



Tanit Ester

1. The minhag yisrael is to fast on the 13th of Adar in order to commemorate the fast that the Jews fasted before going to war in the days of Mordechai and Ester. ¹ If Purim falls out on Sunday, the fast is moved up to Thursday. ²
2. Someone who has some small illness but is in a lot of pain may eat on Tanit Ester, but should make the fast another day. ³
3. Although some are strict to observe all of the stringencies of Tishba BeAv on the other fast days, these stringencies don't apply to Tanit Ester. ⁴

1. The Shiltot (Shiltah 67) writes that both those who live in walled cities and those who live in non-walled cities should fast on the 13th of Adar because that was when the Jews gathered together to fast and pray prior to going to war in the days of Mordechai and Ester. Rabbenu Tam (cited by Rosh Megillah 1:1) agrees and supports this by saying that they must have fasted before going to war just as the Midrash says that the Jews fasted before the war with Amalek in the desert.

On the other hand, the Kol Bo (Siman 62) explains that the fast is in commemoration of the fast that Ester decreed on the Jews of Shushan (Ester 4:16). Accordingly, the name "Tanit Ester" is fitting. The Avudraham (Taniyot s.v. VeAtta) argues that the fast Ester decreed was for 3 days and in Nissan, whereas our fast is only one day and in Adar. Rather he favors Rabbenu Tam's reason.

The Rosh (*ibid.* 1:8) describes Tanit Ester as a rabbinic institution, while the Shibbolei HaLeket (Siman 194) quotes Rashi as saying that it is only a minhag. Hagahot Maimoniot (Taniyot 1:2) agrees. Based on the Rambam, the Mishna Brurah 686:2 rules that it is only a minhag. The Ran (Taniyot 7a s.v. Aval), however, quotes the Raavad who says that it is MeDivrei Kabbalah based on the words of "Divrei HaTzomot" (Ester 9:31). The Bach 686:2 writes that the Rambam agrees with the Raavad but concludes that most poskim hold it at most a rabbinic institution.

Tosfot (Tanit 18a s.v. Rav) asks how we have the minhag to fast the day before Purim if according to the Megillah Tanit one may not conduct a eulogy on Purim and the Gemara (Tanit 15b) says that one may not fast on the day before the holidays on which one may not conduct a eulogy. Tosfot answers that Megillah Tanit was nullified with respect to the laws on the day before and after Purim and Chanuka. The Baal HaMa'or (Megillah 4a) answers that since Purim is considered Divrei Kabbalah, which is similar to Divrei Torah, there was no prohibition to fast on the day beforehand. The Meiri (Tanit 18a) quotes some who answer that that since Tanit Ester is a fasting of

happiness, commemorating the miracle of the Jewish people's success in war, it isn't a violation of the prohibition to fast on the day before Purim.

2. The Shiltot (*ibid.*) writes that if Purim falls out on Sunday, they would fast on Thursday and not Friday because on Friday they would need to prepare for Shabbat. Tur and S"A 686:2 codify this as halacha. The Meiri in Magen Avot (Inyan 23) explains that although the fast days of mourning are delayed rather than pushed earlier, Tanit Ester is pushed up because it is a fast day of happiness.

3. Darkei Moshe 686:1 quotes the Aguddah who says that someone who has an eye ache may eat on Tanit Ester but has to make it up another time. The Rama 686:2 rules that a Choleh Shein Bo Sakana or someone with an eye ache who is in great pain may eat on Tanit Ester but should make it up another day. Hilchot Chag BeChag (p. 29) generalizes this to say that anyone with a small illness who is in great pain may eat but should make it up afterwards. The Aruch HaShulchan 686:4 writes that the Rama didn't need to mention a Choleh Shein Bo Sakana except for those who held that Tanit Ester is MeDivrei Kabbalah, however, according to those who say it only a minhag, its obvious that a Choleh Shein Bo Sakana is exempt as he is even exempt from Tisha BeAv. Chazon Ovadya (p. 39) adds that anyone who has to eat on the doctor's orders doesn't have to make it up afterwards.

4. The Mishna Brurah 550:6 quotes the Eliyah Rabba as saying that a righteous person (Baal Nefesh) should be strict to observe all of the 5 prohibited pleasures of Tisha BeAv on Shiva Asar BeTamuz, Asara BeTevet, and Tzom Gedalya. The Beir Halacha 551 s.v. MeRosh Chodesh also quotes this. Rav Soloveitchik (cited in Nefesh Harav page 196) explained that this stringency doesn't apply to Tanit Ester, which is a fast of happiness and not mourning (see note 1). Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Halichot Shlomo 18:6) agrees.