

"You shall love Hashem your G-d with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your resources." (6:5)

Chazal teach us that regarding he who places greater significance upon his material abundance than on his own body, the *Torah* says, "With all your resources." For he whose body has greater importance than his money, the *Torah* says, "With all your soul." Regardless of what is important to us, we must be willing to sacrifice it in the service of Hashem. The *Chofetz Chaim* examines this statement. What is the most important possession of a Jew? What takes precedence over everything? The *Torah*! It is our life. Without it, we simply cannot exist. Yet, declares the *Chofetz Chaim*, the *Torah* demands that we be ready to give up our most important possession in order to serve Hashem. Even if it means giving up our portion of *Torah*, we must be willing to be *moser nefesh*, to sacrifice our *Torah* learning, in order to serve Hashem. This is remarkable!

The **Ponevezer Rav, zl**, infers from the words of his *rebbe*, the *Chofetz Chaim*, that he who holds the scepter of education, who distinguishes himself as a *posek*, *halachic* authority, as a *rosh yeshivah*, or a *magid shiur*, must devote himself totally to his students. He must do so even at the expense of his own educational development and spiritual ascendancy. It is the holy obligation and mandate of every *mechanech*, *Torah* educator, to give all of himself to his students. He is to devote part of his valuable time -- which is normally set aside for his own study -- so that his *talmidim* will better understand the *shiur* and grow to greater spiritual heights. This is the true essence of *mesiras nefesh*, to stand ready to sacrifice one's own *ruchnios*, to enable others to study *Torah*. Those who heard this statement made by the *Ponevezer Rav* noted the intensity of emotion with which he made this statement. This is essentially what the *Rav* did. After the European Holocaust, he sacrificed his own erudition in order to devote his whole life to rebuilding *Torah*. This ultimate form of *mesiras nefesh* ensured the success of his endeavor.