



הריני מקבל עלי מצות עשה של ואהבת לרעך כמוך  
והריני אוהב את כל אחד מבני ישראל כנפשי ומאודי

## **The Curse of Strife**

### **Sefer Darkei Shalom – The Ways of Peace**

#### **Chapter 5, Section 3, Pages 54-56**

*Translated by Rabbi Ariel Bar Tzadok*

In the book *Even Shlomo*, Chapter 11, letter Het, it is written that there are “five types of mixed multitude (Erev Rav) within Israel (i.e. the Jewish People)<sup>1</sup>:

1. Masters of argument and slander.
2. Masters of lust.
3. The (two-faced hypocrites (lit: those whose inside is not like their outside).
4. Those who hunt after honor so as to make themselves famous.
5. Those who hunt after money.

**The Masters of Argument are the worst of all; they are called Amalek.**

The Son of David shall not come until he (Amalek) is blotted out of the world. Any argument that is not for spiritual reasons (the sake of Heaven) is because of the mixed

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<sup>1</sup> The source of this is the holy Zohar 1-25A. There it says, “There are five sections to the Erev Rav (mixed multitude): They are the Nifilim, Giborin, Anakim, Rifa'im and Amalekites. Because of them, the final Hey (of the holy Name) has fallen from Her place.” The commentaries *Yedid Nefesh* and *HaSulam* both have interesting details regarding this passage.

One thing clear from all the commentaries is that the Erev Rav are those Jews (i.e. incarnate as Jews) but who do not observe the Mitzvot with a pure heart. This is recognizable by their actions.

The *Yedid Nefesh*, on page 188, writes of Amalek: “They make themselves appear as good Jews, as *Hasidim* and as *Rabbis*.” Above we read other aspects of Amalekite action, i.e. causing strife. It is unfortunate that this spirit of ungodly conflict imbues a small number of members of the religious community today.

We must be vigorous in integrating our spirituality with our Halakhic observance. Yet, we must not confuse the spirit of ungodly conflict with holy conflict, which is blessed by HaShem. As with Pinhas the son of Eliezer, the son of Aharon the Kohen, we must always stand up against those who would seek to weaken the Torah, and thus the foundation of the Jewish people, even if those individuals are Jewish “leaders” as was Zimri, the leader of the tribe of Shimon who by his actions caused death to reign in Israel.

Yet, we must not sink to their level to fight them; we cannot defeat them by imitating their immorality. On the contrary, we can only defeat the Erev Rav among us by our own Torah righteousness.



multitude, who jump at any chance to give themselves power and take the glory, as it is written, "Let us make for ourselves a name". (Tikunei Zohar 46B).

In the book *Hafetz Haim*, Section "Guarding the Tongue", Subsection "Remembrance", Chapter 15, it is written in the name of the Rambam: ***"The prophets have prophesied and the wise have spoken; all together condemning the evils of arguments, and still could not condemn it enough."***

The Hafetz Haim has also written that, aside from arguing being a great sin in and of itself, it is also the cause of many more grievous sins, such as pure hatred, slander, libel, anger, insult, harmful speech, public embarrassment, vengeance, bearing a grudge, cursing, causing the loss of one's livelihood, and many a time the desecration of the Name of G-d, which is the greatest sin of all.

By this, one also comes to godlessness, and then one draws others to become involved with his arguing.

By this comes mockery; they mock those of the opposing view in order to draw more people to support their side.

Even if, at the beginning, all this evil was not the original intention; even so, by the end they will not escape all of the above-mentioned sins.

This is certain to all who are experienced and know the way of the world.

In the Gemara Hulin 89A, it is written:

***"Rabi Ila says,  
The world stands only upon he who is silent at the time of conflict."***