

One, nasi, prince, each day shall they bring their offering... The one who brought his offering on the first day was Nachshon ben Aminadav, of the tribe of Yehudah. (7:11,12)

The words "*es korbano*" are not found regarding the *korbanos* of any of the other *nesiim*. Nachshon was unique among the *nesiim*. Along with his *korban*, he brought himself, his devotion, his spirit of sanctity, his *mitzvos* and *maasim tovim*, good deeds. The **Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh** says that while all the *nesiim* brought "themselves" along with their *korbanos*, Nachshon was the most outstanding. Consequently, the *Torah* emphasizes "*es korbano*, his *korban*, himself. The *Torah* does not refer to Nachshon as a *nasi*. Why? *Ohr Hachayim* explains that he viewed himself as just another Jew, not as the greatest of the *nesiim*. His unique nature earned him the distinction of being the first *nasi* to offer a *korban* for the *Chanukas HaMizbayach*, dedication of the Altar.

Nachshon had two seemingly disparate qualities. On the one hand, he was the one that jumped first into the *Yam Suf*. His action encouraged the rest of *Klal Yisrael* to follow. He took the initiative. He made the first step. This act makes him appear to be a "take charge" personality, someone who believes in himself, rather than one who considers himself to be just another Jew.

Horav Zaidel Epstein, Shlita, contends that actually these qualities complement one another. The true leader is one who does not seek the leadership role, who views himself as a common citizen, but takes the proper action when necessary. A leader is available when the community needs his leadership ability. Otherwise, he remains in the background as a collective member of the community. This describes Nachshon. When *Klal Yisrael* stood at the banks of the Red Sea, when fear and anxiety overwhelmed the nation, he was the one who made the necessary move: he jumped in. When they were about to offer sacrifices for the dedication of the *Mizbayach*, he faded into the "scenery". Moshe Rabbeinu called him forward to lead the *nesiim* in dedicating the Altar. Even though he was the first to offer a *korban*, he viewed himself as just another *nasi* who was offering his *korban*. This may be inferred from the prefix, "*vov*", "and", of "*v'korbano*". He viewed his *korban* as a part of the collective offering - "and his *korban*" - not - "his *korban*". He did not distinguish himself. He was first, but in his eyes he just followed along with the others. He was the kind of person who was always at the head of the line.

Nesanel ben Tzuar, the *nasi* of *shevet* Yissachar, followed right behind Nachshon. The *Midrash* relates that the tribe of Reuven, the first-born of the tribes, came forward and said: "The tribe of Yehudah has precedence over us. Yehudah is the king of the tribes; he should, therefore, be first to dedicate the Altar. We would like to follow him." Moshe told them, "Hashem has determined the order of succession according to the encampments and their banners. The tribe of Yissacher will offer next, followed by the tribe of Zevulun". The *Ohr Ha'Chaim* adds that Yissacher followed Yehudah because of his distinction in *Torah* study. They represented the paradigm of the *ben Torah*, the one who devotes himself to constant *Torah* study. Zevulun, the supporter of *Torah*, the

one who made sure that Yissacher had no material concerns to distract him from his studies, followed closely behind.

What is the significance of this tripartite group who led the sacrifices? **Horav Eliyahu Schlesinger, Shlita**, explains that Yehudah was foremost because of his position as monarch. *Malchus* takes precedence. What value does monarchy hold if it is short-lived, if there is no future to his reign, if there will not be anyone over whom to rule? Who can guarantee the future of *Klal Yisrael*? Who can ensure that the people over whom Yehudah is to rule will adhere to his monarchy, that they will subordinate themselves to the dictates of the heritage he represents? It is the power of *Torah*.

Its truth and Divine origin will sustain the *malchus* of *shevet* Yehudah. *Shevet* Yissacher and his partner/supporter, *shevet* Zevulun, will educate *Klal Yisrael*. They will assure the development of *mosdos ha'chinuch*, *Torah* institutions, for educating ensuing generations. Thus, they will secure *Klal Yisrael's* future. Only a *malchus*, monarchy, that is committed to the total education of its young, has a right to rule and to endure.