



A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

פרשת בראשית
תשרי תש"פ

SAMACH VOV

This year 5780 marks 100 years since the passing of the Rebbe Rashab on the 2nd of Nissan 5680.

To mark this milestone, Kollel has started a new daily shiur in the Rebbe Rashab's famous series of Maamarim 5666, Hemshech Samach Vov.

All men are invited to join the shiur. Monday-Friday 6:40-7:00am with Rabbi Johnson in the Kollel.

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

On Erev Sukkos, Kollel ran a successful matching fundraising campaign. We would like to thank all of those who contributed to the appeal.

We would also like to thank all of those who participated in the auctioning of Aliyos during the Yamim Noarim and Simchas Torah.

All proceeds go to fund the Kollel Yungeleit in their studies and teaching Torah and Chassidus within our community.

DOR LEDOR SUMMER

The Summer Dor Ledor program begins this Shabbos. Fathers and boys are invited to join us at 6:30pm in the ORZ Mezzanine.

Engaging learning, stories, nush and prizes.

A selection of learning materials are provided.



Rabbi Gordon's Wednesday night Nach shiur

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Assistance through opposition

After creating Adam and placing him in Gan Eden, Hashem says "it is not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper for him." This helper would become Chava, Adam's wife and life partner.

In the original text, the helper is described as "*Eizer Knegdo*". The word *Eizer* means a helper. But the word *Knegdo* means to be opposite or against him. The Torah describes Chava's relationship to Adam in a dual and paradoxical function – she is a helper but she is opposite him.

Rashi explains that if man is worthy, she will be a helpmate. But if he is not worthy, she will be opposite him to fight him.

In Torah Or, the Alter Rebbe presents a deeper explanation of the words *Eizer Knegdo*, in which the two terms are not alternate modes. Rather they are one simultaneous experience of assistance and opposition – or better put, the assistance that comes from opposition.

On the verse "Ki Shemesh Umagen Hashem Elokim" (Tehillim 84:12), Chassidus explains that the two different names of Hashem in the Posuk represent two different modes of Divine manifestation. These modes are likened to the sun (Shemesh) and a shield (Magen) respectively.

The name Havayah (Y-H-V-H) represents absolute revelation of Hashem's infinite light – the Or Ein Sof. This light is the source of Creation. However, in order to bring the worlds into existence so that they can exist as an independent reality, the light needed to be contracted, otherwise existence would be overwhelmed by the revelation.

This contraction is described as Tzimtzum, referring to the concealment which acts like a shield to limit the intensity of the Divine light, so that it can bring the finite reality into being. The source of the Tzimtzum is from the name Elokim, which shields the Divine light of Havayah.

It would seem that the creation of our world is a descent, marked by a reduction in G-dly revelation. But in truth, it is the Tzimtzum that allows us to access the deepest levels of G-dliness which is beyond even the lofty light of Havayah.

Through the process of Tzimtzum, Hashem created

the world מ'אין שום - something from nothing. The purpose and intent of this creation is that through our Avodah we transform the ש' back into א'ן, surrendering the something-ness and independence of the world back to a state of oneness of Hashem.

When we reveal G-dliness within the concealment of the Tzimtzum, surrendering the independent and separate nature of the world to G-d's will, this creates a tremendous delight Above as it actualises the purpose and intent of Creation – to make our lowly finite world into a dwelling place for Hashem.

Chassidus illustrates this idea with the metaphor of a mirror. Unlike a window or transparent glass that allows the light to shine through uninterrupted, the mirror has a backing that obstructs the flow of light.

But this backing or coating creates a deeper affect. Instead of the light shining through, it reflects off of the coating to create a reflection. The coating allows us to see behind and beyond ourselves, something which would not be possible were it not for the obstruction.

This is the inner meaning of Hashem describing Chava as an *Eizer Knegdo* – assistance that comes through opposition.

The revelation of Havayah which is beyond the worlds is described as the male aspect of the Divine light. The G-dliness which is limited and channelled into the world as a result of the Tzimtzum (Elokim) is the feminine dimension (also described as the Shechina).

The feminine component of Tzimtzum creates a *Knegdo* – it is an oppositional force that conceals the revealed masculine light. But this *Knegdo* is an *Eizer*, facilitating the opportunity to reach greater and deeper levels than could otherwise be attained.

This explanation provides us with a lesson on how to view the challenges and difficulties that we face in life.

Difficult and challenging situations or facing opposition should not be seen as a negative. Neither should conflict or relationships challenges. On the contrary, challenge and adversity can be a catalyst for growth. They help us to bring out deeper strengths and potentials that, in their absence, we would never have been able to realise.

Can I Attend an Open-House Inspection on Shabbos?

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

In Kiddush on Shabbos day we quote the Posuk from the Novi Yishaya¹ ממצוא חפצריך ודבר דבר, "You shall honour it (Shabbos) by... refraining from pursuing your affairs and from speaking profane things".

Chaza"l² explain that "refraining from pursuing your affairs" means that on Shabbos one is not allowed to do anything to procure or see to their affairs, even if this action does not violate any Shabbos prohibition.

This applies if the action being done on Shabbos is in order to do something after Shabbos that would be forbidden to do on Shabbos itself, either Biblically or Rabbinically.

The Alter Rebbe³ explains that the rationale behind the prohibition of ממצוא חפצריך is that one is occupying themselves on Shabbos with something which is forbidden to do on Shabbos. This is a *zilzul Shabbos*. These Halochas are discussed in Orach Chaim 306.

Talmudic Examples

Rashi⁴ brings the example from Mesechta Eiruvim⁵ that on Shabbos one may not go into their field to see what work needs to be done after Shabbos.

Similarly one may not wait at the edge of the city to be closer to the bathhouse for use after Shabbos (since bathing in hot water is forbidden on Shabbos)⁶.

Another examples brought in Rishonim⁷ is to walk inside the city to find a wagon or boat to hire after Shabbos (hiring and travelling are both forbidden to do on Shabbos).

Under the prohibition of ממצוא חפצריך, one may not be *Machshich Al Hatechum* i.e. walk to the edge of the *Techum* (approx. 1km outside of the city limits) on Shabbos and wait there until after Shabbos (dark). This is only if their intention is to go beyond the *Techum* for a forbidden purpose such as hiring workers or cutting fruits⁸.

Conditions for ממצוא חפצריך to apply

1. It must be for something that is forbidden to do on Shabbos

As mentioned above, the prohibition only applies when the action being done on Shabbos is for something which would be forbidden to be done on Shabbos.

If one's intention is for something permissible, even if others would interpret it as being

for a forbidden purpose, ממצוא חפצריך does not apply⁹.

2. It must be recognisable as being done for a forbidden purpose

If the action is likely to be interpreted as being for a permissible purpose, it is not subject to the ממצוא חפצריך¹⁰. The Gemora's case of walking in one's field refers to a field which evidently needs ploughing or other forbidden activity.

Since in Talmudic times bathhouses were built on the outskirts of the city. Waiting at the edge of the city evidences the intention is to go to the bathhouse straight after Shabbos.

The case of finding a wagon or boat is also only where it is recognisable, for example at the port or in a known/designated wagon depot.

Otherwise, walking in the city or field (even if the intention is for preparing for something forbidden) is permissible since people will assume that the individual is merely going for a walk.

The definitions of being recognisable is determined by what the average person think. If the action would be "recognisable" it will be forbidden, even if there are no people around to see.

3. No Heter exists to be able to do thing on Shabbos itself

A final condition is that if there would be a Heter to do the activity on Shabbos itself, the prohibition of ממצוא חפצריך will not apply. This is so even if the Heter exists only in theory but not in reality. This is best understood through example: Travelling to the end of the *Techum* to bring in merchandise after Shabbos is permissible since if there would be walls, the carrying would be permissible on Shabbos¹¹.

Modern day examples

Going into one's office on Shabbos: Aruch Hashulchan¹² writes that one cannot go into their factory to see what is needed. The same would apply with any other business or office. Entering a home office would not be "recognisable" as for a forbidden purpose, unless one is looking at paperwork etc¹³.

Taxi or bus stop: Walking to a bus, train or taxi stop to leave straight after Shabbos would be permissible if it is not recognisable as being for travel (but rather a Shabbos walk). However one cannot enter or wait in the station or bus stop as this would be recognisable¹⁴.

Window browsing: Shopping is forbidden on

Shabbos. Therefore, one may not window browse on Shabbos if their intention is to buy and the window browsing is recognisable as being with the intention to buy. If one has no intention of buying it is permissible. However one cannot read price tags¹⁵.

Open house inspections: Based on the discussion above we can conclude that one may not enter an open house inspection on Shabbos. Buying or renting a house is forbidden on Shabbos and therefore entering a house to inspect on Shabbos violates ממצוא חפצריך as it is clearly recognisable as being for that purpose¹⁶.

Reading "for sale" signs and billboards is forbidden under an additional Rabbinic *issur* of שטררי השיטות which restricts reading material on Shabbos.

Exceptions

Since the Novi uses the term ממצוא חפצריך, we learn that only *your* affairs are forbidden, but ממצוא חפצריך שמיים, affairs of Heaven are permissible. This refers to something being done for the sake of a Mitzvah or for the needs of the community¹⁷.

Therefore, if the house purchase or rental is for a Mitzvah e.g. a Shul, Beis Medrash or Mikva, one may technically inspect on Shabbos. Similarly buying land in Eretz Yisroel from a non-Jew is also a Mitzvah and therefore one may visit inspections¹⁸.

*For practical application of these Halachos please contact your local Rav.

¹ Yishaya 58:13

² Shabbos 113a and 150a. The Acharonim discuss whether this Issur is Divrei Kabbalah or Rabbinic.

³ OC 306:5

⁴ Shabbos 113a

⁵ Eiruvim 39a

⁶ ibid

⁷ Mordechai Shabbos 24:449. See Beis Yosef 306 and Ram"o 306:1

⁸ Mishna 150a. Tur and Shulchan Aruch 306 and 307. See Alter Rebbe 307:3 in brackets, that the prohibition applies even if one is merely travelling towards the *Techum* on Shabbos but does not reach the edge.

⁹ Aruch Hashulchan (306:5) explains that this is because the prohibition is not one of causing suspicion.

¹⁰ This is derived from the principle in the Gemora דבור אסור הרהור, דבור מותר, i.e. only if it is recognisable like the spoken word as opposed to hidden thoughts.

¹¹ For an explanation why a theoretical Heter suffices, see Shulchan Aruch Harav 307:15

¹² 306:3

¹³ Additionally this would violate a Rabbinic decree of שטררי הדיוטות which restricts reading materials on Shabbos,

¹⁴ See Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchasa volume 3

¹⁵ This is also due to the decree of שטררי הדיוטות

¹⁶ See Badei Hashulchan 107:5

¹⁷ See Talmud Shabbos 150a and Shulchan Aruch 306

¹⁸ Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchasa 29. Even in these cases where it is halachically permissible, there may be other considerations including public perception and misinterpretation by those who are not proficient in the halachos.