

To the Leviim shall you speak... When you accept from the Bnei Yisrael the tithe... you shall raise from it a gift... your gift shall be reckoned for you like grain from the threshing floor... (18:26,27)

The Levi who receives his portion of *Maaser* from the *Yisrael* must, in turn, give *Terumah* to the *Kohen*. The *Torah* tells us that this *Terumas Maaser* is considered the same as *Terumah Gedolah*, which is offered by the *Yisrael*. *Imrei Yosef* cites the *Zidetchoiver Rebbe, zl*, who claims that this *pasuk* alludes to an ethical lesson for he who has been raised above his peers to be selected for spiritual leadership. One might think that it is his virtue and scholarship, his good deeds and meticulous *mitzvah* observance, that effected this "promotion". The *Torah* tells him not to permit this change in position to make him arrogant. He is not better than the others; he is not more virtuous, nor does he possess greater scholarship ability. He was chosen for another reason, unknown to him or anyone else. Hashem has determined that he should ascend to leadership. It is similar to the *halachah* we find concerning the *shiur*, measure/amount of *Terumah*, one is required to contribute. *Chazal* say "*chitah achas poteres es hakri*," one stalk of what exempts the entire pile of grain. In other words, there is no set measurement. A person can conceivably fulfill his obligation by giving only one kernel of grain!

Veritably, all stalks of grain were planted and grew equally. There is no advantage of one over the other. Hashem commanded that the people give *Terumah*, and since "this" kernel of grain is elevated to be that *Terumah*, it becomes holy and raised up above the rest. Suddenly, the kernels of grain are no longer equal. Does this kernel of *Terumah* have something about which to be arrogant? Is it any different than the rest of the grain? No - it just happens to be that it was selected for *Terumah*. Had the *goral*, lot, fallen on another kernel, then it would have been used as *Terumah*. It is not because one is better than the other; it is just that one happened to be chosen.

A parallel perspective applies to one who has been selected for leadership. He should not view himself as better, just as the grain which was chosen. It could have been someone else. It just happened to be him. In a homiletic rendering of the *pasuk*, he says, "*Your gift shall be reckoned for you.*" That which Hashem has raised you above your peers should be considered "*like the grain from the threshing floor*," you are only like the one kernel of grain whose lot it was to be selected for *Terumah*. You should not view yourself as being better than the others; just, perhaps, a little luckier.QUE