



פרשת וירא

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

Zoom: 838 2804 6702

Password: 613

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

Zoom: 842 1925 6023

Password: 613

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

Password 613

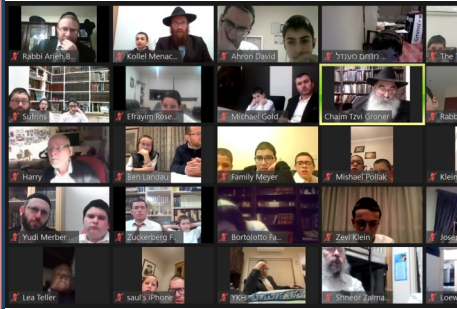
RETIRES SHIUR

The daily retirees shiurim will be resuming again in person this week.

Join Rabbi Szmerling for a Gemara shiur. Followed by Rabbi Mendel Gurkov on Sefer Hachinuch. Monday-Thursday 10:00am.

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא **חידוש** Chiddush

**In this Edition**Before you pass judgement... **P.1**Halachos for travelling - part 2 **P.2****Before you pass judgment...**

We are all judges and we pass judgement all the time. Our subjective perspective on any given event or interaction, leads us to make a judgement on how we interpret and therefore respond to the incident.

Before destroying the cities of Sodom and Amora. Hashem says **אֲרַדָּה נָא וְאֶרְאֶה הַכַּעֲקֵתָהּ הַבְּאֵה אֵלַי עֹשׂ כָּלָה** "I will descend and see; if they have acted in accordance with the outcry that has come to Me - then destruction".

Why does Hashem say "let me go down and see". Hashem is everywhere, so why does He say 'let me go down'? Further, Hashem is all-knowing, yet the Posuk implies that Hashem 'needs' to go down to observe.

The Alter Rebbe presents a fascinating explanation to answer these questions. As a preface we need to understand some fundamental Chassidic concepts.

Kabbalah distinguishes between 2 of Hashem's Middos; the Attribute of Judgement (**מִדַּת הַדִּין**) and the Attribute of Compassion (**מִדַּת הַרַחֲמִימִים**).

The Attribute of Din, a manifestation of Gevurah, is likened to fire which rises up from below to above. The Middas Harachamim is from the side of Chesed, which is like water which flows from above to below.

In Kabbalah, Chesed is connected to sight and Gevurah is connected to the sense of hearing.

Based on this, the 'cry that comes to Me' from Sodom is the accusation of the Attribute of Judgement. It rises from below to above and is described as a sound that is heard on High.

The attribute of judgement looks at the facts of the case with a critical eye, looking to find fault and ascribe blame.

Before passing judgement, Hashem says "let Me go down and see". Let me look at the from the perspective of Middas Harachamim. The Attribute of Compassion seeks to find the redeeming quality, to find a justification and the be Melamed Zechus.

Hashem is saying that it may be possible to be Melamed Zechus on the people of Sodom, to judge them favourably and not have to punish them. Only if their sins are so great that even Middas Hachessed

cannot be Melamed Zechus for them, only then they will have to be punished.

Before bringing the Flood upon the earth to destroy mankind, Hashem said "every product of the thoughts of his heart was always only evil." After the Flood, Hashem said that He will no longer destroy the world because "the inclination of man is evil from his youth."

What changed? Before the Flood man's evil was a reason to destroy him, but after the Flood the very same reason of man's evil was seen as a reason for not destroying.

Chassidus explains that before the Flood, Hashem interacted with the world through the Attribute of Din. But after Noach's Korbanos, the Attribute of Compassion was awakened and man's evil nature became a reason for understanding and compassion.

We see from this that the same set of facts can be interpreted in different ways, depending on which lens we use to look at them.

When it comes to our own faults and wrongdoings, or those of our family and friends, we tend look to justify and be Melamed Zechus; There must be mitigating factors, there must be some explanation, they surely didn't mean it...

But when it comes to others, we are more predisposed to jump to conclusions and pass the castigating judgment of Middas Hadin.

On this Posuk, Chaza"l (as quoted in Rashi) teach that a judge in a capital offense may not rule on the case without first seeing. The intent is that they must examine the case carefully. But why do they use the word "seeing"?

Chaza"l are telling us that like Hashem, a judge must approach each case with the lens of Chesed.

This message is not just for Dayanim. It is a guide for each of us when we pass judgement on other's and interpret the realities in our lives.

If this is how Hashem treated the people of Sodom whom the Torah describes as people who are exceedingly wicked and sinful, certainly we can all do the same in our interactions with others.

To learn more of the Alter Rebbe's insights, join the Monday night Chassidus class. Details in the left column.

The weekly Halacha analysis

Halachos for travelling - Part 2

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

Tefillas Haderech

When one travels on a journey, they should recite Tefillas Haderech. It is both taking permission from Hashem to leave and also a request for protection along the way.

Tefillas Haderech is recited when travelling more than 4km beyond the city limits. This is because it is generally only considered dangerous when travelling beyond 4km.

If one travels less than this distance, they may recite Tefillas Haderech without the concluding Bracha. If one travels in place that is known to be a dangerous place, they must recite Tefillas Haderech even when travelling less than 4km beyond the city.

Even one who is travelling to do a Mitzvah, (where we apply the principle "Shluvei Mitzvah will not be harmed"), still recites Tefillas Haderech.

Tefillas Haderech is recited whether one is travelling by foot, car, boat, plane or any other mode of transportation.

It is preferable to stop one's car to recite Tefillas Haderech. Some Poskim require Tefillas Haderech to be said while standing however based on the Alter Rebbe, it is sufficient to stop the vehicle on/in which one is riding.

If stopping is not possible or would be dangerous (e.g. on a highway), Tefillas Haderech may be recited while driving. Technically, the above applies to the driver and passengers may always recite Tefillas Haderech while driving. Nonetheless, there is a Hiddur Mitzvah for each person to say Tefillas Haderech while standing.

Tefillas Haderech should be recited only after one has left (approximately 35 metres beyond) the city limits. It is preferable to recite Tefillas Haderech immediately at this point.

There are differing opinions whether one can be Yotzai by hearing Tefillas Haderech from someone else or whether each traveller must recite it for themselves. Therefore, it is preferable for each individual to recite it personally.

Tefillas Haderech is only recited once each day. If one stays overnight in a city and continues his journey on the following day, some Poskim require Tefillas Haderech to be recited again. If a person is merely in transit or will be travel-

ling through the night, Tefillas Haderech is only recited on the first day of travel.

The Alter Rebbe's ruling (Siddur) is that even when staying overnight (and certainly on a continuous journey), Tefillas Haderech is only recited on the first day of travel. On subsequent days it is recited each morning without Hashem's name in the conclusion.

Sefer Haminhagim notes that when away from home, even when staying in one place for many months, the Rebbe Rashab would recite Tefillas Haderech each day after Shachris without Hashem's name in the conclusion.

Since Tefillas Haderech does not begin with a Bracha, it is preferable to recite it immediately after another blessing; e.g. Asher Yotzar or a Bracha Achrona after eating. If this is not possible, one still recites Tefillas Haderech.

If Tefillas Haderech was not recited; as long as one has not reached within 4km of their destination, Tefillas Haderech should still be recited in full. Otherwise it should be said without Hashem's name in the conclusion.

When returning on the same day, the words ותחזירנו לשלום are added.

Davening on the Way

If one needs to daven while travelling, the following halachos apply;

One should be aware of the proper times for davening as they may change from place to place along the journey.

One should wash their hands and dress appropriately as per usual for davening.

Today with the various Phone apps, one can find a compass with which to determine the direction to face when davening. If one does not know the direction one should have kavanah in their heart to be davening directly to Hashem.

One should preferably stop their travelling and stand for davening Shemoneh Esrei.

It is preferable not to daven Shemoneh Esrei in an open area. Rather one should daven in or near a building or near trees or in a secluded area.

When travelling by train the Rebbe Rashab would stand, when traveling by carriage the Rebbe would sit while davening. The primary

issue is being able to have proper kavanah.

When davening Shemoneh Esrei while sitting, one should have the legs placed together. If possible one should rise when bowing during Shemoneh Esrei. One should also still take 3 steps back at the end of Shemoneh Esrei.

Technically, if one is unable to stop to daven the full Sheoneh Esrei while travelling, there is the possibility of davening an abridged Shemoneh Esrei referred to as Havineinu. For a number of reasons, the Acharonim write that we don't recite this instead of the full Shemoneh Esrei anymore.

Words of Torah

The Alter Rebbe rules that when travelling, once should speak words of Torah, as it says in the Shema ודברת במ... ובלכתך בדרך, "and you shall speak them (Torah)... when you go on the way".

If one is walking they should not learn in depth lest they lose focus on the road and get lost. The same would apply to a driver. Passengers in a car may learn in depth.

Pirkei Avos teaches that one who travels and turns his heart to idle matters (as opposed to thinking words of Torah), is liable for their life.

The Shela'h writes that it was the practise of Chassidim and Anshei Maaseh to have a Mesechta or Mishnayos to review by heart while travelling.

Kitzur Shulchan Aruch writes that one should say a few chapters of Tehillim each day while travelling, with Kavanah and a sense of submission to Hashem.

Kiddush Hashem

Whether we are away on holiday or out on a day-trip, we should always be aware that we represent Torah and Yiddishkeit.

Our conduct and interactions with others should be in a manner which ensures that שם ידך, bringing about a Kiddush Hashem and not the opposite.

This would include; politeness and Derech Eretz. It also applies in our driving and being courteous and patient on the road. One should also teach their children about making a Kiddush Hashem.