



SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

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In the *zemer* we sing each Shabbat evening, *Kol Mekadesh Shevii* - we see a reference to the Temple's future re-construction.

The stanza reads: "*Samcheim bevinyan shalem*" Rejoice in the complete building. What exactly is the connection between Shabbat and the building of the *Beit Hamikdash*?

The opening verses of *Parshat Vayakhel* (*Shemot* 35:1-3) find Moshe once again instructing Bnei Yisrael regarding the sanctity of Shabbat. Most specifically, in verse 3 we read the instruction: "*Lo tivaaru eish bechol moshvoteychem b'yom hashabbat...*" "You shall kindle no flame in any of your dwelling places on the Sabbath day..."

This verse is commonly interpreted to connote the obvious legal ruling - the prohibition against kindling flames of any sort on Shabbat. However, there is a beautiful, and perhaps more significant teaching regarding this verse from the Torah commentary the *Shnei Luchot HaBrit* (Two tablets of the Law) written by the 16th Century Kabbalist, **Rabbi Yeshayahu Horowitz**, the *Shela'h HaKadosh* of Prague **zy'a**. He writes:

"*Lo tivaaru eish bechol moshvoteychem b'yom hashabbat, al tivaaru eish shel*

machloket bayom hashabbat! Zeh hayom sheniyachad yisrael zeh lazeh..." "You shall kindle no flame in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day - do not fuel the flame of conflict or disagreement on the Sabbath day! Shabbat is the day that brings each Jewish person closer to each other..."

This teaching is so powerful. The biblical prohibition to not spark a match, (or for that matter any of the various Shabbat regulations), is but one aspect of the essence of Shabbat. Perhaps in refraining from even these seemingly mundane acts, we are somehow meant to take stock, acknowledge and even reach out to our fellow Jew; to find a common bond, to set aside our differences, and reflect and build on the bonds that join us, rather the fractured divisiveness that causes so much confusion and disagreement.

This, says the ***Darchei Noam***, the **Rebbe of Slonim *shlita***, is the meaning of the stanza in our *Shabbat zemer*, *Samcheim B'vinyan Shaleim*. Each Shabbat we rejoice in the knowledge that the very essence of Shabbat

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is building, not in physically laying the stones of the Temple, but in spiritually building the bridges between each member of the Jewish people, building that unified sense of purpose, that shared awareness, not only of where we come from, but where we are in the here and now. Only then, when we once again achieve that understanding and genuine love and respect for one another, can we also, together, begin to truly build for the future.

The Slonimer Rebbe teaches us that this is the essence of each and every Shabbat, that each week we have our opportunity to do our small part in building the *Beit Hamikdash*. *Ye- hi Ratzon*, may we indeed merit both to appreciate the great gift that is *Shabbat Kodesh*, and to actualize the power for building a better tomorrow that is inherent in the sacred unity that Shabbat brings to Am Yisrael. ■

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