



## Prayers Answered

Over the course of the *masechet Taanit* we have been learning about the different fasts that were observed due to *atzirat geshemim* – draught. The *Mishnah* (3:9) discusses what would happen if they were in the middle of a fast and it began to rain. According to the first opinion, whether they complete the fast depends on whether it rained prior to sunrise. *R' Eliezer* however maintains that if it rained prior to midday, they would not complete the fast. After midday however, they would. The *Mishnah* concludes with an incident where *R' Tarfon* ruled like *R' Eliezer* and the remainder of the day was treated like a *yom tov*.

The *Rosh* (1:6) however cites the *Raavad* that asks that this *Mishnah* appears to contradict the following *Beraitah* (*Taanit* 11b). The *Beraitah* teaches that if someone was fasting for a sick person and they recovered during the fast, or fasted for some other reason and it passed, the fast is nonetheless completed. The *Raavad* answers that once it has rained sufficiently, they have all they need and there is no need for further fasting. For any other *tzara* there is still a concern that it will return.

The *Raavad's* answer works with the opinion of the *Meira* who understands that they would only stop fasting if it rained the amount that was required prior to midday. That amount is if it penetrated one *tephach* deep into dry ground or three *tephachim* deep into worked soil.

The *Rosh* however finds the *Raavad's* answer insufficient. That is because the *Rosh* maintains that they would stop fasting even if it only just started raining before midday, even if had not yet sufficiently rained.

They would nonetheless recite *hallel* and celebrate that they *tefillot* have been answered.<sup>1</sup> If the confidence alone is enough, then one could say the same for the other *tzarot* as well. The *Rosh* therefore differentiates between our *Mishnah* that relates to an issue facing the *tzibbur* and the crises of an individual that is the focus of the *beraita*. The *tzibur* are required to sing *hallel* with a full stomach, while an individual must complete their fast. Indeed, the *Rosh* cites the *Rambam* who does not differentiate between the *atzirat geshemim* and any other *tzara* that affects the *tzibur* when bringing the ruling in our *Mishnah*.

Note that the *Rosh* understands that even if the sick person died during the fast, it would nonetheless need to be completed – the *neder* would need to be fulfilled. The *Tifferet Yisrael* explains, based on his understanding of *Rashi*, that otherwise it would appear that one is stipulating with *Hashem* that they will only fast on their own terms – if the *tefillot* are answered. He explains that continuing the fast is like the requirement to bless *Hashem* for both the good and, what appears to us, as the bad.

The *Ramban* (*Taanit* 11b) also differentiates between a public and private fast. Yet he explains that due the strain on the *tzibur* they had in mind from the outset that the fast would end if it rained prior to midday. The *Tifferet Yisrael* understands that it is only in the context of the *tzibbur* that we can say “*lev beit din matne aleihem*” – that such an assumed stipulation is applied.

*Yisrael Bankier*

<sup>1</sup> The *Shulchan Aruch* (575:11) begins by citing the amount of rain required for them to stop fasting, which is the amount cited by the *Meiri*. Yet continues that if it simply started to rain before midday then they would stop fasting and celebrate. This is also the language of the *Tur*. The *Mishnah Berurah* understands that the *Shulchan Aruch* is ruling like the *Rosh*. The

*Aruch HaShulchan* (575:13) however finds the simple reading of the *Shulchan Aruch* difficult considering that there is a minimum amount of rain required to put an end to the series of fast. Perhaps, based on the *Rosh* above, if it begins to rain, specifically on a public fast, there is an added confidence that their *tefillot* have been answer.

## Revision Questions

תענית ב' ר' – ג' ט'

- Who were exempt from the first three fast days? (ב' ר')
- Was anyone exempt from the second set of fast days? (ב' ר')
- What other difference is mentioned between the *anshei mishmar* and *anshei beit av*? (ב' ז')
- What was prohibited for the *anshei mishmar* until Thursday and why? (ב' ז')
- With respect to a day mentioned in the *megillat ha'ta'anit* as being prohibited from fasting, are the days prior to and proceeding it prohibited from fasting as well? (ב' ח')
- On which day of the week do we not begin the set of fast days and why? (ב' ט')
- On which days during the year do we not begin the set of fast days and why? (ב' י')
- What is the law where a fast day (out of a set of already decreed fast days) coincides with one of the days described in the previous question? (ב' י')
- Meteorologically, what is an indication of a *betzoret*? (ג' א')
- How do we respond differently to the phenomenon described in the previous question as apposed to the way we respond to the lack of rain (as described through the first two *perakim*)? (ג' א')
- Does any rainfall satisfy that the community need not fast? (ג' ב')
- If one city is denied rain, how do the surrounding cities respond? (Include both opinions) (ג' ג')
- What other incident affecting a single city elicits the same response from the surrounding cities? (ג' ד')
- For what six incidents affecting one city, do all the cities throughout Israel react as if it is affecting them? (ג' ה')
- What occurred in *Ashkelon* that caused the *Zkeinim* to institute a fast day in *Yerushalaim*? (ג' ו')
- On which incidents are we *matriyah* even on *Shabbat*? (ג' ז')
- On any negative occurrence we are *matriyah* – what is the single exception? (ג' ח')
- What is the incident including *Choni HaMe'agel*? (ג' ט')
- Does everyone continue fasting if rain fell during the fast day? (ג' ט')

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## Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
10 September כ"ד אלול	11 September כ"ה אלול	12 September כ"ו אלול	13 September כ"ז אלול	14 September כ"ח אלול	15 September כ"ט אלול	16 September א' תשרי
Taanit 4:1-2	Taanit 4:3-4	Taanit 4:5-6	Taanit 4:7-8	Megilah 1:1-2	Megilah 1:3-4	Megilah 1:5-6

