

## These are the things that Hashem has commanded, to do them...on six days, work may be done, but the seventh day shall be holy. (35:1,2)

The *Torah* introduces the laws regarding the building of the *Mishkan* with an admonition to observe *Shabbos*. *Rashi* notes the juxtaposition of these laws and infers that building the *Mishkan* does not override the observance of *Shabbos*. *Abarbanel* explains that since building the *Mishkan* is a symbol of the strong bond that exists between Hashem and *Klal Yisrael*, one might think that it should take precedence over everything, even *Shabbos*. After all, action is a positive expression of our love and commitment to Hashem. Should it not have preeminence over the observance of *Shabbos*, which represents a cessation from action? Specifically, in response to this line of thinking, the *Torah* emphasizes the laws of *Shabbos* in connection with the construction of the *Mishkan*, in order to teach us that *Shabbos* takes precedence over the building of the *Mishkan*.

**Horav Eli Munk, zl**, gives two reasons for the predominance of *Shabbos* over the building of the *Mishkan*. Firstly, the *Mishkan* and its successor, the *Bais Hamikdash*, would one day disappear. *Shabbos*, on the other hand, is a *mitzvah* which was to last forever. Its observance would ensure that the loss of the *Mishkan* and the *Bais Hamikdash* would not affect *Klal Yisrael's* relationship with Hashem. Structures are temporary; *mitzvos* are eternal. To paraphrase *Horav Munk*, "More than the Jews have kept *Shabbos*, *Shabbos* has kept the Jews." We must realize that non-observance of this critical *mitzvah* can evoke grave consequences in our relationship with Hashem.

A second reason for the prioritization of *Shabbos* over the *Mishkan* is based on a comparison between the concepts of time and space. Hashem sanctified the seventh day of Creation, making *Shabbos* the symbol of holiness in the dimension of time. In a similar manner, the *Mishkan* serves as the representative of holiness for the dimension of space. *Kedushas ha'zman*, sanctification of time, takes precedence over *kedushas ha'makom*, sanctification of place, precisely because Hashem initiated the concept of time after the seventh day. Since man fashioned the *Mishkan*, however, it demonstrates man's ability to create holy places which Hashem consecrates.

The holiness of time is inherent in Creation, while the consecration of space is not. Man can attain perfection within the dimension of time by using the hours and minutes that are allotted to him for spiritual purposes. Such opportunity does not exist in the spatial dimension. Holiness is not increased by vanquishing space or increasing one's possessions in quantity or quality. Our function as Jews does not depend on certain fixed points on earth, but rather in the manner in which we serve Hashem during the specific times that have been established for us. The dimension of space has the flexibility to allow changes to take place. Time does not have this characteristic. It is eternally fixed. We infer from the prohibition against desecrating *Shabbos* for the sake of building the *Mishkan* that the sanctity of time has greater significance than the sanctity of space.