

And let them take for Me a portion, from every man whose heart motivates him. (25:2)

Parashas Terumah is preceded by *Parashas Yisro* and *Mishpatim*, both *parshios* that focus on the *halachic* aspects of our lives. *Parashas Yisro* details the Revelation at *Har Sinai* and the *Aseres Hadibros*, Ten Commandments. Next is *Parashas Mishpatim*, containing many laws, most of which focus upon man's relationship with his fellow man. *Parashas Terumah* follows with Hashem's command that everyone is responsible to contribute towards the building of the *Mishkan*. A lesson can be derived from the sequence of the *parshios*. In order for *Torah* to survive, we must be willing to sustain it. *Hachzokas ha Torah*, sustaining those that study *Torah*, supporting those institutions in which *Torah* is taught and studied, ensures *Torah's* future.

The *Midrash* tells us that *Klal Yisrael* uttered the words, "*Naase v'nishma*", "*We will do and we will listen*," indicating their overwhelming dedication to the *Torah*. Hashem responded with the enjoinder, "*V'yikchu Li Terumah*," "*and they shall take for Me terumah*." Simply, Hashem was telling them: If you want to guarantee that the *Torah* which you have just accepted will remain a part of your future, then you must be willing to give *terumah*, to give up something to support the *Torah*.

The notion of donating towards the *Mishkan* reflects a deeper perspective. Indeed, as the commentators ask: If Hashem was asking for a contribution, the *Torah* should have said, "*V'yitnu*," "*and they shall give*." Why does it say, "*V'yikchu*," "*and they shall take*"? *Horav Eliyahu Schlessinger, Shlita*, cites *Horav Eliyahu E. Dessler, zl*, in the *Michtav M'Eliyahu*, who teaches us a profound lesson regarding the concept of "giving." It is commonly accepted that in order to achieve a relationship of affection, one must receive gifts from the other. For instance, children love their parents when they receive gifts from them; people develop an affection for others who give them gifts - regardless of the nature of the gift. *Horav Dessler* opines that this is not correct. It is the converse. One develops a feeling of affection for someone whom he has helped or bequeathed a gift on. When one devotes himself - his strength, effort, skill, his valuable time - to somebody, he develops a feeling of closeness, a feeling of kinship, a feeling of love. No, it is not by taking, but rather by giving, that one achieves this level in a relationship.

In the *Talmud Bava Metzia 38a*, *Chazal* say, "A man wants/would rather have his own *kav* (a small measure) than nine *kavim* of someone else's." *Rashi* explains that even though what he has is very little - it is still his; he has worked for it. We develop a relationship with the object of our own personal effort. In the *Talmud Shabbos 88b*, *Chazal* tell us that Hashem raised *Har Sinai* over the heads of *Klal Yisrael* saying, "If you accept the *Torah*, it will be good, but if you do not, here will be your grave." According to *Chazal's* statement, the original acceptance of the *Torah* was under coercion. We are taught that on Purim, *Klal Yisrael* accepted the *Torah* willingly and unequivocally. For a complete treatment of this concept, we would have to dedicate another paper. Suffice it to say: *Klal Yisrael's* original acceptance of the *Torah* is enigmatic. One can be

forced to accept those *mitzvos* that are action- oriented. This is not true of those *mitzvos* that are heart-oriented, that focus upon one's emotion, such as loving Hashem and believing in Hashem. How can one be pressured to act in a way which comprises a response to a spontaneous emotion? Either one feels the emotion or he does not.

Horav Schlessinger explains that this was the underlying reason for the command to "*take terumah*" for the *Mishkan*. By availing *Klal Yisrael* the opportunity to give towards the *Mishkan*, Hashem was giving them the opportunity to develop *ahavas Hashem* and *ahavas Torah u'mitzvos*. The love would develop as they gave from their pockets and of themselves. By giving, one establishes a bond with the recipient. The *Mishkan* atoned for the sin of the Golden Calf. The origin of the sin lay in their lack of love for the Almighty. Had they manifest true *ahavas Hashem*, they would not have sinned.

All of the *mitzvos* that Hashem grants us are to fulfill this goal: to develop our *ahavas Hashem*. By performing His *mitzvos*, our love for Him becomes greater and more pronounced. This is consistent with the famous words of *Chazal*: Rabbi Chananya ben Akashiyah says, "Hashem wanted to confer merit upon *Yisrael*. Therefore, He increased for them *Torah* and *mitzvos*." Hashem sought to give His nation the opportunity to love *Torah* and *mitzvos*. To accomplish this, He granted them a multitude of *mitzvos*. The more one performs *mitzvos*, the greater will be his desire and love for Him. Unfortunately, the converse is equally true.