

## AVOIDING STRIFE (2)

### GREAT DISPUTES

Chazal say that when discussing Torah, two people, even a father and son or a Rebbi and his *talmid*, can appear to be fierce enemies, yet in the end, they reconcile out of their love for each other and harbor no hard feelings. This can be seen from Beis Hillel and Beis Shammai who, despite their Torah disagreements, freely arranged *shidduchim* with each other and lived peacefully together.

(קידושין ל ע"ב, יבמות יד ע"ב)

During the time of the controversy between the Alter Rebbe and the *tzaddik*, Reb Boruch of Mezhibuzh, one of the Alter Rebbe's chassidim wanted to step in and prove his Rebbe's righteousness. The Alter Rebbe did not allow him to get involved.

Some time later, the Alter Rebbe reminded him about this and said, "If you think this was a simple *machloikes*, you are mistaken. This was a continuation of the *machloikes* between Shaul HaMelech and Dovid HaMelech."

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"א ע' 44)

### 'HOLY' WARS

Although the chassidim of Vilna suffered during the time of the great *machloikes*, they constantly tried to bring about peace and did not respond to their tormentors. At one of the meetings of the chassidim, in the year תקנ"ו (1796), some of the learned young *talmidei chachomim* among them decided that at this point they must begin to fight back. The chossid Reb Meir Refoels, who for many years had worked on keeping the peace, argued against this. Reb Moshe Meizels sided with the younger group and, deeply pained by all their past suffering, used strong words against his opponent.

Hearing about this, the Alter Rebbe immediately dispatched a messenger to tell the younger group that although in principle they were right, they must nevertheless act with *middos tovos* and *ahavas Yisroel* – for this was what would ultimately cause the Name of *HaShem* to be glorified. Later that

year, the Alter Rebbe also wrote a letter to Reb Moshe Meizels, asking him to publicly ask forgiveness from Reb Meir Refoels, "For Chazal teach that no peace will come from quarreling, and most *tzoers* result from *machloikes* that is thought to be *leshem Shamayim*. (May *HaShem* protect us from it!)"

(אגרות קודש אדה"ז ע' פ, שם ע' תלה [מליקוט י"ד כסלו תשל"ט ע' 150], ספרי דברים רפ"ו)

The *gaon*, Reb Yonasan Eybeschutz, once said: The *yetzer hara* will bring about *machloikes* by convincing a person to be zealous for the sake of *HaShem*. One must therefore carefully weigh one's own actions, even in a *machloikes leshem Shamayim*, because the *yetzer hara* will try to steer the *machloikes* into negative directions.

(יערות דבש דרוש ה')

How can a person tell whether in fact his intentions are purely *leshem Shamayim*?

The Shelah HaKadosh advises that one should judge this according to the way he feels towards the other person in all other areas. Only if he loves him entirely, can the *machloikes* truly be described as being *leshem Shamayim*.

The Rebbe explains: The heart of *kedusha* is unity. Therefore, a true *machloikes leshem Shamayim* will lead to full harmony. By contrast, the core of *kelipa* is strife. Hence, even if the *yetzer hara* dresses himself up in a *zaidene zupetze*, a pious-looking silken *kapote*, and convinces a person that his current *machloikes* is being conducted *leshem Shamayim*, if it is causing the opposite of *ahavas Yisroel* it is obvious that it is coming from *kelipa*.

(של"ה, התועודיות תשמ"ה ח"ג ע' 1911)

### AT ALL COSTS

Reb Yehudah Hachassid writes that one should not quarrel over serving as *chazan*, even if the community will instead send someone who is unworthy. Those who are in charge will be held accountable.

The Alter Rebbe *paskens* that one should not quarrel over performing a *mitzvah*. As we find about the *lechem hapanim*, that the refined *kohanim* would step aside to avoid quarreling with the aggressive ones who grabbed the bread, even though it was a *mitzvah midoraissa*.

(ס' חסידים ס' תשנז, שו"ע ר"ס' נג סכ"ט)

One young chossid would daven before the *amud* in a shul where the *minhag* was to wear a *talis* for Mincha and Maariv. Knowing that the *minhag Chabad* is to not wear a *talis* then, he was unsure of what to do, and presented his question to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe replied that despite the vital importance of our *minhag*, he should certainly avoid *machloikes*, and if they are insistent on their *minhag*, he should comply with them.

(אג"ק חט"ז ע' יב, צז)

A talented *chazan* arrived in the town of Kemfna and the townsmen wanted to appoint him as their *baal tefilah*. Knowing this man to be lax in the observance of *mitzvos*, the local Rov did not agree to give him this holy position. The townsmen did not relent and they insisted that this man be appointed.

Foreseeing the imminent *machloikes*, the Rov sent the question before Reb Yosef 'Hatzadik', the son-in-law of the Noda BiYehuda and the Rov in Posen, asking what he should do. Reb Yosef's answer was quick in coming:

"It is better to erect a *tzeilem* in the *heichal* and avoid *machloikes* amongst Yidden! State your opinion pleasantly, and if they don't listen do not fight them."

(מופת הדור ע' צ')

## CONSIDER THIS!

- Why is it laudable to yield to the other side for the sake of peace? Shouldn't one stand strong in his values?
- How does one know when to yield and when to stand firm?

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**RESPONSIBILITY FOR A LOST PUSHKA**

We recently moved houses, and somehow during the move several *tzedakah pushkas* were misplaced. Are we responsible to reimburse the estimated amount in each of the *pushkas* to the organizations for which the *pushkas* were designated?

- When someone accepts the responsibility to watch over an object belonging to another, the Torah assigns various degrees of liability for loss or damage, depending on whether he is being paid to safeguard it, if he is borrowing it, or is just doing a favor. A *shomer chinam*, one who is not being paid to guard, is only responsible if the object was lost or stolen as a result of his negligence.
- In our case of the lost *pushkas*, it is not clear whether the person is even a *shomer chinam* for the *pushkas*. One only attains the status of a *shomer chinam* if he accepts the responsibility to guard the object. But if one merely says, "My house is available for you to place your object," one does not become a *shomer chinam*<sup>1</sup>.
- Hence, allowing an organization to place a *pushka* in one's home is not necessarily equivalent to accepting responsibility at all. Furthermore, even if he were to be a *shomer chinam*, he would still be exempt from payment in a situation where the *pushka* was lost not as a result of negligence.
- However, if one pledged money to *tzedakah* it becomes a *neder*, and he is responsible to insure that his *neder* is carried out. If the amount of the pledge was set aside and then lost, one is obligated to use other money to fulfill the pledge.
- If one placed his pledge in this lost *pushka*, we face the question: Is placing money in a *pushka* considered as if he has given it to the organization and he has fulfilled his *neder*, or is the *pushka* only considered a temporary place to set aside the money until it reaches the organization and he is still responsible. The consensus of *poskim*<sup>2</sup> is that giving to a *pushka* is considered as if it has reached the organization, accordingly there are those who say<sup>3</sup> that no further obligation exists to carry out the *neder*, and one would be exempt from reimbursing the organizations to which the *pushkas* belonged. Obviously, the above is for educational purposes only and when such a question arises practically, one should consult a competent *rov*.

1. שו"ע חו"מ סי' רצ"א סעי' ב.  
 2. שו"ת מאמר מרדכי סי' טו; שו"ת בית יצחק חו"מ סי' כא, שו"ת מהרש"ם ח"ד סי' קז, קמז ובספרו דעת תורה הל' צדקה סי' רנח סעי' ב; שו"ת מספר הסופר סי' מב; אבל יש חולקים ע"ז ע"י שו"ת אבני נזר חו"ד ח"ב סי' רצג, וע"ע בספר צדקה ומשפט (בלאו) פ"ח הע' כה.  
 3. שו"ת ציץ אליעזר חט"ז סי' כט, וצל"ע בדבריו דפסק כן מטעם שיכול לומר קיים לי כהני פוסקים דבא לקופת הצדקה הו"ל כבא לידי הגבאי, ולא הבנתי הא הספק אם לחייבו הוא אם קיים נדרו או לא א"כ מה שייך לומר קיים לי בדיני שמים?

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לזכות הילד שלום זאלע שיי' לרגל יום האפשערניש שלו - כ"ו אייר

שיררו ממנו אידישע חסידישע נחת

נדבת הוריו הרה"ת ישראל דוד וזוגתו ח' מלכה שיחיו אזדאבא

לזכות ר' משה חיים יוסף הכהן ש"י בן פייגא ציפורה אלטמן לאיזש"ט

**REB YAAKOV SHIMSHON OF SHPITOVKAH**

Reb Yaakov Shimshon was one of the great Rabbonim and chassidim of his time. He was a *talmid* of the Mezritcher Maggid, Reb Pinchas Koritzer, and Reb Boruch Mezhibuzer. He was an exceptional *gaon* in Torah and was a *Rov* in Shpitolvka. Some relate how the Alter Rebbe testified that his depth of understanding in Torah was extraordinary. In his later years, Reb Yaakov Shimshon was sent by his Rebbe Reb Boruch Mezhibuzer as an emissary to Eretz Yisroel. He was *niftar* on Gimmel Sivan, תקס"א (1801).



At one point during his journey to Eretz Yisroel, Reb Shimshon was left without any money to continue his travels. Realizing the situation, his *shamash* went out in the streets and announced, "The Rav of Shpitolvka is in need of funds for his trip!" Immediately, all the townspeople came out and contributed generously to the Rebbe.

When the Rebbe heard what had happened, he called in his *shamash* and scolded him for having used the "Crown of Torah" to benefit his own physical needs. "But what should I have done?" queried the *shamash*. The Rebbe replied, "You could have just as well taken your *yarmulke* from under your hat, turned it upside down and gone collecting from door to door, just like everyone else!"



Reb Shimshon once approached three important members of the community and asked them to join him in collecting money for *tzedakah*. One of them excused himself by saying that he has no strength; the second said that he is older and it is not befitting for him, and the third claimed that they would probably not be too successful anyway.

The *Rov* answered them, "The *possuk* already forewarned all three of you, for it says: "Rodef *tzedakah* v'chessed, yimtza *chaim* tzeddaka v'chavod," one who pursues *tzedakah* will find life, *tzedakah*, and honor. For the one who claims he has no strength, the *possuk* says he will find life; for one who says that we will not succeed in getting the money, the *possuk* says he will find *tzedakah*; and to the one who considers it degrading, the *possuk* promises he will earn honor.

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי ש"י בן רבקה

**A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE**

**JEW'S SHOULD BE 'YIDDEN'**

The months preceding and following the six day war were charged with many emotional and philosophical debates. The Rebbe persuaded many influential personalities, to make use of the circumstances for the spreading of *yiddishkeit*.

In a fascinating letter to Mr. Eliyahu Amikam, a prominent reporter, the Rebbe wrote: "In your article, I did not find the primary, simple message which should be self understood ...

It has to be stated that Jews should be 'Yidden'. Meaning, they need to put on *tefillin*, keep *Shabbos*, and *kashrus*... The girls must dress as their grandmothers dressed... In today's age, if the Jews would be *Yidden*, the *geula* would certainly have arrived. This is what must be said."

To Rabbi Chaim Gutnik the Rebbe said, "There is no other way. All routes have been tried, and failed. Why are people not trying the true route, to keep Torah and *mitzvos*?"

"The people have to hear: For one year, try it, become a Torah nation! ...be Torah observant twenty four hours a day!"

