

## "And Yisro heard.... all that Hashem wrought for Moshe and Yisrael." (18:1)

*Rashi* explains that Yisro heard the news of the splitting of the Red Sea and the war with Amalek. These two miraculous events so impressed Yisro that he left his established home in *Midyan* and joined *Bnei Yisrael* in the desert. Obviously, all the other nations also heard the news about the remarkable miracles which were occurring for *Bnei Yisrael*. Yisro, however, applied what he indeed heard to his immediate lifestyle.

*Horav Chaim Shmuelevitz z.l.*, was wont to say, "Yisro did not simply *hear*, he "*derhered*," a Yiddish expression which connotes a unique quality of listening. It implies attending to the underlying messages in order to discern the meaning of what was heard, rather than simply listening. Yisro certainly was not alone in hearing, but he was uniquely able to understand the significance of the events and to apply their message to his personal life. He demonstrated that indeed he had heard.

*Horav Sholom Shwadran, Shlita*, offers an amazing parable to explain this idea pragmatically . A man decides to take a "walk" on a busy highway. All around him cars are sounding their horns with intensity; drivers are screaming at him, but to no avail. He continues nonchalantly along, completely unperturbed by the irate sounds around him. The sounds now become stronger in an attempt to jolt this foolish man to his senses. In disgust, one driver stops his vehicle, goes over to the man and asks him, "Don't you hear everyone honking their horns for you to get off the highway?" "I heard," responds the jaywalker. "Is this considered hearing?" retorts the driver. "If you heard, you would immediately leave the highway. You aren't listening, you are ignoring everything around you!" To what avail is "hearing," if it serves no purpose? Yisro's hearing catalyzed an immediate response. This is the true meaning of "hearing."