

בס"ד

THE RASHI OF THE WEEK

Week of

Parshas Emor

20 Iyar, 5778 – May 5, 2018

Compiled from the works of
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An Outline of the Rebbe's Explanation of Rashi

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Parshas Emor

Likkutei Sichos Volume 17, Pages 242 – 247

Rashi in His Own Words

ויקרא כ"ג, ג': וְשֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבַּת שַׁבְּתוֹן מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ כָּל מְלָאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ שַׁבַּת הוּא לַיהוָה
בְּכֹל מוֹשְׁבֹתֵיכֶם:

רש"י ד"ה ששת ימים: מה ענין שבת אצל מועדות, ללמדך שכל המחלל את המועדות מעלין עליו כאלו חלל את השבתות. וכל המקיים את המועדות, מעלין עליו כאלו קיים את השבתות:

Vayikroh 23:3: Six days may work be performed, but on the seventh day, it is a complete day of rest, a holy occasion; you may not perform any work. It is Shabbos to the Lord in all of your dwelling places.

Rashi Heading: Six days: Why does Shabbos appear here among the festivals? To teach you that whoever desecrates the festivals is considered as if he had desecrated Shabbos, and that whoever fulfills the festivals is considered as if he has fulfilled Shabbos.

Synopsis

This week's Torah portion, Emor, tells us about each of the festivals¹. Immediately after introducing the discussion of the festivals, the Torah pauses to tell us about Shabbos²; "Six days may work be performed, but on the seventh day, it is a complete rest day, a holy occasion; you may not perform any work. It is Shabbos to the Lord in all of your dwelling places." We know that Rashi is particular about all of the words which he uses, including the words which serve as the heading of his comments. Here he is bothered by the fact that the commandment of resting on Shabbos is placed together with the commandments regarding observing the festivals. He makes this perfectly clear, by asking the question outright, "Why does Shabbos appear here among the festivals³?" This being the case, we must understand why the heading of his comments is "for six days?" His problem is not regarding the mention of the six weekdays, but rather the day of

1. Vayikroh 23:4-37.
2. Vayikroh 23:3.
3. Rashi ibid.

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Shabbos! Quite often Rashi will follow the words which he cites from the verse with "etc." (וגו' in Hebrew), in order to allude to the end of the verse. However, here he does no such thing.

Additionally, we need to understand why Rashi begins with the negative, "whoever desecrates the festivals is considered as if he had desecrated Shabbos," rather than the positive, "whoever fulfills the festivals is considered as if he has fulfilled Shabbos."

The question as to why Shabbos appears among the festivals is in and of itself not such a strong question; it is really not much of a question at all according to Peshat. As other commentaries say, Shabbos can be included together with the festivals. Even if it cannot be included among the "appointed holy days which we designate⁴," it still needs to be mentioned together with the festivals in order to point out the differences between Shabbos and the festivals. The problem which *actually* bothers Rashi is why the Torah needs to tell us that "for six days work may be done." The Torah only needed to mention Shabbos here, not the six weekdays. Rashi explains this by comparing the severity of performing labor on a festival to the severity of performing labor on Shabbos.

When the Torah says that "six days may labor be performed," it does not use the word "six" as an adjective, the number of days during which work may not be performed. Rather, as Rashi explains in many other places, "six - ששת" is a noun, a unit of time. What Rashi is actually explaining is, that the Torah is designating two distinct units of time. One unit of time is a weekday, during which labor may be performed; the other is Shabbos and festivals during which labor may not be performed. That explains why Rashi only cites the words from the verse "six days." That is his point; a six-day work week is one unit of time. That also explains why Rashi begins with the negative, "whoever desecrates the festivals is considered as if he had desecrated Shabbos." He is explaining that both Shabbos and festivals are a time unit during which work may not be performed.

Rashi's Explanation

This week's Torah portion, Emor, tells us about each of the festivals. Immediately after introducing the discussion of the festivals, the Torah pauses to tell us about Shabbos; "six days work may be performed, but on the seventh day, it is a complete rest day (שבת שבתון), a holy

4. See Vayikroh 23:2, Vayikroh 23:4 and Vayikroh 23:37.

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occasion; you may not perform any work. It is Shabbos to the Lord in all of your dwelling places." Here Rashi seems to be bothered by the fact that after introducing the laws of the festivals, the Torah interrupts with the commandment of resting on Shabbos. He makes this perfectly clear, by asking the question outright⁵, "Why does Shabbos appear here among the festivals?"

Difficulties in Understanding Rashi

We know that Rashi is particular about all of the words which he uses, including the words which serve as the heading of his comments. Why is the heading of his comments "for six days?" His problem is not regarding the mention of the six weekdays, but rather the day of Shabbos after the introduction of the festivals!

Quite often Rashi will follow the words which he cites from the verse with "etc." (וגו' in Hebrew), in order to allude to the end of the verse. Thus, he would be including the words the "seventh day." However, here he does no such thing.

There are instances where Rashi cites the first few words of a verse without writing "etc." and explains the entire topic. For example, when describing the Ephod, one of priestly garments, the Torah says⁶ "and they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, and crimson wool, and twisted fine linen, the work of a master weaver." Rashi cites the words "and they shall make the ephod," and explains that "If I would try to explain the making of the Ephod and the Choshen according to the order of the verses, their explanation would be fragmentary and the reader would make a mistake in combining them. Therefore, I am writing first how they were made in their entirety, in order that the reader will be able to run through it quickly ..." We see that despite the fact that Rashi is explaining the entire process of the Ephod, he only cites the words "and they shall make the Ephod," without even writing "etc. - וגו'." However, that only applies in an instance where the first words of the verse contain at least a part of the entire content which Rashi is explaining. That is obviously not the case with our Rashi.

We also need to understand why Rashi begins with the negative, "whoever desecrates the festivals is considered as if he had desecrated Shabbos," rather than the positive, "whoever fulfills the festivals is considered as if he has fulfilled Shabbos."

The Explanation

5. As a rule, Rashi does not ask questions; he provides answers which explain potential difficulties.

6. Shemos 28:6 and Rashi's comments there.

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We may attempt to explain the mention of Shabbos in the following manner. The Torah is telling us that we may not be any more lenient regarding a holiday than we are regarding Shabbos. There is a fundamental difference between Shabbos and festivals. Hashem created the world in six days, and on the seventh day He rested (as so to speak). Therefore, we must keep Shabbos. Since then, there has been an ongoing cycle of six weekdays followed by Shabbos. In other words, Shabbos was sanctified by Hashem Himself. The festivals, on the other hand, are sanctified by the Jewish nation, meaning by the Sages. The Torah tells us when, in relation to the Hebrew month each festival occurs, the festival is to be observed. The day the month begins is decided by the Sages, specifically the Supreme Jewish Court in Jerusalem, called the Sanhedrin⁷. Shabbos is mentioned in order to teach us, that despite the fact that it is sanctified by G-d, and the holidays are sanctified by man, we must be equally careful regarding both of them.

However, this answer does not suffice. When the Torah compares Shabbos to the holidays, it does not speak about desecrating either, but rather about observing both. This shows us that the Torah does not imply any leniency regarding festivals.

Rather, the explanation is as follows. When the Torah says that "six days labor may be performed," it does not use the word "six" as an adjective, the number of days during which work may not be performed. Rather, as Rashi explains in many other places throughout the Torah, "six – שש," or "seven – שבוע," is a noun; it is a unit of time. Rashi gives a similar explanation several verses further⁸. It is written "And you shall bring a fire offering to the Lord for a seven-day period" "שבועת ימים." Rashi cites the words "for a seven day period" and explains that "the Hebrew is שבועת ימים, lit., a "seven" of days." Wherever the שבועת appears, it denotes a noun, and (thus, the expression here שבועת ימים means) "a week of days," septaine in Old French (which is the noun, as opposed to sept, meaning the number seven). Likewise, every (construct expression like) שמונת, שלשת, חמשת, ששית (literally means, respectively,) "an eight of," "a six of," "a five of," "a three of," (meaning a unit consisting of one of these numbers)⁸.

What Rashi is actually explaining is, that the Torah is designating two distinct units of time. One unit of time is a weekday, during which labor may be performed; the other is Shabbos and festivals during which labor may not be performed. That explains why Rashi only cites from

7. See Rambam Laws of the Sanctification of the New Moon. "The sanctification of the new month has been entrusted to the Sanhedrin. The new month does not begin until it has been sanctified by the court, and it is the day that they establish as Rosh Chodesh that is Rosh Chodesh."

8. See Vayikroh 23:8 and Rashi's commentary.

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the verse "six days." That is his very point, that a six-day work week is one unit of time. That also answers why Rashi begins with the negative, "whoever desecrates the festivals is considered as if he had desecrated Shabbos." He is explaining that both Shabbos and festivals are a time unit during which work may not be performed, as opposed to a weekday on which labor may be performed.

Deeper Explanation from Rashi

The Sages tell us in the Midrash that "six days you shall work" is a positive commandment of the Torah. This means that not only *may* work be done during the weekdays, but that it is actually a *mitzvah* to perform work. This is in accordance with the teaching that "Hashem should bless you in all that you do," meaning that you must do something, i.e. work, in order to provide a vessel to hold G-d's blessing.

However, all of this is regarding the body. The physical body in which Hashem cloths the G-dly soul conceals the Divine manifestation within the world. This is the reason that the laws of nature, with which G-d created the world, must be followed. However, on Shabbos and holidays when the Divine soul is revealed, these laws do not apply.

Since the G-dly soul is higher than the body, its revelation on the holy days influences the body. Despite the limitations of the physical body, the soul is able to elevate the body and of bring it out of its natural limitations. The soul will actually remove the body from exile, and we will merit the actual redemption through our righteous Moshiach now.

(Compiled from a talk given on Shabbos Parshas Emor 5734)

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the Lubavitcher Rebbe**

* * *

**IN HONOR OF
Chaim and Aiden Oded שיקחי Morris**

*

**DEDICATED BY THEIR PARENTS
Rabbi & Mrs. Menachem M. and Chaya Mushka שיקחי Morris**

* * *

**IN HONOR OF
Hatomim Avrohom Moshe ben Mina Esther ש' Gordon
For a complete and speedy recovery**

*

DEDICATED BY HIS CLASSMATES

in

YESHIVAH TORAH OHR שיקחי

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR MOTHER
Mrs. Brocha bas Reb Tzvi Nechemiah Hacoheh ע"ה Cohen
Passed away on 8 Shevat, 5778
May Her Soul be bound in the Eternal Bond of Life**

*

DEDICATED BY HER FAMILY

* * *

**IN HONOR OF
Mr. Sholom Moshe Hacoheh ben Tzivia ש' Cohen
For a complete and speedy recovery**

* * *

**DEDICATED BY
Hatomim Moshe Shlomoh Zohar ש' Mars**

*

May he merit to be a Chossid, a Yerei Shomayim and a Lamdon

מוקדש לזכות

כ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו מליובאוויטש

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לזכות

חיילי "צבאות השם" חיים ועדן עודד שיחיו מאריס

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נדפס ע"י הוריהם

הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו מרת חי' מושקא שיחיו מאריס

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לזכות

הת' אברהם משה בן מרת מינה אסתר שי' גארדאן

לרפואה שלימה וקרובה

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נדפס ע"י חבריו התמימים

בישיבה תורה אור

* * *

לעילוי נשמת

מרת ברכה בת ר' צבי נחמי' הכהן ע"ה כהן

נפטר ביום ח' שבט, ה'תשע"ח

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

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נדפס ע"י בני משפחתה שיחיו

* * *

לזכות

ר' שלום משה הכהן בן צבי' שי' כהן

לרפואה שלימה וקרובה

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נתרם ע"י

הת' משה שלמה זהר שי' מארס

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יהי רצון שיזכה להיות חסיד, ירא שמים, ולמדן