



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת a collection of maamarim on
תנא דבי אליהו given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Behaaloscha 5762

After Am Yisrael complain about the מן and ask for meat, Moshe Rabeinu asks Hashem, “Was I pregnant with all of this nation, and did I give birth to them that you ask me to carry them... I cannot carry them by myself.”

The Sfas Emes (Likutim Behaaloscha) asks, “Moshe Rabeinu’s declaration that he cannot carry them by himself is understandable. ההכרח לא יגונה, there is no shame in admitting our inability to do something that isn’t possible. However, when he asks “Was I pregnant with all of this nation?”, he implies that he may have been able to bear the burden of the nation. If it was indeed possible, why would Moshe Rabeinu give up and not perform the task assigned to him by Hashem? Why then, did he declare that he couldn’t bear the burden alone?

The Sfas Emes answers that Hashem gives parents the ability to “carry” their children even if the task is beyond the limits of their natural abilities. Moshe Rabeinu said that if he had actually given birth to the nation, he would have had the supernatural strength that parents receive from Hashem and he would have been able to bear the burden of the nation.

The *Siach Sarfei Kodesh* (Parshas Behaaloscha) brings the following story. “Once, the son of a Gerer chassid complained to the Sfas Emes that his father refused to provide him with financial assistance. When the Sfas Emes asked the young man’s father to share his side of the story, the father said that he simply didn’t have the resources to help his son.



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It was the week of Parshas Behaaloscha. The Sfas Emes asked, “Moshe Rabeinu said, “From where do I have meat to give to this nation. Was I pregnant with them?” If he didn’t have meat, what difference would it make if he carried and gave birth to the nation? Clearly, the Torah is telling us that when it comes to our children, the excuse that “I don’t have the resources” simply doesn’t apply. You have to apply all of your strength and acumen to helping your son with his *parnassah*.

This lesson is particularly impactful if we remember that Moshe Rabeinu was *moseir nefesh* for Am Yisrael. The Midrash (Devarim Rabbah 7/10) tells us that Moshe Rabeinu said “Let Moshe and hundreds like him perish rather than a Jew suffering damage to his toenail.” Nonetheless, Moshe Rabeinu teaches us that, as devoted as he was, simple Jewish parents’ ability to help their children surpasses anything that Moshe Rabeinu could do for them.

The Pnei Menachem zy”a told me a story about his father the Imrei Emes zy”a that illustrates this lesson.

Late in his life, the Imrei Emes married his second wife, the Rebbetzin Feige Mintche a”h, the mother of his youngest son, Pinchas Menachem. The Pnei Menachem told me that he remembered his mother’s constant simcha and vitality. One day, he found her in her room, crying as she said *Tehillim*. When he asked her what was wrong, she told him that his brother, Leibel Temkin, her oldest son from her first marriage, had received a draft notice from the Polish army. She also told him that when she told her husband, the Imrei Emes about the situation, he didn’t respond. She asked the Pnei Menachem to go to his father, the Imrei Emes, and request that the Rebbe daven for Hashem to have *rachamim* on Leibel.

The Pnei Menachem went in to his father and asked him to give Leibel a *bracha* that he should be saved from serving in the Polish army. Once again, the Imrei Emes didn’t respond. When the Pnei Menachem reported



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back to his mother, she became even more concerned and tearfully resumed her *tefillos*.

A while later, the Rebbetzin was relieved and overjoyed to hear that her son Leibel received an exemption. She called over her young son Pinchas Menachem and told him that since he had been so concerned for his brother, he deserved to have the *zechus* of telling the Rebbe the good news.

When he rushed into his father's room, he found him immersed in learning as usual. The Imrei Emes looked up and asked his son what he had come to tell him. When he told the Rebbe that Leibel had received an exemption, the Rebbe responded, "I already knew that". The Pnei Menachem wondered who could have shared the news with the Rebbe. His mother was the only one who received the message, and she sent him to his father immediately afterwards.

When they sat down to a meal later in the day, the Rebbe told the Rebbetzin that not only had he known that Leibel had received an exemption, but that he even shared the news with the Rebbetzin's mother, his sister Rebbetzin Esther Biderman. Upon hearing this, the Rebbetzin asked her mother why she didn't share the good news with her, rather than leaving her to worry about her son. Her mother responded that the Rebbe had told her not to share the news with her daughter.

Rebbetzin Feige Mintche was shocked to hear that her husband insisted that she not be told the news that could have saved her so much agony. At dinner that evening, she asked the Rebbe why he didn't tell her that he had given Leibel a *bracha*, and was sure that he would be freed. She wanted to know why he let her suffer for so long.

The Rebbe answered that he didn't share his knowledge with her because a mother has to *daven* and shed tears for her child's welfare. Only her heartfelt *avodah* enables the child to merit a *yeshuah*.



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Therefore, even though it was clear to him that Leibel would receive an exemption, he didn't let her know because he didn't want her to stop *davening* and crying on behalf of her son. While he knew that there would be a *yeshuah*, he also knew that her son's *yeshuah* was dependent on those heartfelt *tefillos* and tears.

The Pnei Menachem told me to share this powerful story with parents so that they would understand the extent of their obligation to do all that they can for their children, and realize that their *tefilos* for their children can accomplish more than the *tefilos* of the *Gadol Hador*.

In our generation parents need great strength to be *mechanech* children in the face of powers of *tumah* and *klipah* that keep getting stronger. They need to *daven* and cry for the welfare of their descendants. It is also vital that they remember that Hashem has given them supernatural abilities that enable them to care for, and assist their children. This message can inspire us to invest all of our strength in caring for our children ונזכה בעזה"י לבנים ובני בנים עוסקים בתורה ובמצוות על ישראל שלום אכי"ר



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