

ISSUE

333



A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא **חידוש** Chiddush

פרשת מקץ
כסלו תשפ"ד

YARCHEI KALLAH 5784

Kollel's annual Yarchei Kallah, Summer Learning Program 5784 starts in 10 days.

Our guest speaker this year is returning scholar and world-renowned speaker, **Rabbi Ari Shishler** who will be joined by the Kollel Rabbis and community Rabbis to present a full program of Shiurim and presentations to stimulate your minds and spark your interest.

Many topics this year will focus on aspects of the current Gaza War and global antisemitism.

Teves 13-20, December 25-Jan 1 at the Goldhirsch Hall. The full schedule will be available shortly with all topics and speakers.

www.jewishlearning.com.au

YESHIVAS KAYITZ

Kollel will once again be running a Yeshivas Kayitz learning program for boys going into grades 5-9. The program will run in the last full week of school holidays, with Chassidus, Davening and Shiurim by the Kollel Rabbis.

Stay tuned for details and booking information.

WEEKLY SHIURIM

After a break for Chanukah, our nightly Shiurim will resume this week. Join us every night of the week on Zoom for different Shiurim;

Details of all of the Shiurim and links for the Zoom broadcast can be found on our website.

www.KollelMenachem.com.au



In this Edition

Resolving the Paradox of our Lives **P.1**

Asarah B'Teves on Friday **P.2**

Resolving the Paradox of our Lives

When Pharaoh had his dreams, he sought the council of his advisors and wisemen. They offered explanations that made sense, explaining that the seven good cows and ears of grain meant that Pharaoh would father seven daughters. The seven bad cows and ears of grain indicated that he would bury seven daughters.

Yet the Torah says that "they could not interpret the (the dreams) for Pharaoh". Rashi explains that whilst they were able to interpret the dreams, their interpretations did not satisfy Pharaoh.

Yosef explained that the seven good cows and seven good ears represented seven years of plenty in Egypt. They would be followed and consumed by the seven bad cows and seven bad ears, representing the seven years of famine that would follow. On completing his interpretation, Yosef then advised Pharaoh to store grain during the years of plenty, to ensure provisions for the years of hunger. On hearing this, the Torah tells us that the interpretation was good in Pharaoh's eyes and he praised his wisdom.

We can ask a number of questions on this account;

Yosef's interpretation seems straight forward, so why did the wisemen of Egypt not see it? What was the wisdom in Yosef's interpretation that led Pharaoh to praise him? And why after giving his interpretation, did Yosef offer Pharaoh advice on what to do?

The Alter Rebbe explains that the enigma of a dream that makes it so hard to understand, is the existence of paradox. When we are awake, our rationale mind cannot accept or tolerate paradox, but in a dream, contradictions can co-exist. A true dream-interpreter is one who is able to interpret and resolve the contradiction. With this we can understand Yosef's mastery.

In Pharaoh's dream, he saw the seven good cows. He also saw the seven bad cows that swallowed up the good cows. But there was one detail in the dream that didn't make sense. Before swallowing the good cows, the seven bad cows stood alongside the good cows, suggesting that at one point, the two coexisted.

If the good cows represented years of plenty and the bad cows, the years of famine, how could the two coexist? How could there simultaneously be plenty

and famine together? Since they could not explain this illusive paradox, the wisemen had to offer different explanations where no contradiction existed.

Yosef was able to explain the paradox and weave the two opposites together. His advice to collect grain during the years of plenty, was not just advice. It was part of the interpretation. By collecting grain during the years of plenty, there could be an abundance of grain even during the first years of the famine. This is the meaning of the seven good cows and seven lean cows standing side-by-side.

The contradiction in the dream was not a contradiction at all. It was part of the prophesy and was the key to the survival of Egypt and the surrounding lands in the years of famine. Yosef was able to see the underlying oneness that was hidden within the contradiction. This is why Pharaoh praised Yosef and why he only did so after Yosef's advice.

Pharaoh's dreams also carry a spiritual message. The seven good cows represent our G-dly aspirations and the seven emotions of the G-dly soul. The seven lean cows represent our worldly pursuits that come from the seven emotions of the animalistic soul, which threaten to swallow up our G-dly experience. How can these two opposites coexist side-by-side?

The power of Yosef is the ability to synthesise the two— that both the physical and spiritual parts of our lives and the two souls within us; our spiritual involvement in prayer and Torah study and our physical involvement in business etc. are not meant to be contradictory. They are both part of one common Divine purpose.

The two sets of cows standing side-by-side represented Yosef's own life. Yosef was fully investment in the world as a businessman, running the global economy. At the same time, he maintained an absolute connection to Hashem. His "business" was a spiritual service of gathering sparks and elevating the world.

In Tehillim, every Jew is likened to Yosef. We all have the ability to interpret dreams, by synthesising the tensions in our lives between the material and the spiritual, between our body and our soul.

Asarah B'Teves on a Friday - Part 1

When does the fast end and what if one brings in Shabbos early?

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

This year, if Moshiach has not yet arrived, the fast of Asarah B'Teves will fall out on Erev Shabbos. It is the only public fast that can fall out on Erev Shabbos based on our fixed calendar. The Rishonim and Poskim discuss the question of when one concludes the fast in such a Kvius and what happens when one davens Maariv and brings in Shabbos early.

Background

The Gemara¹ raises the following question: if Torah students are fasting on Erev Shabbos, what is the law about completing the fast?

In the discussion, the Gemara quotes a Braisa that one year, Tisha B'av fell on Erev Shabbos² and Rabbi Akiva ate a boiled egg in the afternoon. He did so, not because he needed to eat, but in order to show the Halacha that we do not complete the fast on Erev Shabbos³. The reason is so as not to enter Shabbos in a state of affliction.

Rabbi Yossi argues with Rabbi Akiva, teaching that on Erev Shabbos we do complete the fast – מתענה ומשלים. Ulla concludes that the Halacha follows the view of Rabbi Yossi. The Gemara is discussing personal fasts and communal fasts, as evidenced from the Braisa citing an example of Tisha B'av.

It would seem clear from this that when a fast falls on Erev Shabbos, we have to conclude the fast which means fasting until nightfall. But we will see that even according to the conclusion of the Gemara, this is not necessarily so.

Do we have to conclude the fast

Tosfos explain that the ruling of Ulla is only “if a person wishes to conclude their fast” (אם) (ירצה), but not that it is not necessary to do so. They understand this based on the initial question of the Gemara which asked whether one is allowed to complete the fast (not whether one *must* complete the fast)⁴.

The Mordechai⁵ and other Rishonim relate that once when Asarah B'Teves fell on Erev Shabbos, the great Baal HaTosfos Rabbeinu Yitzchak (Ri) tasted from the Shabbos food before going to Shule (while it was still light). He did this so that he would not enter Shabbos in a state of affliction.

This supports the interpretation of Tosfos that the conclusion of the Gemara that one

“fasts and completes” is optional and that it is actually preferable not to complete the fast at all. The view of Rabbeinu Yitzchak is not brought in the Halachic codes at all.

The Rosh – fast until nightfall

The Rosh writes that since 1) our sages teach that any fast which does not continue to the end of the day is not considered a fast and 2) one is allowed to fast into Shabbos if they wish to, they must continue to fast until nightfall.

Only if they made an express stipulation (prior to accepting the fast upon themselves) that they can eat earlier after the community has davened, may they end the fast before nightfall.

Maharam – fast until after Maariv

The Maharam (Rabbeinu Meir M'Rottenburg) rules that if the community daven Kabbolas Shabbos and Maariv and return home while it is still light, they may eat immediately as they have accepted Shabbos already⁶.

The Maharam obligates one to complete the fast. His rationale is that after one has davened Kabbolas Shabbos and accepted Shabbos, the day has concluded and it is considered as having concluded the fast. This applies when one davens any time after Plag Hamincha⁷.

The Mishna Berura⁸ writes that according to this opinion, if they have davened early, it is not appropriate to continue fasting and to wait until Tzeis Hakochovim to eat.

The Alter Rebbe goes a step further, explaining that according to this opinion, once one has accepted Shabbos through davening, it is forbidden to continue fasting into Shabbos and that they must make Kiddush and eat immediately, since it is forbidden to fast on Shabbos⁹.

Psak Halacha

The Tur brings both opinions of the Rosh and Maharam but does not issue a ruling.

In Shulchan Aruch¹⁰, the Mechaber rules that if one accepted on themselves to fast on Erev Shabbos, they must fast until nightfall, unless they made a stipulation. This follows the stricter opinion of the Rosh that davening Maariv early does not help.

The Ram"o brings the opinion of the Maharam that one does not need to fast until nightfall and may eat after davening Kabbolas Shabbos early.

The Ram"o issues a ruling that distinguishes between a personal and communal fast.

On a Taanis Yachid one does not complete the fast and can eat after Maariv, following the Maharam. It is still preferable to specify this at the time of accepting the fast to be Yotzai according to the Rosh as well. However, for a Taanis Tzibbur – a public fast day – we follow the stricter opinion and must fast until nightfall.

The ruling of the Ram"o is based on a Teshuvah of the Mahari"l¹¹. The Mahari"l also quotes the opinions of the Rosh and Maharam. He concludes that for a personal fast one can be lenient, however he did not want to rule leniently for a public fast.

(The public fast that he was referring to was a local communal fast on the 43rd day of the Omer decreed because of a Gezeira).

The Acharonim, including the Magen Avraham, Alter Rebbe and Mishna Berura, all adopt the distinction of the Ram"o. The Alter Rebbe explains the rationale for this ruling;

The obligation to complete a private fast is based on one's own acceptance of the fast. Therefore, we follow the lenient opinion that one has completed the fast after Maariv.

However, a public fast, it is an obligation to complete the fast and therefore we follow the stricter opinion. Making a stipulation does not work for a communal fast as it is not his 'own fast' to decide¹².

1. Eiruvim 40b

2. Based on our fixed calendar this cannot occur. That year, the month of Tammuz was a full month of 30 days

3. See Tosfos who quotes Rabbeinu Chananel that we have a tradition that Rabbi Akiva was sick and the doctors instructed him to eat an egg. Rabbi Yehuda was unaware of this and assumed that it was to teach the Halacha.

4. Based on this understanding, Rabbi Yehuda who argues with Rabbi Yossi holds that it is forbidden to conclude the fast.

6. This only applies on Erev Shabbos when davening early brings Kedusha of Shabbos. During the week davening Maariv early does not allow one to finish the fast.

7. The Tashbetz writes that even the Maharam was not so lenient and only permitted one to eat close to Shkiya.

8. Biur Halacha

9. Tehillah Ledovid questions where the Alter Rebbe derives this from

10. OC 249:4

11. 33

12. Magen Avraham,