

**Wembley Synagogue**

מִצְוָה

Insights from the commentators into the Sidra of Massei 5768

What's the Sidra about?

First Aliyah: The Torah recounts the journeys of the Jews in the desert. In the first aliyah the Torah lists the first seven of the 42 journeys which took them from Egypt to the banks of the Jordan. **Second Aliyah:** The rest of the journeys are enumerated. **Third Aliyah:** G-d instructs the Jewish people to eradicate all Canaan's inhabitants and destroy their idols after crossing the Jordan River. The borders of the land of Israel are delineated. The land was to be divided by lottery amongst the nine and a half tribes (Reuben, Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh were going to settle on the eastern bank of the Jordan). **Fourth Aliyah:** G-d appoints a representative from each tribe to divide his tribe's portion of land between the tribal members. **Fifth Aliyah:** The Jews are commanded to provide the Levites with 48 cities where they would dwell -- 42 cities plus the six cities of refuge which would be designated. Along with these cities, the Levites were given expanses surrounding the cities for their cattle. **Sixth Aliyah:** The Jews are commanded to designate six cities of refuge. These cities offer refuge to a person who inadvertently kills another. The murderer must remain in the city of refuge until the death of the serving High Priest. The Jews are enjoined not to take "blood money" from an intentional or unintentional murderer who wishes to lighten his sentence. **Seventh Aliyah:** In last week's reading, G-d instructed Moses to give the daughters of the deceased Tzelophchad his portion in the land of Israel. The elders of Tzelophchad tribe now protested that this would cause Tzelophchad sons -- who could possibly be of another tribe -- to inherit their mother's properties, thus possibly transferring land from the portion of their tribe to another. G-d therefore instructs Tzelophchad daughters to marry men from their own tribe, so the land they inherit will remain in their ancestral tribe.

SHOPPING DURING THE NINE DAYS

The Weekly Halacha Discussion- A review of practical halachic topics related to the weekly Sidra

By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt.

QUESTION: Is it permitted to go shopping during the Nine Days?

DISCUSSION: It is forbidden to make a major purchase, such as a car, silver items, or furniture during the Nine Days. There are two possible prohibitions involved in such a purchase: Purchasing a substantial (chashuv) item - even if used - obligates one to recite a shehechyanu (1), and it is improper to recite it throughout the Three Weeks(2) and especially during the Nine Days (3). If the car or furniture is for the use and enjoyment of the entire family, in which case ha-Tov v'ha-Meitiv is recited instead of shehechyanu (4), one would be allowed to buy it during the Three Weeks but not during the Nine Days. This is prohibited since it is similar to building or buying a binyan shel simchah (loosely translated as building or buying an item for pleasure or joy), which the Shulchan Aruch (5) clearly forbids(6).

Shopping for clothing or shoes, even if they are intended for use after the Nine Days(7), is prohibited(8). Both expensive and inexpensive items (such as socks) are included(9). [If one has no clean shirt for Shabbos, he may wear a new shirt(10).] Shopping for items which a) do not require a shehecheyanu; b) are not purchases which could be classified as a binyan shel simchah; and c) are not apparel, is permitted. Even when shopping is prohibited, the following leniencies apply: Only actual buying is prohibited. It is permitted to shop without buying. Window or comparison shopping is permitted. Returns are permitted. Exchanges may be prohibited(11). An item which is forbidden to be bought during the Nine Days because of the shehecheyanu restriction may be bought during the Nine Days if it requires assembly and if the assembly will be done after the Nine Days. The same rule applies to a utensil that requires immersion. If the immersion will not take place until after the Nine Days, no shehecheyanu is said at the time of purchase(12). It is permitted to buy a car or furniture for business purposes. The shehecheyanu should be said after Tishah b'Av(13). People in the clothing business may purchase stock during the Nine Days(14). If delaying the purchase will cause one a substantial loss(15), or if the item will not be available after Tishah b'Av(16), it is permitted to buy the item during the Nine Days(17). A bachelor who is getting married after Tishah b'Av may buy anything he needs during the Nine Days(18). One who does not have appropriate shoes to wear on Tishah b'Av may buy them during the Nine Days(19). If one will run out of clothing for small children, one may either wash the clothes or buy new clothes(20).

FOOTNOTES:

1. O.C. 223:3. 2. O.C. 551:17. 3. Aruch ha-Shulchan 551:38. 4. O.C. 223:5. 5. O.C. 551:2, Mishnah Berurah 11 and Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 13. 6. Mishnah Berurah, ibid. and Aruch ha-Shulchan 20 prohibit buying silver items as binyan shel simchah. Igros Moshe O.C. 3:80 prohibits car buying for the same reason. See also Nitei Gavriel, pg. 51, who quotes the Puppa Rav as including furniture as well. 7. Mishnah Berurah 551:49. 8. Rama O.C. 551:7. See also Mishnah Berurah 45. 9. Mishnah Berurah 551:45-46. 10. Beir Halachah 551:6, according to the explanation of Igros Moshe O.C. 3:80. The poskim do not mention specifically if one would also be allowed to buy the shirt during the Nine Days. 11. Since the shopper is getting a new item in exchange for the old one, it may be considered as if he is buying the item anew. A rav should be consulted. If the new item requires a shehecheyanu, the exchange may definitely not take place during the Nine Days; see Moadei Yeshurun, pg. 152, note 31. 12. Mishnah Berurah 223:17 and Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 21 quoting R' Akiva Eiger. See also Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 167 quoting Harav C.P. Scheinberg. 13. Igros Moshe O.C. 3:80. 14. Mishnah Berurah 551: 11. 15. See Zichron Shelomo, Hilchos Chol ha-Moed, pg. 94, who quotes Harav M. Feinstein and Harav Y. Kamenetsky who rule that when an item is offered on sale at a substantial reduction and the sale is not likely to occur again in the near future, it is considered a davar ha-aveid in regard to hilchos Chol ha-Moed. 16. Ben Ish Chai (Devarim 2). 17. Based on Mishnah Berurah 551:11 and 13 that permit even a binyan shel simchah in order to avoid a loss. There are other poskim who prohibit a binyan shel simchah even in a case of loss; see Kaf ha-Chayim 551:29. 18. Mishnah Berurah 551:14 and 46. Other poskim disagree with this leniency; see Kaf ha-Chayim 551:30, 33 and 101. 19. Igros Moshe O.C. 3:80. 20. O.C. 551:14 and Mishnas Yaakov (quoted in Piskei Teshuvos, pg. 83).

שבת שלום!
Shabbat Shalom



Shabbat starts 8.00pm



Shabbat ends: 9.43pm