



פרשת נח

מרחשון תשפ"א

MONDAY NIGHT CHASSIDUS

Join Rabbi Johnson on Monday nights for a taste of the Chassidische Parsha.

Learn Chumash Bereishis through the eyes of the Alter Rebbe as we delve into the mystical explanation of the Parsha from the Alter Rebbe's classic work, Torah Ohr.

Mondays 8:30-9:30pm

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TUESDAY NIGHT PARSHA WITH RABBI BROH

Join master-teacher Rabbi Leor Broh for a shiur on the weekly Parsha.

Insights from the classic commentaries and Chassidische Seferim.

Tuesdays 8:30-9:30pm

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WEDNESDAY NIGHT NACH WITH RABBI GORDON

Discover the richness of Navi with Rabbi Yossi Gordon.

Learn about the stories and personalities through the teaching of the Midrash and our sages.

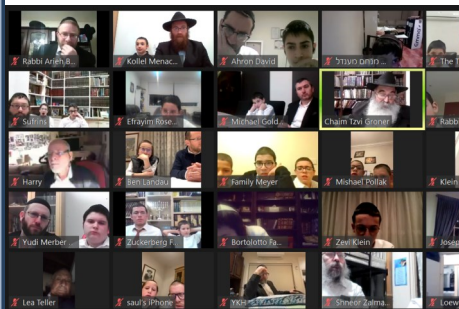
Wednesdays 8:30-9:30pm

Zoom ID 964 8806 3547

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RETIRES SHIUR

The daily retirees shiurim will be resuming again. Join Rabbi Szmerling for a Gemara shiur. Followed by Rabbi Mendel Gurkov on Sefer Hachinuch. Monday-Thursday 10:00am.

**In this Edition**The rainbow paradox **P.1**Leaning in Tachanun without a Sefer Torah **P.2****The rainbow paradox**

The rainbow's status in Judaism is paradoxical. We are introduced to the rainbow in Parshas Noach as the sign of Hashem's covenant never to destroy the earth by flood again. Should Hashem consider to bring darkness and destruction upon the world, the appearance of a rainbow within the clouds would cause Him to withhold the destructive flood waters.

If so, the rainbow seems to indicate G-d's displeasure. Indeed in perfectly righteous generations such as that of king Chizkiyahu and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, the rainbow never appeared.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Gemara teaches that one who stares at a rainbow, is not concerned for the honour of His Creator and he should never have been born.

This statement is based on the Prophet Yechezkel's vision of Maaseh Hamerkava which describes 'like the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Hashem.' The rainbow's appearance signifies the Divine countenance which should not be gazed upon.

The Rishonim pose an obvious question: If the rainbow is a natural phenomenon caused by atmospheric conditions, surely it was present before the flood as well?

The Ibn Ezra concludes that these atmospheric conditions that produce the rainbow only emerged after the flood. This physical change was caused by an underlying spiritual change.

Chassidus explains that the Flood, which acted as a Mikvah, added a new dimension into creation – man's ability to refine and purify the world.

Prior to the flood the focus of creation was a utopian world created by G-d. When man failed to maintain this utopian state, punishment and destruction was forthcoming.

Only after the flood does G-d say 'I will no longer curse the earth because of man'. Instead, G-d would leave things to man to rectify through his own efforts, through the service of Teshuvah.

This change gave rise to the rainbow. The rainbow is produced when sunlight is refracted through mist within the clouds. Sunlight represents the G-dly energy that shines from Above. Clouds, produced from evaporating water from the earth's surface represent man's activities within the world.

Our sinful actions are like dark clouds which block out the Divine light. When our actions are of a refining nature the clouds too become 'refined', drawing an even higher level of G-dliness into the world. The result of this Teshuvah is the rainbow - the refraction of the Divine countenance (as described by Yechezkel) within our world.

On seeing a rainbow we bless Hashem for remembering His covenant. We are grateful not only that He will not destroy the world, but for the gift which the rainbow signifies: that no matter how corrupt things may seem or how low we have fallen, we have the ability to rectify our deeds and the world in which we live and connect to Hashem in an even deeper, more meaningful way than before.

The Zohar says that one should not look for the footsteps of Moshiach until he sees a rainbow with shining colours. Chaza"l teach that we will be redeemed through Teshuvah. Our Teshuvah and efforts in elevating this world are the necessary conditions to produce this brilliant rainbow which will herald in the Messianic utopia.

- See Shulchan Aruch Harav 131:1
- Siman 324
- 6:7
- 131:2
- There is a difference in that the Posuk in Shoftim does not mention the Ark of Hashem
- This proof is not definitive as it may refer to a home where a Sefer Torah was present
- OC 131:7
- 131:3
- Perhaps he words it this way because the Ta"z follows the Mechaber
- 131:1
- See Nimukei Orach Chaim (Munkacz) that there are different understandings of the position according to Kabbalah.
- 131:3
- 131:10
- Quoted in Darkei Moshe 131
- 131:6
- Levushei Srad.
- 131:13
- Piskei Teshuvos 131:12
- Agur quoted in Darkei Moshe
- Pesachim 85b
- 131:7
- 22:24:1
- Eshel Avraham 131:5
- Igros Moshe OC 4:21
- 131:5
- 26:5:20:5
- Chut Shani Yomtov, Inyanim 10
- He writes that when he was young, in many places in Europe the children were not taught to say Tachanun, even those who already knew a number of Mesechtos!

The weekly Halacha analysis

Leaning in Tachanun without a Sefer Torah

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

The technical Halachic and Talmudic name for the Tefillah of Tachanun is Nefilas Apayim – literally ‘falling on one’s face’.

In the times of Chaza”l and the Rishonim, Nefilas Apayim involved actually bowing down with their face to the ground. This could be done either with stretching out one’s hands and feet or by kneeling on the ground.

Nowadays, due to a number of Halachic concerns, the custom is not to bow with one’s face to the ground. Instead, we lean our heads on our arm and cover our face.

When there is no Sefer Torah present

The Rokeach writes that we only ‘fall on our face’ in the presence of a Sefer Torah. As support, he quotes a Posuk from Sefer Yehoshua at the battle of Ai “and Yehoshua tore his clothes and fell on his face on the ground before the Ark of Hashem...”

This opinion is recorded by both the Ram”o in Darkei Moshe and by the Beis Yosef. The Beis Yosef writes that if this is a received tradition (Kabbalah), we accept it. But if not, it can be easily argued against.

In the Shulchan Aruch, the Mechaber writes about Nefilas Apaim and does not make any distinction on whether it applies only in the presence of a Sefer Torah or not. However, the Ram”o brings the opinion of the Rokeach as Halacha.

The Ta”z challenges the opinion of the Rokeiach and his source. He quotes from the account of the Pilegish Begivah “and they cried and repented before Hashem”. We do not say that crying and repentance may only be done in the presence of the Sefer Torah (before Hashem). So too, the use of “before Hashem” has no consequence in the verse of Yehoshua either.

He also brings a case discussed by the Rosh as proof that one does Nefilas Apayim even at home.

In contrast, the Magen Avraham follows the position of the Ram”o who rules like the Rokeiach. The Alter Rebbe adopts the ruling of the Ram”o and Magen Avraham, however he describes this as Yesh Nohagin, that there are those whose custom is to only do Nefilas Apayim in the presence of a Sefer Torah.

Siddur HaAriza”l writes that one should fall on their face even when there is no Sefer Torah present. However, this only applies to a person who is known to be pious and follow the ways

of Kabbalah. Birkei Yosef writes that we follow the opinion of the Mechaber and fall on our face even when there is no Sefer Torah present and that this accords with the teachings of Kabbalah.

The Ezras Nashim and adjacent rooms

The Magen Avraham rules that even though for other Halachos the Ezras Nashim is not considered as being in the same room, for the purpose of Nefilas Apayim is has the same status as being in the Shule. The Alter Rebbe writes that this applies even if the door between them is closed.

Aruch Hashulchan writes that people who are in small rooms that are adjacent to the Shule or Beis Medrash do Nefilas Apayim. This is like the Ezras Nashim.

In the courtyard of the Shule

The Mahari”l writes that in the courtyard of a Shule one does Nefilas Apayim if the door of the Shule is open. If the door is closed, they recite Tachanun with their face uncovered for it is as though they were at home.

The Ta”z qualifies that this is only where one can see the doorway from where they are standing. If one was on the sides of the courtyard they do not fall on their face even if the door is open. The Alter Rebbe does not bring this qualification of the Ta”z.

Mishna Berura writes further that this will also only apply if from one’s angle they can see the Aron Kodesh through the door.

If the door is open but there is a curtain in front, Daas Torah rules that we still do Nefilas Apayim. If one can see the Aron Kodesh through a window which is open or has clear glass, they do Nefilas Apayim.

Davening at the time of the Tzibbur

Darkei Moshe quotes Mahar”l Molin that if one is davening at home at the same time that the Tzibbur is davening, it is considered as if he was with them in the Shule in the presence of the Aron Hakodesh. Therefore, they can say Tachanun while covering their face.

This is because we apply the principle that even a Mechtzah of iron cannot separate between a Jew and their Father in Heaven. Based on this Elya Rabbah writes that this applies even if the door of the Shule is closed.

Levush writes that he never saw this practised. It could be that the leniency only applies when the person’s house is next to the Shule and can

hear them. However, the other Acharonim do not make this distinction.

Magen Avraham writes that one has to be saying Tachanun at the same time that the Tzibbur is saying Tachanun. However the Ta”z writes it is sufficient to be davening at the same time as the Tzibbur is davening. The Aruch Hashulchan follows the Ta”z. However, the Alter Rebbe explicitly rules like the Magen Avraham.

Ketzos Hashulchan writes that one may only do Nefilas Apayim at home together with the Tzibbur if no Makom Metunaf (a disgusting place where one is forbidden to daven) separates between one’s home and the Shule.

Pri Megadim quotes Elya Rabbah that when one says Tachanun without falling on their face, for example one who is davening in their home, it may be said while standing.

Sefer Torah Pasul

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein writes that since we do not fall on our faces in the original manner of bowing, we can do Nefilas Apayim even in the presence of a Sefer Torah which is Pasul.

Other Seforim

Elya Rabbah records the opinion of Shayarei Kneses Hagedolah that other Seforim have the same status as a Sefer Torah.

The Elya Rabbah writes that he has not seen this practised. Further, in every home, one would be in the presence of the Mezuzah, so why would one not do Nefilas Apayim? He also points out that the Posuk which is the source of the Rokeiach’s ruling refers to the Aron Hakodesh which contained a Sefer Torah.

Kaf Hachayim rules like Elya Rabbah that we do not perform Nefilas Apaim when there are only Seforim present.

However, many of the contemporary Poskim rule like the Shayarei Kneses Hagedolah, including the Igros Moshe. Rabbi Nissim Karelitz likewise writes that one may do Nefilas Apayim in the presence of other Seforim. However, he qualifies that this is only where the Seforim are kept in a permanent manner such as in a designated bookshelf.

Chinuch

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein rules that for the purpose of Chinuch we can allow children to do Nefilas Apaim even where there is no Sefer Torah or even Seforim present, relying on the ruling of the Mechaber.