



# KINDER TORAH.™

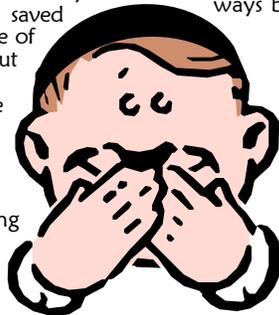
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PARASHAS KI SAVO

## NO WORDS

**“C**ursed is the one who strikes his fellow secretly” (Devarim 27:24). Rashi explains that this curse is given to those who speak loshon hora. Loshon hora is referred to a “secret potch.” The one who is being spoken about may not even be aware that he is being degraded with harmful words. Loshon hora is a serious aveyra that can lead to terrible consequences. The following story presents a solid piece of advice to reduce one’s loshon hora.

**“I**’m home, Yaakov.”  
“Shalom my dear wife, Rachel? How was your day today?”  
“It was great. I made a tremendous savings today.”  
“Fantastic, Rachel. It is always good to find a bargain and save money. What did you buy?”  
“I didn’t buy anything, Yaakov. Money was not what I saved today.”  
“Oh. You must have saved time. Did you find a new shortcut that saved traveling time? Did you take care of several errands in one trip and cut out a lot of running around?”  
“Not really. I did not save time either.”  
“I know what you saved – energy. You took care of some business by phone and fax and saved making a tiring trip to the bank or the office.”  
“I’m afraid that I did not save energy either, Yaakov.”  
“You are really testing my creativity, Rachel. Did you save stress and aggravation by avoiding or overcoming a difficult situation?”  
“Not exactly.”  
“My dear wife, if you did not save money, time, physical or emotional energy, then what did you save?”  
“Words.”  
“Words. You saved words. Let me think about that a moment. That is a very interesting concept. How do you save words?”



**“I** was on my way to work. I saw a few friends of mine standing and talking. I could have gone over to them and joined their conversation. I probably would have spoken a few hundred words, perhaps even some loshon hora. Instead, I smiled, waved at them, and kept walking. I saved hundreds of words today!”  
“I am very proud of you, Rachel. How did you tune in to this idea of saving words?”  
“I heard a lecture a few weeks ago. The speaker mentioned the Rambam’s discussion of the subject of silence (Hilchos Deos, chapter 2, halacha 4). ‘A person should always produce an abundance of silence.’ Silence is something that must be produced. It takes a conscious effort to

keep silent. The Gemora (Chullin 89a) states that a person’s profession in this world is to conduct himself like a person who cannot speak. A profession is something that takes time, patience, and practice to learn. After much hard work, the professional has mastered his profession and can produce beautiful things. A physician can heal people, a chef can make delicious food, and an artisan can make handcrafted objects. What should we produce? Silence. Rav Shimshon Pincus zt”l refers to silence as a beautiful song.”  
“This is fascinating. Please tell me more.”

**“T**he Rambam continues . . . ‘He should only speak words of wisdom, or words which are necessary to sustain his life. It was said about Rav, a student of our holy Rebbe (Yehuda HaNasi) that he never spoke an unnecessary word his entire life. Most people’s conversation consists of unnecessary words. Even when speaking about one’s physical needs, one should not say too much.’ This is based upon the Gemora (Berachos 61a) which states that a person’s words should always be few (in number. He should

always realize that) he is standing before Hashem. The Almighty is in the heavens, and he is here in this (lowly) world. Therefore, his words should be few.”

“I am beginning to realize what a savings you made today, Rachel. What else did the Rav say?”

“He quoted the Mishna (Pirkei Avos 1:17). ‘All my life I have grown up among wise men, and have found nothing better for the physical welfare than silence . . . Too much talk brings sin.’ The latter statement is logical. One can understand that silence is good for the *neschama* (soul). It prevents the sins of loshon hora, hurtful words, and *machlokes* (unjustified argument). However, the first part of the Mishna is truly astounding. Silence is also good for the health!”

**“I**ndeed. Many physical ailments are caused by stress. People get worked up when they keep talking. They become angry, their blood pressure rises, and they become ill. Sadness and complaining can also bring a person down physically. Silence is a healing tonic for the body and soul.”

“The Rav also mentioned the Gemora (Kiddushin 71b) which states that a person’s quietness is sign of his pure lineage. Keeping quiet was a noble quality. Thousands of years ago, in Bavel, they would identify the aristocratic families by their silence.”

“Pirkei Avos (3:17) mentions another benefit of silence. It preserves one’s wisdom. A wise person listens more than he speaks and carefully considers what he will say before responding. He does not talk pointlessly or carelessly. He will re-

main wise because his thoughts and words will retain their precision.”  
“Silence has a bounty of benefits. May we enjoy them all!”

*Kinderlach . . .*

*Let us all begin a savings plan. We will try to save as many words as we can. We will think before we speak. Are the words that we are thinking about really necessary? What purpose do they serve? Are they words of wisdom? Are they necessary for physical needs? Are they decisions that need to be made or problems that need to be solved? If so, say them in as few words as possible. If not, keep quiet. Save those unnecessary words. They are bad for your body and soul. Enjoy the silence. No words can express the beauty of the song of silence.*

## TORAH NATION

**“T**his day you have become a nation” (Devarim 27:9). What national event happened on that day? We did not enter the Land of Israel. We did not begin speaking our own language. Rav Shimshon Refael Hirsch explains that the Jewish people took an oath to accept and uphold the Torah on that day. That was the beginning of our nationhood. Although we were still in the desert without a homeland, and without any visible natural means of existence, we were a nation. What unifies the Jewish nation? The acceptance and upholding of the Torah. We are now approaching Rosh Hashanah, the day in which we proclaim Hashem’s sovereignty. He is the King. But there can be no King without a nation. We are his nation. But what is a nation without unity? To be the nation fitting to accept Hashem’s rule, we must be unified. Rav Hirsch explains that upholding the Torah is the key to our unity. This month of Elul, is our month of preparation for Rosh Hashanah. We have the opportunity now to strengthen our national unity, to prepare ourselves to accept Hashem’s rule. To do that, we must strengthen our Torah learning and observance of mitzvos.

*Kinderlach . . .*

*We still have over a week until Rosh Hashanah. Try to strengthen your Torah learning each day. Try to be more careful when you do mitzvos. Pray and make blessings with more kavannah (concentration). Do more chessed (acts of kindness) for people. Prepare yourselves. The King is coming.*

Parasha Questions:

- How many large stones did they erect altogether? Where were they located? (Rashi 27:2)
- How many curses are mentioned and what are they? (27:15-26)
- What is the reason for all of the terrible events? (28: 47)

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