

## **"Who am I, but dust and ashes." (18:27)**

*Rashi* comments: "I was already fit to be dust at the hands of the kings and ashes at the hands of Nimrod, were it not for Your mercy which stood by me." There is an obvious perplexity in *Rashi's* commentary. The *posuk* implies that Avrohom is speaking in the present tense - "and I am", however, according to *Rashi*, Avrohom seems to be referring to what might have been had he not been spared by Hashem.

*Rashi*, is teaching us a great lesson regarding the character trait of *hakoras hatov*, gratitude. When one is spared from certain death he has two ways of showing his appreciation to his benefactor. He can either thank him solely for the act of saving his life. Or, he can broaden the scope of his appreciation by acknowledging that everything that will happen throughout his lifetime is a result of the actions of his savior. If we examine these two approaches we see that the latter is the more honorable one. According to the first approach, one gives thanks only for what has happened; However, the second approach, teaches us that life would never be the same had there not been this intervention on the part of his benefactor.

This is *Rashi's* lesson: One must remember to show gratitude not just for what happened, but for every moment of one's life, and for every good thing that has happened as a result of the actions of his original benefactor.