

Why Work?

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The Menorah was made (Exodus 25:31).

It shall be made on its own (*Midrash Tanchuma, Beha'alotkha* 3).

Because Moses was uncertain how to create it, God said to him: Throw the brick of gold into the fire and it will form itself. Therefore it does not say "You must make" (Rashi on Exodus 25:31).

Work, work, work... Most of the world spends the vast majority of their waking hours hard on the job. But does more of the grind mean that we produce more and earn a better living? And is there any way that our lives could be a little less stressful and things could come by a little easier?

Reb Noson teaches that when engaging in work or business, we need to focus all of our thoughts, speech and actions on God. The reason why we are engaging in work is because there are sparks of holiness hidden in these mundane matters, and it is God's will that we uplift these sparks through our toil.

It is also God's will that we refrain from working on Shabbat. When we refrain on Shabbat from performing any of the *Lamed-Tet Melakhot* (Thirty-Nine Acts of Labor) that were used in the construction of the Tabernacle, we merit to rejoice in God's

Ratzon (Divine Will or Favor) and reinforce our faith in the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe. Then the *Lamed-Tet* Acts of Labor are transformed into *Tet-Lamed*, which spells *TaL* (dew)—the dew of God's Divine Favor toward us. The more we believe in the power of Shabbat and the realization of God's will permeating this world, the more the holiness of the Shabbat will be drawn into the six workdays and we will be blessed with Divine Favor.

Regarding the construction of the Tabernacle, the Torah states, "The Tabernacle was erected" and "The Menorah was made" – for the work was accomplished by itself. The Jewish people merely intended to perform the work, and the work was accomplished. So too, when it comes to our livelihood, we should realize that the work we are doing doesn't actually create anything: it is only God's Favor that blesses us.

God's will is realized when we rest on Shabbat and affirm our belief that He runs both the world and our personal lives. When we live according to God's will, our work also becomes His will. Therefore our Sages teach that when we fulfill God's will, our work is completed through others (*Berakhot* 35b).

May we all attain true faith in God, and through this faith we will usher in the day that is completely Shabbat, soon and in our days. Amen.

Based on Likutey Halakhot, Hilkhhot Shabbat 3