



פרשת בראשית

תשרי 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

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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

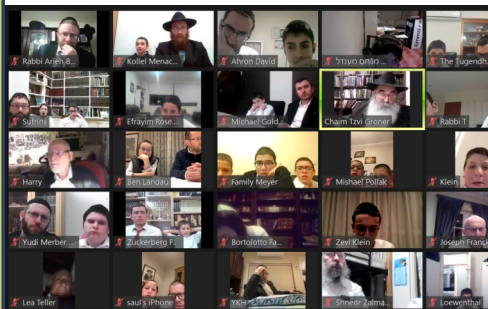
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RETIRESSES SHIUR

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.

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא **חידוש** Chiddush

**In this Edition**Why the Torah begins with a Beis **P.1**Opening the hood of a baby carriage **P.2****Why the Torah begins with a Beis**

Bereishis Bara Elokim, in the Beginning G-d created... The Torah's opening words form the very building blocks of creation. The Mystics teach that the very word Bereishis itself, contains within it all of the Torah's teachings.

We believe that every letter of Torah is integral and deliberate, this must especially be true of the Torah's very first letter, the letter Beis: Not only does it kick-off the Torah's narrative, but is also the letter through which G-d directed His creative energy.

Many sources have discussed why the Torah begins with the letter Beis and not with an Alef, the first letter of the Alef-Beis.

The introduction to the Zohar describes how each of the letters starting from Tav came before Hashem to present their case as to why they were worthy to be the opening letter of the Torah. Since their names bore negative allusions, they were deemed unsuitable candidates. Finally came the letter Beis. As the source of blessing (being the first letter of the word Beracha), Beis was chosen.

Little Alef had remained outside prompting Hashem to ask why he had not entered as had his fellow letters. 'Master of the World' said Alef, 'I saw each letter depart without being considered and thought: why would I (the starting letter of the word Arira - cursed) be any different? And after all, you have already given Beis this greatest of honours!'

'Do not worry' Hashem assured little Alef, 'It is you with your humility and oneness who is truly the head of all the other letters. Beis may be the opening letter of the Torah, but I have an even greater role for you to fulfil.'

For 26 generations Alef waited until Matan Torah when Hashem announced: Anochi Hashem Elokecha, I am the Lord your G-d - the first of the Ten Commandments.

The Torah has 2 dimensions: On one hand it is a wisdom to be studied and comprehended. However on a deeper level the Torah is a divine gift beyond comprehension which binds us to Hashem, the 'Giver of the Torah'.

The first dimension focuses on our individual capacities of study and understanding. The second aspect emphasizes humility and surrender.

By starting the Torah with the letter Beis, Hashem alludes to us that the intellectual dimension of Torah encapsulated in its words and meaning is of secondary importance.

Before the Beis of Bereishis must come the Alef - connection and surrender to the 'One'. This in turn gives meaning and inspiration to our study.

The Alef dimension is epitomised by the Ten Commandments, when Hashem revealed Himself to the entire Jewish people. They heard Hashem's voice and were utterly overwhelmed by the awesomeness of the experience.

Herein lies the uniqueness of the Jewish people's connection to Torah. The non-Jewish world may recognise the wisdom of the Torah but they have no inkling of its essence.

Chaza"l describe how king Ptolemy ordered 70 of the Sages of Eretz Yisroel to translate the Torah into Greek. To ensure that the translation would be authentic, he had each one placed in a separate room.

Hashem gave them each divine insight to make certain textual emendations so that the heathens would not distort the Torah to support their idolatrous beliefs. One of them was the opening Posuk:

Instead of writing Bereishis Bara Elokim, which may have been interpreted (G-d forbid) that a different deity called Bereishis created G-d, they rearranged the words to read Elokim Bara Bereishis.

Ptolmey's Greek Torah began with an Alef because it was one-dimensional. He appreciated the wisdom and philosophy of Torah, but that's all it was.

For us the written word of the Torah begins with a Beis. The Alef of Torah, lies within our souls - our inseparable connection to Hashem and His Torah.

Before we study Torah, we recite Birkas Hatorah, where we recognise Hashem as the 'Giver of the Torah' and affirm that the ultimate purpose of our study is to connect ourselves to Him on the deepest of levels.

The weekly Halacha analysis

Opening the hood of a baby carriage on Shabbos

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

Q. I know that you can't put up a tent or open an umbrella on Shabbos. But can I open and close the cover of my baby carriage?

A. The Shulchan Aruch¹ rules that one is not allowed to build an ohel (tent structure) on Shabbos. This prohibition applies when the ohel is constructed to be a roof to protect the area or those underneath it, from something be it rain or sun.

If the ohel is a permanent structure, erecting it would be biblically forbidden as a derivative (toldah) of the Melacha of boneh – building. Constructing a temporary ohel is rabbinically forbidden.

Adding to a pre-existing permanent ohel is also forbidden. However, adding to a temporary ohel will be permitted in certain situations. An example would be if the pre-existing temporary ohel is at least a tefach (8cm) wide.

When a temporary ohel is constructed without the intention of covering that which is beneath it, such as when setting up a table top on top of its legs, there is no problem unless one is also erecting 'walls' or if there are already 'walls' underneath the ohel.

Any ohel which is forbidden to erect on Shabbos may also not be dismantled. This would be an act of *soffer* - destroying.

The case of the folding chair

The Shulchan Aruch brings the law of a Kisei Traskal²; a type of folding chair made of leather attached to a frame. When the frame is opened, the leather spreads out to create a seat. The Shulchan Aruch rules that opening such a chair is permissible on Shabbos and does not constitute an ohel.

In explaining this ruling, the Magen Avraham³ quotes Rashi who writes that it is allowed 'because he has not done anything, he is merely setting it up.'

Rashi brings this in connection to setting up a pre-constructed 'ohel' such as a bed. By extension, even though the folding chair needs to be spread out, since he is merely 'setting it up', it may be opened on Shabbos.

The Magen Avraham adds that based on this reason one may erect a Chuppah on Shabbos. This ruling applies to a Chuppah that was attached to the poles before Shabbos and is

only being opened up on Shabbos⁴.

The approach of some Acharonim

At first glance it seems that the Magen Avraham allows one to open these types of items even if it is for the purpose of a creating an ohel. The heter being that it was already assembled before Shabbos and now is only being set in place. This is the view of the Mishna Berura⁵.

Based on this, some poskim permitted one to open an umbrella on Shabbos, since it too is only being set in place on Shabbos.

Most Poskim however, including the Mishna Berura, rejected this ruling for other reasons⁶. According to this opinion a baby carriage hood may be opened and closed on Shabbos.

The Alter Rebbe's understanding

However, on this law of the Kisei Traskal, the Alter Rebbe⁷ writes; "any temporary roof which one does not intend to make as an ohel, is only forbidden to spread over 'walls' if it was not attached to the walls before Shabbos."

The Alter Rebbe clearly rules that the law of the Kisei Traskal - i.e. that a pre-connected 'ohel' may be opened up on Shabbos - is limited to when there is no intention to create an ohel, such as when setting up a folding chair. However, if the intention is to create an ohel, it remains forbidden.

Why then does the Magen Avraham allow a Chuppah to be opened?

The Acharonim⁸ explain that since the Chuppah is set up for kavod (to honour those beneath it) and not for shade, it is not considered to be set up as an ohel. This is the basis for permitting a Tallis to be spread as a Chuppah for the Chosson Torah on Simchas Torah.

However, a Chuppah structure which is opened for the purpose of shading would be *ossur*. Clearly an umbrella would be forbidden according to this view⁹ as constituting an ohel.

The baby-carriage hood

Based on this it seems that it would be forbidden to open or close the cover of a baby carriage, since it is being done for the purpose of an ohel - to shade or cover the baby.

Indeed, this is the basis of the psak of Rav Moshe Feinstein¹⁰ to be strict. Ketzos Hashul-

chan¹¹ also rules stringently.

Even according to this opinion, if the carriage hood was open at least a tefach (8cm) before Shabbos, one could open it more on Shabbos. This would only be adding to a temporary ohel which is permissible.

Similarly, when opening the hood, if one does not open it completely and leaves it open a tefach breadth, this would be permissible.

The hinge-factor

There are those who question this ruling of the Ketzos Hashulchan based on a clear ruling in the Shulchan Aruch.

In Hilchos Sukkah¹² the Alter Rebbe writes about a roof (shlock) which has been erected on top of a Sukkah to protect it from rain. The roof is opened when the Sukkah is in use.

The Alter Rebbe rules that even though the shlock is made as an ohel, since it has hinges on which it opens and closes it is considered to be a door (*pesach gamur*) and can therefore be opened and closed on Shabbos, even if it was not left open a tefach before Shabbos.

The carriage hood is also operated with hinges and is made to open and close constantly. If so, the heter of the shlock should apply and it should be permissible to open and close the baby-carriage hood without any concern. This is the psak of the Beer Moshe¹³.

The same leniency would not apply to a 'boot cover' which is not operated with hinges but rather snapped, zipped or draped on. If the boot cover is higher than a tefach (8cm) above the inside of the bassinet, it will constitute an ohel which is made for the purpose of sheltering from the elements.

If the boot cover is being used, it should be attached before Shabbos and should always remain covering at least a tefach length across the bassinet.

1. Orach Chaim Siman 315
2. Sif 5
3. Sif Koton 8
4. Shaar Hatziyun 34
5. Sif Koton 27
6. See *Biur Halocha* טפח ה"ד
7. Sif 13
8. *Tehillah Ledovid* 315:8
9. See *Noda Biyehudah Mahadura Tanyana* O.C. 30
10. Orach Chaim volume 4, responsa 105
11. *Ketzos Hashulchon* 120:8
12. Orach Chaim 626:20
13. Volume 6, responsa 97