

"If a man from among you would bring an offering near to Hashem." (1:2)

Rashi explains that this *posuk* refers to voluntary *korbanos*. There are *Mitzvos* which man has been given a choice of whether or not to observe included in the 613 *mitzvos*. Their observance affirms man's relationship to Hashem. We find that the call to bring materials for the building of the *Mishkan* was addressed to those who would "donate from the heart." Some *korbanos*, as mentioned above, were non-obligatory. This concept similarly applies to *mitzvos* which apply to areas of *chesed* (kindness). The minimum performances are stated, while the actual amounts are exclusively man's decision. Why is this so? If a given endeavor is of such importance that Hashem would include it in the 613 *mitzvos*, why is it not obligatory? A *mitzvah's* performance is clearly critical in molding a Jew's character. Hence, its observance should be compulsory. *Horav Yaakov Kanievsky Z"l* explains that *mitzvah* performance which originates from a voluntary source is an essential prerequisite for serving Hashem. This form of obedience serves as a vehicle for expressing pure love of Hashem.

We may question the actual commandment to love Hashem. How can one be enjoined in *mitzvos* of the heart? How does one whose heart is not aflame with the love of Hashem perform this *mitzvah*? Our *Chazal* have taught us, however, that one attains the sublime level of love for Hashem through a perception of Hashem's preeminence and beneficence. His countless forms of kindness to man should awaken and inspire one in His love. Man's love for Hashem develops in consonance with his self-motivated and spontaneous service towards Him. For this purpose, Hashem has provided us with those *mitzvos* which avail us of these unique opportunities for spiritual growth.