

## When you see the donkey of your enemy lying under its burden... you must nevertheless raise it with him. (23:5)

*Targum Yonasan* explains the words, *Azov taazov imo*; “You must nevertheless raise it with him,” as: *Mishbok tashbok b’ha’hi shaata yas sina b’libach alvi v’tifrok v’siton imi*, “You should vacate your feelings of animosity (at that time) towards him and assist with him.” Apparently, he interprets *azov taazov imo* as: vacate your feelings of hatred towards him, while *azov taazov* applies to one’s negative feeling against this person. [While one should never hate a Jew, this refers to one who has sinned.] Why must he relinquish his animus in order to provide support? He does what he must do because the Torah instructs him to do so. Why does he have to vacate his feelings? Who says one must “love” the person he helps? Is the help otherwise insufficient?

*Horav A. Henach Leibowitz, zl*, derives from here that in order to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *chesed*, acting with kindness, *b’shleimusah*, in complete perfection/fully, it is not enough simply to perform the act by rote or because this is what we do. He must feel a sense of kinship, love and good-will towards the beneficiary; otherwise he is lacking in true empathy. If he has no empathy, his *chesed* is flawed. Superficial *chesed* comes up short. Following the completion of his act of *chesed*, he may return to his negative feelings, as the *Targum* emphasizes *b’ha’hi shaata*, “at that time.”

Another lesson is garnered from here: We have control over our emotions. It is possible to hate and implement the “off” switch in order to transform one’s emotions into love and empathy. Once the task is carried out, we may switch back. This is a direct rebuttal to those who claim to be “compelled” to act the way they do, to feel the way they feel. No one is stuck in a hate “mode” or love “mode.” Feelings are controllable – if one so desires.