

Every many whose head inspired him came... the men came with the women... every man with whom was found... all the women whose hearts inspired them. (35:21,22,23,26)

Horav Yeshaya Pik, zl, posits that these *pesukim* address four types of donors. (Charitable donations usually fall under the rubric of these four circumstances.) Some men/husbands will not donate before going home and speaking it over with their wives. This type of husband is in a situation in which their bank accounts are joint, and his wife has a dominant role in the home (as it should be). Therefore, whatever money goes out must have her acquiescence. Concerning this type of man, the Torah writes: “The men came with the women.” These men had their wives’ consent. Next is the man who knows that he will never receive his wife’s compliance. Whatever he does has to be behind her back, from a secret cache of funds. Regarding him, the Torah writes, “every man with whom was found.” He kept some money for himself, so that he could contribute to *tzedakah*.”

The next fellow is he who is not dependent upon his wife’s permission. He either has sufficient funds to act on his own or his wife is of the same mind and/or trusts her husband’s decisions. He is the one concerning whom the Torah writes, “Every man whose heart inspired him came.” Last is the woman who has access to her own funds, who does not require her husband’s involvement in her monetary decisions. Her husband respects her ability to make financial decisions and is, thus, in complete accord with her donations.

Interestingly, if we peruse the sequence of *pesukim*, the one who gives freely with his money – and either does not have to consult his wife or she is likeminded and in agreement with his decisions – is listed first among the donors. He can write a check immediately, since no hassle will occur concerning his contributions. Next comes the husband who has to check with his wife just to make sure that she agrees with him, followed by the poor fellow who has to donate surreptitiously behind his wife’s back. The last case is the wife who gives freely of her own volition, either because she has her own funds or because her husband respects her decisions. Why is she last? I would think that she would be second – right after the husband who is in control of his checkbook. Perhaps, it is specifically because she is so circumspect and careful that she has earned her husband’s respect concerning monetary decisions. Thus, she is last, because she takes her time to render each decision.