

HALACHA V'HALICHA... By Rav Chaim Schabes

The Mishna says that there were ten generations from Noach until Avraham Avinu, who all caused Hashem to anger, and when Avraham Avinu came, he got the reward of all of those generations. Why should Avraham get the reward of others? It is true that he merited reward, but why of all those generations? The Telzer Rosh Yeshiva, R' Y.L. Bloch, answered that when a person sins, the impressions of his actions are not restricted to just himself; rather, it poisons the air of the whole world, and therefore, after so many generations of corruption, it was that much harder for Avraham Avinu to accomplish what he set himself to do. Since it was a thousand times harder for him to reveal the truth, that is why he merited to receive the reward of all those generations.

When it rains on Shabbos, it is permitted to hold a piece of plastic or clothing over one's head to protect oneself, and it is not considered an *ohel* (tent), because there is no permanence to it. Concerning a hat that has a hard brim that is wider than a *tefach* (3 1/2 in.), there is a dispute amongst the Rishonim if it is permitted. The Shulchan Oruch says that it should not be worn (OC 301:40), but the MB (152) brings that in a place where people are accustomed to wearing it, one should not protest against them. Opening an umbrella, although many Acharonim wrote that it is considered an *ohel*, and possibly *assur mid'Oraissa*, it seems that their umbrellas had a clasp that was fixed to hold them open (Bi'ur Halacha 315:8 *tefach*). However, our umbrellas seem to be analogous to a folding chair, and there would really be no prohibition of opening them, but nevertheless, Chazon Ish (52:6 *divrai*) writes that it has a prohibition *mid'Rabbanan* because of *uvdin d'chol* (a weekday activity). Anything that a person wears in order to protect himself from actual pain or discomfort is not considered carrying on Shabbos, but something that one wears only to prevent his clothing from getting dirty or ruined, is considered carrying. Therefore, one would be allowed to wear a plastic hat cover over a straw hat in an area that has no *eruv*, since it protects him from getting wet, but not over a regular felt hat, since it is just protecting the clothing. Shoe rubbers are considered a piece of clothing, because they protect one's body and not only the shoes. The MB writes (OC 2) that one should not wear two pieces of the same clothing at the same time, and the same should apply to shoes and galoshes, but the Aruch Hashulchan says that galoshes are permitted; others write that by leather and rubber it doesn't apply altogether. To remove wet mud from one's clothing is not considered laundering, because some of it will remain, but the MB says that if nothing will remain, it is not permitted, similar to removing food that got dried. If one has a different piece of clothing that is clean, one would be obligated to change, because the obligation to wear clean clothing on Shabbos is not restricted to when one starts wearing them (if one doesn't have a second piece of clothing, then wearing it as it is, is considered *k'vod* Shabbos; in this case one should make sure to clean it right after Shabbos). The same is true about making the beds, if they are untidy, one would be obligated to straighten them up, because there is an obligation of *kavod* Shabbos the whole day. If one's clothes got drenched in the rain, although one is normally not allowed to wear or handle a garment that is very wet, for fear that one may come to squeeze out the water, nevertheless, one is allowed to continue wearing it until he reaches home, where he is permitted to remove it carefully (OC 301:46 and MB 162). Even if one's socks are very wet, and it is inevitable that they will be squeezed when walking with them, he is nevertheless allowed to continue walking with them till he comes home, where he will be able to remove them.

THOUGHTS ON THE HAFTARAH ... By Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro (Yeshaya 54:1-55:5)

The Haftara of Noach contains a *nevuah* that represents one of the strongest calls for *limud Torah* in Tanach. This particular *nevuah* begins הווי כל צמא לכו למים. The word 'הווי' generally connotes a feeling of sadness or issuance of a warning, but in this case Rashi explains that it represents a call to the people to prepare themselves for what the *navi* is about to impart. Still, the 'warning' aspect of the word is also significant, since no good will come to those who do not heed the words of the *navi*. There are of course several other *nevuos* that chastise people for not learning, and encourage them to put an emphasis on this pursuit. This *nevuah*, though, is directed to those who already have a thirst for knowledge. To those people the *navi* says לממה תשקלו כסף בלא להם. Ibn Ezra, among others, explains that in the time of Yeshayahu, the pursuit of knowledge didn't abate, but it was severely misdirected. At that time, the power of the Assyrian kingdom was growing in Eretz Yisrael, and along with the political and military influences came other spheres of knowledge such as a new language and other disciplines. As the Jewish people began putting their efforts into acquiring this new knowledge and establishing themselves in the non-Jewish world, the study of Torah began to suffer. This is why the *navi* insists ויגיעכם בלוא לשבעה. The level of your efforts is consistent, and you may be enjoying your studies, but in the long run they will not truly satiate you and you will remain hungry! In fact, as time has passed and as world power after world power has fallen, it becomes clear that what people had pursued as 'ultimate knowledge' has become worthless. This *nevuah* is meant for all generations, and its message is timeless: acquiring secular knowledge cannot quench a Jew's hunger and thirst for wisdom; only the pursuit of Torah and its knowledge can help a Jew attain his goals in this world.

ON LANGUAGE... By R' Moshe Orlian

In deciding what to do with the people of Bavel, Hashem says (B'reishis 11:7) הבה נרדה ונבלה שם שפתם. There are 2 basic approaches to understanding the word ונבלה ("ve-na-ve-LA"). The first view treats the נ of ונבלה as the נ indicative of *binyan nif'al*. As such, the subject of this verb is שפתם, and it would be translated as "their language will become confused" (*nif'al* is passive). According to this, ונבלה would be a variation of ונתבלבלה. Others, Rashi included, argue that the נ of ונבלה represents the first person plural, as does the נ of נרדה in the same *passuk*. The subject of the verb would then be Hashem and his hypothetical "*bais din*" (hence the plural), and the translation would be "we will confuse their language".

"A GIGANTIC LITTLE SECRET" ... By Rabbi Yosef Schwab

קץ, קץ כל בשר בא לפני, referring to the destruction of life on earth during the Flood, equals 190 in *gematria*. This alludes to the fact that the destruction occurred over 190 days: 40 days of rain + 150 days of the springs spewing forth.

