

Parshas Mishpotim – Yehoshua Schmulian

כ"ט שבט תשע"ז – 25th February 2017 – שבת פ' משפטים

In this week's Parsha we receive many mitzvos. Two of them are helping load, and unload animals. In Baba Metzia we learn that if there is an opportunity to help load or unload an animal it is preferable to help un-load the animal. BUT the Gemora continues, if the animal needing unloading belongs to a friend and the animal needing loading belongs to someone you hate you should attend to the person you dislike first in order to create peace, contrary to the previous halacha.

The Gemora Pesachim (113a) asks how this situation would come about in the first place. Does it not say *לֹא-תִשְׂנֵא אֶת-אָחִיךָ בְּלִבְךָ* 'You shall not hate you brother in your heart'? But in this case, we are talking about where the owner of the animal that needs loading (Reuven) was seen by the person that is obligated to help him, (Shimon), transgress one of the mitzvos that Hashem hates most. According to the Gemora, this explains Shimon hating Reuven.

This begs the question, if there is nothing wrong with Shimon hating Reuven then why should Shimon go out of his way to help Reuven load his animal? Tosfos answers that while it is permitted for Shimon to hate Reuven, Reuven has no justified reason to hate Shimon back.

By Shimon helping Reuven load his animal, he is doing more than this, he is investing in the other person thus allowing himself to build a new bond with him.

R' Yisroel Salanter was once traveling on a train to Vilna. On the train, he met a young bachor on his way to be tested to become a shochet. The young bachor was anxious and nervous about the forthcoming test and thus was easily angered by almost everything R' Yisroel did. At the end of the train journey there was a large crowd waiting on the platform.

After telling the bachor they were waiting for R' Yisroel the bachor asked where R' Yisroel was. A man pointed out someone within the crowd. To the bachor's dismay it was the man that he had pestered along the journey. The next day the bachor found R' Yisroel and asked for forgiveness. R' Yisroel was mochel him instantly and then requested that his son-in-law (a great dayan) test the bachor. Sadly, the bachor failed the test and was preparing to send a letter to his family telling them the news. R' Yisroel instructed the bachor to write that he would be staying in Vilna for another 6 months to consolidate his skills. During that time the bachor learned with a great rebbe, retook the test and passed with ease.

Why did R' Yisroel feel the need to do so much for this bachor? The answer is that R' Yisroel was not completely mochel the bachor and by giving and investing emotionally in the bachor, he began to like the bachor more. The same concept as the mitzvah of helping someone you hate, load their donkey.

Good Shabbos.