

Moshe told his father-in-law everything that Hashem had done... Yisro said, “Blessed is Hashem Who has rescued you.” (18:8,10)

The power that a story has to impact a person cannot be overstated. *Horav Nachman Breslover, zl*, teaches, “There is nothing that revives the spirit, purifies the heart, deepens the thought, or draws us close to our Father in Heaven more than telling a story (obviously, there is an art to telling a story). Indeed, prior to giving us the *mitzvos* of the Torah, Hashem preceded it with the story of Creation.”

Moshe *Rabbeinu* employed the effectiveness of a story to inspire Yisro and draw his heart close to Hashem, “Moshe related to his father-in-law all that Hashem had done.” *Rashi* comments, “To draw the heart, to draw him close to Hashem.” As a result, we find Yisro making a *b’rachah*, blessing, “Blessed be Hashem for saving you...for saving the nation.” To make such a blessing, one must have personally witnessed the miracle where it occurred. The *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 218 rules, “Only one who sees the place where miracles were performed for *Klal Yisrael* recites the blessing.”

The *Imrei Emes, zl*, of Gur offers a powerful explanation which lends us a window into the influence a story, well-told, can have on a person. He says that Moshe *Rabbeinu’s* relating the story of the exodus from Egypt, with the accompanying events preceding and succeeding it, was so geographically clear and compelling that Yisro could actually see the events unfolding before his very eyes. By virtue of his uncanny ability, a storyteller is able to transport his audience to a different place and time, to the point that they personally sense and experience the events of the story. Through Moshe, Yisro was present, participating with the nation. Thus, he made a blessing.

The *Brisker Rav, zl*, adds that for Moshe it was a *halachic* imperative to share with Yisro to publicize the events and wonders up to – including and the aftermath of – the Exodus. When Hashem wroughts miracles for us, we must publicize them, share them with whomever we can to the point that the listener feels a kinship with the experience as if he were a participant. Why was it so important to relate the story to Yisro? Because he was the first one who had not personally experienced the event. He was not present, thus Moshe made him feel as if he had been there.