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Section 10 aims to explain how, according to the Bible, the First Temple was destroyed on the ninth of Av despite mention of its occurrence on the seventh of that month in 2 Kings 25:8-9: "In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month ... Nebuzaradan, the captain of the bodyguard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. He burned the house of the Lord, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down" (NRSV). "The ninth of the month" is also mentioned earlier in that chapter: "On the ninth day the famine became so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land" (2 Kings 25:3-4). Although the Bible probably refers to the ninth day of the fourth month (Tammuz) in these verses, this rabbinic teaching presents the two dates ("on the seventh day of the month" and "on the ninth day") as references to the fifth month (Av). In its attempt to resolve this contradiction and, thus, to demonstrate that the First Temple was destroyed on the ninth of Av, this tradition asserts that the destruction began "on the seventh day of the month" (2 Kings 25:8) and was completed "on the tenth of the month." This date is also mentioned in Jeremiah 52:12-13: "In the fifth month, on the tenth of the month ... Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard ... entered Jerusalem. He burned the house of the Lord, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem..." (NRSV). Indeed, Josephus mentions the tenth of the month as the date on when the two Temples were burned (*Jewish War* VI.250; 268). While tannaitic texts typically avoid descriptions of the destruction of the Second Temple, the Tosefta discusses the details of the first destruction.

A parallel to this section of the Tosefta (10), can be found in the Jerusalem Talmud, Taanit 4:7, 69b-c:

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Rabbi Jeremiah in the name of Rabbi ?iyya bar Abba: By rights, it should have been [ruled] that that they should fast on the tenth [of Av, the day] on which the House of our God was burned. So why on the ninth? For on that [day] the visitation began. And [indeed] there is a tannaitic tradition [that states]: "On the seventh, they entered it (the Temple). On the eighth, they were [in the process of] demolishing it. On the ninth they ignited the fire (lit: light) within it, and on the tenth it was burned down." Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi fasted on [both] the ninth and the tenth [of Av]. Rabbi Abun fasted on [both] the ninth and the tenth. Rabbi Levi fasted on the ninth and on on the eve of the tenth.

Like this Tosefta, the Jerusalem Talmud's discussion on the exact timing of this destruction is followed by a mention of the fast that was observed in response to this catastrophe. The Tosefta continues with passages on the laws of mourning the Temple (sections 11-13), then concludes this discussion of the Ninth of Av by stating with certainty that these fast days will become festive days (Section 14). This final passage is well suited for its location at the end of Tractate Taanit of the Tosefta. The editors of the Mishnah and the Tosefta often closed tractates with an encouraging message. In this case, the Tosefta cites Isaiah 66:10: "Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her! [Join in her jubilation, all you who mourned over her] (JPS)" to prove the future transformation of these fast days into festivals.

Keywords in the original language:

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Thematic keywords in English:



- [destruction of the Temple](#)
- [fast](#)
- [Jerusalem](#)
- [Jerusalem Temple](#)
- [ninth of Av](#)
- [Rabbi Yose](#)
- [visitation](#)

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Other sources connected with this document: Text

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The destruction of the Temple

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Text



[Mishnah Taanit 4:6](#)

The calamities of the seventeenth of Tammuz and the ninth of Av

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Text

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