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## Tefillah - 141 Speaking & Singing From The Heart

### ***The Beis HaMikdash - Where The Word of Hashem Emanated From***

והשב את העבודה לדביר ביתך We ask Hashem to return the service of the Temple to the “**Dvir**” (the Holy of Holies).

The Kodesh Kodashim in the Beis HaMikdash was called the “**dvir**” from the word *dibbur*, “speech”, hinting to the fact that the *Kodesh Kodashim* was the place where man conversed with Hashem, for it was the place where the voice of the *Shechinah* emanated from the Keruvim and the Kapores in the Aron. It is written, “*For from Zion comes forth Torah, and the word of Hashem from Jerusalem.*” Thus, the Beis HaMikdash is called “*dvir*”, because it was the place of the “*dibbur*” (word) of Hashem.

Let us reflect into the power of *dibbur* \speech, and especially with how it applies to *tefillah*, prayer.

### ***Five Kinds of Speech***

Man is called *nefesh chayah*, a living spirit, and Targum Onkelos translates this as “*ruach memalelah*” – a talking spirit; man is personified as the power of speech.

**1)** The power of speech, when used on its totally external level, is used for forbidden speech, and Rav Chaim Vital in *Shaarei Kedushah* describes these as the bad *middos* of gossip, falsity, and bragging; these are all forms of forbidden speech.

**2)** Even when one is not speaking words which are forbidden, there is a slightly less evil kind of speech as well: when a person has idle chatter, which is not forbidden, but it still about pointless things.

**3)** A neutral level of speech is to talk about things that we need – when it concerns our physical needs. These are words which are necessary for us to speak about.

**4)** A higher form of this kind of speech is when we speak about things that assist in doing a mitzvah, such as to speak words that will enable an act of chessed to get done.

**5)** The highest level of speech is to speak words of holiness, such as to speak words of Torah and *tefillah*.

If the mouth of a person is being used to speak evil kinds of conversations (i.e. gossip or falsehood), or if he simply chats all the time about pointless things, or even if a person speaks all the time about

what needs to get done - if that is a person's entire level of speech, such a mouth is not fit to speak to Hashem with in Shemoneh Esrei.

When one davens Shemoneh Esrei, "his heart has to be directed toward the Holy of Holies", meaning, one's level of speech needs to be emanating from his heart. When a person speaks to Hashem in *davening*, even though he speaks words of holiness, if his mouth isn't used for holiness in his day-to-day life, his mouth is unclean when he talks to Hashem in Shemoneh Esrei.

### ***The Relationship Between Our Speech and Our Daas (Mind)***

Even more so, when a person speaks, he must know which place inside himself he is speaking from. With most people, only a superficial level of speech is accessed!

Of course, all adults have a degree of *daas* (mature thinking), or else they wouldn't be able to talk at all; talking requires some use of our *daas*, so that we can think about what we are saying and articulate it. But the level of speech that an adult has often remains at the same level of a child!

A child has a weak amount of *daas*, and that weak amount of *daas* gives him enough maturity to be able to talk; but although a child can talk and he can think about what he wants, he's only talking on a very external and superficial level. For example, when a child says "Father", he's focused on what he wants from his father, not on his father.

When a person gets older and matures, his speech gets more sophisticated, and his *daas* gets more mature too, but often, his level of speech still remains at the same level of when he was a child.

Most people - who have not yet worked to understand themselves well - are therefore not aware of the fact that their level of speech hasn't changed since the level of when they were children.

Perhaps one will counter to this that this is really noble, because it is an example of the quality of *temimus* (earnestness); that would be true if indeed the adult has still retained his *temimus* of a child. But it doesn't end up being a virtue, because the adult is usually missing the *temimus* he once had when he was a child.

The more a person matures - not just physically but internally - his speech is supposed to mature with him.

The Ramban says that one should think before he talks. A child does not think before he talks. Speech doesn't come out properly on its own; it needs thought. One has to think before he talks about what he is about to say: Is it necessary?

Even more so, after a person gets used to thinking before he talks, one has to ask himself from which place in himself he is speaking. If a person has remained as immature as when he was a child, that means his speech hasn't changed either. But when a person has gotten older and he is more mature, and he thinks before he talks about what he will say, he has an *avodah* that as he is talking, he should know from which place in himself he is talking from. Even if a person thinks before he talks, he might still be talking from a lack of *daas*.

The inner kind of life is that when a person speaks, he speaks from an internal place in himself, and he does not view this as a mere plus. The words a person speaks reveals a person's thoughts and feelings. It reveals what a person thinks, and the more a person thinks, the more his speech can reveal his deep thoughts; and speech also reveals feelings.

In clearer terms: the more internally a person lives life, he speaks from a clear mind and from deep

feelings (depending on different times). When he speaks, he is connected to what he says. He doesn't just say things. He is concentrated on what he says, and when he says the words, his thoughts are connected to what he says.

This is the depth of the words of the Ramban that one needs to think before he talks.

And when a person speaks, he expresses his feelings as well. The more internally a person lives life, the more a person is aware of his feelings; he is alive. His words reveal his feelings; he speaks from a clear recognition of what he feels. His words are alive, because his words reveal the depth of his mind and heart. Speech like this reveals the true power of speech which man is defined by. All other words are dry and dead.

Some words involve more intellect and less feeling, and sometimes we express our feelings and our intellect is less involved. But in either case, the mature kind of speech expresses both our thoughts and feelings together, and the degrees of how much thought or how much feeling is involved will depend on the situation.

Generally speaking, when it comes to learning Torah, we need to mainly use our intellect and less feeling; Tefillah however requires more feeling and less intellect. (It is mainly avodah of the heart, and you just have to think about the meaning of the words before you say them, which uses the intellect). Either way, the mature level of speech always expresses both the depth of your intellect and your feelings.

The more mature a person's speech becomes, the more his speech resembles the speech of Hashem.

Thus, the conversations of a Torah scholar need to be studied, because the speech of a Torah scholar is mature; his words reveal clarity of intellect and deep feelings.

The more internal of a life a person lives, the deeper and more alive his speech becomes. His words will emanate from his heart. One who listens to those words will then be affected in his heart by the words he hears coming from that person.

Thus, one needs to draw himself closer to more mature speech. Along with this, if one wants to live in an inner way, he needs to make sure to hear words that are true and alive. A person might talk in learning and know what he's saying, but he's not living the words of Torah he's saying. When a person doesn't live what he says, even his bad *middos* are discernible in how he talks, in the way he is expressing himself and in the style of speaking that he is choosing. His words reveal the traces of evil in himself that he hasn't yet worked to refine, and this can negatively affect the listeners.

It is not easy to find someone who speaks from both his thoughts and his heart. But the more a person wants to seek Hashem, he must try to elevate his speech.

### ***Singing and Hearing Songs***

Another point that has to do with this is as follows.

We speak many words throughout the day, but another kind of speech is the words we express when we sing. When a person sings Zemiros at the Shabbos table, although it's nice that he's praising Hashem, if this is done without any awareness, it can get a person used to just saying words that he never thinks about! Even when he does think about it, he can't sing about these words from his heart, because he is not connected to the words he is saying.

This does not mean *chas v'shalom* that one should not sing Zemiros; rather, the intention here is to

deepen the experience of singing Zemiros.

When one gets used to singing, he is expressing his heart. When learning Torah, one is expressing his intellect. But with Zemiros, one is singing words which are supposed to inspire him. One has to therefore ask himself if his heart is connected to what he is singing.

A person might be singing Yedid Nefesh, yet he's not connected to the words he is saying; does his heart feel that Hashem is our Yedid Nefesh? Does he at least daven for this? When a person sings about how much he loves the Torah, is he thinking at all about these words he is singing? Is he trying to sing from an inner place in himself, more and more? If not, his singing is superficial, and it becomes more superficial with the more he sings.

The same is true for hearing songs. One has to hear songs that come from a pure source, not from a source that is superficial. A singer might have a sweet voice (in Hebrew, a "kol areiv"), but his soul can still be from the Erev Rav! When one hears songs, his soul deeply connects with the singer, and if the singer is a sinner, he connects to the sins of the singer! There are singers which do not have Jewish souls at all. Even if the singer has some feelings, that doesn't mean it's a feeling for holiness coming from the soul...

We cannot change the generation, and we can't expect everyone to change and only listen to songs and words that come from a pure place. But a person must know how to at least live correctly. When a person hears songs that are rooted in holiness, and the composer had holy intentions through composing the song - this is very hard to find, because usually a song is composed for the sake of honor or other reasons.

The power of speech which we use in davening, in order to connect to Hashem, needs to come from an internal place in ourselves. Just as there is a word of Hashem, so must a person draw himself closer to the word of Hashem. Of course, we cannot reach the level of Hashem's speech. But one can draw himself closer and elevate his speech.

In tefillah, one has a hard time concentrating, and one of the reasons is because he's not connected to his words. The speech a person hears is usually superficial. The songs a person hears are often from impure sources, even though the words are the words of Dovid HaMelech.

The Jewish soul is only inspired by songs that come from a pure source, and it can feel purity and holiness from those songs.

The more a person makes sure to think before he talks and to express his feelings, his speech matures, and he can properly talk to Hashem in Shemoneh Esrei.

### ***In Conclusion***

**והשב את העבודה לדביר ביתך** - We ask Hashem that our avodah be returned, that our speech should resemble the word of Hashem. Such a mouth is a kind of mouth that can kiss the mouth of Hashem, so to speak. Such words connect a person to Hashem as he prays.