

The Weekly Farbrengens



SPEAKING TRUTH (II)

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES

The wife of the *amora* Rav caused him much distress. Whenever he asked for lentils, she would serve him beans, and when he asked for beans, she would serve him lentils. When his son Chiya grew older, he began to switch his father's messages, so that his father now received what he had requested. At first Rav thought that his wife had mended her ways, but then the boy told him what he had been doing. Rav was pleased with his son's resourcefulness, but he told him not to continue with it, for he would become accustomed to speaking falsely.

(יבמות סג ע"א)

Rebbi Zeira said that one should not promise something to a child and then not fulfill it, for then he would be teaching him to lie.

The *tzaddik* Reb Yechezkel of Shinova was known as the 'lover of truth.' His father, the *Divrei Chaim* of Tzanz, once said that his son would never go back on his word, even if he was given everything in the world. Once, a tailor sewed a garment for Reb Yechezkel's grandchild. After trying it on, the boy refused to take it off until the tailor promised that he would sew pockets for it. The *tzaddik* then insisted that he do as he had promised, so the child would not become accustomed to telling lies.

(סוכה מ"ו ע"ב, סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 208)

Chazal say that when questioned about a matter about which one is not entirely sure, one should respond "I don't know," so that he should not end up telling a lie and be held responsible for his words.

(מס' דרך ארץ פ"ב ה"א)

When one answers Yes or No, that answer should be completely truthful. Even nodding or shaking one's head, or any kind of expression, should indicate only the truth.

(ספר חסידים ס' לתרנח)

EXACT WORDING

A decree against the *Yiddische* style of dress was

placed on many cities in Poland, and the *rabbanim* differed as to whether one had to be *moser nefesh* for this or not. The *tzaddik* Reb Avraham of Chechanov held that one must have *mesirus nefesh*, while other *talmidei chachomim* in his city insisted that another opinion should be considered on such a vital subject. Therefore, despite the dangers of travel, Reb Avrohom decided to travel to Warsaw to the *tzaddik*, the *Chiddushei HaRim*. When his family expressed their concern, he assured them that there was no need to worry. After all, he was not going to settle there ('*avek-zetzin zich*'). When he arrived, the Rebbe offered him a chair, but Reb Avrohom refused and remained standing as the *Chiddushei HaRim* gave his view (which also expressed the need for *mesirus nefesh*).

When Reb Avrohom left, he explained why he had refused to sit: "I had told my family that I was not going to '*avek-zetzin zich*' (literally, "sit"), and I did not want to go back on my word, even in its literal sense."

(סיפורי חסידים זוין מועדים ע' 59)

CONSIDER

Was it permissible for the Rov to deny owning the knife? How then could he admit it and put his life in danger?

Did Reb Refael hold that it was forbidden to say "it is raining" when coming in from the rain? Why did he refrain from saying so?

One of the *talmidim* of Reb Pinchas Koritz, Reb Refael of Bershah, excelled in this *middah* - so much so, that if he were to walk into the *beis medrash* dripping wet and someone would ask him if it was raining outside, he would only say, "When

I was outside it was raining..."

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"א ע' 243)

STAYING FAR FROM FALSEHOOD

Once, in the city of the author of *Machatzis HaShekel*, a dead man was found, and the Rov's knife, full of blood, was lying near him. The murderer had evidently stolen it from the Rov in order to implicate him. The townsmen advised the Rov to tell the judge that the knife was not his. In court, however, the Rov told the truth, admitting that it was his knife, though he insisted that he had not committed the murder, and in the end he was freed. He later explained to his well-meaning townsmen that when the *shevatim* were told by Yosef to bring Binyomin to Mitzrayim, Yehuda could have taken another child and told Yosef that this was Binyomin, but he could not bring himself to tell a lie.

(הקדמת המו"ל למחצית השקל יורה דעה)

Reb Aizik of Vitebsk was one of the outstanding *chassidim* of the Alter Rebbe. He lived to the age of 105. During all his 85 years as a *rov*, he abstained from eating *lekach*, and when questioned about this, he would not answer. A short time before his passing he told the following story:

Once, as a young *rov*, I participated in a *simcha*, and took a piece of regular cake from the table. One of the guests asked me why I did not take the *lekach*, since it was more special. I had forgotten about the *lekach* but was embarrassed to say so, so I answered, "I don't eat *lekach*!"

From that day on, I never tasted a piece of *lekach* again, in order to stay true to my words.

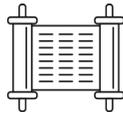
(שמועות וסיפורים ח"א ע' 261)

Chazal teach that the *Yidden* were sent into *golus* only because they transgressed the *possuk*, *Midvar sheker tirchak* - "Distance yourself from falsehood."

The *tzaddik* Reb Pinchas Koritz would tell his *talmidim* that if *Yidden* refrained from telling lies, *Moshiach* would have come long ago. The main deterrent to *Moshiach's* coming is falsehood.

(שערי הקדושה להר"ו, שמועות וסיפורים ח"א ע' 243)





WASHING CLOTHING ON ROSH CHODESH

My clothing is dirty and I need them. Can I wash them on Rosh Chodesh?

Although Rosh Chodesh is referred to in the posuk as a moed, work is not prohibited on that account. Yet, the Talmud Yerushami quotes a custom that women refrain from melacha on Rosh Chodesh. Various reasons are offered for why this day of rest was given to them. One is as a reward for not participating in the chet ha'egel. Others say, based on the Midrash, that this is because Rosh Chodesh was given to the Jews in the merit of Chana's prayer, the prayer of a woman.

Following the first reason, some rishonim write that this dates back to the days of Moshe Rabbeinu. Shulchan Aruch records the custom and poskim discuss whether the custom obligates. Their conclusion is that due to its widespread acceptance, it is binding on all women. There is no such custom for men, and a man who practiced it doesn't need hataras nedarim to stop.

Poskim debate whether this custom begins from the night of Rosh Chodesh, and in practice, women refrain by night as well.

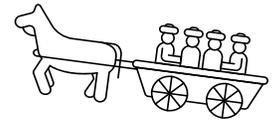
Regular house chores—like cooking and cleaning the home—aren't included in the minhag. Some hold that unless one has a specific custom, it would be sufficient to refrain from just a few melachos. Some point out that the common custom is to refrain from sewing, some add washing clothing, and some add ironing as well. In practice, it is accepted for women not to sew, weave, or wash clothing on Rosh Chodesh.

With regards to sewing a button that fell off, contemporary poskim rule that it is allowed if needed for that day. A seamstress should consult a rov when is it considered a loss (davar ha'aved) that would allow her to take the job.

In contemporary times, when washing machines wash clothes at the press of a button, some poskim hold that women may turn it on, while others are stringent. In practice, if there is no male available to turn the machine on, it is allowed for clothes needed on Rosh Chodesh.

- 1. ראה ערכין דף י' ע"ב.
2. טור או"ח סי' תי"ז בשם פרד"א.
3. ראה כף החיים (פלאגי) סי' ל"ד סי"ח.
4. ראה שבלי הלקט סי' קס"ט הו"ד בבי"י סי' תי"ז.
5. שו"ע או"ח סי' תי"ז ס"א, מ"א שם סק"ג, וביה"ל שם ד"ה והנשים נוהגות.
6. ראה פר"ח שם.
7. ביה"ל או"ח סי' תי"ז ד"ה הנשים.
8. ראה דעת"ת סי' י"ז ובסידור יעב"ץ שי"ח פ"ז.
9. רוח לוח דבר יום ביומו דיני ר"ח.
10. שבה"ל ח"ו סי' נ'.
11. ספר הלכה סי' מ"ט אות ח' בשם הרב וואזנר ע"ה.
12. ראה ערוה"ש או"ח סי' תי"ז ס"י.
13. ראה שבט הקהתי ח"א סי' קל"ה.

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



R. LEIB DOKSHITZER

R. Aryeh Leib Sheinin was born in 5649 in Bobroisk and was sent to learn in Lubavitch at a young age. He was known in Lubavitch for being completely removed from the material world, absolutely devoted to learning and davening, to the extent that the Rebbe Rashab is said to have referred to him as a beinoni, as defined in Tanya. After his marriage R. Leib served as a mashpia in Zhebin and then as the rov of the town of Dokshitz. He was killed by the Nazis on Lag Baomer 5702.

R. Avrohom Pariz related:

"I was walking down the streets of my hometown Bobroisk on a break from yeshiva in Lubavitch, when I was called into a shul to complete a minyan for Mincha. When I entered the shul, I saw my good friend Leibeh Sheinin wearing tefillin and davening baarichus. When I asked why they didn't count him for the minyan, they replied that he'd been sitting there since the morning, oblivious to his surroundings. Clearly he had lost his mind, and is unsuitable to be counted for a minyan...

"That's when I realized the distance

between myself and Leibeh Sheinin: they still considered me 'normal.' That stirred me to become more dedicated to davening."

Though the Frierdiker Rebbe sent R. Leib to serve as the rov of Dokshitz, many townspeople were unhappy with a true chassidische rov who didn't follow baalibatische protocol. They complained to the regional governor and described him as a "batlan" who is unfit for the position. The governor asked to meet R. Leib, but when he saw his striking appearance, he confirmed that he should be the rov.

During the machlokes in town, R. Leib gave a Shabbos Hagadol derashah in which he spoke about the opening Mishna in Pesachim, "Any place where one does not bring chometz, he does not need to check." R. Leib explained it in chassidische style: chometz refers to negative traits and pride. Since you did not deposit by your friend, you shouldn't be checking there for negative traits. Instead, check inside yourself...

(חסידיים הראשונים ח"ב ע' 244, 247)

A Moment with The Rebbe



TO BE A GERRER CHOSSID

Despite encouraging all Yidden to study Chassidus Chabad, the Rebbe often encouraged non-Chabad chassidim to strengthen their commitment to their own Rebbe and his ways.

When the Gerrer chossid Reb Elimelech Naiman of Borough Park brought his son to the Rebbe on 2 Shevat 5750 (1990), the Rebbe asked him, "Is your son already a Gerrer chossid? You know that it depends on you. It depends on how you educate him, and his education is your responsibility..."

On 22 Teves 5745 (1985), a bochur recorded the following in his diary:

On the Rebbe's way out from mincha, he gave a bracha to a group of Gerrer

chassidim present. The Gerrer Rebbe's driver approached the Rebbe to convey his regards. The Rebbe thanked him and asked him his name. He answered, "Yehonoson Borenstein."

The Rebbe smiled and replied, "That's your goyishe name. What is your Yiddishe name?"

Now, he gave his name together with his mother's name. The Rebbe responded, "You need to give your mother's name to the Gerrer Rebbe, not to me. I need your father's name..."

(Traditionally, the mother's name is used as a request for a bracha, and the father's as a way of reference; A Chassidische Derher, Teves 5776, page 11)