

"And it was when Moshe held up his hand that Yisrael prevailed ." (17:11)

Rashi comments that Moshe's hands became heavy as a form of punishment, because he did not personally involve himself in the *mitzvah* of battling Amalek. According to *Rashi* these *pesukim* seem inconsistent with one another. On the one hand, Moshe raised his hand, turning the tide and effecting *Klal Yisrael's* victory. On the other hand, Moshe is criticized for his *atzlus*, indolence, in not personally being involved in the war. How are these two ideas to be reconciled?

Horav Eliyahu Meir Bloch, z.l., infers from this *pasuk* a profound insight into the responsibility of a *manhig Yisrael*, *Torah* leader. One who stands at the helm of the spiritual leadership of *Klal Yisrael* should take a personal interest in **all** aspects of communal development. He should not delegate responsibilities to various individuals while sequestering himself in spiritual devotion and *Torah* study. Obviously, he should not neglect his own spiritual development. There must be a balance. Time must be allotted to oversee and direct the mundane issues of a community, while standing at the forefront of any incursion into the spiritual fibre of our people. One leader cannot ascend the mountain to pray while the other goes out to battle. This is not the appropriate manner in which a *Torah* leader achieves *shleimus*, perfection.

It is important to note that *Horav Bloch's* words are directed towards the *Torah* leadership whose obligation it is to be involved in **all** aspects of *Klal Yisrael*. It does not however give license to the *ben Torah* who is devoted to *Torah* study to lessen his commitment. He should, however, be sensitive to easing the plight of those who stand prepared to defend *Klal Yisrael*.

Horav Bloch issued this statement. He demanded the same of other *gedolim* during the infancy of *Agudas Yisrael* and other *Torah* oriented organizations in America. He felt that other *Roshei Yeshivah* should participate in building the foundation for a strong and vibrant *Torah* Judaism in our country. As a result of his vision -- and that of others -- *Torah* learning and observance has blossomed in this country.