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NOT SHABBOSDIK!

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Aside from the 39 forbidden types of work on Shabbos, there are other activities that are inconsistent with the spirit of Shabbos. This kind of activity is sometimes referred to as "not Shabbosdik," or not appropriate for Shabbos. Often, people look at these types of activities as merely inappropriate but not strictly forbidden. Although this holds true for some non-Shabbosdik activities, many of these activities are actually forbidden by an explicit *pasuk* (verse) in Sefer Yeshaya that we read in the *haftarah* of Yom Kippur. The Ramban (Sefer Hamitzvos Shoresh 2) teaches that mitzvos that are known to us through the books of the Prophets are actually part of the *Torah Sheba'al Peh* that was given to Moshe on Har Sinai and, in many ways, are like mitzvos *diOrayso* (Scriptural mitzvos). Those non-Shabbosdik activities mentioned by Yeshaya were prohibited by Hashem Himself and transmitted to Moshe as part of the Torah.

The *pasuk* in Yeshaya actually prohibits a number of categories of activities on Shabbos. We will focus here on one of those categories.

The Navi (Yeshaya 58:13) says: "You shall honor it [Shabbos, by refraining]... from taking care of your [weekday] needs." So "taking care of weekday needs" is forbidden by the Navi as a lack of honor to Shabbos. But what is meant by this?

Let us mention several activities that one may consider "taking care of weekday needs" or "non-Shabbosdik," and analyze if they are indeed forbidden by these words of the Navi.

May one walk on Shabbos to a store and wait outside in order to be able to buy something on sale right after Shabbos?

May one window-shop on Shabbos?

How about going to an open-house to look at a home for sale?

May one check on the progress of a house under construction on Shabbos?

What about to check on the construction of a yeshiva or shul?

May someone go to his office before Shabbos is over in order to begin working immediately after Shabbos?

The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 306:1) applies Yeshaya's words "taking care of your needs" as follows: One may not check on one's property to see what it needs tomorrow. Also included in the prohibition is walking on Shabbos to the edge of town in order to go to the bathhouse (located right outside the city) after Shabbos. The Rema (*ibid.*) adds that it is similarly forbidden to walk around looking for a horse or wagon in which to travel after Shabbos.

The common denominator of these activities is that one is doing something on Shabbos to facilitate doing something after Shabbos that is forbidden on Shabbos. Taking care of one's field, home improvements, going to the bathhouse and travelling by horse and wagon are all activities forbidden on Shabbos. Facilitating those actions are considered taking care of weekday needs and thus forbidden on Shabbos.

The Shulchan Aruch continues and says that one is permitted to go to the edge of town in order to fetch one's animal after Shabbos. This is because fetching an animal could be done in a permitted manner on Shabbos; thus, facilitating it on Shabbos is allowed.¹

According to this definition, facilitating a purchase by going to a store or inspecting merchandise in the store window would seem to be included in this prohibition, as would inspection to facilitate construction.

¹ Significant acts of preparation for weekdays are often prohibited, even if the weekday activity is one permitted on Shabbos. This is a separate prohibition called *hachana* (preparation), which will *be'ezras Hashem* be discussed in a

future article. Merely walking or looking at something is not included in that prohibition, and is thus allowed in our case.

However, the Shulchan Aruch in another place (Orach Chaim 307:9) makes a statement which seems to contradict what we have learned until this point. He writes that one is permitted to wait on Shabbos near one's garden until dark in order to pick fruit after Shabbos. Why is this permitted? He is facilitating an act that is forbidden on Shabbos!

The Mishna Berura (307:39-40, 306:1) explains that facilitating a forbidden act is only prohibited if it is evident from one's actions that he is doing so. Otherwise, it is in the category of merely thinking about a forbidden act which is allowed. For example, if one looks carefully at one's field during the plowing season, it is evident that he is doing so to facilitate the weekday plowing. Waiting at the edge of town near the bathhouse and looking at horse-and-wagons for hire are obviously and evidently facilitating acts forbidden on Shabbos. Similarly, if one stands right next to one's garden, it would be evident that he is preparing to cut fruit, and that would be prohibited.

However, by merely waiting near (but not right next to) one's field, it would not be evident that one is facilitating a forbidden act, and that would not be considered breaching the honor of Shabbos through "taking care of one's needs."

There is another exception to this prohibition, based upon the wording of Yeshaya, "...taking care of **your** needs." The Gemara (Shabbos 150a) derives from this that only facilitating personal needs is prohibited, but facilitating mitzvah needs is permitted.

Thus, one would be permitted to stand at a store before Shabbos is over to be prepared to purchase mitzvah needs even if the intent of facilitating a purchase is evident.

To summarize: We have learned that the Navi prohibits actions on Shabbos that are evidently intended to facilitate an act that is forbidden on Shabbos for non-Mitzvah needs.

Let us now return to our questions. On Shabbos, it would be permitted to inconspicuously walk near a store or near one's workplace in order to shop or work

after Shabbos, but one would not be allowed to wait inside or right next to the store or one's office, for it would then be evident that one is facilitating a purchase or work. However, if the purchase or work is for a mitzvah, it would be permitted. Window shopping could be allowed when done in a way that does not create the impression of facilitating a purchase.² Walking near the construction site of one's home and merely glancing at it could be allowed, as that is not an obvious facilitation of a weekday need. Inspecting the site in a way that is evidently facilitating the construction, though, would be prohibited. Checking on the construction of a shul or yeshiva would be permitted because it is for a mitzvah purpose. Going to an open house would be prohibited if it would be obvious that it's intended as a means to facilitate a possible purchase.

We have learned that many non-Shabbosdik activities, although not *melacha* (forbidden labor), are nevertheless included in the Navi's prohibition of "taking care of one's needs" and are considered violations of the honor of Shabbos and strictly prohibited on Shabbos.

However, the concept of keeping to the spirit of Shabbos goes further than this. The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 306:8) teaches, "It is permitted to think about one's weekday affairs; however, in order to enjoy Shabbos, it is a mitzvah not to think about them at all and it should be as if all of one's work is done." The Mishna Berura (ibid. 38) adds that if those thoughts would cause one to be preoccupied and worried, they should certainly be avoided.

One who is imbued with the true spirit of Shabbos feels that one's weekday needs are non-existent. He would then find it unnecessary and inappropriate to do many of the above-mentioned activities, even if they are not technically prohibited.

If we are careful to respect the honor of Shabbos, we merit the fulfillment of the next words of Yeshaya, (58:14): "Then you will delight in Hashem!"

² However, reading the price tags or advertisements may be prohibited for reasons beyond of the scope of this discussion.