

You are standing today, all of you, the heads of your tribes, your elders, your small children, your women. (29:9)

Is there a specific reason that the *Torah* emphasizes the fact that the heads of the tribes, the Jewish leadership, were also gathered there? *Horav Tzvi Hirsch Ferber, zl*, explains that ultimately Hashem judges everybody, regardless of the importance of his position, whether he has fulfilled his *teudah*, mission, in life. He cites *Horav Chaim Volozhiner, zl*, who explains that the *tefillah* which we recite in the *Mussaf Shemonah Esrei* of *Rosh Hashanah*, “*maasei ish u’fekudoso*” “everyone’s deed and mission”, delineates the function that each individual must carry out. We all have responsibilities that we are to carry out during our tenure in this world. The Almighty judges us based upon whether we carried out our responsibilities. A *rebbe*, *Torah* teacher, is judged accordingly: Did he perform his task appropriately? A father is judged accordingly: Was he a “good” father and husband? A woman is judged as a wife and mother. In other words, while Hashem judges us as human beings and individuals, He also judges us in accordance with our specific role. One might be a great person, but a weak teacher or father or community leader. While one’s role does not necessarily reflect upon his character, he still must answer for his non-fulfillment of his individual responsibility.