

## "Assemble the people, the men, and the women, and the little children." (31:12)

*Rashi* explains that the purpose of including the little children was to compensate those who had brought them. It seems peculiar that parents should be enjoined to bring little children to this great assemble only for the purpose of receiving reward! We may suggest the following lessons to be derived from this imperative. First, education is not bound by a specific time frame. Parents should seek to educate their children from an early age. Indeed, in this case, infants were being educated subconsciously, since they were too young to understand the words of *Torah!*

The *Talmud* states that *Rabbi Yehoshua* achieved his abundant wisdom as a result of his mother's total devotion to his *Torah* education. When she was pregnant with him, she sought out the great scholars in their individual *Torah* centers and beseeched them to pray on behalf of her unborn child, so that he would become a *Torah* scholar. After *Rabbi Yehoshua* was born, she placed his carriage in the *Beis Hamedrash*, so that only the sounds of *Torah* study would enter his ears. His mother's total dedication to the value of *Torah* study, even at the early stages of the child's maturation, evidently played a pivotal role in *Rabbi Yehoshua's* development into a revered *Torah* scholar.

We may also note the *Talmud's* choice of the words in describing the parents. *ovthcnk* is defined as "those who bring them." Why did it not simply say "the parents"? Perhaps the *Talmud* wishes to emphasize the role of the parent as the key to success in the child's educational experience. In order for children to fully benefit from their education, it is crucial that the parents be involved. Bringing a child to shul and "dropping him off," just to assure his presence is of little value. Parents must "come together" with their children to experience, to listen, to be involved, to share a davening or a *Torah* learning program. When parents include themselves in the child's educational process, they will receive the ultimate appropriate reward, *Torah Nachas!*