

## HOW TO GIVE

*The story is told of a rabbi who comes home after his annual maot chittim speech. (In the weeks before Passover, it is the custom in all Jewish communities to raise maot chittim--"wheat money"--with which to provide the poor with matzah, wine and other needs of the festival.)*

*"Nu? So how did it go?" asks the rebbetzin.*

*"Well," says the rabbi, "we're halfway there. The poor agree to receive. Now I just have to convince the rich to give."*

*The rabbi had it all wrong. Giving is the easy part.*

*It's the receiving part that's so difficult. How many people do you know who have mastered the art of graciously receiving a gift or a compliment? Why, many of us find it hard to bring ourselves to ask for directions!*

*There is a reason why this is so. Man, we are told, was created in the image of his Creator. Giving comes naturally to the Source of All. But how can One who lacks for nothing receive? Only by an act of self-contraction, by the great mystery of a divine will that proclaims: "I desire thus from you."*

*Created in the Divine Image, man is a natural giver. But it requires a supreme effort on our part in order to genuinely receive, to hollow the self into a receptive vessel for a bestowal of love.*

*An even greater challenge is the endeavor to be a true recipient in the very act of giving. To convey to the recipient of our gift--as G-d conveys to us--how deeply we desire to give, and how grateful we are for having been granted the opportunity to do so.*

*-By Yanki Tauber; based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe*