

When you reap your harvest ... and you forget a bundle ... you shall not turn back to take it, for it shall be for the convert, the orphan and the widow, so that Hashem, your G-d, will bless you. (24:19)

If one reads the *pasuk*, I think it communicates an important message. When we give *tzedakah*, charity, to one who is in need, we think it is all about him/her. He or she needs our help. What about the benefactor? Does he receive any personal benefit outside of the spiritual reward and the personal satisfaction that he derives from his actions? The Torah teaches that one should not think his charitable actions benefit only the beneficiary. He, too, will benefit as evinced by the following story. Anyone who has ever searched for a job knows that the process can be tedious and demoralizing. No matter how good one thinks he/she may be, the person who is hiring is always looking for "someone else." Two young women, one who was married and supporting her husband in *kollel* and the other one who had not yet found her *bashert*, Heavenly-designated spouse, were good friends, both qualified secretaries, and both looking for a job. A position in an up and coming company became available. The company was prepared to pay top dollar to the right candidate. Sarah, who was married, was hopeful. So, too, was Rivkah, her good friend. The both had secured interviews for the next day, Rivkah at 10:00 a.m. and Sarah at 3:00 p.m.

Rivkah made an extraordinary impression upon the husband and wife, proprietors of the business, to the point that the wife told Rivkah that, as far as she was concerned, she could begin working for them the following day. They had, however, promised interviews to a number of applicants, so they would have to wait until the end of the day before they could give her a contract. Rivkah was torn. On the one hand, she wanted the job, on the other hand, her good friend needed the money to support her *kollel* family. Rivkah was not "there" yet. She made a decision which clearly demonstrated the kind of young woman she was. She returned to the proprietors of the business and explained that she had a friend who was coming for an interview that afternoon. She would much rather see her friend get the job, because she needed the money. She assured them that Sarah would do a good job for them as well.

Sarah was hired and, after a while, her work pleased the owners of the business. Meanwhile, the proprietors of the business could not get over Rivkah's outstanding character traits. Indeed, they wondered if she would not be an appropriate match for their son, who was an excellent *ben Torah*. The woman called Rivkah and invited her to come over with her mother to visit. When they came, Rivkah went out to spend time with Sarah, while her mother and the woman spoke. The woman was quite candid with Rivka's mother, relating to her how impressed she was with her daughter. She inquired of her daughter's friends and every one of them seemed to have a high opinion of her. Would Rivkah and her mother be interested in her son? Rivkah's mother replied that they would look into it. After some inquiries, it became apparent that the proprietors' son was truly a special young man, both in learning and *middos*, character. They met, they liked one another, it

was a match made in Heaven!

Prior to the wedding, Rivkah's future mother-in-law spoke with Rivkah and said, "You came here looking for a job, which you relinquished to your good friend. As a result, you eventually became part of our family. I am happy to tell you that, *Baruch Hashem*, we are quite well-to-do. We would like our son to sit and learn as long as he wants. To this end, we are making you and our son full partners in this business. You came to apply for a job, and, instead, became a part owner!"

We think that, by extending ourselves to others, we are helping them. This is true, but we are also helping ourselves.