

The Weekly Farbrengens



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מרכז אנש

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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

AVOIDING STRIFE (I)

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 מוהרשי"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.

supreme value of peace.

(סו"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 זיון תורה, ע' 557)

CONSIDER

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*?

(פרפראות לתורה)

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)

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 1765, a longstanding *machloikes* was seething in the city of Smargon. It had once boasted a large *yeshiva*, and many of its learned *bochurim* 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

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' צ)



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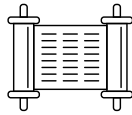
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DAVENING AT HOME

What should I be mindful of when davening alone?

It is important to be dressed respectfully for *davening*, even at home.¹ Just as you should have a set place for *davening* in *shul*, you should have a set place at home where you won't be disturbed.² Shmoneh Esrei mustn't be recited while facing pictures, paintings, a mirror, or anything distracting.³ Shmoneh Esrei should be *davened* silently, however if it helps you concentrate, or to help your child *daven*, you may recite Shmoneh Esrei out loud—but not too loud⁴—when *davening* alone at home.⁵

In *tachanun*, you should omit the 13 attributes of mercy (or read them like a *posuk*),⁶ and don't bend over for *nefilas apayim*.⁷ On Friday night, add the paragraph of *v'lomar* before *borchu*, and according to *minhag* Chabad, you recite *vayechulu* even alone.⁸

The Alter Rebbe writes that one should only *daven* in Lashon Hakodesh when alone, since he needs the *malachim* to vouch for him, and they don't understand other languages. (A *tzibur* doesn't require the *malachim's* intercession, thus with a *minyán* one may *daven* in any language.)⁹

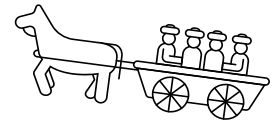
There are, however, several justifications for one who can't *daven* in Lashon Hakodesh. Some say this restriction applies only to a personal petition (e.g. for one who is ill) and not to standard set prayers. Others say that the problem is specifically with Aramaic, which is despised by the angels, and not other languages.¹⁰

Yekum purkan is in Aramaic, and some say that one *davening* alone shouldn't say it.¹¹ The Alter Rebbe, in a different context, writes that it is not a supplication rather a blessing, and that may explain why the Alter Rebbe doesn't mention in the *siddur* to skip it.¹² Others explain that it is a standard set prayer.¹³ The second *yekum purkan* is a blessing for the congregation, and that is why the *siddur* says that one need not say it without a *minyán*.¹⁴ Similarly, *kegavna* in Aramaic recited on Friday night isn't a prayer, but rather a description of what is happening in heaven at that time.

1. ראה שו"ע ושוע"ר סי' צ"א לפרטים בזה.
2. שו"ע"ר סי' צ ס"ח.
3. שו"ע"ר שם סכ"ב.
4. שכל המגביה קולו ה"ז מנביאי השקר.
5. שו"ע"ר סי' קא ס"ג.
6. סידור, שו"ע א"ח סי' תקס"ה ס"ה ט"ז שם סק"ה. למעשה א"צ לסיים הפסוק ע"פ פתה"ד סי' נ"א סק"ו ושול"ת רב פעלים ח"א סי' א'.
7. ראה שו"ע"ר סי' קלא ס"ג.
8. סידור אדה"ז, שו"ע"ר א"ח סי' רס"ח קו"א סק"ב. כף החיים שם סקל"ח.
9. גמ' סוטה ל"ג ע"א. שו"ע"ר א"ח סי' ק"א ס"ה.
10. שו"ע"ר שם בשם רבנו יונה פ"ב ברכות דף ז ע"א ורא"ש פ"ב ברכות סוף סי' ב'.
11. משנ"ב א"ח סי' ק"א סקל"ט.
12. ראה שו"ע"ר סי' רפד ס"ד, וכך מסביר המנח"י הו"ד בס' היחיד והלכותיו סכ"ט.
13. רבבות אפרים ח"א סי' רט"ז.
14. ולהעיר שבסידור תו"א כתוב "יחיד אינו צריך לומר". ואם רוצה לאמרו, יעשה כמ"ש בשער אפרים שער י' סכ"ו ופתחי שערים שם להחליף "יתכון" ל"יתהון".

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REB PESACH MALASTOVKER

Reb Pesach Malastovker was of the younger chasidim of the Alter Rebbe and a great chossid of the Mitteler Rebbe and Tzemach Tzedek. He was a brilliant *gaon* and had an immensely deep understanding in Chasidus. Reb Pesach was a great *oived* and a remarkable *baal midos tovos*.

dislike for the apple, but Reb Pesach insisted that he still desired it. The Alter Rebbe took the apple a third time, and this time Reb Pesach said with confidence, "Now I truly don't desire it."

The Alter Rebbe instructed Reb Pesach to eat the apple, and he was healed from his negative thoughts.

Some enemies of Reb Pesach became jealous of his exceptional *davening*, and used forces of impurity to cast bad thoughts into his mind. Reb Pesach couldn't understand how such lowly thoughts were coming to him, and he brought his dilemma before the Alter Rebbe.

(למען ידעו ע' 072)

Recognizing the cause of the thoughts, the Rebbe took an apple and stared at it for a while. He then handed it to Reb Pesach and told him, "Say that you don't want the apple." Reb Pesach understood that the Rebbe wanted him to despise the apple and so he told the Rebbe, "How can I say that, when in truth I do desire it?"

Reb Pesach would relate: "Each year I collect all of the questions I have in Chassidus in order to present them to the Rebbe when I enter *yechidus*. Yet, every time, as I enter the Rebbe's room all of my questions are resolved."

Reb Groinem, the *mashpia* in Lubavitch, would explain why this happened: Lack of clarity in Torah is brought about by *klipa* hiding the truth. When Reb Pesach entered the Rebbe's room where *Elokus* is revealed, his *neshama* felt the *kedusha*. As a result, the *klipos* were shattered and all of the questions disappeared.

(למען ידעו ע' 269)

The Alter Rebbe took the apple back and stared at it again. He then asked Reb Pesach a second time to state his

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE THIRD STANZA

Reb Yoel Kahn relates:

At the Shabbos Parshas Shemini *farbrengen* of 5712 (1952), the *niggun* "Shalosh Tenuos" was sung, which is comprised of stanzas from the Baal Shem Tov, the Maggid and the Alter Rebbe.

When the *farbrengen* ended, the Rebbe went to his room and returned shortly thereafter for *mincha*. After *davening*, the Rebbe began singing the *niggun* again, with an emphasis on the third stanza.

The *niggun* continued for a while. The Rebbe repeatedly asked that third stanza be sung, again and again – "This is the part that is relevant to us: the Alter Rebbe's stanza, the new *neshama*..."

The Rebbe turned to the wall and leaned one hand on it. The other hand he closed but left the thumb open, and began making swinging motions, as if to say: deeper, deeper...

(Bedarkei Hachassidim, page 226)