



Volume II Issue #3

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On the Parsha

"...when you come to the land that I am giving you, the land shall rest. It is a Sabbath to Hashem" (Vayikra 25:2)

The Seforno on this Pasuk explains that the purpose of the Shmita (sabbatical) year, is so that the entire year when we are "off", and not working the land, we can be **dedicated to serving Hashem**.

There is a Mitzvah in the Torah (Dvarim 28:9) called, "*V'halachta B'drachav* – And you shall walk in His ways." The Midrash (Vayikra Rabba 17:1) indicates that **grabbing hold of the Middah of Emes – truth, is a remarkable means of developing a closeness to Hashem**, as the verse recited in Ashrei states, "*Karov Hashem Lechol Korav – Lechol Asher Yikra'uhi B'emes* - Hashem is close to all those who call Him – to all those who call Him in truth. "

Life is about emulating Hashem, emulating His Midos and developing a Dveikus (closeness) with Him. The Gemorah in Shabbos (55a) tells us that Hashem's signet ring (*Kaveyachol*) is truth, and Gedolei Torah have urged us to always keep this in mind. The higher level of Emes - that of "*Dover Emes Bilvavo* – speaking truth in one's heart" has been incorporated in our daily davening right after the Akeidah.

The concept of improving our Everyday Emes is one that is eminently doable. Many people who have embarked on this path have been surprised as to how easy it can be, especially when one has a partner or group joining together in this endeavor. The benefits involved are also quite rewarding. Let's adopt this fine Midah to further develop our Dveikus and relationship with HaKadosh Boruch Hu. Please subscribe to our weekly newsletter by sending an email to info@everydayemes.org with "Subscribe" in the subject line or through www.everydayemes.org.

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Chizuk - Inspiration

The following story was relayed at the shiva of Rebbitzin Sheila Feinstein A"H, wife of YBLC" T Rav Reuvain Feinstein Shlita and daughter-in-law of Rav Moshe Feinstein ZT'L. A Rebbe with a rather limited salary had got into a car accident with a woman in Staten Island. He was at fault and immediately took responsibility. However, he requested to have a mechanic provide an estimate on the repairs and fix the car without working through the car insurance provider, thereby avoiding an increase in insurance rates. The woman readily agreed.

When the estimate came in from her mechanic, it was rather high. He asked her if it would be possible for her to go to his mechanic to see if it would be lower. Again, she readily agreed. The price was significantly lower. The Rebbe's financial situation was rather dire at the time and even with the significantly lower price, the Rebbe could not afford to pay. He asked if the woman could pay for the repairs herself and he would pay her back over a short time. Once again, she readily agreed. When the Rebbe was ready to give her the last payment, he decided to drive it over to her house personally. The Rebbe asked her, "I am at a loss as to why you have been so remarkably nice to me. How is it that you have been so kind and trusting of me?"

She responded, "I am a teacher at a public school where Mrs. Sheila Feinstein is the principal. She is such a remarkable and honest person. If you are from her tribe, I most certainly can trust you."

Halacha – Jewish Law

There is a three-way debate regarding the Pasuk in the Torah that states, "*Midvar Sheker Tirchak* – stay far away from a false matter" (Shmos 23:7). Some

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say that it only applies to Dayanim (judges) involved in adjudicating a ruling (Orech Meisharim 9:1).

Others say that by Torah law, it applies to all - but only when harm can come to someone through the lie (Sefer Yereim Mitzvah #235). The third opinion, which is *Halacha L'maaseh* (the practiced law) and the conclusion of most Halachic authorities is that it applies to everyone - even when no harm will come from the lie. (Chareidim Mitzvas Assei 4:26).

EXCEPTIONS AND EXCEPTIONS TO THE EXCEPTIONS

There are many areas of Halacha, however, that are extremely difficult to fully grasp unless one studies them with the following four-point based organizational structure.

- I. The nature of the prohibition.
 - a. Is it a full Biblical prohibition or is it a Rabbinic prohibition?
 - b. Is there an underlying debate as to whether there is an Issur (prohibition) in the first place?
- II. The exceptions to the prohibition.
 - a. What exceptions exist as to the underlying prohibition?
- III. The exceptions to the exceptions.
- IV. The Rishonim and Achronim who discuss issues #2 and #3 – which ones are authoritative in general? Under what circumstances may other Halachic authorities (Poskim) be relied upon? Is it ideal, or just permissible? Are there things one should do when one employs a leniency?

There are a number of exceptions cited in the Poskim as to when one may relate something false. However, since there are numerous exceptions to the exceptions, **one should always ask a competent Posaik (Halachic authority) before one applies the exceptions.** This is not to say that one should avoid using the exceptions – it is just that Halachic guidance is always necessary. The exceptions are a] Mipnei Hashalom (to keep peace) b] to be able to perform a Mitzvah such as Tefillin c] to enable one to act with

humility d] to mitigate significant pain e] to mitigate a huge loss of assets.

In future columns, an attempt will be made to explain these Halachos, according to Rav Nachum Yavrov ZT'L, in his remarkable work entitled, "Niv Sfasayim." Rav Elyashiv ZT'L himself, used Rav Yavrov's Seforim, and held his rulings in high esteem. However, as mentioned earlier, one must always seek personal guidance in these matters from a competent Posaik.

Mussar – Introspection

A Translation of Rav Chaim Kanievsky ZT'L's selection on Emes from his Mussar Sefer Orchos Yosher (courtesy of Orchotyosher.org)

Chazal have greatly praised the trait of Emes and they have said that Hashem's seal is truth. They further stated (Tanna D'Bai Elyahu Zuta Chap. 3) that Hashem created everything except for the trait of lying and the

trait of doing evil to others, for all the other improper traits, at times, a purpose. Whereas, if man did not sin, there would be no

אמת

במה הפליגו חז"ל במדות האמת, ואמרו (שבת 118א) (א) וְחֻמְרוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּב"ה אֱמֶת. וְאִמְרוּ (בתי"א 15"ג) הַבַּל קָרָא הַקְּדוֹשׁ-בְּרִיךְ-הוּא חוּץ מִן מִדַּת הַשֶּׁקֶר וּמִדַּת הָעוֹלָה, שֶׁלֹּא קָרָא וְלֹא עָשָׂה אֱמֶת הַקְּדוֹשׁ-בְּרִיךְ-הוּא וְכֵן (המנהג וְגַל הַמִּידוּת הַרְעוּת יֵשׁ מִן לַפְּסִימִים בָּרָךְ, אֵל מִדַּת הַשֶּׁקֶר, אִם מִן אֵדָם לֹא הָיָה חוֹשֵׁאִים - אֵין קָרָא שֶׁם קָרָא). אִם אֵדָם עוֹשֶׂה אֵת עֲצָמוֹ צְדִיק וְלֹדֵבֵר אֱמֶת, מוֹסְרִין לוֹ מִלֵּאף שְׂמִתְנַהֵג עִמּוֹ בְּרִיךְ צְדִיקִים וְקוֹדְבֵר אֱמֶת, וְאִם עוֹשֶׂה אֵדָם אֵת עֲצָמוֹ רָשָׁע וְלֹכֵחַשׁ וְלֹדֵבֵר שֶׁקֶר, מוֹסְרִין לוֹ מִלֵּאף שְׂמִתְנַהֵג עִמּוֹ בְּרִיךְ רָשָׁעִים וְקוֹדְבֵר שֶׁשֶׁקֶר, וְהַדוֹבֵר אֱמֶת מְקַדְּמֵה מִלֵּאף הַעֲבָרוֹת, בְּדִאִתָּא בְּמִדַּת שֶׁמִּי הַשְׁלִיכִים (אֲשֶׁר הַפְּרִישִׁים עַל רֵי"ו) וְזֶה לְשׁוֹנוֹ וְגַל הַדוֹבֵר אֱמֶת אֵינוֹ נִקְשֵׁל לְעוֹלָם, וְיִמְעָשׂה אַרְבַּע קְטִימִים

need for this trait. If a man attempts to make himself worthy and only speaks Emes, from above he is given a Malach (angel) who acts with him in the manner in which the righteous are treated (i.e. nicely) and the speaks the truth about all his qualities. If a person chooses the wrong path and starts denying things and lying, then he is given a Malach who will treat him as evil-doers are treated and who states inaccuracies about him. One who speaks the truth is one who is careful to avoid all sins and it says in Midrash Mei Shiluach (Otzer Hamidrashim p. 297), "one who speaks truth, never stumbles..."