



AVOIDING STRIFE

The Tragedy of Machloikes

The Torah forbids us to behave like Korach and his group, by causing and continuing *machloikes*, controversy. Indeed, the *Gemara* says that a person who continues a *machloikes* actually transgresses a 'lav', a prohibitive commandment, which some *Rishonim* count as one of the *taryag mitzvos*.

(סנהדרין קי ע"א, ס' חרדים פכ"ד מ"ב)

Only *HaShem's* work on the second day of Creation is not crowned with the phrase, *...ki tov* – "and *HaShem* saw that it was good." Why?

The *Midrash* gives the reason: there was *machloikes* on that day, when the waters that filled the earth were split. Now, if *machloikes* that ultimately was of *benefit* to the world is undeserving of that phrase, how much more so regarding *machloikes* that brings *confusion* to the world.

(בראשית רבה ד, ח)

Chazal warn that a home split by controversy will eventually be destroyed, and a *shul* torn by controversy will eventually be transformed into a place of idolatry. Once, an angry dispute broke out among the *chachomim* in a *shul* in Tveria, and reached such a peak that a *sefer Torah* was accidentally torn. Reb Yosei ben Kisma, who was present at the time, said, "I would be surprised if one day this *shul* doesn't turn into a place of *avoda zara!*"

And indeed, in due course this actually happened.

(מס' דרך ארץ פ"ט, יבמות צו ע"ב, וראה חרדים פ"ז)

Reb Berachia said: So severe is *machloikes*, that although the Heavenly *beis din* punishes only those who are over twenty and a worldly *beis din* holds thirteen-year-olds responsible, during the *machloikes* of Korach even day-old infants were burned and swallowed into the earth.

(במדבר רבה יח, ג)

The Shelah HaKadosh writes that one

machloikes chases away a hundred possibilities for *parnasa*.

(אג"ק מוהרש"ב ח"א ע' קע)

Reb Simcha Bunem of Pshis'cha, once told his chassidim: Just look at the sheer power of the *tum'a* found within *machloikes!* Korach and his followers claimed that Moshe Rabbeinu, the humblest of all people, was trying to raise himself over others. Such a senseless claim can be caused only by *machloikes*. It can even dim the vision of great men and rob them of their common sense.

(פרפראות לתורה)

Disputing a Leader

Machloikes is always repulsive, loathsome and forbidden; as the Torah instructs, "You shall not be like Korach." The Me'iri adds that a person who quarrels with someone whom he is obligated to respect is even more despised.

(מאירי סנהדרין קי ע"ב)

In the year תקכ"ה (1765), a longstanding *machloikes* was seething in the city of Smargon. It had once boasted a large *yeshiva*, and many of its learned *bochorim* had married into local families and settled near them. Now, every city of course has to have a *rov*, but these young men were such impressive *lomdim* that they were unable to tolerate any newly-appointed *rov* for more than a short time. Hearing of this, the Alter Rebbe stopped over in the town on his way home from Mezritch, and delivered a *maamar*. Its theme: the supreme value of peace.

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' 19)

Some chassidim once complained to the *gaon*, Reb Avraham of Sochatchov, the *Avnei Nezer*, that the *rov* in their town had ruled too leniently in a certain question of *kashrus*. Unwilling to accept any more of his rulings regarding *kashrus* issues, they asked their Rebbe to send them a different *rov*.

The *tzaddik* replied, "Even according to your claim, this *rov* has at most transgressed an *issur deRabbanan*. However, what you want to do is an *issur deOraysa*, for the Torah explicitly

forbids *machloikes*. Furthermore, since *machloikes* causes people to make mistakes, it would cause many to transgress other *issurim*."

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה, ע' 557)

The Power of Peace

Rav Ila'a taught: The world continues to exist in the merit of whoever closes his mouth in the midst of a *machloikes*.

(חולין פ"ט)

Peace is so powerful that regarding those who serve *avoda zara* but live peacefully, *HaShem* says that it is as if He has no control over them. The *Midrash* illustrates this by the following example: Although in the generation of Dovid HaMelech there were many men of stature, many would fall in battle because of their *machloikes*. Yet in the time of Ach'av, when many people were serving *avoda zara*, they succeeded in battle.

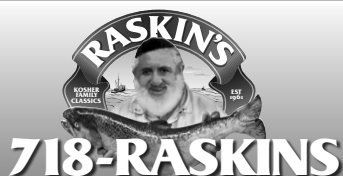
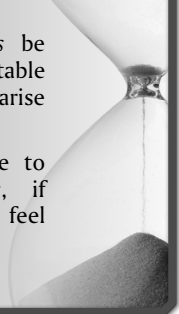
(בראשית רבה לח, ו, ויקרא רבה כו, ב)

When Yaakov Avinu was about to take leave of his children for the last time, he said, "*Gather together* and I will tell you what will happen to you at the End of Days." As the *Midrash* points out, he was telling the Children of Israel that the way to prepare themselves for the *Geula* was – by *togetherness*.

(בראשית רבה פ' צח)

CONSIDER THIS!

- How can *machloikes* be avoided? Isn't it inevitable that disputes will arise between people?
- What value is there to avoiding *machloikes*, if one doesn't really feel *Ahavas Yisroel*?



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A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Horaa Rechovot

Non-Mevushal Wine

We are having not-yet religious guests over for *Moshiach seudah*. Do I need to cover my non-mevushal wine?

- Real *yayin nesech* from which one is prohibited to benefit occurs when a non-Jew pours or shakes what he knows to be wine for the sake of *avodah zara*. If he handled it without any intention, the wine is prohibited *midrabanan (stam yeynam)*.¹ Drinking the wine uproots a person's *kedusha* and causes one to lose his portion in *Olam Haba*;² and in the words of Chassidus it "contaminates one's mind and heart."³
- As a form of penalty,⁴ *rishonim*⁵ quote the prohibition to drink the wine of a Jew who publicly disregards the laws of Shabbos,⁶ or deliberately transgresses the Torah's laws to antagonize.⁷ (In case of doubt whether such a Jew touched the wine, it is permissible since a penalty is not applied in case of doubt.⁸)
- What about non-observant Jews nowadays? Since most Jews who don't observe Shabbos aren't doing so deliberately, and are like a child who was raised amongst non-Jews (*tinok shenishba*), *poskim* deliberate whether their wine is included in this rabbinic decree.⁹ One should be stringent, but in case of need should consult a *rov*.¹⁰ A Jew who is actively in the process of becoming more observant but does not yet observe Shabbos, his wine is permissible *b'dieved*.¹¹ Whether one may pour such a Jew a cup of non-mevushal wine is a matter of dispute and it should be avoided, however if they may be slighted one may be lenient.¹²
- Kaballa* introduced an additional stringency not to drink wine just seen by a non-Jew (but not by an unobservant Jew¹³), especially with *kiddush* wine (since it loses its "*siman bracha*").¹⁴ Some are stringent even if the non-Jew looked at it through glass (for which reason the Rebbe kept the wine bottle at *farbrengens* in a paper bag),¹⁵ provided that the bottle was opened.¹⁶

1. שו"ע יו"ד סי' קכ"ג ס"א.
2. אין בש חי שנה ב' (בלק א'). וראה בשלה"ק ד שער האותיות אות ק' קדושת האכילה אות ק"ה.
3. סיפור עם אדמו"ר מהר"ש - ראה ד"ה באתי לגני תשי"א אות ו' (ולהעיר שעל פניו שם היה רק סתם יינם).
4. שו"ת חת"ס יו"ד סי' ק"כ.
5. בה"ג (בהל' שחיטת חולין, דקכו"ו ע"ד.) ב"י סי' קי"ט, שו"ע שם סי' קכ"ד ס"ח.
6. ראה שו"ע"ר או"ח סי' שפ"ה ס"ג ובמשנ"ב שם סק"ד.
7. ראה שו"ע סי' קכ"ד ס"ו, ס' הכשרות פ"ט סס"ד.
8. אשרי האיש יו"ד ח"א פ"ח סכ"ז (במקרה שפרצו לדירה התיר היין).
9. ראה מהרש"ג יו"ד סי' ה' שמיקל. ובשו"ת בנין ציון החדשות סי' כ"ג שמסתפק ומסקנתו שהמתמיר תע"ב. ובמנח"א ח"א סי' ע"ד אוסר.
10. ראה העו"ב גל' תתקס"א עמ' 86 בשם הרבי שבין לא סומכים להקל מצד תינוק שנשבה דאין לדין אלא מה שענינו רואות.
11. שו"ת חלקת יעקב ח"א סי' ע"ו.
12. הגרש"ז אויערבאך - ס' הכשרות פ"ט הע' קס"ט.
13. שו"ת התעוררות תשובה ח"א סי' י"ג. ולהעיר מהמסופר בהתועבויות תשמ"ד ח"ב ע' 750. ובתשובות והנהגות ח"א סי' תע"ג הקיל. וממור"ר מהגר"מ אהרון שליט"א שמעתי להקל במקום כבוד הבריות.
14. ע"פ בן איש חי שם אות ט"ז (שמיקל בראיית ישמעאלים).
15. שלה"ק שער האותיות אות ק' קדושת האכילה אות ק"ו.
16. ראה שו"ת דובב משרים (הגאון מטשעבין) ח"א סי' קכ"ד. וראה חקרי מנהגים ח"ב ע' קע"ה.
17. שו"ת נחלת פנחס ח"א סי' צ'.

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OUR HEROES

Reb Gershon Ber Paharer

Reb Gershon Ber's father passed away while his mother was pregnant with him, and he was named after his father. A short time later his mother passed away as well and he was raised by his relatives. Eventually, he was taken in by his uncle Reb Abba der Lebediker, a chossid of the Alter Rebbe who brought him close to the ways of *Chassidus*. In the year 5609 (1849), Reb Gershon Ber met Reb Hillel Paritcher and became his *talmid*. Reb Gershon Ber became a *mekushor* to the Rebbe Maharash and then the Rebbe Rashab. The Rebbe Rashab appointed him as a *shadar* to the cities in the Kherson region where he would collect money and *chazer Chassidus*.



The chossid Reb Mendel Gurary was once traveling by train to his hometown, Kremenchug. The trip was days long and he was desperate for company, so he set about searching the cars for a Yid with whom he could converse. After some time, he spotted a figure in the corner wrapped in a blanket. Sensing that this was what he was looking for, Reb Mendel approached the figure and lifted the blanket. Sure enough, inside was the eminent chossid Reb Gershon Ber Paharer. He was awake, but deep in thought, meditating on some concept in *Chassidus*.

Reb Gershon opened his eyes and exclaimed to the chossid in front of him, "*Yungerman, yungerman!* Remember to tell your children that *Hu levado ve'ein zuluso* – There is nothing else but *HaShem*."

(מפי חסידים, חסידים הראשונים ח"ב ע' 41)

Once, Reb Gershon Ber sat with his fellow chassidim and expressed his gratitude to Hashem for all that had passed over him:

"As a child under my mother (his father had passed away before he was born), my life was surely good. Then, after my mother passed away, my uncle took me in, and that too was good. Then, my uncle passed away and the community took charge of me, and was also good.

"When I grew older, the community handed me over to a craftsman to learn a trade (craftsmen were known to treat their apprentices harshly), and that was good as well. Then, I became one of the *yungeleit* who served Reb Hillel Paritcher, and that is surely good. After that, I became a *melamed* and I earned a living, and that's good (*melamedim* were actually paid a meager salary and lived very poorly). Finally, I merited to become a *Shadar* for the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe Rashab, and that is definitely good.

"I must therefore not be ungrateful R"L, and I should rejoice and thank Hashem for His kindness and mercy."

(רשימו"ד חדש ע' 258)

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Here's Your Extra Dollar

A young girl who was not *frum* at the time passed by the Rebbe one Sunday for dollars. She was dressed in her usual style, which was not particularly modest. As she received her dollar, the Rebbe assured her that if she dressed differently on her next visit, he would give her two dollars.

When she asked her parents to buy her new clothing, they brushed her off, until they saw that it was affecting her health, so they agreed.

The following Sunday, she went once again to receive a dollar from the Rebbe, this time dressed modestly. She passed by the Rebbe, but was disappointed to be given only one dollar.

She continued walking, when she was suddenly summoned back. The Rebbe said, "I was sure you would remind me about what I had said, but seeing that you didn't, I had to remind you myself. Here's your extra dollar!"

(HaChen HaChassidi, p. 129)



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