

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

If one follows the translation of this *pasuk* – “Every man and woman whose heart motivated them to bring – brought a free-willed offering” – seems redundant: “Whoever was motivated to bring – brought.” Is there any question concerning their offering? The commentators respond to this redundancy, each in his inimitable manner. I will focus on one such interpretation.

Horav Yehonasan Eibeshitz, zl, offers a practical explanation. When Moshe *Rabbeinu* made his appeal for the *Mishkan*, the entire Jewish nation responded positively – even the *erev rav*, mixed-multitude. This created a problem, since the members of the *erev rav* were now *persona non grata*, after their involvement in the *eigel ha'zahav*, Golden Calf, debacle. Indeed, they were the initiators of the sin that cost the Jewish People dearly. They had the perverse audacity to lead the nation in serving the Golden Calf. The *Mishkan* was to serve as an atonement for the Golden Calf. Here they were once again at the forefront of the tumult to contribute towards the *Mishkan*. What unmitigated *chutzpah!*

The nation had no intention of accepting their contributions and allowing them access to the *Mishkan*. However, there was one problem: How were they going to make up the money which the *erev rav* would have donated? By not including their donations, there would be a shortfall. The people came to a decision. The *erev rav* would not be included, yet there would be no shortfall. Why? The people would make up the difference. They would pay the *erev rav*'s portion from their own pockets, and thereby not permit the *erev rav* to mix in to their collective atonement. All of them would pay the money, so that the *erev rav* did not have a role in the *Mishkan*. This is what is meant by the *pasuk* when it implies that *Bnei Yisrael* gave twice. When the people saw that the *kol ish v'isha*, every man and woman (referring to the *erev rav*), came with his or her contribution, *Bnei Yisrael* immediately upped the ante and gave more money to cover the shortfall. They put their money where their mouths were. It is easy to refuse the *erev rav*, but are **we** willing to pay the tab?