

# The Weekly Farbrengens

MERKAZ ANASH מרכז אנאש  
 649 • יוחי תשפ"ב • לחען ישמעו • 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 have someone come in, 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)

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 Rebbi Shimon ben Shetach and told him he wanted to do *teshuva*. Rebbi 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. Rebbi 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 Rebbi 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 Noach 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.

(לקוט 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.

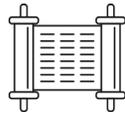
However the *Baal Shem Tov* cautions that one who often speaks falsehood should abstain from changing the truth for the purpose of peace, since this may strengthen his bad habit.

(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 זוין תורה ע' 208)



### BROKEN GLASSES ON SHABBOS

**My glasses broke just before Shabbos. Can I use them as is on Shabbos?**

Halacha states that if the leg of a bench fell out on Shabbos, it may not be reinserted even loosely out of concern that one may come to do so tightly, in the normal manner, and transgress the *melacha* of *boneh* (building) or *makeh b'patish* (completing a product). As a safeguard for this prohibition, Chazal forbade using the bench by supporting it with something else.<sup>1</sup> It may, however, be moved for purposes other than its normal use.<sup>2</sup>

If the leg already fell out and was used for sitting before Shabbos, one demonstrates that he isn't bothered, and the concern that he may fix it doesn't apply. Likewise, if the leg broke, cracked, or got lost, there is no concern since it can't be reinserted. Some *poskim* even suggest that one may intentionally get rid of the leg on Shabbos to preclude this concern and permit its use. If it can only be fixed professionally, we aren't concerned that one will bring it to a professional on Shabbos.<sup>3</sup>

How do these principles apply to glasses?

If a screw fell out from the frame, one is not allowed to screw it back, and one may not even use the glasses in their present state out of concern that he might screw it. Some suggest that one can get rid of the screw and thus permit wearing the broken glasses. But if the glasses broke in a manner that one cannot fix them without a professional (e.g. cracked), there is no concern that one will fix them on Shabbos. If they are completely unwearable, the glasses are *muktzeh*.<sup>4</sup>

If the frames bent out of shape, one is not allowed to straighten them due to *makeh b'patish*.<sup>5</sup>

As long as one used the broken frames before Shabbos as is, we are not concerned that one will come to fix them on Shabbos.

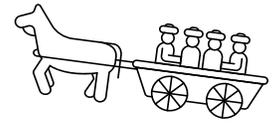
1. שו"ע או"ח סי' ש"ח ט"ז ושוע"ר. 2. ראה קצוה"ש סי' ק"ט סק"י, ו"ס. 3. וראה משנ"ב שם ס"ק ס"ח, וראה ס' להלכה שם. 4. שלמי יהודה פ"ד סי"ג יסוד ו'. 5. שש"כ פט"ו ס"ע"ז.

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

לע"נ

ר' משה יעקב ב"ר ישעי' ע"ה  
והילד תנחום ב"ר משה יעקב ע"ה  
יאהרצייט י"ד טבת

## Our Heroes



### R. YITZCHAK AIZIK OF VITEBSK

R. Yitzchak Aizik Beharad (Bograd) was born in 5528 (1768), in the town of Smilovitch, in the Minsk district. In 5543 (1783) he attended the Minsk debate between the Alter Rebbe and some of the leading non-Chassidische Rabbonim, following which he became a *chossid* of the Alter Rebbe.

R. Yitzchak Aizik received *semicha* from the Alter Rebbe and served as the Rov of Vitebsk for 60 years. He was also a *chossid* of the Mittlerer Rebbe and Tzemach Tzedek, and had a close relationship with the Rebbe Maharash in his youth. R. Yitzchak Aizik merited a very long life, passing away in 5627 (1867), at the approximate age of 100. His *teshuvos* were published in *Shu"t Pnei Yitzchak*, and some additional *chidushim* of his remain in manuscript.

One erev Shabbos after *chatzos*, a man entered the Vitebsker Rov's home and requested a *din Torah*. Asked why he couldn't choose a better time, the man explained that he was a *melamed* and he couldn't leave his students anytime during the week. R. Yitzchak Aizik acquiesced. When he asked where the other party was, the *melamed* replied that he came to hold a *din Torah* with Hashem.

R. Yitzchak Aizik sat down and the *melamed* presented his arguments: "There are three partners in creating a child - the two parents and Hashem. Now, I have a daughter to marry off and no money, but the third partner is well off and isn't helping out." R. Yitzchak Aizik became very serious, and he *parkened* that the *melamed* is right.

On Sunday, a fancy carriage parked in front

of the *melamed's* home. The wife of the local *poritz* was suffering from a toothache, and they heard that the *melamed's* wife could practice magical healing. Reluctantly, the woman went, and miraculously, the pain disappeared. The *poritz's* wife was grateful, and hearing about their dire state, she gifted them with more than enough money to marry their daughter.

Before R. Yitzchak Aizik accepted the *rabbonus* in Vitebsk, the Alter Rebbe posed three *shailos* to him and then told him how to *parken*. R. Yitzchak Aizik understood that he will need to rule on these cases, and indeed, two of the *shailos* came up soon after. Sixty years passed and the third *shailah* hadn't come up, but R. Yitzchak Aizik was certain that he wouldn't leave this world until he is presented with that case.

One day, the elderly R. Yitzchak Aizik was sitting in the Beis Din, when a butcher entered the next room and asked another *rov* about an animal lung and he ruled it to be *treif* as Halacha states. Hearing the exact question that the Alter Rebbe had told him 60 years prior, R. Yitzchak Aizik knew that it had to be *kosher*. The *rabbonim* probed the butcher until he admitted having intentionally damaged the lung to settle a score.

Having addressed the third *shailah*, R. Yitzchak Aizik called for the *Chevra Kadisha*. Everyone was surprised since he looked healthy, but he was adamant. He entered his home and lay in his bed, and he returned his *neshamah* to his maker.

(לקו"ס פרלוב דפ"ח ע' פו)

## A Moment with The Rebbe



### TRUE ANASH

A Lubavitcher woman who ran a support fund for *kallas* informed the Rebbe that she planned to resign from her work. In Elul 5740 (1980), the Rebbe penned her a letter, unequivocally rejecting her idea to quit, and encouraging her to strive for greater heights.

"Now with regards to your reasoning, you should seek the council of *anash* activists. That is, true *anash*, and true activists..."

And the Rebbe explained: "Whoever will tell you that it is preferable to withdraw,

or weaken, any activities in the spirit of Frierdiker Rebbe - is no activist and is no member of the Rebbe's *anash*.

"Even though there may be reasons and justifications, any sluggishness and or being downtrodden in his work are contrary to his explicit directives, pleas and promises."

After sending it to her, the Rebbe edited this letter again for the general public and was ultimately published in *Likutei Sichos*.

(Likutei Sichos, vol. 19, page 620; Hiskashrus issue 1163)