

## Shabbat – Definition of Work 1

Ref: *Sefer Zemanim, Hilchot Shabbat, Chapter 7*

### DEFINITION OF WORK

There are **39** (sometimes referred to as **40-1**) categories of forbidden work on *Shabbat*. These are called *avot melachot*. (The fathers).

These *av melachot* are derived from the categories of work that were performed on the *mishkan* i.e. the Mini Temple which Mosheh built after coming out of *Mitzrayim*.

On *Shabbat*, no work took place on the *mishkan*. From these **39 melachot** (which were performed on the *mishkan*) we derive all the works which we are forbidden to do on *Shabbat*.

The **39 av melachot** are as follows:

(The 4 categories set out below is an opinion but not as set out in the *Mishneh Torah*)

### WORK NEEDED IN MISHKAN FOR BREAD OR DYES (11)

*Charishah* – Ploughing

*Zeriah* – Sowing

*Ketzirah* – Reaping

*Imur* – Sheaf gathering (Bundling)

*Dishah* – Threshing (Extracting produce from stalks or its 'shell')

*Zeriah* – Winnowing (To separate grain from chaff)

*Berirah* – Separating (To remove debris from grain)

*Techinah* – Grinding

*Harkadah* – Sifting

*Lishah* – Kneading

*Afiyah* – Baking. This includes cooking and softening or hardening an entity with fire.

### WORK NEEDED IN MISHKAN FOR MATERIAL CURTAINS (13)

*Gezizah* – Shearing

*Libun* – Whitening wool, linen etc.

*Niputz* – Beating of fabric to produce threads

*Tzeviyah* – Dyeing of threads

*Teviyah* – Spinning

*Asiyat Hanirin* – Heddles (a process of weaving)

*Nesachat Hamasechah* – Warp (Process of weaving)

*Arigah* – Weaving – Final process of weaving

*Betziah* – Undoing weave

*Kesherah* – Tying a knot

*Hatarah* – Untying

*Tefirah* – Sewing

*Kriyah* – Tearing of a fabric

WORK NEEDED IN *MISHKAN* FOR LEATHER CURTAINS (6)

*Tzidah* – Trapping of living creature

*Shechitah* – Slaughtering

*Hafshatah* – Skinning

*Haavadah* – Processing hides

*Mechikat Haor* – Smoothing hides. Hair removal

*Chitucho* – Cutting leather

WORK NEEDED IN *MISHKAN* FOR CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDING OF *MISHKAN* (9)

*Binyan* – Building

*Stirah* – Demolishing (with the purpose to build. Destructive demolishing is not considered as work).

*Makeh Bepatish* – The final hammer blow. This refers to any finalization of an article.

*Ketivah* – Writing

*Mechikah* – Erasing

*Shirtut* – Ruling lines

*Havarah* – Enflame

*Kibui* – Extinguishing flame for a purpose.

*Hotzaah mereshut lereshut* – Transfers an item from one domain to another.

*Meein melachah achat* are categories of work which have the same single intent as the *av melachah* (e.g. sowing is *av* and pruning is *meein*), or have the same activity (e.g. Ploughing is *av* and making groove in ground is *meein*)

Each *av* category has many subsidiary categories, called *toldot* (children).

These acts are only like the *av*. E.g. cutting up a vegetable into very thin slices is like the *av melachah* of grinding (the one act pulverises and the other cuts up, and the intent in the 2 cases may be different).