

And let them take for Me a portion. (25:2)

Chazal (Midrash Rabbah Shemos 33:1) expound on the *pasuk's* expression, *V'yikchu Li*, "They shall take for Me." The *Midrash* compares the Torah to a good acquisition (*mekach*) of which people are unaware of its value. When they consider how much the buyer paid the broker, however, they realize the value of the purchase. Likewise, how does one determine the true value of the Torah which we received? We look at the payment made to Moshe *Rabbeinu*: the skin of his face becoming otherworldly radiant. The *Midrash* further expounds, discussing an acquisition during which the seller sells himself along with the item he is selling. Likewise, Hashem says, "I sold you My Torah; I myself was sold along with it." This may be compared to a king who had a one and only daughter. One of the other kings came and took her for a wife, planning to return to his far-off land. The father of the bride said, "My daughter is my only daughter; I am unable to part from her. I cannot tell you not to take her from me. After all, she is your wife. I ask one favor of you: In any place in which you choose to live, prepare a room for me, so that I may dwell near you." Likewise, Hashem said, "I gave you My Torah. I am unable to part from it. I ask that you make for Me a Sanctuary that I may dwell in it, thus remaining near to My Torah" (whose repository is the *Aron HaKodesh* in the *Mishkan*).

Chazal teach how important the Torah is to Hashem, how He values it so much that He had us make the *Mishkan* to house the Torah in its Ark. We should make note of this caveat: Hashem comes along with the Torah.

Horav Yosef Zundel, zl, m'Salant (Be'er Yosef), supplements this with an insightful comment. A king is willing to live together with his daughter and son-in-law only if his son-in-law treats his daughter respectfully. Only then is the king pleased, as he sees the love and harmony that exists in his daughter's home. If, however, his son-in-law ignores his wife, treating her indifferently, rejecting her for other diversions, and, as a result, humiliates her, the father will surely not be their guest. He will be in too much pain to witness such boorish treatment of his daughter. Likewise, Hashem comes along with his daughter – the Torah, only when He observes that the treatment she receives from *am Yisrael* is respectful. If, in contrast, Hashem sees that His Torah is treated with scorn and derision, He wants no part of this relationship. When we treat the Torah in an unbecoming manner, we are, by extension, driving away Hashem. The flipside is that when we treat the Torah with respect, we merit having the *Shechinah* in our presence. This is why, when one learns Torah, he should be *b'simchah*, filled with joy. After all, Hashem is present with him.

Chazal (Shabbos 30b) teach that the *Shechinah* does not rest upon a person (or an entity, i.e., home) when he/it displays *atzvus*, sadness. When a house is filled with joy, the *Shechinah* permeates the home. In his *hesped*, eulogy, for *Horav Shmuel Vosner, zl, Horav Yisrael Zicherman, Shlita (Rav of Achuzas Brachfeld)*, related the following story. He was on the rabbinical board of Maaynei Ha'Yeshua Hospital in Bnei Brak. As such, he had occasion to visit with the patients. One day, he was summoned to the bedside of a man who was paralyzed over most of his body. When *Rav Zicherman* entered the room, the patient struggled to position himself. "*Rebbe,*"

he asked, “am I still permitted to recite the *brachah* of *She’asah li kol tzarki*, ‘Who has provided my every need?’” Rav Zicherman replied, “Rav Vosner is scheduled to visit the hospital today. Why not ask him?”

Rav Vosner visited, and the patient presented his case. He was unable to do much of anything. Did the *brachah* have any real meaning? The Rav replied with a story, “When I was younger and a student in *Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin*, I accompanied my venerable *Rebbe, Horav Meir Shapiro, zl*, to visit one of the *yeshivah* students who was gravely ill. He was in acute pain with, very little hope for relief. It was, thus, surprising to see this young man *b’simchah*, in a joyful, serene mood. Rav Meir was taken aback by this young man’s attitude, and he asked, “What is motivating your sense of joy?” The young man’s response was a stunning revelation.

“With regard to my present situation, I am unable to do anything for myself. I asked myself, ‘Why is Hashem keeping me alive? What purpose is served with me laying here in excruciating pain and unable to do anything?’ I then reminded myself of *Chazal’s* statement (*Shabbos 12b*), ‘The *Shechinah* rests above the head of a sick person.’ This means the purpose of a *choleh*, sick person, is to bring the *Shechinah* down to this world. Due to my illness, the *Shechinah* is down here above my head. I think this alone is an important and qualifying reason for living.

“However, *Chazal* also teach (*Shabbos 30b*) that the *Shechinah* does not reside where *atzvus*, sadness/depression, exists. Thus, I gather whatever emotional strength I have to enliven myself, so that the *Shechinah* will remain above my head.”

When Rav Zicherman heard the young man’s story, he commented, “This thought should be saved for generations.” Rav Vosner then looked deeply into the eyes of the sick man and said, “How can you say that your life serves no purpose in the world? On your shoulders rests the *Shechinah*, made possible by you! Can one have any loftier purpose for living than being the medium for bringing down the *Shechinah* and providing a resting place for Him?”