

LESSON 6: Anger is like Avodah Zara

Here we discuss why we chose to focus on this aspect of the commandment.

The lessons are based on providing the students with eternal messages that will hopefully stay with them for life.

Make sure your students understand the following words as you use them in the classroom.

Here are more sources that will give you a deeper understanding of the concept we are bringing across in class.

In this lesson, the students will explore how anger is like idol worship, and learn healthy ways to deal with anger.

Anger is one of those emotions that humans have. It is how we act when that feeling of anger approaches that makes all the difference. When one's anger leads to destructive behaviors – such as rage, throwing things, hurting people (physically or emotionally) – the anger is destructive.

Jewish tradition has taught that anger reflects a lack of Emunah in Hashem. When we are angry at something that happened (or didn't happen), we are in a sense saying that this should not have happened to me. "Why did my friend leave my bike outside and then it got run over? Why my bike? Why me?"

Yosef Hatzaddik was sold into slavery by his brothers. But when he had the opportunity for revenge, he did not act in anger. He understood that all that had happened to him was from Hashem. Similarly, when Rabbi Akiva was refused hospitality in the village and had to sleep in the forest, he too did not become angry and understood that this too came from Hashem.

When we have Emunah, we realize that everything, even the smallest event, comes from Hashem – for our good, although we may not understand it. Even broken bikes. And thus, when the bike is destroyed, we know that this too is from Hashem, and no reason to react with anger. Of course, this response is difficult, and for most people, takes a lifetime of training oneself to respond without getting angry. (This does not mean that we should not work toward achieving something, or work to prevent accidents. הַשְׂתַּדְּלוּת.)

This anger, this lack of Emunah, is akin to idol worship; we are letting anger and lack of Emunah get in between Hashem and ourselves, and thus hindering our relationship with Him.

When we encounter a potential anger-causing situation, we can choose our response. We can recognize the feeling of anger, accept it and respond in a healthy way. When we let go of the anger, we recognize that Hashem runs the world.

VOCABULARY WORDS

- Anger

READ MORE ABOUT IT/BIBLIOGRAPHY

http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/110350/jewish/Anger.htm

<http://www.chabadcentral.org/templates/blog/post.asp?AID=555503&PostID=14027&p=1>