

The Weekly Farbrenging



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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

SPEAKING TRUTH (I)

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUTH

One should always speak truthfully; as the Torah says, *Midvar sheker tirchak* – “Distance yourself from falsehood.” Even if the proposed lie will not cause any harm to anyone, it is forbidden to tamper with a story. Moreover, whoever is careful to ascertain the facts of a story before repeating it will always have many listeners.

(אורחות צדיקים שער כ"ב, ר"ח שער קדושה פ"ב)

There was once a town called Kushta (in Aramaic, “truth”), where the inhabitants never veered from the truth and no one died at a young age. The *amora* Rav Tavus moved to the town, married there, and had two sons. Once when his wife was washing herself, a neighbor knocked on their door, and feeling that it was inappropriate to say that she was bathing, Rav Tavus said that his wife was not there. As a result, shortly after, his two children died. When the townspeople heard the story, they asked him to leave Kushta and not bring the *malach hamaves* upon them.

(סנהדרין צ"ז ע"א וברשי"ש)

The Torah warns us to *distance* ourselves from falsehood, since falsehood is more disgusting than all other negative traits. One who speaks truth follows the path of *HaShem*, and merits His *brachos*; one who chooses falsehood invites upon himself worry, conflict and pain.

(ס' החינוך מצוה עד)

There was once a young man who, since his childhood, had always done as he pleased, and had committed many *aveiros*. One day, feeling remorseful, he went to Rabbi Shimon ben Shetach and told him he wanted to do *teshuva*. Rabbi Shimon told him that all he had to do was to watch himself from telling lies and he would be saved from transgression. “No problem,” said the young man. Rabbi Shimon had him swear, and the young man went home.

Some time later, the young man was in his

neighbor's home and, not managing to control himself, he stole all the gold and silver. As he was leaving, he thought to himself, “What will I tell the neighbor when she asks about her possessions? If I deny taking them, it will be a lie, and what will be of my oath?”

He then returned whatever he had stolen, and understood the wisdom of Rabbi Shimon.

(אוצר המדרשים, ס' חסידים החדש ע' ג)

CONSIDER

What is the problem with falsehood: the speaking itself or its bringing to distrust?

Is changing the facts for the sake of peace: a permissible form of falsehood or is it the real truth?

THE MISFORTUNE OF FALSEHOOD

When *HaShem* commanded Noah to take a pair of all living creatures into the *teiva*, Falsehood wanted to enter as well, but was stopped because he had no pair. Searching for a match, he met Tragedy and asked if he was willing to be his pair.

“What will you give me in return?” Tragedy asked.

“All my profits,” Falsehood promised, and Tragedy agreed.

After the *mabul*, when they left the *teiva*, Falsehood went around to collect his earnings, but they had all been taken by Tragedy.

“Where are all my profits?” he complained.

Tragedy replied, “Didn't we make an agreement?”

To this, Falsehood had no response. Nothing is achieved by falsehood, for everything will be taken by tragedy and misfortune.

(מדרש שו"ת ז)

All the letters of the word *emes* (אמת) stand on two feet, whereas the letters of the word *sheker* (שקר) stand on one. This teaches us that truth stands firm and endures, while falsehood does not. Additionally, the letters of *emes* are far apart in the sequence of the *alef-beis*, while the letters of *sheker* are close to one another, for keeping truthful can be difficult, while resorting to lying is easy to do.

(ילקוט שמעוני, בראשית ג)

The punishment of a liar, *Chazal* say, is that even when he tells the truth, no one believes him.

(סנהדרין פ"ט ע"ב)

KEEPING TO TRUTH

One is allowed to change the truth for the purpose of peace. However, this only applies when relating something about the past, but not when promising something that is to be done in the future.

However the *Baal Shem Tov* cautions that one who often speaks falsehood should abstain from changing the truth for the purpose of peace, since this may strengthen his bad habit.

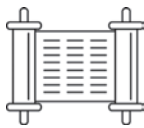
(ש"ע אדה"ז סי' קנ"ו, כתר שם טוב אות מ)

A wealthy man decided one night, while saying *Kerias Shema*, that he would give twenty-five rubles to *tzedaka* every time he said something that was not true. When the local *melamed* heard this, he exclaimed, “Then lie and provide for the poor!”

Later, when that *melamed* visited Lubavitch, the Rebbe Maharash rebuked him for his advice, for one is not allowed to lie, even for a good reason.

(סיפורי חסידים זיון תורה ע' 208)





BRACHA ON WATER

Does one make a bracha on water drunk before running?

The Mishna teaches that one who drinks water to quench his thirst makes a *shehakol*. The Gemara explains that if drinking only to wash down food stuck in one's throat, one makes no brachos before or after, since water only gives a person pleasure when they are thirsty.¹

Other beverages, however, require a bracha before and after, even when drunk to wash down stuck food, since their taste is enjoyable.² The same is true of water mixed with even a little flavoring or another drink, when its taste is noticeable.³

Whenever the person enjoys the water, they are presumably somewhat thirsty and make a bracha.⁴ Therefore, one who drinks water to swallow a pill, before a medical procedure, or to hold off a headache, makes a bracha only if they enjoy the water as well.⁵ If part of a *revi'is* was drunk for thirst and part not, one makes a *bracha rishona* but no *bracha acharona*, since a full *revi'is* was not drunk for thirst.⁶

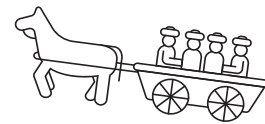
As for drinking before a fast, some are *medayek* from the Alter Rebbe's words that water gives enjoyment only "when one is thirsty," so one who drinks now only to prevent later thirst, before a fast or a journey, makes no bracha.⁷ The same applies to filling up on water for a health need, such as a nursing mother drinking water to have more milk, or mineral water taken as a regimen.⁸

A speaker whose mouth becomes dry, but does not feel thirsty at all, would not make a bracha on the sips they take to relieve dryness of the mouth alone.⁹ When drinking hot water just to warm up, some hold that no bracha is made, while others hold that warm water, unlike cold, provides enjoyment even without thirst. Practically, one makes a bracha unless he truly has no enjoyment.¹⁰

Seltzer follows the same principle: one who enjoys the carbonation makes a bracha even when not thirsty, but a small sip taken only to swallow a pill or to ease heartburn gets no bracha.¹¹

1. משנה ברכות מ"ד ע"א, ובגמרא שם ע"ב. שו"ע או"ח סי' ר"ד ס"ז.
2. שו"ע שם ס"ח. שו"ע"ר שם סי"ג, סדר ברכה"נ פ"ז ה"ז.
3. אשל אברהם (בוטשאטש) סי' ר"ד במהדורת.
4. מ"ב סי' ר"ד ס"ק מ'.
5. סדר ברכה"נ פ"ז ה"ח. וראה שבת הלוי ח"י סי' פ"ג.
6. ברכת הבית שער ג' ס"ק מ"ב.
7. לשון אדה"ז בסדר ברכה"נ שם: "שאינ הנאה לאדם בשתיית המים אלא בשעה שהוא צמא". וראה דעת תורה סי' ר"ד בשם דעת קדושים. ובאמרי אמת ליקוטים ברכות מד ע"א מסתפק בזה.
8. שדי חמד, אסיפת דינים, מערכת ברכות סי' א' אות ל"ג. שו"ת רבבות אפרים ח"י סי' ס"ד. תורת היולדות פס"ב ס"ג. שעה"צ סי' ר"ד ס"ק ל"ו.
9. נשמת אברהם סי' ר"ד ס"ק. וראה פתחי הלכה פ"ד הע' 29 ע"פ השעה"צ סקל"ד דכל שהוא מרגיש הנאה מהשתיה צריך ברכה דמסתמא צמא הוא קצת.
10. אמרי נעם ברכות מ"ה (שלא בריך). אגלי טל מלאכת אופה ביאורים אות י"ט ס"ק י"ב. בנין שלם סי' ר"ד ס"ז ע' קל"ג.
11. פתחי הלכה שם. שו"ת משנה הלכות ח"י סי' מ"ד. וראה שערי ברכה פ"ח הע' י"ה.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה



R. CHAIM BENTZION RASKIN

R. Chaim Bentzion (Bentche) Raskin (5624-5699) was born in Dubravna, to a family of chassidim going back to the time of the Alter Rebbe. After his marriage, he lived in Rudniya, near Lubavitch, and was a chossid of the Magen Avos of Kopust. After the passing of the Kopuster, he became a staunch *mekushar* to the Rebbe Rashab, and later the Frierdiker Rebbe.

R. Benche was known for his incredible dedication to the chinuch of his children. As a result of his *mesiras nefesh*, R. Benche merited to raise Chassidishe children in very trying times, and he is the patriarch of the large Lubavitcher Raskin family.

His children's chinuch was R. Bentche's life. For the first ten years after his marriage, he lived in Rudniya, a town near Lubavitch with a chassidishe bent. But the *haskala* reached that town too, and local youths began to promote secular ideals. When they tried to open a *haskala* school, R. Bentche and R. Boruch Shalom Kahan opposed it intensely, even throwing the desks out of the school building. Their efforts were successful and the school did not open.

But R. Bentche was still concerned about his children, and decided to relocate. He chose Gzhatsk (Gagarin), a town that was been outside the Pale of Settlement, and

therefore comprised almost completely of non-Jews, from whom he wasn't afraid his children would learn.

In Gzhatsk, he immediately established a chassidishe cheder. In hiring a *melamed*, he had to choose between one who had intense *yiras Shomayim* but read with a "Poilishe" pronunciation, and a successful teacher with Lubavitch-like Russian pronunciation of the words, but didn't excel in *yiras Shomayim* to the same degree. The Rebbe Rashab told him to choose the first candidate, since the most important factor in choosing a *melamed* is *yiras Shomayim*.

R. Bentche would rise each day at 4 am and read Tehillim with great emotion and tears. When he would recite *birchos haTorah* and come to the words, "*v'nihyeh anachnu v'tze'etzaenu*" – "may we and our children know Your name," he would say those words with intense concentration and feeling.

In the middle of a farbrengen in Leningrad, the Frierdiker Rebbe once said, "There's a Yid living near Moscow who wakes up at 4 o'clock each morning. He reads Tehillim and cries, and begs Hashem that his children and grandchildren should be *ehrlliche Yidden*."

(תשורה כ"ז, תשע"ט ע' 18)

A Moment with The Rebbe



NOT EVERYWHERE IS KFAR CHABAD ON SIMCHAS TORAH

One of the most revolutionary projects of Tzach in Eretz Yisroel during its early years was Erev Chabad. Held in dozens of kibbutzim, these evenings consisted of Chabad niggunim, with speakers explaining their deeper meaning and sharing ideas of Chassidus and Yiddishkeit. Through them, hundreds upon hundreds became exposed to Chabad.

In Elul 5725, a major Erev Chabad was held at the amphitheater in Caesarea, complete with a full orchestra. The event included a performance of dancing Chassidim, including while standing on their heads – something that was ridiculed by some in both the frum and

secular press.

When Tzach director Rabbi Yisroel Leibov was in yechidus that Tishrei, the Rebbe raised the subject.

"You need to understand that what is appropriate for Sichas Torah in Kfar Chabad on Simchas Torah is not appropriate for a public event," the Rebbe told him. "I'm referring to the dancing while standing on their heads, which raised criticism in the newspapers."

After Rabbi Leibov expressed his anguish over what had happened, the Rebbe added, "There's no need to be upset, just to make sure not to do it again."