

## **So now please come and curse this people for me. (22:6)**

How often does it occur that someone harms us? We are talking about an evil person who, for whatever reason, decides that we are in the way of his progress; or he wants to take revenge on us for something we have done which, in his mind, deserves punishment. While the individual may be totally wrong (or, even if he is totally right), we are not permitted to curse him. First, we do not curse Jews. They are our brothers. The fact that they are not acting like brothers does not change our relationship towards them. So, what does one do when an evil person makes his/her life miserable? He prays to Hashem to bless him. He does not curse his detractor.

A Jew came to the Chazon Ish, zl, and asked the sage to curse another Jew. The situation had deteriorated, so that he simply could not tolerate "life" because of this fellow. "Rebbe, please curse him. Maybe, in this way, he will stop making my life so miserable." The Chazon Ish looked at the man (who thought that he was making a legitimate request) and said, "I will not curse him; rather, I will bless you. We do not curse. Instead, we seek blessing for our lives."

The Chafetz Chaim, zl, once remarked (it was the week of Parashas Balak) to someone who visited him, "When a Jew has a tzarah, troubling situation, what does he do? He goes to a tzaddik, righteous person, and petitions his blessing. Balak, however, had a tzarah (he thought that the Jews would overrun his country), and what did he do? He went to Bilaam, the pagan prophet, not for a blessing, but for a curse. He asked Bilaam to curse the Jews."

I think the reason is quite simple. One who is insecure cannot tolerate competition. The mere thought that someone is presenting a challenge to his position means that he must destroy the competition. What about bettering himself, elevating himself to the point that he has no competition? That would require self-confidence, which, for an insecure person, comes at a premium. Rather than strengthening himself, he would rather undermine the competition. Such a person deserves to be challenged.