



SPEAKING WITH CARE (3)

Careful Speech

A peddler once wandered through the markets near Tzipori announcing his wares: "Who wants to buy *life*?" Rabbi Yannai heard him from his home and called the peddler over. "No, sir," said the man. "It's not for you or for people like you."

When Rabbi Yannai insisted, the man approached and opened a *Tehillim* to the *pesukim*, "Who is the man who wants life...? Hold your tongue from speaking evil...." Rabbi Yannai confirmed his claim by quoting the advice of Shlomo HaMelech, "Whoever guards his mouth and tongue protects himself from troubles."

(ויקרא רבה טז, ב)

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel once asked Tavi, his servant, "Go out to the marketplace and buy me a *good* food." Tavi returned with the tongue of an animal. Rabban Shimon then asked him to buy something *evil*. Tavi returned, once again, with a tongue. In response to Rabban Shimon's surprise, Tavi replied, "Both good and evil come from the tongue. When it is good, there is nothing better, and when it is evil, there is nothing worse."

(ילקוט שמעוני תהלים נב)

The King of Persia was once unwell, and his doctors prescribed the milk of a lioness. One brave man responded to the challenge, and set out with ten goats. Nearing the lion's den, he stopped at a distance and sent a goat towards the lioness, which she quickly pounced upon and devoured. The next day, he came a little closer and gave her another goat. After ten days, he was able to approach the lioness, pet her, and take some milk in peace.

Napping on his way home, he dreamt that his limbs were arguing with each other about which of them deserved the credit for acquiring the milk. The feet said, "Without us, you wouldn't ever have gotten here!" The hands claimed, "But we took the milk!" And the brain took the credit for the idea. Finally, the tongue spoke up: "If I hadn't suggested the idea, it would never have happened." The other limbs laughed, "How dare you compare

yourself to us? You're not an active limb like we are!" The tongue responded briefly, "Okay, you will soon see that *I* control you."

Back at the palace, the man said, "Your Majesty! Here is the milk of a dog." The king, furious, commanded that he be hanged. As he was being dragged to the gallows, the limbs began to cry and the tongue said, "I will save you, and you will see that *I* am in charge."

The man pleaded to be taken back to the king, and told him that the milk had in fact been taken from a lioness. This was checked out, and when he was freed, The limbs all surrendered to the tongue: "Now we see that 'life and death depend on the tongue.'"

(ילקוט שמעוני תהלים לד)

Hold Your Tongue

After spending a year learning at the feet of Reb Mordechai of Neshchiz, Reb Naftali of Ropshitz was suddenly advised by the *tzaddik* to return home. He pleaded to be allowed to remain but was ignored, so he turned to the *Rebbetzin*. When she requested that Reb Naftali be allowed to stay, Reb Mordechai agreed, but remarked, "I hope there will be no reason for regret."

A few days later, while Reb Mordechai was still in *shul*, a stranger came to his home. Reb Naftali, sensitive to the visitor's *aveiros*, called out, "Get out of here! How dare you come to the Rebbe's home!"

The stranger fled, but the *tzaddik*, sensing that something had happened, hurried home and asked who had come. Hearing the story, he ordered Reb Naftali to hurry and bring the visitor back.

When the stranger arrived, Reb Mordechai welcomed him warmly and asked him why he had not come for so long. The man promised to come more often, offered the *tzaddik* gifts from his farm, and took his leave.

Reb Mordechai then explained the background to this event to his *talmid*. The visitor had been close to the *tzaddik*, who had lent him the strength to stay away from sin, but since his visits had dwindled, he had been dragged down by many *aveiros*. Too embarrassed to

appear before his Rebbe in this state, he continued to fall lower, until after a long while he decided to forsake *Yiddishkeit* completely. However, before doing so, he decided to visit Neshchiz just one last time as a test: If he would be accepted warmly, he would know there was hope, and he would begin behaving like a proper Yid.

Reb Mordechai concluded: "I didn't want all my hard work and my *tefillos* on behalf of this Yid to be endangered by your rash tongue. That's why I asked you to go home a few days earlier."

(סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 388)

Watching Our Words

In תש"י, the chossid Reb Volf Greenglass compiled a booklet of basic but little-known daily *halachos* that are overlooked by some. In a letter, the Rebbe suggested including some *halachos* about guarding one's speech, for he had heard that some people were not vigilant in this area.

(אג"ק ח"ג ע' שנה)

The Rebbe explains that in addition to refraining from speaking negatively, one should also make a point of using his speech for good things. In fact, by increasing positive talk, one automatically comes to refrain from bad speech. After all, this is the approach of *Chassidus* - to banish the evil by increasing the good.

(התועודויות תשמ"ח ח"ד ע' 92)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Why is so much ascribed to the tongue if it only expresses what's inside the person?
- How does speaking positively hold a person back from speaking negatively as well?

A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Moshe Gourarie

Walking in Front of Someone Davening

If someone is *davening shmoneh esreh* in a place where people usually walk, is it permissible to walk in front of him?

- *Halacha* says¹ that one may not walk four *amos* (approx. 6.5 feet) in front of someone *davening shmoneh esreh*, since this may disrupt his *kavana*. According to *Kabala* this prohibition also applies to walking four *amos* to the side of one *davening*. This *halacha* applies as well to the three backward steps taken at the conclusion of *shmoneh esreh*, which may not be taken if doing so will intrude in the four *amos* of someone *davening*, even if that person began *davening* later².
- *Poskim* write³ that if someone positioned himself in a place normally meant for people to pass by, it is permissible to walk in front of him, since he had no right to *daven* there. Some *poskim* also permit walking in front of somebody *davening* with his eyes closed or with a *talis* over his head⁴.
- In a situation where one must hurry to a *mitzvah* (e.g. to *daven* with a *minyan* or to use the bathroom in a case of urgency⁵) and someone is *davening* in the way, there is a discussion among *poskim* whether he may pass in front of the person *davening*. Some suggest⁶ that it is permissible, since the disturbance of the persons' *kavana* is only a *sofek*, whereas the *mitzvah* going to be performed is of certainty; and certainty supersedes *sofek*. However others⁷ argue that the *mitzvah* to be performed *later* cannot permit transgressing an *aveira now*.
- Another *halacha*⁸ says that one may not even sit within four *amos* of one who is *davening shmoneh esreh*, because the space around one *davening* becomes holy and it is disrespectful to idly sit in a holy place. If the one sitting is *davening* or learning he need not stand up, though the *davening* or learning must be verbalized, not merely kept in thought. Additionally, if one was already sitting when another person began to *daven* nearby, there is no obligation to stand up, though it is deemed a worthy thing to do. However, if the area is designated for *davening* (i.e. a *shul*), everyone is obligated to stand, even if the one sitting was there first⁹.

Please note that the above may not be applicable for your situation. Consult your Rov for a final psak.

1. שו"ע אדה"ז סי' קב ס"ד.
2. שם ס"ה.
3. הליכות שלמה - תפילה, ע' קטו.
4. בא"א (בוטשטאש) שם ס"ד מתי, אבל בביאור הלכה ד"ה אסור כ' דלפמ"ש החי"א דטעם האיסור מפני שמפסיק בין המתפלל לשכינה אין להתיר. ויל"ע בדעת אדה"ז, דמחד גיסא הביא רק הטעם שמבטל כוונת המתפלל דלפ"ז בגוונא שעוצם עניו פשוט שמותר לעבור לפניו וכמ"ש הא"א, אבל לאידך אדה"ז הביא מהמג"א דעת חכמי
5. הזהר שאוסרים אפי' בצידיהם, ולפי זהר יתכן שיש עוד טעמים להאיסור והדבר צ"ע.
6. היינו שיעבור על איסור בעל דשקצו דלש"י אדה"ז (בסידור הנהגות בית הכסא, והוא כדעה הב' שבשו"ע מהד"ב סי' ג ס"א) היינו הוא שהרגיש כבר בנקביו ומעמיד עצמו.
7. אשל אברהם שם.
8. שו"ת יד אליהו (לר"א מלובלין) סי' ג.
9. שו"ע אדה"ז סי' קב ס"א.
9. שם ס"ג.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לזכות יוסי וחי' מושקא הויכברג
לרגל חתונתם ביום כ"ו סיון

לזכות הת' שמואל ראפאפארט וב"ג מרים דין שיחיו
לרגל חתונתם ביום כ' תמוז
ע"י ההורים
הרה"ת יוסף ורעיתו חוה שיחיו ראפאפארט
הרה"ת ברוך שמואל ורעיתו תקוה שיחיו דין

OUR HEROES

Rebbetzin Shaina



Rebbetzin Shaina, the wife of the Mittlerer Rebbe, was born to a poor *melamed*, a *chossid* of the Alter Rebbe. Her father told the Alter Rebbe of his poverty and his inability to find proper *shidduchim* for his daughters. The Alter Rebbe assured him that he would make a *shidduch* with one of his children, after which the *chossid* would have no problem finding appropriate spouses for the rest of his children.



Two grandchildren of the Mittlerer Rebbe and Rebbetzin Shaina, daughters of Rebbetzin Sara, were orphaned from both sides at a young age. The two orphans, Rivkah and Gittel, were raised in the home of the Mittlerer Rebbe. When they reached marriageable age, Rebbetzin Shaina suggested to her son-in-law the Tzemach Tzedek to take one of the women as a *shidduch* for his son, the future Rebbe Maharash. The Tzemach Tzedek told her, "A *shidduch* from Liepli has been suggested with a dowry of twenty thousand ruble. What kind of dowry will be given here?"

The Rebbetzin replied, "*Eishes chaver kechaver* (The wife of a *tzadik* is equal to the *tzadik* himself)! I will give the *chossan* forty years of *eishes chaver kechaver*!" The Tzemach Tzedek agreed, making a "*kinyan*" with Rebbetzin Shaina to transfer this *zechus*.

The Tzemach Tzedek chose the younger of the two ladies, Rivkah, to be the wife of his son, later known as the Rebbetzin Rivkah. In lieu of the older daughter who relinquished her first-born *zechus* and marriage priority, the Tzemach Tzedek made sure that she marry a worthy *chossan* as well.

On the day of the *chassuna*, the Tzemach Tzedek instructed his son, the Rebbe Maharash to receive a *bracha* from Rebbetzin Shaina. The *chossan* found his grandmother in the kitchen, busily preparing of the festive *seuda*. The Rebbetzin answered offhandedly that the day was long and she would *bentch* him at the time of the *chupah*. Unsatisfied with the response, the Tzemach Tzedek instructed his son to go back and ask to receive her *bracha* now.

Rebbetzin Shaina, paused when she saw that her grandson had returned. Realizing that he would not give up, Rebbetzin Shaina washed her hands and in front of two witnesses put her hands on the *chossan's* head, "May it be HaShem's will that you should be blessed with all the powers that I have inherited from my husband!"

When the Tzemach Tzedek later heard the blessing, he was exceedingly pleased.

לזכות ר' אדם הלוי עפשטיין ליום הולדתו

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Secret Fashion Negotiations

Regarding the theme of the Neshei Chabad annual convention, the Rebbe wrote in his handwriting:

"Urgent;

"It is obvious, that all activities in the area of *tznius* are extremely vital and should be pursued via all available means. These activities should include discreet negotiations with fashion designers and wholesalers of women's clothing – since many complain of difficulty finding *tznius/dike* clothing in stores.

"It is also imperative to stress, in an appropriate manner, the insult a woman gives to herself by declaring to the world that she has no other quality or virtue worthy of recognition other than her dressing in an immodest fashion."

During a *Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen*, in 5717, the Rebbe ended off saying: "It is a great *mitzvah* to publicize that *hilchos tznius* of the *Shulchan Aruch* are relevant not only in winter, but in summer too; not only in the city, but in the country too; and not only for children, but for adults too... A happy and healthy summer to all."

לזכות השליח שלום דובער בן לובה

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