

# CHIZUK IDUD

*Divrei Torah from the weekly sedra  
with a focus on living in Eretz Yisrael  
Chizuk for Olim & Idud for not-yet-Olim*

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## Vayakhel 5776

As we study Parashat Vayakhel we notice that as the Torah provides a detailed description of the building of the Mishkan, curiously the day of Shabbat is featured rather prominently. As Rashi explains, this is intended to teach us that no matter how important the Beit HaMikdash is, it does NOT override the Shabbat. The Midrash tells us that Shabbat is equal to all the mitzvot of the Torah. Says the Almighty: "If you keep the Shabbat, I will reckon it as if you have kept ALL the mitzvot. Whereas, if you do not keep the Shabbat, I will reckon it as if you had violated all the commandments." The centrality of Shabbat, and its great symbolic importance, is borne out by a well-known comment made by the Chofetz Chayim. The Chofetz Chayim would often quote the Talmudic passage (Shabbat 10b) in which the Shabbat is likened to a precious gift. "I have a fine gift in my storehouse and Shabbat is its name. I request that you give it to the People of

Israel. Go and inform them." A gift is an outward symbolic expression of an internal state of mind. Were a bride to return the gifts received from her bridegroom this would prove that she doesn't want him and their connection would, no doubt, quickly dissolve. So too regarding Shabbat observance, said the Chofetz Chayim, if Jews do not observe the Shabbat it is as if we are returning the Divine gift, signifying that we no longer wish to maintain a special relationship with the Creator.

Many are comfortable quoting the Chofetz Chayim's message when it pertains to Shabbat, however, living in Eretz Israel is also equaled to all the mitzvot of the Torah (See Sifrei D'varim 80), and the Divine gift of Shabbat is paralleled by the gift of Eretz Yisrael ('HA'ADAMA ASHER NATATA LANU" - D'varim 20:9) - Thus, the Chafetz Chayim's message regarding the Chilul Shabbat is no less pertinent to one who, when given the opportunity to make Aliya, chooses to turn his back on the Divine gift.

Who in his right mind would turn his back on this the most precious of gifts? Who?! 