

THE KEY TO SUCCESS IS INITIATIVE

by Rabbi Yissocher Frand

Rabbi Frand on Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 453, The Tefillah of B'rich Sh'mei. Good Shabbos!

The Key To Success Is Initiative

Parshas Vayakhel contains a verse describing the people who came forth in the construction of the Tabernacle: *"Every man whose heart inspired him (asher nesa'o leebo) came and everyone whose spirit motivated him brought the portion of Hashem for the work of the Tent of Meeting, for all its labor and for the sacred vestments."* [Shemos 35:21]

The Ramban notes that the Mishkan was an impressive structure. However, when Moshe Rabbeinu called forth the people to come participate in its construction, he was taking a big chance. The people were not trained architects or builders. Most of these people did not know the difference between a hammer and a screwdriver. However, the Ramban says that somehow the people found it within their nature to do what they were called upon to do.

The Ramban interprets the expression *asher nesa'o leebo*, literally as "whose heart lifted him up". They had neither the training nor the skill but they had the inspiration and daring and initiative that it took to get the job done. That is all it took to accomplish what needed to be accomplished. More than skill, a person needs ambition.

This Ramban is teaching us that the greatest key to success is not necessarily the training. It is the ambition and initiative to do something.

The Mirer Mashgiach, Rav Yeruchem writes similarly: "If one looks at the great people in the world, if one looks at those who have made financial fortunes - most, if not all such people achieved their greatness thanks to their tremendous drive and initiative." Rav Yeruchem further writes that the difference between the Rishonim [Medieval Jewish scholars] and us is not their IQ or intelligence. The difference is that they had a tremendous drive and sense of ambition to know all of Torah. That

is what separates them from us!

That is the way it is in every endeavor in life. The people who have the guts and gumption to accomplish the lofty goals they set out for themselves are those who succeed.

Someone recently lent me a book about the Reichman family. In their heyday, the Reichmans were the biggest real estate development company in the history of the world. Many of us are aware of the tremendous generosity of the family - giving out millions and millions of dollars to Tzedaka and Torah causes.

How did they get started in the construction business? According to the book, they had a tile business -- the Olympia Tile Company. They sold building material. One day, they decided they needed a bigger warehouse.

They went to several different general contractors and gave their requirements for building a new warehouse. The lowest bid that came back was \$120,000. Mr. Reichman thought to himself: "I bet that for \$120,000 I can build a warehouse myself. I bet I can build it cheaper."

At the time, he did not know the first thing about construction. He knew nothing about building. All he knew was that he believed in himself and he believed that he could build a warehouse that would meet his needs for less than \$120,000. So it was. He built it for \$70,000. He then said to himself, "You know -- this is not a bad business." The Reichmans started building one story warehouses. From there they moved on to multi-story buildings. One thing led to another until they became the biggest real estate development company in the world. Why? Because "nesa-o leebo". It was because of initiative. "I'll try it! I can do it."

When Moshe asked for volunteers to build a Mishkan, people came forth willing to try and determined that they would succeed. Ambition. Initiative. Gall. These are the keys to success.

Ironically, Rav Yeruchem says, when Moshe Rabbeinu -- for the best of reasons -- contained his ambition, he was punished. Rav Yeruchem is referring to the incident by the burning bush. Moshe hid his face [Shemos 3:6]. According to Rav Yehoshua ben Korcha in the Medrash, Moshe was not acting properly at that moment. Had he not hid his face then, had he had a little more "chutzpah" and ambition at that moment, G-d would have revealed all the secrets of the world to Moshe -- a desire that Moshe later had, but was denied.

Such is the beauty and power of initiative and ambition.

This write-up was adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tape series on the weekly Torah portion. The complete list of halachic topics covered in this series for Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei are provided below:

Tape # 047 - Pikuach Nefesh: To Save a Life

Tape # 090 - The Melacha of Carrying.
Tape # 138 - The Melacha of Tying Knots
Tape # 185 - The Melacha of Writing
Tape # 231 - Making A Siyum
Tape # 275 - Electricity in Halacha
Tape # 321 - Leap Year and the Second Adar
Tape # 365 - The Melacha of Tearing
Tape # 409 - The Melacha of Melabain (Laundering)
Tape # 453 - Wearing a Watch on Shabbos
Tape # 497 - The Tefillah of B'rich Sh'mei
Tape # 541 - Learning Kabbalah
Tape # 585 - The Melacha of Trapping
Tape # 629 - Sitting in Judgement on Shabbos
Tape # 672 - The Mishebeirach in Halacha
Tape # 673 - Putting a Sefer Torah in the Aron
Tape # 717 - One Hundred Brochos a Day
Tape # 761 - Killing Two Birds With One Stone

Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information.

Text Copyright © 2006 by Rabbi Yissocher Frand and **Torah.org**.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington.

Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Yerushalayim.