***How can we disagree constructively? What can we learn from our different traditions?***

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| **Disagreement for the Sake of Heaven in Judaism** | **A Biblical View of Conflict in Christianity** | **Ethics of (Ikhtilaf) Disagreement in Islam** | **Constructive Conflict in Conflict Resolution Studies** |
| Howard Kaminsky, “Constructive Conflict in Jewish Tradition: Machloket L‘shem Shamayim, A Dispute for the Sake of Heaven” [[1]](#footnote-1)  In elaborating upon the concept of a disagreement for the sake of Heaven (Mishnah Avot, 1:12) the Rabbis were not merely attempting to define it only on a theoretical level. Rather, they were intent upon prescribing practical standards of comparison to be used in testing and evaluating the true nature of real-life conflicts that one either encounters or engages in. That means to say, if one is involved in a conflict and finds that his or her attitude and actions conform to the Hillel and Shammai paradigm—that one is doing such things as engaging in dialogue, being receptive to the other party’s opinion, maintaining benevolent feelings, and exhibiting goodwill towards the other—then one can be confident that one is promoting constructive conflict. | Ken Sande, The Peacemaker, p. 30-31**[[2]](#footnote-2)**  A Biblical View of Conflict:  Conflict is not necessarily bad…  Since God has created us as unique individuals, human beings will often have different opinions, convictions, desires, perspectives, and priorities. Many of these differences are not inherently right or wrong; they are simply the result of God-given diversity and personal preferences. Therefore … we should not demand *uniformity* (see Eph. 4:1-13). Instead of avoiding all conflicts or demanding that others always agree with us, we should rejoice in the diversity of God’s creation and learn to accept and work with people who simply see things differently than we do…. Most importantly, the Bible teaches that we should see conflict neither as an inconvenience nor as an occasion to force our will on others, but rather as an …opportunity to glorify God, serve others and grow to be like Christ. | Taha Alwani, Ethics of Disagreement in Islam, ch. 4**[[3]](#footnote-3)**  Ethics in the Pursuit of Truth:  When differences of opinion were inevitable … They (the Companions of the Prophet)  would remain firmly within the bounds of what is allowed in striving to reach the truth. They would admit their errors without any bitterness or embarrassment while always having a tremendous respect for people or virtue, knowledge, and understanding. No one would overestimate himself or disparage the ability or the rights of his brother Muslim. The search for truth and for the correct judgment was the mutual endeavor, and they willingly accepted the truth from whichever quarter it came. | Johnson, Johnson and Tjosvold, “Constructive Controversy”, p 91,101**[[4]](#footnote-4)**  For controversies to be managed constructively, participants need both cooperative and conflict management skills. The following skills are necessary for following and internalizing these norms:  (1) I am critical of ideas, not people. I challenge and refute the ideas of the other participants, while confirming their competence and value as individuals. I do not indicate that I personally reject them. (2) I separate my personal worth from criticism of my ideas…. (3) I listen to everyone’s ideas, even if I don’t agree….. (4) I change my mind when the evidence clearly indicates that I should do so…..  Thomas Jefferson based his faith in the future of democracy on the power of constructive conflict…. Engaging in the constructive controversy procedure skillfully provides an example of how conflict creates positive outcomes. |

**Discussion Questions:**

1. In pairs, chose at least 2 texts to read outloud together (if you have time read the other two texts).
2. What are some of the similiarities and differcnes between these texts?
3. Note: different role models for engaging in healthy disagreement are mentioned in these texts, who are they? Who are your role models for doing so?

***כיצד ניתן לנהל מחלוקת בצורה בונה? מה ניתן ללמוד מהמסורות השונות שלנו?***

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| **מחלוקת לשם שמים ביהדות** | **מבט נוצרי מקראי על מחלוקת** | **אתיקה של מחלוקת**  **(אדב איחטילאף) באסלאם** | **קונפליקט קונסטרוקטיבי בפילוסופיה המערבית** |
| חיים קמינסקי, "מחלוקת בונה במסורת היהודית: מחלוקת לשם שמים"[[5]](#footnote-5)  בפירוט המושג 'מחלוקת לשם שמים' (משנה אבות א:יב), הרבנים לא רק ניסו להגדיר אותו באופן תיאורטי. אלא, הם היו נחושים בדעתם לקבוע סטנדרטים מעשיים שניתן יהיה להשתמש בהם בכדי לבחון ולהעריך אתהמהות האמיתית של המחלוקות שאנשים פוגשים בחיי היומיום שלהם. . כלומר, אם אדם שמעורב בקונפליקט מוצא שהגישה והמעשים שלו או שלה דומים לפרדיגמה של הלל ושמאי –אדם זה עושה דברים כמו לנהל דיאלוג, להביע כבוד כלפי הדעה של האחר, לטפח רגשות של חסד, ולהביע רצון טוב כלפי האחר – אז אותו אדם יכול להיות בטוח שהוא מקדם מחלוקת בונה. | קן סנד, העושה שלום, עמ' 30 – 31**[[6]](#footnote-6)**  מבט מקראי על מחלוקת:  מחלוקות הן לא בהכרח רעות... מכיוון שהאל ברא אותנו כיחידים ייחודיים לעתים קרובות יהיו לבני אדם דעות, אמונות, שאיפות, פרספקטיבות ועדיפויות שונות. שונות זו בטבעה היא איננה טובה או רעה, היא קיימת כתוצאה מגיוון והעדפות אישיות שהעניק לנו האל. לכן... מוטב שלא נדרוש אחידות (ראו אפר' ד:1-13). במקום להימנע מקונפליקטים או לדרוש מאחרים תמיד להסכים איתנו, עלינו לשמוח בגיווון של בריאת האל וללמוד לקבל ולעבוד עם אנשים שפשוט רואים דברים בצורה אחרת מאיתנו (ראו רומאים, 15:7, 14:1-13)..... והכי חשוב, המקרא מלמד אותנו שעלינו לראות מחלוקות לא כאי-נוחות ולא כעתוי לכפות את רצונינו על אחרים, אלא... כהזדמנות לפאר את האל, לשרת אחרים ולגדול להיות כמו ישוע. | טאהא אלאוני, אתיקה של מחלוקת באסלאם, פרק ד'**[[7]](#footnote-7)**  אתיקה של רדיפה אחר האמת:  כשמחלוקות היו בלתי נמנעות... הם (חבריו של הנביא) היו נשארים באופן מוצק בתוך גבולות של מה מותר בחיפוש אחר האמת. הם היו מודים בטעויות שלהם בלי מרירות או בושה תוך שמירה על כבוד רב כלפי אנשים אחרים, או צדק, ידע או בינה. אף אחד לא היה מעריך את עצמו יתר על המידה או מזלזל ביכולות או בזכויות של אחיו המוסלמים. החיפוש אחר האמת והשיפוט הנכון היה מאמץ הדדי, ומרצונם קיבלו את האמת מכל כיוון שהגיעה. | ג'ונסון, מחלוקת בונה**[[8]](#footnote-8)**  (91-92) על מנת שמחלוקות תתנהלנה בצורה בונה, המשתתפים זקוקים למיומנויות שיתופיות ולמיומנויות לניהול מחלוקות. המיומנויות הבאות צריכות להיות מופנמות: (1) אני מבקר את הרעיונות ולא את האנשים. (2.) אני מפריד הערך העצמי שלי מביקורת של אחרים על הרעיונות שלי. (3.) אני מקשיב לרעיונות של אחרים גם כשאני לא מסכים איתם. (4.) אני משנה את דעתי כשהראיות מצביעות בבירור שעלי לעשות זאת.  (עמ' 101-102) טומיס ג'פרסון ביסס את האמונה שלו בעתיד הדמוקרטיה בכח של מחלוקת בונה.... עיסוק בהליך של מחלוקת בונה באופן מיומן מדגים כיצד קונפליקט מייצר תוצאות חיוביות. |

**שאלות לדיון:**

1. בזוגות, בחרו בלפחות שני מקורות וקראו אותם בקול ביחד (אם נשאר לכם זמן קראו גם את השניים האחרים).
2. מהו הדמיון והשוני בין המקורות הללו?
3. שימו לב: במקורות מוזכרים מספר מודלים לחיקוי לניהול מחלוקת באופן בונה, , מי הם? מיהו המודל לחיקוי בעניין זה עבורך?

**كيف يمكننا أن دير الاختلاف بشكل بناء؟ ماذا يمكننا أن نتعلم من تقاليدنا المختلفة؟**

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| **الخلاف من اجل الله في الديانة اليهودية** | **النظرة المسيحية عن الاختلاف** | **ادب الاختلاف في الاسلام** | **خلاف بناء في الفلسفة الغربية** |
| جونسون, الاختلاف البناء[[9]](#footnote-9)  تفسير المصطلح الخلاف البناء اوالخلاف من اجل الله. الحاخمات لم يهتموا فقط للبند النظري بل اوضحوا الاعتماد على المبادئ الذهنية والفعملية لبناء اداراة الخلاف بشكل افضل. وذلك بموجب شريعة هيلل وشماي وكرح. تلك المبادئ تتطلب تحليل جدي وموضوعي وصريح للمواضيع المتناقضة. بالاضافة الى ذلك يجب ان تتوفر انفتاحات للاراء المختلفة والحاجة الى النوايا الطاهرة والعفيفة. حينما تتوفر تلك الشروط تنتج ردود بناءة للاراء المتناقضة وامكانيات مختلفة قد تحدث خلال الخلاف وفي نهاية المطاف ستجلب نتيجة ايجابية. | كن سند، الذي يصنع السلام, صفحة 30 – 31**[[10]](#footnote-10)**  منظور الكتاب المقدس عن الخلاف  الخلافات ليست سيئة بالضرورة ... لأن الله خلقنا مختلفين فطبيعة الأفراد في كثير من الأحيان مختلفين من حيث الآراء البشرية، معتقداتهم وتطلعاتهم، ووجهات نظر وأولويات مختلفة. هذه الطبيعة المختلفة ليست جيدة أو سيئة، الخلاف كان موجودا نتيجة للتنوع والتفضيلات الشخصية. لقد وهبنا الله الخلاف ... يجب أن لا نطالب بمواقف احادية ومتجانسة. بما معناه بدلا من تجنب الصراعات أو نطالب الآخرين أن نتفق دائما معنا، بل علينا أن نفرح بالاراء المختلفة لانها تحمل الصحة الفكرية التي وهبنا اياها الرب وان نتعلم كيفية القبول والعمل مع الاخرين اللذين هم مجرد يرون رؤية الأشياء بشكل مختلف منا. والأهم من ذلك، الكتاب المقدس يعلمنا أننا يجب أن نرى الخلافات بانها غير مريحة وتفرض مواقفنا على الآخرين، وانما كفرصة لتمجيد الله، وخدمة الآخرين، وان نصبوا ان نكون مثل يهشوع. | طه جابر العلواني، ادب الاختلاف في الاسلام. [[11]](#footnote-11)  اداب البحث عن الحقيقة: حينما يقع الخلاف لا محالة فان الصحابة يضعون الخلاف ضمن حدود "المسموح وغير المسموح" والبحث عن الحقيقة. كانوا يعترفون باخطائهم دون حرج او خجل، بموازة الحفاظ على احترام الاخرين في الاسلام. لم يكن احدا يقدر نفسه الا ما وسعها ولم يستهن احدا باخر او بقدرات الاخر او الاستهانة بحقوق الاخر. البحث وراء الحقيقة كان مجهود مشترك ومن ارادتهم تقبلو الحقيقة. | جونسون, الاختلاف البناء **[[12]](#footnote-12)**  (91-92)  يجب ان تدار النزاعات بشكل بناء. المشتركين يجب ان يتمتعوا بمهارات بناءة وتعاونية لإدارة النزاعات. تذويت المهارات يجب ان تتلاشى مع هذه البنود:  (1) انتقد الافكار وليس الاشخاص.  (2) التغاضي عن نقد الاخرين لافكاري. (3) استمع للافكار الاخرى حتى وان كنت لا اوافق عليها (4.) انا اغير رائي حينما تكون الحقائق ظاهرة وجلية (صفحة 101-102).  توماس جيفرسون أسس إيمانه في مستقبل الديمقراطية عن طريق قوة الخلاف البناء ... الانخراط في إجراء الجدل البناء يوفر مهارة جديدة وناجعة الا وهي كيفية انتاج من الصراع نتائج إيجابية. |

**اسئلة للنقاش:**

1. المهمة بالازواج: اختاروا على الاقل مصدرين واقروا المصدرين مع بعضهن البعض (اذا تبقى وقت ارجو ان تقرأو بقية المصادر).
2. ما اوجه الشبه والاختلاف بين المصدرين؟
3. انتبهوا: في المصادر مذكورين عدة نماذج لادارة الخلاف بشكل بناء، ما هي تلك المصادر؟ وما هو النموذج المثالي حسب رائك؟

**Session Plan for Break out Groups (Interfaith gathering 19.2.2017):**

1. Introductions (10min):
   1. Goal: As mentioned, tonight’s event is part of a week long effort of individuals and communities around the country working together to raise awareness of how can we engage in disagreements and conflicts in a more constructive and sacred manner. Together, we will be doing a multi-faith/ culture text study and discussion on this important topic.
   2. Introductions: Name and where you are coming from.
   3. Who was the last person with whom you had a (serious) argument/ disagreement? What is one emotion that comes up for you when you think back to that moment?
   4. Intro to text study: Over the next 30 min. we are going to explore some of wisdom of our religious/ cultural traditions, as well as our own life wisdom that may inform us on how we can engage in disagreements in a healthier manner. There are four texts on your sheet, each one describes some of the wisdom of healthy disagreement in Judaism, Christianity, Islam and contemporary conflict resolution. Each of the texts are from major contemporary scholars who wrote articles, books based on their religious/ cultural texts and traditions of how to engage in healthy disagreement/ constructive conflict.
2. Text Study (15min):
   1. Split into small groups of 2-3 (from diverse religious traditions) and study together at least 2 of the texts then come back together as a group to discuss.
   2. Always begin by reading the text aloud – sometimes more than once. Check that there are no words or phrases that are not understood by allowing people the opportunity to ask for explanations.
   3. Question to think about while reading through the texts in pairs:
      1. What are some of the similarities between the different texts?

* They all mention the idea of trying to be like “role models” (Hillel, Shamai, the companions of the Prophet, Jesus, Thomas Jeffereson).
* They all emphasize that conflcit may not be negative but when done correctly can be positive.
* That for disagreements to be healthy there needs to be good relations between the sides.
* Keeping an open mind and understanding the opinion and logic of the other side, sometimes admitting to being wrong.
  + 1. What are some of the differences between the different texts?
* They all point to different religious/ cultural role models.
* The religious traditions speak more of searching for truth, Heaven/ God being part of how we disagree, the character of the people in the disagreemntss, while the conflict resolution text speaks more of rational skills.

1. Group discussion (15min):
   * 1. Personal Reflection Questions (after asking 2 questions give minute for them to think):

* Which texts did you read and what can you take from them to try and engage in healthier, sacred, constructive disagreements in our own lives?
* What are some of the challenges in applying these texts in real life today? (For example the issue of scope: only within each religious tradition or also between?).
  + 1. Ask each individual to write down and consider sharing one thing they would like to take with them from this session that may help them in their various disagreements and conflicts. (Give everyone a minute, no need to share).

**Bigoraphies of Scholars:**

**Rabbi Dr. Howard Kaminsky[[13]](#footnote-13)** has an EdD (Doctor of Education) from Teachers College, Columbia University, with a focus on traditional Jewish perspectives on peace and interpersonal conflict resolution. He has a MS in Jewish education from Yeshiva University and received semichah from Mesivta Tifereth Jerusalem and studied at Yeshivat Chafetz Chaim, where he was a student of Rav Henach Leibowitz. Howard has over twenty-one years of classroom teaching experience. He has taught at the Yeshiva of Central Queens, Yeshiva University High School for Girls, and Fordham University. He studied and received training in conflict resolution at Teachers College’s International Center for Cooperation and Conflict Resolution and has served as a community mediator at Community Mediation Services in New York. His academic interests and research are in the areas of social and emotional learning, conflict resolution, and Jewish studies.

**Taha Jabir Al-Alwani (طه جابر علواني), Ph.D. (1935 – March 4, 2016)[[14]](#footnote-14)** was the President of Cordoba University in Ashburn, Virginia, United States. He also held the Imam Al-Shafi'i Chair in the Islamic Legal Theory at The Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences at Corboda University. Al-Alwani concentrated on the fields of Islamic legal theory, jurisprudence (fiqh), usul al-fiqh, Qur'anic sciences, and general Islamic thought. Al-Alwani was founder and former chairman of the Fiqh Council of North America. Born in 1935 in Iraq, Al-Alwani received his high school diploma from Al-Azhar in 1953 and received his bachelor's from the College of Shari’ah and Law at al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt in 1959. He continued at the college and earned a master's degree in 1968 and a doctorate in Usul al-fiqh in 1973. Al-Alwani has written and published over 30 books on a wide variety of Islamic issues including the "Ethics of Disagreement".

**Ken Sande[[15]](#footnote-15)** is the President of Peacemaker Ministries. He is an engineer and attorney who, since 1982, has used biblical peacemaking principles to help resolve thousands of conflicts, including business, employment, and family disputes; church divisions; and complex lawsuits. He is a member of the national panel of arbitrators of the American Arbitration Association and has served on the board of directors of the Christian Legal Society and the Dispute Resolution Committee of the State Bar of Montana. He presently serves on the Board of Directors of the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation in Philadelphia. Ken is a Certified Christian Conciliator™ and is the author of numerous resources on conflict resolution, including The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict, (Baker Books, Updated ed. 2003) and Peacemaking for Families (Tyndale, 2002).

**David W. Johnson[[16]](#footnote-16)** (born 1940 in Muncie, Indiana) is a social psychologist whose research has focused on four overlapping areas: cooperative, competitive, and individualistic efforts; constructive controversy; conflict resolution and peer mediation and experiential learning to teach interpersonal and small group skills. Johnson has developed and applied psychological knowledge in Constructive controversy…. Johnson began documenting the essential role of intellectual conflict in effective instruction and decision making in the 1960s when conflict was largely seen as undesirable and destructive. His formulation of constructive controversy theory, the program of research and the operational procedures that he created, have now made constructive controversy a frequently used procedure in education and in decision making situations in a wide variety of organizations. His work demonstrates the instructional and decision-making power of intellectual conflict and highlights the importance of training all citizens in a democracy in the controversy procedure to enable them to engage in constructive political discourse. effort to improve practices within educational systems. Johnson’s books have been translated into 20 different languages and his work has been applied in many countries.

**Bibligoraphy for further reading:**

**Constructive Disagreements in Jewish, Islamic, and Western Traditions**

<http://elmad.pardes.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Jewish-and-Islamic-Conflict-Sourcesheet.pdf>

**Constructive Controversy: The Value of Intellectual Opposition**

<http://www.beyondintractability.org/artsum/johnson-constructive>

**Howard Kaminsky, “Constructive Conflict in Jewish Tradition: Machloket L‘shem Shamayim, A Dispute for the Sake of Heaven”**

<http://www.9adar.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Constructive-Conflict-in-Jewish-Tradition-by-Howard-Kaminsky.pdf>

**Alwani, Taha J. *Ethics of Disagreement in Islam*, The International Institute of Islamic Thought, Virginia, USA, 1996.**

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2. Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker, A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict Third Edition*, USA: Baker Books, 2004, pp. 29 – 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
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7. Alwani, Taha J. *Ethics of Disagreement in Islam*, The International Institute of Islamic Thought, Virginia, USA, 1996. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
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11. http://waqfeya.com/book.php?bid=11553 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
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13. http://pcjcr.pardes.org/about-us/staff/ [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taha\_Jabir\_Alalwani [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. https://www.monergism.com/topics/mp3-audio-multimedia/all-north-american-speakers-messages/ken-sande [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\_W.\_Johnson\_(scholar) [↑](#footnote-ref-16)