

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

Horav Gamliel Rabinowitz, Shlita, interprets this *pasuk* homiletically, employing it to establish the guideline for *tzedakah*, charitable giving. *Ish asher yidvenu libo*; a man whose heart compels him to give, who gives sincerely, has attained a lofty achievement. We all give, because we can, because Hashem has commanded us to give. Do we give out of shame, afraid of what our friends will say? Do we give out of a sense of guilt? How does one reach the plateau of honest, heartfelt giving? He must believe that it is not his money that he is giving to the poor man, but *Terumasi*; it is Hashem's money. You are taking the portion that you are giving from Hashem's treasury, a portion of which happens to be in your possession. Everything belongs to Hashem, and He has deposited it with you for the purpose of "spreading the wealth." Thus, the ritual of giving *tzedakah* is actually the process of taking Heavenly funds and giving them to *tzedakah*. Until one achieves the point that he realizes and acknowledges the Source of the funds in his possession, he cannot achieve *yidvenu libo*. As long as one considers the funds to be his own, he will never achieve the level of *yidvenu libo*.

The *Satmar Rav, zl*, was an extraordinary *baal tzedakah*, serving as the address for every hard-luck story, every Jew who required financial assistance. He once asked a wealthy Jew to increase his annual stipend. The man replied, "*Rebbe*, with my ten fingers (he raised both hands), I slaved to make my fortune." The *Rebbe* replied, "By us (in our Torah circles), these "ten fingers" are referred to as *siyata diShmaya*, Heavenly assistance. Nothing – absolutely nothing – is achieved without Hashem's will that it succeed. Without Hashem, one is unable to accomplish anything. While most of us know this, we sustain this awareness only until we "make it." Once the achievement occurs, we soon forget what we have believed and acknowledged all the time. Now it is all our own expertise, acumen, etc. that catalyzed our growth and success. Hashem is conveniently replaced with *kochi v'otzem yadi*, "My power and the might of my hand" (*Devarim* 8:17).

Rav Gamliel explains that this was the role which the *gizbarim*, treasurers, played in the *Mishkan*. They oversaw the collection and appropriation of the funds used for the construction of the sanctuary in the wilderness. They understood the true motives behind the contributions. Deeply righteous men, who were Divinely inspired to peer deep into the souls of those who stood before them with their contributions, these men were not swayed by a person's station in life, lineage, or material assets. They looked for one thing: Money that people gave out of purity of heart and faith. The Jew who fully understands that whatever he possesses is from Hashem, is worthy of contributing to the *Mishkan*.

Rav Gamliel remembers years earlier when he would often attend the *melave malkah* gathering at the *Baal HaTanya shul* in Meah Shearim. Many of the *chassidei Chabad* who lived in the area would attend this festive celebration of escorting out the *Shabbos Queen*. The tables were decked

with food galore for everyone to partake. One man, named *Rav Yehudah Levin* prepared and sponsored the weekly event. It was apparent from his extreme devotion to this endeavor that it held lofty spiritual significance to him.

When asked why this *melave malkah* was so special to him, *Rav Yehudah* explained that, years earlier, he had visited the *Lubavitcher Rebbe, zl*, who asked him, "Who sponsors *melave malkah* at the shul?" *Rav Yehudah* replied, "I do." "You are mistaken," the *Rebbe* countered. "You are not the one who gives. Hashem gives! Hashem gives everything!" These words penetrated *Rav Yehudah's* heart. He believed *be'emunah sheleimah*, with complete faith, that everything is "sponsored by" Hashem. If this is the case, why not spend more and prepare a lavish *melave malkah* for all to enjoy? He would "bill" it to Hashem's "account."

This is the meaning of *tikchu es Terumasi*, "You shall take My portion. You shall be aware that when you are giving, you are actually *taking* from My portion which I have deposited with you for your surrogate spending."