

# Laws of Fasts, Chapter 3 (Auto Translated)

English

Auto Translated

## Shiur Overview

### Summary of Shiur – Laws of Fasts, Chapter 3

#### Introduction: The Connection Between Fasts for Rain, Rosh Hashanah, and Sukkos

Maseches Taanit is not a side matter, but rather a **continuation of Rosh Hashanah**. The foundation comes from the pesukim in Parshas Eikev: "A land that Hashem your God looks after, from the beginning of the year until the end of the year" and "If you will surely listen... I will give the rain of your land in its time" – the Ribbono Shel Olam looks at the rain every year. On Sukkos there is "on the festival they are judged regarding water," nisuch hamayim (water libation), the four species which "bring favor regarding water." When all this hasn't helped, one needs even more teshuva – and that is the fast for rain in Cheshvan/Kislev. Therefore, we blow shofar during a fast just as on Rosh Hashanah – because it's literally the same theme.

There is also a distinction made between **makas batzoret** (a local trouble, like a plague on one limb) and **shnas batzoret** (something is fundamentally wrong with the year – it hasn't started raining at all).

Between Tishrei and Nisan there is no Yom Tov d'Oraisa – only Chanukah, Purim, and Rosh Chodesh (which are d'Rabbanan). But what **is** there during this period that is d'Oraisa, according to the Rambam's approach, is **fasts** – built on the pasuk "When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, you shall sound the trumpets." Maseches Taanit is, as it were, "the tractate of winter."

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#### Halacha 1 – First Stage: Talmidei Chachamim Begin to Fast (17 Cheshvan)

**The Rambam's words:** "If no rain has fallen at all from the beginning of the rainy season..." – if the 17th of Cheshvan has arrived and it hasn't rained, talmidei chachamim begin to fast Monday, Thursday, and Monday.

**Explanation:** From the 17th of Cheshvan, when we begin asking for rain (in Eretz Yisrael), if it doesn't rain, first talmidei chachamim begin to fast – not yet the community.

#### Novel points:

1. **Why specifically talmidei chachamim first?** Three reasons:

- Talmidei chachamim have **greater power in prayer** – as we learned in Hilchos Tefillah, "in the place of learning, there is prayer" – one who learns has better prayer.

- We don't want to **create a panic in the city** – talmidei chachamim are close to the community leaders (nasi, Sanhedrin, elder), we begin quietly.

- It's still **not such a great trouble** – still an earlier, more "refined" stage.

2. **Yechidim = talmidei chachamim:** In the Gemara it says that "yechidim fast" – the Rambam interprets that "yechidim"

means talmidei chachamim. It's not a decree on the community, but rather whoever feels it themselves and knows the halachos.

3. **"All students are fitting for this" – the Rambam's innovation:** In the **Gemara** it says specifically "one who is fitting to be appointed as a leader over the community" – only an important scholar. But the **Rambam says "all students"** – even a student who is not yet himself a scholar, but rather a student of talmidei chachamim, may/must fast. This is a leniency relative to the Gemara's measure.

4. **Talmidei chachamim need to keep up with the news:** From the fact that talmidei chachamim begin to fast when it doesn't rain, we see that they need to know what's happening – they "have the community in mind," they are close with the leaders.

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#### Halacha 1 (continued) – Second Stage: First Three Fasts on the Community (Rosh Chodesh Kislev)

**The Rambam's words:** "If Rosh Chodesh Kislev arrives and rain has not fallen – the beis din decrees three fasts on the community" – Monday, Thursday, and Monday. **"And all the people enter the synagogues, pray, cry out, and supplicate, as they do on all the fasts."**

**Explanation:** After a whole month of Cheshvan without rain, beis din decrees three fasts on the entire community. The community prays in the synagogue.

#### Novel points:

1. **Anshei mishmar fast with them:** The kohanim who are in their mishmar (weekly shift in the Beis HaMikdash) fast along – **except** those who are actually doing the service that day (the beis av of that day). The reason: they need strength for the service, and also because kohanim eat from the sacrifices.

2. **The Beis HaMikdash's central role in fasting:** From this law of anshei mishmar we see that fasting is fundamentally connected to the Beis HaMikdash – there is the main place of fasting, the place where one goes to pray for rain.

3. **"In the synagogue" as opposed to "in the city square":** During the later, stricter fasts we go out to the street (rechovas ha'ir), but during this first set not yet.

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#### Halacha 2 – Third Stage: Second Set of Three Fasts

**The Rambam's words:** "If these have passed and they were not answered – the beis din decrees three more fasts on the community."

**Explanation:** If after the first three fasts it still hasn't rained, beis din decrees three more fasts, but stricter. Timing: after Monday-Thursday-Monday, we fast the very next Thursday – it continues immediately.

**Stringency 1: One Stops Eating While It Is Still Day**

**The Rambam's words:** "And any fast on which one eats while it is still day... if he ate and stopped and decided not to eat anymore, he may not eat again even if there is still time during the day."

**Explanation:** During the second set one may only eat while it is still day (before night). If someone stopped eating and decided not to eat anymore, he may no longer eat even if there is still time during the day. But if he didn't decide not to eat anymore, he may still eat.

**Novel points:**

- This is similar to the principle we learned in previous chapters regarding nighttime – that once one has stopped eating, one doesn't eat anymore. This is called "seudah hamafsekes." The mechanism is that when one stops, it becomes like the beginning of the next day's fast.

- A leniency: The prohibition is only when he actively "decided not to eat" – if he had nothing in mind, he may still eat.

**Stringency 2: Pregnant and Nursing Women**

During other fasts, pregnant and nursing women are exempt; here they are obligated.

**Stringency 3: Five Afflictions (Similar to Yom Kippur, with Leniencies)**

**The Rambam's words:** "These three fasts, all the people are forbidden to do work during the day, but at night they are permitted. And they are forbidden to wash their entire body in hot water, but their face, hands, and feet are permitted. Therefore, the bathhouses are locked. And they are forbidden in anointing... but to remove dirt is permitted. And they are forbidden in marital relations and in wearing leather shoes in the city, but on the road it is permitted to wear shoes."

**Explanation:** Work is forbidden during the day (but at night it's permitted); washing the entire body in hot water is forbidden (but face, hands, feet are permitted); therefore the bathhouses are closed; anointing is forbidden (but to remove dirt is permitted); marital relations are forbidden; wearing leather shoes in the city is forbidden (but on the road it's permitted).

**Novel points:**

- This is similar to Yom Kippur's matters (washing, anointing, relations, wearing shoes), but each one comes with a leniency: regarding washing – face, hands, and feet are permitted; regarding anointing – to remove dirt is permitted (perfuming is forbidden, but soap to wash off dirt is permitted); regarding wearing shoes – on the road it's permitted. This is not as strict as Yom Kippur itself.

- Regarding bathhouses: A question is raised whether a mikveh is also forbidden or only bathhouses – "perhaps a mikveh is permitted."

**Prayer and Crying Out**

**The Rambam's words:** "They pray with supplications, and cry out and supplicate like the other fasts."

**Novel points:**

- "Ze'akah" (crying out) is not just praying, but rather a special form of screaming. It's compared to the Yamim Noraim when people cry out "Aneinu" or "Teshuva, Tefillah, U'Tzedakah" –

the prayer leader says it and the congregation responds with a cry.

- Ze'akah is one of the ten expressions of prayer – it's an extreme level.

- "Teshuva, Tefillah, U'Tzedakah" is not a request but an awakening – "Wake up, do teshuva!" – similar to shofar.

- [Digression: A humorous comment about Stoliner Chassidim who always scream – that those who already know how to scream should do it now as it should be done during these special fasts.]

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**Halacha 3 – Fourth Stage: Seven Fasts**

**The Rambam's words:** "If these have passed and they were not answered, the beis din decrees seven individual fasts on the community, Monday and Thursday and Monday, and Thursday and Monday and Thursday and Monday."

**Explanation:** If the second set of three didn't help, beis din decrees seven fasts – Monday, Thursday, Monday, Thursday, Monday, Thursday, Monday – two weeks of Monday-Thursday-Monday plus another third set.

**Pregnant and Nursing Women During the Seven Fasts**

**The Rambam's words:** "And during these seven, pregnant and nursing women do not fast... Even though they don't fast, they don't indulge themselves in luxuries, but rather eat and drink only what is necessary for the fetus."

**Explanation:** Pregnant and nursing women don't fast during the seven fasts, but they may not indulge themselves – they eat only as much as is necessary for the child.

**Novel points:**

- There are **two versions** in the Rambam: (a) "And during these seven alone pregnant and nursing women fast" – meaning during the previous three they don't fast, but during the seven they do; (b) "And during these seven pregnant and nursing women do not fast" – meaning during the seven specifically they don't fast. The second version makes more sense because the seven is harder.

- The principle that pregnant and nursing women eat only "what is necessary for the fetus" is expanded: even someone who cannot fast because he has no strength, doesn't mean he can make large meals – there is a concept of restraint even when one eats.

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**Halacha 4 – Anshei Mishmar and Anshei Beis Av During the Seven Fasts**

**The Rambam's words:** Anshei mishmar – "fast and complete"; anshei beis av – "part of the day... and do not complete."

**Explanation:** During the seven fasts it becomes stricter: anshei mishmar (who previously only fasted part of the day) now fast a full day. Anshei beis av (who previously didn't fast at all) now fast part of the day but not a full day, because they need to be able to do the service.

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**Halacha 5 – Stringencies of the Seven Fasts: Going Out to the Street, Six Blessings, Ne'ilah**

**The Rambam's words:** "And everything that is forbidden during the three middle ones, is forbidden during these last seven. And in addition to these – they go out and pray in the city square, and they bring down the elder... to rebuke the people so that they will return from their ways." "And they add six blessings in the morning prayer and in the afternoon prayer... and thus they pray twenty-four blessings." "And ne'ilah... and they are forbidden to do work all day."

**Explanation:** All the stringencies of the second set also apply here. In addition: we go out to pray in the city square (not in the beis midrash), we bring down the elder to give rebuke. We add six blessings (eighteen plus six equals twenty-four). We pray ne'ilah. Work is forbidden all day (not just during the day as in the second set).

#### **Novel points:**

1. **The foundation of going out to the street:** The Gemara says: "**We cried out in private and were not answered**" – we cried out in private (in the beis midrash) and it didn't help, let's go in public, embarrass ourselves and be humbled. The elder who usually sits in the beis midrash in holiness and purity, is brought out to the "dirty street" – this itself is a sign of humility.

2. **Only during the seven do we speak about teshuva directly:** Even after six fasts (two times three) we still haven't spoken about teshuva directly – only during the seven do we bring the elder "to rebuke the people so that they will return from their ways." We thought people had already caught the hint, but they hadn't.

3. **Six blessings:** These are the "Mi She'anah" blessings (He who answered Avraham Avinu, etc.) which are detailed in the next chapter.

#### **Closing the Stores**

**The Rambam says that we close the stores (and they lock the stores).** On Monday the store is closed all day. On Thursday we open in the evening (le'eis erev) so that one can buy food for Shabbos. On Thursday we open all day because of the honor of Shabbos.

#### **Novel points:**

- "Stores" is not the same as "work" – stores means specifically the places where one buys food for today (spices, such things as we learned in Hilchos Yom Tov). This is a broader decree than just work – even women, even non-Jewish stores, everything should not be open.

- When we open in the evening on Thursday, we do it with a change – we lower the doors a bit, like Chol HaMoed, so that one can see that it's a change from normal. We don't open the store fully.

- If there are two entrances (doors), we open only one. If there is an "istava" (a vestibule, a bench, a piece of separation that one sees from a distance that it's an open store), then he may open both doors on Thursday, because it's a concealed store anyway.

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#### **After the 13 Fasts – We Reduce Business Dealings**

**The Rambam's words:** "We reduce business dealings, building for joy (such as painting and decorating), and planting for joy (such as types of myrtle and types

of tents), and we reduce betrothals and marriages unless one has not yet fulfilled the mitzvah of procreation."

**Explanation:** We reduce business, we don't build any building for joy, we don't plant any fragrant plants/flowers, we make fewer weddings – except one who hasn't yet fulfilled procreation.

#### **Novel points:**

- "Building for joy" – the Rambam explains immediately: such as painting (decorating a beautiful house), engraving (carving beautiful designs in wood or stone). In other halachos it says that building for joy means for example building a chuppah for a groom.

- We see a principle that one may only do "essential" (necessary) things.

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#### **Marital Relations Are Forbidden During Days of Famine**

**The Rambam's words:** "And anyone who has fulfilled the mitzvah of procreation, it is forbidden for him to have marital relations during days of famine."

**Explanation:** Not only may one not arrange a match, but one may also not live with one's wife. This is not just the seven days – this goes from then until one is helped, which can last months.

#### **Novel points:**

- Someone who hasn't yet fulfilled procreation, we cannot nullify a mitzvah d'Oraisa. But someone who has already fulfilled it, he now only has a rabbinic obligation from "in the evening do not withhold your hand" or the mitzvah of onah – that is indeed forbidden.

- The Gemara's reason: It shouldn't be that all Jews are in distress and he is in his joy.

**[Digression: Dispute among poskim regarding the night of immersion]** In the Shulchan Aruch there is a dispute: the Shulchan Aruch says that on the night of immersion one does have relations even during days of famine (because it's a matter of the mitzvah of onah), and the Magen Avraham says not even on the night of immersion.

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#### **We Reduce Greetings – Talmidei Chachamim Are Like Those Rebuked by God**

**The Rambam's words:** "And we reduce greetings between one person and another. And talmidei chachamim should not greet at all, and they should be like those rebuked and excommunicated by God. And a common person who greets them, they return it to him with a soft voice and with a heavy head."

**Explanation:** Regular people should greet less, not make long pleasant conversations. Talmidei chachamim don't greet at all, and conduct themselves like those rebuked and excommunicated by God. If a common person greets them, one answers him with a soft voice and with a heavy head.

#### **Novel points:**

1. **Why are talmidei chachamim stricter?** Two explanations:

- Talmidei chachamim have responsibility for the community more than anyone else – both they begin (they lead) and they

are stricter. It's their role to bring abundance with their merit and their Torah.

- The reality is that it's a situation of "rebuked by God" – the Ribbono Shel Olam isn't sending rain, the simple meaning is they are angry with Him. A simple person doesn't understand this, and besides he will become sad. The talmid chacham knows how to be rebuked by God **without becoming sad** – that's the secret. If one becomes sad there's no way (it doesn't help).

2. **Because talmidei chachamim know why** – they understand the situation, they won't become sensitive, therefore they can conduct themselves more strictly.

3. **Common person** – the Rambam in Perush HaMishnayos explains that "common person" means someone who has derech eretz but not Torah – he's a decent person, not a bad person. He will become sensitive because he doesn't know that talmidei chachamim are now like those rebuked. Therefore we answer him – but with a soft voice and with a heavy head, not "slap him a high-five."

4. **Innovation from this:** From here we see that a talmid chacham generally may not answer with a soft voice and with a heavy head – only when it's a fast is there a permission for this. This fits with what we learned in Hilchos Deos, that a talmid chacham must be involved with the community.

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#### **Fasts of Individuals (Talmidei Chachamim) After the 13 Fasts**

**The Rambam's words:** "Talmidei chachamim return alone and fast Thursday and Monday and Thursday until Nisan of the season passes. But not the community, for we do not decree on the community more than thirteen fasts."

**Explanation:** The community no longer fasts after the 13 fasts. But talmidei chachamim continue fasting every Monday and Thursday until Nisan of the season.

#### **Novel points:**

- "Thursday" first – because the last of the seventh fast was Monday, the talmid chacham continues fasting from Thursday.

- Seemingly, if the community could indeed bear it, one could add more.

#### **The Stringency of the Fasts of Individuals**

**The Rambam's words:** "When individuals fast, they are permitted to eat at night, and they are permitted in doing work, and in washing and anointing and relations and wearing shoes, like all other fasts in which nothing is forbidden except eating and drinking."

**Explanation:** The fasts of the individuals (talmidei chachamim) are light like regular fasts – only eating and drinking are forbidden, but work, washing, anointing, relations, wearing shoes are permitted.

**Novel point:** From here we see that all other regular fasts, washing is not forbidden – only certain specific fasts (like the second three and onward) have this prohibition.

**They interrupt for Rosh Chodesh and for Purim** – on Rosh Chodesh and Purim we stop the fast. Even if Purim falls on a Thursday, we don't fast.

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#### **Nisan of the Season – Until When Do Individuals Fast?**

**The Rambam's words:** "Nisan of the season has passed – and that is when the sun reaches the beginning of the constellation of Taurus."

**Explanation:** "Nisan of the season" doesn't mean the month of Nisan according to the moon/calendar, but rather according to the season of the sun – when the sun comes to the constellation of Taurus.

#### **Novel points:**

- The season of Nisan is when the sun enters the constellation of Aries. After a whole month of that – thirty degrees (not thirty days, but thirty astronomical degrees) – we come to the constellation of Taurus. That is "Nisan of the season."

- Rain goes with the season, not with the calendar. The season of Nisan can come out two weeks before or after Nisan, depending on the leap years. Therefore we reckon with the season-territory.

- As we learned in the previous chapter: when the time has already passed that it can no longer rain, or the crops will no longer grow, "for rain at this time is only a sign of curse" – if it rains now afterward it's a sign of curse.

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#### **Places Whose Rainy Season Is Different**

**The Rambam's words:** "All these laws – are regarding what is customary in Eretz Yisrael and everything similar to it. But places whose rainy season is before the seventh of Marcheshvan or after this time – when their time arrives and rain has not fallen, individuals fast Monday and Thursday and Monday, and afterward the beis din decrees thirteen fasts. And they interrupt on Rosh Chodesh and on Chanukah and on Purim."

**Explanation:** All the laws we learned are according to Eretz Yisrael. But places where the rainy season is different, one must do things according to those seasons, with the same order.

#### **Novel points:**

- Here the Rambam mentions Chanukah as well (they interrupt on Rosh Chodesh and on Chanukah and on Purim), which he didn't mention earlier regarding Eretz Yisrael. The reason: In Eretz Yisrael, Chanukah was already during the times of the second three or the seven fasts (not during the individuals), but in other places where it begins differently, Chanukah can come out at a time when one needs to mention it.

- "Beis din" here doesn't necessarily mean the great beis din – it's the local beis din, because we're talking about different places with different seasons.

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#### **Fasts in the Diaspora – Without the Stringencies of "Like Yom Kippur"**

**The Rambam's words:** "Any fast that is decreed on the community in the diaspora, they eat at night... and its law is like other fasts, for we do not decree on the community a fast like Yom Kippur."

**Explanation:** In the diaspora, the fasts don't have the strict stringencies of "like Yom Kippur" – one doesn't need to stop

eating while it is still day, and one may eat at night. This is a special stringency only for Eretz Yisrael and only regarding rain.

### Novel points:

1. **The reason why only Eretz Yisrael:** This is connected to the parsha of "If you will surely listen," where the Torah's main promise is **"I will give the rain of your land in its time."** "Your land" means specifically Eretz Yisrael. Therefore, when it comes to rain in Eretz Yisrael, this is a

direct touch on the promise of the Torah, and therefore it requires fasts on the level of Yom Kippur itself. For a regular trouble one certainly needs to do teshuva, but it doesn't reach the level of such a communal fast.

2. **The application of the stringencies:** The stringency of "like Yom Kippur" only applies during the **13 fasts** — that is, the three first ones (second set), seven afterward — not during the first three of individuals and not during the last ones that individuals will continue.

## | Full Transcript

### Laws of Fasts Chapter 3 – The Order of Fasts for Rain

#### Introduction: Fasts for Rain and Their Connection to Rosh Hashanah

Good, dear Jews. We are here, we are learning the holy Torah, we are learning the Rambam, Laws of Fasts, Chapter 3.

So, until now we have learned about a list of various different troubles that one fasts for. The last on the list was "for rain." And in the previous chapter we learned "matar batur," when it's simply a trouble, it rains too much or too little, and then one makes a fast according to the order that we learned in a general way, Monday and Thursday and Monday, until the trouble passes.

But now we are going to learn a new type of order, which is a special order for rain. Specifically, not simply that it doesn't rain when it should rain, but rather it hasn't begun to rain at all this year. There is indeed a time after Sukkot when it should begin to rain for the year, and there develops a year of drought when it doesn't rain that year. It's a kind of abnormal year, it's not a normal year. Then there is a special order of these fasts, there is a whole, there is essentially a list of thirteen fasts that the court decrees upon the community for such a situation.

#### Fasts for Rain Are a Continuation of Rosh Hashanah

I must say an introduction, perhaps it's more like a topic of homiletics, that here one sees the essential connection of fasting with the festivals. That is, for example, we learn Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot, it says "on the festival they are judged regarding water," on Rosh Hashanah there is generally a judgment for the entire year upon the people. And what does this mean? Why are there judgments every year? What is the topic of such a yearly thing?

The simple explanation is that the essence is built on what it says in "Vehaya im shamoa." This is literally the verse in Parshat Eikev, from which verse one also learns the law of Rosh Hashanah. It says **"a land that the eyes of Hashem your God are upon it from the beginning of the year until the end of the year,"** and the next verse is **"and it shall be if you surely listen."** The meaning is, the Almighty looks from the beginning of the year, that is, that the year should have rain, that the year should be **"and I will give rain for your land in its time,"** yes, also "in its time," there is a time when it rains, and it should come **"and I will give grass in your field"** etc., everything should come from the rain. This is a yearly thing.

And for this yearly thing there is what we pray on Rosh Hashanah, perhaps Sukkot, we make the water libation etc., to arouse that it should begin to rain. Yes, it's the same thing. It

says in the Gemara that all these species appease for water, everything is built on this.

After this hasn't helped, one must do even more repentance, and then one does repentance in the month of Cheshvan, Kislev, which is the fast for rain. So Tractate Taanit, people think that it's perhaps a side matter, it's actually a continuation of Rosh Hashanah. From this, Rabbi Uri Holtzman said a lecture here that Rosh Hashanah and fasts are connected. From this one sees, here by fasts one blows the shofar just like on Rosh Hashanah. So, there is a great connection between these two things, because it's literally the same thing. A fast is when Rosh Hashanah isn't right, when the year isn't right, one must fast and make it so that it should indeed rain.

#### The Difference Between a Plague of Drought and a Year of Drought

Good, this is my... Very good. Previously we learned, if it doesn't rain for a period of time, it's called a plague of drought. So there is a plague of drought, such a small local thing, like a plague, not the entire body is sick. And afterwards there is a drought itself, which hasn't begun to rain at all. Yes, it could be. Very good. But it's something that the year, something is wrong with the year, something is wrong with the people. A year of drought.

Says the holy Rambam, behold... Let's learn further, we must thank the Jews who pour upon us generous rains of blessing, those who support our lecture, and especially our esteemed friend Rabbi Yoel Halevi, may the Almighty repay him a hundredfold.

#### Law 1: Torah Scholars Begin to Fast

Good, says Chapter 3, says the Rambam thus: **If no rains fell at all.** The new year, no rain came at all. **From the beginning of the rainy season,** from the beginning when it's the season when it should rain, from after Sukkot, the month of Cheshvan.

Ah, this is a continuation of the previous one. Previously we learned it, that if it's forty days or whatever, it already begins. But if it doesn't rain at the beginning when it should rain, it's already from the seventeenth of Cheshvan. Then when we begin to request rain, no? His calculation. That is, in the Land of Israel his calculation, but really from after Sukkot, and one begins from his calculation. But this is already ten days later, it didn't have to rain. It didn't have to rain.

So if the seventeenth of Cheshvan came, no rains fell, we should have been praying. But first one begins to request, one is more strategic here.

#### Why Torah Scholars First?

Torah scholars have indeed a tremendous... two things. First of all, Torah scholars have a great power to pray, because yes, as we learned in the Laws of Prayer, that in a place of learning, in a place where they learn, there is prayer, the Jews who learn have a better...

And secondly, I also think Torah scholars, one won't make a panic in the city. Torah scholars are those who are close to the leaders of the community, yes? The president of the Sanhedrin, or whoever is the elder, one sees later the elder is the one who leads with the fasts. He won't yet make a panic in the entire city. He begins with the Torah scholars.

The simple explanation is that it's not yet such a great trouble, it's still more scholars. That's the simple explanation. It's still more noble farmers.

No, the scholars are the individuals. It says in the Gemara that individuals fast at this point. The Rambam doesn't say. The Gemara explains, individuals means the scholars. It means those who aren't decreed upon. Rather whoever feels on his own, he sees that it's not fitting, one doesn't decree. The scholars look at this more, they know the laws.

Ah, they are aware of it. So you see here just as you said earlier that it's only a dispute among the decisors whether one should know the news. You see that the Torah scholars must keep up. It was rain, it should rain, they know. They know, they have in mind the community, they are close with the princes, with the... they are more... one cannot obligate the community, but one will see at the end also such a thing. But the Torah scholars are indeed obligated.

So they begin to fast Monday and Thursday and Monday. Like the order.

#### **All Students Are Fit for This – The Rambam's Innovation**

And the Rambam says, one doesn't have to be a great Torah scholar from this, and think who am I to be fit. No, **all the students**. Even if he is not yet a scholar, even if he is not yet a scholar himself. A student of a scholar, that is simply a student, not even the student of the main scholar, he is a student of the Torah scholars. It means all the students. Even, it doesn't have to be any law of a Torah scholar or specifically the distinguished Torah scholars. **All students are fit for this**.

Right, in the Gemara it says specifically one who is fit to be appointed a leader over the community, whoever is indeed a scholar. But the Rambam says that students, even poor students, may. Simply, if someone has nothing to do, perhaps it's a matter of fear?

Good, this is from the seventeenth of Cheshvan.

#### **Law 2: Rosh Chodesh Kislev – The Court Decrees Upon the Community**

What happens when, we will already go through an entire month, **Rosh Chodesh Kislev arrived and no rains fell**. Yes, then one goes to the entire community. **The court decrees three fasts upon the community**, one decrees a... a trio of three... everything that goes with the set of Monday and Thursday and Monday. Very good.

And this is, the fasts will be both in time and in levels of stringency of the fast. So the Rambam now explains, how hard is the fast? He says, the fasts become worse and worse. That is, it doesn't become worse. It becomes more and more hard. Yes, in different ways.

#### **The First Three Fasts – The Light Ones**

We learned the first step, the first simple fast. **And they are permitted to eat and drink at night**, one may the night before Monday, as they learned, a normal fast is actually like this.

#### **The Men of the Watch Fast With Them**

And? Who fasts? Not everyone, but... Ah, what happens? The Kohanim who are in Jerusalem, they do the service. Excuse me, the Jews... There were besides the Kohanim who did the service, and the Levites who did the singing, there were the Jews who were there to maintain the service, and what they did was to arrange.

What did the men of the watch do? No, he says that men of the watch means yes the Kohanim. Sorry, I'm wrong. I meant the men of the station. Men of the station. Men of the watch? Ah, the Kohanim were divided into watches. Each week was one group of Kohanim. So the Kohanim do the service in the Temple. The one who is in the watch, even if he doesn't do the service, soon one will see, because besides this there was a division of the father's house that was switched according to each day.

So it was divided thus, among all the Kohanim it was divided into twenty-four watches. Each watch took simply two weeks a year or whatever. And in the week, in each watch, there were other father's houses, the family, that family.

So **the men of the watch fast with them**, in that they come to service. Those who are busy with the service in the Temple, they don't fast, they need to have strength for the service, and also presumably because they eat. The Kohanim eat a portion of the offerings. This is the community's entire year. Okay, he eats only when there are individual offerings, and people bring peace offerings, and people bring meal offerings. Yes. **But the men of the watch who are in that service do not fast with them**.

#### **And All the People Enter the Synagogues**

**And all the people**, but the rest will. Here one sees from the law of the men of the watch all the time, one sees interestingly that this is the essence like the Temple. It's like one will see what they already learned essentially, they will learn next chapter more details about the... that the fast had to do with the Temple. They already saw one law that the Temple reads with a shofar and half the treasures, so one will see the next chapter also, and from this chapter it's with the Land of Israel, the Temple has the essential place of the fast, because there is indeed the place where the Almighty receives to blow the shofar, just as there one goes and one prays for the fast, for the rains.

It could be, as honor of the Temple is the entire men of the watch, even if he doesn't work today, he works basically he will have to work tomorrow or the day after, but the entire watch still he still him. Later one will see that only those who work today, it's still work, only those who must work today. Yes, something he washes the floor, something he does, which isn't worse. Why must one be called in substitutes? Okay.

**And all the people**, the rest of the folk, **enter the synagogues**, go into the study hall, the place where one prays, **they pray, cry out, and supplicate**. **As they do in all the fasts**, the previous fasts from the previous chapter.

This is apparently the topic of... He means in the synagogue as opposed to in the city square, which one will see by the later

fasts. Yes?

### **Law 3: If These Passed and Were Not Answered – The Second Three Fasts**

**If these passed and were not answered**, one goes, one begins, one puts a bit more pressure so to speak. **The court decrees three other fasts upon the community**. One begins again, but this time not Monday and Thursday and Monday. That is, apparently the next Thursday one already fasts. A fast must make it so that the situation should stop.

And this is with several intensifications. The first Monday one fasted, then Thursday, then Monday, and still no rain, so Thursday one fasts again, and again until next Thursday.

#### **Stringencies of the Second Three Fasts**

**And in these three** it's even harder than before, so what? That one doesn't eat from the night before, one may no longer eat, but also not that one **stops eating while it is still day**. Not that from the day before one may still eat, but at night one no longer eats. It's a peculiar language, **they eat and drink while it is still day**. Rather while it is still day, also not that it's permitted while it is still day.

And what else? Something else that is hard? **Pregnant and nursing women**, who on other fasts are exempt, but here...

### **Law 2 (Continued) – Second Set of Three Fasts: Laws of the Final Meal**

One is speaking presumably in a manner that there is no danger at all for the child, unlike on Yom Kippur. Right, that Yom Kippur is also the same law that even pregnant and nursing women are obligated. Unlike all other fasts which are rabbinic, that even here, they are exempt.

And the men of the watch also, already, fast part of the day, but do not complete, they don't have to finish the entire day's fast, because they have the Temple, so it's easier on them.

And the men of the father's house, the men of the watch are those for an entire week, and the week itself is divided into father's houses, father's houses, it's each one has, it appears seven father's houses. So, the men of the father's house, and they, the Rambam explains, who are engaged in the service on that day, they do not fast at all so that they can do the service in the Temple.

#### **Laws of Eating While It Is Still Day**

And the second fast, the second set of three fasts, says the Rambam, **and any fast in which they eat while it is still day**, a fast where one may only eat while it is still day, is essentially similar to what was learned, as we learned earlier regarding at night, we learned in previous chapters, that once one has already stopped eating, one eats no more. It already begins as if the next day's, regarding eating, it means thus as if the next person will be Friday, one eats already.

And when one stops while it is still day, also, this is called the final meal, yes, the meal which is from the holiday, then one stops, one eats no more.

Once he has finished eating certainly, **"if he ate and stopped and decided not to eat, he does not return and eat even if there is time left in the day"**. Even if there is still time in that day, once he has decided not to eat anymore, he may not eat anymore.

If he wants to eat, he must have in mind. Ah, no, he doesn't have to have in mind an obligation, he must on the contrary, if

he has decided not to, yes. I say it's a leniency, if he had nothing in mind, he may still eat.

#### **Stringencies of the Second Set: Work, Washing, Anointing, Marital Relations, Wearing Shoes**

Good, says the Rambam further, in the second set of three fasts there is still, he will enumerate more stringencies that exist in those days.

**"These three fasts, all the people are forbidden"**, not only from eating, but also **"from doing work during the day"**. During the day one may not work, one is indeed the entire day busy crying out. **"And at night they are permitted"**. At night one may indeed work.

**"And they are forbidden from washing the entire body in hot water, but his face, hands and feet are permitted"**. One may not wash the entire body in hot water, but one's face, hands and feet one may indeed wash.

**"And therefore"**, so that one should indeed maintain the enactment of not washing oneself entirely, **"they lock the bathhouses"**. The bathhouses, the Jewish bathhouses are closed. Yes, close the mikveh, whatever, the bathhouse. Perhaps not the mikveh, perhaps the mikveh one may.

**"And they are forbidden from anointing"**, one may not anoint oneself, as if one is engaged in all the matters of Yom Kippur. No, each one comes with a leniency. He says, one may not wash, but one's face, hands and feet one may indeed. One may not anoint oneself, **"but to remove dirt is permitted"**. It means, one may not put, I don't know, body lotion, but one may indeed put soap to wash off dirt.

**"And they are forbidden from marital relations, and from wearing shoes in the city"**. In the city, where one doesn't need so importantly, one may not go in the city. **"But on the road"**, on the way to the city, which is difficult, one can, there are, I don't know, pits, thorns, there one may indeed, **"one may wear shoes"**. One may indeed.

#### **Prayer and Crying Out**

And further, **"they pray with supplications, and cry out and supplicate like the other fasts"**. This is the second set.

#### **Discussion: What Is the Meaning of "Crying Out"?**

What if nothing has helped at all still? There is a meaning for the word "crying out." Earlier it said "they pray, cry out, supplicate." It means all three are praying, but it's more a crying out, as one knows from the High Holy Days, there are the pieces that everyone cries out. That crying out is one of the ten expressions, there is something extra about crying out.

"Fool, he's shouting!" Just as when the prayer leader says and the congregation answers, it's always thus, the prayer leader says "answer us" this and that "answer us," and the entire congregation shouts "answer us," or shouts "repentance, prayer, and charity." Crying out is when the congregation shouts.

"This is their cry." That one shouts at the congregation, by the way.

"He shouts at himself." Not necessarily, yes.

"No, say repentance, prayer, charity, what are you saying? It's not a request."

"Come on, do repentance!" It's awakening, like the shofar, yes.

But further... yes, I don't know. These are interesting expressions. I say, the Stolin Hasidim who always shout, they

hold that everything is shouting, now they must begin to shout properly. If they know indeed how to shout, let them do it now as it should be.

### Halacha 3 — Third Set: Seven Fasts

Okay. Now, we come to even more, the third is even harsher.

**"Avru elu v'lo ne'enu, beis din gozrin sheva ta'aniyos yechidos"**. This time it's already a set of seven, not three. **"Sheva ta'aniyos yechidos al hatzibur, sheini v'chamishi u'sheini, v'chamishi, u'sheini v'chamishi u'sheini"**. It continues until the salvation comes. Monday and Thursday, Monday and Thursday, and again Monday and Thursday and Monday. That means, here two weeks plus a third set of BaHaB. Right? Yes. That's the topic of seven. Four and three, yes? You understand, I'll still catch why it's seven.

#### Pregnant and Nursing Women by Seven Fasts

And the seven is back that pregnant and nursing women don't fast. Interesting.

**"U'v'elu hasheva..."** Ah, because it's already been mixed once, it's already been. Okay. **"U'v'elu hasheva..."** They're already also deeper in their pregnancy. **"U'v'elu hasheva ein uboros u'menikot mis'anos."**

#### Discussion: What's Really the Meaning?

What's really the meaning? Because it's seven, because it's harder?

"Question there they cry out, and not in the seven last ones." It seems so.

"In seven one cannot. Three..." It makes sense.

Ah, there are two versions. There's a version in the Rambam, **"U'v'elu hasheva bilvad uboros u'menikos mis'anos"**. There's a version that the previous three is reversed, not yet the pregnant and nursing women, but by the seven. That one held simply that the seven is when it becomes more harsh. Okay. It's true, the simple meaning should be so, but there the version is, it's built on the Gemara's and Braisa's that the Gemara answers.

**"Aval she'ar ta'aniyos, elu k'she'ar ta'aniyos she'ein uboros u'menikos mis'anos"**. Says the Rambam, **"Af al pi she'einan mis'anos, ein lahen rachmanus al atzman"**. They need to have strength for the children, so it's not the simple meaning that they're completely exempt from being part of the community's troubles. **"Ein mis'angin atzman b'tafnukim"**, they may not indulge themselves with good food, with good things, **"ela ochlos v'shosos k'dei kiyum havlad"**, they may eat enough as much as is needed to sustain the child.

Interesting, he didn't start any clear parameters, but we say that even one who cannot fast because he doesn't have strength, but we don't mean that now he can make great feasts. No, there's still something of a concept.

### Halacha 4 — Anshei Mishmar and Anshei Beis Av by Seven Fasts

What happens with the anshei mishmar? Let's not forget about them yet. By the seven fasts it's even harsher. The harshness here is that the anshei mishmar, previously we said that they should only fast part of the day, but then **"mis'anin u'mashlemin"**, they fast a whole day.

By anshei beis av, since they work in the Beis HaMikdash, they don't need to fast a whole day, but nevertheless **"miktzas**

**hayom"** they also fast, **"v'lo mashlemin"**, they don't need to complete it.

Says the Rambam, **"V'chol davar she'asur b'shalosh emtza'iyos"**, what we previously enumerated, washing, anointing, marital relations and wearing leather shoes, **"asur b'elu hasheva ha'achronos"**, is also forbidden in these things.

### Halacha 5 — Stringencies of the Seven Fasts: Going Out to the Street

Says the Rambam, what else is more with the seven? **"Yoseir al elu"**, they have more stringency, more than all others. The main thing, the main thing. The main thing is, we've already learned one stringency, that anshei beis av also fast a little. **"Yoseir al elu"**, they have another stringency, another stringency.

#### Taking Out and Praying in the City Street

The main thing is, **"Ad shebehen bilvad"**, we take out the distress to the street. It's not enough that we do it in the beis midrash, but it didn't help. The Gemara says, "We cried out privately and were not answered," we weren't helped. Let's go publicly, shame ourselves, humble ourselves.

**"Motzi'in u'mispallelin b'rechov ha'ir"**. In the Beis HaMikdash there's an order that we pray, it's not such a... Standing together in the street is more like a protest, like it's a cry of distress, we must go out to the streets.

**"Mispallelin b'rechov ha'ir, u'moridin es hazaken"**, we take down, we bring down the elder from his house, **"u'moridin oso l'rechovah shel ir"**. We bring him to the city square, yes, we bring the elder, **"I'hochi'ach la'am"**, to give rebuke to the people, **"k'dei sheyashuvu midarkom"**. Usually he, he sits in the beis midrash in holiness and purity, but here we bring him out to the dirty street.

We'll see what we do later, in the next section, later he'll say which sermon he gives. No, also how it goes, we put on ashes, whatever, what we do. The elder comes **"I'hochi'ach la'am"**, to rebuke the world, **"k'dei sheyashuvu midarkom"**, they should do teshuva (repentance).

#### Adding Six Blessings

And what else do we do? And we add, it's interesting, we're already holding now twice three, we're already holding in the seven, and perhaps now we need to talk about teshuva. We still don't need to do teshuva. We thought we caught the hint, we didn't catch what we're doing. Yes.

**"U'mosifin shesh brachos"**, ah, and here there's already also another order of prayers. We add six blessings in shacharis (morning prayer) and in mincha (afternoon prayer), and in the highest prayer the Rambam also spoke about this. He said what the six blessings are. We'll go learn it, I think, in the next chapter. In chapter... what are the prayers of "Mi she'anah"? "Mi she'anah l'Avraham avinu" and such things. Ah, he'll say, yes. Each one, "Mi she'anah"... yes. Yes. Especially in shacharis and in mincha.

**"V'nimtza mispallelin arba v'esrim brachos"**, in total between three times six, four times ne'ilah. Twenty-four means more than every week. Every day we pray eighteen blessings. But eighteen from nine is six. But anyway, eighteen plus six is twenty-four. Yes.

#### Ne'ilah and Work

"U'ne'ilah mis'anin", also, we lock up the stores. But on Monday, the whole day the store is locked. That means, previously we already learned that one may not work. Previously they also learned "V'chol ha'am miskhansin l'batei knesses mispallelin v'zo'akin u'mischanenin".

### The Matter of Locking Stores – Difference Between Monday and Thursday

#### Speaker 1:

Four you mean. Twenty-four means more than every week. Every day one needs eighteen blessings. But eighteen day to needs six. But anyway, eighteen plus six is twenty-four. That's what I mean.

Yes, **v'no'alin es hachanuyos**. Also, we lock up the stores. But on Monday... the whole day the store is locked. That means, previously we already learned that one may not work. Previously they also learned **v'chol ha'am nichnasim l'beis haknesses mispallim v'zo'akim u'mischananim**. That means, we also learned that one may **asur b'melacha**.

It could be that here all that **hachanuyos** means even the women don't work, or similar, even non-Jews, even such a thing, the store shouldn't be open. I think that **chanuyos** is not the same thing as **melacha**. **Chanuyos** is there where the food lies that one goes to buy for today. It's something... because you see, **u'v'sheini matin l'eis erev u'foschin**, we open in the evening, one needs food to break the fast. The **chanus** sells, we learned what a **chanus** sells in hilchos yom tov, **tavlinim**, such things that the **chanus** sells. So that's what we do.

But we don't do it for the sake of display, we lower the gates of the store a bit. Like chol hamoed (intermediate days of festivals) also gave us such a thing, we don't open the store fully. So that one should see that there's a change, **poschim es hachanus**, so that one should have what to buy to eat. But **b'chamishi, poschim kol hayom mipnei kvod Shabbos**, on Thursday we open yes the proper building buying for honor of Shabbos.

**If the store has two entrances, open one and lock one.** It means even **b'chamishi**. Yes. Apparently. If one can make an atzba... there's a larger entrance. **Atzba** means a, he says, it means a bench, and they learned the same halacha regarding all of chol hamoed. **Atzba** means a bench, some building, some piece of separation. Yes, something that one sees strongly from the distance that there's an open store. Then, **im yesh lachanus atzba lefaneha, pose'ach k'darko b'chamishi v'eino choshesh**, he may open both doors. Right, because it's anyway more so privately, it's a concealed store. Yes.

### The Matter of Reducing Business – The Third Level

What happens with the wedding celebrations? Seven fasts. It didn't help at all. What do we do? But yes, and they were not answered. We don't give up yet. We declare three weeks. A boycott. Such a boycott. No, we declare such a... It's the greater distress, and it's the laws of mourning.

**Mema'atin b'masa u'matan**, we do less business. **U'v'vinyan shel simcha**, we don't build a **binyan shel simcha**. I think in other laws it says **binyan shel simcha** means for example building a wedding canopy for a groom and similar. Ah, no, the Rambam immediately said **k'gon tziyur**, painting, painting a beautiful house, painting beautiful things on the house, or **v'ki'ur** also means carving in the wood or in

the... beautiful carvings. **U'v'neti'ah shel simcha, k'gon minei hadas u'minei ahalim**, we don't plant any spices, flowers, yes.

**U'mema'atin b'erusin v'nisu'in, ela im ken lo kiyem mitzvas pirya v'rivya**. If someone has not yet fulfilled **mitzvas pirya v'rivya** (commandment to be fruitful and multiply), he still has the mitzvah upon himself, he may yes. Yes. We see here that one may only do essential things, yes? **Mema'atin b'masa u'matan**. It's such an aspect. Already.

### The Matter of Marital Relations Being Forbidden in Days of Famine

Says the Rambam, **v'chol mi shekiyem mitzvas pirya v'rivya**, not only may one not arrange a match now, but one also may not live with his wife. Not only **asur b'tashmish hamitah** is only the seven days. Here it's from then until we're helped, months sometimes, something will last, so **asur lo l'shamesh mitaso b'yemei ra'avon**. Someone who has not yet fulfilled **mitzvas pirya v'rivya**, we cannot nullify a mitzvah, but someone who has already fulfilled it, he only has now the rabbinic obligation of **la'erev al tanach yadecha**, or the mitzvah of **onah**, yes, that is yes, **asur lo l'shamesh mitaso b'yemei ra'avon**. I think the Gemara says that it shouldn't be that all Jews are in distress and he is in his joy.

### Digression: Dispute of Poskim Regarding Night of Immersion

I see that in Shulchan Aruch there's a dispute among the poskim whether one goes to the mikveh at all, whether there's a concept of **mitzvas onah**. Shulchan Aruch says that on the night of immersion one does yes have marital relations even in days of famine, and the Magen Avraham says even not on the night of immersion. Okay, one should do what one can. Yes, one should try to be at the same time. Already, amen.

### The Matter of Reducing Greetings – Torah Scholars Like Those Rebuked by God

**U'mema'atin b'she'ilas shalom bein adam l'chavero**, we ask less, we don't make idle conversation, we don't greet people. **V'talmidei chachamim lo yish'alu shalom. Talmidei chachamim** (Torah scholars), simply between person and his fellow one should greet, but not make long nice conversations. **Talmidei chachamim** who know why, they know why, they understand the situation, they won't become sensitive, **lo yish'alu shalom**, they don't greet at all, and they should conduct themselves **k'nezufim v'chiniduyim lamakom** (like those rebuked and excommunicated by God).

### Discussion: Why Are Torah Scholars Harsher?

#### Speaker 2:

It's very interesting, we see here that the **talmidei chachamim** must have responsibility for the community more than anyone else, both they begin and also that they're harsher, and they must also go **k'nezufim v'niduyim lamakom**, because it's their role to bring abundance with their merit, with their Torah.

#### Speaker 1:

I thought that the reality is that this is a state of **nezufim lamakom**. The Almighty doesn't send rain, the simple meaning is they're angry with Him, right? They're somewhat angry here. But what? A simple person doesn't understand, he doesn't understand. And besides that he'll become sad. The **talmid chacham** knows how to be **nazuf lamakom** without

becoming sad. That's the secret. If one becomes sad there's no way. So naturally he conducts himself seriously.

#### Speaker 2:

What you said is also true, probably because he's responsible a bit.

#### Speaker 1:

Yes.

#### The Matter of an Am Ha'aretz Who Greeted Them

**V'am ha'aretz shenasan lahem shalom**, an **am ha'aretz** (unlearned person) who greeted a **talmid chacham**, and he'll become... He brings that the Rambam in Perush HaMishnayos says, **am ha'aretz** means someone who has derech erez (proper conduct) but not Torah. He's a decent person, not a bad person. So he'll become very sensitive, because he doesn't know what the **talmidei chachamim** are now **k'nezufim**. So **machzirin lo**, one should answer him, but it's enough to fulfill **b'safa rafa** (with a soft voice). It's enough that you do it **b'safa rafa u'v'choved rosh** (with a soft voice and with gravity). Don't slap him a high-five, but such a... That means, he should understand that on one hand it's a sad day, we're not angry with him, he says we're not angry with him, but he answers him a bit more quietly than normal. That's the secret. Yes, very good.

#### Innovation: A Torah Scholar Generally May Not Answer With a Soft Voice

From here we see that a **talmid chacham** generally may not answer **b'safa rafa u'v'choved rosh**, but when it's a fast, then there's a permission for this. They already learned hilchos deos (laws of character traits), that it must be a derech hamitzvah (way of the commandment). No, they learned regarding a **talmid chacham**, that on one hand he'll be mixed with the community, but also not too much. **Lo yisracheh harbeh** (he shouldn't distance himself greatly). The measure, from this one needs the understanding of a **talmid chacham** to know the measure.

#### The Matter of Individual Fasts – Torah Scholars After the 13 Fasts

And afterwards, fasting. Fasting, but very interesting. That means, here you also see that there's a measure how much one can fast. Fasting essentially, now is the greatest time of trouble, surely one should fast. No, we don't fast anymore, the community doesn't fast anymore.

But **talmidei chachamim**, **talmidei chachamim chozrim l'vadam u'mis'anin chamishi u'sheini v'chamishi ad sheyetze Nisan shel tekufa**. **Chamishi** means because we finished **b'sheini**, the last seventh fast was **sheini**. So the **talmid chacham**, he continues fasting. Where, so the **talmid chacham** fasts off a whole... **ad sheyetze Nisan shel tekufa**, until it becomes the season of the month of Nisan. **Aval lo hatzibur**. Why? **She'ein gozrin al hatzibur bishvil geshamim shelo yardu yoser mishlosh esreh ta'aniyos**. On the community one cannot place more than thirteen fasts. Simply because one cannot, the community cannot recover from it afterwards. But apparently if one can yes recover from it.

#### The Stringency of Individual Fasts

Says the Rambam further, what's the law when the **talmidei chachamim** continue with their fasts? How harsh are those fasts? Says the Rambam thus, **k'shemis'anin hayechidim**, when the individuals, the **talmidei chachamim**, are fasting

**ad sheyetze Nisan, mutarin le'echol balaylah**, they may yes eat at night, **u'mutarin ba'asiyas melacha**, they're yes permitted to do work, **u'v'rechitza**, which we learned one may not do in the second seven and further, **u'v'rechitza v'sicha v'tashmish u'ne'ilas hasandal, k'she'ar kol hata'aniyos she'ein asur bahen ela achila u'shtiya**. We see from here that all other fasts are not forbidden washing. I think that only the poskim discuss certain fasts where washing is forbidden.

**U'mafsikin al roshei chodashim v'al Purim**. But on Rosh Chodesh and Purim, then we stop the fast. This is the Purim season, we're already holding by Purim. Even if it's Monday Thursday, we rejoice yes. I mean, he doesn't fast on Purim. If Purim fell on a Thursday, in such a kind of year, he makes anyway such a Purim, he doesn't fast on Purim. Already.

#### The Matter of "Nisan of the Season" – Until When Do Individuals Fast?

What is after Nisan? Says the Rambam, **yatza Nisan shel tekufa**. This is there a season of Nisan? No, he's explaining. There's a Nisan of the moon that we make according to the calendar or according to sanctification of the month. It has nothing to do with the season. But the season **shel tekufa** means a month after the true season. **V'hu k'shetagia hashemesh l'schilas mazal shor**. You remember, they learned from the month the month, right? The season of Nisan is when the sun enters the constellation of Aries. Now, after a whole month from that, thirty degrees truly, not thirty days, but after thirty degrees from that it comes to the constellation of Taurus. That's called **Nisan shel tekufa**, the aspect of Nisan from the season, not from the year. The year can be before that, we learned. The season of Nisan can come out two weeks before and after Nisan, whatever, it depends according to the leap years, such things.

The rain goes with the season, that's the thing. So we calculate with the Rosh Chodesh territory. It's simple, but right? We calculate with the things, because the rain doesn't go with the... like we learned in the previous chapter, that when it's already passed the time, that it can no longer rain, or the crops will no longer grow now anyway, **she'ein hageshamim bazman hazeh ela siman klala**. If it rains now after that, it's unfortunately a sign of curse. Ah, I needed it, you didn't give it to me, now you give me rain. **Aval yardu kol ikar mischlas hashanah**.

#### The Matter of Places Whose Rain Season Is Different

Says the Rambam further, **kol elu hahalachos shelamadnu ad ata shehaseder masai yardu geshamim v'chadomeh, b'midbar hamorim b'Eretz Yisrael v'chol hadomeh lah**, the lands around Eretz Yisrael. **Aval mekomos she'onas hageshamim shelahem kodem shiva b'Marcheshvan o achar zman zeh**, places where the season is different, then one must do the things according to those seasons. **K'shehigi'a zmanam v'lo yardu geshamim, hayechidim mis'anin sheini v'chamishi u'sheini**, and afterwards it will be the **talmidei chachamim**, afterwards will be the three, and then seven. **U'mafsikin b'roshei chodashim u'v'Chanukah u'v'Purim**. That means, we stop like... He didn't say the law previously, but I think he said in the laws. Chanukah he didn't mention, he said Rosh Chodesh and Purim. Because we already had... Chanukah was still in the times of the second

three, or the seven. **V'shohin achar ken k'mo shiva yamim**, that means, they wait seven days after the first three fasts, **im lo yardu geshamim, beis din gozrin al hatzibur shlosh esreh ta'aniyos**. Like we saw previously, that here three fasts are in the month of Kislev. He says, if it starts differently, you'll take the whole order according to the order of your place.

And you see here also that **beit din**, here doesn't mean the **beit din hagadol** as you had thought,

#### **Fasts in Chutz La'aretz – The Distinction Between Eretz Yisrael and Chutz La'aretz**

that you see that it's in other distant places.

So, the Rambam says further, **"kol ta'anit shegozrin al hatzibur b'chutz la'aretz, ochlin bo balaylah"**. All these fasts of chutz la'aretz, **"ochlin bo balaylah"**. The stringencies that we learned that here when from while it is still day one may no longer eat, in Eretz Yisrael by the seven, by the three and seven, or only by the seven? I think it's already by the second, no? Ah, by the second it said at night, and afterwards it said even from while it is still day after eating. Okay.

Yes, **"ochlin bo balaylah. V'dino k'sha'ar ta'anit"**. Why? **"She'ein gozrin al hatzibur ta'anit k'ein tzom Yom HaKippurim"**, that one must stop from while it is still day is a special stringency only for Eretz Yisrael, **"u'viglal hamatar"**. Only in Eretz Yisrael does one do it, only by a decree for rain.

#### **The Reason for the Stringency in Eretz Yisrael**

Why is this the matter? He says, because this has to do with the portion of **"v'haya im shamo'a"**. The main promise of the

Torah is, in Eretz Yisrael will come **"matar artzechem b'ito"**. So for this comes specifically exactly like Yom Kippur, the exact fasts.

Just any trouble... **"Artzechem"** means Eretz Yisrael, yes, certainly, **"artzechem"** of the Torah. For just any trouble one must do teshuvah, certainly, but it's not the level of a public fast, that means not a public fast.

And also one does it only by **"otan yud-ches ta'aniyot shehen shalosh rishonot v'sheva achareihein v'sheva achareihein"**, not the first three and not the last ones that the individuals will continue.

#### **Summary of Chapter 3 – The Order of the Season and Times of the Fast**

**"Ad kan perek gimmel"**, where we learned the order of the season, the season from Cheshvan basically until Nisan, when then if it doesn't rain one does the whole order, the fasts that have to do with the times. Very good, the times of the fast, the winter.

#### **The Season of Winter and the Tractate of Ta'anit**

It was interesting, we also learned, there is no yom tov in the Torah in this season, right? In the Torah there are yamim tovim... Nisan and afterwards the seventh month Tishrei. In between Tishrei and Nisan there is no yom tov from the Torah, only Chanukah, Purim, Rosh Chodesh that we see here.

But what is there, as if from the Torah according to you, I mean not, the Rambam said that it's built on you **"v'tzar hatzorer etchem"**, there are fasts. Ta'anit is the tractate of the winter. Whoever wants to know which tractate is fitting to learn a whole winter, Tractate Ta'anit.

Until here chapter 3.