

Shabbat Vayakhel/Pekudei: Who is Shabbat For?

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Shemot 35:1-3

שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי יִהְיֶה
לְכֶם קָדֹשׁ שַׁבַּת שַׁבְּתוֹן לַיהוָה כֹּל־הָעֹשֶׂה בּוֹ
מְלָאכָה יוּמָת:

On six days work may be done, but on the seventh day
you shall have a sabbath of complete rest, holy to GOD;
whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.

1. What is Shabbat? And what is the Mishkan?

Keli Yakar on Shemot 35:2

ומה שהקדים בפר' כי תשא (לא יג) משכן לשבת,
וְכָתַב אֶת שַׁבְּתוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ לְדֹרֹשׁ מִיתוּר לְשׁוֹן
אֶת שְׂאִין מִשְׁכַּן דּוּחָה שַׁבַּת וְהוּא לֵה לְהַקְדִּים
הַשַּׁבָּת וְלֹא יִצְטָרֵךְ לִיתוּר שֶׁל אֶת, הִנֵּה לִפִּי מֵה
שִׁפְרִשְׁנוּ לְמַעַל פֶּר' כִּי תִשָּׂא בִּתּוֹר לְשׁוֹן אֶת הַצֶּרֶךְ
לְכָתֹב לְשׁוֹן אֶת, אֲמַנָּם דְּבָרֵי רִשְׁ"י יִתְרֵץ בְּדֶרֶךְ
אַחֵר וְאֵגֵב זֶה יִתְרֵץ ג' כ' לְמֵה שְׁנֵה מִשֶּׁה הַסֹּדֵר כִּי
הַקֶּב"ה צִוָּה לוֹ תַּחֲלָה עַל הַמִּשְׁכָּן וּמִשֶּׁה הַקְדִּים
הַשַּׁבָּת, וְזֶה כִּי הַשַּׁבָּת אֵין בּוֹ כ"א כְּבוֹד הַשֵּׁ"י
לְהוֹרוֹת כִּי הוּא יֵת' חֲדָשׁ עוֹלָמוֹ, וְהַמִּשְׁכָּן מוֹרָה כָּלוּ
עַל כְּבוֹד יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׂוִיתָר לָהֶם הַקֶּב"ה וְהַשִּׁרָּה
שְׂכִינָתוֹ בְּתוֹכָם וּמַחֲל לָהֶם עוֹן הָעֵגֶל, וְהַקֶּב"ה חָס
בִּיתָר עַל כְּבוֹדָם שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל ע"כ הַקְדִּים הַמִּשְׁכָּן
וְכִדִּי שֶׁלֹּא יִטְעוּ לומר שֶׁלֶכֶךְ הַקְדִּים לומר
שֶׁמִּלֵּאכֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן דּוּחָה שַׁבַּת ע"כ הוֹסִיף מִלֵּת אֶת
אֲבֵל מִשֶּׁה חֲשַׁב שֶׁלְכְּבוֹד הַשֵּׁ"י רָאוּי לְהַקְדִּים
הַשַּׁבָּת הַמּוֹרָה עַל כְּבוֹדוֹ יֵת' וְאֵח"כ הַמִּשְׁכָּן הַמּוֹרָה
עַל כְּבוֹדָם שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִתּוֹךְ קְדִימָה ז' יוֹבֵן מִמִּילָא
שֶׁהַשַּׁבָּת דּוּחָה מִלֵּאכֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן כִּי מִי נִדְּחָה מִפְּנֵי
מִי הָיָה אוֹמֵר הַקָּטָן מִן הַגָּדוֹל וְלִמַּעַל פֶּר' כִּי תִשָּׂא
תִּמְצָא עוֹד טַעַם אַחֵר לְמֵה הַמִּשְׁכָּן
נִדְּחָה מִפְּנֵי הַשַּׁבָּת.

And regarding why in Parashat Ki Tisa (31:13) He preceded the Tabernacle before the Sabbath, and wrote *Nevertheless you shall keep My Sabbaths* to derive from the additional word *nevertheless* that the Tabernacle does not override the Sabbath — He should have mentioned the Sabbath first, and would not have needed the extra word *nevertheless*. Now, according to what we explained above in Parashat Ki Tisa regarding the extra word *nevertheless*, there was a need to write the word *nevertheless*. However, Rashi's words can be resolved in a different way, and along with this, it will also explain why Moses changed the order, because the Holy One, blessed be He, first commanded him about the Tabernacle, but Moses put the Sabbath first. This is because the Sabbath is solely about the honor of God, to teach that He, blessed be He, renewed His world, while the Tabernacle entirely indicates the honor of Israel, that the Holy One, blessed be He, made concessions to them and caused His Divine Presence to dwell among them, and forgave them for the sin of the Golden Calf. The Holy One, blessed be He, is especially concerned for the honor of Israel, therefore He mentioned the Tabernacle first. And so that they would not err and say that He mentioned it first to indicate that the work of the Tabernacle overrides the Sabbath, He added the word *nevertheless*. But Moses thought that for the honor of God, it was appropriate to put the Sabbath first, which indicates His honor, blessed be He, and afterwards the Tabernacle, which indicates the honor of Israel. And from this precedence, it will be understood automatically that the Sabbath overrides the work of the Tabernacle, because which one is pushed aside for the other? You must say the lesser for the

¹ All translations are from Sefaria, unless otherwise noted.,,

	greater. And above, in Parashat Ki Tisa, you will find another reason why the Tabernacle is set aside for the Sabbath.
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Or HaHayyim on Shemot 35:2	
<p>שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה. טַעַם זִכְרוֹן עֲשִׂית מְלָאכָה בִּימֵי הַחֹל, אוֹלֵי שְׂיָכִין לֹמַר שָׁאֵם יְהִיָּה יוֹם שְׁבִיעִי קִדָּשׁ, תַּעֲשֶׂה הַמְּלָאכָה הַצְּרִיכָה לָךְ בְּשֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים.</p>	<p>ששֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה, "during six days work shall be performed, etc." The reason the Torah emphasises the work to be performed on the weekdays may simply be a hint that if one observes the seventh day as a holy day, the work required for our maintaining ourselves during the subsequent six days will take care of itself.</p>
<p>אוֹ יִרְצֶה הַכְּתוּב לְאַסּוֹר מְלָאכָת שַׁבָּת בֵּין עַל יְדֵי עֲצֻמּוֹ בֵּין עַל יְדֵי גוֹי, וְהוּא אָמַר שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה בְּצִיר"י תַּחַת הַתִּי"ו, פְּרוּשׁ תְּהִיָּה נַעֲשִׂית, אֲבָל בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי אֶפְלוּ עַל יְדֵי אֲחֵרִים אֵין לָךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת, וְזֶה כְּהֶאֱמַר אֲמִירָה לְגוֹי אֲסוּרָה דְּבַר תּוֹרָה (מְכִילְתָּא פֶּרֶשֶׁת בֹּא). וְטַעַם אָמַר שֵׁשֶׁת וְלֹא בְּשֵׁשֶׁת כִּדֵּי שְׁלֹא תִטָּעָה כִּי יֵשׁ מִצְוָה בַּעֲשִׂית מְלָאכָה בָּהֶם.</p>	<p>The Torah may also wish to remind us that performance of work on the Sabbath is prohibited regardless of whether it is performed by a Jew or by a Gentile on his behalf. The vocalisation of the word <i>te-asseh</i> (passive form), is intended to convey that whereas it is permissible for a Jew to have his work performed by Gentiles during the week, on the Sabbath it must not be performed at all. This would correspond to the opinion expressed in the Talmud that if one tells a Gentile to perform work for one on the Sabbath, one violates a biblical prohibition (<i>Mechilta Parshat Bo</i>). The reason the Torah writes ששֶׁת instead of בששֶׁת, is to remind us that work performance during the six days of the week is a מצוה, a positive commandment.</p>
<p>עוֹד יִרְמֹז כִּי לֹא יִקְוֶמוּ שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים בְּמְלָאכָתָם אֲשֶׁר הֵכִינָם ה' לַעֲשׂוֹת, אֲלֹא אִם יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי יְהִיָּה לָכֶם קִדָּשׁ, אֲבָל אִם לֹא יִשְׁמְרוּ שַׁבָּת לֹא יְהִיָּה הַשֵּׁשֶׁת יָמִים, כִּי שַׁבָּת הוּא נֶפֶשׁ קִיּוֹם הָעוֹלָם, וְכִמוֹ שֶׁהִקְדַּמְנוּ בְּפֶרֶשֶׁת בְּרָאשִׁית בְּפֶרוּשׁ פְּסוּק (בְּרָאשִׁית ב:ב) "וַיִּכַּל יְהוָה בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי" יַעֲיֵן שָׁם.</p>	<p>There is also a lesson here: the success of the work performed during the six days of the week depends on observing the seventh day as a holy day. The reason is that the Sabbath is the soul of the world, as we explained in our introduction to Genesis in Genesis 2:2, "God finished...on the seventh day."</p>

2. Secure in Our Place

Nehemia Polen, <i>Stop Look Listen: Celebrating Shabbat Through a Spiritual Lens</i> , 210	
<p>Keeping Shabbos calls for bracketing the world of competitiveness in all its forms. If everyone felt secure and calm in their own place, there would be no need to seize the place of another. Hasidic masters teach that allowing anger to inflame one's emotions to the point of losing control is a form of violating Exodus 35:3, "You shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations on the Shabbos day."</p>	

Wendell Berry, <i>Another Day: Sabbath Poems 2013-2023</i> , 159	
<p>Here we are still on the frail small earth wobbling in the sky, and we are holding on in awe and hope to the Big Brain, our chosen almighty, while the Six Days' Work burns in profitable fire</p>	<p>until its lover's eye looks with love upon it, when then even the dark begins to shine. Old sunlight sings to the young sun. In its lover's gaze it becomes seen, and by his praise begins to be as it was made.</p>