



SIMCHAT SHMUEL

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In our *sedra* this week, Hashem instructs Moshe Rabbeinu to construct the *Mishkan*, a sacred space for Hashem's presence among the Jewish people. The opening verses of *Parshat Terumah* set forth the mandate that each member of *Klal Yisrael* must participate by contributing to the enterprise of the *Mishkan*'s construction -*vayikchu li teruma*- take and present for me a gift.

The Great Chasidic Sage, **Reb Simcha Bunim of Peshiska, zy'a** explained the intention behind our verse- *vayikchu li teruma*- take and present for me a gift as follows:

Every individual desires that they should indeed themselves be 'gift worthy'. Each person strives to ascend to a high and holy state of consciousness, and only when we have achieved that heightened consciousness are we worthy to experience and intuit the gift of the divine presence which resides within each of us.

The **Tiferet Shlomo**, the Rebbe of Radomsk, **zy'a**, clarifies this point:

During those sacred moments when a person expresses their dedication, when they

commit to contribute to the needs of the community and begin to see the innate holiness within one another and within each member of the community, then the divine presence is felt in the most palpable way.

Indeed, during these past many months, there has been so much giving, so much desire to give on behalf of *Klal Yisrael*, so many who have given the ultimate gift on behalf of *Klal Yisrael*, and so many who have poured out their hearts to support our holy *chayalim*. This capacity to give to one another, to express our love and support for one another, and to see the good in one another, has certainly transformed our understanding of what it means to give, and to give unconditionally.

The **Sabba Kadisha of Slonim zy'a**, offers a unique explanation of our verse. "Really the verse should read *vayitnu li teruma*- you should give to me an offering, and not *vayikchu li*-take for me an offering. So what is the meaning of *vayikchu li teruma*? The verse is meant to instill in each of us the understanding that when we give *tzedaka*, it should be with the *kavana* that as much as we are giving, we too are receiving through that *mitzva* of *tzedaka*. We gain the *zechut* of bringing joy, of providing assistance to others in need. Ultimately through our acts of *chesed* we personally receive as much if not more than we actually give.

Yehi Ratzon, may we indeed be blessed to continue giving, to continue to see the good in one another and to feel Hashem's presence in every moment. ■





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