

BITACHON LESSON FROM THE PARSHA

The Joy of Loving Those Who Hurt You – פרשיות אחרי מות - קדושים תשפ"ו

לא תקם ולא תטר את בני עמך ואהבת לרעך כמוך אני ה'
 You must not take revenge nor bear a grudge against the members of your people; Love your fellow as yourself; I am Hashem (Vayikra 19:18)

hatred to him because he was just a puppet, puppeteered by ה' אני.

The *Sefer Hachinuch* (Mitzvah 241) explains the root of this prohibition as follows:

מִשְׂרָשֵׁי הַמַּצְוָה שֶׁיַּדַּע הָאָדָם וַיִּתֵּן אֶל לְבוּוֹ כִּי כָּל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָהוּ מִטוֹב עַד רָע הוּא סִבָּה שֶׁתְּבוֹא עָלָיו מֵאֵת הַשָּׁם בְּרוּךְ הוּא וּמִיַּד הָאָדָם מִיַּד אִישׁ אַחֵיו לֹא יִהְיֶה דָבָר בְּלִתי רְצוֹן הַשָּׁם בְּרוּךְ הוּא עַל כֵּן פְּשִׁיעֵרָהוּ אוֹ כְּאִיבָהוּ אָדָם יָדַע בְּנַפְשׁוֹ כִּי עֹנֵתוֹ גָּרְמוֹ וְהַשָּׁם יִתְבַּרְךָ גָּזַר עָלָיו בְּכַף וְלֹא יִשִׁית מַחְשְׁבוֹתָיו לְנֶקֶם מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי הוּא אֵינוֹ סִבָּת רָעָתוֹ כִּי הָעוֹן הוּא הַמְסַבֵּב וְכֵמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר דָּוִד עָלָיו הַשְּׁלֹמֹ (שמואל ב טז יא) הִנְחוּ לוֹ וַיִּקְלַל כִּי אָמַר לוֹ ה' תִּלְהָה הָעֵינָן בְּחַטָּאוֹ וְלֹא בְשַׁמְעֵי בֶן גֵּרָא

From the neighbor who refuses to be neighborly to the boss who stiffs you out of your well-deserved raise, from the Shul member who publicly made a joke at your expense to the guy who steals your parking spot, the knee-jerk reaction of getting aggravated, annoyed, upset or bent out of shape, must be done away with. Instead, we must train ourselves to react as the Torah wants us to react, by looking inward and realizing that it is all Hashem talking to us! תִּלְהָה הָעֵינָן בְּחַטָּאוֹ וְלֹא בְשַׁמְעֵי בֶן גֵּרָא

From the roots of this Mitzvah is that a person must know and put into his heart that everything that happens to him — good and bad — the cause of it coming to him is from Hashem. As from the hand of man nothing can be - without the will of Hashem. Therefore, when a person caused him pain or hurt him, he should know that his own sins caused it, and Hashem decreed this for him. And he should not have thoughts of taking revenge on the one who pained him, since he is not the cause of his pain, but rather the sin is the cause; like Dovid Hamelech said (Shmuel II 16:11) [when he was cursed by Shimi ben Geira] "leave him to curse, since Hashem told him to do so — he attributed the matter to his own sin, and not to Shimi ben Geira.

The Gemara (Shabbos 31a) relates:
 מַעֲשֵׂה בְּגוֹי אֶחָד... שָׁבָא לִפְנֵי הַלֵּל אָמַר לוֹ גִּיירֵנִי עַל מְנַת שְׁתַּלְמִדְנִי כָּל הַתּוֹרָה כּוֹלָה פְּשָׁאֵנִי עוֹמֵד עַל רֶגֶל אַחַת גִּיירֵיהָ אָמַר לוֹ דַּעְלֵךְ סְנִי לְחִבְרֵךְ לֹא תַעֲבִיד זֶה הֵיא כָּל הַתּוֹרָה כּוֹלָה וְאֵינְךָ פִּירוּשָׁה הוּא זֵיל גְּמוּר
 A gentile came before Hillel and said "Convert me on condition that you teach me the entire Torah while I am standing on one foot. He converted him and said to him: "That which is hateful to you do not do to another; that is the entire Torah, and the rest is its explanation. Go learn."



Intellectually this may be simple, but in reality, to entrench this belief in our hearts and minds takes a lot of work. These are fundamental ideals of Emunah, Bitachon and Hashgacha Pratis that require total immersion of all our senses and emotions to master.

Why did Hillel only tell him to avoid hurting others when the Torah demands **וְאֵהֲבַת לְרֵעֶךָ** which is more than just not hurting our fellow man, but also to do good to our fellow man, to worry about our fellow man's well-being as our own (See Rambam Hilchos Dei'os 6:3)

The *Sefer Hachinuch* understood this and therefore prefaced and accentuated his words with **שִׂידַע הָאָדָם וַיִּתֵּן אֶל לְבוּוֹ ... יָדַע בְּנַפְשׁוֹ**; this is not just information that one must know, it is a way of life that one must live. It's not enough to just control our inner hatred; it's not enough just resist the urge to take revenge; we must uproot the hatred from our hearts and eradicate the sinful cravings for retaliation.

The *Chidushei HaRim* Zatzal explains that to reach the level of **וְאֵהֲבַת לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ**, where we actually love others like ourselves - to be able to love those who hurt us despite what they did to us – requires Emunah and Bitachon on a level that only a Yid can comprehend and reach. The gentile who came to Hillel was not capable of comprehending such a level, so Hillel told him only **דַּעְלֵךְ סְנִי לְחִבְרֵךְ לֹא תַעֲבִיד** – that was the max he was capable of!

The only way to do this is to strengthen our Bitachon and train our minds to know that the one who hurts us is just a stick – he's just a vehicle being used by Hashem to give us a message. The very Posuk that warns us to not take revenge concludes with **וְאֵהֲבַת לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ** - it goes hand-in-hand: you must continue to love and respect the one who hurt you - **וְאֵהֲבַת לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ** - as he is not the one who hurt you, Hashem did! You must not harbor any

Next time someone offends you, embarrasses you, slanders you, undercuts you or otherwise hurts you, not only should you realize that it is all from Hashem and not change your attitude toward that person even an iota, you should also rejoice at the fact that you are capable of continuing to love the stick that hurt you, as it's a sign that you're an elite member of the tribe! You are from the select few humans who are tasked with the cherished Mitzvah of **וְאֵהֲבַת לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ**. You are a Yid!

אֲשֶׁרֵינוּ מֵה טוֹב תִּלְקֵנוּ – Ah, how fortunate we are!

Good Shabbos!