

Yosef Chaim and R' Kook would meet at a bris or wedding, they would engage each other in friendly conversation.

When R' Gifter was considering closing his Yeshiva, the Lubavitcher Rebbe⁹ sent a messenger to him R' Gifter—who opposed¹⁰ Chabad—saying that if he wants to close the Yeshiva because of financial reasons, he should rather leave it open and the Lubavitcher Rebbe takes full responsibility for the finances.¹¹

There were two Chassidische Rebbes that were involved in a machlokes.¹² When one of the Rebbes passed away, his son made peace with the other Rebbe. When his Chassidim asked how he could make peace with the other Rebbe if his father didn't, he answered, "I don't have the Torah or Tefilla of my father. So should I also hold on to the machlokes of his?!"¹³

When R' Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz spoke about divisions that had plagued the Jewish people in the past, he would mention the following parable. There was a wealthy man with two sons-in-law, one who ate no meat and the other ate no dairy. For many years, the rich man fed them both in his house according to their tastes. One sat at one table with his family eating meat and the other sat at a second table with his family eating dairy. Eventually the father-in-law¹⁴ lost his fortune and served the whole family bread and potatoes. He told his sons-in-law, "Now that I can't afford meat or dairy delicacies, why sit at separate tables?" Similarly today, said R' Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz, we lack the greatness, the scholarship, the zeal and the intensity of those from earlier times—we have neither meat nor dairy—so there is no point eating at separate tables.

An avreich that was making a bris approached R' Pam with the following dilemma. The grandmothers—named Rochel and Esther—of this new baby boy each had their husband pass away within the year. Consequently, each one was adamant to have the child named after their

Listen to the short Fascinating Insights podcast at <https://jewishpodcasts.fm/fascinating-insights>, where it can also be downloaded! Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordechai Friedlander ztz"l for close to five years. He received semicha from R' Zalman Nechemia Goldberg ztz"l. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of three books including the recently released *Extraordinary Insights*, in addition to being the host of *The Fascinating Insights Podcast*. His writings, some of which have been translated into Yiddish, Hebrew, German and French, inspire people across the spectrum of Jewish observance to live with the vibrancy and beauty of Torah. He lives with his wife and family in Kiryat Yearim (where the Aron was for 20 years [Shmuel 1, 7:1,2]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

⁹ In the Telz Yeshiva in Telz, Lithuania, they—including R' Gifter—learned Tanya.

¹⁰ R' Gifter did consider, though, that the Lubavitcher Rebbe was from the Gedolai Hador.

¹¹ Heard from R' Gifter's son, R' Zalman.

¹² R' Yitzchak Friedman (1850–1917), also known as the Pachad Yitzchak, was the eldest son of R' Avraham Yaakov Friedman (1820–1883), the first Sadigura Rebbe. Upon the death of his father in 1883, R' Yitzchak and his younger brother R' Yisrael (1852–1907) assumed joint leadership of their father's Chassidim. This was rare—that following their father's passing they led the dynasty together. Included in this was leading the *tisch* together. Although they were content with this arrangement, many of the Sadigura Chassidim preferred to have one Rebbe, and in 1887, the brothers agreed to draw lots to determine who would stay in Sadigura and who would move out. The lots fell to R' Yisrael to remain as the second Sadigura Rebbe, while R' Yitzchak moved to the neighboring town of Boyan and established his court there, becoming the first Boyaner Rebbe. Under this

husband (and they weren't willing to have the child be named after both grandfathers by combining the names). R' Pam asked for more details and he decided that the grandmother named Rochel had more of a right to have the child named after her husband. He then asked the avreich for the phone number of Esther (the other grandmother). He called her and said that it is a great merit to have a child named after your husband but it's even a greater merit to avoid machlokes. Therefore it's better to relent and let the other grandmother have the child named after her husband. A few days later R' Pam saw this avreich and asked him how the bris went. The avreich joked and said he had such problems, as a new argument ensued. The grandmother Rochel heard what R' Pam told Esther and as a result each grandmother was willing to forgo naming the child after their deceased husband.¹⁵

We should all merit to fulfill the Pasuk¹⁶ of *בקש ורדפהו*, *שלומו ורדפהו*, to seek and pursue peace.

[The Train](#)

The Ben Ish Chai (1832-1909) was asked about the 19th-century revolutionary invention, the train. The question: If Shlomo Hamelech was the wisest of all men, then why didn't he invent the train in his time, thousands of years earlier?

The Ben Ish Chai answered that the truth is that Shlomo understood the depths of all the wisdoms of the world and could have invented the train in his time. But he didn't because Hashem didn't allow him to do so as a means of protecting the world. When wisdom is given to the side of holiness, it comes with specific guidelines that correspond to what the world is able to handle responsibly. Had Shlomo invented the train in his time, it would have started a chain of developments which by the time of Nevuchadnetzar may have already reached something like the atomic bomb. And that would have meant the destruction of the world.

arrangement, R' Yitzchak assumed the mantle of Nasi of kollel Vohlyn in Eretz Yisrael, and with it the merit of lighting the fire in Meiron on Lag Baomer as well as the Tiferes Yisrael shul in the Old City of Yerushalayim.

¹³ The Mishna (Avos 5:20) says a machlokes that is *לשם שמים* was the dispute between Hillel and Shamai... The *מאור ושמש* (Korach, s.v. *והנה אררהיב*) points out that the Mishna says Shamai and Hillel, not Beis Shamai and Beis Hillel, because Shamai and Hillel argued *לשם שמים* whereas their students had their biases as each one said their Rebbe is greater.

¹⁴ The Zohar (Naso) tells us that a son-in-law, with his learning Torah and good deeds, causes a spiritual elevation to his father-in-law in the *עולם העליון*, higher world.

¹⁵ The Chesed L'Avraham (*מעין שני*, end of נ"ב) says that we give a name to a baby boy only after the *mila* because all the while he still has the *ערלה* and impurity on him, the *sod ha'neshama* cannot take effect on him (cited by the B'tzeil Hachachma 6:10).

¹⁶ Tehillim 34:15.