



Parshas Korach 5764

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Am I permitted to walk through my vegetable patch on Shabbos?

In the previous sheet we cited the *posuke* in ישעיה from which *Chazal* learn various *halachos* with regards to Shabbos. From the words מְצוּאָה הַפֶּתַח *Chazal* learn that one is forbidden to take care of one's finances, business or general affairs. The *Shulchan Aruch*¹ presents various examples of this. The first is that one may not stand next to one's field during the reaping or the plowing season and see what the field requires.² The same would apply to walking through a vegetable patch and deciding what needs to be picked, which vegetables require watering etc.

Did we not learn that one may think³ about one's matters and here, after all, one is merely thinking and not doing anything?

Indeed thinking and contemplating *per se* is permitted but in the above cases one is actually walking in the vegetable patch or standing next to one's field during the plowing season and as such one's thoughts are "noticeable". One cannot say that it is merely thinking because one's thoughts are accompanied with the action of being in the 'wrong' place.⁴

¹ *Simon* 306:1.

² See *M"B* 306:1.

³ We also learned that it is preferable not to, but strict *halacha* does not forbid it unless it causes concern.

⁴ *M"B* *ibid*.

Would I be permitted to walk next to or through my field and merely enjoy the scenery?

Yes you would because then one is not doing anything associated with a *melacha* or action prohibited on Shabbos.

But then who knows whether I am thinking of the field's needs or not?

You know and *Chazal* prohibited such an action.

May I sit at a bus stop before Shabbos is out, in order to catch the first bus?

The same would apply to sitting at a bus stop before Shabbos is out. If one is sitting there in order to rest, it is permitted even when done close to when Shabbos is out. However if one sits at the stop with a weekday 'action' in mind, since one is doing an action – sitting at the bus stop – and one's intention is to catch a bus, it is forbidden.

What about standing far from the bus stop?

That is permitted, because one's action is not associated with prohibited thought.

What about window shopping, anything wrong with that?

There is nothing wrong with window shopping as long as one does not transgress certain prohibitions. For instance, one must

not look at the price tags, because it is prohibited to read business matters on Shabbos, and that includes price tags.⁵ HaRav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach זצ"ל however says⁶ that since it is customary to stand in front of store windows without intending to purchase anything, even if one were to think about purchasing it is permitted because it is no longer 'noticeable' that one is intending to purchase and it is considered merely as 'thinking'. This might however depend on whether people in that place "window shop" without having intention to make a purchase. Based on that, referring back to standing at a bus stop, if it is raining or windy, even if one intends on catching a bus after Shabbos it would be permitted because it is seen as a regular action and not one associated with a prohibition. When at the bus stop one must not look at the timetable because then his intention is noticeable.

Would this prohibition apply to one's house or apartment?

Normally one may walk around one's home and think freely because most times one's thoughts are not noticeable, but if one is inspecting tiles closely or looking carefully at a wall that needs painting, it would be noticeable and prohibited.

What about walking in town to a certain location in order to be there when Shabbos is out?

In most cases one's intentions are not noticeable because it is normal to walk through town. To walk through the market place, where people go mainly to buy, in

order to look for a store, or to walk to the town's perimeter in order to be able to do a prohibited action after Shabbos, would be forbidden.⁷

Vort on the Parsha

The *possuk* says (18:21) that *Hashem* has allocated the tithes to the tribe of Levy. The Levi'im must depend on the grace of *B'nei Yisrael* for their basic sustenance, and one would think that since the Levi'im did not sin they would receive their own land in Eretz Yisrael and not have to depend on others, and *B'nei Yisrael* who did sin would not receive land.

Rav Sternbuch shlita says that on the contrary: their reward is that they are not tied down to physical land and all its materialism - rather they have fewer ties to the physical and thus are able to reach a higher perfection of their spirituality.

Food For Thought

May I give a gift on Shabbos or Yom Tov?

What if the item is needed on Shabbos, does it make a difference?

May I hire a chazzan for shul on Shabbos?

What about hiring a craftsman without mentioning money?

Answers coming next week.

⁵ SS"K 29:9.

⁶ SS"K 29 footnote 22, 24.

⁷ Simon 306:1 and M"B 2, SS"K 29:8.

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Note: The purpose of this series is intended solely for the clarification of the topics discussed and not to render halachic decisions. It is intended to heighten everyone's awareness of important practical questions which do arise on this topic. One must consult with a proper halachic authority in order to receive p'sak.