

"And they should spread a cloth entirely of turquoise wool over it, and adjust its staves." (4:6)

The accepted translation for *uhsc unau* in this *pasuk* is "*and adjust its staves.*" The verb *unau* is usually translated as "and they shall place it," which implies that the *badim*, staves/poles, would now be inserted in the rings of the *Aron*. This translation, however, is not consistent with the *halacha*, which commands that the *badim* of the *Aron* **never** be removed from their rings. Consequently, we discern that the term *unau* refers to placing the *badim* upon the shoulders of the *Leviim*-- or their adjustment within the rings of the *Aron* in order to facilitate the *Leviim*'s task of carrying it.

In the *Talmud Yuma 72a*, *Tosfos* makes a novel statement. They contend that there was actually another set of poles which fit into a second set of rings. Consequently, the first set of poles was inserted into four rings, never to be removed. The second set of poles was removed when the *Aron* was stationary. This decision rendered by *Tosfos* must be comprehended from the perspective of practicality. Why would the Torah require a set of poles which was never used? Secondly, why were the poles which were not used never to be removed from the *Aron*? Theoretically, the poles which served the function of providing access for the *Aron*'s being transported would be the ones to remain inserted within the rings.

This writer once heard an interesting explanation for this *halacha*. The "extra" *badim* suggests a valuable lesson. The *Levi* or his present day "counterpart," the *ben Torah*, must understand that one should not seek to lighten his *Torah* load. The extra *badim* convey a critical implication. Making use of these *badim* would enable four more *Leviim* to carry the *Aron*, making life easier for them. Nonetheless, the *Aron* was transported by only four *Leviim*. Likewise, one who loves the *Torah* does not sense its weight upon his shoulders. Consequently, he does not seek methods for easing the yoke placed upon him. Carrying something or someone you love is not a burden; it is a privilege.

Another aspect of the *badim* presents a different perspective. Alongside the *badim*, which are "noticeable" as a result of their practical function, another set of *badim* exist which are hardly noticeable. These nevertheless serve an important and integral purpose. In every endeavor there are those supporters who are concealed behind a cloak of anonymity. These people are no less important than the ones who maintain a high profile. Indeed, without these quiet, inconspicuous "behind the scenes" people, the ones who are prominent would not succeed. Similarly, this is the case with the Yissachar/Zevulun relationship. One brother, Yissachar, devoted all of his time to *Torah*, while Zevulun supported and sustained him. Yissachar, who studied *Torah* publicly, was able to do so as a result of the unobtrusive efforts of Zevulun. This is an implication of the extra *badim* on the *Aron*.

It is notable that the *badim*, which represent the supporters and facilitators of *Torah* learning, are

not to be removed. Why is this ? The rationale behind this demand is simple: The supporters of *Torah* must be there even before it is apparent who are the actual students of *Torah*. It is incumbent upon the "invisible" benefactors and champions of *Torah* study to see to it that there are students who will study the *Torah*. Sometimes, as parents, they even have the obligation to raise these students from birth, nurturing their abilities, inspiring them with a love for *Torah*. The *badim* which serve to carry the *Aron* were removable, since they were needed only at such times that the *Aron* was transported. The other set of *badim* were never to be removed, since they signified the foundation for and support of *Torah* study, a requirement which is as timeless as it is essential. These *badim* communicated the message of *Torah* transmission from generation to generation, an obligation which is everlasting and must remain uninterrupted if the chain of *Torah* transmission is to remain viable.