The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Sun, Jan 29 2023 ■ ז' שבט, תשפ"ג
סימן רמ"ח סעיף ד'

Overview

Siman 248 Seif 4:

If one is traveling by caravan and everyone knows that it is necessary to desecrate Shabbos since it is dangerous to refrain from traveling on Shabbos, within three days of Shabbos it is prohibited to begin traveling but earlier in the week it is permitted. If afterwards a dangerous situation arises that necessitates desecrating Shabbos in order to preserve life it is permitted and does not constitute a desecration of Shabbos. One who is moving to Eretz Yisroel and a caravan is available on erev Shabbos may begin traveling with them since he is traveling for the sake of a mitzvah. He should stipulate that they may not travel on Shabbos and once they are in the wilderness if they decide not to refrain from traveling he may travel with them outside of the techum in order to preserve his life. If they entered a city on Shabbos he may travel throughout the city and even if they left him outside of the city and he wants to enter the city it is permitted, since he left for a mitzvah he is allotted 2000 amos in every direction. According to some, any time one travels for business or to visit a friend it is considered for the sake of a mitzvah and only when one travels for pleasure is it considered not for the sake of a mitzvah. For that reason the custom in some places is for people to be lenient with regards to embarking by boat or with a caravan within three days of Shabbos since it is all considered for the sake of a mitzvah and one need not protest against the practice and there are authorities upon whom to rely.

- Even a Rabbinic prohibition. (M.B. 25)
- Knesses HaGedolah cites authorities who maintain that if one is certain that he will have to desecrate Shabbos it is prohibited to embark on the journey, and it is upon this position that people rely when they refuse to desecrate Shabbos, thereby slightly endangering their lives so that the initial journey should not have been in violation of halacha. (M.B. 26)
- In other words, even though it turned out that he had to desecrate Shabbos since it was due to circumstances beyond his control it is not considered a desecration of Shabbos. (M.B. 27)
- There is a disagreement whether this applies only if the intent is to move there or even if one's intent is to visit and return home since walking four amos in Eretz Yisroel is a mitzvah. (M.B. 28)
- This stipulation is essential and if they refuse he may not travel with them. (M.B. 29)
- This applies if one is afraid to remain in the wilderness out of fear of wild animals or dangerous thieves. (M.B. 30)
- One may also travel beyond 12 mil, but once one reaches a safe place he must refrain from traveling any further. (M.B. 31)
- Magen Avrohom writes that this ruling applies only if one traveled for an actual mitzvah rather than for business, and when traveling for business one may not travel through the entire city or even 2000 amos in every direction. (M.B. 32)
- If one had permission to travel, even if it was a pleasure trip, and on Shabbos it was necessary to travel to preserve his life he may travel 2000 amos in all directions. Similarly, if one mistakenly thought he was permitted to embark within three days of Shabbos he may travel 2000 amos in all directions. (M.B. 33)
- This is true even if he has food but is interested in earning more money. (M.B. 34)
- Magen Avrohom and others are not lenient regarding one who wishes to embark with a caravan. (M.B. 35)
- In a place that does not have this custom, l'chatchila one should not be lenient since many Poskim require a full-fledged mitzvah. (M.B. 36)

Halacha Highlight

Scheduling elective surgery at the end of the week

Shulchan Aruch Siman 248 Seif 4

שלשה ימים קדם שבת אסורים לצאת

Three days before Shabbos it is prohibited for one to embark

Shulchan Aruch discusses one who will travel with a caravan through the wilderness. It is assumed that it is not safe for one to stop traveling when Shabbos arrives due to the potential dangers involved in remaining in place for Shabbos. Accordingly, it is prohibited to embark on such a journey within three days of Shabbos, but if it is more than three days before Shabbos it is permitted to embark on such a journey. In the event that when Shabbos arrives it is necessary for one to desecrate Shabbos it is permitted for him to do so in order to preserve his life that is in danger. The reason for the distinction between three days before Shabbos and earlier in the week is that once one is within three days of Shabbos he must begin to take precautions to avoid desecrating Shabbos. Earlier in the week is associated with last Shabbos, and it is unnecessary for one to take precautions to avoid desecrating Shabbos (מ"ב ס"ק כ"ו). Biur Halacha (ד"ה וביום ראשון) notes that according to the rationale behind this ruling one may not embark on such a journey on Tuesday night since that is already considered within three days of Shabbos.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (שמירת שבת כהלכתה פל"ב סע' ל"ג ובהע' צ"ז) writes that being that from Wednesday one is obligated to take precautions to avoid desecrating Shabbos, one should not schedule elective surgery from Wednesday through Shabbos. The reason is that it is likely that one will have to desecrate Shabbos to care for the patient who had surgery. However, if a more qualified doctor only does this surgery at the end of the week, it is permitted to schedule the surgery at that time. Similarly, if one is experiencing pain it is also permitted to schedule an elective surgery that will alleviate the source of the pain.