

Neglected Torah ?!

It is no secret that for eons, a special section of the Torah has been neglected.

Comprising both positive and negative mitzvos, many of which occur hourly and daily, this is the section of interpersonal mitzvos. Inattention to these mitzvos not only causes one to be derelict in their fulfillment, but prevents one from attaining the proper attitude and skills with which to relate to his fellow man, spouse, and the world around him. Knowledge of these mitzvos could avert hatred, controversy, anguish, hurt feelings, discrediting of Torah and those who study it, chillul Hashem— and even heart disease. The quality of our interpersonal relations would be unrecognizably improved.

We don't understand why this field -- which comprises half of the Ten Commandments -- was neglected, but the fact is that most students do not study them. Lamdanim do not analyze these mitzvos, poskim do not sufficiently clarify their details, organizers of anthologies do not collect this kind of material, and printers do not print books about it. Yeshivos too have not given these mitzvos a prominent place in their curriculum and chedorim and schools do not speak out enough about them. Inevitably, where a topic is not studied, it is not observed. Lack of awareness prevents G-d fearing Jews from fulfilling them.

Nonetheless, we have been witnessing a heartwarming phenomenon. These precious mitzvos are being revived and are being returned to their original glory. The public is slowly awakening and displaying increasing interest in the social mores delineated by the Torah, and which are promoted by these mitzvos. The first sprouts of this trend was advocated by Rav Yisroel Salanter and the Chofetz Chaim, and it is our generation which is finally beginning to see the fruits. We hope to satisfy the public's thirst for study material and halachic books on these topics. It will require immense effort to fill the vacuum that existed in this area during generations, particularly since time is limited, and the work is so immense.

This undertaking was adopted by the group of Torah scholars united in the Machon "**Toras Ha'adam - L'adam.**" (Institute to Promote Interpersonal Mitzvos). The Institute engages in meticulous collection of material located in the Bible commentators and poskim, some of which are only located in libraries and private book collections. It then organizes and clarifies the Jewish law; builds topics in a clear, comprehensible and appealing manner; engages in the exegesis and analysis of the topics and then generates

summaries, tables, and illustrations in the form of common stories which are dissected under the surgeon's knife of Jewish law.

The first publication of the series was dedicated to the mitzva of "You shall not hate your brother in your heart", which is the prohibition against baseless hatred. Within six months, the entire publication was sold out, and a second, larger printing was made. Future plans includes editing and publicizing study books in the areas of Agada, Mussar and Chassidut, and schoolbooks and reading books for youth. The Institute also engages in publicity to bring the need for this important literature to the awareness of the wide public.

A historic turnover has been awaiting the Jewish people since the days when the Second Sanctuary was destroyed because of baseless hatred. If we utilize the opportunity today to reinstate the mitzvos whose transgression led to our downfall, we can effect the revolution.

We offer our prayers to heaven that we succeed in realizing our plans. If our efforts succeed in adding even just one drop of oil to the holy torch lit by the great leaders before us, our labor will not be vain.