

# CHIZUK *and* 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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## **Emor 2017**

In describing the fundamental mitzva of "Kiddush Hashem", the Rambam quotes a verse from this week's Parsha (Vayikra 22:32): "The whole House of Israel", Maimonides writes, "is commanded to sanctify His great name as it is said: "And I shall be sanctified in the midst of the children of Israel"; and they are admonished not to desecrate it, as it is said: 'You shall not profane My holy name'", (Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 5:1).

We are all accustomed to labeling different events as a "Kiddush" or a "Chilul Hashem", assuming that any behavior which reflects positively on the Jewish People and on the Torah constitutes an example of a Kiddush Hashem, while a Chilul Hashem is assumed to have taken place whenever a person's actions have brought shame upon the community. As Abayei teaches us (Yoma 86a) the word V'AHAVTA in the commandment to love G-d, is to be understood as if it was vowelized - V'AHEIVTA - you shall cause his name to be loved.

One is required to behave, Abayei explains, in a manner which will motivate others to come closer to G-d.

In an article aptly titled "Chilul Hashem", Rabbi Shimon Schwab zt"l eloquently discusses the negative aspects of one such case. Rav Schwab's words were penned in reaction to the deluge of negative publicity generated by a court case brought against a Rabbi accused of having ruthlessly enriched himself at the expense of others. Vivid accounts of this Rabbi's exploiting, conniving, and manipulating - flaunting the laws of G-d and Man - were profiled in many news outlets, together with pictures of the accused on TV in which his large velvet yarmulke featured prominently. As Rav Schwab accurately noted at the time, although such "profaners and desecrators are only a handful of unscrupulous people, they reflect badly upon us all."

As mentioned earlier, the Rambam finds the proof-text for the notion of a "Chilul Hashem" in the verse from this week's Parasha. Rav Schwab, however, focused on a different verse from the Navi Yechezkel. In Masechet Yoma, Abayei teaches us that inappropriate behavior associated with a student of the Torah,

causes a desecration of the Divine name, It is in regard to people of this ilk that the verse says: "They came to the nations which they arrived at, and desecrated My holy name when it was said of them: These are the People of G-d who have left His Land, (Yechezkel 36:20) - i.e. this type of inexcusable behavior is that which leads G-d to banish his people and send them off into exile. While studying Rav Schwab's piece, I noted the curious omission of the prophet's very next verse: "But I shall take pity on My holy name which the House of Israel have desecrated amongst the nations to which they have come." In these words the Prophet surprisingly teaches us, that the very reality of the Jewish nation remaining in exile constitutes in and of itself the greatest Chillul Hashem of all!

**MIPNEI CHATA'EINU GALINU MEI'ARTZEINU**" - Our sins caused our dispersion. However, since the nations perceive our dispersion as a Chilul Hashem, as a sign of G-d's weakness and inability to protect His People - therefore Hashem will bring us back to the Land: "I will take you from the nations and gather you out from all the countries and I will bring you into your own Land" (Yechezkel 36:24). The prophet Yechezkel relates to the national return home as the great act of "Kiddush Hashem" which

will erase the historic memory of the desecration of the Divine name.

Rabbi Yehuda Amital zt"l quoted the words spoken in the year 1937 by Rabbi Menachem Zemba HY"D, a leading Rabbi in prewar Warsaw, before an assembly of Agudat Yisrael: "The question of Eretz Yisrael which is currently being debated, involves the sanctification of G-d's name. There are various opinions, both for and against; Those who want to see the reestablishment of Jewish sovereignty are driven by a great yearning to sanctify the name of the Almighty before the eyes of the nations; to show them all that even after thousands of years of wandering the globe, the Jewish People have not given up hope, and they will, yet, live on." Rav Amital himself added the following observation: "The Holocaust, which was the greatest calamity in Jewish history, the greatest Chilul Hashem ever, had to immediately be counterbalanced by the great "Kiddush Hashem" of the miraculous establishment of a Jewish State.

Our generation has been blessed to see the concrete realization of Yechezkel's prophetic words: "But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall... yield your fruit to my people Israel... The land that was desolate will be

**rebuilt, and the destroyed cities will be inhabited..." (36:34,35). By coming home and choosing to rebuild one of the "ruins of Jerusalem", you are making the words of the prophets come true, thereby taking part in the biggest "Kiddush Hashem" of all!**