

Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes... He shall not desecrate his words; according to whatever comes from his mouth shall he do. (30:2,3)

The *Tiferes Shlomo* suggests that the root of *matos* is *yateh*, to turn. The *roshei ha'mattos* are the leaders of the people who have the ability to turn the hearts of the people toward a positive trajectory. The Torah commands them to guard and commit to whatever exits their mouths. In other words, they should not speak from "both sides of their mouths," saying one thing and personally doing another. They must be consistent in personally adhering to what they expect of the people. Only then will they earn the respect to have the ability to be *mateh*, turn, the nation in the correct direction.

Furthermore, it must be *zeh ha'davar asher tzivah Hashem*; "This is the commandment of Hashem." Hearsay is insufficient. The leader, or whoever is relating the law, must render the ruling based upon a clear and unimpeachable knowledge of and proficiency in *halachah*. The *Klausenberger rebbe, zl*, observed that all too often practices and even pseudo-*halachah* is based upon stories in which a *chassid* or follower relates what he has heard or seen, which is insufficient proof for establishing a practice. He was wont to say, "When a *chassid* says that he 'saw' a certain practice executed by his *Rebbe*, it means that he (only) heard about it. If he claims to have "heard" of it, one can be certain that it is a false report. *Halachos* should be established neither on stories nor on what one sees in practice. We have a *Shulchan Aruch*, Code of Jewish Law, for *halachah*, which should be our guidebook for executing our Divine mission in this world.