The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תקע"ה סעיף ח'-י"ג

Overview

Siman 575 Seif 8:

The above procedure applies when rain does not fall altogether but if rain fell and the herbs sprouted but then began to dry, they fast and cry out until rain falls or until the sprouts have dried. Similarly, if Pesach or around that time arrives which is the time for the trees in Eretz Yisroel to blossom and rain hasn't fallen, they fast and cry until rain sufficient for trees falls or until the time passes altogether. Similarly, if Sukkos arrives and sufficient rain has not fallen to fill the various water reservoirs, they fast until sufficient rain falls to fill those reservoirs. If they do not have water to drink they fast for rain at any time they do not have water to drink, even during the summer. If 40 days pass between one rain and another, they are suffering from a drought and they fast and cry out until rain falls or until the season passes.

- They do not blast the *shofar*. (M.B. 22)
- At that point it is a wasted prayer. (M.B. 23)

Siman 575 Seif 9:

When is the above true? In Eretz Yisroel and similar places, but in places where the time for rain is earlier than the 17th of Cheshvan or later, when that time arrives and the rain has not fallen individuals fast on Monday, Thursday, Monday and interrupt for Rosh Chodesh, Chanukah and Purim. After waiting about six days if the rain did not fall *bais din* decrees 13 fasts following the pattern mentioned above.

Siman 575 Seif 10:

Any fast that is decreed outside of Eretz Yisroel they may eat at night and follow the *halachos* of other fasts since a decree to fast similar to Yom Kippur cannot be decreed other than in Eretz Yisroel, for rain and only those ten fasts which are the middle set of 3 and the last 7.

- Some authorities question whether nowadays even in Eretz Yisroel they follow this pattern of fasts and it is possible that they act as agents of previous generations. (M.B. 25)

Siman 575 Seif 11:

If they were fasting on account of rain, how much rain must fall to interrupt the fast? Once it penetrates a *tefach* into dry land, two *tefachim* in average land and three *tefachim* in worked land (and the amount of rain that must fall to recite a *beracha* is addressed in *siman* 221). **If it starts to fall after midday they must complete the fast that day** (see above *siman* 569) **but if it started to rain before midday they do not complete the fast and instead eat, drink, treat it as a Yom Tov and that afternoon they gather to recite *Hallel HaGadol*.**

- Most of the day passed in sanctity. They no longer recite עננו at *mincha* or other supplications. It is also appropriate to recite *hallel* except that it cannot be recited while hungry. Some maintain that since they were answered that day they do recite *Hallel HaGadol*. (M.B. 26)
- As long as the rain began falling before midday and did not stop at midday, we follow when the rain began to fall and they do not complete the fast. (M.B. 27)
- *Hallel HaGadol* is recited only when one is full. (M.B. 29)
- This refers to chapter that contains the 26 כי לעולם חסדו and we conclude מודים אנחנו לך וכו' as recorded in *siman* 221 and individuals may no longer recite a *beracha*. Before *hallel* one should recite שיר המעלות הנה ברכו וכו' as well as מעלה נשאים מקצה הארץ. (M.B. 30)

Siman 575 Seif 12:

Hallel HaGadol is recited only when they were answered on the day they fasted but if they were answered the following day they do not recite it.

- They were not answered because of the fast, rather Hashem was compassionate towards them. (M.B. 31)

Siman 575 Seif 13:

If rain fell on the night of the fast before dawn they do not recite *Hallel HaGadol*.

- Shulchan Aruch implies that even when the fast begins at nightfall, the main part of the fast does not commence until morning and thus when it rains at night it is not considered as though they began the fast. (M.B. 32)

Halacha Highlight

Davening for rain during *shemittah*

Rema Siman 575 Seif 11

מתענים וזועקים עד שירדו גשמים

They fast and cry out until the rain falls

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ח') explains that the procedure of fasting in two sets of 3 fasts followed by a single set of 7 fasts applies when rain did not fall altogether, but if rain fell and after the herbs began to sprout the rain stopped and the herbs began to dry, they fast and cry out until the rain falls or until the herbs dry out completely. The reason they stop crying out once the herbs dried is that at that point it is a wasted prayer since the rain will no longer benefit those herbs that are already dry (מ"ב ס"ק כ"ג).

The *Poskim* have an interesting discussion concerning a drought that occurs during the *shemittah* year when people do not plant their crops [and the custom in Yerushalayim is not to fast when there is insufficient rain to fill the water reservoirs]. Kaf HaChaim (אות מ"א) cites authorities who maintain that since the observance of *shemittah* in our times is only a Rabbinic obligation and there is also an uncertainty whether we are observing *shemittah* in the correct year, the custom is to fast for a drought that occurs in the *shemittah* year for the trees and grain that grows in a permitted manner during that year. Rav Seraya Divlitzki (פלגי מים עמ' ס"ב) notes that although nowadays there are many people who do not observe *shemittah*, nevertheless, *davening* for rain is not considered as though one is *davening* for something that it prohibited. Consequently, when there is a drought one must *daven* for rain even during the *shemittah* year.