

# The Weekly Farbrengens



למען ישמענו • אחרי-קדושים תש"פ • 564  
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

## SEEKING PEACE (I)

### THE IMPEDIMENTS TO PEACE

The Alter Rebbe explains that the cause of *machloikes* is the narrowmindedness of being unable to tolerate another's perspective; *achdus* comes from broadmindedness, the ability to accommodate two approaches to an issue.

Elsewhere, the Alter Rebbe writes that *machloikes* comes about because of a negative spirit that enters one's heart, causing him not to trust his friend, despite that person's friendship.

(מאמרי אדה"ז ענינים ע' פו, מאמרי אדה"ז הקצרים ע' תכט)

Another cause of *machloikes*: Instead of focusing on quarreling with himself in order to overcome his *yetzer hara*, a person diverts that energy to quarreling with others.

(אמרות טהורות ע' פ"א)

The Friediker Rebbe related:

After the *mussaf* on *Shabbos*, *Parshas No'ach*, תרנ"ט (1898), we began the *Kiddush* at my home at about twelve, hoping to have enough time to later attend the *seuda* of my father, the Rebbe Rashab. Suddenly, at one-thirty, he walked in and said that he had come to join us.

One of those present was the chossid, Reb Leib Velizher. True, he was an earnest *yerei-Shamayim* and did not act according to personal agendas, but he dealt harshly with others, especially with simple people.

Now, at that time his hometown, Velizh, was torn by a bitter *machloikes*, in which Reb Leib was a major player. Thus it was at this *Kiddush* that my father delivered the *maamar* known as *Heichaltzu*. Its theme is the destructive *kelipa* of Midyan which creates strife, inciting one Yid to quarrel with another. This *kelipa* is nourished by *yeshus*, the bloated sense of self-importance whereby one Yid cannot tolerate another's existence, even though that other person has done nothing wrong.

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' 18, סה"מ תרנ"ט ע' ס)

### PEACE, EVEN AT A PRICE

A *shtetl* called Pahar was broiling in a *machloikes*, and one of those involved was a chossid of the Rebbe Maharash called Reb Volf Levitin.

When he visited Lubavitch and the Rebbe asked him why he took part in it, Reb Volf replied by quoting from *Tehillim*, "With one who is crooked, act deviously."

The Rebbe told him, "You may be right, but in the meantime you are becoming devious..."

(לקו"ס פרלוב ע' קבח)

cause me pleasure should endeavor to smooth away all friction and radiate *ahavas Yisroel*."

(תו"מ תשמ"ז ח"ב ע' 494)

In a letter to one of the *mosdos*, the Rebbe laid down the approach to take in the event of a dispute:

"I am not pleased with disputes of any kind. But while standards of *chinuch* of course cannot be compromised, monetary issues do not warrant *machloikes* – especially since such disputes often arouse the desire of each party to triumph at all costs."

(אג"ז ח"ז ע' רז)

### THE WAY TO PEACE

We sometimes think that momentarily fighting out an issue will settle it and bring peace. *Chazal* warn against this by assuring us that no good or peace will ever be gained by quarreling.

(שמות רבה ל, יז)

The *gaon*, Reb Chaim Rapaport, the *rov* of the city of Lvov, was a great adversary of the Baal Shem Tov. Once, when he was learning alone in the *beis midrash*, a man walked in, and when Reb Chaim asked who he was, he replied, "I am mere dust and ashes (*afar va'eifer*)."

The guest then asked, "And who are you?"

Reb Chaim responded, "I, too, am mere dust and ashes."

"If so," said the unnamed guest, "why should there be *machloikes* between us...?"

Reb Chaim then understood that this man was the Baal Shem Tov. From that day on he became attached to him, and later fulfilled many significant missions on his behalf.

(רשימות דברים ח"ג ע' רעח)

### CONSIDER

Why is strife a result of the *yeshus* if people are actually quarreling over something significant?

Why is *bittul* the only path to peace? Why will arguing it out never bring positive results?

After delivering a fiery *sicha* concerning a certain recent wrongdoing, the Rebbe warned those present that they should not cause further *machloikes* by pointing fingers at those who had been at fault.

"The existent *machloikes* is bad enough and one should not fan its flames... On the contrary: every effort must be made to extinguish it. Whoever pours fuel on the fire, and claims that it is water, is only fooling himself.

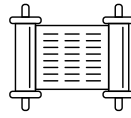
"Anyone who heightens the *machloikes* is waging war against me! Conversely, one who wishes to

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COVID-19 RENT REVERSALS

May I cancel the lease on my office space due to the current situation?

If one leased a space for a year and it burnt down mid-term, he need not pay for the rest of the year since the space isn't available.1 If he passed away RL mid-term, poskim dispute whether the remainder of the year's rent must be paid from his possessions.

Some rishonim consider a rental to be an ongoing service, and since this unforeseeable circumstance wasn't forewarned by either party (see issue 563), the remainder of the rent need not be paid.2 A second opinion views the rental lease as if the renter "purchased" the property for the year, not each month individually, thus the entire rent becomes obligatory at the outset.3

The Rema rules that he need not pay, but if he paid in advance, the landlord need not return it. This is either because of the law of muchzak, or because paying in advance demonstrates that he took responsibility for the entire term no matter what happens.4 Yet, some achronim limit this exemption from further rent to a renter who died, not when the renter was forced to leave for another reason.5 The Tzemach Tzedek rules that when a rental was cut short due to any unavoidable circumstance that happened to the renter (not to the property), he must pay for the entire duration of the lease.6

By a regional calamity (makas medina), such as a natural disaster that affected the property (e.g. a hurricane) to only be partially usable, the halacha is that the owner bears the loss and may only collect a discounted rent going further.7 Some poskim even allow the renter to completely back out from now onward.8

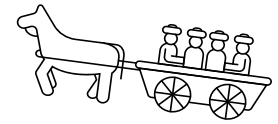
What about a plague that impacts the people but not the property itself (e.g. Covid-19)? Some hold that the landlord can demand payment claiming that the space is still available,9 while others say that in certain instances the renter can argue that he cannot use it.10

If governmental restrictions don't allow access to the rented premises, the space could be considered inaccessible and "destroyed," thus the renter can retract and be refunded even if he paid in advance.11 However, it is questionable if this applies to a non-essential storefront that may be accessed but not opened to the public, since he could theoretically use it for storage (which has a lower rent value) or to sell essential goods. In any case, if one isn't willing to give up the space and wants to hold it for after the pandemic, he must pay at least a discounted rate.12

When doubtful whether the specific case is included in makas medina, some say to split the loss,13 while others give power to the muchzak.14 In practice, based on the Chasam Sofer, a settlement should be made by the local beis din.

8. מהר"ם פאדווא סי' ל"ט שאפשר לבטל השכירות מכאן ולהבא.
9. ערוה"ש סי' של"ד סי"י וסי"ב שו"ת מהר"ם טייטקין ריש סדר נשים, ה"ד בקצות סי' שט"ז סק"א (כיון שהבית קמון) וז"ל כנה"ג סי' ש"ב הגה"ט או"מ.
10. שו"ת חו"מ סי' של"ד סק"ג וט"ז שם ד"ה הוי, וראה שו"ת מהר"ם דפוס פראג סי' שפ"ח.
11. רמ"א חו"מ סי' ש"ב סי"ז.
12. דין ניכוי ראה צ"צ פס"ד שכי"א אבל מהר"ם פדווא הג"ל סב"ל שישלם כולו.
13. שו"ת מהר"ם דפוס פראג סי' שפ"ח.
14. ובאופן אחר ראה מחנה אפרים שכירות סי' ז' שתלוי אם ישלם. קצוה"ח חו"מ סי' שכ"ב סק"א.

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



REB AVROHOM ELYEH AKSLEROD

Reb Avrohom Eliyohu Akslerod ("Kabilniker") learned in Tomchei Temimim Lubavitch and was an outstanding yerei shomayim. In the winter of 5684 (1924) he moved to America, and he took on the position of rov in the Tzemach Tzedek shul in Baltimore. He conducted himself in America as a tomim would in Lubavitch. He walked the streets with his talis koton visible, a rare scene in those years. When the Frierdiker Rebbe arrived in America he would often visit 770. When the bochurim requested him to farbreng, he would generally refuse, saying he came to the Rebbe to receive. He passed away on 4 Adar 5714 (1954).

to America?" Reb Avrohom Elye replied, "Sacks of mesiras nefesh."

Reb Avrohom Elye's davening in Baltimore was just like he was accustomed to in Lubavitch. On the first night of Rosh Hashanah after becoming rov, he davened at great length, well after the minyan was finished. The congregants who were not accustomed to such conduct figured he must be requesting from Hashem to receive a higher paycheck to be able to afford a more comfortable lifestyle. They got together and decided to raise his salary. However, when they approached him and offered the raise, Reb Avrohom Elye declined, explaining that he is content with what he has and does need the extra American luxury.

His work in America was no easy task; one needed great mesiras nefesh to stand strong in matters of Yiddishkeit. Reb Zev Kazinitz was a tomim learning in Lubavitch, and when the time came for him to join his parents who lived in America, he wrote a letter to Reb Avrohom Elye asking, "What is important for me to bring along

It is said that the Frierdiker Rebbe remarked, "I can testify that Avrohom Elye has never lifted his eyes to see the skyscrapers of New York."

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE SPEECH THAT CAUSED SATISFACTION

Reb Chaim Moshe Alperovitch was a tomim at the yeshiva in Lubavitch, later living in Eretz Yisroel, unfazed and unchanged. In 5716 (1956), when Reb Chaim Moshe came to the Rebbe for the first time, he was asked to speak at the Tzeirei Chabad convention in 770. He began by listing various levels of yiras Hashem (fear of G-d) as they are explained in Chassidus, and went on to expound on their merits.

has discussed in the latest maamar the concern of tintum hamoach and tintum halev (intellectual dullness and emotional apathy). Fellow chassidim! We must overcome these obstructions, and clean our minds and hearts!" When a report of the speeches at the convention were brought to the Rebbe, the Rebbe's face glowed with satisfaction with Reb Chaim Moshe's speech, truly spoken from the heart.

Suddenly he cried out, "The Rebbe (Otzar Hachassidus EY page 419)