

## Power of Hearing

Hearing is an art. We must attune our ears to listen to the accurate message that is being conveyed to us. Listening actively and attentively to a simple statement can leave a profound impression upon us. Nachlas Tzvi tells how a simple abstract statement directed to Horav Chaim Volozhiner, zl, the father of the yeshivah world, prompted him to ponder in a manner which eventually catalyzed the yeshivah movement. Rav Chaim related that when he was a young man, shortly after his wedding, he turned to the business world in order to support his family. Once, as he was on his way to the annual market, he met an old friend who was also in business, whom he had not seen in a long time. Seeing Rav Chaim, the friend asked, "Why are you here? What are you doing here?" At the time, Rav Chaim responded that he had come to do business. While the question was a simple salutation, it started Rav Chaim thinking. "Why are you here; What are you doing here?" are questions that have deep and penetrating meaning. Why was Rav Chaim at the market when he should have been learning Torah? Why was he selling wares when he could have been selling Torah to students? Why was he "osaik," involving himself in chaye shaah, temporary matters, and ignoring chaye olam, matters of eternity?