

## TAILOR-MADE

### PARSHAS YISRO

I read a story a long time ago. I don't remember the exact details, but it is very appropriate to this dvar Torah.

*A prestigious rav was invited by a town in Europe, to become their rabbi. When he arrived, the townspeople brought two people to the rav. The individuals had been having an argument and they wanted the rav to settle their dispute. The rav heard their case. He thought for a long time and finally said that the case was a sham! He said that whenever he judged a case, he felt siyata dishmaya, help from Hashem, inspiring and guiding his decision. He did not experience that feeling now so he knew that the dispute was a fabrication. As he said that, the townspeople smiled and marveled at the wisdom of their new rav.*

On the day after Yom Kippur (**Rashi** Shmos 18:13), Moshe was judging Bnei Yisroel. Moshe's father-in-law, Yisro, asked him, "Why are you sitting by yourself and [letting] the people stand around you from morning until evening?" Moshe replied "Because the people come to me *lidrosh*, to seek [instruction from] Hashem. (Shmos 18:13-15)

There are different interpretations explaining what Bnei Yisroel were asking Moshe. **Targum Yonasan ben Uziel** and the **Kli Yakar** (18:15) say that Moshe was judging disputes.

The **Chofetz Chaim** zt"l has a different approach. He explains that Yisro could not understand what questions the Jews could possibly have, which required Moshe's judgements. The Jews were living in the desert. They did not own property and did not have the need to conduct any business transactions. Hashem provided them with all their needs. How could they be involved in any litigation?

Moshe told Yisro that he was correct. Currently, the Jews had no disputes that required judicial ruling. Rather the Jews came "*lidrosh*". They had wanted to

*"Moshe said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to seek [instruction from] Hashem." (Shmos 18:15).*

clarify various laws that could come up in the future, after they were already settled in Eretz Yisroel, in their own homes. They asked various theoretical questions of what to do in different circumstances that could potentially arise.

Yisro responded to Moshe that holding court from morning until evening would tire Moshe and impact his productive leadership of Bnei Yisroel. Why would that tire Moshe? **Rashi** (18:13) says (quoting **Talmud** Shabbos, 10A) that when a judge judges a case honestly, he is considered a partner with Hashem in the creation of the world. Since he is a partner with Hashem, he will not become tired while trying to resolve the case. However, since the cases brought to Moshe were theoretical but not actual cases, then Moshe wouldn't be getting assistance from Hashem. Thus, Moshe would have to exert himself more and would become fatigued. ([Life and Works of the Chofetz Chaim](#), part 1 page 46. Quoted in [Biurei Chofetz Chaim on the Torah](#) by Rabbi Yisroel Yosef Braunstein)

