

Parshat Yitro- 2010

Yitro, the father in law of Moshe gave some good and valid advice to Moshe Rabbeinu, which was accepted and incorporated. Yitro saw a scene that was unbecoming for a nation with a progressive judicial system. He observed long lines of people waiting to speak to Moshe. Some were there to seek Moshe's prayers and blessings, some to settle their disputes, and others, to clarify the laws of the Torah (18:15-16).

Yitro suggested a delegation of authority, according to which litigants and questioners would be required to submit their requests to "lower courts", so that Moshe would be free to deal with matters that required his personal attention. Yitro's idea was obviously sensible to Moshe so he accepted and implemented the advice, however, with a major change. Yitro said "KOL DAVAR HA **GADOL** YAVIU EILECHA" (18:22), They should bring every MAJOR matter to you and every MINOR matter, they, (the lower courts) will judge. When Moshe implemented this concept he stated (18:26) "KOL DAVAR **HAKASHEH** YAVIUN EL MOSHE. Everything DIFFICULT should be brought to Moshe.

Yitro's suggestion meant that everything Gadol, every major concern, or grand larceny, requires the attention of a higher court, whereas the lower courts can handle events of petty larceny. That would mean that the wealthy people, the upper class people, would receive the attention of Moshe Rabbeinu while the lower courts would deal with the less affluent. Moshe rejected this concept.

Moshe amended the advice by stating, that everyone would be treated equally, because a DIN PRUTAH, K'DIN MEI'AH, a dispute over a small amount of money is just as important in Halacha, and to the litigants involved, as a dispute over a large sum of money. Everyone is entitled to equal treatment. The division between higher and lower courts will be regarding a Davar Ha'Kasheh, that is, a difficult question, an intricate halachik issue, which will be dealt with by Moshe Rabbeinu himself, or the higher courts. But regarding petty larceny or grand larceny, the quantity of money involved in the dispute is not what determines the personal attention of Moshe. Only the quality of the question, the intricacy of the Halacha is what brings Moshe into the picture. One dollar or a million dollars are equal in the eyes of Moshe. The one-dollar is just as important to the poor man as a million dollars is to the wealthy man.