



לע"נ ברוך בענדיט ובורה גרוס ע"ה  
by Mr. & Mrs. Duvy Gross

# The Hakuk Edition English Topics on the Daf

*Dedicated l'refuah sheleima for Yaakov ben Victoria*

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THE SIXTH PEREK OF YEVAMOS IS DEDICATED:

לע"נ גרשון בן החבר מרדכי

## Yevamos Daf 63

When is one allowed to lie for the sake of peace?

At the bottom of amud a, we find the enlightening episode with Rav and his wife. When his son reversed his father's menu request, Rav chastised him that one should not utter falsehoods.

The commentators ask on this Gemara from a later daf, that one is permitted to say a lie in order to make peace. Why isn't this an example of that exception?

The Maharsha says that although it would have been appropriate for Chiya to alter the truth for the honor of his father, Rav taught him that it's not a good idea. As Yirmiyah mourned the condition of his generation, "They have become habituated to say falsehood," if one does it enough times it will become second nature.

Alternatively, the Meiri says that the hetter is only if telling the truth would cause a catastrophe. Here, Rav was telling his son that he wasn't so bothered by it, anyway. "It's better for her to continue acting in this way than for you to get used to saying untruths," as Meiri puts it.

Other poskim cite a mystifying differentiation from the Sefer Chasidim (426). Brought by the Magen Avraham in siman 156, he says it's permissible to alter the truth only regarding things in the past, but not for the [present or] future! His example is if someone asks you to borrow money and you don't want to, for fear he might not pay back. You cannot say, "I don't have the money," but have to avoid it some other way. According to this, Rav was telling his son that he is prohibited from changing the truth.

Where did the Sefer Chasidim derive such a concept? Well, the Gemara's most famous example of altering the truth is when Hashem told Avraham that Sarah had said "I am old," instead of "he is old." So, we don't see a precedent to speak thusly about the future. Shu"t Lev Chaim (O.C. 1:5) asserts that his source is indeed from our Gemara; Rav forbade him to change his order since it was not just about the past. (Although the issue was over Rav's previously stated words, it was relevant to the future.)

This is not unanimously accepted, though. Daas Torah of the Maharsham (O.C. 156:1) notes various sources which seem to contradict it and rule that one may do it

even regarding the future. For example, the Gemara in Beitzah (20a) recounts that Hillel once brought an animal to be brought as a korbon olah on Yom Tov. Beis Shamai held that this was forbidden, and they confronted Hillel and demanded to know what korbon he was bringing. Hillel told them it was a shelamim, which even Beis Shamai allowed. Rashi explains that he changed from the truth for the sake of peace. Clearly, this is allowed even for the present and future!

Rav Yitzchok Silver shlit" a adds many more places in Shas which permit it, such as the famous Chazal that one should praise a bride as "beautiful and righteous" even if she is not (כלה נאה וחסודה). Nevertheless, in sefer Emess Knai (5:13) he recommends adhering to the opinion of the Sefer Chasidim if at all possible, since many poskim cite it.

In sefer Chofetz Chaim (Rechilus 1:8), he cautions to minimize the falsehood as much as possible. One should try to avoid both words damaging to others and outright lies, as well. This is explicated by the Ramban who explains that when Hashem quoted Sarah to Avraham "And I am old," it was not a lie. Sarah had also said, "After I have withered could I become youthful?" which implies, "I am old"! All Hashem did was to omit her next phrase of "My husband is old" for the sake of peace.

See Orchos Yosher of Rav Chaim Kanievsky shlit" a, who emphasizes the tremendous importance of speaking truth. He cites another passage from Sefer Chasidim (1061) that even when the Gemara in Bava Metzia (23b) lists three areas in which one may deviate from the truth, it doesn't necessarily mean we may say outright lies. "For a man of truth, it should be impossible to utter 'yes' instead of 'no.'" Rather, one may speak

nebulously and say something which may be understood in more than one way.

Our Gemara is thus a powerful lesson in honesty, even where it may technically be permitted to bend the truth.