

Every man and woman whose heart motivated them to bring for any of the work... Bnei Yisrael brought a free-willed offering to Hashem. (35:29)

Upon reading the *pasuk*, one is struck by its redundancy. What is the difference between *kol ishv'ishah*, every man and woman, and *Bnei Yisrael*? Are they not one and the same? The *Chida, zl* explains this with a pertinent analogy. Often a *shul* has an appeal on *Shabbos* for badly needed funds to support an important project. In the heat of the announcement, people tend to get carried away and, wanting to “keep up with the Joneses,” pledge more than they would normally give. At first, the donor is very proud of himself. After all, everyone else, even the wealthy members, has pledged only one hundred dollars. He, on the other hand, has pledged five hundred dollars. This warm feeling lasts throughout the davening and even on the walk home, when everyone smiles at him and pats him on the back. When he arrives at home, however, and the accolades no longer accompany him, he asks himself, “Am I out of my mind? First of all, I do not even have that kind of money (at least not for *tzedakah*). Why did I pledge so much more than the wealthiest members of the *shul*?” This hindsight, bitter feeling, gnaws at him until he decides, “Done! I will pay this time. However, never again! The next time an appeal occurs, I will think twice, even three times, before I make a pledge.” The *Chida* explains that, concerning the appeal for the *Mishkan*, the people had no regrets. From the “pledge” made by any man or woman, until the moment that they brought the check it was all with an unusual free-will to donate for the building of the Sanctuary. Since contributing to *tzedakah* consists of two stages – the pledge and writing the check – the Torah repeats that everyone was on the same page from start to finish.

Horav Reuven Karlinstein, zl, offers a practical explanation which should give us something to consider with regard to our own *avodas ha'kodesh*, service to Hashem. A father goes to perform a *mitzvah*, do his children accompany him to watch, learn, and participate? The father goes to purchase a *lulav* and *esrog*. Where are his children? Why should they not be inspired seeing how many people attend, how much they spend (regardless of their income), how meticulous and uncompromising they are in looking for an *esrog mehudar*, beautiful *esrog*? A father goes to bake *matzos*. Where are his children? Why should they not develop a love for *mitzvos*? *Tzedakah* often occurs at home, when a solicitor, a *Rav, Rosh Yeshivah*, representative of a Torah institution/organization, pays a visit. Should the children not develop a love of sharing with others? I remember my good friend, *Reb Yosef Feigenbaum, zl*, sharing with me his father's (Reb Moshe) manner of giving *tzedakah*. I came by one night, past the children's bedtime, to solicit for a local learning project for *rebbeim*. It was then an innovative idea that would require the support of forward-thinking individuals. *Reb Yosef* was optimistic about the idea and prepared to give us a check. Before he wrote the check, however, he asked his wife to call the children downstairs. A few minutes later, their five children came down in their pajamas, and they all took a seat at the table. *Reb Yosef* explained to them that he wanted them to watch and share in the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*. This is how he was raised, and this is how he raised his children. It is, thus, no wonder that each of them has in them their parents' commitment to *harbotzas haTorah* and *ahavas Yisrael*.

Concerning the donating process for the *Mishkan*, it was not only the Jewish man and woman/parents that participated. It was also (all) *Bnei Yisrael*, the children, whom their parents brought to observe and experience the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*.

As an aside, we cannot overstate the impact parental behavior – both positive and negative – has on their children. Making a positive impression grants our children a head start on the road of life. They are equipped for their journey because their parents have taught them by example how one should live. This is the concept of *d'mus d'yukno shel aviv*. Yosef saw an image of his father, the Patriarch Yaakov. He saw what a Jew should look like and how he should live. This image protected him from the sin. The flipside is a warning to parents: Your children are watching. What message do you want to send to them? How do you want them to remember you?