

PARSHA WITH

Rabbi Shmuel Brazil



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תשפ"ו RAV BRAZIL PARSHAS TOLDOS
VERTICALITUS - THE LIFE OF TORAH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

Why is a lie described as an evil in "a horizontal" position and not vertical like the term hold up? Let us suggest the following explanation. An animal does not have a *neshamah* nor *bechirah* for it only possesses instinct. Therefore its spine is horizontal to the earth and its head faces the ground. Its entire existence and focus is only earthliness. Man in contrast, has a vertical spine and his head lifts towards the heavens because even though he also gravitates towards the earth he nevertheless has an inner drive from his *neshamah* to direct himself towards *shamayim* and spiritual *shelaimus*.

There is an idiom Have a spine or you have no backbone. It is used to describe someone who lacks courage, strength of character, or the ability to stand up for himself. In our context it means when one easily surrenders to his *yetzer hara* and physical cravings he is being called upon to become morally healthy for his spine is likened to that of an animal. In short he is spiritually dysfunctional and sadly is stricken with Horizontilitus. Hashem's intent for Man is to be always in a spiritual state of Verticalitus driven by the clear consciousness of Hashem as his sole creator, master, and constant life sustainer.

Truth is part of the essence of Man. The *passuk* says concerning the creation of man ויפח חיים באפיו נשמת חיים. Hashem blew within man's nostrils a living spirit a divine *neshamah*. The Baal Haturim writes that the end letters of these four word spell חותם which means a seal or signature. Hashem's seal is *emes* as Chazal say אמתה הקב"ה and therefore the purpose of blowing a soul into Man is for him to strive to navigate and lead himself towards the vertical life of righteousness and *emes* instead of *sheker* which is horizontal and earthly.

Now we can understand why *sheker* is translated as a lie. When Hashem blew within Man his *neshamah* it produced the power of speech ויהי אדם לנפש חיה which Targum Onkelos explains לרוח ממללא a speaking spirit. It is the *neshamah* that gave him the power to talk. Since he derives speech from his *neshamah* it is expected that Man should speak only the truth and not falsehood. Otherwise, he becomes an ingrate by abusing and ignoring the very power that gifted him speech in the first place. When one "lies" either spiritually or physically, he immediately transforms his being into the HM the Horizontal Man guided by his earthliness and not by his divine spirit.

The following contents of this *mamar* is primarily based on the sefer of Derech Aitz HaChaim Rav Pinchus Erlinger. Yaakov was the pillar of *Emes* in the world, as the *passuk* says תתן. אמת ליעקב That is also the reason why he was also the pillar of Torah. The Torah is the

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ultimate *emes* in the universe through and through. Let us bring a few remarkable allusions to his profound concept. The first three words of the Torah ברא אלוקים have an ending acronym of אמת. The last day of creation which was Shabbos also possesses in its last three words a front acronym of אמת as it states ברא אלוקים לעשות. We see from this that the entire process of creation is surrounded with *emes*.

Rashi in his commentary on *Chumash* spreads the acronym of *emes* equally throughout the Torah. The first letter of Rashi in his commentary on *Chumash* is the א of אמר. The last letter of Rashi in the Torah ends with the letter ת from the word לוחת. The middle word in the entire Torah is the word גחון (Vayikra 11,42) which Rashi translates as מעים intestines which starts with the letter מ once again hinting that the entire Torah is enveloped with this *middah* of *emes*.

The first letter of the *Aseres Hadibros* is the א of אנכי. The first *Mishnah* of תורה שבעל פה begins with the letter מ in the word מאימתי. The first gemarah in *Shas*, *Berachos* begins with the word תנא which is the letter ת, together spelling אמת. The meforshim say that all three above are hinted in the *passuk* ראש דברך אמת (Tehillim 119,160). The beginning of Your words (in the *Aseres Hadibros*, *Mishnayos* and Gemarah) are the letters of אמת.

The *sefarim* tell us that when Hashem created the world he created each day with a unit of three letters from the *Aleph Beis*. 3×7 equals 21. Since the first letter is the letter ב of בראשית, the first unit of three letters are בגד the next is הוז, followed by חטי, next כלם etc. What happened to the *aleph* since there are 22 letters in the *Aleph Beis*? It was used to start the *Aseres Hadibros* with the word אנכי.

One might ask why not begin the world with the unit of אבג then דהו followed by זחט then יכל? What would be done with the letter ת? No problem Start the *Aseres Hadibros* with the word תורה. The most fascinating answer given to why the first unit of the seven days were composed of the letters בגד is that Hashem wanted to demonstrate that the entire universe is based on this *middah* of אמת which is *gematriah* 441 which in מספר קטן adds up to 9. מספר קטן is the method of *gematriah* when one reduces the number into the smallest digit by adding the numbers together). By starting with the unit of בגד and upwards, we will always arrive at the number of 9 which symbolizes אמת. For example הוז = 18 which is again 9. חטי = 27 = 9, כלם adds up to 90 which equals 9 etc. Hashem's unit choice of letters starting with בגד demonstrated that Hashem desired that on each day of creation all speech should only possess the quality of "nine" to be based on *emes* and the *neschama*.

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In contrast if Hashem would have started the Torah with the unit starting with the letter א then the *mispar katan* would add up to 6 which is שקר = 600. אבג = 6, דהו = 15, זחט = 24, יכל = 60, מנס = 150. If so each day created with the unit of these three letters starting with אבג would have sustained a world with sheker as its base. Truth would have been totally eradicated.

Yaakov who personified the *middah of emes* and the Pillar of Torah אמת לנו, was very reluctant to accept the *berachos* designated for Aisav. We find that as he was entering Yitzchak's presence *Chazal* say that he davened נפשי משפת שקר save me from the "edge" of a lie. Even though he was commanded by his mother to accept those *berachos* which came to her through a *nevuah*, he would have still been happier not to receive the *berachos* at all even though was permitted as the *nevuah* dictated.

To attest to his true feelings of reluctance to act with trickery, he said to his mother אולי ימושני אבי, the word "perhaps" is used when the outcome is desirable, in contrast to the usage of פן which means "lest" and foreboding negative results would follow. By using אולי, Yaakov manifested that he wished that his true identity would be discovered before the hoax led to fruition even at the cost of losing the *berachos*.

Rav Yaakov Kamenitzky ztl when he was 16, learned as a *talmid* by the Alter from Slabodka. One Erev Pesach the Alter invited him to his Seder. Rav Yaakov remembered that his father was always strict that on Pesach one never eats out by other people and he innocently thought that this would apply even to include this special invitation. He was thinking very hard to find the right words not to offend his Rebbe. He came up with the plan to say that his *minhag* is not to eat *gebrochts* which the Alter did. Even though his own family also ate *gebrochts*, but since there was now also the issue of his custom not to *mish* in other people's houses, he felt that a lie for the sake of *Darchei Shalom* was in place. The Alter understood and Rav Yaakov did not attend his Rebbe's Seder.

However, afterwards Rav Yaakov had regretted his using of a lie in this situation even though it was permitted by *Chazal* for it was still a lie. From that Pesach on until the end of his life he kept his word and never ate *Gebracts* on Pesach.

When Rav Yaakov at the age of 92 during his last trip to Eretz Yisrael he was asked by his grandson what did you do in order to merit living such a long life. He answered "Never once in my entire life did I speak one word of sheker". (not even on Erev Pesach).

Gut Shabbos