

# Dvar Torah for Rosh Chodesh Av/Parshat Matot-Massei

Based on *Likutey Moharan I*, Lesson #136/ *Likutey Tefilot* #116

“And Aharon died on the first day of the fifth month” (*Numbers* 33:38). Hillel says, “Be a student of Aharon’s. Love peace and pursue peace. Love people and help them get more interested in Torah” (*Avot* 1:12)... “Don’t judge the other guy till you’ve been in his position” (*ibid.* 2:5).

(Paragraphs in blue are from *Likutey Tefilot*.)

As you certainly noticed, we are trying to undo our *galut* problem by pulling it out by its roots—sinat chinam (baseless hatred). Aharon HaKohein was a champion of peace. Is it mere coincidence that the Torah points out the anniversary of the day of his death—the start of the month of Av, when the mourning for the Beit Hamikdash intensifies—just as the month of Av begins? It’s as if this verse was put here to serve as a “holiday reading,” to underscore the message of the day.

Last week we spoke about finding good in others. To a certain degree this finding occurs “from a distance,” that is, without necessarily having any direct contact with him or her. What happens when our dealings with another are “in your face,” up close and unpleasantly personal? What if we are having a *machloket* (fight, spat, disagreement or quarrel) with someone? How do we put on the brakes and join Aharon’s Yeshiva? **HELP!**

Rebbe Nachman points out that “it takes two to tango”—*machloket*—can only take place if there’s no unity. If you find yourself in a spat it means you and your adversary are on two different levels of *kedushah* (holiness). One is higher, the other lower. How do you get together?

If your friend is the higher, you must make the necessary effort to reach his level.

If the disagreement is because of me, because I am distant from their level of holiness and they spurn me, have pity on me, for Your sake. Help me to soon repent, completely and honestly, so that I reach the level of every Jew who is greater than I. Let me join them and be at peace with them.

If you are on the higher level, your friend may be jealous of your success. You must help him achieve your level. You do this by judging him favorably. As we saw from Lesson #282, judging someone favorably actually puts them on a higher level.

Father in Heaven, help me. Rescue me, so that I will be worthy of judging every person favorably, even my opponents. Help me to judge favorably even those who oppose and disgrace the genuine tzaddikim. I want to do what our Sages taught: “Don’t judge the other guy till you’ve been in his position,” so that there won’t be any fights or arguments whatsoever, so that Jews will have peace and harmony.

You are filled with compassion! You are the Master of truth and peace! You know where all *machloket* stems from, especially the *machloket* between all the different streams of Judaism. **OY!** How many lives have been wasted because of this *machloket*?!

Have pity on all of us. Reveal the truth. In Your mercy do what You have to do to unite us and make peace between us, Your holy nation, Your chosen.

Rebbe Nachman offers a word of caution. Despite your best efforts to end the *machloket* by judging favorably, the other party may not be interested in peace. If so, God forbid, he will fall further away.

*agutn Shabbos!*  
*Shabbat Shalom!*

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