

**Wembley Synagogue**

קרן

Insights from the commentators into the Sidra of Korach 5768

What's the Sidra about?

1st Aliya: Korach, along with Dattan, Aviram, and 250 men from Shevet Reuven, challenged Moshe and Aharon's leadership. Moshe set the next day for a showdown, hoping that the rebels would reconsider their rebellion. **2nd Aliya:** After attempting to convince Korach to reconsider, Moshe attempted to sway Dattan and Aviram. Moshe's efforts were rebuffed. **3rd Aliya:** The next day Hashem instructed Moshe and the nation to separate themselves from the tents of Korach, Dattan, and Aviram. Moshe proclaimed that his and Aharon's leadership would be divinely confirmed through the way in which Korach and his followers would die. Korach, Dattan, and Aviram, along with their entire families were swallowed up by the earth, while the 250 men from Reuven were consumed by a heavenly fire. **4th Aliya:** A rebellion broke out among the people, and Aharon had to intervene in order to stop the plague sent as a punishment against the people. 14,700 people perished in the plague. **5th Aliya:** Aharon's appointment as Kohen Gadol is reconfirmed through the test of the staffs. Aharon's staff was the only staff that miraculously sprouted almonds. **6th Aliya:** Aharon's staff is placed in the Holy of Holies. The duties of the Kohanim and Leviyim are stated along with a list of the Kohen's share in the nations produce and live stock. **7th Aliya:** The Levite's share of the nation's produce and the gifts given by the Leviyim to the Kohanim are stated. (Source: Rav Aron Tendler)

THE MITZVAH OF MEZUZAH:

The Weekly Halacha Discussion- A review of practical halachic topics related to the weekly Sidra
By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt.

וַיִּקַּח קֹרַח - And Korach took... (16:1) Korach asked... A house full of Seforim, does it require a Mezuzah? (Source: Midrash Rabbah 18:3)

THE BASIC OBLIGATION

It is a Biblical obligation for all adults, men and women(1), to affix a mezuzah to the right post of each doorway of their home. One who fails to do so transgresses a positive command(2). Although a mezuzah also protects a home(3) and safeguards the well-being of one's little children(4), this is by no means the primary reason for the mezuzah. The intention that one must have when affixing the mezuzah to the doorpost must be "for the sake of the mitzvah of mezuzah(5)." Indeed, some poskim mention that it is prohibited to consciously have in mind that the mezuzah is for the purpose of protection. Such an intention detracts from the essential character of a mitzvah, which is to fulfill Hashem's will with no other considerations(6). Many poskim hold that it is Rabbinically prohibited to live in a home which does not have proper mezuzos, just as it is prohibited to wear a four-cornered garment without tzitzis(7). These poskim rule that if another house is available, one must move out of his home as soon as he realizes that it is lacking proper mezuzos(8). He is permitted to temporarily remain in his home only if he is unable to obtain a mezuzah immediately, or if he found out on Shabbos that his home has no mezuzah(9). Other poskim are somewhat more lenient and do not require the residents to move out if they have already moved in(10). All agree that the problem must be rectified immediately. There is absolutely no excuse for delaying the purchase and placement of a mezuzah for several days or weeks. One may enter another Jew's home even though there are no mezuzos on his door(11). It is clearly prohibited to nail a mezuzah case to a door-post on Shabbos and Yom Tov(12). If the mezuzah case was nailed in before Shabbos or Yom Tov and remains intact, but the mezuzah parchment fell out, some poskim permit replacing the mezuzah in the case while others prohibit it(13). In any event, the mezuzah parchment does not become muktzeh and it may be picked up so that it does not lie on the floor in disgrace(14).

WHEN DOES THE OBLIGATION OF MEZUZAH BEGIN?

Contrary to what is commonly believed, the obligation begins as soon as one moves into his own home. By the first day or night that a home will be occupied, or by the first day or night that an addition to a home will be used, every doorway must have a mezuzah.

[Indeed, many poskim hold that one should not affix a mezuzah before actually moving into a house(15) (even though he owns it and plans to move in in the near future), and certainly the

blessing should not be recited until the actual move(16). Other poskim hold that once he has moved his belongings into the house, the mezuzah may be affixed with a blessing(17).]

It is only when one rents [or borrows] a home from another person [outside of Eretz Yisrael] that a thirty-day(18) waiting period is allowed until one becomes obligated to affix a mezuzah(19). The Rishonim argue as to the reason for this exemption. Rashi(20) explains that until thirty days have elapsed, one can easily change his mind about the rental; thus the house is not really "his" until thirty days are over. Tosfos explains that the first thirty days of residence are considered as "temporary dwelling," and temporary dwelling does not obligate one to affix a mezuzah.

Based on Rashi's explanation, it follows that when a long-term contract is signed which legally obligates the renter for an extended period of time, then the obligation of mezuzah takes effect immediately (21). Moreover, if upon moving into the house, the renter fixes it up in a manner which shows that he is planning to remain there for a long while, logic dictates that a mezuzah be put up and the proper blessing recited. This, indeed, is the view of some poskim(22), and one may conduct himself in accordance with this view(23). But many poskim advise that although the mezuzah should be affixed immediately upon moving in, the blessing should not be recited until the thirty-day period is up(24). At that time, it is proper to remove one mezuzah, recite the blessing, and return the mezuzah to its proper place. If it is difficult or bothersome to do so, then the mezuzah need not be removed; merely touching it is sufficient for the blessing to be recited(25). [An exception to this is when one rents a bungalow or a summer home for a short stay. In such a case, the poskim agree that thirty days should elapse before a mezuzah is affixed(26).] If the thirty-day period is up on Shabbos or Yom Tov, the mezuzah should be affixed on erev Shabbos or erev Yom Tov before lighting candles. The blessing should be recited at that time(27).

FOOTNOTES:

1 Y.D. 291:3. 2 Sefer ha-Chinuch 423. See Menachos 44a where it states that two positive commands are transgressed. See also Teshuvos Binyan Tziyon 7. 3 Tur Y.D. 285 based on Avodah Zarah 11a. 4 Shabbos 32b. 5 Tur Y.D. 285; Aruch ha-Shulchan 285:3. 6 Sdei Chemed (Mem,114) quoting Derech ha-Melech, based on Rambam (Hilchos Mezuzah 5:4) and Kesef Mishneh, ibid. See also Igros Moshe Y.D. 2:141 who explains this issue at length. 7 Magen Avraham O.C. 13:8 as explained by Pri Megadim O.C. 38:15; Avnei Nezer Y.D. 381. 8 It remains unclear if in the opinion of these poskim one needs to move to a friend's home or to rent a hotel room in order to avoid this prohibition. 9 Pischei Teshuvah Y.D. 285:1 quoting Pri Megadim; Aruch ha-Shulchan Y.D. 285:5; Ben Ish Chai (Ki Savo). 10 See Sdei Chemed (Mem, 115), Kuntres ha-Mezuzah (pg. 6 and pg. 128) and Tzitz Eliezer 13:53 who quote several poskim who hold that the Rabbis did not prohibit entering a house that has no mezuzah nor did they require one to move out of his dwelling when he realizes that there is a problem with the mezuzah. 11 Sdei Chemed (Mem, 115) quoting Ruach Chayim. 12 Mishnah Berurah 313:41; 314:8. 13 Sdei Chemed (Mem, 115) quotes both views. See Binyan Shabbos, pg. 27 for an explanation. Tzitz Eliezer 13:53 rules leniently, while Mezuzas Melachim 286:19 is stringent. 14 Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (quoted in Shalmei Yehudah, pg. 28). 15 See Chovas ha-Dar 9:1. 16 Mishnah Berurah 19:4. This is the proper way; Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (oral ruling quoted in Avnei Yashfei 2:80). 17 Harav C. Kanievsky (Mezuzos Bei'secha 276:78) quoting the Chazon Ish. This also seems to be the view of the Aruch ha-Shulchan O.C. 19:2. 18 Moving day, even if it is close to night, is counted as day number 1. Thus 29 days later, the obligation takes effect. 19 Y.D. 286:22 20 Menachos 44a. 21 Siddur Derech ha-Chayim quoted in Pischei Teshuvah 286:18. 22 Several poskim quoted in Sdei Chemed (Mem, 115) and Chovas ha-Dar, pg. 31. 23 Aruch ha-Shulchan 286:49. See also Chayei Adam 15:22. 24 Pischei Teshuvah 286:18; Nachalas Tzvi; Sdei Chemed (Mem, 115); Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:179. 25 Igros Moshe, ibid. 26 Igros Moshe, ibid. 27 Kuntres ha-Mezuzah, pg. 82. Another option is to nail the mezuzah case to the post before Shabbos and insert the mezuzah on Shabbos (Chikrei Leiv Y.D. 128). But, as stated earlier, some poskim do not allow this on Shabbos.

שבת שלום!

Shabbat Shalom



Shabbat starts 8.00pm



Shabbat ends: 10.27pm

לע"נ ר' מרדכי צבי ב"ר חייאל משה וולפסון ז"ל

The *Insights into the Sedra* sheet is edited by Chazan Anthony Wolfson

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