

פרשת ויקהל פקודי

והנשאם הביאו את אבני השהם ואת אבני המלאים לאפד ולחשן [לה, כז] (quoted in רש"י) asks why did the נשיאים wait until after everyone else brought their gifts for the משכן? The מדרש explains that the נשיאים initially pledged to give whatever was lacking from the נדבות of the rest of the people. As it turned out, the donations of everyone else was more than enough and all that was left for them were the אבני שהם and the אבני מלואים. The תורה viewed this as an attitude and act of עצלות, something lacking in their enthusiasm to do מצוות. This is why the word נשיאים is spelled נשאם without the י.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (ס' קול רם ח"ב) זצ"ל says that we see from here to what extent the תורה disapproved of what they did and considered it עצלות. Although they had apparently commendable reasons for waiting till the end (which they felt were valid), and even though the value of these stones were far greater than the gold and silver that everyone else brought, the תורה does not take this into account. It still would have been more meritorious had they brought their נדבה right away.

This can relate to us as well. Someone may have the opportunity to do a מצוה, to help someone out now or to give צדקה now. But if he would wait it is possible to do a מצוה or חסד for a greater cause or perhaps in a greater way. The תורה is teaching us that nevertheless, one should jump at the opportunity that is given to him now rather than wait. This shows more זריזות and enthusiasm, and that he won't pass up a chance to do a מצוה for anything in the world.

The Torah is also מרמז this in this week's מפטיר by the words of ושמרתם את המצת to instruct us מצוה הבאה לידיך אל תחמצנה [שמות יב' יז] to do your your mitzvos without any delay otherwise they will become chomitz!

Have a good Shabbos.
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