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[Home](#) > Tefillah - 067 Fights of Chanukah

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## Tefillah - 067 Fights of Chanukah

### ***Fights Are Inevitable***

After we ask Hashem in the blessing **ראה בענינו** that Hashem should see our suffering, we ask Hashem, **ריבנו ריבנו** - to “fight our fights.” On Chanukah and Purim as well, we ask Hashem to “fight our fights” for us.

There are generally three kinds of fights (*merivah*) that we go through. Man and woman get into fights with each other, because woman is sometimes called *rivah*, strife; therefore, husband and wife encounter fights with each other. Another kind of fight takes place within oneself - our own desires fight and clash with each other [when we are not sure what we want]. Another kind of fight is when we fight our *yetzer hora* (evil inclination).

We all have fights. It is impossible for us to go through life without encountering fights, because our soul has a nature to fight with opposition. The only issue is what kind of fight we will have. When we don't express our need to fight in a healthy way, it will manifest itself in an unhealthy and evil way.

In the future, there will be peace upon the world, and our soul will be at peace as well. But for the time being, there is no revelation of true peace on the world, and therefore, we need to undergo certain fights. That is our current situation; fights are part of our life.

We have the power of *bechira* (free will) to decide if our fights will mainly be with our *yetzer hora* - or if they will be with people. If a person fights his *yetzer hora* a lot, he will fight a lot less with others. If he doesn't fight his own *yetzer hora*, he will end up fighting a lot with other people and with his own family, because his soul demands some kind of fight.

The words of the *Chovos HaLevovos* are well-known - the main fight we have on this world is with our *yetzer hora*.

What does it mean, though, that we are asking Hashem to fight our fights for us, **ריבנו ריבנו**?

### ***When Does Hashem Fight For Us?***

The world is full of wars, some bigger and some less. But every day, there are wars going on. Since the beginning of Creation, there has been war and strife. The first strife in Creation was between Kayin and Hevel - on the first day of Creation, there was already fighting. How many people have died since the beginning of this world due to strife!

If we would have Hashem fight our fights for us, everything would be different. However, in order to merit Hashem's help in our fights, we need to fight in the proper way. If we don't have the proper perspective on fights, we have no right to ask Hashem to fight our wars for us.

The power to fight, *merivah*, is mostly being used in the world for evil. Fights usually stem from bad *middos* – mainly from the traits of jealousy, desire, and seeking honor, which are the three negative traits that “take a person out of the world”.

In the war against the Greeks, they discovered a flask of pure olive oil. This hints that their fight emanated from an inner purity; if not for their pure motivations in why they fought, they wouldn't have merited to find the flask of pure oil. They were willing to have *mesirus nefesh*, and from that inner recognition, they fought the Greeks. They fought with purified *middos*. In the times of Mordechai and Esther as well, they fought with pure intentions. The wars fought on Chanukah and Purim represent the true kind of fight: that when we have to fight, we need to do so with pure intentions, and not out of a superficial desire to fight those who challenge us.

But the fights in today's times are mostly stemming from all kinds of selfish interests – either out of jealousy, desire, or to seek honor. When this is the motivation of people when we fight, we don't have the right to ask Hashem to fight our fights for us.

### ***Fighting Along With A Hope For Peace***

If a war is all about winning, this is not a true kind of war, and we can't ask Hashem to assist us in such wars. If a person doesn't have a wish that there should be peace in the world, he does not have the correct perspective on wars and fights. He fights for the sake of fighting and winning, and not because he wants to arrive at peace with his challengers.

The inner essence of life is really peace; it is the inner point in the soul. The nature of the soul is to be peaceful. The soul also has the deep ability to pursue the truth – and to fight for the truth – but truth is meant as a vehicle to arrive at peace. When truth is not used as a vehicle to get to peace, then pursuing the truth is destructive to the world, because when peace isn't the goal, the goal is instead about victory over the enemy.

Although the true power of peace will be revealed in the future, that doesn't mean we cannot access the power of peace in our times. We can still access it and reveal it somewhat.

However, to *only* pursue peace is also detrimental. We are living in a world which is a mix of good and evil, and it is mostly evil; if a person only pursues peace, and he does not fight for truth, then he will wish to connect with the entire world, even with those who are totally evil. This is detrimental. A person must not use the deep power of peace to seek peace with the evil in our times. Instead, we must access our power of peace by desiring deep down that there should be peace in the world.

If we do not bear in mind this perspective as we fight for truth, our fights for the truth will be destructive. The world cannot survive on truth alone; we need both truth and peace together. “Truth and peace met.” Moshe epitomized truth, and Aharon epitomized peace. We need to fuse both abilities together. In order to really use the power of pursuing truth and to fight for it, we need to have the goal of peace in the equation.[\[1\]](#)

We must make the following internal clarification. We all fight; that is our nature. However, just because this is true does not mean that we should ignore the goal of peace. Most of the wars and fights in today's times are not being conducted with any peace, and they certainly don't bring peace. But if we can fight in a holy manner, like the wars we fought on Chanukah and Purim – and this can only be done when it is together with the understanding of peace.

If a person doesn't have a yearning for peace in the world, his power to fight will be turned to evil uses. His fights will stem from bad *middos*, and he resembles Korach's fight, which was for evil motives.

### ***How To Deal With A Fight***

We all have fights as we go through life. Sometimes we choose to fight, and sometimes we are dragged into a fight against our will – whether it comes to fights with our family members, or with our neighbors, etc. There is no way to go through life scot-free from any fights, because all of us will inevitably end up in some kind of fight.

In whatever fight we find ourselves in, though, we should always make sure that we have a desire that there should be eventual peace, even as we are in middle of going through the fight.

Chazal say that the *yetzer hora* gets stronger every day, and if not for Hashem's help it is impossible to defeat (Sukkah 52a). The depth behind this is that Hashem's peace is the most powerful weapon against all our fights. The way to merit it is when we have a desire for peace, even as we are fighting the opposition.

We must try to avoid fights and strife as much as we can, but all of us inevitably will get into fights. Even Moshe Rabbeinu was placed into a fight, with Korach. Even Aharon, the paradigm of peace, did not always have peace; he gave the idea to make the Golden Calf because all of the fighting that was going on. And they were fighting with him too in the process. So inevitably, all of us encounter fights. However, although this is true, we need to make sure that we have a deep desire for peace. When we find ourselves in a fight, we must desire peace at the same time. This is the true way to fight, which the *tzaddikim* all fought with.

This is a matter that requires deep reflection. This was always a point that needed to be considered, but in our generation especially, where there is much war and strife going on, this matter needs tremendous attention. If a person doesn't make this reflection, he will lose both this world and the Next World, in his ignorance towards this concept.

The sensible way is to seek both truth and peace together. As we fight, we must wish there could be peace too.

Even when we had to fight the Greeks, who created the Greeks? Hashem created them. We were only to win over them because we realized that they were *Hashem's creations*...

May we merit that Hashem should fight our fights, and that He should reveal onto the world “the vessel which holds all blessing – the power of peace”.[\[2\]](#)

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[\[1\]](#) Refer to **Tefillah #089** - *Truth and Peace Together*

[\[2\]](#) For more on this concept, see ***Getting To Know Your Soul: Part II: Chapter 10: Netzach: Lasting Victory***.