

From: [Clifford Miller](#)
To: [Covid Archive](#)
Subject: Fwd: can you be in two places at once
Date: Sunday, November 8, 2020 12:44:55 AM

Elizabeth

I don't know whether Rabbinical Assembly shares with you discussions such as these about Jewish religious observance in the age of Zoom

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **David Saltzman** <rabsaltz@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Nov 6, 2020, 2:04 PM
Subject: Fwd: can you be in two places at once
To: Rabbi Ari Lucas <alucas@agudath.org>, Silverstein, Alan <asilverstein@agudath.org>, A. C. Fellner <acfellner.mac@mac.com>

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From: **Baruch Frydman-Kohl** <bfrydmankohl@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Nov 6, 2020 at 1:06 PM
Subject: Re: can you be in two places at once
To: <RAVNET@listserv.rabbinicalassembly.org>

Only God can be in multiple places at the same time, because the Divine is not material and thus does not occupy any space.

However, I recently simultaneously attended by zoom a funeral in Philadelphia and one in Toronto. I wondered whether this is what God experiences.

Shabbat shalom

Best wishes,

Baruch

“Kindness builds new worlds.”

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl
Rabbi Emeritus
Beth Tzedec Congregation
Toronto
647.218.1810

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=hbimT09apb4>

On Nov 6, 2020, at 12:39, George Barnard <rabbiglb@gmail.com> wrote:

Early in the Zoom era, someone here asked the question. I don't remember what the rabbi answered, However, I do remember situations in which people floated from one physical minyan to another. (In fact, I did it at least once.) There were two groups of 9 people praying in two adjoining rooms. (In the case in which I was involved, one was Orthodox, and one was Egalitarian, which is why they didn't join together.) An additional person would go back and forth, making sure that there were 10 people for "bar'khu," kaddish, etc., wherever and whenever they "needed a minyan". I agree 100% with David that this is undesirable from a religious point of view.

Shabbat shalom
George

-
Rabbi George (Gershom) Barnard
Cincinnati, OH
HUC-JIR (NY) '75

On Fri, Nov 6, 2020 at 12:09 PM Rabbi David J.B. Krishef

<Rabbi@ahavasisraelgr.org> wrote:

I think being a part of two minyanim at once makes no sense. Think of it from a physical perspective. I'm either in this room or in that room, I can't be in both rooms. Have you ever seen someone at the kotel, for example, starting a new minyan by grabbing someone from an adjacent minyan and saying, "hey, stay in your minyan but join my minyan, too!" Ein L'davar sof. I have four screens, my wife has three, my kids have several more, can I be in 10 minyanim at once just because I can set up 10 screen around me?

Early on in COVID lockdown days, I had one person who tried to be in my minyan on one screen, and a Hebrew class or a minyan in his other congregation in Austin on his other screen. It was clear that he was not responding to Kaddish or Barkhu, participating in Kedusha, and was not really in our minyan. We had a conversation about the boundaries of how I would count someone in a minyan, and from that point on, he chose one or the other.

I don't see any spiritual benefit, either for the individual in two minyanim or in the minyanim themselves, of finding halakhic justification for this. Either the minyan has a participant who is giving only 50% kavanah (at the most), which is not good for the minyan; or the participant is distracted by two minyanim and lacks full kavanah for either. It cheapens minyan from an aspirational prayer experience into a performative, check-the-mitzvah-box experience.

David

Rabbi David J.B. Krishef Rabbi@AhavasIsraelGR.org
Congregation Ahavas Israel, 2727 Michigan St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI
49506-1297
Voice - 616-949-2840 fax - (616) 828-0285
AhavasIsraelGR.org twitter - @davidkrishef

blog - "Embodied Torah" at embodiedtorah.com

New Mission Statement of Congregation Ahavas Israel:

We create a welcoming, inclusive, and engaging sacred community, helping individuals follow their spiritual paths using traditional Jewish practices.

Vision Statement:

To create connections between individuals in our Jewish community through religious, educational, and social programs that attract participation of our membership and beyond.

On Nov 6, 2020, at 11:49 AM, David Nesson
<ravdjn@GMAIL.COM> wrote:

To get our minds off counting for a minute, here is a different counting question to ponder
A member of my congregation asked the following last night she had two minyans to attend via zoom one for her family and one for a member of the congregation both at the same time
she had two computers open, and participated in both can you be counted in two minyans simultaneously
I think she wanted to know more as a philosophical question and maybe a halachic?
any thoughts?

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