



Parshas Bechukosei

Shmuz by Rabbi Shimon Max

Written over by Moshe Reuvein Sussman

16 Iyar 5781

March 17th 2021

The Medrash in this week's Parsha discusses a case of someone who is cruel and says he even holds back kindness from his relatives. Reb Alachsandri says that this refers to someone who withholds inviting his relatives to a simcha because his relatives are poor.

The Aitz Yosef explains this Medrash that this act is egregious because it is fitting that the relatives rejoice in your simcha, and you are withholding a basic right of his only because you are embarrassed of their poverty, a reason that should have made you want to invite the relative even more.

We see from here two things. One is that there is a very strong factor of withholding something that someone is entitled to, and that is cruelly, regardless of your excuses. Secondly, the factor he mentions that embarrassment prevented him from being invited because the relative is poor. If someone withholds an entitlement from a poor relative because they are embarrassed from their poverty, that makes the cruelty a completely different level.

We must be careful not to let any issue that should empower us to help people and create feelings of Rachmanus become twisted to turn away someone and take away an entitlement, because that is particularly severe cruelty.