

Weddings and Fasting

Dear Yonathan,

It never ceases to amaze me how things get twisted around that are said by me. When I told Yael D. just before her wedding about fasting it was just a normal thing which would help the bride. In Sus the brides always did a 3-day cleansing fast early in the week of preparation. This fast cleanses the body and the result is shiny radiant skin and a healthy feeling all over. It was not intended that the bride fast the last days before her wedding, but in Yael's case I only told her about it on the Friday before her wedding so she had no choice but to fast for one day just up to the breaking of bread. This was surely not meant to be a tradition. Even for slim women a three-day fast is very beneficial to their health. So it is not *just* a thing to lose weight. But for "plump" brides it is also good.

I do not think the "bride's maids" need to fast with her because then they get their minds on their own needs and "sufferings" rather than on the one they are preparing. They should put all their effort into helping their friend, meeting all of *her* needs. If the bride gets a little bit sick it shows she really needed to fast. She should rest a lot during this time, take walks in the fresh air. This is for her health's sake, not a "spiritual" fast. The bride's preparation has to do with her flesh also. Being physically healthy also makes for a better spiritual condition.

I do not understand why the whole household fasts. This must make the "extreme pressure" of the preparation week very difficult for the household. They are having very busy schedules during that week and fasting like this needs more *rest* for your body. Pushing yourself while fasting can hurt your body. I do not recommend it. But this is, of course, up to the individuals involved.

If the bride fasts early in the week it will leave time for her to gradually return to a normal diet, first eating vegetable juices, then light vegetables the day or so after her fast.