden into despair. The moment the mourning is complete, the comforting begins.

Said Twice, For a Reason

Yeshayahu does not say comfort My people once. He says it twice: *nachamu, nachamu*. The Midrash asks why the word is doubled and answers by pointing to a line the prophet speaks a verse later — that Yerushalayim has received from the hand of Hashem *kiflayim*, a double measure, for all her sins. The blow landed twice. Two Batei Mikdash were destroyed, centuries apart, on the same date, and two long exiles followed.

A single word of comfort answers a single wound. The prophet doubles the word because the wound was inflicted twice, and the consolation is built to be at least as large as the pain it comes to heal.

Comfort that is smaller than the grief is not comfort at all.

Who Is Doing the Comforting

Further into the seven weeks the doubling happens again, and this time it is not the word for comfort that repeats but the One giving it: *Anochi, Anochi hu menachemchem* — I, I am He who comforts you. Consolation usually arrives through a messenger. This one is spoken in the first person, twice. The One who brought the churban does not send word of comfort. He comes and stands in the room.

Cut to the Measure of the Wound

Despair looks at a man stabbed for his kippah and a family shot at in Salford and sees proof that nothing changes for the Jew. Nachamu reads the same facts the other way. The Sages say that whoever mourns over Yerushalayim merits to see her joy — a rule, not a kind thought. The mourning and the rejoicing are two halves of one thing, and the second does not come without the first.

The comfort is not handed out at random. It is cut to the exact measure of the wound, so the deeper the destruction, the greater the redemption built out of its own rubble. That is why the Sages read Eichah as calling Tisha B'Av a *moed*, a festival, even while we fast on it, and why we are taught that Moshiach is born on the ninth of Av itself. The lowest day of the year already carries the highest inside it.

So hold this week's two pictures side by side. A man attacked on a Manhattan sidewalk for being visibly Jewish, and days later that same people gathering for the one Shabbos whose whole message is that the comfort is already on the way, doubled, and cut to fit the pain before it. Zecharyah promised that this very fast of the fifth month will be turned into joy and gladness and cheerful festivals, and that the *Tzemach* will build the Heichal of Hashem — the third and final Beis HaMikdash. The kippah that marked a man for attack in exile is the same crown he is meant to wear when that promise lands. Nachamu insists it will not be a distant someday. It comes that very night, as soon as the mourning ends. It has already begun.

SOURCES

Devarim 3:23–7:11 · Yeshayahu 40:1–2 (Haftaras Nachamu); 51:12; 54:11 · Zecharyah 6:12; 8:19 · Yirmiyahu 23:5 · Eichah 1:15 · Taanis 30b · Yerushalmi Berachos 2:4 (Moshiach born on Tisha B'Av) · Eichah Rabbah; Pesikta d'Rav Kahana; Yalkut Shimoni, Lech Lecha 64; Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer 48; Bamidbar Rabbah 18:21; Tanchuma Korach 12; Abudraham · The Rebbe, Shabbos Nachamu 5751, Sefer HaSichos 5751 vol. 2, pp. 736–749 · News: NY1, Times of Israel, CBS New York, ABC News, CNN, NBC News (Manhattan, July 23); The Jewish Chronicle, Jewish News, JNS, Salford Now, Greater Manchester Police (Salford, July 20).

ON THE HORIZON

- ◆ **Wednesday, 15 Av · July 29** — Tu B'Av. “There were no days as good for Israel as the fifteenth of Av and Yom Kippur, when the daughters of Yerushalayim would go out in borrowed white garments and dance in the vineyards” (Taanis 4:8). From here the nights lengthen — the season for adding in Torah study after dark.
- ◆ **Monday, 20 Av · August 3** — Yahrzeit of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, the Rebbe's father and Rav of Yekaterinoslav, arrested for his work on behalf of Yiddishkeit and niftar in Soviet exile in Alma Ata, 5704 (1944).

RAMBAM STUDY SCHEDULE · SHABBOS, 11 AV · DAY 173

Daily Rambam

Three chapters a day: Pesulei HaMukdashin, chs. 14–16 · **One chapter a day:** Shofar, Sukkah v'Lulav, ch. 7 · **Sefer HaMitzvos:** Positive 91.

Sefer HaMitzvos, in brief: the day's mitzvah is the command to burn *nosar* — the flesh of an offering left past the time it may be eaten. “And what remains of the flesh of the offering on the third day shall be burned in fire” (P 91; Vayikra 7:17), stated explicitly of the korban Pesach as well: “You shall not leave any of it until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn in fire” (Shmos 12:10). The Mechilta reads that verse as attaching a positive command to a prohibition. Because the prohibition of *nosar* is one that is *nitak la'aseh* — undone by a positive act — no lashes are given for it; the leftover is burned instead. *Pigul* falls under the same law, since Scripture already called it by the name *nosar*.