



פרשת ואתחנן

שבת נחמו

מנחם אב תש"פ

BEIS HAMIKDASH EVENING MOTZAI SHABBOS

COVID-19 didn't stop this annual tradition. On Motzai Shabbos, over 70 devices logged in to this year's Beis Hamikdash learning evening to learn about the Beis Hamikdash before Tisha B'av. 2 quality shiurim were given by Rabbi Yossi Gordon and Rabbi Aryeh Knapp.

NEW SERIES: FROM CONCEALED TO REVEALED

Join us for the Monday night Chasidus shiur with Rabbi Y. Johnson.

Studying a Maamar from the great Chossid Reb Hillel Paritcher

The sequence of the Haftorahs from the Three Weeks through to Yom Kippur help us understand how we transition from the ultimate concealment to the ultimate revelation. And how our times of suffering may just be the beginnings of the greatest blessings.

Monday 8:30pm. Starts this week

Meeting ID: 838 2804 6702

Passcode: 613

DAILY SIYUMIM

In keeping with the Rebbe's directives, we will continue our nightly Siyumim up until the 15th of Av. 7:00pm daily. Thank you to all of those who have given Siyumim.

Meeting ID: 871 8350 3530

Password: 613

CHOF AV PROGRAM

Save the date. On Sunday August 9 - Av 20, join us for a shiur in the teachings of the Rebbe's father, with guest speaker Rabbi Dubov.



Cover of Kollel's new LIFT publication

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The double comfort of Nachamu

This Shabbos is called Shabbos Nachamu, the Shabbos of comfort after the day of Tisha B'av when we mourn the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash and the tragic descent of our people into the suffering of golus.

This week's Haftorah is the first of 7 Haftorahs of comfort to the Jewish people in their state of golus and assuring them that Hashem will bring them back to Eretz Yisroel with the Geulah.

It opens with the famous words נחמו נחמו עמי. Hashem tells the Novi Yeshaya "Comfort, comfort My people says your G-d. Speak to the heart of Yerushalayim... for she has received double for all her sins."

Because the Jewish people were punished double-fold for their sins, Hashem comforts them with a double measure of comfort, Nachamu Nachamu.

The Tiferes Shlomo of Radomsk gives a beautiful explanation of the true comfort that these words provide in times of difficulty;

The destruction of the Beis Hamikdash and the ensuing Golus led to great suffering for the Jewish people. For close to 2000 years, we have suffered poverty and oppression, and the taunts of those who mock and denigrate us. A golus of the body.

But there is a spiritual suffering that comes with golus that make it that much more difficult to bear. Not only have we been exiled and suffer physically, we are plagued with the feeling that Hashem has forsaken and abandoned us. Does Hashem still desire our service? Does he still hear our prayers? Perhaps because of our sins He no longer finds favour in our Avodah of Torah and Mitzos and He has pulled away.

Suffering is terrible enough. But to feel that we are going through it alone, without Hashem by our side, is all the more painful.

The first and foremost comfort that a Navi or Tzaddik can give in the time of golus is to reassure us that Hashem is present with us wherever we are. Despite everything, He still desires our Avodah and He still hears all of our prayers. He is present alongside us through everything we experience, close at hand and suffering together with us.

One of the greatest G-dly visions ever experienced was the Nevua of Yechezkel of the Merkava, the Diving Throne with all of its angels. Where did this vision take place? Not in Yerushalayim, not even in Eretz Yisroel. Yechezkel says that he received this vision when "I was amongst the exile by the river Chvar... in the land of the Kasdim (Babylon)".

This vision was a comfort to his fellow Jews in exile. Here, in our place of tears, suffering and banishment, Hashem with His hosts of angels is with us.

We find a similar idea in the very first Exile that the Jewish people experienced, the slavery in Egypt. Before passing away Yosef said "I will die in this land. But פקוד יפקוד, Hashem will remember you and take you out of this land". פקוד is in present tense, יפקוד is in future tense.

The term פקוד is used by our sages to describe the union between husband and wife. Yosef was telling the Jewish people that we may feel like we are dying in the suffering of exile, spiritually distant. But we should know that Hashem says that even in golus, He is constantly united with us. He is with us now פקוד, and so too He will be with us יפקוד when He redeems us.

Right now while we are suffering in Golus and Hashem's presence is not revealed, we don't feel or sense this closeness or union. Hashem sends His Neviim and Tzaddikim to comfort us that the reality is not how we perceive it.

The double punishment for their sins refers to the two facets of the pain of Golus; the suffering of the body, our physical travails, and the spiritual trauma of doubts that Hashem is no longer with us, no longer desires us and does not hear our prayers

Hashem sends Yishaya to deliver a double comfort נחמו נחמו, for both of these afflictions.

Usually Neviim conclude their message with נאום ה', "says the Lord". In these words of comfort, Yishaya concludes אמר אלליכם "says your G-d". Yishaya is consoling us, that despite our sins, despite the fact that we have been punished and sent into golus, Hashem is your G-d. He is with us, helping us through, hearing our prayers and waiting to take us home.

The weekly Halacha analysis

Tearing on Shabbos; foil, toilet paper and plastic tablecloths

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

The Shulchan Aruch¹ rules that on Shabbos one may not break earthenware or tear paper because this is like *מתקן כלי* - making a (useable) item on Shabbos. This refers to a situation where the act of tearing makes the paper into a useable item e.g. silver foil or toilet paper. Making a vessel is a derivative of the Melocha of *בפטיש* מכה.

The Mishna Berura² notes that this Halacha is referring to a situation where one is not tearing (or cutting) to a specific size. If one were to tear something to a specific size, one would also violate the Melocha of *מחתך*.

What About קורע - Tearing?

If one tears the paper for a useable purpose, the Mishna Berura writes that one also transgresses the Biblical Melocha of *קורע* - tearing. If the tearing does not serve a constructive purpose, it is would only be Rabbinically forbidden.

The Mishna Berura³ and Pri Megadim therefore question why the Shulchan Aruch makes no mention of the prohibition of tearing in this Halacha?

The Alter Rebbe⁴ explains that the Shulchan Aruch's omission is because tearing paper does not constitute *קורע* at all! The Melocha of *קורע* only applies when separating multiple things (גופים רבים) that were attached or stuck together.

A single piece of paper is one solid object (גוף אחד) and therefore tearing it would not be *קורע*. Since fabric is woven from multiple threads, tearing material would be *קורע*.

The Alter Rebbe brings proof for this position from a Tosefta⁵, which says that on Shabbos one may tear an opening in the leather covering over a barrel. We see that there is no concern of *קורע*, because leather, like paper is also a *גוף אחד*.

The Alter Rebbe's position is also held by the Tehillah Ledovid⁶, Ketzos Hashulchan and Pische Zuta. It is also suggested in the Nishmas Adam⁷. It is also implied in the Shulchan Aruch⁸ in the very next halacha that separating papers which are stuck together (for a constructive purpose) is a Toldah of *קורע*.

The Mishna Berura⁹ challenges the Alter Rebbe's position based on a Yerushalmi. However

Ketzos Hashulchan¹⁰ rigorously defends the Alter Rebbe's definition of *קורע*.

Making a Useable Item

Whereas the Poskim debate the issue of *קורע*, there is consensus on the Shulchan Aruch's ruling that when the tearing of the paper creates a useable item, this is forbidden as *מתקן כלי*.

According to the Mishna Berura the prohibition here is only Rabbinic. Whilst creating an actual vessel is Biblically forbidden, here no actual vessel *כלי* has been created, but only something that can be used *כלי*. There is no difference whether it is cut by hand or with an implement (e.g. scissors or knife).

However the Alter Rebbe rules that as long as a useable item is being created, there is a Biblical prohibition of *מתקן כלי*. The Biblical prohibition applies only if the paper is cut with an implement. Tearing by hand is Rabbinically forbidden.

Practical Examples

Silver Foil and Cling Wrap: Tearing silver foil or cling wrap from the roll makes the foil/wrap into a useable item. Therefore this would be *מתקן כלי*. If one were to cut it with a knife or using the serrated edge of the box this would be Biblically forbidden according to the Alter Rebbe. (According to the Mishna Berura there will also be the prohibition of *קורע*). The same would apply to tearing paper towel off the roll.

Tearing Toilet Paper: The above would also apply to tearing toilet paper since the tearing makes the paper into a useable item.

If toilet paper was not pre-torn before Shabbos, one may tear the toilet paper with a *shinui* e.g. with one's elbows¹¹. This relies on the principle that *כבוד הבריות*, human dignity, overrides Rabbinic prohibitions¹².

There are Poskim who write that one should still be careful to not tear on the perforated lines of the toilet paper since this would be considered *מחתך*, cutting to a specific size.

Others, including Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, rule that this would not constitute *מחתך* since tearing on the line is not done for the measure but for convenience. Some suggest that tearing on the lines may also be treated

like cutting with an implement (since this is the usual manner) and therefore Biblically forbidden *מתקן כלי* according to the Alter Rebbe.

Cutting plastic tablecloths: Cutting plastic tablecloths from the roll is also forbidden on Shabbos because of *מתקן כלי* (and according to the Mishna Berura it is also *קורע*). Cutting to a specifically required measurement would also be *מחתך*.

Asking a non-Jew to cut these tablecloths would be forbidden under the laws of *אמירה לנכרי*. According to the view of the Alter Rebbe that tearing by hand is only Rabbinically forbidden, some Poskim¹³ suggest that one may ask a non-Jew to tear the tablecloths by hand. This relies on the principle of *שבות מצוה*, since there is a halachic requirement or at least a minhag for tables to be covered on Shabbos. One should not rely on this *lechatchila*.

Tearing paper/napkins etc.: When tearing is not for the purpose of creating a useable item, according to the Alter Rebbe this would not be forbidden as *קורע* does not apply in a *גוף אחד*. According to the Mishna Berura there is still Rabbinically forbidden *קורע*.

Opening chip bags: The sides of the bag have been sealed together. Separating them may constitute *קורע* according to the Alter Rebbe. Some Poskim are lenient when the bags are heat sealed since there is no glue.

Cereal boxes: Unsticking the tabs on the top of the cereal box would constitute *קורע* according to the Alter Rebbe. The box should rather be cut open (along the side so as not to make the box into a useable container). ■

¹ OC 340:13

² 340:41

³ 340 Biur Halacha אין שוברין

⁴ OC 340:17 in brackets. See also 314:16

⁵ Shabbos 17:9

⁶ 340:11 who explains that this is also the view of the Chacham Tzvi Teshuvos 39. See also Tehillah Ledovid 314:13

⁷ Shabbos 29:5. The Mishna Berura writes that the Nishmas Adam retracted from this view.

⁸ 340:14

⁹ Biur Halacha ibid

¹⁰ 145:4

¹¹ According to the Alter Rebbe a *shinui* may not be required as tearing by hand is only Rabbinically forbidden. Nonetheless a *shinui* is still advisable.

¹² See OC 312

¹³ Nishmas Hashabbos