

## "We are all sons of one man....your servants are not spies." (42:11)

The *Ramban* offers insight into the dialogue between Yosef and his brothers. Yosef questioned the need for all the brothers of such a prestigious family to journey to Egypt to purchase food. Obviously, such a mission could have been accomplished by a few of the brothers, together with an entourage of servants. The brothers responded that "*we are sons of one man*" - and our father, seeking to minister to the needs of brotherhood and unity, insisted that we travel together. Such a journey of togetherness would promote brotherly love.

*Horav A. H. Lebowitz, Shlita*, notes that Yaakov's decision offers a profound insight onto the significance of *achdus* - unity. If Yaakov was so concerned about the dangers of the trip that he refused to permit Binyamin to accompany them, why did he allow all of the brothers to go? Should not the risks of such a journey preclude the whole family from going? What about the *bitul Torah*, cessation of *Torah* study, for all the brothers? Unity and brotherhood are not merely noble attributes. They are the basis of *Torah* life and the foundation of *Yidishkeit*. The essential trait of "*love your fellow man as yourself*" is the fundamental principle of the entire *Torah*. It was, therefore, necessary for Yaakov to emphasize that *mitzvah* at all costs.

We must add that *Ahavas Yisrael*, love for a fellow Jew, cannot be fulfilled simply by active involvement in communal affairs, while simultaneously neglecting the needs of the individual. Our concern for *Klal Yisrael* - the whole people - must generate from a genuine sensitivity to the individual Jew. One who works relentlessly for national Jewish causes, while neglecting the Jew at home or on the street, does not reflect the true essence of *Ahavas Yisrael*.