

The Weekly Farbrengens



למען ישמעו • בראשית תשפ"ז • 900
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

SPEAKING WITH CARE (I)

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, ג, ג 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.

(פריהמ"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"ב)

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.

(ערבין 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)

CONSIDER

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?

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"א)

The great chossid and *mashpia* 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)

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 Trisker Maggid, 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 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 began 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)



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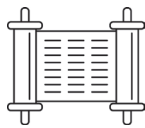
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GIRLS LIGHTING SHABBOS CANDLES

What is the halachic basis for a girl to light her own candle with a bracha?

Chazal instituted that every home have a candle burning on Shabbos, and gave the mitzvah primarily to the woman of the house. In 5734, the Rebbe called on Jewish girls everywhere to light with a bracha from the age of chinuch.¹ The Rebbe urged that every effort be made to spread this practice since the world needs much more light today and this will near people to Hashem.²

When some raised the concern of a *bracha levatala*, since the mother of the house is already lighting, the Rebbe responded to the claims and pointed out that this had been the widespread custom and only lapsed because of poverty and shortages of candles.³

Shulchan Aruch writes that the woman's lighting and bracha cover her husband, her children, and guests supported by her (but not others eating their own food at the same table).⁴ A daughter eating at her parents' table is part of the household and covered by their candles, so she can seemingly not make a bracha there.

The Alter Rebbe quotes a dissenting view that household members are themselves obligated by *arvus*, responsibility to see to it that the homeowner lights up the space, and one obligated by *arvus* may make a bracha no less than one obligated in his own right.⁵ The Alter Rebbe notes that the minhag has spread accordingly.⁶

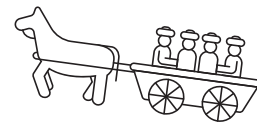
Indeed, the minhag for girls to light was upheld in Beis Harav,⁷ as well as in Brisk, Ger, Belz, Tzanz, Bobov, Vishnitz, Ruzhin, Sadigura, Tchernobil, and Rachmistrivka, the Karelitz family, and many others.⁸ The Aruch Hashulchan likewise records that girls make their own bracha even at their mother's home, since women were charged with this mitzvah in particular.⁹

Ner Shabbos is an obligation on each person (*chovas gavra*), which is why a guest not supported at his host's table must light or buy a share in the homeowner's candles. The mother's lighting exempts each family member's personal obligation, and the daughter may have in mind not to be included and retain her own *chiyuv*.¹⁰ A girl who lights her own every week, it is as though she stipulated from the outset not to be included in her mother's lighting.

Ideally, each should have her own candlestick, so that they are separate.¹¹

1. לקו"ש חט"ז ע' 168. וראה שיחת כ"ד אלו.
2. תשל"ד, הובאה בשיעורי הלכה למעשה (להרש"ד לוי) ס' רס"ג סט"ו.
3. לקו"ש חט"ז ע' 146 הערה 45.
4. אג"ק ח"ל ע' קצח. וראה ניצוצי אור ע' 104.
5. שו"ע ס' רס"ג ס"א, ס"ה וס"ט. קורא שם ס"ק (בג"ב שבת לא אשכחן הדיור זה בגמרא, אם כן אין לברך ע"ל).
6. קורא שם ס"ק ה'.
7. שו"ע ס' ט"ו וס"ו.
8. שיחתו תשרי תשל"ה - שיחות קודש תשל"ה ח"א ע' 34. וראה אג"ק ח"ל אגרות יא"שצח.
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לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה



R. YISRAEL YITZCHOK LUBINSKY

R. Yisrael Yitzchok Lubinsky was a Chassid of the Tzemach Tzedek, Rebbe Maharash and Rebbe Rashab, and a *talmid* of R. Hillel Paritcher. Born into a family of Chassidische *gevirim* from Sosnitz, R. Yisrael Yitzchok lived in Semyanovka, in the province of Chernigov, where he owned an alcohol brewery. Despite being a wealthy and busy businessman, he was known for his lengthy and heartfelt davening, during which no one could disturb him. R. Yisrael Yitzchok also served as the Rebbe Rashab's representative in the Russian capital of S. Petersburg for communal affairs.

R. Zalman Duchman related this story as he heard it from R. Yisroel Yitzchok:

Once, the government found out that in Semyanovka they were appropriating alcohol from the factory, that is, without paying the tax. A major trial was scheduled for thirteen defendants and R. Yisroel Yitzchok was to be a witness. The investigator Stalietov was sent from Petersburg to run the trial.

The Rebbe Maharash would generally say that every matter should be heard as it seems ("azoy") and answered as it seems, without getting into the nitty-gritty. When R. Yisroel Yitzchok traveled to the Rebbe Maharash in Lubavitch to

ask for advice regarding the trial, he asked the Rebbe Maharash to hear him out in detail, because many *Yidden* were facing potential five-year prison terms. He presented to the Rebbe Maharash a whole list of questions he expected to be asked, and the answers he planned on giving. "But," R. Yisroel Yitzchok asked, "if Stalietov asks me such-and-such a question, what should I answer then?"

The Rebbe Maharash replied: "You are an intelligent young man (a *guteh kup*), and you are a *Yid*, who is not caught up in *taivos*. Stalietov is a *goy*, not too intelligent, and consumed by *taivos*. Such questions will never occur to him."

So it was, and the trial ended favorably.

(לשמע און ע' עה, אלה תולדות פרץ ע' 566)

During World War I, the German army was approaching a forest owned by R. Yisroel Yitzchok. Afraid that it would be lost, he asked the Rebbe Rashab if he should sell it. The Rebbe advised him not to sell, and explained:

"The Mezritcher Maggid said that if one has a functional *keili* for HaShem's *bracha*, he should not break it. Only if from Shomayim they cause it to break, then there is no other choice but to look elsewhere..."

(רשימות דברים חדש ע' 163)

A Moment with The Rebbe



'VILDKET' IS NOT CHINUCH

In 5726, Reb Chaim Binyamini founded the very first yeshiva in Brazil. Over the years, he merited to educate over one thousand students, many of whom went on to serve as rabbonim in communities throughout Latin America.

His yeshivah was known for its highly structured schedule, with a strong emphasis on *seder*, discipline, and *eidelkeit*. After visiting Eretz Yisroel and the United States, and seeing the educational standards there, Rabbi Binyamini wondered whether his approach had become outdated. He wrote to the Rebbe asking if he should adapt to the educational methods that had become more widely accepted.

"Perhaps I should instead be educating them with '*vildkeit*' - wildness - so that they will be able to survive, in the natural course of things, in this physical world," he wrote.

"Of course you should continue in your way," the Rebbe responded, referring to Rabbi Binyamini's emphasis on *seder* and *eidelkeit*. "For it's evident that educating toward *vildkeit* (disorder) and the like - is simply *vildkeit*."

The Rebbe added that a loose approach is "the opposite of what I request, urge, and demand, based on the directives of my father-in-law, the Rebbe."

(Yeshivah Shel Maalah, pp. 414-415)