

## Moshe heard the people weeping in their family groups. (11:10)

To express their displeasure publicly, entire families gathered outside their tents and wept. *Rashi* explains that the word "families" alludes to the real reason for their complaint. The family laws that were initiated at *Har Sinai* became a source of frustration for them. They did not care to have their relationships governed by the *Torah*. Rather than viewing the laws of family life and morality as a privilege reserved for the nobility that comprises *Klal Yisrael*, they viewed them as an infringement on their freedom. **Horav Yitzchak Blazer, zl**, suggests a novel interpretation to the word "families." The *manna* descended to all Jews equally. Status did not play a role in the distribution of the Heavenly food. The rich did not receive more than the poor; those of more distinguished lineage did not receive special treatment. People were frustrated; they cried that their "families" were not receiving preferential treatment. This was bothersome to Moshe. Why should one family receive more than another, simply because of its lineage? Why should family be the prime factor in determining one's prize? They all stood together as "*one person with one heart*" at *Har Sinai*. Why should anyone claim preeminence over another? Regrettably, for some people this is cause for weeping.

**Otzar HaTorah** notes Moshe *Rabbeinu's* ability to discern between the various complaints and sounds emanating from the people. They complained about one thing - but he was able to hear another - the real underlying complaint. They complained about the *manna*. He heard a much more significant complaint, one that demonstrated the depths of depravity to which they had sunk. Shlomo *Hamelech* entreats Hashem in *Melachim 3:9*, "*And you shall give to Your servant an ear to listen.*" He was implying that a leader must possess the capacity to "hear," to listen, to understand and focus upon what the people are really saying. Every expression, every word, every nuance, carries with it a different message. The leader must be capable of hearing that message and responding to it.

In referring the *pasuk* in *Shemos 32:17*, "*Yehoshua heard the sound of the people in its shouting, and he said to Moshe, 'The sound of battle is in the camp,'*" the *Midrash* in *Koheles* says, "Moshe said, 'One who is destined to lead a multitude of people does not know how to discern between various sounds?' " You should be able to distinguish between sounds of war and sounds of revelry! A leader should be attuned to the pulse of his flock and understand exactly what motivates them. He should be able to focus on the origin of their desires to determine what they really seek. Moshe understood the basis of the weeping. Episodes such as this establish one's ability to lead and develop one's character in the leadership role.