

However, you must observe My Shabbasos. (31:13)

Tishmoru is written in the plural, implying that the exhortation to observe *Shabbos* is being spoken to a group. The *Chafetz Chaim*, *zl*, commented, "It is not enough that you and your household observe *Shabbos*. You must see to it that other Jews also observe *Shabbos*." Thus, it is not a singular command. Rarely do we find the Torah instructing us not only to personally observe, but also, to see to it that our observance influences others. I write this specifically because our observance, our valuing *Shabbos*, our sensitivity to this *mitzvah* is the only way the alienated Jew will ever come to appreciate *Shabbos*. When he sees how much it means to us: externally, our changed demeanor both in the way we dress and the way we act; and internally, our being at peace with ourselves, with our family, suffused by the glow and warmth of *Shabbos*, then it will imbue him with second thoughts.

Shabbos attests to Hashem as the Creator of the world. As He "worked" for the Six Creation days, He "rested" on the Seventh day. We are to emulate the Creator. *Shabbos* is an eternal sign between Hashem and His People. To profane *Shabbos* is to deny the sign, to eschew the bond created by this relationship. *Sforno* observes, regarding the admonition not to build the *Mishkan* on *Shabbos*, *Ach es Shabsosai tishmoru, ki os he Beini u'beinchem*, "However, you must observe My *Shabbasos*, for it is a sign between Me and you," that if we damage, undermine and ultimately destroy the *ose*, sign, of *Shabbos*, there will be no reason for Hashem's Divine Presence to rest among the Jewish People. In other words, one primary contingency in building the *Mishkan* is that *Shabbos* be respected and observed. If there is no *Shabbos* – then there is no need for the *Mishkan*. The two go hand in hand with one another.

The sacred nature of the *Mishkan* applies as well to the *Bais HaMikdash*. Therefore, the imperative that *Shabbos* be observed as a contingency for warranting Hashem's Divine Presence holds true as well for the *Bais HaMikdash*. Our *Batei Mikdash* are gone, with a mere reminder of those glorious days and that magnificent edifice -- the *Kosel Maaravi*. Should we not accord the remnant of what is left of the *Bais HaMikdash* with equal respect? Hashem's Presence is inextricably bound up with *shemiras Shabbos*, Sabbath observance. It is, therefore, perplexing and hypocritical that those who long ago eliminated *Shabbos* from their religious preferences would battle for their own form of ritual observance, which is inconsistent with *halachah*. Why bother? Why is *Shabbos* any less of an important ritual? A building is a holy place only as long as that edifice serves as a repository for holiness. One cannot sever their religious relationship with Hashem, the Source of Holiness, and expect the *kedushah* to be available for him.