



Likkutei Sichos

Volume 11 | Beshalach | Sichah 3
and *Siyum* of *Eruvin*

Sacred Space

Translated by Rabbi Elisha Greenbaum
Edited by Rabbi Eliezer Robbins and Rabbi Y. Eliezer Danzinger

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1.

RABBI SHIMON'S TWO STATEMENTS

When discussing the verse,¹ “No man should leave his place on the seventh {Shabbos} day,” our Sages teach² (quoted in Rashi’s commentary),³ “these are the 2000 cubits” of *techum Shabbos*.⁴ Meaning, this verse is the basis of the biblical prohibition against going out of the city’s 2000-cubit boundary range from one’s home city on Shabbos.

The *halachos* of *techumim* zones are subject to a Mishnaic dispute between Rabbi Shimon and the Sages, at the end of the fourth chapter of *Eruvin*:⁵

Whoever spent the onset of Shabbos, even one cubit outside the bounds of the *techum* should not enter {the *techum*}. Rabbi Shimon says, “As long as he is within 15 cubits {of the *techum*}, he may enter, as the surveyors {who mark the boundaries of the *techum*} do not measure exactly, because they take those who err into consideration.”

Rabbi Shimon opines that the surveyors who would measure and mark a city’s 2000-cubit *techum* boundary “would not measure exactly,” placing the marker exactly at the edge of the *techum*. Rather, they would place the marker {approximately} 15 cubits within the boundary, “because people would mistake the distance, not having recognized the marker, and would occasionally walk past the marker and then return, without paying attention.”⁶ Thus, even a person who was outside the *techum* at the onset of Shabbos, if he is less than 15 cubits past the *techum* {marker} he is permitted to enter the *techum* {on Shabbos}, since he is {probably} actually **within** the 2000-cubits *techum*.

¹ *Shemos* 16:29.

² *Eruvin* 51a.

³ Rashi’s commentary on *Shemos* 16:29.

⁴ {*Techum Shabbos* is the 2000-cubit maximum distance that one may travel outside a city on Shabbos.}

⁵ *Eruvin* 52b.

⁶ Rashi’s commentary on *Shemos* 16:29.

Rabbi Shimon's reasoning is presented as a principle⁷ {concluding the laws of *Eruvin*} in the last *Mishnah* of tractate *Eruvin*, at the end of chapter 10:⁸

Rabbi Shimon says, “Wherever the Sages permitted something to you, they granted you that which was yours, as they only permitted those things that were prohibited by rabbinic decree.”

The *Gemara*⁹ explains that with this teaching, Rabbi Shimon explains the reasoning behind two {variant} laws: {The statement} “Wherever the Sages permitted something to you, they granted you that which was yours” relates to the above-quoted *halachah*: “Whoever spent the onset of Shabbos... outside the bounds of the *techum*... Rabbi Shimon says, ‘As long as he is within 15 cubits {of the *techum* marker} he may enter.” Concerning this point, Rabbi Shimon explains that since they {these 15 *amos*} are “yours,” {in the first place} “because he was already within his *techum*,”¹⁰ “they granted you” and “he may enter” {the *techum*}. Meaning, as long as a person is within 15 cubits {of the *techum* marker}, he is still **within** the *techum*; accordingly, the Sages allowed him to enter.

The conclusion of Rabbi Shimon's remarks, “they only permitted those things that were prohibited by rabbinic decree,” refers to a different *halachah* in the above-quoted *Mishnah* in Chapter 10:¹¹

One may tie a harp string {on Shabbos} in the Temple but not in the {rest of the} country {i.e., outside the Temple}; {doing so} for the first time is prohibited both here and there {i.e., inside or outside the Temple}.

Rabbi Shimon disagrees and says (in a *Beraisa* quoted in the *Gemara*: “A Levite whose harp string broke {on Shabbos} may tie it {with a knot}.” Rabbi Shimon says,) “He may {only} **make a bow**.” Rabbi Shimon's reasoning is explained in the *Mishnah* at the end of the tractate: “They permitted this only because it was prohibited by rabbinic decree.”

⁷ See *Maharsha*, end of *Eruvin*, who writes that this is “a principle applicable to all the laws of tractate *Eruvin*.”

⁸ {*Eruvin* 104b.}

⁹ 105a.

¹⁰ {Rashi's commentary on *Eruvin* 105a, s.v. “*Yikanes*.”}

¹¹ *Eruvin* 102b.

Meaning (as the *Gemara* explains there), “The Sages permitted making a bow, since doing so will never lead a person to become liable for a sin offering.¹² However, they prohibited tying a knot, since doing so may lead a person to become liable for a sin offering.

Rashi explains the correlation between these two concepts:¹³

Rabbi Shimon would have explained his position to the *Tanna Kamma*¹⁴ as follows: “Although I am lenient regarding a person who was outside the *techum* at the onset of Shabbos, I am strict regarding a harp string. For in the case of the *techum*, “the Sages granted you that which was yours,” while in the case of a harp string, “the Sages only permitted things that were prohibited by rabbinic decree.”

{However} *Tosfos* says:¹⁵

In that case {*techum*}, Rabbi Shimon’s ruling is not considered a leniency, because *the Sages granted you that which was yours*. Similarly {making} a bow is permitted because it’s a permissible act.¹⁶ That is, the rulings share a single rationale: “The Sages granted you that which was yours.”

Ostensibly, this is difficult to understand: Based on Rashi’s position,¹⁷ what connection between these two different laws compelled Rabbi Shimon to justify his stringency in one case, despite treating the other case leniently? Would it be conceivable to assume that a leniency in {the case of} “spending the onset of Shabbos outside the *techum*” {automatically} also necessitates a leniency in the case of tying {knots} in the Temple?

And according to *Tosfos*, who explains Rabbi Shimon’s reasoning, that the same rationale that necessitates a leniency {regarding *techumim*} compels us to be strict here {regarding tying}, why doesn’t the *Gemara* just say, “Wherever the Sages permitted something to you, they granted you

¹² {One is only rendered liable for a sin offering for contravening Biblical prohibitions.}

¹³ Rashi’s commentary on *Eruvin* 105a, s.v. “*Koshras*.”

¹⁴ {The first authority in the *Mishnah* with whom Rabbi Shimon argued.}

¹⁵ *Eruvin* 105a, s.v. “*Amar Rabbi Shimon*.” Similarly, in Rambam’s *Mishnah Commentary*, loc. cit.

¹⁶ In contrast to tying a knot which is a forbidden act

¹⁷ {According to Rashi, Rabbi Shimon’s intent is to justify his leniency in the case of *techum*, and contrast it to his stringency in tying a knot.}

that which was yours,” and nothing further. Surely this would have been a sufficient justification for the **stringency** regarding the snapped string. Why does Rabbi Shimon add the explanation, “they only permitted those things that were prohibited by rabbinic decree”? Why is he not satisfied with the first and principal explanation (“they granted you that which was yours”), especially since the *Mishnah*’s practice is {to utilize} “short expressions that contain many ideas”?¹⁸

Furthermore, these quotes of Rabbi Shimon were arranged at the conclusion of a *Mishnah* dealing with “a *sheretz* {small creeping animal} found {dead} in the Temple,” and seemingly, have no contextual connection with that *Mishnah*. Surely {if Rabbi Shimon’s principles refer to *halachos* in other, previous chapters}, these principles should have been taught contiguously with those laws {*techumim* or tying knots}. And if they are cited here, let them be written, at the very least, as a separate, independent *Mishnah*.

2.

THE EXPLANATION

We can explain these anomalies by prefacing with one of the reasons why “it’s a *mitzvah* {recommended practice} to establish *erubin* around courtyards and alleys”:¹⁹ “It’s beneficial for a person to move about or transport foodstuffs {on Shabbos}, which is a *mitzvah*, as Scripture says,²⁰ ‘Call Shabbos *oneg* {a pleasure}.’”²¹ So, too, we can understand why it is important for a person’s *oneg Shabbos* to {allow him to enter the *techum*, to} be **within** the city’s *techum*, in order to “move about or bring...” throughout the entire city (and the surrounding 2000 *amos*, in all directions). Were a person to spend Shabbos outside the *techum*, this would drastically curtail his engagement in these activities, which is the antithesis of *oneg Shabbos*.

¹⁸ Introduction of the Rambam’s *Peirush HaMishnayos*.

¹⁹ *Tur* (and *Shulchan Aruch*) “*Orach Chaim*,” beg. ch. 395.

²⁰ {*Yeshayahu* 58:13.}

²¹ *Perishah*, “*Orach Chaim*,” beg. of ch. 39.

In this context, we could posit that “one who spent the onset of Shabbos outside the *techum*” is even obligated to enter the city {if halachically possible}, so as not to extend the period of his contravention of *oneg Shabbos* throughout the entire twenty-four hours of Shabbos.

On this basis, we could posit Rabbi Shimon’s position regarding *techum* stems from a fundamental principle: Quantity (at the expense of quality) trumps quality (at the expense of quantity).

We now understand that Rabbi Shimon’s directive for a person to “enter” {the *techum*} (which {grammatically, may be} intimating an imperative or obligation, i.e., *you must ‘enter’*,²² rather than simply granting him permission to enter) is meant to prevent him from extending the duration of his forbidden act {remaining outside, thereby contravening *oneg Shabbos*}. Were a person to “enter” {the *techum*}, he {might} (actively) contravene the {rabbinic prohibition} of walking out²³ of the *techum*. Doing so would be much worse than the prohibition of refraining from *oneg Shabbos* by (passively) staying where he was at the onset of Shabbos. Nonetheless, Rabbi Shimon still advises a person to “enter,” since this entering (the *techum* of the city) is only a {one-time} violation, {performed} at the moment the person enters. In contrast, by remaining outside the *techum*, the person extends the duration of his violation, throughout every moment he remains there, and according to Rabbi Shimon, quantity trumps quality.²⁴

3.

QUALITY VS. QUANTITY

Based on the explanation that Rabbi Shimon instructs a person to “enter” {the *techum*} because Rabbi Shimon believes quantity overrides quality, we can understand the connection between his two statements,

²² {In the Hebrew original, “*yekaneis*.” Since in Hebrew, there is no distinct verb form for the subjunctive, and imperative, *yekaneis* can be translated as “may enter,” or “should enter,” depending on context.}

²³ {It is a rabbinic violation of Shabbos to “walk out of the *techum*” by crossing the *techum* boundary in either direction.}

²⁴ {Performing ‘quantitatively’ more prohibitions, by spending the whole Shabbos without *oneg*, preempts the comparatively more severe ‘quality’ of possibly risking the rabbinic prohibition of crossing the *techum*.}

each of which explains a separate *halachah*: Namely, the statements, “Wherever the Sages permitted something to you, they granted you that which was yours,” and “they only permitted those things that were prohibited by rabbinic decree.”

There are two ways to fix a harp {string}: tying a knot or making a bow, and both have a distinct stringency. Knot-tying can potentially lead to {a Torah prohibition, punishable by} a sin-offering (a qualitative stringency). In contrast, making a bow, which can be loosened, does not create a permanent knot, and is {at worst} prohibited rabbinically. However, this leniency of bow-making leads to a stringency: Since a bow is impermanent, it will (probably) need to be re-tied to the harp numerous times (quantity). This would not happen when tying a **permanent** knot, so doing so involves only a one-time violation. The solution to this dilemma, whether to tie a knot or to make a bow, also depends on whether *quantity* or *quality* is more important.

Once Rabbi Shimon indicates his opinion that *quantity* is preeminent in the case of “one spending the onset of Shabbos outside the *techum* should enter,” it seems reasonable to assume that in the case of tying a harp string, he would also favor permitting a person to tie a knot (limiting the quantity) over making bows (numerous times). Rabbi Shimon rejects this assumption by asserting, “they permitted only those things that were prohibited by rabbinic decree.” To paraphrase Rabbi Shimon: “Although I rule leniently regarding quality in the case of *techumin* {ruling that a person should enter once} in order to minimize the “quantity” of the prohibition {forsaking *oneg Shabbos* for the entire Shabbos}, nonetheless, I am stringent regarding quality in the case of of tying. Thus, I don’t allow tying a knot in order to minimize the quantity of bows made. The reason for this stringency is because “they only permitted those things that were prohibited [both quantitatively and qualitatively] by rabbinic decree.” In other words, the principle that *quantity* supersedes *quality* only applies where the {potential} prohibitions are of the same type – either all Torah prohibitions or all rabbinic. In contrast, when fixing a harp, the quantitative prohibition of making a bow multiple times, which is only rabbinic, is

outweighed by the qualitative prohibition of tying a knot, which potentially entails a Torah prohibition. In contrast {to Rabbi's Shimon's opinion that seemingly in all cases quantity supersedes quality}, a qualitative issue concerning a Torah prohibition should override a quantitative issue concerning a rabbinic prohibition.

Evidence supporting this perspective can be adduced from the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*:²⁵

When a dangerously ill person requires meat {on Shabbos}, we may slaughter {an animal} for him. We do not say: "Feed him *neveilah* {meat from an animal that was not ritually slaughtered}," which involves {transgressing only} a negative prohibition {punishable by lashes}, rather than desecrate the Shabbos {by slaughtering an animal}, which involves {transgressing} a prohibition punishable {with execution} by stoning.... When a person eats *neveilah*, he commits a {Torah} transgression with every olive-sized portion.... In contrast, when slaughtering, a person violates only one {Torah} prohibition, even though it is more severe....

If, however, it is necessary to cook wine {for a sick person}, a Jew should fill {the cooking utensil}, and a non-Jew should heat it.... {Even if the non-Jew touches the wine}, it is of no consequence, because {drinking} wine touched by a non-Jew is forbidden only according to Rabbinic Law.

The Alter Rebbe makes clear that {the principle that *quantity* supersedes *quality* only applies} where the potential prohibitions are of the same type. Eating *neveilah*, a **Torah** prohibition, multiple times {quantity} is worse than the {one-time} qualitatively more severe prohibition of slaughtering on Shabbos ({a Torah prohibition} punishable by stoning). In contrast, drinking wine touched by a non-Jew is only rabbinically forbidden (despite being a quantitative issue — a prohibition transgressed with every sip). Thus, contravening a Torah prohibition {even once}, qualitatively

²⁵ "Orach Chaim," 328:16.

more severe than a rabbinic one, is worse than contravening a rabbinic prohibition, no matter how many times the rabbinic prohibition is breached.

4.

STRUCTURE OF THE MISHNAH

In light of this explanation, we can understand why the *Mishnah* concludes with “Rabbi Shimon says” (as an adjunct to the first part of the *Mishnah*): “If a *sheretz*²⁶ is found {dead} inside the Temple...,” rather than as a separate, independent *Mishnah*. The first part of the *Mishnah* discusses this same issue — whether *quantity* (an extended duration) overrides *quality* (intrinsic importance). To quote the *Mishnah*:²⁷

“A *sheretz* found in the Temple is removed by a Kohen, wrapped in his sash {even though the sash will become impure} so as not to **prolong** the presence of impurity {inside the Temple}.” These are the words of Rabbi Yochanan ben Beroka. Rabbi Yehudah says, “{He should use} wooden tongs in order not to **increase** impurity.”²⁸

The reasoning behind their disagreement:²⁹ “One Sage {Rabbi Yohanan ben Beroka} maintains: Delaying {removal of the} impurity (*quantity*) is of prime concern,³⁰ whereas the other Sage {Rabbi Yehudah} maintains: Increasing impurity (*quality*) is of prime concern.”³¹

²⁶ {The Torah lists eight *sheratzim* — rodents — and reptiles, that convey ritual impurity. *Vayikra* 11:29-30.}

²⁷ *Eruvin* 104b.

²⁸ {It would take some time to get the tongs, increasing the duration of impurity in the Temple. Though the *kohen*'s sash is susceptible to ritual impurity, wooden tongs are not.}

²⁹ *Eruvin* 104b.

³⁰ {Consequently, he even permits defiling priestly garments to prevent any delay in removing the impurity.}

³¹ {Consequently, he rules that the impurity should be removed only by means of wooden tongs.}

5.

A CHASSIDIC PERSPECTIVE

Tentatively, we can explain the connection between Rabbi Shimon's two principles, as well as the distinction between them, from the perspective of the inner dimension of Torah. [And on this basis, another explanation will come to light as to why Rabbi Shimon maintains that when a person may be permitted to re-enter the *techum*, we must permit him to do so]:

Several sources³² explain how *hotza'ah* {the prohibition of moving items} between domains is the basis of all the thirty-nine *melachos* {categories of actions forbidden on Shabbos}.

The *Midrash*³³ relates that a heretic asked Rabbi Akiva, "If you are correct that *Hashem honors the Shabbos*, He should not allow winds to blow, rain to fall, or grass to grow on Shabbos!" Rabbi Akiva replied with an analogy from *eruv* and *hotza'ah*: "An *eruv* is not needed to permit carrying within any one domain; similarly, the entire universe belongs to Hashem."³⁴ This answer is puzzling: Rabbi Akiva's response only seems to resolve the difficulty regarding {why Hashem is not contravening} the prohibition against moving items between domains. Surely the other {thirty-eight} prohibitions are not all based on *hotza'ah*!

In light of this question, we must explain that *hotza'ah* must be the quintessential characteristic of all *melachos*, their foundation and source, common to all categories of {Torah} forbidden activity, their *toldos* {subcategories}, and *shevusim* {rabbinic decrees}. Therefore, since the concept of *hotza'ah* between domains does not apply to Hashem (as the whole world belongs to Him), consequently, the foundation of, and justification for, all other *melachos*, derivatives of *hotza'ah*, also are negated.

³² *Torah Or*, 99d; *Likkutei Torah*, "Tazria," 21c; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5640, "Matzah Zu," ch. 57.

³³ *Bereishis Rabbah* 11:5 and cf. *Shemos Rabbah* 30:9

³⁴ {So Hashem is not desecrating Shabbos.}

Now we can explain why tractate *Shabbos*³⁵ begins with a discussion of the laws of *hotza'ah* (even though *hotza'ah* appears **last** in the list of *melochos*.³⁶ Seemingly, *Rabbeinu Hakadosh*³⁷ should have enumerated all the *melochos* first, and then explained them in order — in fact, talmudic commentators query this point). The laws of *hotza'ah* are discussed first because *hotza'ah* is the fundamental characteristic of all thirty-nine *melachos*.

To explain: Shabbos is meant to be “Shabbos for Hashem.”³⁸ While Yom Tov is “divided between Hashem and you,”³⁹ Shabbos is fully devoted to Hashem. We refrain from *melachah* on Shabbos to “embed the belief in Creation within our souls,”⁴⁰ that Hashem created the world (in six days, and rested on the seventh). Even now, Hashem constantly creates *ex nihilo* (during the six weekdays, yet He refrains from {creating with} the ten creative utterances on Shabbos — when He sustains the world via {Divine} thought, just as {He did} on the first Shabbos of Creation). He is the exclusive Master of the world, which is completely under His sway and providence.

The universe {*olam*} (etymologically related to *he'elem v'hester* {concealment}) exists in such a way that a person could mistakenly assume that existence continues inexorably, with no single controller in charge, G-d forbid, and that there are two {conflicting forces in charge of two opposite} realms: a realm of goodness and holiness, and a realm of evil and impurity. Resting on Shabbos instills within us the true faith and knowledge that the entire universe is all one domain, the private realm⁴¹ of Hashem, the unifying Force of all existence.

³⁵ *Shabbos 2a*.

³⁶ *Shabbos* ch. 7.

³⁷ {Author of the *Mishnah*.}

³⁸ *Shemos 26:10*.

³⁹ *Pesachim 68b*.

⁴⁰ *Sefer HaChinuch, Mitzvah 32*.

⁴¹ {“*Reshus HaYachid*” in the Hebrew original, lit., “the domain of the individual.” When constructing an *eruv*, we transform the enclosed public area into an “individual” domain — the realm of Hashem.}

Now we can understand why contravening {any} *melachah* on Shabbos brings about: a) a decline in faith, as mentioned above; and b) an intensification of the above mentioned concealment and the mistaken belief (that there are, G-d forbid, separate realms), analogous to “*hotza’ah*” from the private domain {of Hashem}. So the fundamental characteristic of all thirty-nine *melachos* is *hotza’ah* from the private realm.

That is what Rabbi Akiva alluded to when he answered that “the entire universe belongs to Hashem.” From Hashem’s perspective, His absolute existence can never be obscured, because every facet of the world, even the existence of evil, resides within the private realm of the Divine. (Eventually — in the Future Era — even the **lowest** levels of existence will reveal this truth, as stated in the *Midrash*:⁴² “In the future, a man will attempt to pick a fig on Shabbos, only for the fig to cry out, ‘It’s Shabbos!’” In other words, the universe **itself** will sense and testify that nothing exists other than Hashem.) Thus, it is not possible for Hashem to contravene the fundamental Shabbos prohibition of *hotza’ah*, or, by extension, any other *melachah*, as mentioned above.

6.

THREE CATEGORIES OF EXISTENCE

All existence can be subdivided into three general categories, which allude to the three Shabbos domains: a) the category of holy entities, which are used in one’s *avodah* of actively doing good; this category corresponds to the private domain⁴³ (Hashem, the Solitary One of the world); b) the category of evil and prohibitions (“*mountains of separation*”),⁴⁴ necessitating avoiding evil and refraining from forbidden actions, a category that is analogous to the public domain (the **antithesis** of *the private domain*); and, c) the category of permissible items, which straddles

⁴² *Midrash Tehillim*, end of ch. 73; *Yalkut Shimoni*, “*Yirmiyahu*,” *remez* 315.

⁴³ {In the Hebrew original, “*reshus hayachid*”; lit., “the domain of the individual (or solitary one).”}

⁴⁴ {A term connoting the *kelipos*. *Mountains* are a metaphor for ego, a defining feature of *kelipos*, and *separation* is the antithesis of G-dliness.}

the gap between *mitzvos* and prohibitions. Serving Hashem with items of this {third} category can be achieved by one of the two above-mentioned means: Either by, a) {following the dictum} “sanctify yourself with permissible things,”⁴⁵ or, b) elevating permissible things and sanctifying them, by “devoting all your actions to Hashem”⁴⁶ and “know{ing} Him in all your ways.”⁴⁷ This {third} category of items alludes to the following Shabbos domains: a *chatzer* {courtyard} in which several residents live; a *mavoi* {thoroughfare}; a *carmelis* {semi-private domain}; or the like. These are all intermediate zones⁴⁸ falling between private and public domains, which can be transformed into private domains by an *eruv chatzeros*, *shituf mevo’os*,⁴⁹ and so forth.

In light of this explanation, we see that *eruv chatzeros* and *eruv techumin* share a common theme: expanding a Jew’s {private domain and its boundaries (the *category of holiness*). These domains and boundaries are intrinsically constricted in size {quantity}, but by (expending effort in) constructing *eruvin*, they are extended and enlarged.

Understanding this common theme of *techumin* and *chatzeros* may clarify the underlying connection between Rabbi Shimon’s two statements: a) “Wherever the Sages permitted something to you, they granted you that which was yours,” referring to *techumin*, and, b) “they only permitted those things that were prohibited by rabbinic decree,” which is the conceptual basis for {refraining from} (all the thirty-nine *melachos*, in general {and specifically}) not carrying between domains, since both statements share a common theme, as elucidated.

[This common theme shared by *techumin* and *shevus* {rabbinic decrees, such as those concerned with *chatzeros*} is also expressed, in

⁴⁵ {I.e., sanctifying oneself by treating the “permissible” as “forbidden.”} *Yevamos* 20a; *Sirei*, “*Re’eh*,” sec. 14, par. 21. See *Tanya*, ch. 30 (39a), which says that this is a biblical obligation. See *Kuntres uMa’ayan*, sec. 41, ch. 1, and fns. ad. loc. {I.e., limit yourself even regarding permissible matters.}

⁴⁶ *Avos* 2:12.

⁴⁷ *Mishlei* 3:6. {“Your ways” connotes the realm of the permissible.}

⁴⁸ {They are all not technically *public domains*, yet since they *appear* to be public, they must be enclosed by an *eruv* or a *shituf mevo’os*}.}

⁴⁹ {Accomplished, in part, by a communally owned deposit of food and markings or fencing constructed at the entrance to or surrounding these areas.}

particular (both quantitatively and qualitatively), by the variant opinions {of rabbinic authorities} regarding the *halachos* of each. Regarding *techumin*, there are three opinions: a) even the 2000-cubit limit is biblical;⁵⁰ b) the twelve *mil*⁵¹ limit is biblical, while the 2000-cubit limit is rabbinic; and, c) the prohibition of {overstepping} *techumin* is entirely rabbinic. These opinions correlate to the variant opinions regarding *shevus*: a) **every** aspect of *shevus* is biblically mandated, since the Torah instructed us, “*tishbos*” {to rest}⁵² {on Shabbos}, while the details {defining this rest} were relegated to the Rabbis; b) some of the *shevusim* are biblically mandated (and defined rabbinically), while others are rabbinic; and, c) **all** aspects of *shevus* are rabbinic; the Torah’s instruction to “rest” is only an *asmachta* {a biblical allusion to a rabbinic prohibition}.

7.

THE *TECHUM* OF NEGATIVITY

Nevertheless, there is actually a dramatic difference⁵³ between the prohibition of *techumin* and performing {biblically prohibited} *melachos* on Shabbos, to the extent that they are also opposites.

By performing *melachah* on Shabbos, a person **profanes** {*mechalel*} Shabbos, creating an **emptiness** {*chahal*} and vacant space in Shabbos, thereby profaning the sanctity of Shabbos. In other words, when a person performs a *melachah* on Shabbos, he **introduces** something undesirable, “bringing negativity into Shabbos.”⁵⁴ In contrast, by leaving the *techum*, he doesn’t introduce anything mundane into Shabbos; rather, he **drags** Shabbos into the realm of *kelipos*.⁵⁵ For {generally} a

⁵⁰ {that one may not leave the perimeter of a city on Shabbos}

⁵¹ A *mil* is approximately 960 metres (0.6mi.).

⁵² *Shemos* 23:12.

⁵³ See Arizal’s *Shaar HaMitzvos*, “*parshas Beshalach*,” p. 2; *Shaar HaKavanos*, “*Shabbos Kodem*,” p. 1.

⁵⁴ {An apparent paraphrase from sources in the previous and following footnote.}

⁵⁵ {*Kelipah* translates literally as “a shell” or “a peel.” This term refers to anything that conceals, and thus opposes G-dliness, just as a shell or a peel conceals the fruit within. *Kelipah* is often used to refer to the forces of negativity, evil, or impurity.} For a discussion of this idea, see Rav Chaim Vital’s *Taamei HaMitzvos*, “*parshas Beshalach*”; Arizal’s *Siddur*, “*Kavanas Eruv*”; *Or HaTorah*, “*Bereishis*,” (vol. 3), p. 474b.

sacred aura of the sanctity of Shabbos radiates in every Jew, even a boor or total ignoramus,⁵⁶ and when he *leaves the techum* (of holiness), he drags this sanctity of Shabbos out with him, into the realm of the *kelipos*.

[This discussion is not comparable to the concept of adding to the beginning and end of Shabbos (extending the **time** of Shabbos — though, on the face of it, why wouldn't we suggest to similarly extend the **physical space** of Shabbos, by exiting the *techum*)? For in the case of extending Shabbos in time, the Torah specifically directs (and thus permits) some time (**contiguous** to Shabbos) from a weekday to be added to Shabbos and transformed into holiness. In contrast, leaving the *techum* is forbidden, because it drags the holiness of Shabbos into this area, which is outside the *techum* of holiness, and within the realm of *kelipos*.]

On this basis, it is understood that the prohibition against walking⁵⁷ beyond the *techum* continues to be violated as long as the person remains outside the *techum*. (Meaning, the prohibition against leaving the *techum* does not apply specifically to the action of leaving; rather, it is a consequence of leaving — the state of **being** outside the *techum* — in a forbidden zone, bound and entangled by the forces of *kelipah*) This further explains the opinion of Rabbi Shimon, who instructs one to “enter” {the *techum*},⁵⁸ because if a person is permitted to enter, he **must** enter in order not to prolong his time spent within the realm of *kelipos*.

8.

LIFE LESSONS

As is the case with every Torah law and concept, there are life lessons to be derived from everything discussed:

⁵⁶ *Tanya*, ch. 46.

⁵⁷ {In the original Hebrew, “הוצאתה,” lit., “carrying.” However, because of contextual considerations, the translation assumes there may have been a typo in the original, and the word should read, “הציאתה,” “exiting,” or “walking outside.” -Editors}

⁵⁸ {If one mistakenly left the *techum* on Shabbos or was outside the *techum* at the onset of Shabbos.}

The primary nature of any Jew is his G-dly soul, which is truly a part of G-d Above. Therefore, just as Hashem, in His glory, is infinitely elevated above any root or source of Creation, to the extent that when compared to His Divine majesty, the ten utterances by which He created the world are referred to as “speech of a commoner,”⁵⁹ so too, every Jew is more exalted than all worldly existence. However, the Torah commands us, “Six days you shall labor and do all your work.”⁶⁰ In this regard, we are similar to Hashem: He diminished Himself⁶¹ to create the universe. Similarly, אדם, man (recalling the verse, “אדמה לעליון,” “I will be like the most High,”)⁶² was created in such a way that he must stifle {his true divine} self and occupy himself in worldly pursuits.⁶³

If so, when a Jew spends his time in mundane, worldly pursuits, in a place of constraints and degradation, we can appreciate that his true essence remains in a Shabbos-like state — at rest and at peace, aloof from all weekday concerns. As such, every Jew can derive life lessons (even on weekdays) for his general conduct, from these two Shabbos laws (the prohibition against *melachah* and leaving the *techum*) because a Jew is essentially {in a state similar to} **Shabbos**:

The life lesson derived from the prohibition of performing *melachah* on Shabbos is analogous to a man permitting mundane, weekday-like activities to invade his mind and intellect (intellect is inherently Shabbos-like).⁶⁴ Though we were commanded to “do all your work,” a person should undertake this work with his external faculties only, not with his essential, higher-order faculties. All his higher-order faculties {on the contrary} should be dedicated to Torah {study} and divine service exclusively. When the verse states: “For you shall eat the labor of your hands,”⁶⁵ this specifically refers to manual exertion, not to exertion of mind or heart.

⁵⁹ Zohar vol. 3, p. 149b.

⁶⁰ Shemos 20:9.

⁶¹ {Meaning, He constricted His Infinite Light, as it were.}

⁶² {Yeshayahu 14:14.}

⁶³ He should also serve Hashem by minimizing his sense of self. See *Tanya*, ch. 49.

⁶⁴ See *Likkutei Torah*, end of “*parshas Beshalach*.”

⁶⁵ *Tehillim* 128:2.

When a person brings weekday-like activities *{uv'din d'chol}* into his mind and intellect (his 'Shabbos'), this makes them *{his mind and intellect}* vacant *{chalal}* and empty of any G-dly awareness (as explained previously⁶⁶ in relating the concept of profaning *{chilul}* Shabbos by emptying it. Had he any awareness of or sensitivity for the truth that only Hashem's blessings bring prosperity — that his efforts in business are only a receptacle for Hashem's blessings (as the verse states, "Hashem will bless all that you do") — he wouldn't submerge his head in business schemes and ultimately useless strategies and gimmicks (since success comes only from Hashem's blessings). In fact, these various business schemes, which exhaust him and prevent him from studying Torah and serving Hashem, actually prevent and hinder him from becoming a receptacle for Hashem's blessing.

Even a person who does not bring his business interests into his "Shabbos" *{analogous to doing melachah}* must remain aware of the other injunction against "leaving the *techum*." This is because he must not leave the *techum* "on Shabbos" (time allocated for Torah and *mitzvos*), even with his external faculties. He mustn't use his feet (his external faculties) for anything outside of Torah and *mitzvos*, since *Torah abides in all 248 limbs of a person's body*.⁶⁷ The same is true when praying or performing *mitzvos*, etc.

9.

CARRYING A *SHERETZ* OUT OF THE TEMPLE

The concluding *Mishnah* of *Eruvin* discusses a case in which a *sheretz* is found inside the Temple. Meaning, even after a person implements all the life-lessons contained within tractates *Shabbos* and *Eruvin*, by refraining from *melachah*⁶⁸ of the intellect and allowing his

⁶⁶ Chap. 7

⁶⁷ *Eruvin* 54a; *Tanya*, ch. 37.

⁶⁸ *{Hotza'ah is the subject of the first chapter of tractate Shabbos, which is the quintessence of all Shabbos melachos, as explained.}*

“feet” to “rest” within the *techum*,⁶⁹ he may still discover a *sheretz* within his personal Temple.⁷⁰ The source of *sheretz*-impurity is not exuded from a person’s body; rather, it comes from outside⁷¹ {of the realm of holiness} Since the universe has not yet been fully refined, the physicality of the world allows the possibility of a *sheretz* trespassing into a person’s Temple. It makes no difference that he is not the source of this negativity.⁷²

Although this impurity did not come from him, and he is presumably not personally responsible {for its presence, nonetheless}, no one⁷³ disagrees that **he** is responsible to remove the *sheretz* from the Temple. The *mishnaic* Sages’ sole disagreement is *how* it should be done. One opinion is to “remove it with his sash.” Spiritually, this entails a person immediately occupying and investing himself (at least his garments)⁷⁴ {with the removal of the *sheretz*}. He does so irrespective of the fact that “one who wrestles with a filthy person is bound to become soiled.”⁷⁵ It is worthwhile {according to this opinion⁷⁶ to allow the sash to become impure} in order to prevent impurity from lingering {in the Temple}. Alternatively,⁷⁷ a person must exert himself {more} — taking care not to touch the *sheretz* even with his clothing, looking for “wooden tongs” to use in removing the *sheretz*. As *Tanya* puts it:⁷⁸ “Pretend not to notice,”⁷⁹ and,⁸⁰ “one must set aside opportune times,”⁸¹ so as not to increase impurity, and not to become soiled through removing the impurity {immediately}, even though this {the time it takes to obtain tongs} will delay the rectifying {of the impurity}.

⁶⁹ {The topic discussed in the concluding chapter of tractate *Eruvin*.}

⁷⁰ {Topic of the final *Mishnah* and conclusion of tractate *Eruvin*.}

⁷¹ {The *sheretz* entered from outside the Temple, yet was found dead within the Temple precincts.}

⁷² {In the analogy: the *kohen* does not become personally impure, whether he removes the *sheretz* with a sash or with wooden tongs.}

⁷³ {Both opinions in this concluding *Mishnah*.}

⁷⁴ {The soul’s garments: thought, speech, and action.}

⁷⁵ *Tanya*, ch. 28.

⁷⁶ {Rabbi Yochanan ben Beroka’s opinion.}

⁷⁷ {Rabbi Yehudah’s opinion.}

⁷⁸ *Tanya*, ch. 28.

⁷⁹ {When ‘foreign thoughts’ distract a person during prayer.}

⁸⁰ *Tanya*, ch. 26.

⁸¹ {When a person is occupied with holy matters, such as prayer or Torah study, and he is assailed by regrets over his past conduct, the Alter Rebbe counsels him not to struggle to do *teshuvah* immediately; rather, he should resume his prayers, and set aside appropriate time later to undertake *teshuva*.}

In any case, we are now so close to Moshiach's arrival; all the deadlines have passed and the only thing necessary is *teshuvah*. In one turn, in one moment, “*teshuvah* out of abundant love can transform impurity to purity.”⁸² So especially now, obviously, each person has the privilege and obligation to eradicate the spirit of impurity from the earth by spreading *chassidic* teachings outward. In this way, each person accelerates and hastens “the advent of the Master”⁸³ {Moshiach's arrival} **imminently**, in actuality.

-Based on a talk delivered on the 20th of Menachem Av, 5722 (1962)

⁸² *Tanya* Ch. 7.

⁸³ {In the Aramaic original, “קאתי מר.” See Sanhedrin 98a.}