



## Overview

## Halacha Highlight

### Siman 568 Seif 7:

If the *yahrtzeit* of a parent is in Adar, on the leap year he fasts in the second Adar. Some maintain that he fasts during the first Adar unless they died in Adar Sheni in a leap year so that the *yahrtzeit* is observed in Adar Sheni and the custom is to fast in the Adar Rishon. However, some are stringent to fast on both.

- ❖ Shulchan Aruch maintains that *stam Adar* is Adar Sheni whereas the dissenting opinion maintains that it is Adar Rishon and we also have the principle that we do not push off *mitzvos*. (M.B. 41)
- ❖ Magen Avrohom asserts that when one vows to fast on his father's *yahrtzeit* he must fast in both months but if he is merely following the custom to fast on a father's *yahrtzeit* he must do whatever he did the first year the *yahrtzeit* fell in a leap year. If the person consults in the first year what he should do, he should be instructed to fast both days but if this is difficult he should fast in the 1<sup>st</sup> Adar. The other mourners are not obligated to give him more than one *kaddish*. Maharshah writes that one who does not know the date of his parent's *yahrtzeit* he should choose a day to observe it. If a parent died on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Rosh Chodesh of Adar Sheni (i.e., 30 Adar Rishon), in a regular year he should fast on the 1<sup>st</sup> of Adar rather than on the 29<sup>th</sup> of Adar. If a parent dies on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Rosh Chodesh Kislev (i.e., 30 Marcheshvan) and the following year Marcheshvan has only 29 days it is not clear which day he should fast. Magen Avrohom concludes that if in the year of the 1<sup>st</sup> *yahrtzeit* Marcheshvan has only 29 days he should fast on the 29<sup>th</sup> of Marcheshvan but if the 1<sup>st</sup> year Marcheshvan has 30 days it has been established that he fasts on Rosh Chodesh and thus in subsequent years he should fast on Rosh Chodesh. (M.B. 42)

### Siman 568 Seif 8:

One fasts on the day his father passed away rather than on the day he was buried.

- ❖ Even in the 1<sup>st</sup> year where the mourning is calculated from burial the *yahrtzeit* will correspond to the

### Fasting on a *yahrtzeit*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 568 Seif 7

כשארע יום שמת אביו או אמו באדר

**When the day that one's father or mother dies falls in Adar**

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ז') discusses the timing of fasting on a *yahrtzeit* during a leap year when there are two months called Adar. Shulchan Aruch rules that one should fast in Adar Sheni whereas the Rema cites authorities who maintain that one should fast on Adar Rishon and then notes that there are authorities who are stringent and fast on both of them. Mishnah Berurah (סי"ק מ"ב) also writes that if someone who faces this circumstance asks what he should do, he should be advised to fast during both months.

There are three reasons given for fasting on a *yahrtzeit*. The first is that the day of a parent's *yahrtzeit* is a day of bad *mazal* for the deceased's children. Others explain that on the day of a *yahrtzeit* the deceased is subjected to judgment and when the children fast it provides a degree of atonement for the parent. A third approach is that fasting encourages the children to repent and reflect on their ways and doing so elevates the souls of the deceased.

One who is accustomed to fast on a *yahrtzeit* is not obligated to commit to fast during *mincha* on the day before since fasting on a *yahrtzeit* is a long standing custom but it is, nevertheless, appropriate for one to commit to fast during *mincha* the day before. Many authorities maintain that nowadays one should not fast on a *yahrtzeit* and the primary reason given is that our generation is weak and fasting will limit the Torah that one will be able to study on that day (פסקי תשובות אות ז'). Rav Akiva Eiger (חוט המשולש החדש עמי רמ"א) instructed his children not to fast on his *yahrtzeit* and instead asked them to spend the entire day engaged in Torah study or at least hire others who will study for the entire day.

day of death rather than the day of burial. If there is a delay of two or three days between death and burial there is a dispute whether the 1<sup>st</sup> *yahrtzeit* corresponds to the day of death or burial. (M.B. 44)