

אָז וּשְׂאִיל בֵּי מִדְּרָשָׁא. אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ:  
הֲלִבְתָּא: מִתְעַנֵּין לְשָׁעוֹת, וּמִתְפַּלְלִין  
תְּפִלַּת תְּעֵנִית. וְהֲלִבְתָּא: קִנְקֵינִין  
שֶׁל נְבָרִים לְאַחַר שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר חֳדָשׁ  
מִוִּתְרִין. בְּמָה שִׁימַשׁ מֹשֶׁה כָּל שִׁבְעַת  
יָמֵי הַמְּלוֹאִים? בְּחֻלּוֹק לָבָן. רַב כְּהָנָא  
מְתִיב: בְּחֻלּוֹק לָבָן שְׂאִין לוֹ אֵימְרָא.

Mar Ukva went and asked these questions in the study hall. They said to him: The *halakha* is: One fasts for hours, and he even prays the prayer of a fast. And the *halakha* is that the jars belonging to gentiles are permitted after they have not been used at all for twelve months. Finally, in what garments did Moses serve all seven days of inauguration? He did not serve in his own clothes, nor in the regular priestly garments, but in a special white cloak. Rav Kahana taught: Moses served in a white cloak that does not have a hem.<sup>N</sup>

אָמַר רַב חִסְדָּא:

Rav Hisda said:

#### NOTES

In a white cloak that does not have a hem [*imra*] – בְּחֻלּוֹק לָבָן שְׂאִין לוֹ אֵימְרָא: According to most early authorities, the term *imra* is referring to the border of a hem at the bottom of a garment. The white shirt that Moses wore during the seven days of inauguration did not have a border, neither a folded hem nor an additional piece of material sewn to the bottom of the garment. Rashi explains that the shirt was made without a hem so that people could not suspect Moses of illicitly removing money consecrated for the Tabernacle in the folds of his garment. Elsewhere (*Avoda Zara* 34a), Rashi himself rejects this explanation, arguing that by the time the Tabernacle was inaugurated the money donated for its construction had already been spent.

*Tosafot* (*Avoda Zara* 34a) suggest that Moses' shirt was

made without a hem so that it would be clear to all that it was new and had never been worn before. Alternatively, this was to prevent people from thinking that some defect had been found in Moses when they saw that he was replaced by Aaron at the end of the seven days of inauguration. Since the shirt that Moses wore lacked a hem, it would be apparent to all that it had been intended from the outset to be worn for only a short time. *Tosafot* also cite an alternative explanation, that *imra* means wool. The priestly garments were made of wool and linen, a combination that is ordinarily prohibited as diverse kinds. According to this explanation, Rav Kahana is saying that as the cloak worn by Moses was not a priestly garment, it was made of linen without any admixture of wool.

#### Perek I

#### Daf 12 Amud a

הָא דְאָמַרְתָּ מִתְעַנֵּין לְשָׁעוֹת – וְהוּא  
שְׂלֵא טַעַם בְּלוֹם עַד הָעֶרֶב. אָמַר לֵיהּ  
אֲבִי: הָא תְּעֵנִית מִעֲלִייתָא הִיא! לֹא  
צְרִיכָא דְאִמְלֹךְ אֵימְלוּכֵי.

The *halakha* is that which you said, that one may fast for a few hours,<sup>H</sup> provided that one took a fast of a few hours upon himself, and that he fasted and did not taste anything until the evening. Abaye said to Rav Hisda: This ruling is obvious, since it is a full-fledged fast, as one ultimately fasts the entire day. Rav Hisda answered: No, it is necessary to say this *halakha* in a case where he changed his mind, i.e., he began the day without intending to fast, but for various reasons he did not eat, and halfway through the day he decided to continue fasting for another few hours until nightfall. Rav Hisda maintains that this kind of fasting for hours is considered a fast.

#### HALAKHA

One may fast for hours – מִתְעַנֵּין לְשָׁעוֹת: One may observe a fast for a few hours, provided that in practice he does not eat the entire day. How so? If one is immersed in his daily activities, and does not eat in the morning, and subsequently decides that he wants to fast for the remainder of the day, he is allowed to do so, and should then insert the *Aneinu* prayer into the *Amida*. However, some authorities maintain that even one who observes a fast for only a few hours needs to have

taken it upon himself the previous afternoon. If one obligates himself to fast for the first part of a day, and then eats, or conversely, if he has eaten during the first part of the day and subsequently takes upon himself a fast for the rest of the day, he is not considered to be observing a fast that requires the recital of the *Aneinu* prayer. However, he is required to observe the terms of his obligation (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 571:10–11).

BACKGROUND

A descendant of Senaah, son of the tribe of Benjamin – מִבְּנֵי בְנוֹ שֵׁל סְנָאָה בֶן בְּנִמִּין: This statement indicates that the private holidays of families who brought the wood for the Temple were observed by all the members of the family, as Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Tzadok, was a priest whose mother was apparently from the Senaah family.

HALAKHA

Any fast upon which the sun does not set – כָּל תַּעֲנִית שֶׁלֹּא שָׁקְעָה עָלָיו חֲמָה: A fast that is not observed until nightfall, after the appearance of three medium-sized stars, is not considered a fast. Consequently, if one who is fasting intends to break his fast before that time, he may not recite the Aneinu prayer. Certain authorities permit the recitation of the Aneinu prayer even if one's fast does not continue until nightfall. These authorities further rule that an individual may insert the Aneinu prayer into the sixteenth blessing of the Amidah, Who listens to prayer, even if one does not intend to continue his fast until nightfall. However, the prayer leader may not recite the Aneinu prayer unless a fast taken on by the community will be continued until nightfall (Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim 571:1).

That it is a holiday of ours – שְׂוִים טוֹב שְׁלָנוּ הוּא: There were fixed dates for certain families to bring their own wood for the arrangement on the altar. The members of each family would treat the day of their wood offering as a holiday, on which it was prohibited for them to conduct eulogies, fast, or perform work (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Kelei HaMikdash 6:9).

Similarly, when the Ninth of Av occurs on a Shabbat and the fast is postponed until Sunday, those involved in a circumcision on Sunday are permitted to pray the afternoon service early on and eat before dark, as it is a holiday for them (Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim 559:9).

Any fast that one did not take upon himself while it was still day – כָּל תַּעֲנִית שֶׁלֹּא קִיבַל עָלָיו מִבְּעוֹד יוֹם: If one did not take the obligation of an individual fast upon himself during the afternoon of the day before the proposed fast, it is not considered a fast, whether with respect to the recitation of the Aneinu prayer or to the fulfillment of his vow. Some authorities maintain that an individual recites the Aneinu prayer even if he did not take the fast upon himself the previous day (Rema). Everyone agrees that one who experiences a disturbing dream during the night may fast the next day to rectify the dream's bad effects, despite the fact that he did not take the fast upon himself the day before (Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim 571:5).

וְאָמַר רַב חִסְדָּא: כָּל תַּעֲנִית שֶׁלֹּא שָׁקְעָה עָלָיו חֲמָה לֹא שְׂמִיָּה תַּעֲנִית. מִיְהִיבֵי: אֲנָשֵׁי מִשְׁמֶרֶת מִתְּעַנִּין, וְלֹא מִשְׁלֵימִין. הֵתָם לְצַעֲרוֹי נִפְשִׂיהָ בְּעַלְמָא הוּא.

תָּא שְׂמַע: דְּאָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בְּרַבִּי צְדוּק: אֲנִי מִבְּנֵי בְנוֹ שֵׁל סְנָאָה בֶן בְּנִמִּין. וּפְעַם אַחַת חָל תַּשְׁעָה בְּאַבְרָהָם לְהַיּוֹת בְּשַׁבָּת, וְדַחֲיָנָהּ לְאַחַר הַשַּׁבָּת, וְהִתְעַנִּינוּ בּוֹ, וְלֹא הִשְׁלַמְנוּהָ, מִפְּנֵי שְׂוִים טוֹב שְׁלָנוּ הוּא. הֵתָם נִמִּין לְצַעֲרוֹי נִפְשִׂיהָ בְּעַלְמָא הוּא.

תָּא שְׂמַע, דְּאָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: אֵיזָה בְּתַעֲנִית עַד שְׂאֲבֹא לְבֵיתִי. הֵתָם לְשִׁמּוּטִיהָ נִפְשִׂיהָ מִבֵּי נְשִׂיאָהּ הוּא דְעֵבֵר.

אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: כָּל תַּעֲנִית שֶׁלֹּא קִיבַל עָלָיו מִבְּעוֹד יוֹם לֹא שְׂמִיָּה תַּעֲנִית. וְאִי יִתֵּב, מֵאִי אָמַר רַבָּה בַר שִׁילָא: דְּמִי לְמִפּוּחָא דְּמִלְּיָא זִיקָא.

And Rav Hisda said: Any fast<sup>n</sup> upon which the sun does not set,<sup>h</sup> i.e., when one eats in the middle of the day, it is not called a fast at all. The Gemara raises an objection: The members of the priestly watch, the priests and Levites who are serving in the Temple that week, fast on a communal fast, like the members of the non-priestly watch who are attached to specific groups of priests, but they do not complete<sup>n</sup> the fast with the rest of the community. This indicates that even a fast lasting only a few hours is called a fast. The Gemara explains: There they abstained from food merely to cause themselves distress, as an act of solidarity with the rest of the community, but this was not considered a full-fledged fast.

The Gemara cites another proof: Come and hear, as Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Tzadok, said: I am a descendant of Senaah, son of the tribe of Benjamin,<sup>b</sup> and once the Ninth of Av occurred on Shabbat, and we postponed the fast until after Shabbat, as Shabbat supersedes the fast of the Ninth of Av. And we fasted on that day, but we did not complete the fast, due to the fact that the tenth of Av is a holiday of ours,<sup>h</sup> a private holiday for our family (26a), and one does not fast on holidays. This proves that a fast of only a few hours is nevertheless called a fast. The Gemara rejects this claim: There too, they did so merely to cause themselves distress.

The Gemara again attempts to disprove the opinion of Rav Hisda, this time by citing a custom of Rabbi Yoḥanan: Come and hear, as Rabbi Yoḥanan occasionally said: I shall be in observance of a fast until I come to my house. This indicates that one can take a fast upon himself even for just a few hours. The Gemara rejects this proof as well: There he did this to excuse himself from the household of the Nasi.<sup>n</sup> At times, Rabbi Yoḥanan received an invitation to dine at the house of the Nasi, but wanted to decline. To avoid insulting the Nasi, he would say that he had taken a fast upon himself, and afterward he would eat at home. Since this was not a real fast, it is not proof of the legitimacy of a partial-day fast.

Shmuel said: Any fast that one did not take upon himself<sup>n</sup> while it was still day<sup>h</sup> is not called a fast. The Gemara asks: And if one happened to sit in observance of a fast that day, what is that considered? Rabba bar Sheila said: He is likened to a bellows<sup>n</sup> that is full of air. His behavior does not constitute a fast, as he is merely a container full of air, without food.

NOTES

And Rav Hisda said, any fast – וְאָמַר רַב חִסְדָּא כָּל תַּעֲנִית: The early authorities point out a difficulty. As Rav Hisda's first ruling, that one who fasts for hours may not taste anything until evening, is apparently identical to his second statement, that a fast that does not continue until sunset is not considered a fast, one of these statements is apparently superfluous. This difficulty is removed if the reading of Rabbeinu Ḥananel and others is accepted: And Rav Hisda follows his own reasoning. According to this version, the Gemara is in fact stating that his two statements amount to the same ruling.

Some commentaries explain that Rav Hisda's first statement teaches that one cannot eat in the morning and subsequently observe a fast of hours during the second part of the day. His second statement is that one cannot fast in the morning and proceed to eat in the afternoon (Ritva). Yet others suggest that Rav Hisda's first statement is referring to the special Aneinu prayer of a fast. One who fasts for hours is considered to be fasting with respect to the recitation of Aneinu only if he does not taste any food from the beginning of the day until evening. Rav Hisda's second ruling refers to whether or not it is considered a fast that fulfills a vow to observe a fast. If one vowed to observe a fast and fasted for several hours but did not continue until sunset, his vow remains unfulfilled (Ra'avad).

The Rambam (Sefer Zemanim, Hilkhot Ta'anit 1:13) rules that if for some reason one neglects to eat in the morning and

subsequently decides to observe a fast for the rest of the day, he is considered to be fasting for hours and he recites the Aneinu prayer. Even if he eats in the morning and then decides to fast for the rest of the day, he is observing a fast for hours. The early authorities and the later authorities analyze the relationship between this ruling and the two statements of Rav Hisda. Some commentaries on the Rambam suggest that he understood Rav Hisda's first statement, that one fasting may not eat anything until evening, as referring to the part of the day after he begins his fast. However, if he eats in the morning, before beginning his fast, the remainder of the day is considered a fast (Maggid Mishne).

The members of the priestly watch fast but they do not complete – אֲנָשֵׁי מִשְׁמֶרֶת מִתְּעַנִּין וְלֹא מִשְׁלֵימִין: Rashi (15b) explains that the members of the priestly watch who serve in the Temple that week observe each fast imposed on the community during periods of drought. However, they do not continue their fast all the way until nightfall, as they must preserve their strength lest the work of the Temple become too difficult for the members of the extended patrilineal family and other priests be called in to help them. Others suggest that they do not complete the fast because they are sometimes required to help eat the offerings sacrificed that day, to ensure that none of the meat is left over after the permitted time for its consumption (Rabbi Elyakim).

To excuse himself from the household of the Nasi – לְשִׁמּוּטִיהָ לְנִפְשִׂיהָ מִבֵּי נְשִׂיאָה: It is inferred in the Jerusalem Talmud (Nedarim 8:1) from a similar statement of Rabbi Yoḥanan that one may commit to fast for a period of hours or until a certain event occurs. Apparently, the Gemara there understands that Rabbi Yoḥanan did indeed commit to fast for a few hours, and that one who obligates himself to fast in the morning and eats in the afternoon is considered to have observed a fast. This ruling contradicts the opinion of Rav Hisda cited here. Some early authorities attempt to reconcile the opinions of the two passages (see Ritva and Meiri).

Any fast that one did not take upon himself – כָּל תַּעֲנִית שֶׁלֹּא קִיבַל עָלָיו: Some commentaries observe that the halakha that on the afternoon prior to a proposed fast one must commit himself to it is derived from the verse: "Sanctify a fast" (Joel 1:14), which indicates that a fast day must be declared and sanctified before it begins (Rif).

Likened to a bellows – דְּמִי לְמִפּוּחָא: Some commentaries explain that he is similar to a bellows in that the air it contains quickly escapes. Here too, his fast ends after a mere few hours, and therefore it is not considered a proper fast with regard to his prayers.

**At the afternoon prayer – בתפילת המנחה:** If an individual wishes to observe a fast, he must commit to observing the fast during the afternoon service of the previous day, either during the recitation of the sixteenth blessing or at the conclusion of the *Amida*, in accordance with the opinion of Shmuel. He should explicitly state or mentally verbalize the phrase: Tomorrow I will observe an individual fast. Some commentaries rule that it is preferable to declare one's commitment to the fast after completing the *Amida*, so as not to interrupt the prayer (*Rema*). If one did not take the fast upon himself during the afternoon service, he may do so later in the afternoon, provided that it is still day (*Bah; Magen Avraham; Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim 571:6*).

PERSONALITIES

**רבי שמעון ברבי – Rabbi Shimon, son of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi:** Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's youngest son, Rabbi Shimon, was also his closest disciple. Exchanges between father and son are mentioned several times in the Gemara. This son of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi became one of the most important Sages of his generation, and the other disciples of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, even those who were older than Rabbi Shimon, were his students. He was a particularly close friend of Rabbi Ḥiyya, who was his partner in the silk trade. Rabbi Shimon discussed halakhic issues with other Sages of his generation, and his name is mentioned once in the Mishna. Since he was Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's youngest son, he did not assume the office of *Nasi*, president of the Sanhedrin, but his father did appoint him to an important position of leadership in his academy after his death, specifically the role of the *Hakham*. This was the third most important position in the Sanhedrin.

אימת מקביל ליה? רב אמר: במנחה. ושמואל אמר: בתפילת המנחה. אמר רב יוסף: כוונתיה דשמואל מסתברא, דכתבי במגילת תענית: להו, כל איניש דייחי עלוהי מקדמת דנא ייסר.

**S** The Gemara asks: **When does one take a fast upon himself? Rav said:** One takes a fast upon himself in the afternoon<sup>N</sup> of the day preceding the fast, from midday onward. **And Shmuel said:** One must take a fast upon himself for the following day at the end of the afternoon prayer.<sup>HN</sup> **Rav Yosef said:** It stands to reason that the halakha should be in accordance with the opinion of Shmuel, as it is written in *Megillat Ta'anit*, after a list of all of the Festivals established by the Sages in commemoration of various events throughout Jewish history: **Therefore, whoever has bound himself beforehand with an obligation to fast on one of these commemorative days, he will be bound.**

מאי לאו ייסר עצמו בצלו? לא. יאסר עצמו.

The Gemara explains the apparent proof from the text of *Megillat Ta'anit*. **What, is it not** the case that this means that he binds himself to the obligation at the time of prayer,<sup>N</sup> and if he did not do so at that point in time his fast does not go into effect? The Gemara rejects this explanation: **No;** the text should be amended by one letter so that it does not read *yeisar*, he shall bind himself, but *yei'aser*, **he shall render himself prohibited** from transgressing these instructions. In other words, the text is explaining that despite a prior vow to fast, it is prohibited for one to do so on the commemorative days enumerated in *Megillat Ta'anit*.

פליגי בה רבי חייא ורבי שמעון ברבי: חד אמר: ייסר, וחד אמר: יאסר. מאן דאמר ייסר, כדאמרין. למאן דאמר: יאסר, מאי היא?

The Gemara comments: **Rabbi Ḥiyya and Rabbi Shimon, son of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi,<sup>P</sup> disagree with regard to this dispute. One of them said that the text of *Megillat Ta'anit* reads: He will be bound, and the other one said that it reads: He will be prohibited. The one who said: He will be bound, this is as we just say. However, according to the one who said: He will be prohibited, what does it mean?**

NOTES

**In the afternoon – במנחה:** Most early authorities explain that according to the opinion of Rav one who wishes to observe an individual fast is required to take that fast upon himself at some point during the previous afternoon. Rav Hai Gaon states that one must commit to the fast during the second half of the day, from the time of *minḥa gedola*, the earlier afternoon prayer, which begins half an hour after midday. Conversely, Rabbeinu Gershom maintains that one must commit to the fast during the final quarter of the day, from the start of *minḥa ketana*, the later afternoon prayer, nine and a half hours after sunrise.

According to some early authorities, Rav says that one must commit to the fast during the afternoon only to emphasize the difference between his opinion and that of Shmuel, who rules that this must be performed during the afternoon prayer. In fact, Rav maintains that one who wishes to observe an individual fast may take it upon himself well in advance (*Ritva; Ran*). These commentaries explain the dispute between Rav and Shmuel as follows: According to Rav, the undertaking of a fast is considered a vow to perform a meritorious deed. This vow is binding even if it is uttered well in advance. Shmuel, however, argues that one who undertakes to observe a fast is not vowing to perform a meritorious deed, as his vow will cause him suffering. Consequently, he must take on the fast in the manner in which one accepts Shabbat or a Festival, i.e., in the prayer he recites shortly before the onset of the fast.

**At the afternoon prayer – בתפילת המנחה:** The early authorities dispute the precise formula of the prayer that signifies taking on a fast, as well as the point in the afternoon when it is recited. According to the Rambam, one who wishes to observe an individual fast must recite the special *Aneinu* prayer in the sixteenth blessing of the afternoon *Amida* the day before the fast (see Rambam *Sefer Zemanim, Hilkhot Ta'anit 1:10* and *Maggid Mishne* there). Many authorities reject this view, arguing

that the sources mention the *Aneinu* prayer is recited only on a fast day itself. The Rambam himself apparently changed his opinion, as this ruling does not appear in the standard version of his code.

Most early authorities maintain that a fast must be taken on by reciting the formula: Tomorrow I will observe an individual fast. According to some commentaries, this formula is included in the sixteenth blessing of the afternoon *Amida*. Others claim that it is inserted at the end of the *Amida*, immediately before the last line: May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart find favor before You, or immediately after that line, before one takes the three steps backward that signal the conclusion of the *Amida* prayer.

**What, is it not the case that he binds himself at the time of prayer – מאי לאו ייסר עצמו בצלו:** Some commentaries ask how the reading: He binds himself, supports the opinion of Shmuel. Even Rav agrees that one who wishes to observe a fast must obligate himself beforehand. Rav can simply explain that one must commit himself at some point during the afternoon before his proposed fast (*Ritva*).

The *Ritva* answers that Rav maintains that one is not required to commit to his proposed fast in the afternoon prayer, because he holds that committing to a fast constitutes a vow to perform a meritorious deed. Consequently, it also follows that it is not necessary for him to declare that he is taking the fast on the previous day at all. Instead, he can commit to the fast well in advance, in which case there would be no need for him to mention the fast once again the day before. For this reason, the Gemara claims that this section of *Megillat Ta'anit* is not in accordance with the opinion of Rav. The Gemara answers that the text must be amended to read: He shall render himself prohibited. This means that if one has taken a fast upon himself beforehand, he may not eat on that day, even if it occurs on a day when fasting is prohibited.

An individual who took upon himself to fast on Monday, Thursday, and Monday – **יחיד שקיבל עליו שני וחמישי** – **ישני**: If an individual committed himself to a series of fasts, and one of the days on which he was supposed to fast occurs on a Shabbat, a Festival, a New Moon, Hanukkah, or Purim, then the following *halakha* applies: If he took on the fasts by means of the ordinary formulation, he is not required to fast on those days; however, if he took on the fasts in the form of a vow, his vow is binding and requires annulment (Ramban). The Rambam maintains that if one took the fasts on himself by means of a vow, and one of the days on which he is supposed to fast occurs on a date when fasting is prohibited by Torah law, the vow is binding and requires annulment. Conversely, if that day occurs on Hanukkah or Purim, on which fasting is prohibited by rabbinic decree, the vow is not binding. The accepted custom is in accordance with the opinion of the Ramban (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 570:1*, and in the comment of Rema).

**עד מתי אוכל ושותה** – **עד מתי אוכל ושותה**: On any fast that is observed only during the daytime, whether it is an individual or a communal fast, one may eat and drink all night until dawn, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi. However, if one falls soundly asleep, he may not eat when he wakes up, unless he stipulated beforehand that he will eat in the event that he awakens. If he merely dozes off, he is permitted to eat until morning. Some authorities maintain that one may drink until morning, even if he falls into a sound sleep without stipulating that he will drink when he wakes up, as he certainly had in mind that he should be permitted to drink until the fast begins (Rema, citing Mordekhai and *Tur*). Some authorities maintain that it is nevertheless preferable to explicitly make a stipulation with regard to drinking as well (*Magen Avraham*). Others argue that nowadays, when all are accustomed to drinking upon awakening, this stipulation is not necessary (*Arukh HaShulhan; Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 570:1*).

**דתנא במגילת תענית: כל איניש דייחי עלוהי מקדמת דנא יאסר. כיצד? יחיד שקיבל עליו שני וחמישי ושני של כל השנה כולה, ואירעו בם ימים טובים הקתובין במגילת תענית, אם נדרו קודם לגזרתנו, יבטיל נדרו את גזרתנו, ואם גזרתנו קודמת לנדרו, תבטיל גזרתנו את נדרו.**

**תנו רבנן: עד מתי אוכל ושותה? עד שיעלה עמוד השחר. דברי רבי אלעזר ברבי שמעון אומר: עד קרות הגביר. אומר אביי: לא שנו אלא שלא גמר סעודתו. אבא גמר סעודתו אינו אוכל.**

**איתיביה רבא: גמר ועמד, הרי זה אוכל. התם בשלא סילק, איכא דאמרי אמר רבא: לא שנו אלא בשלא ישן. אבא ישן, אינו אוכל. איתיביה אביי: ישן ועמד, הרי זה אוכל. התם במתנמנם.**

**הכי דמי מתנמנם? אמר רב אשי:**

The Gemara explains: This is as it is taught in *Megillat Ta'anit*: **Whoever has taken upon himself beforehand to fast on one of these Festivals days, he will be prohibited to eat and drink. How so? With regard to an individual who took upon himself to fast on each Monday, Thursday, and Monday<sup>1</sup> series of the entire year, and the commemorative holidays written in *Megillat Ta'anit* occurred on these days, if his vow preceded our decree,<sup>2</sup> i.e., the decree of the Sages establishing these commemorative days, his vow annuls our decree and he must fast, but if our decree preceded his vow, our decree annuls his vow and he may not fast on those days.**

**The Sages taught in a baraita: Until when may one eat and drink<sup>3</sup> on communal fasts, when one fasts during the day but not the preceding evening? Until dawn. This is the statement of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi. Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Shimon,<sup>4</sup> says: Until the call of the rooster, which is before dawn. Abaye said: They taught this ruling, that one may eat all night, only if he has not finished his evening meal, as he may continue eating the same meal all night. However, if he has finished his meal, he may not eat any more.**

Rava raised an objection to Abaye from a *baraita*: **If one finished his meal and stood up, nevertheless, he may eat more.** This shows that one may in fact eat throughout the night, even if he has finished his meal. Abaye answered: **There the baraita is referring to a situation where he has not yet removed or cleared the table, and therefore it is as though he has not yet finished his meal. Some say a slightly different version of this discussion. Rava said: They taught this ruling only if he did not sleep after eating, but if he slept he may not eat anything else that night. Abaye raised an objection to Rava from a baraita: If one slept and arose from his sleep during the night, he may eat.** Rava explained: **There the baraita is referring to one who was merely dozing, and was not fully asleep.**

The Gemara asks: **What are the circumstances of dozing? Rav Ashi said:**

NOTES

**1: אם נדרו קודם לגזרתנו** – The early authorities suggest several interpretations of this passage. Rashi and many other early commentaries explain that this refers to the time when the Sages first instituted the commemorative days recorded in *Megillat Ta'anit*. If the vow preceded that decree, it is valid, but if the decree preceded the vow, the fast is annulled. Others understand the Gemara differently. In a case in which one has committed himself to a series of fasts, if he has already observed one or more of them and the next fast falls on a day recorded in *Megillat Ta'anit*, then his vow overrules the decree of the Sages. However, if he has not yet observed any of his fasts,

and the first of the series falls on a commemorative day listed in *Megillat Ta'anit*, the decree of the Sages cancels his vow, and it is prohibited for him to fast (Ra'avad on Rif). Yet others explain that if one undertook a series of fasts before the rabbinical court sanctified the New Moon, in which case he could not have known when he vowed that his fasts would fall on days recorded in *Megillat Ta'anit*, his vow overrules the Sages' decree. Conversely, if one vowed after the court had already sanctified the New Moon, so that he should have known that his fasts would occur on days recorded in *Megillat Ta'anit*, the decree of the Sages cancels his vow (Rabbeinu Gershom).

PERSONALITIES

**רבי אלעזר ברבי שמעון** – Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Shimon, was a distinguished scholar, like his father, Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai. Rabbi Elazar's remarkable personality is the subject of numerous anecdotes. When Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, who was strongly opposed to Roman rule, was betrayed to the authorities by informers, Rabbi Elazar fled with his father and lived with him in a cave for thirteen years. The two subsisted on the barest essentials and spent their time studying Torah. During this period, Rabbi Elazar learned almost everything he knew from his father, who was his principal teacher, though Rabbi Elazar occasionally disagreed with his halakhic rulings. Rabbi Elazar also studied with other scholars of his father's generation, including Rabbi Yehuda, Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua, and Rabbi Meir.

Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, a friend from his youth. Nevertheless, all acknowledged his personal piety, asceticism, and greatness in Torah knowledge. His father considered him one of the most pious individuals of all time, and he was apparently considered exceptionally righteous by the common people as well. Rabbi Elazar is also one of the most prominent figures in the *Zohar*. When he died, he was eulogized for his great achievements as a student of the Torah, both Written and Oral, as a preacher, and as a composer of liturgical poetry. The Gemara informs us that he was buried next to his father's grave in Meron. Rabbi Elazar's teachings are quoted explicitly in several places in the Mishna, while many other rulings of his are apparently stated in the Mishna anonymously. He was therefore referred to as Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Shimon, the Unattributed, i.e., the one whose opinions are often recorded as unattributed *mishnayot*. Some of his statements, which are also quoted by early *amora'im*, are cited in the *Tosefta* and in halakhic midrash.

Later, Rabbi Elazar was forced to assume the unpopular position of a law-enforcement officer, and his acceptance of the post aroused opposition among the Sages. His spiritual independence led to friction with other Sages, which cooled his relations with

נִים וְלֹא נִים; תִּיר וְלֹא תִיר. דְּקָרוּ לִיה  
וְעָנִי וְלֹא יָדַע אֶהְדוּרֵי סְבָרָא, וְכִי מְדַבְּרֵי  
לִיה, מְדַבְּרֵי.

אָמַר רַב כְּהָנָא אָמַר רַב: יַחֲדֵי שְׂקִיבֵל  
עָלְיֵי תַעֲנִית אָסוּר בְּנַעֲלִית הַסְּנַדְּל.  
חַיִּישִׁינָן שְׂמָא תַעֲנִית צְבוּר קִיבֵל עָלְיֵי.  
הִיכִי לִיעֲבֹד? אָמַר רַבָּה בַר רַב שִׁילָא:  
לִימָא הֵכִי: לְמַחֵר אֵהָא לְפָנֶיךָ בְּתַעֲנִית  
יַחֲדֵי.

אָמְרוּ לִיה רַבֵּן לְרַב שֵׁשֶׁת: הָא קָא  
חֻוּיָן רַבָּנֵי דְּמַסִּימֵי מְסַנְיָהוּ וְאָתָּנוּ לְבִי  
תַעֲנִיתָ! אִיקְפֵּד וְאָמַר לְהוּ: דְּלָמָא  
מִיכֵל נְמֵי אָכּוּל.

אֲבִי וְרַבָּא מְעִילֵי כִי מַסִּימֵי אֲפָנְתָא.  
מְרִימָר וּמְרָא זוּטְרָא מְחַלְפֵי דִימִינָא  
לְשִׂמְאָלָא, וְדִשְׂמָאָלָא לִימִינָא. רַבָּנֵי  
דְּבִי רַב אִשִּׁי נִפְקֵי כִי אֹרְחִיָּהוּ. סְבָרֵי  
כִי הָא דְּאָמַר שְׂמוּאֵל: אִין תַעֲנִית צְבוּר  
בְּבָבֶל אֵלָא תִשְׁעָה בָּאָב בְּלָבָד.

אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: לֹוּה אָדָם  
תַעֲנִיתוּ וּפּוֹרַע. כִי אָמְרִיתָה קַמִּיָּה  
דְּשְׂמוּאֵל, אָמַר לִי: וְכִי נָדַר קִבֵּל עָלֶיךָ  
דְּלֹא סָגִי דְּלֹא מְשַׁלֵּם? לְצַעֲוֵרֵי נִפְשִׁיָּה  
קִבֵּיל עָלֶיךָ. אִי מְצִי, מְצַעֵר נִפְשִׁיָּה; אִי  
לֹא מְצִי, לֹא מְצַעֵר נִפְשִׁיָּה.

אִיכָא דְּאָמְרֵי אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב:  
לֹוּה אָדָם תַעֲנִיתוּ וּפּוֹרַע. כִי אָמְרִיתָה  
קַמִּיָּה דְּשְׂמוּאֵל, אָמַר לִי: פְּשִׁיטָא! לֹא  
יְהִי אֵלָא נָדַר! נָדַר מִי לֹא מְצִי בְּעֵי  
לְשִׁלּוּמֵי וּמְיוּל לְמַחֵר וְלִיוֹמָא אַחֲרֵינָא?

One is asleep but not fully asleep, awake but not fully awake. This means that if they call him he will answer, but he cannot give a coherent reason. And when we remind him of something that just happened he remembers it.

Rav Kahana said that Rav said: An individual who took a fast upon himself is prohibited to engage in the wearing of shoes on the day of his fast. The reason is that we are concerned that perhaps he took a communal fast upon himself, and wearing shoes is prohibited on communal fast days. The Gemara asks: How should one act, to avoid this problem? Rabba bar Rav Sheila said: Let him recite this formula: Tomorrow I shall be before You in the observance of an individual fast.

The Gemara relates: The Sages said to Rav Sheshet, who was blind: We see Sages who wear their shoes and go to the study house on a communal fast day. This shows that there is no need to be concerned about this prohibition. Rav Sheshet became angry and said to them: Perhaps they even ate, if you saw them treating the fast lightly.

The Gemara further relates: Abaye and Rava would enter the synagogue while wearing sandals on the leather [apanta]<sup>NL</sup> of their shoes, i.e., they would wear their shoes upside down. Mareimar<sup>p</sup> and Mar Zutra<sup>p</sup> would switch the right shoe for the left and the left for the right. By contrast, the Sages of the school of Rav Ashi would go out wearing shoes in their usual manner. They hold in accordance with that which Shmuel said: The only completely stringent communal fast in Babylonia is the Ninth of Av alone. Therefore, in Babylonia there is no need to be concerned that one might have taken a communal fast upon himself.

The Gemara discusses another topic related to fasts. Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: A person may borrow his fast and repay,<sup>NH</sup> i.e., if one is unable to fast on the specific day he intended to fast, he may annul his fast for that day and fast on another day instead. Rav Yehuda related: When I said this halakha before Shmuel, he said to me: And did he take a vow upon himself, which would mean that it is not possible for him not to repay it? He took upon himself to cause himself discomfort on that day. If he is able, he must cause himself discomfort; if he is unable, he does not need to cause himself discomfort, in which case he need not repay the fast.

Some say a different version of this discussion. Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: One may borrow his fast and repay. When I said this halakha before Shmuel, he said to me: This is obvious. Let it be considered only a vow; even so, is he not required to repay a vow on the next day or on another day? Since a commitment to fast is a type of vow, he is obligated to repay it at some point in time.

NOTES

כִי מַסִּימֵי – אֲפָנְתָא: While wearing sandals on the leather [apanta] The early authorities dispute the precise meaning of the term *apanta*, although they all apparently agree that this is referring to a type of shoe that does not have leather soles. *Tosafot* maintain that *apanta* is referring to a type of footwear consisting only of the upper portion of a shoe, without a sole. Rashi and the *Shita Mekubbetzet* explain that *apanta* is a soft slipper. Others claim that these turned their shoes upside down and walked with their feet touching the soles.

לֹוּה אָדָם תַעֲנִיתוּ – וּפּוֹרַע: A person may borrow his fast and repay According to the Rambam (*Sefer Hafla'a, Hilkhot Nedarim* 4:15) and several other early authorities, this applies only if one did not specify the date for his fast. However, if he undertook to observe a fast on a specific day, he cannot later transfer his fast to a different date. Conversely, most early authorities maintain that this *halakha* applies even if one undertook to observe a fast on a specific day (Ra'avad; Rashba; Ritva). They argue that support for this opinion is provided by the anecdote cited in the Gemara involving Rav Yehoshua, son of Rav Idi. When Rav Yehoshua explained that he was declining to eat due to his fast, the members of Rav Asi's household suggested that he observe the fast on some other day, without first asking him whether he had specified a particular day.

The early authorities also disagree with regard to the circumstances in which one may cancel his fast and observe it on another day. Some maintain that this *halakha* applies only if he would suffer great distress were he to continue fasting (Rabbeinu Hananel). Others rule that it also applies if he is invited to a meal that can be characterized as a religious celebration, or if he wants to participate in a meal as a mark of honor to an important person, or to maintain good social relations with his friends (Rif; Rambam). Yet others claim that the story of Rav Yehoshua, son of Rav Idi, proves that one may postpone his fast even if he cannot provide any special reason for doing so.

LANGUAGE

אֲפָנְתָא – The leather [apanta] – The piece of leather on the portion of a shoe that covers the foot. In Syriac, *panta* means the back of the hand, or the skin covering the foot.

HALAKHA

לֹוּה אָדָם תַעֲנִיתוּ – וּפּוֹרַע: A person may borrow his fast and repay If one vowed to observe a fast on a particular day, but forgot his vow and ate on that day, he must refrain from eating for the remainder of the day. However, if he vowed to fast without specifying a particular date, and after beginning to fast he forgot and ate, he is required to fast on another day. If one vowed to observe several fasts without specifying the dates, and after starting to fast on a particular day he wants to cancel the fast on account of some other religious obligation, or in honor of an important person, or because he was in a state of distress (Rema), he is permitted to break his fast and repay it on another day (*Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim* 568:1–2).

PERSONALITIES

Mareimar – מְרִימָר: A Babylonian *amora* of the sixth generation, Mareimar was a colleague of Rav Ashi. After Rav Ashi's death, Mareimar is said to have taken his place as head of the Sura academy. Many Sages of the following generation were his students, especially Ravina the younger, his closest disciple. The prefix Mar is possibly an indication that he belonged to the family of the Exilarch. Mareimar's son, Rav Yehuda bar Mareimar, was also a Sage.

Mar Zutra – מְרָא זוּטְרָא: A colleague of Rav Ashi, Mar Zutra was one of the leading Sages of his generation. His teachers Rav

Pappa and Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak accepted him as their equal. Apart from his greatness in *halakha* and *aggada*, Mar Zutra was a noted preacher, and his sermons are cited in the Gemara. He apparently held an official position as scholar-in-residence and preacher in the household of the Exilarch. In his old age, he was appointed head of the Pumbedita academy.

Some of the meetings between Mar Zutra, Ameimar, and Rav Ashi, which are frequently mentioned in the Talmud, may well have been formal conferences attended by the leaders of Babylonian Jewry.

NOTES

A third-born [tilta] calf – עגל תילתא: Some commentaries on Shabbat 11a explain that tilta is referring to a calf that reached only a third of its potential size; such a calf has the choicest meat (Rashi). Others say that meshulash in the Bible and tilta here both mean the best, similar to the term: "And captains [shalishim] over them all" (Exodus 14:7), which is referring to the highest ranking soldiers (Tosafot in Shabbat 11a).

A fast for a dream – תענית הלום: This issue of observing a fast for a troubling dream is discussed at length by the commentaries, especially in light of the statement of the Gemara elsewhere (Sanhedrin 30a) that dreams do not have any particular significance (Ritva). The Ritva explains that one who has experienced a disturbing dream should take it as a sign from Heaven to examine his ways and repent. Observing a fast is an act that facilitates sincere repentance. The fast should be observed on the day following the dream, even on Shabbat, while the dream is still vivid and likely to lead to repentance. Ordinarily, the obligation to experience joy and pleasure on Shabbat renders it prohibited to fast. However, one who has experienced a disturbing dream is permitted to fast on Shabbat, as he would not enjoy his food anyway. On the contrary, he takes pleasure in fasting, as in this manner he can begin to mend his ways and lessen the anxiety caused by the dream.

And even on Shabbat – ואפילו בשבת: Some commentaries explain that this incident involving Rav Yehoshua, son of Rav Idi, occurred on a Shabbat, which is why a third-born calf was prepared for him. This explains the need for him to specify that he was fasting for a bad dream, which is permitted even on Shabbat (Ramat Shmuel).

HALAKHA

A fast for a dream – תענית הלום: A fast is as beneficial for rectifying the effects of a disturbing dream as fire is powerful against chaff. Therefore, one who has had a bad dream should fast and repent (Magen Avraham) on the day following the dream. Nevertheless, fasts for dreams are optional (Rashba). In recent times, many authorities have ruled leniently on questions involving fasting for dreams (Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim 220:2).

And even on Shabbat – ואפילו בשבת: One who is distressed by a bad dream is permitted to observe a fast in order to rectify its negative effects, even on Shabbat. According to some authorities, there are only three types of dreams for which one may fast on Shabbat; others add additional types to the list. Some commentaries add that one should not fast if the suffering caused by his fasting will outweigh the distress caused by the dream (Rivash). In contrast, certain authorities maintain that one should never observe a fast for a disturbing dream on Shabbat (Rav Amram Gaon; Tur). One who fasted for a dream on Shabbat is required to observe an additional fast the next day, to atone for fasting on Shabbat. If he is unable to fast on two successive days, or if that Sunday is a day on which fasting is prohibited, he must fast on a different day instead (Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim 288:4).

רב יהושע בריה דרב אידי איקלע לבי רב אסי. עבדו ליה עגל תילתא. אמרו ליה: ליטעום מר מידי. אמר להו: בתעניתא יתיבנא. אמרו ליה: ולוויף מר וליפרע. לא סבר מר להא דאמר רב יהודה אמר רב: ליה אדם תעניתו ופרע? אמר להו: תענית הלום הוא.

ואמר רבה בר מחסאי אמר רב חמא בר גוריא אמר רב: יפה תענית לחלום כאש לנעורת. אמר רב חסדא: ובו ביום. ואמר רב יוסף: ואפילו בשבת. מאי תקנתיה? ליתבי תעניתא לתעניתא.

מתני' עברו אלו ולא נענו, בית דין גוזרין שלש תעניות אחרות על הצבור. אוכלין ושותין מבעוד יום, ואסורין במלאכה, ורחיצה, ובסיכה, ובנעילת הסנדל, ובתשמיש המטה, ונועלין את המרחצאות.

עברו אלו ולא נענו, בית דין גוזרין עליהן עוד שבע, שהן שלוש עשרה תעניות על הצבור. הרי אלו יתרות על הראשונות, שבאלו מתרענין, ונועלין את החנויות. בשני מטין עם חשיכה, ובחמישי מותרין מפני כבוד השבת.

עברו אלו ולא נענו, ממעטין במשא ומתן, בבנין ובנטיעה, באירוסין ובנישואין, ובשאיילת שלום בין אדם לחבירו, כבני אדם הנזופין למקום. היחידים חוזרין ומתענין עד שיצא ניסן, יצא ניסן וירדו גשמים, סימן קללה, שנאמר: "הלא קצר חטים היום" וגו'?

גמ' בשלמא כולהו, אית בהו תענוג – רחיצה, וסיכה, ותשמיש המטה. אבל מלאכה צער הוא! אמר רב חסדא אמר רב ירמיה בר אבא: אמר קרא: "קדשו צום, קראו עצרה, אספו זקנים". בעצרת. מה עצרת אסור בעשיית מלאכה, אף תענית אסור בעשיית מלאכה.

The Gemara relates: Rav Yehoshua, son of Rav Idi, happened to visit the house of Rav Asi. They prepared a third-born calf,<sup>N</sup> whose meat is high quality, for him. They said to him: Let the Master taste something. He said to them: I am sitting in the observance of a fast and may not eat. They said to him: And let the Master borrow and repay the fast. Doesn't the Master hold in accordance with this halakha that Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: A person may borrow his fast and repay? Rav Yehoshua, son of Rav Idi, said to them: It is a fast for a dream.<sup>NH</sup> He was fasting to rectify the negative effects of a bad dream he had experienced the night before.

The Gemara explains the relevance of this last comment. And Rabba bar Meḥasseya said that Rav Ḥama bar Gurya said that Rav said: A fast is effective to neutralize a bad dream like fire is effective for burning chaff. Rav Hisda said: The fast is effective specifically on that day that one dreamed. And Rav Yosef said: And one suffering from a bad dream is permitted to fast even on Shabbat.<sup>NH</sup> The Gemara asks: What is the remedy for one who has denigrated Shabbat by fasting? Let him sit in observance of another fast, on another day, to atone for his fast on Shabbat.

**MISHNA** If these three regular fasts have passed and they have not been answered with rain, the court decrees three other fasts upon the community. These are severe fasts, in which one may eat and drink only while it is still day, before the beginning of the night of the fast, and on the day of the fast itself they are prohibited to engage in the performance of work, in bathing, in smearing with oil, in wearing shoes, and in marital relations; and they lock the bathhouses so that no one should come to bathe on that day.

If these three fasts have passed and they still have not been answered, the court decrees on them another seven fasts, which are a total of thirteen fasts, upon the community, not including the first three fasts observed by individuals. These seven fast days are more severe than the first ones, as on these days, in addition to all the earlier stringencies, they sound the alarm, as will be explained in the Gemara, and they lock the stores. Although shops must remain closed most of the time on these days, on Monday they open them a little at nightfall to allow people to purchase food for breaking their fast, and on Thursday they are permitted to open the stores all day in deference to Shabbat, so that people may purchase food for the sacred day.

If these fasts have passed and they have not been answered the court does not decree additional fasts, but the entire community observes the customs of mourning. They decrease their engagement in business transactions, in building and planting, in betrothals and marriages, and in greetings between each person and his fellow, like people who have been rebuked by God. The individuals, i.e., Torah scholars, resume fasting every Monday and Thursday until the month of Nisan ends. After this date they no longer pray for rain, since if Nisan has ended and rains subsequently fall, they are a sign of a curse, as it is stated: "Is not the wheat harvest today? I will call to the Lord that He may send thunder and rain, and you will know and see that your wickedness is great" (1 Samuel 12:17). The wheat harvest is around the time of Shavuot, well after Nisan.

**GEMARA** The Gemara discusses the activities that are prohibited on a communal fast day: Granted, all of the other actions are prohibited, as they provide pleasure, namely, bathing, smearing, and marital relations. However, working is a cause of suffering. Why was it decreed that one must refrain from working? Rav Hisda said that Rav Yirmeya bar Abba said as that the verse states: "Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders" (Joel 1:14), this indicates that a fast day is like a day of assembly. Just as on a day of assembly, i.e., a Festival, it is prohibited to engage in working, so too, on a fast it is prohibited to engage in working.

This supports the opinion of – **מְסִייעַ לִיהָ לְ**: When the Gemara wishes to explore the possibility that the mishna it is analyzing can be cited as proof for the opinion of a Sage, it will typically state: This source supports the statement of that Sage.

They examine the affairs of the town – **מְעִינֵין בְּמִילֵי** – **דְּמַתָּא**: Some commentaries derive this requirement from the following verses: “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loosen the fetters of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke? Is it not to deal your bread to the hungry and that you bring the poor who are cast out to your house? When you see the naked, that you cover him; and that you do not hide yourself from your own flesh?” (Isaiah 58:6–7). These verses teach that God views favorably those fasts on which people examine their behavior and attend to the social injustices they find in their community (Vilna Gaon on *Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 576:16). Others add that on communal fast days, the leaders gather to attend to the community’s problems and requirements, as well as to right any wrongs that the community as a whole may have inflicted on individuals (Rabbi Elyakim).

אִי מָה עֲצַרְתָּ מֵאוֹרְתָא, אֲף תַעֲנִית נְמִי מֵאוֹרְתָא! אָמַר רַבִּי זֵירָא: לְדִידִי מִיִּפְרָשָׁא לִי מִינֵיהּ דְּרַבִּי יִרְמְיָה בַר אֲבָא: אָמַר קָרָא: “אֶסְפוּ זְקֵנִים.” דּוּמְיָא דְאַסְיַפְתָּ זְקֵנִים. מָה אֶסְיַפְתָּ זְקֵנִים בְּיוֹם, אֲף צוּם נְמִי בְּיוֹם. וְאִימָא: מְטִיהָרָא! אָמַר רַב שִׁישָׁא בְרִיהַ דְּרַב אִידִי: מְסִייעַ לִיהָ לְרַב הוּנָא, דְאָמַר מְצַפְרָא בִּינוּפְיָא.

הֵיכִי עָבְדִי? אָמַר אַבְיִי: מְצַפְרָא עַד פְּלָגָא דְיוֹמָא מְעִינֵין בְּמִילֵי דְמַתָּא. מִכָּאן וְאִילָךְ, רַבְעָא דְיוֹמָא קְרִינֵן בְּסַפְרָא וְאֶפְטָרְתָא. מִכָּאן וְאִילָךְ, בְּעִינֵין רַחֲמֵי שְׁנָאִים: “וַיִּקְרָאוּ עַל עַמּוּדָם, וַיִּקְרָאוּ בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרַת ה' אֱלֹהֵיהֶם רַבְעִית הַיּוֹם, וּרְבַעִת מִתּוֹדִים, וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים לַה' אֱלֹהֵיהֶם.”

The Gemara asks: **If so, one could say: Just as on a day of assembly it is prohibited to work from the previous evening, so too, on a fast it should be prohibited to work from the evening. Rabbi Zeira said: This was explained to me by Rabbi Yirmeya bar Abba himself: The verse states: “Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders,”** indicating that a fast is similar to a gathering of elders: **Just as the gathering of elders is performed by day, so too, the time for a fast is also by day.** The Gemara asks: **But if so, one can say that the fast should begin from noon. Rav Sheisha, son of Rav Idi, said: This supports the opinion of<sup>N</sup> Rav Huna, who said: The public gathering on fast days occurs in the hours of the morning.**

The Gemara asks: **How do they act on a fast day? Abaye said: From the morning until the middle of the day<sup>N</sup> they examine the affairs of the town<sup>N</sup>** by checking if there are any deficiencies or corruptions in the city, moral or otherwise, and attempt to fix them, as these problems may have been the cause of the Divine punishment. **From this point forward, for a quarter of the day they read a portion from the Torah and a portion from the Prophets [haftara]. From this point forward, they pray and petition for mercy, as it is stated: “And they stood up in their place and they read in the book of the Torah of the Lord their God a fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and prostrated themselves before the Lord their God” (Nehemiah 9:3).**

#### HALAKHA

**מְצַפְרָא עַד – פְּלָגָא דְיוֹמָא**: On communal fast days that are decreed to avert an impending calamity, the court judges and the community leaders gather in the synagogues from after the completion of the morning prayers until noon, to examine the conduct of the townspeople. They attempt to rectify any flaws in behavior that they might find, and they admonish wrongdoers and shame those who resort to violence to get their way. During the third quarter of the day, an appropriate section of the Torah

is read, as well as a portion from the Prophets related to the occasion. During the last quarter of the day, the congregation recites the afternoon prayer and offers special petitions and supplications. These practices have not been observed in recent generations, either because the courts no longer have the authority to correct the wrongs they find (*Arukh HaShulhan*), or because in general the customs concerning communal fasts are no longer observed in their entirety (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 576:16).

#### Perek I

#### Daf 13 Amud a

אִיפּוּךְ אָנָּא! לֹא סָלְקָא דַעְתְּךָ, דְכַתְיב: “וְאִלֵּי יֶאֱסָפוּ בַל חָרָד בְּדַבְרֵי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל מַעַל הַגּוֹלָה” וְגו'. וְכַתְיב: “וּבְמִנְחַת הָעֶרֶב קָמוּתִי מִתַּעֲנִיתִי... וְאֶפְרָשָׁה כַּפֵּי אֶל ה'.”

The Gemara asks: **I can reverse<sup>N</sup> the order of events, so that the first half of the day is spent in prayer while the second half is focused on the concerns of the community.** The Gemara answers: **It should not enter your mind to say that, as it is written elsewhere: “Then were assembled to me<sup>N</sup> everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel due to the faithlessness of them of the captivity and I sat appalled until the evening offering” (Ezra 9:4). And it is written in the next verse: “And at the meal-offering I arose from my fast, even with my garment and my mantle rent; and I fell on my knees and I spread out my hands to the Lord” (Ezra 9:5).** These verses indicate that first one must deal with the issues of the community, and only afterward engage in prayer.

#### NOTES

**I can reverse – אִיפּוּךְ אָנָּא**: Although it stands to reason that the members of a community should first correct their ways and only afterward petition for mercy, the Gemara argues that there is good reason to reverse the order, as many of the *halakhot* of fasting and repentance are derived from the description of the penitence of the people of Nineveh. The *Ramat Shmuel* points out that the book of Jonah states that the inhabitants of Nineveh first petitioned God for mercy and only then attended to the wrongs committed in their community: “But let them be covered with sackcloth, both

man and beast, and let them cry mightily to God; and let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands” (Jonah 3:8).

**Then were assembled to me, etc. – וְאִלֵּי יֶאֱסָפוּ וְגו'**: In other words, all those who feared God came to discuss “the faithlessness of the captivity,” i.e., the sins of the people of the Babylonian captivity who had ascended to Eretz Yisrael. This is referring to the correction of communal wrongs, as stated in the previous *halakha* (Rabbi Elyakim; Ran).