

Parshas Yisro

This week's Parsha, Yisro, contains the giving of the Torah and the beginning of the world being empowered, enabling the drawing out of the G-dly and spiritual aspects of our physical dimension. The profundity of the event begs the question, why was the Parsha named Yisro? That is, called for Moshe's father-in-law, as opposed to some other name connoting the grandeur of the importance of the climactic event, such as this.

Rashi answers this question, somewhat by describing how great Yisro was and the personal sacrifices he made to learn the Torah and hear its words. This points to the fact that Yisro was a person of stature, and the move to sacrifice everything and be drawn to Torah is reasonable and a lesson to each of us. However, Yisro remained part of the Jews because of his lineage through Moshe, but he ultimately returned to his homeland (with permission from Moshe, and converted his family). Again, there should be a more significant reason for the Parsha to be named after him.

Based on the Pesukim and Mepharshim, Yisro recommended Moshe, which Hashem said was the best way (18:24) of organizing the hierarchy in the judicial system that needed to be set up. This is a critical reason for naming the Parsha after Yisro. Because of his method, advice, and ultimately implemented system, the Torah would spread efficiently and quickly to all Jews.

If the Torah is given so that it is accessible on our earth, "Lo Bashamayim Hi," and must be practiced, it must be accessible to everyone. While the system Moshe or others may have contemplated may have worked, Hashem authorized the Yisro way, which was critical to ensuring access to Halachik rulings for all Jews.

It is of utmost importance that the Jews had easy access to understanding halacha, as it was from this moment forward that the oral tradition (which was ultimately codified into Mishna, Gemara, etc.) began. All Jews had access to the variations of the law and the interpretation of manifesting the laws to practice our Judaism correctly. If it were done in another way, maybe a select few would know how to correctly practice a mitzvah, yet, because of this implemented structure, every one of us, no matter how knowledgeable, has access to the information to serve Hashem and perform the mitzvos correctly.

It is of critical importance that when we do a mitzvah, we do it correctly, and more importantly, there is added benefit when we even focus on the tiniest detail, as this discipline gets embedded to our core and brings Hashem closer to us and us closer to bringing Mashiach. Therefore, the impact of Yisro was so crucial that the Parsha is named for him.

The lesson though is that we, all these years later, still practice and conduct ourselves according to the laws laid out because of how the system originated in the ability to disseminate and educate the people. If the Parsha warranted to be named after Yisro because of his impact

on teaching Torah and learning to do
Mitzvos properly, how important is it if we
do the same?

Let's continue to harness that so we bring
ourselves one moment closer to
Mashiach.

Good Shabbos.