The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן רמ"ח סעיף ב'-ג'

Overview

Siman 248 Seif 1:

It is permitted to set out to sea, even on *erev* Shabbos if one is traveling for a *mitzvah*. One should stipulate that the boat should not travel on Shabbos and if the gentile decides to travel anyway there is no issue. When traveling for non-mitzvah purposes one may not leave within three days of Shabbos. It is permitted to leave more than three days before Shabbos even if the boat is pulled by animals, and even if the water is not more than ten *tefachim*. It is permitted even if the Jew will have to perform *melacha* to conduct the boat. **If the journey is short, for example, from Tzur to Tzidon which is only a day's journey it is permitted to leave *erev* Shabbos in the morning, since it is possible to reach one's destination before Shabbos. In those places where the custom is not to travel on *erev* Shabbos at all, even a short distance, one may not travel on *erev* Shabbos.**

- The Gemara discusses the restriction against leaving by boat within three days of Shabbos. Some explain that the concern is that the Jew may have to perform *melacha* for *pikuach nefesh* or that the gentile will perform *melacha* on behalf of the Jew or a possible violation of the *techum* restriction. The reason one may not begin his journey within three days of Shabbos is that it is close enough to Shabbos that one must take precautions to prevent desecrating Shabbos. Rif maintains that the concern is that it will diminish one's *oneg* Shabbos since the first three days of the trip one will likely be ill. According to others the concern is that it resembles floating or swimming which is prohibited according to all opinions. More than three days before Shabbos it is permitted since there is no concern he will make a swimmer's barrel. Shulchan Aruch follows Rif's opinion but agrees with the *Poskim* that leaving more than three days in advance is permitted even though one will be compelled to desecrate Shabbos. It is just that he maintains that even if there is no concern for doing *melacha* or the *techum* it is prohibited since it will decrease one's *oneg* Shabbos.
- Magen Avrohom writes that on Shabbos it is prohibited to travel even for a *mitzvah* since one cannot stipulate that the gentile should not travel on Shabbos. Some authorities maintain that it is permitted to travel for a *mitzvah* on Shabbos. (M.B. 2)
- Sefer Olas Shabbos is uncertain whether in a case where it is not possible to make this stipulation, for example the gentile refuses to refrain from travelling on Shabbos, may one travel with him nonetheless. Later authorities conclude that the stipulation is preferred but is not essential. (M.B. 3)
- In other words, one may not travel from Wednesday. Gra maintains that the three days include Shabbos and one may travel on Wednesday. (M.B. 4)
- The same applies before Yom Tov. (M.B. 5)
- In other words, one should not think that it is prohibited similar to one who travels by wagon where it is prohibited to travel on Shabbos even if one began his journey more than three days before Shabbos. (M.B. 6)
- Beforehand it is associated with the previous Shabbos and since he left during a time that it was permitted he need not refrain out of concern for what will be in the upcoming Shabbos. If something happens and it is necessary to desecrate Shabbos to save his life it is not considered a desecration of Shabbos. (M.B. 8)
- Although it is not necessary for one to refrain from traveling, since he left more than three days before Shabbos, nevertheless, he is obligated to do what he can to limit the desecration of Shabbos. (M.B. 9)
- If his departure is delayed an hour or two it is prohibited to leave since he will not reach his destination before Shabbos. (M.B. 10)

Halacha Highlight

Traveling by train on Shabbos

Shulchan Aruch Siman 248 Seif 1
מתר להפליג בספינה
It is permitted to travel by boat

Shulchan Aruch discusses the permissibility of traveling on a boat on Shabbos. This discussion is rooted in the Gemara Shabbos (19a) where a Beraisa teaches that one may not embark on a journey by boat within three days of Shabbos. However, this ruling is limited to one who is traveling for a non-mitzvah purpose, but one who travels for a *mitzvah* purpose may embark even on *erev* Shabbos, but he should stipulate with the gentile who will be sailing the boat that he must refrain from sailing on Shabbos. Mishnah Berurah (introduction to the *siman*) cites many explanations for this restriction. The two primary explanations are the concern that one may have to perform *melacha* on Shabbos in order to save his life, or because of the concern of travelling outside of the *techum*. Alternatively, there is a concern that the trip will be so uncomfortable that it will diminish one's *oneg* Shabbos.

Teshuvas Chasam Sofer (ח"ו סי' צ"ז) discusses whether it is permitted for one to travel by train according to the same parameters in which one is permitted to travel by boat. He rules that it is prohibited to travel by train on Shabbos since on dry land one will certainly violate the prohibition of traveling beyond the *techum* on Shabbos. Even those who maintain that the restriction of the *techum* does not apply above ten *tefachim,* if one is sitting on something that is four *tefachim* wide the restrictions of *techum* will certainly apply. Even if the train does not travel outside of the *techum,* it is prohibited since the train shakes and that will prevent one from fully experiencing *oneg* Shabbos. Teshuvas Bais Yitzchok (יו"ד ח"ב סי' ל"א) writes that one may not travel on a train on Shabbos even if it remains within the *techum* of Shabbos since it is considered a weekday activity (עובדא דחול).