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**RABBI WEIN'S
WEEKLY
BLOG**

The commentators over the ages who have studied every word of the Torah carefully and meticulously particularly note that the review and accounting for the construction of the Mishkan was preceded by convening all of the Jewish people before Moshe and once again reviewing the laws and importance of Shabbat.

The main and obvious lesson to be derived from this juxtaposition of subject matter is that Shabbat is supreme even over the construction of the holy house of God itself. Though the construction of the Mishkan was not allowed on Shabbat, nevertheless once the structure was erected and operating, the services in that very edifice continued even on Shabbat with the special Shabbat offerings as prescribed in the Torah.

There is a very subtle but meaningful message hidden in this seeming contradiction as to the actual practical supremacy of Shabbat over the Mishkan. After all, if the Jewish people were prohibited from building and constructing the Mishkan on Shabbat then why were they allowed and in fact commanded to operate and conduct the sacrificial

service in that building on Shabbat? There seems to be a disparity of ideas regarding this matter.

Much has been written on the subject but there always is room for new ideas and different insights. This is what makes the Torah eternal and refreshes it in every generation and under all circumstances. It speaks to all times and provides guidance to all the differing ages and histories of humankind. So, I have an idea that I wish to share with you regarding this issue.

The overriding prohibition of work on Shabbat is that of doing creative work. That is the core of the laws of Shabbat as they pertain to work on the holy day. Over the centuries, Jewish tradition has overlaid layers of prohibitions to safeguard the Shabbat but in essence, global prohibition for work on Shabbat remains a prohibition to do creative work.

This is an example of our attempt to imitate the Creator who, so to speak, finished all creative work in establishing our universe and therefore no creative work was performed any longer on the seventh day of Creation. This is the template for our understanding of Shabbat. The Lord rested, so to speak, on the seventh day, however we will understand this and interpret it, from the creative nature of establishing our universe.

It is therefore understandable that

our observance of Shabbat should be concentrated on creative work and that we emulate our Creator, so to speak, by refraining from any further creative work. However just as nature proceeds to operate on the seventh day as it does on all other days of the week, the idea of nature being a creative piece of work diminishes. Building the Mishkan in the desert was a triumph of creativity and ingenuity, of Godly inspiration and human talent. It therefore follows that the final Torah reading of the Book occurs on the Shabbat since that day represents the cessation of Godly creativity as far as our universe is concerned.

Once the Mishkan was in place and built however, it resembled nature in its continuity and flow of activity. Thus even on Shabbat the normal flow of Temple services continued.🕯️