

Maamarei Mordechai

הסבר לפי ממש פשוט

Parshas Ki Sisa 5785

D. Mordechai Schlachter

Hashem gives Moshe the second set of Luchos and finishes off its related instructions.

שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי תִשְׁבֹּת בְּחֵרִישׁ וּבִקְצִיר תִּשְׁבֹּת:

“Six days you shall work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, rest from plowing and harvesting.” (Shmos 34:21).

Why does the pasuk not specifically say “it is shabbos to you?” Is the land resting or the person? Also, why did the Torah specifically state plowing and harvesting?

The Torah talks about Shabbos many times. Moshe introduced the concept in Eretz Mitzrayim. Pharaoh complained to Moshe and says, “They are a very large people and you shall have them rest from their labors?” (Ibid 5:5). Yes, Pharaoh was talking tongue-in-cheek with Moshe when Moshe wanted the people to go out for a three-day holiday. However, the Torah seems to infer that Pharaoh meant something more. Not just the three-day holiday but a weekly day of rest. Wanting one three-day rest does not mean the people will rest from their burdens. Also, how is having them gather their own straw related to a one-time, three-day holiday? Moshe had instituted a day of rest when he “went out among his people and saw their burdens.” (Ibid 2:11). The word **סְבִלָתָם** is in both pesukim. Moshe saw their burdens and gave them a day of rest. Now Pharaoh was angered that he also asked for a three-day holiday out of the country. Pharaoh revoked that day of rest. That is why Egypt no longer gave straw. The “day of rest” was now for gathering the straw or to make up the quota.

The Torah more specifically mentions the concept of Shabbos when Hashem gave the people the manna. (Ibid 16:30). Then Hashem formally gave the commandment of Shabbos on Har Sinai when Hashem spoke the Aseres HaDibros publicly (ibid 20:8) and privately to Moshe (ibid 31:13). Each time Shabbos is mentioned there is a new aspect to Shabbos. What is clear, though, is the Torah does not explicitly mention the full list of Avos Malachos (primary labors) that are forbidden on Shabbos. The Torah, though, does mention gathering and baking (ibid 16:23); ceasing from work that involves income (ibid 20:8-11); not to work animals in the field (ibid 23:12); plowing and harvesting (ibid 34:21); kindling flame (ibid 35:3); and carrying in a public domain (Bamidbar 15:32).

Why did the Torah give so few of the laws of Shabbos and how did the Chazal derive the remainder? The Mishneh gives the thirty-nine categories of primary labor but gives no explanation as to from where they were derived. (Shabbos 7:2). The Yerushalmi does give a reason. It is from the thirty-nine times the Torah says “work” in regards to the Mishkan. (Yerushalmi Shabbos 7:2). However, the Gemara does not state how each melacha itself was derived. It stated that the Torah used the term “work” thirty-nine times in regards to the Mishkan and, therefore, there are thirty-nine

categories; there is no explanation as to how the Mishneh knew what each category was.

In Bavli, the Gemara states that the thirty-nine labors correspond to the labors in the Mishkan. (Shabbos 49b). An opposing view follows that of Gemara Yerushalmi that says they correspond to words “work” are written in the Torah. Seemingly, since the latter explanation does not state how the particular categories were derived, the former opinion also does not. It merely suggests that there were thirty-nine labors in the Mishkan so there are thirty-nine labors for Shabbos. However, neither explanation seems to indicate what those thirty-nine labors are. The Gemara does state that the juxtaposition of Shabbos before building the Mishkan (Shmos 35:2,4) is the basis for the Mishkan’s labor used as the paradigm for Shabbos labor. (Shabbos 70a).

The Gemara in its immediate discussion only gives the examples of sowing, reaping, and carrying (Shabbos 49b). However, while these are the ones that are actually explicit in the Torah, the Gemara derives other reasons for them. Also, the Gemara later gives examples of baking, not from the prohibition of baking manna but from cooking dyes. (Ibid 74b). It also gives the examples of shearing, tying, sewing, weaving, tanning, and sifting. (Ibid). Also, derived from the Mishkan, not the Torah.

The discussions in both Yerushalmi and Bavli led to the reason why the Torah had to list some of them, but not all of them. If the Torah mentioned all of the labors, then it would be considered an inclusive list. It would be almost impossible to do anything on Shabbos. Any activity or labor possibly related to those listed would be considered forbidden so as not to violate the Torah. By having the labors derived only through exegesis by comparing what labors were done in the Mishkan (as the Yerushalmi hints at and Bavli says explicitly) the categories and their derivative labors (toldos) are finite. For example, tying is forbidden, but a temporary knot is allowed. If the Torah said tying then any type of knot or twist or even twirling two threads together would be forbidden.

The Malachos that would not logically be derived from the Mishkan are those in the baking category. Moshe asked for gifts and the gifts were given ready-made. The Mishkan was not a five-year project. They did not start to plant in Egypt or in the wilderness to provide for the Mishkan. Therefore, there was no plowing, reaping, gathering, sowing, sifting, choosing, or even cooking involved in the labors. All materials were given ready-made, well past those processes. Similarly, the items were brought within the camp – in reality – to Moshe and not necessarily by carrying them in between domains or in the public domain. Even if they were carried, the carrying was incidental to making the Mishkan. Therefore, one would think those labors are not forbidden. That is why the Torah specifically teaches that they are. The Gemara, then, teaches that they are exactly like every other labor derived from the Mishkan, finite. The Torah had to mention them because the logic of derivation would not be made. However, they are not more stringent than any other labor.

So too, working on Shabbos for parnassa is not resultant from the Mishkan. However, the Torah stated it and it is forbidden beyond the thirty-nine labors, even if it involves “permitted” labor.