# "His requirement, whatever is lacking to him." (15:8)

While we are not obligated to make the supplicant wealthy, we are enjoined to see to it that he receives his due in accordance with his needs. Everybody's needs are different. One who had previously been wealthy and lost everything cannot subsist on the meager alms that would suffice for one who had always been poor. The Torah is probably the only ethical system that takes the poor man's self-esteem – his present frame of mind – in account when it prescribes the manner in which we are to sustain him. We have to make a person feel good about himself by assessing him according to his self-image. If he was once wealthy, he should  not be treated like a beggar. Return him to his previous station in life.

Even if he was used to receiving a certain amount of *kavod*, honor, because of his previous financial position, he must be accorded the same honor as before. We must feel for him. *Horav Elazar M. Shach, z.l.,* relates that in the *shul* of *Horav Meir Michel Rabinowitz, z.l.,* in Vilna, there was a certain wealthy member who would give large donations to the *shul* every *Shabbos* when he received *Shishi*, the sixth *aliyah*. *Shishi* was considered the preeminent *aliyah,* and he received it weekly because of his large contributions. After awhile, he lost all of his money due to a bad investment. He could no longer contribute in the manner that he did before. The *gabbaim* who were in charge of giving out the *aliyos* felt that to continue giving him *Shishi* would be self-defeating, since he could no longer contribute the same large sums.

*Rav* Meir Michel refused to defer to the *gabbaim's* demand. Instead, he insisted that the individual receive *Shishi* as before, despite his inability to contribute to the *shul* in his previous magnanimous manner. He cited the above *pasuk* to substantiate his ruling. *Rav* Meir Michel felt that once a person had become used to a certain lifestyle, to deprive him of what he once had was to divest him of a part of himself.