

## **All these are the twelve tribes of Yisrael...He blessed them each according to his special blessing. (49:28)**

*Rashi* explains that Yaakov *Avinu* gave each of his sons his individual blessing, uniquely *cogruous* with his individual nature and personality. He then gave a collective blessing to all of them together. *Horav Eli Munk, zl*, explains that the Jewish nation is founded on the principle of unity in plurality. Each tribe is called upon to perform its particular function, based upon its specific character trait. Hence, each tribe constitutes a unit by itself. Why, then, did Yaakov bless them collectively afterwards?

*Horav Eliyahu Meir Bloch, zl*, derives a significant lesson from this *pasuk*. It is important for everyone to utilize his individual abilities and attributes for the betterment of the *klal*, wider community. The blessing of individual talents carries with it a requirement that the person contribute these assets to the *tzibur*, congregation. Furthermore, when each person acts in the collective interest, in harmony with others, everyone becomes enriched. Thus, each tribe gained by the others' involvement. Each tribe merged its attributes with the traits of the other tribes. Yaakov *Avinu* sought this symbiotic unity when he blessed all of his sons together.