

19 Shevat, 5782
January 21, 2022

Parashat Yitro

There are only a few people in the Torah who have parashiot named for them. Balak and Korach were two individuals that were so evil that they earned the humiliation of having a parasha named for them. On the contrary, Noach, Sarah, Pinchas and Yitro were very righteous and therefore they earned the privilege and honor of having a parasha named for them. We can understand that Noach was a great tzadik and merited being saved from the mabul, Sarah was a righteous woman and Pinchas saved Benei Yisrael from a terrible plague. But, what did Yitro do to deserve to have a parasha named for him?

The commentaries explain that Yitro's greatest act was 'hearing' about the miracles that Hashem did for Benei Yisrael. He then did something positive based on what he heard. Yitro came to join the Jewish nation and accept the Torah! Surely, everyone in the world heard about the miracles, yet nobody else came to join them and become a part of this special nation. Amalek even responded in a negative way by attacking and trying to destroy them. Yitro was singled out because he 'heard' and then responded by coming to join Benei Yisrael.

We often hear information, and then have to decide how we will respond. We can learn from Yitro to take the information we hear and use it in a positive manner.

Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Roth