

דעת תורה!

I am very perturbed at the extent to which conflict has increased among the Jewish people. Every day we see the formation of new factions and sub-factions,

publicizing their positions in public by printing many posters, and widely distributing them.

Each side competes with the other to add more signatures to support his position, and to denigrate and embarrass the opposing side. I saw that one individual wrote, "If one adds more signatures, it is more praiseworthy". **But I say, the more signatures one adds to such a poster, the more one is contributing to *machlokes b'Yisroel!***

The result of this trend is that the entire Exile is turned into a fiery inferno. Every single day I am exposed to newspapers and posters from every point of view, that pour shame and insults on those who oppose them. **And it especially aggrieves me that these actions of the Satan have also succeeded in arriving to our Holy Land; it too has fallen into the web of *machlokes*.**

And I do not know who granted them permission to practice the aveiros of *loshon hora* and *machlokes*, which is such a terrible and awful sin!

It is a great mistake when each side thinks it has a monopoly on the truth, and that only his opponent is responsible for the controversy, and bears guilt; his side is blameless, and will be free of any punishment. **This is a great error!** Because even if the truth is on his side, it is inevitable that every argument breeds a desire to win, which adds crookedness to itself, and justifies it. It is impossible to have a completely proper position, where anger and competitiveness are involved.

What is worst of all is that the sin of Chillul Hashem results; and who knows what this can ultimately lead to, G-d forbid?

...Particularly in our time, when the Jewish people are beset by so many tragedies and difficulties... every one of us needs to strengthen ourselves in **learning Torah and doing good deeds**; to endeavor to **increase harmony between Jews**, to tip the Heavenly scales in our favor.

How, specifically in such a time, the heart trembles to see the actions of the Satan succeed in increasing fighting and argument between Jews, in so many cities of Israel, creating a severe Chillul Hashem!

☞ And how great is the obligation of anyone who has the ability, to PROTEST, and at the very least not to allow the printing of such posters, *which is a very severe sin!* ☞

Therefore, my brothers and friends, have pity on yourselves, and on all of Klal Yisroel. Everyone in his own town should do what he can to extinguish the fire of *machlokes*, so that Hashem's great Name will not be further desecrated. **We should all strive to increase harmony in our cities, and in this merit we will be *zocheh* to hear the voice of the one who will herald peace in the world.**

The most junior of the Kohanim, who writes with a broken heart,

Yisroel Meir haKohen

Author of the sefer Chafetz Chayim and Mishna Berura

(Excerpted from the 1948 edition of his sefer, *Z'chor I'Miryam*)