

“See, Hashem has proclaimed by name, Betzalel ben Uri ben Chur of the Tribe of Yehudah.” (35:30)

In recording Betzalel's pedigree the Torah atypically goes back two generations – to Betzalel's grandfather, Chur. This is unusual, since the Torah usually records only the name of the father. Obviously, Chur played a significant role in Hashem's choice of Betzalel to head the work on the *Mishkan*. The *Mishkan* was referred to as *Mishkan Ha'Eidus*, the *Mishkan* of the Testimony, since it served as a testament that Hashem had forgiven *Klal Yisrael* for their involvement in the *cheit ha'eigel*, sin of the Golden Calf. Therefore, it was necessary that Betzalel not have any vestige of relationship with the Golden Calf. A prosecutor may not be a defense attorney; *ein kateigor naaseh saneigor*. This is why gold was not brought into the *Kodesh HaKedoshim*, Holy of Holies, and why Aharon *HaKohen* was not given access to the *Parah Adumah*, Red Heifer, which served to atone (among other things) for the sin of the Golden Calf.

This, explains *Horav Moshe Bick, zl*, is why the Torah details Betzalel's lineage back to his grandfather Chur, who was killed when he stood up to *eigel* revelers. Chur sacrificed his life as a result of the Golden Calf. His grandson followed in his ways. He was focused only on G-d – not on any other faith or worship. Nothing would deter Betzalel from carrying out the word/command of Hashem. It was his family legacy. He proudly carried his family's legacy of *emunah*, faith.

There are those who might suggest that Betzalel must have had some subconscious degree of animus within him. Knowing that he was creating the edifice which would serve as penance for the violent, sinful behavior that catalyzed the murder of his grandfather, could he be trusted to carry out the deed with holy and pure motivation? Can we be certain that there was not a vestige of hatred against those who left him grandfatherless at a young age?

This is why Moshe *Rabbeinu* declares that this was Hashem's decision. He knows that Betzalel was holy and pure and that his motives would likewise not be swayed in any way. He was first and foremost devoted to Hashem and, as such, would comply obediently with what he was told to do.

I think, perhaps, that Betzalel's pedigree signifies even more. What about Uri, Betzalel's father? How does he factor into the equation? He is *nisht ahin nisht aher*, neither here nor there: He is not Chur, who sacrificed himself for Hashem, nor is he Betzalel, whose commitment was unwavering and who built the *Mishkan* exactly as commanded by Hashem.

I once heard that the lesson to be derived from here is that not everyone has his own significance. Some of us are present to maintain the chain, so to speak. Indeed, the middle link of a chain is the strongest, since it connects numbers one and three – or past and future. Uri was the one who saw to it that Chur's legacy was passed on to Betzalel. Without Uri, Betzalel would never exist.

Some individuals in life appear to be “simple” – not the “movers and shakers.” To the superficial

spectator, their contribution to a community is minimal. Quite possibly, Uri *ben* Chur was like that, but look at the son that he raised! Without Uri, no Betzalel would ever exist! There is no such person as a simple Jew. Everyone serves a purpose. He may not have *yichus*, exalted pedigree, but, as a result of his parental excellence, his son will be the founder of an exalted lineage.

Perhaps we may add another aspect to our appreciation of Betzalel's father, Uri. I was always bothered by the choice of Betzalel to be architect of the *Mishkan*. If the purpose of using Betzalel to build the *Mishkan* was that he was Chur's grandson, thereby exhibiting his selflessness in executing the Divine mandate, then why not use Uri, the orphaned son of Chur, to be the *Mishkan's* builder? I think the answer lies in one of the most important qualifications for being the *Mishkan's* builder. The *Mishkan* served as testimony that Hashem had forgiven the Jewish People for their sin of the Golden Calf. Thus, the one who was to construct the *Mishkan* must be a loving, caring individual to whom forgiveness was second nature. He could never harbor a grudge against anyone. A person is not just born with such incredible character traits. He must be raised, nurtured and imbued with the knowledge that people err and, when they repent, their repentance must be accepted – without malice.

Uri saw his father killed before his eyes. It was an image he would never forget. Yet, he was able to forgo his personal feelings and teach his son that a Jew forgives. Regardless of the infraction, we bear no malice. Hashem forgives; so should we. Without Uri there would not have been a Betzalel of such incredible character. He was *mevater*, willing to forgo what might have/could have been his personal feelings, because he was raised in a home where it was the big picture that counted. When Hashem said, "Do", he immediately acted.