

"And Calev silenced the people toward Moshe." (13:30)

Calev attempted to still the rebellious hysteria of *Bnei Yisrael*. Confident that he would continue with the same type of slander as the other spies, the people listened to him when he rose to speak. He began his remarks in an inciteful manner by saying, "Is that all the son of Amram has done to us?" Upon hearing this opening statement, the crowd became silent anticipating a vicious censure against Moshe *Rabbeinu*. Calev, however, sought to attract their attention. He added, "He took us out of Egypt, split the sea, brought us the *manna*, and gathered together the quail." Although he was unsuccessful in quelling the tide of resentment, Calev was able to effect a change in their tone by throwing them off guard.

The *Sifsei Chachamim* cites the *Mizrachi*, who notes that Calev referred to Moshe as "*Ben Amram*," the son of Amram. Rather than call him by his given name, he demonstrated a lack of respect for Moshe. This was to make *Bnei Yisrael* believe that Calev was prepared to challenge Moshe. *Horav Mordechai Ilan, z.l.*, asserts that referring to an individual using his father's name is derogatory. He cites a number of places in *Tanach* and *Midrash* that confirm this position. When Dovid *Ha'Melech* is referred to simply as *Ben Yishai*, it is in an uncomplimentary context. Zimri, in disdain for Moshe, refers to him as *Ben Amram* throughout *Midrash*. What is the reason for viewing the reference to one's father as disrespectful ?

In his commentary on *Pirkei Avos*, regarding the three *Tanaim* who were called by their father's name, *Ben Bagbag*, *Ben Zoma*, and *Ben Hai Hai*, the *Tosfos Yom Tov* explains that these *Tanaim* did not merit to be called by their own names. He cites the *Talmud* in *Sanhedrin 41* which states that as long as *Ben Zakai* studied by himself, he was called by this name. When he began to teach others, however, his name was changed to Rabbi Yochanon *ben Zakai*. Once again this reinforces the previous statement that being called by one's own name is an honor.

Horav Ilan suggests that this may be the underlying reason that during the naming ceremony at a *bris* we say, *ktrahc una trehu*, "and his name shall be called in Yisrael." The emphasis is placed on "*shemo*," his name. We hope that this child will distinguish himself in warranting his own name, not simply that of his father. This may also be the meaning of the blessing, "*vhvh kUSD iyev vz*," "this small (child) shall be (a) great (person)." We hope that he will demonstrate signs of distinction in his own right. Indeed, ancestry is all important and pedigree is a remarkable attribute. They only serve, however, as the foundation for personal growth, not as a justification for being complacent and indolent.