

Study Page 4 Parents and Children

Basic Concepts in Judaism and Zionism /Beit Sasson Community

1. "Gemilut Chasadim"

This term refers to all the commandments that require a person to do good deeds for others and to take their needs into consideration. The Bible often emphasizes the importance of various commandments between a **person and their friends** (for example: the Torah commands the proper treatment of the convert, orphan, and widow thirty-six times), and the Sages (Chazal) also strongly emphasized the importance of "Gemilut Chasadim." In the Mishnah, it is stated: "The world stands on three things: on the Torah, on the service [of God], and on Gemilut Chasadim" (Pirkei Avot).

Gemilut Chasadim can be practiced in two ways:

A. **Charity**: through giving money, either as a gift or as an interest-free loan.

B. **Spiritual-emotional assistance** to others, not involving money (for example: hospitality, visiting the sick, escorting the dead, and comforting mourners).

2. "The Hebrew Calendar"

The Hebrew calendar counts the days and years from the creation of the world. The Jewish holidays and festivals are determined according to the Hebrew calendar, so the Jewish people in all the Diaspora celebrate the holidays at the same time. The months of the year are: **Tishrei, (Mar)Cheshvan, Kislev, Tevet, Shevat, Adar, Nisan, Iyar, Sivan, Tamuz, Av, and Elul**. Every two to three years, the year is "leap" or "intercalated," meaning an additional month—Adar I—is added to align the lunar-based Hebrew calendar with the solar-based Gregorian calendar. This ensures that Passover always falls in the spring and Sukkot in the fall. This type of year is called a "**leap year**." Some months have 29 days, and others have 30 days. The last day of months with 30 days, and the first day of each month, are called "**Rosh Chodesh**." The first two days of Tishrei are known as "Rosh Hashanah."

3. "Eliezer Ben-Yehuda" (1858-1922)

Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, known as the "reviver of the Hebrew language," believed that the revival of the Hebrew nation could only take place in the Land of Israel, and the revival of the nation would occur alongside the revival of the Hebrew language. After centuries in which Hebrew was used only for religious studies and prayers, Ben-Yehuda decided to speak only Hebrew in his home in Jerusalem, thus creating "the first Hebrew home." His great project was the Historical Hebrew Dictionary, which includes Hebrew words from all periods and layers of the Hebrew language. Thanks to his efforts, he is known as the "reviver of the Hebrew

language.





Question sheet on basic concepts in Judaism and Zionism

1. **What is "Gemilut Chasadim"?** Describe in your own words what it means to help others?

2. **How can you do Gemilut Chasadim without giving money?** Write examples.

3. **Why is it important to help people such as a convert (ger), an orphan (yetom), and a widow (almanna)?** What do you think people who need help feel?

4. **How can you do Gemilut Chasadim at school, at home, or in the community?** Give an example of something good you did for someone.

5. **What is the Hebrew calendar and what does it count?** _____

6. **Which holidays are determined by the Hebrew calendar?** Write examples of holidays that are celebrated on the same dates worldwide. _____

7. **Why is there a need to add a month to the Hebrew calendar?** What will happen if we do not add the month of Adar I? _____

8. **What is the difference between the months of the Hebrew year in terms of the number of days?** Which months have 29 days and which have 30?

9. **What is Rosh Chodesh?** _____

10. **Who was Eliezer Ben-Yehuda?** _____

11. **In which years did he live?** _____

12. **What did he believe in?** _____

13. **What did Ben-Yehuda decide to do?** _____

14. What was his great accomplishment? _____

שבוע נפלא ובשורות טובות

אורן שמחי

Mishnah Study Sheet – Masechet Ta'anit 1:4

Beit Sasson Community, 5785

הגיע שבועה עשר במרחשון ולא ירדו גשמים, התחילו היחידים מתעניין שלש תעניות. אוכלין ושותין משחשכה, ומתירין במלאכה וברחיצה ובסיקה ובנעילת הסנדל ובתשמיש המטה.

רבי עובדיה מברטנורא: הגיע שבועה עשר במרחשון. וכבר עברו שלשה זמנים, שהן שלישי במרחשון, ושביעי, ושבועה עשר: **התחילו היחידים** - תלמידי חכמים: שלש תעניות. שני וחמישי ושני:

אוכלים ושותים משחשכה - מתר להם לאכל ולשתות כל ליל התענית עד שיעלה עמוד השחר כל זמן שלא ישן. אבל לאחר שישן שינת קבע אסור לאכל ולשתות אם לא התנה מתחלה קדם שישן. ואית דאמרי דאכילה בעי תנאי, שתיה לא בעי תנאי, דאין קבע לשתיה. והכי מסתברא:

If the seventeenth of Marḥeshvan arrived and rain has not fallen, individuals, but not the entire community, begin to fast three fasts for rain. How are these fasts conducted? As the fast begins in the morning, one may eat and drink after dark, and one is permitted during the days of the fasts themselves to engage in the performance of work, in bathing, in smearing oil on one's body, in wearing shoes, and in conjugal relations

Rabbi Ovadia of Bartenura

הגיע שבעה במרחשון – and three time periods have already passed – which are the third of Mar Cheshvan, the seventh [of Mar Cheshvan] and the seventeenth [of the month].

התחילו היחידים – scholars/Sages

שלוש תעניות – Monday, Thursday [and the following] Monday.

אוכלים ושותים משחשכה – They are permitted to eat and drink all the night of the fast until the crack of dawn all the while that they are not sleeping. But after one has had one's fixed period of sleep, it is forbidden to each or drink if one didn't make a condition [to do so] at first prior to going to sleep. And there are those who say that eating requires a condition made. Drinking does not require a condition made, for there is no fixed period for drinking and that makes sense



Comprehension Questions:

1. What is the date when the delay of rain becomes concerning, and what is its agricultural significance? _____
 2. Who are the "individuals" mentioned, and why are they chosen to begin fasting before the general population? _____
 3. Which actions are permitted during the initial fasts, and what is unique about them?

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Analytical Questions:

1. Why did the Sages establish a gradual approach to fasting in response to delayed rain? _____

2. How do actions like bathing, anointing, and wearing sandals relate to the nature of the fast?

3. What is the spiritual significance of distinguishing between "individuals" and the broader community? _____

Modern-Day Application Questions:

1. How can the concept of fasting be translated into a modern response to environmental or societal crises?

לימוד מהנה ומעמיק

אורן שמחי

