

## **“And to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.” (11:13)**

*Rashi* says this *pasuk* refers to *avodas halev*, service of the heart, which alludes to prayer. The word *b'chol*, with all, has a powerful meaning. When we pray to Hashem it has to be “with all,” with an all encompassing, unequivocal devotion to Him. Nothing should disturb or distract us when we are in communion with the Almighty. Yet, we all know that this is far from true. Many of us do not find the time to *daven* with a *minyan*. Regrettably, we *daven* with complete attention to Hashem only when we are in need. Perhaps if we would *daven* correctly when life is good, we would not need little reminders that our *davening* is waning.

*Horav Yitzchak Zilberstein, Shlita*, makes a noteworthy observation. He relates how he went to the hospital to visit a congregant. As they walked through the lobby near the financial office of the hospital, two armed guards came out of the office with their guns in their hands and asked everyone to move to the side. It was obvious that they meant business, so everyone followed their orders meticulously. It quickly became clear that these two men were guards who worked for Brinks and that they were transferring money from the hospital safe to their truck. Suddenly, one of the visitors looked at one of the guards and said in a cheerful voice, “Aharon, how are you?” No response. No movement from Aharon, the Brinks guard. He ignored his friend totally. He was transferring money. It could have been his best friend; it could have been his relative; it could have been his father – he was obligated to pay total attention to the money transfer. His mind could not wander from his mission.

Let us step back a moment and derive a lesson from the Brinks guard. When we go to *shul* and *daven* to Hashem, are we any different than the guard? Are we not in communion with Hashem – a mission that should demand our complete attention? Yet, we can be in middle of *davening* – and our friend asks us, “What’s new?” – we feel we must immediately respond to him. Our attitude would certainly be different if we were praying for our lives.

This idea should apply to every *mitzvah*. *Rav* Zilberstein relates that *Rebbetzin* Feinstein, the *Brisker Rav*’s daughter, does not speak to anyone when she is involved in salting meat – so intense is her devotion to performing this noble and necessary function. Perhaps, if we would add a little intensity to our prayers, if we would listen to the words we are uttering, Hashem’s response would be positive.