

"Moshe and Aharon fell on their faces before the entire congregation of the assembly of Bnei Yisrael." (14:5)

Moshe and Aharon were no longer able to tolerate *Bnei Yisrael's* invidious behavior. Their ranting and raving, their inane fear and lack of faith, were no longer bearable. Moshe and Aharon gave up in frustration. This defeatist attitude is not typical of Moshe and Aharon's leadership characteristics. Are these the same individuals who stood fearlessly before Pharaoh and demanded that he release the Jews from slavery? Is this the same Moshe who smashed the *Luchos* to the ground, when he descended from *Har Sinai* to witness the decadent behavior of *Bnei Yisrael*, as they worshipped the Golden Calf? Was he not the one who called *Shevet Levi* to come forward and slay the perpetrators of the Golden Calf? Did not Moshe have the inestimable courage to go up to Heaven to accept the *Torah*, paying no heed to the fiery angels?

The scenario unfolding before us is perplexing! One word from Moshe would have silenced the people. He could literally have done away with the spies and restored order to the people. What caused them to respond in such an ineffective manner, by bowing their heads?

Horav Simcha Zisel Broide, Shlita, offers a penetrating insight into Moshe and Aharon's personality. Their humility was their essence - yet they fought faithfully and courageously against any infraction. When the people opted to select new leaders, when the people questioned Moshe and Aharon's qualification to lead, when Moshe and Aharon's integrity as leaders was impugned, they simply bowed their heads. This act indicated that the power behind their leadership was not theirs - it was from Hashem. They were simply fulfilling His command that they be the spiritual mentors of His nation. As far as they personally were concerned, their sense of humility directed them to bow their heads in submission.

We find a similar reaction from Moshe when Korach rebelled against his leadership. The *Torah* relates that "*Moshe listened and fell on his face*" (*Bamidbar 16:4*). This was no indication that Korach was justified in his claims! Moshe, however, was saying, "It is not my choice to be leader of the people. I have been chosen by Hashem for this position. If you have any questions regarding my qualifications to lead - discuss it with Hashem!"

Indeed, humility is a necessary virtue for us all. It is, however, an essential pre-requisite for leadership. All too often one loses sight of his roots or the manner in which he ascended to a leadership position. He must see the Hand of Hashem guiding his every move. Otherwise, he might end up doing something foolish that would return him to his original position. A true leader knows the real source of his power.