

A Call to Action

Serious illnesses ... Children in crisis... A fatal accident...

Will the tragedies never cease?

We call upon all Bnei Torah in our community to respond to this Eis Tzarah the way Jews have always reacted to dangerous situations in the past - with tefilah and introspection.

It is time to end the controversy that is alienating us. For there to be a Machlokes in Torah is the way of the Torah. When a group of individuals attempts to coerce others into accepting their opinion, it is not.

We call upon those responsible for the current situation not to transform what is a Machlokes Batorah L'Shiem Shamayim into a political campaign. We ask that you not trivialize a family's pain and anguish by using their tragedy for personal gain.

Is there anyone among us who can claim to understand the ways of Hashem? When we attempt to assign blame aren't we guilty of perpetuating Machlokes and strife which will only Chas V'shalom bring misfortune on Klall Yisroel?

Let us put an end to the dissention that seeks to divide and destroy us. Let us each heed the council of our Rav in matters of Halacha and let there be only peace and harmony among us from this day forth.

Dear Concerned and Frightened Mother,

As one of the many carriage wheeling mothers in Boro Park, I found your letter highly offensive and nothing but an ill-disguised attempt at manipulation of public sentiment. What's more, I highly doubt the veracity of your identity.

How dare you insinuate that by wheeling a carriage through the streets on Shabbos, I am Chas V'Sholom responsible for the tragedies that have recently occurred. Have you a direct line with Hakodosh Boruch Hu that you can make such a horrific statement? How do you have the audacity to imply that by following the halachic rulings of my Rav, I am minimizing my Zechusim!?!

How have I caused heartache? Have I forced you to carry against your will? Have my Rabbonim delegitimized those who disagreed with them as they themselves were vilified? Have we sunk so low that we can't even differ peaceably in Halacha?

Don't you realize the irony of your suggestion that we avoid carrying on Shabbos so as not to risk offending a few individuals, which, in turn, diminishes our Oneg Shabbos? Are these few individuals as concerned about marring the beauty of my Shabbos? It's interesting to note that the Prisha (סוּתוֹן שַׁבָּת סק"א) says that taking a stroll on Shabbos with an Eruv is one form of Oneg Shabbos.

I have the courage you profess to lack. I am not afraid to follow my Rav and I will not capitulate to your attempt at guilt-inducing rhetoric.

As mothers, we have a special opportunity to bring Yeshuos for Klall Yisroel by studying the many practical Halachos of Shabbos (and leaving the halachos of eruven to our competent Rabbonim,) thereby enhancing our families' observance of this special day.

A Torah Observant Mother