

## On six days work may be done, but the seventh day shall be holy for you. (35:2)

*Rashi* teaches that, in the text, the *mitzvah* of *shemiras Shabbos* precedes the building of the *Mishkan* to warn us that *shemiras Shabbos* overrides the building of the *Mishkan*. Interestingly, in *Parashas Ki Sisa* (preceding the creation of the molten Gold Calf), the Torah introduces the *mitzvah* of building the *Mishkan* prior to mentioning the injunction concerning *Shabbos*. The *Chidushei HaRim* explains that, prior to the sin of the Golden Calf, the six weekday/workdays prepared for *Shabbos Kodesh*. (*Shabbos* was the focal point of the week, with each day bringing one closer to the ultimate goal of *Shabbos Kodesh*.) After the *cheit ha'eigel*, the nation needed their *Shabbos* observance to elevate them to the point that they be worthy of building the *Mishkan*.

We understand from the above that the nation's participation in the Golden Calf debacle harmed them spiritually. They plummeted from the unprecedented level of *kedushah* they achieved when they received the Torah. A number of spiritual deficiencies seemed to "occur" following their sin. They lost the crowns of *Naase v'nishma*: "We will listen, and we will do" (placed on them by Heavenly Angels). Moshe *Rabbeinu* appeared to have some difficulty grasping the idea of the *machatzis ha'shekel*, half shekel, every Jew was to donate. *Horav Zev Weinberger, zl*, explains that, following their sin, Moshe did not see how they could have the *nedivus halev*, heartfelt donations, that were necessary for the building of the *Mishkan*. Hashem showed Moshe a fiery coin (representing the half-*shekel*). This hinted to Moshe that actually the intrinsic sanctity of the Jew did not become tarnished. The "other half" *shekel* in Heaven corresponded to the one on earth. If the people make their attempt, Hashem will connect the coins. Clearly, a sad change occurred in the nation's spiritual integrity.

*Rav Weinberger* adds that much more was expected of the nation prior to their sin. Indeed, we find that the *Nesiim*, Princes, were censured (a *yud* was removed from their name), because they were "late" in donating to the *Mishkan*. Veritably, they acted *l'shem Shomayim*, for the sake of Heaven, when they declared, "Let the nation donate, and we will guarantee the balance." They did not expect the extraordinary outpouring of contributions from the people. Thus, they were left with no reason to give. At least they tried; they meant well. Why hold it against them? The commentators explain that at the very root of their offer was a minute tinge of indolence, a sort of laziness unbecoming men of their stature. *Rav Weinberg* posits that this tinge of indolence was evidenced only relative to the nation's spiritual standing prior to the sin of the Golden Calf. It would not have been noticed after the nation's drop in spiritual status.

Alacrity to perform a *mitzvah* is measured on a variant barometer. In other words, the greater one is with regard to his spiritual performance, the greater will be his alacrity to perform *mitzvos* and good deeds. He relates that *Horav Menachem Porush, zl*, was called by the *Brisker Rav, zl*, on *erev Shabbos* to write a letter of support for a Jew in need [*Rav Porush* was a member of the *Knesset* and a powerful figure in *Eretz Yisrael*]. The *Rav* dictated the letter, and *Rav Porush* signed

it. The *Rav* instructed *Rav Porush* to go to the post office immediately to mail it. “Why?” he asked, “No mail is delivered on *Shabbos*. I can mail it tomorrow night.” *The Brisker Rav’s* response should rouse us from a spiritual slumber. “Who knows if we will be alive *Motzoei Shabbos*?” When one performs a *chesed*, act of kindness, for a Jew, he has no room for any kind of indolence.