



The Joy of Torah - For Life

Parshas Toldos - Negotiating Tactics...

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In this week's Parsha (26,29) Avimelech says to Avrohom that they have only dealt kindly with him, and they made a treaty together. The Ramban comments that this fear that Avimelech had does not seem like it was the fear of attacking him, rather this was a continuation of the story of the treaty he made with Avrohom. Avimelech was afraid that he violated the previous covenant by exiling Yitzchok, so maybe someday Yitzchok's children will attack Avimelech's children and take their land. Therefore, he made a new treaty, and Avimelech expresses that here when he says that he never did anything but good.

This is pretty amazing, considering that Avimelech is trying to reinstate the treaty that he broke, so a good tactic is to make an excuse, or apologize. Why is he claiming he never broke the treaty at all?! We see from here an important lesson. Once a person starts negotiating with a certain "truth", then even if everyone knows it isn't true, it has power in the negotiations! The power of establishing even a known falsehood, has a power in their minds!