

This week's *Parashah* opens with the *Mitzvah* to observe *Shabbat*. We read (35:2), "On six days, work may be done, but the seventh day shall be holy for you, a day of complete rest for *Hashem*." Why, asks R' Moshe Schick z"l (1805-1879; a leading rabbi and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Hungary), does the Torah use the passive form, "Work may be done," instead of saying, "You may work"?

He explains: One might think that *Shabbat* is merely a day to rest one's body from the toil of the workweek. If that were so, however, then a person who did no work during the week would not need to observe *Shabbat*. That is not the *Halachah*, of course; indeed, one who would say that has the legal status of a *Mumar* / someone who has left the fold, writes R' Schick.

Rather than being a day of physical rest, *Shabbat* is a day that *Hashem* gave us to sanctify, writes R' Schick. It is inherently different from all other days, holier than all other days, and filled with blessings more than all other days. Since it is thus a propitious day to attain holiness, a person must sanctify himself on it. This one does by making *Shabbat* a day when he doubles his efforts to engage in *Avodat Hashem* / service of G-d.

This is why the verse is in the passive form, R' Schick explains: Even if work is done for you, and you do no work yourself, *Shabbat* must be a day of rest. Why? Because "the seventh day shall be holy for you." (*Maharam Schick Al Ha'Torah*)

Shabbat

R' Avraham Zvi Kluger *shlita* (*Chassidic Mashpia* in Bet Shemesh, Israel) writes: There is a disagreement among *Midrashim* and the classical commentaries whether the commandment to build the *Mishkan* was given before the sin of the Golden Calf or after that sin. Some, including the *Zohar Ha'kadosh* and R' Moshe ben Nachman z"l (*Ramban*; 1194-1270; Spain and *Eretz Yisrael*), hold that the commandment was given before the sin, as it was always *Hashem's* desire that there be a place on earth where His presence would be revealed. Others, including *Midrash Tanchuma* and *Rashi z"l*, hold that there would have been no need for a physical *Mishkan* if not for sin; *Hashem* would, instead, have "dwelt" within each person. Only after the sin was there a need to make a *Mishkan*, they say.

R' Kluger continues: The *Gemara* (*Eruvin* 13b) teaches that when our Sages disagree, "These and these are the words of the Living *Elokim*." While we cannot always see how two opposing opinions can coexist--here, for example, the commandment to make a *Mishkan* either was given before the sin of the Golden Calf or it was given afterward--the *Gemara* is instructing us to find some common denominator, some point on which the two sides agree. Here, R' Kluger writes, both sides presumably would agree that *Hashem* would like to reside within each Jew's heart, and that He desires that connection more than He desires to reside in a *Mishkan*.

There is a common misconception that *Yom Kippur* is the holiest day on the Jewish calendar. This belief presumably arises from the fact that the Torah calls *Yom Kippur* "*Shabbat Shabbaton*" / "The Sabbath of Sabbaths" and because it comes only once a year, writes R' Kluger. In fact, however, the holiness of *Yom Kippur*--which is one of the festivals, whose occurrence is dependent on man's sanctification of the new moon--is not as great as the holiness of *Shabbat*--which was sanctified by G-d at the time of Creation. (The relative holiness of the two days is demonstrated by the fact that the punishment for performing labor on *Shabbat* is stricter than the punishment for working, or even eating, on *Yom Kippur*.)

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“Every wise-hearted person among you shall come and do everything that Hashem has commanded.” (35:10)

R' Moshe Miskin z"l (1860-1929; *Mashgiach Ruchani* of Yeshivas Toras Chessed in Baranovitch, Poland; better known as R' Moshe Midner) writes: The *Rebbe* of Kobrin z"l (R' Moshe Polyer; 1783-1858) once cried out, “What good is all of your wisdom? ‘Every wise-hearted person among you shall come and do everything that Hashem has commanded.’ Truly having wisdom means doing something--specifically, G-d’s will--with what you have learned. Therefore, one’s intention when learning Torah should be to practice what he is learning. Otherwise, says the *Midrash*, he would be better off if he had not been born.”
(*Kitvei Rabbi Moshe Midner Ha’shalem* p.111)

“Moshe said to Bnei Yisrael, ‘See, Hashem has proclaimed by name, Betzalel son of Uri son of Chur, of the tribe of Yehuda.’ (35:30)

Rashi z"l writes: Chur was the son of Miriam. [Until here from *Rashi*]

R' Daniel Chaim Alter *shlita* (Rabbi and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Yerushalayim; son of the previous *Gerrer Rebbe*) writes: In two additional places, *Rashi* informs us that Chur was the son of Miriam:

- On the verse (*Shmot* 17:10), “Yehoshua did as Moshe told him, to do battle with Amalek, and Moshe, Aharon, and Chur ascended to the top of the hill”; and
- On the verse (*Shmot* 24:14), “To the elders he said, ‘Wait for us here until we return to you. Behold! Aharon and Chur are with you; whoever has a grievance should approach them’.”

Why does *Rashi* tell us in these three places that Chur was the son of Miriam?

R' Alter explains: We read about the midwives who refused to obey Pharaoh’s order to murder the newborn boys (*Shmot* 1:21), “And it was because the midwives feared the *Elokim* that He made for them houses.” *Rashi* comments there: “A dynasty of *Kohanim* and *Levi'im* from Yocheved, who was identical with the midwife Shifra, and a dynasty of kings from Miriam, who was identical with the midwife Pu’ah.” But one might ask, writes R' Alter: Why did Yocheved/Shifra receive her reward in the very next generation, while Miriam/Puah had to wait hundreds of years until her descendant, King David, ascended the throne? The three comments of *Rashi* quoted above are meant to answer this question, says R' Alter.

He explains: A king of *Yisrael* has three obligations: to establish a judicial system, to destroy Amalek, and to build the *Bet Hamikdash*. *Rashi* is noting that Miriam’s immediate descendants played a role in all three of these; she did not wait hundreds of years to receive her reward: Her son Chur helped Moshe hold his arms aloft during the battle with Amalek, and he served as a judge while Moshe was on *Har Sinai*, while Chur’s grandson, Betzalel, was the chief craftsman of the *Mishkan*, the forerunner of the *Bet Hamikdash*.

(*Devarim Achadim*)

“Moshe said to the entire assembly of Bnei Yisrael, saying, ‘This is the word that Hashem has commanded, saying’.” (35:4)

What is the purpose of the last word in this verse--“saying”? R' Yosef David Sinzheim z"l (1736-1812; Chief Rabbi of France; author of *Yad David* on the *Talmud*) explains: The *Mishkan* was to atone for the sin of the Golden Calf, in connection with which we read (*Shmot* 32:3), “The entire people” contributed. Thus, to obtain atonement, the entire nation would need to contribute generously to the *Mishkan*. But not all people are the same, writes R' Sinzheim; some are generous and some are stingy. Therefore, those who were generous were commanded to “say” to, *i.e.*, to persuade, the less generous to donate. Then, the generous donors were to “take” from the less generous ones, as we read in the next verse, before the latter changed their minds.
(*Shelal David*)

“Take from yourselves a portion for Hashem, everyone whose heart motivates him shall bring it, as the gift for Hashem--gold, silver, copper.” (35:5)

R' Yaakov Emden z"l (1697-1776; Central Europe) writes, citing the *Zohar*: In *Parashat Terumah* (25:2), we read, “From every man whose heart motivates him you shall take My portion.” At that point, donations to the construction of the *Mishkan* could be accepted “from every man”--even the *Erev Rav* / the non-Jews who had attached themselves to *Bnei Yisrael* at the time of the Exodus. However, that verse was spoken before the sin of the Golden Calf, which was initiated by the *Erev Rav*. Our verse, in contrast, was spoken after the sin of the Golden Calf, when the participation of the *Erev Rav* was no longer welcome. Therefore it says, “Take from yourselves”--implying: not from the *Erev Rav*. And, lest there be any doubt to whom “yourselves” refers, note that we read a few verses earlier (35:1), “Moshe assembled the entire assembly of *Bnei Yisrael* and said to them . . .”

(*Eim Le'binah*)

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Why, then, asks R' Kluger, was the *Kohen Gadol* permitted to enter the *Kodesh Ha'kodashim* / Holy of Holies only on *Yom Kippur* and not on every *Shabbat*? Based on the above, he writes, this question is answered. The *Kodesh Ha'kodashim* is the holiest physical place in the *Mishkan*--it is where the *Kohen Gadol* can have his most intimate connection with *Hashem*. But the holiness of *Shabbat* makes it unnecessary to seek a connection with *Hashem* within a confined physical space. Instead, *Shabbat*'s holiness enables every Jew, and certainly the *Kohen Gadol*, to discover the presence of the *Shechinah* within himself.

(*Havineini V'echyeh: Shmot* p.679)