

THE CAUSE OF THE PAUSE

by Rabbi Label Lam

HASHEM said to Moshe saying, "You shall speak to the Children of Israel saying, "However, you must observe My Sabbaths, for it is a sign between Me and you for your generations to know that I am HASHEM, Who makes you holy." (Shemos 31:12-13)

Right smack in the middle of the discussion of the many details of the creation of the Tabernacle and its various instruments "Shabbos" is suddenly inserted. What does Shabbos have to do with the construction of the Mishkan?

One of the most often asked question as we review over and again those details of the construction of the Mishkan for four plus full parshios is, "Why is so much attention given to this singular event of history?" Tefillin are comprised of more than 30,000 details. We wear them every day. All we have in the written Torah is "V'Hayu L'Totafos Bein Eiynecha"! Why is so much time and attention dedicated to the Mishkan year after year, generation after generation for all-time? What's the relevance of learning about a structure that has not been in existence for thousands of years?

The Chofetz Chaim is reputed to have said that just as there is a map on the earth so there is a map in Shemaim- the Heavens! The map on earth is dotted with populous cities such as Paris, London, Tokyo, Berlin, and Moscow. The Map in Shemaim is focused in the days of the Chofetz Chaim on Radin, Vilna, Slobodka etc. and nowadays we'd have to add Yerushelaim, Bnei Brak, Brooklyn, Lakewood, Monsey and more. Why is it so? Our Chazal tell us: "Since the time of the destruction of the Temple all G-d has in His world is the four cubits where people are dutifully obedient to Hallacha!"

I would like to take a poetic license to extend this idea and say that just as there is a newspaper on the earth below there's a Newspaper in Shemaim. I don't have to tell you what's on the earthly newspaper. There's chaos erupting in the Arab streets ... a budget battle is brewing...spring training!

What's in the Newspaper in Shemaim? An entire nation is unified and dedicated to creating a place in this universe- a place for the Divine Presence to touch down and dwell with permanence. Everyone is working cooperatively, using all their unique G-d given talents for Heaven's sake! Such an occasion deserves to be highlighted over and over again. That's the real good news!

The word "ACH"- however- indicates that whatever we do to build the Tabernacle is strictly forbidden to do on Shabbos. The Mishkan is holiness residing in the realm of space. Shabbos is that

same holiness in time.

Now imagine the joy of parents entering a busy house on Erev Shabbos to find all the children happily and harmoniously engaged in cleaning and polishing and cooking ...each one according to his ability and age creatively occupied in preparation for the Holy Shabbos! What a "NACHAS!"

We have to labor to build the Mishkan. Shabbos, however, is a continuous gift uninterrupted since the time of creation. Shabbos is done already. We certainly must prepare foods and clean clothing for the occasion but Shabbos itself is complete. It's built. All we need to do is get out of the way and revel in the poignancy of the quietude and the profundity of the stillness which is **the cause of the pause**. DvarTorah, Copyright © 2007 by Rabbi Label Lam and [Torah.org](https://torah.org).