

# This Is Not Good

BY RABBI DAVID WOLPE

Only twice does the Torah use the expression "*lo tov*" — it is not good. Once when God declares (in the first statement about human nature in the Torah) "*lo tov heyot adam l'vado*" — it is not good for man to be alone. The second time is Exodus 18 when Moses' father in law tells him it is *lo tov*, not good for him to be judging the people on his own.

One thing the Torah makes clear to us is that aloneness in life or in complex tasks is not good. The individual has great resources but they are insufficient to the even greater challenges of life. All the current corporate wisdom about working in teams and interaction between experts in different disciplines, the way in which groups can be more creative — all of this is an outgrowth of *lo tov*. The artist in her garret, the hermit in his cave, Moses on the mountain — they have their place and time, but only if each returns to the community to enrich and be enriched.

To be alone is to go into battle without troops, or better, to try harmonies with a single voice. Find friends, partners, family, community: it is *lo tov* to always sing alone.