

Sh'mot 39:32, 43

Thus was **finished** all the **work** of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting. The Israelites did so; just as יהוה had commanded Moses, so they did.

וַתֵּכֶל כָּל-עֲבֹדַת מִשְׁכַּן אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וַיַּעֲשׂוּ
 בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה
 אֶת-מֹשֶׁה כִּן עָשׂוּ:

And when Moses saw that they had performed all the tasks—as יהוה had commanded, so they had done—Moses **blessed** them.

וַיֵּרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶת-כָּל-הַמְּלָאכָה וְהִנֵּה עָשׂוּ
 אֹתָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה כִּן עָשׂוּ וַיְבָרֶךְ
 אֹתָם מֹשֶׁה:

B'reishit 2:1-3

The heaven and the earth were **finished**, and all their array.

וַיֵּכְלוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל-צְבָאָם

On the seventh day God **finished** the **work** that had been undertaken: [God] ceased on the seventh day from doing any of the **work**.

וַיֵּכֶל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ
 אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי
 מִכָּל-מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה

And God **blessed** the seventh day and declared it holy—having ceased on it from all the **work** of creation that God had done.

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשֵׁהוּ
 אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְלַאכְתּוֹ
 אֲשֶׁר-בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת

Sifrei Bamidbar 143

And thus is it written (Shemot 39:43 - 40:1-2) "And when Moses saw all the work — that they had performed it as the Lord had commanded them, thus did they do — that Moses blessed them, saying: On the first day of the first month shall you set up the mishkan, etc." With what blessing did he bless them? He said to them: "May it be His will that the Shechinah repose upon the work of your hands." And they responded "May the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us. And establish the work of our hands upon us. The work of our hands — establish it."

וכן הוא אומר שמות לט וירא משה את כל המלאכה והנה עשו אותה כאשר צוה ה' כן עשו, ויברך אותם משה. מה ברכה ברכם? אמר להם: יהי רצון שתשרה שכינה במעשה ידיכם, והם אומרים: (תהלים צ) ויהי נועם ה' אלהינו עלינו ומעשה ידינו כוננה עלינו ומעשה ידינו כוננהו

“The task never completed” - by Marge Piercy, from *Mars and Her Children*

No task is ever completed,
only abandoned or pressed into use.
Tinkering can be a form of prayer.

Twenty-six botched worlds preceded
Genesis we are told in ancient commentary,
and haShem said not only,

of this particular attempt
It is good, but muttered,
if only it will hold.

Incomplete, becoming, the world
was given us to fix, to complete
and we've almost worn it out.

My house was hastily built,
on the cheap. Leaks, rotting
sills, the floor a relief map of Idaho.

Whenever I get some money, I stove
up, repair, add on, replace.
This improvisation permits me to squat
here on the land that owns me.
We evolve through mistakes, wrong
genes, imitation gone wild.

Each night sleep unravels me into wool,
then into sheep and wolf. Walls and fire
pass through me. I birth stones.

Every dawn I stumble from the roaring
vat of dreams and make myself up
remembering and forgetting by halves.

Every dawn I choose to take a knife
to the world's flank or a sewing kit,
rough improvisation, but a start.