



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and חדוותא דזעיר אנפין collections of maamarim given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Yisro 5769

I had the *zechus* to hear from the the Beis Yisroel zy”a, an explanation of the *pasuk* (שמות י”ט:ג) *יְשָׂרָאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל*. Rashi comments that *Beis Yaakov* refers to the women, whereas *Bnei Yisrael* refers to the men. Hashem instructed Moshe Rabeinu to speak to the women with gentle language, as implied by the verb *תֹּאמַר*. However, *יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל* - speak to the men with language that is tough as sinews (*גידין*) and explain the details of the Mitzvos and the punishments associated with them.

The *Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh* and other *meforshim* notice an apparent contradiction. Hakadosh Baruch Hu’s instructions to Moshe Rabeinu which began *יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל* conclude with the words *יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל*. Rashi brings the *Mechilta D’Rabi Yishmael* which interprets those words as a limitation *לא פחות ולא יותר* - Moshe Rabeinu was to say no less and no more. We are therefore forced to conclude that the words which Moshe Rabeinu utilized when speaking to the women, were identical to the words he used when speaking to the men.

How then, was he able to speak with the women *בלשון רכה*, with gentle language, and to the men *בלשון קשה*, with harsh language?

The Beis Yisrael zy”a answered that the words that Moshe Rabeinu transmitted to the women were exactly the same as the words he used when speaking with the men. However, the men and women *heard* the message differently. The women heard a message that emphasized,



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וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ לִי מִמְּלֶכֶת כֹּהֲנִים וְגוֹי קְדוֹשׁ – and you will be to me a kingdom of *kohanim* and a holy nation. They heard לשון רכה, a beautiful promise that by accepting the Torah, they and their descendants would be “*Rebbeshe eineklach*”, elevated beyond all other nations. The men heard those same words as לשון קשה which emphasized how hard they would have to work in order to reach the level of *kedushah* befitting a nation that is called ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש.

His explanation was based on the words of his grandfather, the *Sfas Emes zy*”a (יתרו תר”ג), who concludes, “Therefore Hashem spoke with these words, in this order, for it was revealed before him that each one would be drawn according to their way. The women would hear it as an enticement, and the men would hear it as a fearsome obligation.”

This lesson is one that every parent and teacher must study and understand. When someone hopes to teach others, he needs to realize that each child or student will understand his words in their own way, depending on the child’s personality and abilities. Therefore, when a parent or teacher asks his child or student to do something, they may not comply, or they may even do exactly the opposite of what was requested. The first response must be to judge them favorably, and to realize that the children may have understood the request very differently than the adult meant it to be understood. Chazal taught us כשם שפרצופיהם שונים, כך דעותיהם שונות - just as their faces are different, so their understanding is different. Parents or teachers shouldn’t assume that children think about and understand things in the same way that they do.

Im Yirtzeh Hashem when we interact with our children and *talmidim* this way, *min hashamyim* we will be treated similarly and will be judged favorably in all of our actions, אכי”ר.



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