



Parsha Encounters

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Parshas Vayishlach – Rabbi Fishel Zlatopolsky

“Pure Revenge”

“And Yaakov heard that Dinah his daughter was defiled. And his children were with the flocks in the field, and Yaakov kept quiet until they came”. (Bereshis 34:5)

These psukeim require further explanation. Why is Yaakov taking such a passive stance, if indeed “a despicable act was done in Israel” (34:7)? Why did Yaakov not take the lead and express his condemnation? What made him keep quiet and wait for his sons to take revenge?

Rabbi Shimon Schwab answers these questions with a beautiful insight into the following gemora: “Great is revenge, for it was given between two mentions of Hashem’s name as it is said in Tehilim 94/1 ‘**Kail** Nekomos **Hashem**’. (Brochos 33a).

From here we learn that vengeance is a great thing, but only if it begins and ends with Hashem’s name. Only if the revenge is taken purely for the sake of Kiddush Hashem from beginning until the end without any personal agenda, is it truly considered proper. It’s true, our Sages taught us that one should involve himself in torah and mitzvos even when not purely for the sake of heaven with the hope and a goal of one day meriting to attain the level of Lishmo- doing the commandments out of love for Hashem and His holy Torah. (Nazir 23b) This, however, is not true when it comes to the mitzvah of taking revenge from

the evildoers. There, one is not allowed to get himself involved unless he is **certain** of the purity of his intentions.

The Gemorah (Shabbos 33b) tells us that prior to Dinah’s abduction, Yaakov benefited the city of Shchem (very much). He introduced them to currency, set up markets and built bath-houses. Now Yaakov Avinu was afraid. Would his revenge be motivated purely by the fact that an abomination was done, or maybe there would be a tinge of personal indignation? Perhaps, to a minute degree, his revenge would be prompted by their lack of gratitude, or by their failure to recognize and appreciate who Yaakov was and what he had done for them. Subsequently, the revenge would not be “pure”, and so Yaakov restrained himself.

Very often we find ourselves drawn into disputes of far less noble character. And towards the guilty party (not us, of course), we unleash our “justified” indignation and condemnation. We feel that we are on a holy mission to restore justice. And, of course, it’s not the money or kovod... it’s a principle! Well, if we are really looking for a principle, let us turn to Yaakov avinu: And Yaakov heard ... and he was **quiet!** Let us ensure that our “principle” is completely L’shem Shamayim.

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Halacha Encounters

Snow and Rain on Shabbos

Rabbi Dovid Greenberg

During the wet, wintry season, it's worthwhile to refresh our memories about some of the halachos that pertain to snow and rain on Shabbos.

Shaking Off Wet Clothes

The Shulchan Aruch (O.C. S. 302:1) states that one may not shake out clothing that have absorbed water on Shabbos due to the prohibition of Melabain (laundry). In a situation where the water mars the appearance of the garment in the eyes of the wearer, one may not even gently shake the water out. The wearer's concern about the water gives it the status of an impurity (stain), and therefore the removal of any moisture constitutes laundering. However, if the wearer is unconcerned about the appearance of his garment, gentle shaking would be permissible. Many Poskim are of the opinion that all raincoats fall into this category, for their function is to become wet, and hence they may be gently shaken. Strong shaking is forbidden in regard to all wet garments due to the inevitability of squeezing out the water which is an effective step in the laundering process. If the garment is constructed from plastic or non-absorbent material, one is allowed to shake it vigorously. With regard to snow, the top layer which hasn't begun to melt into the garment, is allowed to be shaken off. Since the snow is not embedded into the garment there is no prohibition of Melabain. However, the lowest layer may only be shaken off only if one isn't concerned with its appearance, and even then, one mustn't shake vigorously. Accordingly, one must be careful not to shake off any rain that has fallen on his hat, but one may gently shake off accumulated snow. One should also be careful when tying or untying wet shoelaces, to do so gently as to avoid the prohibition of squeezing out water.

Hanging Up Wet Clothing

It is prohibited to hang wet clothing to dry on Shabbos due to the principle of Maris Ayin. This term expresses Chazal's fear, that if an onlooker views a certain activity they may assume that a transgression has taken place, and may be led to believe that the act is really permitted. When one sees a person hanging up wet laundry one could conclude that the clothing was laundered on Shabbos, and that it is

permissible to do so (ibid. 301:45). This fear is only relevant when the clothing is wet enough to moisten a second surface to the extent that the second surface could transfer moisture to a third surface. (Tofeiach Al M'nas L'Hatfiach) Otherwise no one would confuse the clothing with freshly laundered garments (M.B. 308:63). Also the prohibition applies only to hanging the wet garments in the usual place (i.e. the laundry room, or over the shower). Therefore one may hang the wet clothing in the closet or drape them over a chair. Similarly, any item which is common to become wet not through laundering, like a raincoat or items which would be ruined by laundering in water, like suits and many overcoats, may be hung up even in the laundry room, for there is no fear that an onlooker would assume they were laundered (Shmiras Shabbos K'hilchaso 15:119, S' Kitzor Hil. Shabbos). One must be careful not to hang wet clothes in the close proximity of a heater or other heat source, because that could lead to the prohibitions of cooking and laundering on Shabbos. (When the wetness is removed by heat, the clothing become brighter- M.B. 301:169).

Wearing Wet Clothes

Chazal forbade moving wet clothing. Because the owner is perturbed about the wetness, he may end up squeezing out the water. This prohibition only applies after one has removed the wet garments from himself. However, while one is wearing them, Chazal did not decree that he must remove them, though he should be mindful not to squeeze or press them. Similarly, if one has no suitable clothing besides the wet clothing, one is permitted to don them. The reason for these exceptions is that Chazal did not make preventative decrees at the expense of a person's dignity which would surely be compromised if one had to remove his wet clothing immediately (Aruch Hashulchan 301:118).

If one's garments are saturated with water or covered by snow he need not be concerned that he is carrying rain water or snow in the public domain on Shabbos, because being that this act of carrying would only be a Rabbinic prohibition (due to the unusual method of carrying and other factors) the Rabbis didn't want to forbid a situation which is beyond one's control (i.e. being caught in a sudden downpour). Therefore, they didn't forbid even knowingly walking in the rain, for they don't like to make inconsistent decrees (s.326:7).

Rabbi Greenberg learns full-time at the kollel.