

## And they shall take for Me a Portion. (25:2)

*Rashi* adds: *Li LiShmi*, “Take for Me – for My Name.” What is *Rashi* teaching us by adding *Li LiShmi* – for My Name? Obviously, if a person contributes to the *Mishkan* which will serve as the repository for the *Shechinah*, Divine Presence, the person is doing so for Hashem. What does adding His Name add to the equation? The **Chavos Yair** offers a penetrating explanation which has powerful ramifications for the way we should give *tzedakah*, charity. He quotes the **Shlah HaKadosh** who posits that one who gives charity to a poor man – even an amount as miniscule as a *perutah*, penny, actually partners with Hashem, as the *Shem Havayah*, Divine Name, of *Yud Kay Vov Kay*, combine together with him in the act of giving *tzedakah*. How does this occur?

The *perutah*, smallest denomination of coin, resembles the *yud*, the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This is followed by the *hay*, or *kay* (since we do not articulate Hashem’s Name), the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, alluded to by the hand with its five fingers that holds the penny and gives it to the poor man. The *ani*, poor man’s, outstretched arm bears resemblance to the *vov*, the sixth letter of the alphabet, and shaped like a vertical straight line. Last, we have the poor man’s outstretched hand – once again, with the five fingers alluding to the *hay*. Thus, when one gives *tzedakah*, his act of giving embraces the Name of Hashem – *Yud, Kay, Vov, Kay*.

The *Chavos Yair* parlays this exposition with a frightening addendum. One must be careful not to ignore the *ani*, poor man, when he seeks alms. One who waits for the poor man to beg, to stretch out his hand in solicitation, is creating a situation whereby the poor man’s outstretched hand, the “*vov*” and “*hay*” of the beneficiary precede the “*yud*” and “*hay*” of the benefactor. This causes Hashem’s Name to be spelled out of its proper sequence! This is the underlying meaning of *Ki tzaddik Hashem tzedakos aheviv, yasher yechez Faneimo*, “For righteous is Hashem, those of righteous deeds He loves, those who are upright will behold His Face” (*Tehillim* 11:7). As Hashem performs acts of *tzedakah* constantly and at all times, even before one supplicates Him, Hashem wants His people to act likewise – whereby they give the poor man his due, before the man resorts to begging. *Yasher yechez faneimo*, “those who are upright (straight) will behold His Face.”

This is what *Rashi* is teaching us when he writes *LiShmi*, for My Name. The act of giving *tzedakah* should symbolize Hashem’s Name in its proper sequence. This means that one should give before the poor man must suffer the indignity of stretching out his hand to beg.

One morning, following *Shacharis*, morning prayer service, the holy **HoRav Meir, zl, m’Premeshlan**, one of the early *Chassidic* Masters, sat in his “office” accepting people and soothing the hearts of those who came to him to confer his blessing on them. Suddenly, a poor widow entered the anteroom and demanded to see the *Rebbe* immediately. An argument ensued, as she demanded to go ahead of the line, while the *gabbai*, attendant, claimed that this was exactly the purpose of a line: there was an order of sequence. She would enter when it was her turn. The woman was not accepting “no” for an answer. Her needs were great – and immediate. She could

not wait. Suddenly, the *Rebbe* called out, “Arye! Allow her to enter. She is in need of alms and must have them immediately.”

The woman entered as the *Rebbe* lifted a large denomination of coin from his table, held it momentarily, and transferred it from one hand to the other. Afterwards, he placed the coin on the table and motioned for the woman to take it.

He later explained his seemingly strange behavior. “You should not think that “Meir” (as he would refer to himself) was playing with a coin. We are taught that one’s intention upon giving *tzedakah* to a poor man should be on Hashem’s Name.” He then explained that the penny is the *yud*; the benefactor’s hand, the *hay*; the poor man’s outstretched arm, the *vov*, and his hand the concluding *hay*. If the beneficiary is a woman, it presents a problem, since the benefactor may not place it in her hand. Physical contact with a woman is prohibited. Thus, *Rav Meir* transferred the coin from one hand to the other so that he would have the “benefit” of the second hand/five fingers, to allude to the second *hay*. This gives us something to reflect upon at the next opportunity we have to give *tzedakah*.