



לזכות  
חיים מרדכי בן רבקה  
נחמה דינה בת אסתר הדסה  
לרפואה שלימה וקרובה

נדפס ע"י  
שלוחי הרבי ומשפחותיהם שיחיו  
טולוז, צרפת



# Shabbos First



Hashem commanded the Yidden, soon after their departure from Egypt, concerning the Shemitah year: Upon settling in Eretz Yisroel and beginning to till the holy soil, the land must be worked for six years and rest on the seventh year, when “the land shall rest a Shabbos unto G-d.” It is to be noted, however, that the commandment is given in a reversed order, beginning with the words, “and the land shall rest a Shabbos unto G-d” (followed by “six years shall you seed your field,” etc.).

The sequence in the Torah is itself Torah, instruction.

The order of the verses (referring first to the Shemitah year and then to the six working years) teaches us that the Shabbos-year, like the Shabbos-day, is the source of influence and benefit for the six working years and the six working days, respectively.

Herein lies the answer to the question posed by non-Jews, and sometimes by Jews also: How can one maintain a system of six working days and six working years, in compliance with the Torah, when the surrounding world, wherein

Jews comprise but a small and weak minority, does not have limitations? Moreover, how can Jews, whose daily life is regulated by various restrictions of the Torah which non-Jews do not have, hold their own in the midst of such a totally different society?

The answer is to be found in our portion of today: The six days of the week, and the six years of the Shemitah cycle, derive their strength from the “Shabbos unto G-d”—from the holy Shabbos day and the holy Shabbos year. This holiness is the very source of blessing for the working days and working years, enabling a Yid to conduct his daily life in accordance with the dictates of the Torah and, precisely because of this, to be successful too.

The Torah maintains that at no time should there be absence of holiness in Jewish life. The sanctity of Shabbos must permeate the six working days and six working years. There can be no total absence of holiness in one’s daily life. There can only be a difference in the measure of holiness, whether it expresses itself in a lesser

or fuller degree or in the maximum measure so that the Jewishness of the Jew is manifest not only in, and during the time of, his prayers, study of the Torah, and the fulfillment of the precepts, but in all aspects of his daily life. These should likewise be permeated with holiness, as it is written, “Know Him in all your ways,” “and all your actions should be for the Sake of Heaven”; and during the holy days with the utmost intensity.

This, then, is the two-fold function of Shabbos, which is entirely holy (“*Shabbos-kodesh*”) and which is connected with G-d (“A Shabbos unto G-d”): It is the source of the Jew’s strength to hold his own during the six working days, in a competitive society, and, moreover, be successful also materially. It also enables the Jew to uplift the working days, taking them out of their material drabness and making them holy too. ①