

## **"These are the heads of their fathers houses... and the sons of Shimon... and these are the names of the sons of Levi. (6:13,14,15)**

Why does the *Torah* emphasize the word "names", in regard to *Shevet Levi*, tribe of *Levi*, in contrast to the other *shevatim*? The *Shelah Ha'kadosh* offers a powerful insight. The tribe of *Levi* was not included in the Egyptian bondage. They did not suffer the cruelty which was an everyday experience for *Bnei Yisrael*. What could they do to share in *Bnei Yisrael's* anguish at this particularly trying time? They gave their children names which reflected the suffering and exile of their brethren. The name Gershon implies being a stranger in a strange land. Kehas alludes to dulling of the senses due to slavery, while Merari alludes to the bitterness.

One should recognize the importance of being an individual who bears the yoke with his fellow man. It is not sufficient to empathize with someone or to take pity on him, When you "bear the yoke" with someone, you feel his pain, because it is your pain. Once his plight is yours, you must help him. This form of kinship is necessary in the *Torah* world, Indeed, it is one of the forty nine "steps" required in order to acquire *Torah*. Quite possibly this is why the *Torah* world has endured for so long. The support and devotion we offer our fellow Jew constitute the foundation from which we all develop.