



SPEAKING WITH CARE (1)

The Wisdom of Silence

Shlomo HaMelech said, "There is a time to speak and a time to be silent." Chazal teach us to speak words of Torah, but to minimize unnecessary chatter.

(קהלת ג, ז, חולין פט)

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said, "All my days I have grown up among *chachomim* and have found nothing more beneficial for a person than silence." Rabbi Akiva said, "A fence around wisdom is silence." This refers to unnecessary speech in worldly matters.

Chazal say that silence is good for the wise; how much more is this true for others. The best remedy is silence, for it spares a person from many issues.

(אבות א, יז, גיג וברע"ב, פסחים צט ע"א)

Rambam speaks of five kinds of speech: (1) speaking as a *mitzvah* – such as studying Torah, which is equal to all other *mitzvos*; (2) forbidden speech – like falsehood, *lashon hara*, cursing others and unclean language; (3) Redundant speech which brings neither benefit nor harm – such as discussing current events and the news. (4) Commendable talk – praising positive things and noting the damaging effect of negative things. This includes praising the righteous and their doings so that others will follow their ways, and degrading the sinners and their conduct so that they will be despised in the eyes of all. This can also be done by relating a story or singing a song. (5) Permissible speech – that which is necessary for day-to-day living and for business. One should try to concentrate most of his speech on that which is a *mitzva* and commendable, and minimize the rest.

(פיהמ"ש לאבות א, יז)

In *Eretz Yisroel* they would say, "Speech is worth a *sela*, silence is worth two," implying that even permissible speech should be limited.

(מגילה יח ע"א)

Chazal observe that HaShem placed the tongue behind two walls, the teeth and the lips, so that one refrain from inappropriate speech.

It is said that a person was created with two ears and one mouth, so that he knows to minimize his speech.

(ערכין טו ע"ב, ארחות צדיקים שער השתיקה)

The Me'iri writes: Unnecessary speech is no different than the sounds made by animals.

(ס' התמיד להמאירי ע' ב)

Holy Speech

Since the power of speech is an expression of the *Shechina* within a person, one must try to use it for holy purposes. For this reason, the tongue is hidden in the mouth, just as a treasure is kept concealed and locked.

(ראשית חכמה שער הקדושה פ"א)

After the passing of R. Yehuda ben Shoshan in the upper Galil, he appeared in a dream to his *talmid* R. Lapidus; his face shone like the sun and each hair in his beard, like a blazing torch. The *talmid* asked what he had done to merit such *kedusha*, and he replied that throughout his lifetime he had not spoken unnecessarily. A person's speech is similar to *malochim* and one should use it for *kedusha*.

(ראשית חכמה שער האהבה פ"ו)

The great chossid and *meshpia* Rashbatz would advise the chassidim who would fast, "Instead of fasting with your stomach, fast with your mouth!"

(לשמע אוזן ע' 222)

R. Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev would explain the *possuk*, "One should not desecrate his word; whatever leaves his mouth he should fulfill," to mean that if one guards his speech, everything he says will be fulfilled by *HaShem*.

(קדושת לוי פ' מטות)

Think Before You Speak

The chossid R. Zev Vilenker said about himself, "The Alter Rebbe's look affected me in such a way that I should never speak without thinking." Indeed, throughout his entire life, whenever a motion or hint would suffice, he would abstain from speaking.

(אג"ק הרי"צ ח"א ע' עדר)

The *tzaddik* R. Nachman of Breslov once said, "In our childhood we learn to speak, and as we age we learn to keep silent. That's the problem! We learn to speak before we learn how to keep silent..."

(טללי תשובה ע' 219)

R. Avrohom, the *maggid* of Trisk, once said, "For yourself you do not need to speak, for thought would suffice; you only speak for the benefit of your friend. Stop and think for a moment: perhaps your friend is not interested in this 'favor' of yours..."

(טללי תשובה ע' 219)

When the *tzaddik*, R. Simcha Bunim of Pshischa, was instructed by his Rebbe, the Chozeh of Lublin, to journey to a small town, he asked some chassidim to join him, and they set out without knowing the purpose of their trip. When it was time to eat, R. Simcha and the chassidim were informed by their host that they were going to be served *fleishigs*, whereupon they to question how the food had been prepared and delved into many *halachic* details. Suddenly, they were interrupted by a beggar, warming himself near the fireplace, "You are so careful with what goes into your mouths, but you don't monitor what comes out – your words!"

When R. Simcha Bunim heard this, he understood why his Rebbe had sent him, and promptly set out on his journey home.

(סיפורי חסידים זיון תורה ע' 95)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Is there a benefit to silence besides avoiding negative speech?
- Why are we more careful about what enters our mouth than we are about what comes out?

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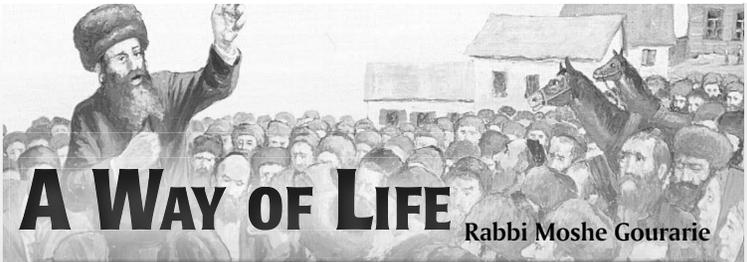
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A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Moshe Gourarie

Borrowing Without Permission

Is it permissible to use another's item without permission if it is clear that he does not mind if other's use it (such as an inexpensive pen left lying around)?

- The *halacha*¹ is that one who borrows something without permission is considered a thief. Nevertheless², if it is clear that the owner would not mind, it is permissible to use (for example: an object which no owner would mind its use, since there is no concern that it will decrease in value, or if the owner is a close friend of his). However, an object which most people wouldn't mind it being used without permission (because the chance of a decrease in value is farfetched), but there is clearly a minority of people who do mind (since there is a small chance of loss), one may not assume that the owner belongs to the majority and he may not use the item.
- Concerning a *tallis*³ and *tefillin*⁴ there is a special allowance since we assume that people like having *mitzvos* performed with their possessions, when there is no loss incurred on their part. Since *tallis* and *tefillin* are not worn out from temporary use, we may assume that the owner doesn't mind it being used. This is provided that: (1) it is an irregular use, (2) the borrower returns them to their original state (i.e. refolds the *tallis* and *tefillin* in any which way), and (3) he uses them where they were left and does not move them to another room.
- Some *acharonim*⁵ suggest that this allowance does not apply to *mitzvah* objects belonging to a child (*tefillin* of a pre *bar-mitzvah bochur*). Only an adult who has an obligation of *arvus* (responsibility to make sure that others perform their *mitzvos*) is pleased that another is fulfilling a *mitzva* with his object, whereas a child who does not have this responsibility is not included.
- The Shulchan Aruch writes⁶ that one may not use *seforim* without the permission though he is using them for a *mitzva*, since the owner is concerned that overuse will cause the *sefer* to tear. Some later *acharonim* suggest⁷ that nowadays that *seforim* are commonly available and not rare as they were generations ago, we assume that people no longer mind and are happy for a *mitzva* to be performed with their *sefer* (with the abovementioned conditions).

The above is for discussion only. For 'halacha lemaaseh' one should consult his Rov.

1. שו"ע חו"מ סי' שנט סעיף ה.
 2. בהבא לקמן ראה שו"ע אדה"ז חו"מ
 3. ראה ישועות יעקב או"ח סי' לו ס"ק ב;
 הלכות שאלה סעיף ה, ומה שכתב בדעתו
 4. הלוי ח"ג סי' יא.
 5. הלכות גניבה ס"ק ד.
 6. שו"ע אדה"ז שם סעיף יג.
 7. שו"ע אדה"ז סי' יד סעיף ט.
 8. שם סעיף יב.
 9. ראה ישועות יעקב או"ח סי' לו ס"ק ב;
 הלכות שאלה סעיף ה, ומה שכתב בדעתו
 10. הלוי ח"ג סי' יא.
 11. הלכות גניבה ס"ק ד.
 12. שו"ע אדה"ז שם סעיף יג.
 13. שו"ע אדה"ז סי' יד סעיף ט.

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

לע"נ רחל יעשקא בת ר' זאב וואלף ע"ה
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OUR HEROES

י"ז סיון

Rebbetzin Fraida



Rebbetzin Fraida, a daughter of the Alter Rebbe, was a very illustrious woman and was very dear to her father. The Alter Rebbe would recite Chassidus privately for her, while the Mittlerer Rebbe, out of his eagerness to hear more chassidus, would have to hide in the room to listen. Also, when the Mittlerer Rebbe wanted to know a certain *inyan*, he would often ask his sister to ask the Alter Rebbe. Rebbetzin Fraida was married to Reb Elyahu Schneerson. She passed away on the 17th of Sivan, תקע"ג (1813), and is buried in Haditch near her father.

On one occasion of private chassidus from the Alter Rebbe to Rebbetzin Fraida, when the Mittlerer Rebbe was hiding in the room, the Alter Rebbe spoke about the *bigdei kehuna* (the clothing of the *kohanim*). When it seemed to the Mittlerer Rebbe that his father was concluding without having explained the *avneit* (the belt), the Mittlerer Rebbe quickly took off his *gartel* and threw it towards his sister. Fraida took the cue, and asked the Alter Rebbe "Is there no explanation about the *avneit*?" The Rebbe responded, "It seems that someone else is in the room besides the two of us..."

An urgent *pidyon nefesh* was once sent to the *Ohel* in Haditch, where both the Alter Rebbe and Rebbetzin Fraida are buried. The shamash, Chaim Meir, took the letter and in his haste to bring it to the *Ohel*, forgot to knock before entering. Before he realized what was happening, he found himself on the floor outside the *Ohel*. That night, Rebbetzin Fraida came to him in a dream and admonished him, "How could you enter without knocking! You think you see birds here?! *Neshamos* come here!" She ended off saying that since chassidim don't usually give validity to dreams, he would receive a sign about the validity of this dream. As the shamash awoke, a bee stung him in his ear, deafening him in that ear.

Before she passed away, Rebbetzin Fraida asked to be buried alongside the Alter Rebbe. Though she was a special person, the chassidim were hesitant to bury her near the Rebbe.

At the end of her life she began reciting "*elokai neshama*," and when she recited the words "*veata asid litlah mimeni*," she cried out "wait, father, wait, I'm coming." With that her *neshama* left her body.

To be more confident with their decision of burial plots, the chassidim performed a test. They placed her body in a wagon and led the wagon on the road leading both to Haditch and Kremenchug. When the roads split, the chassidim let the horses guide themselves, and sure enough, they followed the path to Haditch. Rebbetzin Fraida's *kever* is immediately adjacent to the kever of the Alter Rebbe.

ליכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי ש"י בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Participating B'ruchnius

Reb Leibel Groner relates:

"Very often, the Rebbe's schedule took a sudden change. "On one such occasion, when the Rebbe planned on participating in a *chuppah*, serving as the *mesader kiddushin*, the Rebbe unexpectedly informed us at the last minute that he would not be able to come out. When the *chozer*, Reb Yoel Kahn heard this, he saw the newly open slot in the Rebbe's schedule as an opportune time to ask the Rebbe to edit a *sicha* being prepared for printing.

"I went into the Rebbe's room and passed on Reb Yoel's request. The Rebbe immediately rejected the proposal. 'It is far more difficult to participate *b'ruchnius*, than *b'gashmius*. During the *chuppah*, I will be occupied..."

ליכות השליח שלום דובער בן לובה