

בְּשִׁיטְחָא

BY RABBI NETANEL NAAMAT
RABBI NAFTALI ZIONS
RABBI AVICHAI BENSOUSSAN



אור ישראל

Living Life Deeper

BUILT TOGETHER

The *Mishkan* was finally completed in *Parshas Pekudei*. The *passuk* records, "And all the work of the *Mishkan* was completed - and the *Bnei Yisrael* did all that Hashem had commanded Moshe."¹ Only a few select members of the *Bnei Yisrael* were the actual labourers who built the *Mishkan*. Why, then, does the *passuk* state that the entire *Bnei Yisrael* followed the instructions, when most were not directly involved in the construction?

The *Ohr Hachaim*² (Chaim ben Moshe ibn Attar, 1696-1743) explains that the Jewish nation has a special characteristic - though each person from *Bnei Yisrael* is an individual, we are collectively considered as one person. Thus, if one person in *Klal Yisrael* learns Torah or does a *mitzvah*, all of *Klal Yisrael* benefits, and is considered as if we all performed this *mitzvah*. Much like no one says, "Reuvain's hands built that house," but instead says, "Reuvain built that house," so too with *Klal Yisrael*.

Therefore, it may be true that Betzalel, Ohaliav, and others did the actual work, but Hashem looks at the *Mishkan* as if all participated in its construction, since *Klal Yisrael* is, "one body." This idea explains how it is possible for one to fulfil the entire Torah, even though some *mitzvos* are particular to a specific type of person (e.g. a *kohein*) or situation (e.g. in *Eretz Yisrael*). Because we are all connected, it is as if we all did the *mitzvos* that one member of *Klal Yisrael* performed.

However, it is important to note that there is a condition to this consideration. The more *Klal Yisrael* acts as one body, getting along with each other, and understanding others' differences, the more we are considered as one body.³

We might sometimes have our circle of friends, and there are others that we feel are 'outside,' people that we don't want to interact with, or worse, we actually hurt their feelings. This can happen in school, *shul*, or any other setting. Besides hurting a specific person, which is terrible in it of itself, this actually affects how *Klal Yisrael* is viewed. On the other hand, if we do what we can to reach out to others, even people that we don't normally get along with, we are not only helping an individual, we are changing the very nature of *Klal Yisrael*!

¹ *Shemos* 39:32

² *ibid.* s.v. ויעשו בני

³ *Chidushei Halev* on *Vayikra* 25:38

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Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

Let's face it, there are sometimes some people that we just don't get along with, people that we'd prefer to avoid. What can we do about people like this; how can we be more focused on *achdus*?

While becoming friends with such a person might be a far away dream, the least we could do is to make sure that we don't hurt this person's feelings.

We all know that just because someone might 'get on our nerves,' that's still not a reason to hurt them. Even if we can't muster the ability to befriend a person like this, we can try to allow their quirks to slide. By recognizing that this person is a whole person, not just these one or two traits, we can have a better perspective when it comes to their faults.

When we are in school, *shul*, or anywhere, and we exclude specific people from a game or discussion, we might not see their reaction, but it can be very hurtful to those who were excluded. Being aware of the repercussions of our actions is a first step towards true *achdus*.

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Improving middos without studying Mussar - doesn't happen. Studying Mussar without generating some improvement in middos - doesn't happen. - R' Gershon Liebmann zt"l

Degel HaMussar pg. 269

WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

Rebbetzin Judy Young's* *levayah* was on hold, as Rabbi Yitzchok Young was waiting for his children to come in from *Eretz Yisrael* for the funeral. Rabbi Young had assured his children that they will have airplane tickets waiting for them at the counter, they should go to the airport as soon as possible.

When the Young children arrived at the terminal, the place was packed with the general hustle and bustle of a busy airport. They made their way to the check-in counter, finally coming face to face with the agent.

The agent typed their names in the computer, looked up and said, "I'm sorry, it doesn't look like you are in the system. I can't issue a boarding pass until you purchase tickets."

The six passengers were taken aback. "But we were assured that the tickets were purchased," said Rabbi Binyamin Bulka, Rabbi Young's son-in-law. "Are you sure?" Rabbi Bulka quickly called his father-in-law who repeated that he did indeed purchase the tickets. But the agent was adamant; there simply was nothing in the system.

During the commotion a manager came by, but he too was powerless to allow them to board. As time was slipping away, Mrs. Bulka and her sister burst into tears, as they realized they would miss the plane that would take them to their mother's *levayah*. Suddenly a man on line stepped forward and said, with an unmistakable British accent, "Excuse me, what is the problem here?"

The situation was quickly explained, and before they could finish the story, the man took out his credit card. "Here is my credit card; I will pay for all of you."

Rabbi Bulka's mouth dropped open in surprise, "But you don't even know us! Why would you do this?"

"We are all *Yidden*," he said as he gave his credit card to the agent. Turning back to the family he said, "You should always go on *simchos*!"

The Bulkas and Youngs could not thank him enough. As they bid each other farewell and exchanged telephone numbers, the gentleman from London said, "If you tell anyone the story, please don't mention my name. It's not important who I am. It's who we are: *Yidden*."

"If you tell anyone the story, please don't mention my name. It's not important who I am. It's who we are: *Yidden*."

*Adapted from, "In the Spirit of the Maggid," by Rabbi Paysach Krohn

DID YOU KNOW?

- Even if *Klal Yisrael* serves idols, Hashem will not punish them if they live with *achdus*.¹
- If *Klal Yisrael* lives with *achdus*, not only will they have nothing to fear, they won't even feel fear.²
- If the Jewish people keep the Torah, Hashem will bless them with peace amongst themselves.³

¹ *Medrash Tanchuma Shoftim* 16

² *Alshich* on *Devarim* 31:6

³ *Ohr Hachaim* on *Vayikra* 26:6