

Journey To Better Speech

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When Moshe Rabeinu, who grew up among royalty in the Egyptian Palace, goes out to see his brethren in their slavery he sees a Jew being beaten to death. He saves him by killing the taskmaster. The next day two Jews are arguing but when he tries to intervene and make peace one turns to him and says, will you kill us like you killed the Egyptian? The verse then says that Moshe was scared.

The simple understanding is that Moshe realizes that someone saw him kill the Egyptian and is scared that word will get back to the palace. He therefore needs to flee. However Rashi brings an alternative explanation.

According to the Midrash, Moshe is not concerned about himself and whether he will now get into trouble or not. He was scared for the Jewish people. He has just been hit with the realization that among the Jewish people there are those who would be happy to 'snitch', to be informers for no constructive purpose. And with that comes his worry that they would not merit to be redeemed from slavery.

The obvious question on the Midrash is: What is it exactly about being informers that would mean that the Jewish people would not warrant being redeemed?

The Maharal presents a deep concept to answer this question. In reality every physical thing is enslaved. By definition the physical world and its parts are confined within their external boundaries. Only the spiritual dimension can really be called 'free'. One way to consider this is an Olympic high jumper. Even if he continually breaks world records there will still be a limit to how high he can jump. But someone who is leaping in the spiritual realm, they will always have the room and ability to reach higher, to expand and improve.

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Tip Of The Week

Do you often find that you will read an article online or a post on facebook and have a tremendous desire to comment? You start typing and you've pressed enter before even considering whether or not it could upset anyone?

The Vilna Gaon quotes the Midrash that for every single moment that someone seals their mouth (from saying something inappropriate) he merits a hidden light in the World to Come that even the highest angels cannot fathom. That is for every single moment! So maybe next time we've written our clever comment, we should wait one moment before pressing enter and read through what we've written. It could be we'll decide to send it (even though it's bad!), but at least we'll get the reward for holding back that moment!

Prayer Insights

The first thing we say when we wake up in the morning is מודה אני לפניך I give thanks before You that You returned my soul to me. **Q.** Why '**before You**'? **A.** If we are to succeed in our day our first thought needs to be that wherever we are and whatever we do, we are before Him. If we can carry that consciousness with us throughout the day we will be inspired to make better choices and be the best selves we can be!

When people are living purely within the physical plane they subconsciously realize that however hard they push themselves they will always be restricted and therefore they will often look for ways to expand beyond their physical limits. These are the people who are always making the biggest noise, the ones who feel they need to be everywhere, comment on everything and of course be the center and transmitter of all gossip. They do not have enough 'space' inside themselves to contain private information without it leaking out.

But when someone is living within the spiritual plane, they naturally have infinite room to expand. They do not need to show off all the time, to get others to compliment them all the time because they do not need to step beyond their personal boundaries, for they have no boundaries! And they have 'space' to keep their own and other's secrets comfortably inside.

Moshe knew that the only way the Jewish people would be able to escape their slavery was if they were moving from the natural slavery that all physicality entails. Only by building a spiritual world inside would they then be able to truly break free. And when he saw that they still needed to mouth off, to snitch for no good reason, this was a clear sign that they were a long distance from building this personal infinite world.

Unfortunately this is an area that many of us still suffer from. We don't feel good until we have shared everything with everyone, we don't know if we had a good holiday or if our marriage is good until someone comments how beautiful our photos look on facebook. We feel that we need to share the latest gossip otherwise we will not be seen as relevant. But the reality is that the only way we can break our confines is by building a spiritual space inside ourselves.

So this week let's try this: Go out and do one good thing, whatever you want, **but don't tell anyone about it!** Let's start building our own internal private space and take a huge step towards true freedom!

לע"נ הרב יוסף אליהו בן הרב מנחם יעקב

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A Positive Approach

A couple we know had noticed that their seven year old son had, for a while, been coming home quite stressed from school. It appeared that he was feeling a lot of pressure from the teacher who seemed to be lacking warmth and was not employing a positive approach in the classroom. The parents considered speaking to the teacher directly to suggest that he create a more positive and light atmosphere but they decided to first discuss their concerns with the Head of the school.

The Head told them not to give any 'constructive criticism' to the teacher - that was his job! Rather, he advised them to find something positive the teacher himself had done and then compliment him for it!

Many people's natural reaction to such advise would be that it was highly inappropriate! The problem was the teacher's approach. It was the teacher that needed to change. Why should they have to search to find something nice to say about a teacher that was causing such stress to their child?

However, even though the advise seemed counter-intuitive they trusted the insight and experience of the Head and decided to give it a go. A few days later, they called the teacher and said to him "What special thing did you do this week? Our son knew the material covered in class so so well! Thank you so much for all your hard work with him".

Two days later their son returned home with a big smile on his face and clutching a special note from the teacher telling the parents how wonderfully their son learned that day in school!

Positivity breeds Positivity!!!