

Fasting on the wedding day

Source Sheet by Tzipah Wertheimer

Genesis 36:3

and Basemat, daughter of Yishma'el, sister of Nevayot.

בראשית ל"ו:ג'

וְאֵת־בְּשֵׁמֶת בַּת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל אֶחָת וְנָבְיֹת:

Rashi on Genesis 36:3:1

BASE-MATH בַּת יִשְׁמָעֵאל
ISHMAEL'S DAUGHTER — But elsewhere (28:9) she is called Mahalath! We find in the Agadic Midrash on the Book of Samuel (Ch. 17) that there are three classes whose sins are pardoned: a proselyte, one who is exalted to a high position and a man on his marriage. It derives the proof for the latter case from here; viz., the reason why she was also calleth Mahalath (pardon) was because his (Esau's) sins were pardoned on his marriage to her (Megillah 17a; cf. also Genesis Rabbah 63).

רש"י על בראשית ל"ו:ג'א'

בשמת בת ישמעאל. ולהלן קורא לה
מחלת? מצינו באגדת מדרש ספר
שמואל ג' מוחלים להן עונותיהן, גר
שנתגיר, והעולה לגדלה, והנושא אשה.
ולמד הטעם מפאן – לכה נקראת מחלת,
שנמחלו עונותיו:

Jerusalem Talmud Bikkurim 3:3:16

They wanted to ordain Rabbi Zeïra but he did not want to take it upon himself. When he heard a *Tanna* stating: “For an ordained person, a bridegroom, a patriarch, [Hashem] deletes [his sins],” he accepted being ordained. An ordained person: (*Lev. 19:32*): “Before a white head [Elder] you shall rise, give respect to an Elder, and fear your God, I am the Eternal.” What is written after that (*v. 33*): “If a proselyte lives in your land, you shall not trick him.” Just as all his sins are forgiven to the proselyte, so all sins are forgiven to one being ordained. The bridegroom: (*Gen. 28:9*) “Esav went to Ismael and married Maḥalat bat Ismael.” But was her name Maḥalat, was it not Basemat? But all his sins were forgiven him. The president: (*1S. 13:1*) “Saul was one year old when he became king.” Was he one year old when he became king? But all his sins were forgiven him as to a baby of one year.

תלמוד ירושלמי בכורים ג'ג'ט"ז
 רבי זעירא הוון בעיין ממניתייה ולא בעי
 מקבל עלוי. כד שמע ההו תנייא תני
 חכם חתן נשיא גדולה מכפרת. קביל
 עלוי ממניתייה. חכם. מפני שיבה תקום
 והדרת פני זקן. מה כתיב בתריה וכי
 יגור אתכם גר בארצכם לו תונו אותו.
 מה הגר מוחלין לו על כל-עוונותיו אף
 חכם שנתמנה מוחלין לו על כל-עוונותיו.
 חתן. וילך עשיו אל ישמעאל ויקח את
 מחלת בת ישמעאל. וכי מחלת שמה.
 והלא בשמת שמה. אלא שנמחלו לו
 כל-עוונותיו. נשיא. בן שנה שאול במלכו.
 וכי בן שנה היה. אלא שנמחלו לו
 כל-עוונותיו כתיבוק בן שנה.

Chart 1:

Examples of people forgiven for all their sins

Rashi (quoting Agadas Medrash Shmuel)	Yerushalmi & Medrash Shmuel
1. Convert	1. Wise person (chachom)
1. One who is exalted to a high position	1. Bridegroom (chosson)
1. Bridegroom (chosson)	1. Leader (Nasi)

Genesis 28:6

When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him off to Paddan-aram to take a wife from there, charging him, as he blessed him, “You shall not take a wife from among the Canaanite women,”

בראשית כ"ח:ו'
 וירא עשו כִּי־בָרַךְ יִצְחָק אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וְשָׁלַח
 אֹתוֹ פְּדָנָה אֲרָם לְקַח־תָּלוּ מִשָּׁם אִשָּׁה
 בְּבָרְכּוֹ אֹתוֹ וַיֹּצֵו עָלָיו לֵאמֹר לֹא־תִקַּח
 אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן:

Genesis 28:7

and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and gone to Paddan-aram,

בראשית כ"ח:ז'

וַיִּשְׁמַע יַעֲקֹב אֶל-אָבִיו וְאֶל-אִמּוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ
פָּדָנָה אֲרָם:

Genesis 28:8

Esau realized that the Canaanite women displeased his father Isaac.

בראשית כ"ח:ח'

וַיֵּרָא עֵשָׂו כִּי רָעוֹת בָּנוֹת כְּנָעַן בְּעֵינָיו
יִצְחָק אָבִיו:

Genesis 28:9

So Esau went to Ishmael and took to wife, in addition to the wives he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael son of Abraham, sister of Nebaioth.

בראשית כ"ח:ט'

וַיֵּלֶךְ עֵשָׂו אֶל-יִשְׁמָעֵאל וַיִּקַּח אֶת-מַחֲלַת |
בַּת-יִשְׁמָעֵאל בֶּן-אֲבִרְהָם אֶחָת גְּבִיּוֹת
עַל-נָשָׁיו לֹא לְאִשָּׁה: {ס}

Rashi on Genesis 28:9:2

על נשיו BESIDES HIS FORMER WIVES — He added wickedness to wickedness for he did not divorce his first wives (Genesis Rabbah 67:13).

רש"י על בראשית כ"ח:ט:ב'

על נשיו. הוסיף רשעה על רשעתו, שלא גרש את הראשונות:

Chart 2: Reasons given for fasting on the wedding day

1. In order to repent so their sins are erased on the wedding day. (their own personal Yom Kippur)	Must complete the fast	Only relevant until nightfall – Tzeit Hakochavim (like Yom Kippur)	Even if you say, don't really have to fast the whole day.... But it's still a fast day with halachos
1. So they don't have wine and therefore will not be intoxicated at the Chuppah	not necessary to complete the fast	Relevant the entire day until the chuppah	Withhold food but no actual halachos. Not an actual fast day
1. They have a precious mitzvah to do and the original saintly people would fast before any important mitzvah.	not necessary to complete the fast	Relevant the entire day until the chuppah	Withhold food but no actual halachos. Not an actual fast day

Chart 3: Yom Kippur and the Wedding Day

	Yom Kippur	Wedding Day
Rabi	You do not need repentance to be atoned	
Rabanan	You literally need practical Teshuvah	Fasting itself is not intrinsically connected to atonement (fasting is for the sake of clarity at the time of the mitzvah)
Rambam (based on his understanding of Rabanan)	You need a feeling to return to Hashem – but not the complete process.	Fasting is for the love of the mitzvos. Even though this is not complete teshuvah, by showing love and affection for mitzvos, you achieve a closeness to Hashem.

Hosea 2:18

(18) And in that day
—declares GOD—

You will call [Me] Ishi, *Ishi* I.e., “my husband.”

And no more will you call Me Baali. *Baali*
Like *Ishi*, *Baali* means “my husband,” but it also means “my Baal.”

הושע ב' י"ח

(יח) וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם־הַהוּא נֶאֱמָרְהוּהָ תִקְרָאִי
אִישִׁי וְלֹא־תִקְרָאִי לִי עוֹד בַּעֲלִי:



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