

Shovavim questions

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 12 Jan 2009 01:30

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I know it is the custom of some to fast every Monday and Thursday during this time. I am considering doing this myself, but I noticed that one Monday is Rosh Chodesh (when fasting is not permitted) and another Monday is Tu B'Shevat (and I don't know if fasting is permitted that day). So my question is what happens to the fasts for those days? Also, is fasting permitted on Tu B'Shevat? Thanks.

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by the.guard - 12 Jan 2009 11:06

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"Mevakesh" is a Talmid Chacham, I hope he can answer you.

I just want to mention though, that fasting used to be the way to achieve spiritual closeness to Hashem in previous generations, but the Ariza"l and the Ba'al Shem Tov changed the practice for a number of reasons. 1) If a person feels good about himself that he fasted, and his ego expands, then it is better that he not fast. 2) Our generation is weak. 3) The fast makes one weak and it becomes harder to serve Hashem with all your strength.

Instead they instituted serving Hashem with fire, with joy and love - which is a higher level than one who breaks the body through punishing it. Also, they said that eating "just what the body needs" for Hashem's sake, is indeed a better goal and a higher level (and much harder!) than fasting.

I don't want to discourage you though. If you feel that fasting helps in Shmiras Habris by making the body feel weaker, then go for it!

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by mdmjerusalem - 12 Jan 2009 13:31

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Halachacly, no fasting is allowed on Rosh Chodesh or 15th of Shvat (???? ???? ???? ????)

Nevertheless our Guard is right about the whole concept of fasting.

Our rabbis have altered the way we atone for our wrongdoings

**Preferably B'Simcha** then B'Taanis

To skip breakfast or coffee in these days, decline your productivity, which is on the expense of your profession especially if you are a learner.

However we still have to break the Chomer to adjust our habits

We can achieve this by selecting one of the following methods:

**1) Taanis Shoois :**

Not to eat for the [any time limit] from when you get home

Not to eat anything from 6 to 8 in the evening

**2) Taanis Haravid:**

a) Put your utensil down between each bite

b) Don't eat food in the method you enjoy it most (Like colder or warmer temperatures, or separate from the foods you like mixed etc.)

**3) Taanis Dibur:**

Not to speak "in any way" for a "period of time".

Or, "a specific topic" for instance "Gaza war" for a day.

Or, to a specific individual, which whom you enjoy to schmooze with.

**4) much more**, you can envision them yourself

Warning: a Kabala ought to be **personalized** and **small**

**Personalized** subtract the routine from the thrust, divided by your aptitude, added to the main goal

**Small** even minute ones are usually tough enough since the kabala itself toughens the plight tenfold or more

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by the.guard - 12 Jan 2009 13:50

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Powerful stuff MDM!

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 12 Jan 2009 14:51

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MDM, thanks for that post. It is definitely full of good information. I was planning on attempting at least some of the fasts of the Shovavim period on the basis of an email list I am on. The rabbi who writes the emails leans much more to the Sephardic end of the spectrum. My understanding is that the Sephardim are much more likely to observe these fasts (which are a tradition, certainly not a halachah). I may still pursue this; I don't know for sure yet, and I've been careful not to make a vow. Instead I am going day by day.

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by the.guard - 12 Jan 2009 14:54

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Yes, the Sefardim are more into fasting. Just remember, it is the Kavana (intention) that counts the most to Hashem.

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 12 Jan 2009 15:03

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Trust me on the kavana. The primary focus of this being a teshuva and bringing the body into line on overcoming the urge to improper sexuality is at the front of my mind and has been over the last several hours.

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by mdmjerusalem - 12 Jan 2009 15:58

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I cant speak for a Sefaradi different minhagim different culture.

But for an Ashkanazi it is really **not advised** to become accustomed to fasting.

However, whatever you choose should be a success.

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by battleworn - 13 Jan 2009 11:10

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I want to add that if you do decide to fast, be sure to check how it effects you. If it causes you, for example, to be irritable or impatient with people, then I think everyone would agree that you should stop.

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by mdmjerusalem - 13 Jan 2009 16:48

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whats up ben

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 13 Jan 2009 17:46

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I went ahead and fasted yesterday. It went pretty well. I was actually in a better mood than I was on the 10th of Tevet (a little Excedrin right before the beginning of the fast works wonders). I haven't figured out yet if it was a help in my battle or not; I guess time will tell. With or without fasting, the whole Shovavim period is pretty intense when you focus on battling the Y"H. Definitely a lot of parallels here with the Gaza war. The Y"H has more tunnels than Hamas, and plays even dirtier to boot. I have no illusion that Shovavim will end the war for me, but I believe this will be one of the major battlegrounds.

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by mdmjerusalem - 13 Jan 2009 18:19

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the objective is not "to end the war"

the point is to "be ready for combat"

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 13 Jan 2009 18:47

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Point well taken MDM. I'm still new enough that I have a lot of thought patterns to adjust. I guess the war never really ends.

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by mdmjerusalem - 26 Jan 2009 15:46

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As the battle progresses we **transport** it to superior levels

That is why the holier an individual is; the more likely he is to be triggered with benign matters.

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Re: Shovavim questions

Posted by markz - 01 Jan 2016 11:49

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[the.guard wrote:](#)

They instituted serving Hashem with fire, with joy and love

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