

GREAT FOR SHARING  
AT THE SHABBOS TABLE!

# בשבת



אור ישראל

Living Life Deeper

PARSHAS  
VAYAKHEL

BY RABBI NETANEL NAAMAT  
RABBI NAFTALI ZIONS  
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## PURE GOLD

In the beginning of our *parshah*, we find the instructions Moshe gave to the *Bnei Yisrael* regarding the collection of funds for the *Mishkan*. In describing the process of collecting the funds, Moshe states, "All those of generous heart shall bring..."<sup>1</sup>

The Ha'amek Davar<sup>2</sup> (Rabbi Naftali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin 1816-1893) points out that this statement places two requirements on those who want to donate. First, they must be of generous heart - they can't be stingy people who would prefer not to donate. Additionally, they must bring the gift themselves, not through a courier. Why not? By bringing the gift oneself, the treasurers of the *Mishkan* can honestly ascertain if the donor is giving this gift because they want to, or if they'd prefer not to, but are donating because of social pressures.

It is understandable why the *Mishkan* required such a stringent collection process. After all, the *Mishkan* was not like any other building - it was built as a 'house for Hashem' and as such, even the thoughts of the donors needed to be pure.<sup>3</sup> However, one would think that if we had an opportunity to give to the ultimate building campaign - building the *Mishkan* - we would certainly give whatever we could, and give with happiness.

Yet, we find that this was not the case. There may have been some people who simply did not feel like they could part with their money, and only gave because of the people around them. Because of these feelings, subtle as they may be, their gift had to be rejected.

We sometimes have the opportunity to do a favor for someone, whether it is physically, or monetarily. Though we may think that our feelings regarding the favor may not matter as long as the job gets done, we see a very different idea in our *parshah*. Our thoughts certainly do matter, and can totally change the type of 'gift' that we are giving.

1 *Shemos* 35:5

2 *ibid.* s.v. כל נדיב

3 *Ohr Hachaim ibid.* s.v. ביאה את

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### Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

Doing favors, and giving *tzedakah*, may be something that you can force yourself to do, it is difficult to force yourself to *want* to give. Is there any practical advice that one can employ to change one's attitude towards giving?

One idea is to understand the nature of the money or talents that we have. It is easy to regard our wealth as our own. However, the more we realize the reality that everything is from Hashem, is owned by Hashem, and that we are simply His agents, the easier it will be for us to part with 'our' money.<sup>1</sup>

Hashem gives us money for a myriad of purposes. He wants us to have food, clothing, and even luxuries. However, one of those purposes is to share our wealth with others. Imagine a friend gave us money to hold while they ran an errand. When they returned we would have no problem returning their money - after all, it's not ours. So too with money that Hashem has given us - a portion has already been designated for others, it's simply not ours!

1 *Kli Yakar* on *Shemos* 35:5 s.v. ועוד

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**Constantly cling tightly to Mussar  
without loosening your grip from it,  
even a bit; Closely guard Mussar - for  
true "life" depends on it.**

- Shlomo HaMelech, *Mishlei* 4:14

## WITHOUT BEING ASKED

Saying that Mrs. Hadassah Zucker\* was overwhelmed was an understatement. She had lost her husband just a few weeks ago, and now the bills were piling up. Though money was tight when her husband was around, Mr. Dovid Zucker had done what he could to shield his wife from the financial burden. However, with his passing, everything came crashing down on her.

On the top of the list was the mortgage on the house. The math simply did not add up, there was no way to pay the mortgage. As an assistant teacher, Mrs. Zucker was not making much per year. Perhaps if Mrs. Zucker found a new job, or did some work on the side, there would be some hope, but it was not a simple matter to find a new line of work. With the mortgage looming, and her husband's passing, Mrs. Zucker had days where she simply did not want to get out of bed.

Amidst all of this, Hadassah happened to be speaking to Mrs. Braun, one of the parents of a student, and mentioned the difficulties that she was going through. The parent nodded, concerned, and then excused herself. After a few minutes she came back. "Someone will be bringing over enough money to cover the mortgage this month," said Mrs. Braun. "She'll be by your house in a couple of hours."

"What? How?" was all Mrs. Zucker could muster, with tears in her eyes. "Don't worry about it," replied Mrs. Braun. "Please use it in good health."

As promised, there was a knock on the door a few hours later. Another parent of a student, Mrs. Newstead, walked in, envelope in hand. The two made small talk, and after some time, Mrs. Newstead said, "I want you to know - you'll be covered for the next four months. That should give you enough time to get your feet under you." With that, she smiled and left.

Mrs. Zucker didn't know what to do with herself. She hardly knew these women, yet, in a matter of hours, they had taken a tremendous load off of her shoulders. "There are some people," thought Mrs. Zucker, "who do *chesed* because they are asked, and there some people who do *chesed* because it is who they are."

*\*Names have been changed, based on a true story.*

### DID YOU KNOW?

- One who gives money to the poor, and comforts him receives almost double the blessings as one who simply gives money to the poor.<sup>1</sup>
- We think that we are helping others with our money. The truth is, the reason we are blessed with money is because we help others.<sup>2</sup>
- Hashem doesn't simply ask us to do *chesed*,<sup>3</sup> He asks that we love to do *chesed*.<sup>4</sup>

1 *Bava Basra* 9b

2 *Tiv Hischazkus, Chesed*, p. 173

3 *Michah* 6:8

4 *Ahavas Chesed*, Vol II, Chap. 1