



Vayakhel/Pekudei "And he Assembled/Accountings" / 12 Adar, 5575 / March 14, 2015

ויקהל-פקודי

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לְאמֹר מְרַבִּים הָעָם לְהִבְיֵא מִדֵּי הָעֲבֹדָה לְמַלְאכָה
אֲשֶׁר-צִוָּה יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת אֵתָּה



Ex 36:5...*they spoke to Moses, saying: 'The people bring more than enough for the work which Adonai commanded us.'*

"Your donation is way too large; we don't need that much," says no one ever! Yet, we read in Vayakhel that there was an overabundance of donations brought to the artisans tasked with the creation of the sanctuary. It seems renewed energy was breathed into the Israelite people as they began to envision and really believe that they would be at the forefront of creating a new community with a promising destiny. Nachmanides comments that this passage shows us a wonderful synergy between inspiring leaders, willing donors, and honest workers who did not take advantage of the "extra" gifts by keeping them for themselves.

There certainly was NOT an overabundance of materials and funds for the creation of the modern State of Israel. Yet, a review of the earliest efforts to create a Jewish homeland shows that individuals and organizations gave in abundance.

Like Moses, David Ben-Gurion inspired people to build something from nothing. He emphasized the development of the Negev as a key to Israel's growth. "*We want only to rebuild what has been ruined and to make the desert bloom... With our own hands we have created, and will create in the future...*" (Addressing the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly, May 4, 1948.

Money streamed in from donors all over - from the World Zionist Organization, Jewish Federations, the American Jewish Committee, Joint Distribution Committee and many other organizations that believed in the building of the Jewish nation. Donations supported Israel's Jewish National Fund, schools, hospitals and defense forces. And, just as important, people gave of themselves, eager to work to see the Jewish dream become a reality as they joined efforts to build, plant, develop and defend the land.

An exemplar of giving was Aryeh Lova Eliav who came to Israel from Moscow in 1924. Lova, a ship commander, smuggled 2,000 survivors from Sweden to Israel in "illegal" immigration of Holocaust survivors to Palestine. Then in the 1950's, as a diplomat in the Israel Embassy in Moscow he secretly contacted Jews, "*Our principal endeavor was to bring hope to Jews. We printed tiny Bibles, tiny prayer books, we brought tallitot in their thousands...avoiding the watchful eyes of the GPU*" (from his interview with The Jerusalem Post '93).

Another, lesser known giver was Hannah (Annie) Landau (1873-1945), principal of the Evelina de Rothschild School for Girls in Jerusalem. The school, founded and endowed by Claude Montefiore,

Aryeh Lova Eliav - [a 20 minute film](#) created by the Spielberg Jewish Film Archive and a list of public activities documented on the archival pages at the [Knesset Site](#).

[The Best School in Jerusalem: Annie Landau's School for Girls, 1900-1960](#) by Laura S. Schor, Brandeis University Press

[IsraelGives.org](#) Donate or fund raise for any non-profit in Israel

MASHAV's 2013 [Annual Report](#), Israel's Agency for International Development, (especially pp-5-7).

[National Women's Philanthropy](#)

provided education, shelter and nourishment to impoverished young girls in pre-State Israel. Landau was outspoken and independent. She established ties with the mandatory officials, Jewish dignitaries and the Mufti of Jerusalem. She shared her own wealth and used her connections to raise more money for those in need which enabled her to purchase ten tons of food and clothing for the families of her pupils living in nearby communities.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do Jews give their time and resources to support Israel?
2. When and why do we feel most inclined to give our support?



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