

## **You shall purchase food from them for money so that you may eat... For Hashem, your G-d, has blessed you in all your hard work. (2: 6,7)**

*Rashi* explains that Hashem has provided you with ample funds, so that you can pay for the food that you receive from Eisav's descendants. If Hashem provides, it would be ingratitude on your part to ask for food without paying for it. *Horav Moshe Chevronei, zl*, derives from here a powerful lesson concerning the meaning of gratitude. When a Jew has the means, yet he presents himself as destitute and in need of assistance, he defames Hashem. He makes it appear that the Almighty does not provide for His subjects. This applies (I assume) not only before gentiles, but even before our fellow Jews. When we have, but make it appear as if we are in need (for whatever reason), we are acting with ingratitude to Hashem. It goes without saying that, when we act without gratitude, we risk losing our Heavenly benefits.

The *Rosh Yeshivah* employs this idea to explain the *Mishnah* at the end of *Meseches Peah*: "Whoever is not a cripple or blind, but presents himself as such, he will not leave this world until he becomes like one of them" (free translation). If a person is blessed with good health, but nonetheless presents himself as sickly (probably for pity or to raise money), he denies Hashem's beneficence. One must appreciate Hashem's gifts; to demonstrate ingratitude by concealing his gift of health is to deny Hashem's favor. Such a person will one day answer for his insolence.

How many of us are guilty of such ingratitude? How many of us cover up our blessings for ulterior motives, because it is more "profitable" to appear poor, as a *nebech*, someone in need? Some do it for attention. Others do it because they are afraid that people will constantly be at their door asking for favors. Others are just simply unhappy people who would rather than share their good fortune with others, live miserably and be considered to be *rachmanus* cases.

*Horav Zaidel Epstein, zl*, was blessed with amazing longevity, reaching almost one century of life on this world. While so many who live a long time conceal their gift, he did exactly the opposite. He never hid his age, because he felt that one does not conceal a gift from Hashem. It shows ingratitude. He did not go around shouting his age, but he did not hide it either. He was thankful to Hashem, so why not show it?