



## B'NAI DAVID-JUDEA

### *Shabbat Shorts*

In our last Shabbat Short, we discussed the background of the melacha of Hotzoa (carrying). How does hotzoa apply when carrying a baby where there is no eruv?

There is a fascinating halachic principle called *חי נושא את עצמו* 'a living creature carries itself'. *חי נושא את עצמו* means that when a person is carried, the weight is not felt by the person carrying as much as the weight of a dead weight would be felt. This is because a living person in some sense still carries herself. Since living people were not carried as part of the construction of the Mishkan, the prohibition of carrying a living person is strictly rabbinic.

But *חי נושא את עצמו* does not apply to someone who actually cannot carry himself--like a baby or someone who cannot walk on his own. To carry them would be transgressing a biblical prohibition since they are seen as a full weight, instead of as a weight that can support itself. Carrying here also includes dragging a child (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 308:41).

*חי נושא את עצמו* therefore creates real questions about how parents with infants and people of all abilities function in our community if there is no eruv or if the eruv is down. Practically, without an eruv, babies may not be carried out of the home (in a situation in which one realizes that the eruv is down and she is presently carrying a baby/child, she can pass the baby/child back and forth every 4-5 feet with another person, or if she is alone, she may carry and walk but make sure to pause with the baby or set the child down every 4-5 feet). Additionally, strollers may not be used if the eruv is down (if the eruv is up, strollers may be used, and some are stringent to open the canopy before Shabbat and not close it entirely because it may constitute building a temporary canopy: Iggerot Moshe Orach Chayim 4, 105:3).

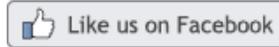
It goes without saying that the presence of an eruv can determine if both husband and wife can attend shul on Shabbat with their children, thereby underscoring just how important our LA Eruv is! Stay tuned for next time when we will conclude with how hotzoa applies to wheelchairs, canes, crutches, and jewelry.

I love feedback!  
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