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THE DEVELOPMENT OF MINHAG AS A REFLECTION OF HALAKHIC VALUES: THE PRE-WEDDING FAST

In a previous essay in these pages¹, we discussed the manner in which a *minhag*, specifically that of fasting for a fallen Torah scroll, has been analyzed by *posekim*, and how this analysis displayed the underlying halakhic values driving the development of the custom. In this paper, attention is turned to another such custom, that of the fast prior to the wedding.

Unlike the fast for the Torah scroll, the practice of this fast has found its way into the *Shulhan Arukh*, or more precisely, into the glosses of R. Moshe Isserles (Rema), who states “. . . and there is a custom that the groom and the bride fast on the day of their wedding.”² Despite such authoritative mention, this practice was not standard to all of the world’s Jewish populations, a fact noted by R. Hayyim Yosef David Azulai (Hida) in his halakhic work *Birkei Yosef*.³ Likewise, R. Hayyim Hizkiyahu Medini states that this fast was not in practice in Kushte.⁴ R. Ovadia Yosef believes the practice to be largely an Ashkenazic one and discourages Sefardic Jews from observing the fast.⁵

Universal or not, those sources that acknowledge the fast do so with a fair amount of gravity. Rema, while excusing one who marries on *Hanukka* from fasting on this inherently festive day, hastens to mention that other times of the year when fasting is avoided—such as *Rosh Hodesh Nissan*—bow to this practice.⁶ *Magen Avraham*,⁷ citing *Bah*, delineates based on whether the day considered unfit for fasting is mentioned in the Talmud or not,⁸ thus concluding that one fasts even on *Lag ba-Omer*.⁹

Several later authorities emphasized the seriousness of this practice in the context of evaluating the impact of such a fast upon other fast days. For example, one who marries on the eleventh of *Tevet* is instructed to fast, regardless of the fact that coming on the heels of the tenth of *Tevet*, this would constitute two consecutive days of fasting. Apparently an occurrence of some frequency, this ruling is found repeatedly in

responsa literature, including the writings of R. Moshe Feinstein,¹⁰ R. Shraga Feivel Schnebalg,¹¹ R. Yehudah Polachek,¹² R. Yekutiel Rozenberger,¹³ and R. Natan Gestetner.¹⁴ The situation is not to be compared, according to these authorities, to fasting two days for *Yom Kippur*, which Rema advises against for health concerns.¹⁵ While that would require forty-eight hours of continuous fasting, in this instance, eating would be permissible during the intervening evening.

These sources utilize this opportunity to emphasize that the pre-wedding fast is not to be taken lightly. Granted, the practice is not as firmly entrenched as the communal calendar fasts, and those do take precedence. Thus, writes R. Shammai Kehat Gross,¹⁶ one whose wedding is two days after the ninth of *Av*, and fears his constitution will not endure two fasts in three days, observes the communal ninth of *Av* fast and will sacrifice the wedding day fast. Alternatively, in the reverse instance, when the wedding closely precedes a communal fast day, if one believes himself incapable of fasting twice in a short period, the wedding day fast should not be observed.¹⁷ Nonetheless, to whatever extent the wedding fast can be accommodated, there is an exhortation to do so; R. Rozenberger recommends a partial fast to one unable to endure two fasts in close proximity.

Thus, the pre-wedding fast acknowledged as a genuine if not uncontested *minhag*, the question then becomes understanding the roots of the practice from a halakhic perspective. As with the Torah scroll fast, the authors of halakhic literature perceive that the religious behavior of the nation of Israel manifests its own unique sanctity; consequently, they seek to relate the practice to a principle of Jewish belief or law, and to progress upon that understanding in the codification of the practical elements of the *minhag*.

Within the corpus of the *Shulhan Arukh* and its immediate commentators, the process begins with a citation by the *Bet Shemuel* of the responsa of Maharam Mintz (#109).¹⁸ Maharam Mintz introduces two, highly distinct reasons for the practice, one speaking to the spiritual essence of the day, and the second addressing a more practical aspect of the events to take place. The two reasons thus differ markedly in how they would dictate the terms of the fast, and thus serve to stimulate much discussion of both a philosophical and a legal nature.

The first reason suggested by Maharam Mintz is the more overtly spiritual in nature, and finds its origins in several Talmudic comments that speak to the effect of marriage on the soul. The Torah tells us (Genesis 28:9) that Esau married a woman named Mahalat, while later

(38:3) referring to her as Basemat. Rashi explains that the latter was the real name; the explanation for the former appellation stems from a citation from the Midrash to the book of Samuel (ch. 17): “Three, their sins are forgiven: one who converts, one who ascends to greatness, and one who marries a woman.”¹⁹ Thus, the name Mahalat is an allusion to *mehila*, forgiveness.

The circumstances of this forgiveness are somewhat vague.²⁰ R. Rozenberger looks specifically to the context of Esau, and adduces scriptural and midrashic proof that the atonement is not automatic, but is rather an opportunity that becomes fulfilled when the groom actually repents on the occasion. A similar position is adopted by R. Hayyim Hizkiyahu Medini, who distinguishes in this matter between a groom and one who ascends to leadership.²¹ This is also the understanding of the Reisher Rav, R. Aharon Levine, who suggests that the sins are actually held in abeyance, and will be held against the groom if he returns to his old ways.²² Alternatively, the same context is understood by others as implying that repentance is not necessary for the atonement to take effect.²³

Having established an expiation of some nature, commentators and decisors suggests a rationale for such Divine benevolence. R. Avraham Shemuel Binyamin Sofer, the *Ketav Sofer*, in his commentary to the Torah, notes the Talmudic statement that “one who exists without a wife exists without a wall.” Ideally, a wife is a spiritual protector, particularly in isolating her husband from temptations of a licentious nature. One who marries, therefore, is taking a proactive measure to protect himself from sin, and simultaneously establishing the defense that previous iniquities were due to the single status he is now abandoning. Such an act is thus to be viewed as repentant and thus earns amnesty.

A more direct approach is taken by R. Yehoshua Falk,²⁴ who notes simply that the forgiveness is earned by fulfilling God’s will.²⁵ More specifically, writes R. Shimon Sofer,²⁶ the groom is meritoriously involved in populating the world. The commentary *Yefei Mare*²⁷ offers a two-pronged suggestion: either the intent to lead a family in righteousness is sufficient to earn atonement, or the merit involved in attaining such an opportunity is indicative of an accepted repentance. R. Sofer’s grandson, R. Akiva Menachem Sofer,²⁸ connects the groom to one of the others who receives forgiveness, that is, “one who ascends to greatness.” We are told (*Pirke D’R’ Eliezer*, ch. 16) “a groom is comparable to a king;” thus one who marries is similar to one who becomes royalty.²⁹

Alternatively, R. A. M. Sofer suggests linking the groom to yet another of his partners in atonement, the convert. This he does in the

name of Maharal of Prague, who writes³⁰ that the convert who receives forgiveness for his conversion undergoes a complete personal transformation, and is, in the Talmud's words, "as a newborn child." So too, a single man is incomplete (*Yevamot* 63a); his marriage is a completion and thus a transformation, acquiring for him a clean slate, spiritually.³¹

In any event, the atonement that accompanies marriage lends a certain character to the wedding day, and consequently affects some of the practices that take place. For example, the groom recites the formula of confession (*viduy*) on this day.³² In essence, the day becomes one of a "personal *Yom Kippur*." Consequently, it is appropriate to fast;³³ this, then, is Maharam Mintz's first suggested explanation. Mahari Beruna³⁴ explains further, in the vein of comparing the groom to the king, that just as a king is judged daily,³⁵ so too is a groom. R. Rozenberger, in light of his aforementioned thesis, notes that had atonement been automatic, no fasting would have been indicated; rather, unrestrained joy would be more appropriate. However, since in his opinion the forgiveness even at this time only comes will repentance, the *Yom Kippur* model is indeed apt.³⁶

The second suggestion of Maharam Mintz is markedly more practical in nature. One who is getting married should refrain from eating beforehand out of concern that too much indulgence will result in intoxication.³⁷ This concern manifests itself in a number of ways.³⁸ Maharam Mintz's fear is ". . . their concentration (*da'at*) will not be settled upon them at the time of marriage." Mahari Beruna expresses the concern that later, it might be claimed that the celebrants were drunk and thus married in an impaired state of mind; further, the Talmud³⁹ requires that one see his wife prior to marrying her, and intoxication may similarly interfere with that.

R. Eliezer of Germaiza suggests a third approach, somewhat akin to the second we outlined.⁴⁰ He writes: "That which the grooms fast until after the blessing, I have found in the *aggada* because the *mitsva* is dear to them, in the manner that the early pious ones have done, that they fasted for a *mitsva* that is dear to them, such as *lulav* and other things." In general, a prohibition exists against eating prior to the fulfillment of certain commandments and prayers, during the time period when their obligation takes hold.⁴¹ This stems from a concern that once the person becomes involved in eating, the *mitsva* will be forgotten and neglected. So too, one might suggest, that as marriage is a type of *mitsva*, it is similarly inappropriate to eat beforehand. However, it should be noted that R. Germaiza's language does not necessarily present the pre-wedding fast as an obligation comparable in status to the prohibition of eating

before performance of a *mitsva*. Rather, his comments may equally if not more readily be taken to state that the custom of fasting at that time developed out of a conceptual similarity, in that eating is generally not done when a *mitsva* is at hand.

Other reasons are also found in the literature. Tashbets writes that just as the Jewish people fasted in preparation for acceptance of the Torah, so too a groom; the receiving of the Torah is compared to a wedding, as indicated by the verse, “. . . your love as a bride, how you followed Me in the wilderness. . . .”⁴² Mahari Beruna further adds the Talmudic dictum, “There is no *ketuba* about which there is not a quarrel.”⁴³ Consequently, a fast is undertaken in prayer that all should go well. Further suggestions are offered in *Responsa Divrei Yatsiv*.⁴⁴

Having toiled to establish a rationale for the practice, the halakhic authorities can now utilize these principles to establish normative guidelines for the fast itself. For example, many authorities note that according to all the reasons, there seems to be no reason to differentiate between a first and second marriage.⁴⁵ An immediate issue that does present itself, however, is that the time period preceding the wedding is generally not identical to a halakhic day, which ends at sunset; in contrast, fast days are usually assumed to correspond to the halakhic day. The reconciliation of this issue is believed to be directly affected by the reasoning favored as the basis for the fast.⁴⁶

To begin with, weddings are often held in the middle of the day. Perhaps the newlyweds should be obligated to continue fasting even after the ceremony, waiting until the day is complete? Such a possibility could only be entertained within the “personal *Yom Kippur*” school of thought; perhaps the atonement requires a complete fast. However, should the reasoning be accepted that the fast is protective in nature, there would seem to be no reason to continue past the *huppa*; R. Medini writes at length to prove that this the case.⁴⁷

R. Shimon Sofer adds an innovative position to this notion. He suggests that when the scheduling of the wedding does indeed result in a fast of reduced length, then this fast must be undertaken even on days when it is rabbinically prohibited to fast, for a partial fast (*ta'anit shaot*) is permitted on those days.⁴⁸

Conversely, weddings are with equal frequency scheduled for a time significantly after dark. When this is the case, the question then becomes the necessity to continue fasting after the day is halakhically over. R. Yehiel Michel Epstein, *Arukh ha-Shulhan*, adopts a preventative approach to the fast, lending a somewhat more lenient character to the nature of

the fast itself.⁴⁹ However, in this case this position reflects itself in stringency, in that the fast is logically unaffected by the conclusion of the day and must continue until after the ceremony.⁵⁰ R. Shlomo Gross notes that particularly within the position of R. Germaiza mentioned above, the closer one gets to the *huppa* the less appropriate it is to eat.⁵¹

However, if one focuses on the fast as a day of atonement, then it may be appropriate to conclude the fast with the end of the halakhic day. R. Ephraim Greenblatt records that at his wedding, after it became dark, his *rebbe*, R. Moshe Feinstein, instructed him to taste some food, saying, “you have already fulfilled the fast.”⁵² This situation prompts a basic question, though. Being that the fast and the wedding are now divided into two halakhic days, why fast at all on that first day, which is not actually the wedding day? This objection is raised and dismissed by R. Ephraim Eliezer Yolles, who observes that there is no incongruity to fasting as a method of repentance on the day prior to the wedding.⁵³ Similarly, R. Medini⁵⁴ records a custom to fast on any day close to the wedding, not necessarily the one immediately preceding the wedding; however, he does not recommend the popularization of this opinion.⁵⁵

Another ramification of less frequent practicality involves the practice of marrying through an intermediary (*shaliach*). Here, the individual performing the action, and thus demanding sound mind and body, is separate from that who receives atonement for his transgressions. Upon whom, then, the fast falls is thus subject to debate. *Peri Megadim*, a commentary to *Shulhan Arukh*,⁵⁶ rules that the groom is not obligated to fast in such an instance, thus shifting the obligation to the *shaliach*.⁵⁷ R. Shimon Sofer differs, requiring the groom to fast on the day the *shaliach* performs his mission.⁵⁸ Along these lines, *Magen Avraham* observes that if one adopts the fear-of-intoxication position, then a father who orchestrates the betrothal of his minor daughter should fast as well. He suggests further that according to either reason, the daughter herself need not fast, assuming that as a minor she has not yet committed sins needing atonement. R. Sofer also discusses in this vein the question of when the fast should take place if the betrothal (*erusin*) and the *huppa* are on different dates, as was once the prevalent custom.⁵⁹

The *Magen Avraham*, in his above-cited comments, rules that the fast is in place if the wedding occurs between *Yom Kippur* and *Sukkot*. However, R. Efraim Zalman Margolios, in his *Matteh Efraim*⁶⁰ writes that if necessary, one may be lenient in this time period. The commentary *Elef Le-Matteh* explains this notion to be consistent only with the atonement approach. Coming closely on the heels of *Yom Kippur*, it

might be possible to rely on the atonement acquired on that occasion. More specifically, R. Yehudah Polachek⁶¹ cites the *Responsa Torat Mordechai* (104) that one can be lenient on the day after *Yom Kippur*, in light of the Talmudic assertion⁶² that Bava ben Buta would offer a sacrifice every day, for fear of inadvertent transgression, with the exception of the day after *Yom Kippur*.⁶³

R. Shraga Feivel Schnelbag⁶⁴ discusses the question of brushing one's teeth on the pre-wedding fast. He rules leniently on both fronts, noting firstly that it will certainly not result in intoxication, and secondly, that even if the fast is for the purposes of atonement, one need not be more stringent than with regular fast days.⁶⁵

It is generally assumed, as far back as the original comments of Rema and Maharam Mintz, that the fast applies both to bride and groom. Nonetheless, later authorities debated whether or not this was conceptually accurate, with the potential ramification of a greater latitude for leniency for the bride when necessary. This issue becomes exceedingly complicated, for while it does relate to the central question of the reason for the fast, the relationship to each of the possibilities is significantly complex. If one assumes the reason to be atonement, an analysis must be undertaken as to whether this atonement is granted to the bride as well, a subject of some debate.⁶⁶ If the concern is intoxication, one must determine the precise nature of what is threatened by intoxication, as discussed above, and examine whether or not that is a bilateral concern.⁶⁷ Lastly, if one adopts the *Rokeach's* formulation of abstention from eating prior to a *mitsva*, two possibilities are again present. On the one hand, the obligation of marriage is primarily on the male;⁶⁸ on the other, as the *Ran*⁶⁹ has observed, the vital and integral role played by the bride assumes some *mitsva* status as well.⁷⁰

Another related issue involves the procedure of "acceptance" (*kabbala*) that is normally required when one accepts upon himself a personal fast day.⁷¹ If the fast is in reality rooted in practical concerns (such as intoxication), there would seem to be no need for a ritual acceptance. However, if the fast is for atonement, there would appear to be two possibilities. On the one hand, a *kabbala* would seem appropriate; on the other, the existence of such an established custom might obviate the need for a specific acceptance, in the manner that a communal fast day does not require one. *Mishna Berura*⁷² dispenses with the obligation of *kabbala*, but some authorities do recommend it.⁷³

In sum, as the details of this custom are debated, one point emerges uncontested. Halakhic authorities realized that the religious practices of

the Jewish people are not mere convention but are reflections of a deep communal intuition of the values of the halakhic system. As such, even post-Talmudic custom is to be analyzed for its latent themes, which are understood to embody the concepts of Jewish law despite lacking explicit initial textual base. Rulings are then made accordingly, striving to maintain and refine the wisdom that the Jewish people first absorb, and then, through their own unique ways, translate into practice.

NOTES

1. *Tradition* 33:2, Winter 1999.
2. *Even HaEzer* 61: 1.
3. *Orah Hayyim* 470:2. See also *Responsa Bet Yehuda* II, 23.
4. *Sedei Hemed, asifat dinim, ma'arekhet hatan ve-kalla* #4.
5. *Responsa Yabia Omer*, III, *Even haEzer*, 9.
6. *Orah Hayyim* 573: 1.
7. *Ibid* #1.
8. R. Shimon Sofer, *Responsa Hitorerut Teshuva, Orah Hayyim* III, #365, observes that it is self-evident that *Magen Avraham's* comment is to the day itself being mentioned in the Talmud, even when the prohibition of fasting on that day is not.
9. See R. Simcha Rabinowitz, *Piskei Teshuvot*, and, at length, R. Yekutiel Rozenberger, *Torat Yekutiel, tinyana*, #35, as well as R. Yekutiel Yehuda Halberstam, *Responsa Divrei Yatsiv, Even haEzer*, 76 and *Orah Hayyim*, 218.
10. *Responsa Iggerot Moshe, Orah Hayyim* I, 167.
11. *Responsa Sheraga haMeir*, VII, 64.
12. *Responsa Megged Yehuda*, 15.
13. *Responsa Torat Yekutiel, tinyana*, 92.
14. *Responsa le-Horot Natan*, VIII, 95.
15. *Orah Hayyim* 624:5.
16. *Responsa Shevet HaKehati*, IV, 314.
17. Compare the discussion of the Butchacher Rav (*Eshel Avraham, Orah Hayyim* 612) as to whether one should fast on the fast of Gedalia if he knows it will interfere with his ability to fast on *Yom Kippur* one week later, and see R. Tsevi Pesah Frank, *Mikraei Kodesh: Yamim Noraim*, 35:3; on the conceptual issues involved, see *Responsa Radbaz* I,13; *Be'er Hetev, Orah Hayyim* 90:11; and *Responsa Hakham Tsevi*, 106.
18. The responsum of Maharam Mintz is also cited by *Magen Avraham, Orah Hayyim* 573.
19. See also *Talmud Yerushalmi, Bikkurim* 3:3.
20. An exposition of the nature of the relevant atonement is found in R. Yitshak Rosenblatt, *Hedvat Yotser*, I, p. 48-50. He questions the statement of the Talmud (*Kiddushin* 49b) that one who marries a woman on the condition that he is righteous, the marriage takes effect even if in reality he is thoroughly wicked. The reason for this is we take into account the possi-

- bility that he has had thoughts of repentance. Why, however, need we deal on the level of a possible repentance, when we know the marriage itself will effect an atonement? (Within the theory of R. Rozenberger, cited above, this question can be readily answered.) The answer must lie, writes R. Rosenblatt, in a difference between the atonement achieved through marriage and that achieved through repentance. The former does indeed bring about expiation of sins, but does not confer the title of "righteous". Thoughts of repentance, however, do bring about this change in personal status (see *Minhat Hinukh* #364). See also R. Baruch Rakovsky, *Birkat Avot* #48.
21. *Sedei Hemed*, *ibid.*
 22. *HaDerash ve-ha-Iyyun*, *Bereshit* #132 (and see also #174).
 23. See, for example, *Responsa Nezer ha-Rosh*, *Yore Dea* 97, as cited and discussed by R. Yitshak Sternhill, *Kokhavei Yitshak*, III, *kuntres kevod melakhim*, #36, and see also *Responsa Divrei Yatsiv*, *Even haEzer*, 72..
 24. *Perisha* to *Tur*, *Even ha-Ezer* 1.
 25. It should be noted that there is a question among authorities as to whether marriage itself is actually a commandment, or rather the necessary means to fulfill the commandment of "be fruitful and multiply". See *Mishne Torah*, *Ishut* 1:2; *Sefer ha-Hinukh*, 552; *Rosh*, *Ketubot* 1:12; *Rashi*, *Moed Katan* 18b, s.v. *de-ka avid mitsva* and *Betsa* 36b s.v. *velo mekaddshin*; *Ritva*, *Ketubot* 7b; *Sheiltot D'Rav Ahai Gaon* 165:1, and *Ha'amek Sheala*; and *Responsa Nodeh bi-Yehuda*, II, *Even haEzer*, 1.
 26. *Responsa Hitorerut Teshuva*, *Even Ha-Ezer* 25.
 27. To the *Talmud Yerushalmi*, *Bikkurim* 3:3.
 28. Glosses *Ikvei Sofer* to *Responsa Hitorerut Teshuva*.
 29. On the atonement of one who ascends to greatness, note also R. Meshulam Zalman Babad, *Minhat Mahavat* II, 104.
 30. *Netivot Olam* II, *Netiv ha-Avoda* ch. 6.
 31. This approach is also noted by R. Natan Gestetner, *Responsa le-Horot Natan*, X, 99.
 32. See *Pithei Teshuva* to *Even haEzer*, and *Rema*, *Orah Hayyim* 562:2; *Taz* and *Mishne Berura* *ibid.*; *Responsa Torat Yekutiel*, I, 42, 97, and 98, and II, 34; the journal *Or Torah* (*Kol Aryeh* publication), I, 86; and *Responsa Divrei Yatsiv*, *Even haEzer*, 75.
 33. The question of why no similar practice is extant in relation to one who ascends to communal leadership is raised by *Sedei Hemmed* and dealt with in light of his aforementioned distinction in the nature of the atonement.
 34. *Responsa Mahari Beruna* #93.
 35. See *Talmud Yerushalmi*, *Rosh ha-Shanna* 1:3.
 36. Note also R. Shimon Gable, *Keli Gola*, *Ta'anit* 26b, who cites from *Kol Bo* (#62) a further scriptural relationship between marriage and *Yom Kippur* in relation to the relationship between God and the Jewish people.
 37. The process by which a concern for intoxication is translated into a general abstention from all food is discussed by R. Yehudah Modrin, cited in "Gloss by the son-in-law of the author" to *Responsa Peri ha-Sade*, III, 75. The equation of this concern to an absolute ban on eating may lead to a merger of this position with that of *Rokeah* (cited below), in that the fear of inebriation may underlie even the basic prohibition against eating before *mitzvot*.

In fact, this is the context of the responsum of *Pri ha-Sade* to which this gloss is appended (the subject is of a *mohel* eating before a circumcision). Alternatively, the fear of inebriation in the pre-wedding context may be understood more directly and thus leniently, as reflected in the words of R. Yehiel Mihel Epstein, *Arukh ha-Shulhan, Even haEzer* 61:21, who rules that if a fast is difficult, care should be taken primarily to avoid intoxicating foods, and in general to refrain from excessive indulgence. See also the comments of R. Yosef Patzanofsky, *Pardes Yosef*, Genesis 24:33.

A further suggestion is made on this issue by *Responsa Divrei Yasziv, Even haEzer* 73. Intoxication is also cited as the reason that one is told to perform the pre-Yom Kippur confession prior to the meal (see *Yoma* 87a and *Ran*). The fear that of all times, one would lose control on the eve of the holiest of days, is striking. Indeed, it seems to be precisely that gravity inherent in the day that provokes a parallel effort by the evil inclination, and consequently enhanced vigilance is required. Thus, the reasons merge: as the wedding day is one of atonement, the evil inclination is provoked; in response, a stronger defense against intoxication is needed.

38. R. Yekutiel Halberstam (*Divrei Yatziv, Even haEzer* 72) observes that if the concern is intoxication, it would be logical to assume that this practice of fasting would be present at a divorce as well, although he admits that evidence of such a custom is difficult to find.
39. *Kiddushin* 41a.
40. *Sefer ha-Roke'ah ha-Gadol*, #353.
41. See, for example, *Shabbat* 9a.
42. Jeremiah 2:2.
43. *Shabbat* 130a.
44. *Even ha-Ezer*, 72.
45. See *Elya Rabba, Orah Hayyim* 573:2; *Peri Megadim, Mishbetsot Zahav*, 573; *Responsa Hitorerut Teshuva*, *ibid*; and *Responsa LeHorot Natan*, IV, 106:1. Note that *LeHorot Natan* adds an additional reason to recommend fasting in this instance, based on *Responsa Hayyim Sheal* II, 14 (a theme *LeHorot Natan* expands on in an earlier responsum, *ibid*, #83).
46. See *Beit Shemuel* to *Even ha-Ezer*.
47. See also R. Shlomo Tovim, *Dover Shalom*, II, 29, who cites from an earlier work, *Zikhron Avot*, (#87), a stringency not to marry early in the day so as not to forfeit the fast; *Dover Shalom* rejects that concern.
48. *Responsa Hitorerut Teshuva, Orah Hayyim* III, 365, citing *Magen Avraham, Orah Hayyim* 418:1 on the permissibility of partial fasts on days when fasting is rabbinically prohibited.
49. See footnote 36.
50. Note, however, *Ezer mi-Kodesh* to *Even ha-Ezer* who feels that even within the atonement approach one need not fast after the *huppa*; *Responsa le-Horot Natan* (X, 96) extrapolates that the desire is only that one be in a state of fasting at the moment of expiation, which is the wedding ceremony itself.
51. *Responsa Mishne Shelema*, 29.
52. *Responsa Rivevot Ephraim*, III, 590:5.
53. *Responsa Divrei Ephraim Eliezer*, I, 215.
54. *Sedei Hemed*, *ibid*.

55. It should be noted that this opinion would lead to the conclusion that even if one is to be married on a day that it is prohibited to fast, one should not cancel the fast, but rather move it up earlier. Indeed, *Responsa Divrei Yatsiv, Even ha-Ezer*, 74, does discuss the possibility that one who marries on *Rosh Hodesh* should fast the day before that, but recommends against it for fear it will lead to indulgence on the next day, that of the wedding, and lead to intoxication, the other relevant concern.
56. *Eshel Avraham, Orah Hayyim* 573.
57. R. Akiva Menachem Sofer, *Ikvei Sofer*, *ibid.*, quotes an interesting penta-teuchal observation from R. Levi Yitshak of Berditchev, *Kedushat Levi, Parashat Hayyei Sara*, that incorporates this position. Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, was sent to betroth a woman on behalf of Isaac. When offered food by her family in the middle of this process, he refuses, stating “*lo okhel ad im dibarti devarai*,” (I will not eat until I have spoken my piece) (Genesis 24:33). If a *shaliach* is indeed obligated to fast, this may explain his refusal. Note also *Pardes Yosef*, *ibid.*; the journal *Vayilaket Yosef*, III, 52 and 198; and *Responsa Divrei Yatsiv, Even ha-Ezer* 73:2.
58. *Responsa Hitorerut Teshuva, Even ha-Ezer, ibid.*
59. *Ikvei Sofer* cites in this regard *Peri Megadim (Eshel Avraham, Orah Hayyim 573)*, that if the concern is intoxication, then the fast should take place on the day of betrothal; if the issue is atonement, the fast should correspond to the *huppa*.
60. 625:2.
61. *Responsa Megged Yehuda, ibid.*
62. *Keritut* 25a.
63. Note, however, the comments of *Responsa Shevet haKehati*, IV, 314, and see also *Responsa Iggerot Moshe, ibid.*
64. *Responsa Sheraga ha-Meir*, III, 103:3.
65. For a discussion of general fast days vis-à-vis brushing of teeth, see R. David A. Mandelbaum, ed., *Zikhron Shelomo* (memorial volume for R. Shlomo Kalish), pp. 255-256.
66. The implication of the Talmudic source is that the expiation is that of the groom. Nonetheless, this implication is less so in later sources. R. Natan Gestetner (*Responsa le-Horot Natan*, X, 96) notes that as atonement stems from the transformative nature of marriage, as noted above in the name of Maharal, this would seem to apply to the bride as well, and he assumes accordingly. This rationale and its conclusion are also adopted by *Responsa Divrei Yatsiv, Even ha-Ezer* 72.
67. See *Responsa Torat Yekutiel*, II, 92.
68. See *Responsa Mishne Shelema, ibid.*, who accordingly imposes the obligation only on the groom if this reasoning is accepted.
69. *Kiddushin* 41a.
70. This reasoning is also utilized by *Responsa Hitorerut Teshuva, Even ha-Ezer* 25, to explain why the bride also receives atonement. See also *Responsa Yabia Omer, ibid.* (and note his discussion in general).
71. See *Ta'anit* 11a.
72. *Orah Hayyim* 562:11.
73. See citations in *Piskei Teshuvot*.