

DON'T HIT THE MAILMAN! **PARSHAS ACHAREI MOS/KEDOSHIM**

The Torah instructs us not to take revenge or harbor any feelings of ill will towards anyone who refused to do us a favor.

Why doesn't the Torah focus on the first individual-the one who refused to do us a favor; who refused to help us in our time of need? He didn't act nice, in the first place while the second person's act of revenge is somewhat justified?

The reason is, the first person doesn't have the proper appreciation of kindness- he can't part with his property to share with you. You, on the other hand, do appreciate the level of kindness one should have. You would be willing to share your possessions were it not for the hatred you feel in your heart towards the one who couldn't share with you. That hatred poisons your desire to act with kindness. The Torah is emphasizing that the root of this problem is hatred between Jews, and that must be eradicated.

One can't be fully blamed for not recognizing the true value of kindness to others. However, one can be blamed for harboring hatred and resentment to a fellow Jew, even if it appears justified.

How can we control our automatic feelings of animosity towards one who did not act appropriately towards us?

One way is to realize that everything that occurs to us is from Hashem. There is no reason to have anger at Hashem's "messenger". Would we hit the

"Don't take revenge or bear a grudge against your fellow Jew; You should love your neighbor as you love yourself; I am Hashem."
(Vayikrah 19:18)

mailman if he brought us a letter containing terrible news?

Another way is indicated by the seemingly extra words of the pasuk, "I am Hashem". If you just won the Mega Millions Lottery, you would be so happy. In the midst of this joy, would it bother you if your friend didn't repay the money he owed

you? Hashem loves us and provides all our needs. Everything comes from Hashem. If we focus on that, why should we feel anger towards another person for refusing us a favor. Maybe Hashem felt we didn't need that particular favor. Or, if we did, Hashem would arrange for someone else to give it to us.

In these days of Sefiras Ha'Omer, let us realize that all we receive is from Hashem and let us remove any traces of hatred from our hearts.

❖**The Chofetz Chaim** *zt"l* said, if you feel anger towards someone and are able to control yourself from talking back, yet you don't talk to that person, that is still called hating a fellow Jew. That causes a delay in the building of the eternal Bais HaMikdash.

Let us help hasten the rebuilding of the Bais HaMikdash.

We can remove any traces of anger in our hearts towards a fellow Jew and replace them with love.

*Based on a dvar Torah by Rabbi A. Henach Leibowitz zt"l,
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