

"And you did not withhold your son, your only one (son)." (22:16)

Avraham is commended for his devotion to Hashem in standing ready to perform every request made of him. He was even prepared to sacrifice his "only son," Yitzchak, to conform to the will of Hashem. It seems strange that he is praised for not acceding to his parental emotions, rather than for his positive affirmation of Hashem's will. Imagine giving someone a bag of precious diamonds. One would assume that the recipient would thank the benefactor for giving the gift, rather than for not withholding it. Why is Avraham not lauded for his positive orientation?

Horav Mordechai Pogremonski z.l., explains that the act of giving entails more than meets the eye. For some individuals, it is merely a matter of convenience. For others, however, it requires serious sacrifice. For some, giving charity means writing a check, while for others it represents serious commitment and remarkable sacrifice. Indeed, sometimes it is difficult to ascertain what comprises the act of giving. Hashem, Who probes the recesses of the mind, knows the precise level of commitment of every individual. Consequently, some people are acknowledged for giving, while others are praised for what they sacrificed in order to give.

Avraham *Avinu*, who was blessed with such a special son as Yitzchak after a lifetime of childlessness, was certainly in extreme emotional upheaval during the *Akeidah*. Yet, he overcame his parental devotion and lovingly brought Yitzchak as a *korban*. Avraham demonstrated his commitment and loyalty to Hashem by prevailing over his natural instincts. For this act, he merited great praise.