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בשבת



אור ישראל

Living Life Deeper

PARSHAS
TETZAVEH

BY RABBI NETANEL NAAMAT
RABBI NAFTALI ZIONS
RABBI AVICHAI BENSOUSSAN

SAY OR STAY?

Parshas Tetzaveh discusses the various articles of clothing the *kohanim* would wear in the *Beis Hamikdash*. The *kohein gadol* would wear additional items that the regular *kohanim* would not wear. Among these is the *me'il*, a blue robe tasseled on the bottom with alternating bells and golden pomegranates, which the *kohein gadol* would wear when he came into the *Beis Hamikdash*.¹

What is the idea behind these particular adornments attached to the garment of the *kohein gadol*? The *passuk* states that the bells were attached so that the *kohein gadol* should be heard when he came to serve in the *Beis Hamikdash*, but this does not explain the silent golden pomegranates.

The Chofetz Chaim² (Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, 1839-1933) explains that these trimmings are symbolic of two different manners of conduct - speech, and silence. There are times where it is important to speak - to learn Torah, to wish others well, to make others happy, and to console others for their loss. However, there are times where silence is called for - to hold one's tongue from speaking *lashon horah*, hurting other people's feelings, or interrupting people when they are speaking.

In fact, the Chofetz Chaim posits that if a person acts in this manner - speaking when it is proper to do so, and remaining silent when that is called for - Hashem will more readily accept their *tefillos*. This is based on the next *passuk* which states, "And the sound shall be heard when he comes to the *Kodesh*," which the Chofetz Chaim understands to mean that a person's prayers will be heard when he comes to *daven*.

Besides the spiritual aspects of speech and silence, it is beneficial to recognize the everyday benefits of knowing when to speak. Friendships can be created or broken depending on how one speaks, and sometimes the best thing one can do for another is to be silent and listen. We were given an amazing gift, something that no other creature has, and it is up to us to use it wisely.

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Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

Speech is the defining characteristic of humanity,¹ and as such it may be difficult to refrain from speaking, even when it is called for. How does one determine when to speak, and when to remain silent, and moreover, how does one remain silent when it is the right thing to do?

As in many areas, the best idea is practice. Even if a person can't practice in reality, one can mentally practice by reviewing a situation in one's mind, and preparing the proper response. Imagine sitting silently while someone else tells a story, even if you have a much better story to tell. Or imagine sitting silently when the teacher calls on another student, when you know the answer.

If our 'default' is to remain silent, it will be much easier to determine when to speak. By taking an extra moment to think about our response, we may be saving ourselves a lot of heartache in the long run. After all, we can hurt someone by blurting out a response, but it's rare to insult someone by taking an extra moment to respond.

By practicing silence, we will better determine when we should speak up.

1 Rashi on Bereishis 2:7 s.v. לנפש חיה

1 Shemos 28:31-35

2 Shmiras Halashon Vol. II, Chap. 15

Ohr Yisrael, along with the entire Beshivtecha readership, wishes our deepest sympathies to the family of Assistant Director and Senior Beshivtecha contributor Rabbi Naftali Zions upon the loss of his esteemed father, R' Chaim Dovid Zions z"l

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Some think that Mussar study focused on middos refinement is only for the most righteous, the Gedolei Hador. In truth, we must all pursue maximum Tikkun Hamiddos through Mussar.
- R' Yehuda Zev Segal z"l
Manchester Rosh Yeshiva Yira V'daas pg.
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EVERYTHING HAS ITS TIME

Rabbi and Mrs. Zevi Haber* sat down in Rabbi Goldman's office. "Thank you for seeing us on such short notice," said Rabbi Haber. "We're simply not sure what to do anymore."

"What seems to be the problem?" inquired Rabbi Goldman.

"Our son Yonatan has been a behavior problem recently," said Mrs. Haber. "We've tried everything - threatening, rewards, begging and pleading, and nothing seems to work. Most recently, he comes home sulky, and refuses to talk. And whenever we ask him to do something, at best he ignores us, and at worst, he throws a tantrum. We don't know what to do!"

"How old is Yonatan?"

"He's only nine! And I'm afraid of what will happen if this continues."

Rabbi Goldman thought for a while. "Tell me, how long ago did this start? And do you recall if anything predated this behavior?"

Zevi Haber paused for a moment, thinking. "About six months ago. I'm not sure exactly what started it, but I remember Yoni coming home one day complaining about a classmate. I gave him some advice, but he got annoyed at me. The next day something similar happened, and whenever I would give advice, he would get more and more frustrated with me. It's come to the point where he doesn't talk to us, and he's just angry all the time."

After gathering some more details, Rabbi Goldman made the following suggestion. "Perhaps next time he's upset about something, let him vent. Just listen, no need to immediately offer advice, no matter how tempting. It seems to me that Yoni might simply not feel comfortable sharing anything with you, as he's afraid that you'll just tell him what to do and how to do it."

Rabbi and Mrs. Haber left the office, both feeling skeptical, but with no other options, decided to take Rabbi Goldman's advice.

Three months later, Rabbi Goldman received a call from Zevi Haber. "Rabbi, I can't thank you enough, I feel like you're a miracle worker! It was very difficult at first, and it took a lot of patience on our part, but I feel like Yoni is back to his old self. He tells us about his day without us having to pry it from him, and he's much calmer. Thank you!"

"Rabbi Haber, Shlomo Hamelech said it best - 'There is a time for silence, and a time for speech.' All the best!"

**Based on a true story, names have been changed.*

DID YOU KNOW?

- One who generally remains silent will be thought to be very wise.¹
- Lot was saved from *Sodom* and *Amorah* in the merit that he remained silent when Avraham told the Egyptians that Sarah was his sister.²
- Yosef heard his brothers refer to Yaakov as, "Your servant Yaakov," ten times, yet remained silent. Because of this, Yosef lost ten years of his life.³

1 *Mishlei* 17:28

2 *Bereishis Rabbah* 58:6

3 *Yalkut Shimoni* 44:151