

"And they shall take to them (every) man a lamb for their father's house, a lamb for a household." (12:3) - "And they shall slaughter it the whole assembly of the congregation of Yisrael... and they shall take of the blood and they shall put it upon the two doorposts and on the lintel." (12:6,7)

In this *pasuk* we note the first *mitzvah* in which *Bnei Yisrael* are enjoined as they prepare for the Exodus from Egypt. It focuses upon the head of the house, while it also embraces the whole family. Even though there is great need for collective communal involvement, the individual is not absolved of his own personal responsibility. We have become so dependent upon communal institutions that we may have forgotten what it means to fulfill our obligations personally. We send the aged to be cared for by the communal organization and the poor to central *tzedaka* funds, while we relegate our children to be brought up and taught by others. As *Bnei Yisrael* approached freedom and eventual nationhood, we were admonished to bear this idea in mind. No nation becomes a nation unless each individual bears his own responsibilities.

Moreshes Moshe observes that Moshe could never impose his will upon the people without their consent. It was necessary for the entire assembly to be actively involved. The Rabbi, the teacher, and the school cannot succeed without the parents' active participation. A Rabbi cannot enforce *Shabbos* observance if it does not exist at home. A teacher cannot impose *tefillah* if it is not modeled at home.

One of the most unique features of the first *Korban Pesach* was the ritual of smearing the blood on the doorposts. When the *Kohanim* sprinkled the blood as part of a sacrificial offering, it was referred to as *vehrzw sprinkling*, of the blood. The procedure of *ub,bu ,uzuznv h,a kgw* they *shall put the blood*, *vbh,bw* contrasts this. To sprinkle means to throw the blood from a distance. Putting the blood on the doorposts, forces one to draw near to them. One cannot be a Jew by proxy or have an observant Jewish home by remote control. One cannot delegate his children's future to the school and divorce himself from their spiritual upbringing. There has to be a *ub,,* - a total personal involvement.

The great message to be gleaned from this first *mitzvah* is that one must make personal sacrifices at home. An individual cannot rely on others to do his job. When there is obvious personal sacrifice for Jewish idealism, children grow up consciously aware of their heritage, ready to accept their mission.