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Techumim

A few times in the *Gemara R' Akiva* and the *Chachamim* argue whether the prohibition of walking more than 2000 *amot* from a city is biblical or rabbinic. The *pasuk* that is brought as a source for this *issur* is from *Shmot* (16:29):

“See that *Hashem* has given you the *Shabbat*; that is why He gives you on the sixth day a two-day portion of bread. **Let everyman remain in his place; let no man leave his place on the Seventh day**”

This *pasuk* seems to state clearly that one is not allowed to leave their place on *Shabbat*. If so how can the *Chachamim* say that there is no *issur* from the *Torah*? Many *Rishonim* use this *pasuk* (along with a few other *Gemarot*) to explain that the *Chachamim* also agree that there is a basis for the *issur* in the *Torah*. If so, what is the *machloket* between *R' Akiva* and the *Chachamim*? A few options may be considered in order to explain this *machloket*.

Rambam (*Hilchot Shabbat* 27:1) explains that there are in fact two different outer limits that relate to *techumim*. The first limit 2000 *amot* is indeed rabbinic, while there is second further limit that is biblical. This *issur* therefore does originate from the *Torah* while the distance however was not specified; the *Torah* just states that one cannot leave his “place”. The *Chachamim* determined that this biblical measure was 12 *mil*, which is equivalent to the size of *machaneh Yisrael*. The sages however went one step further and placed an additional decree restricting the “place” to the city and an area of 2000 *amot* around it where it is still considered its “place”. If we accept *Rambam's* opinion we might be able to find new meaning to this *issur*. We know that there is an *issur* to take anything out of one's house to the public domain. This concept can be explained by a *Mishnah* in *Pirkei Avot* (4:3) that says:

“Do not despise anyone or anything as you do not have a man that does not have his hour and you do not have an object that does not have a place”.

The *Mishnah* introduces an important new concept in the world of objects. Any object has its own place, moving it from its place will automatically change its status. Changing an object on *Shabbat* is not allowed as it is considered *Melech Machshevet* – productive work. Similarly moving the object from one place to another is, in a way, changing its essence. The *Torah* regards a man moving from one city to another in a similar way. A man has his own place and that is his city. Moving out from that city and going to a new place is in a sense changing oneself. That is the reason that the *Torah* does not want a man to do such a thing on *Shabbat*. It was the *Chachamim* that realised that 2000 *amot* around the city is still close enough to be considered staying in one's place. This is the reason that the city itself is not counted in this measurement. But only the 2000 *amot* that are around the city. In the city itself one does not make any change by going from one place to another; it is only when he leaves the city.

On the other hand *Ramban* explains that this *issur* is not from the *Torah* but rather constituted by the sages. *Ramban* gives a very interesting insight about the *pasuk* that we brought before regarding the *issur* of *Techumim*. *Ramban* explains that every *mitzvah* that is written before the *Torah* was given at *Har Sinai*, once the *Torah* was given, is not considered a *mitzvah* unless it is repeated again later on in the *Torah*. In the case of *Techumim* the *issur* is written before the *Torah* was given and therefore it only holds as long as the *Torah* was not given and since it is not repeated later on in the *Torah* there is no *issur* of *Techumim* from the *Torah*.

In summary, no matter which opinion we hold by the *issur* of *Techumim* can be explained as saying that one should concentrate on his or her family and community – that is the purpose of *Shabbat*.

Asher Shafir

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Revision Questions

עירובין ג' טי – ה' בי

- What are the two opinions about how one should reference *Rosh Chodesh* on *Rosh Hashanah*? (גי: טי)
- If someone was forcibly taken outside the *techum*, how far can he walk? (די: א')
- If that person was then forcibly returned inside his *techum*, how far can he walk? (די: א')
- Explain the debate regarding one that was forcibly removed from his *techum* and placed in a walled-off area. (די: א')
- Explain why *Rabban Gamliel* ruled that the passengers of a boat that only reached the port on *Shabbat* were able to leave the boat. (די: בי)
- In what cases is one allowed to leave the *techum Shabbat*? (די: ג')
- If one of these people left the *techum Shabbat* and completed their task, how far can they walk from that spot? (די: ג')
- Describe the debate regarding someone who was travelling and was unaware that at the onset of *Shabbat* he was within the *techum* of a city. (די: ד')
- List the four opinions regarding a traveller that was asleep at the onset of *Shabbat*. (די: ה')
- If three people are standing in a row, and each only able to walk four *amot*, and the region of the middle person overlaps the regions of the outer two, which parties are able to join and eat together? (די: ו')
- To which case does *R' Shimon* compare the case in the previous question? (די: ו')
- If someone is travelling, and they wish to make the *makom shvita* by a particular tree (in the distance) how should they phrase the proclamation? (די: ז')
- Explain the two opinions of how the measure of 2000 *amot* for *techum Shabbat* is measure. (די: ח')
- What are the two methods of making an *eruv techumim* and to whom do they apply? (Include all three opinions) (די: ט')
- Explain the debate regarding one who was sent to place an *eiruv* on behalf of the city, but got held up by his friend. (די: י')
- What are the two opinions regarding one who stepped outside the *techum* whether he can step back inside? (די: י"א)
- How does one determine the borders of an oddly shaped city? (די: ה')
- Explain the debate regarding including a *karpaf* as part of the city? (די: בי)

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
27 th November כ"ה חשוון	28 th November כ"ו חשוון	29 th November כ"ז חשוון	30 th November כ"ח חשוון	1 st December כ"ט חשוון	2 nd December א' כסלו	3 rd December ב' כסלו
Eiruvim 5:3-4	Eiruvim 5:5-6	Eiruvim 5:7-8	Eiruvim 5:9-6:1	Eiruvim 6:2-3	Eiruvim 6:4-5	Eiruvim 6:6-7

