



פרשת בראשית

WITH

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BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

Eternal Words, Eternal Worlds

Contents:

Part I. Words of Creation - 1

Part II. Words of Wisdom - 4

Part III. Words of Kindliness - 7

Part I. Words of Creation

Building Worlds With Words

When we look at the beginning of the Torah we see a phenomenon, something that took place when the world was created, that has to be explained. Because when describing *Maaseh Bereishis*, the Creation of the World, the Torah could have stated very simply that 'in the beginning Elokim created heaven and earth', and finished. That's what it *does* state but those words should have been enough.

But what do we see? וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים - Hashem begins to speak; not that He merely willed the universe into existence. He *said* words: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים - Hashem said, "Let there be light." וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים - Hashem said, "Let there be a firmament." And so on. He said and He said and He said. He created by means of words.

Now, the truth is if you look in the *peirush* of Rav Saadya Gaon he translates *Vayomer Hashem*,

not as 'Hashem spoke.' He translates it 'Shaah Allah' in Arabic, which means 'Hashem willed it'; He desired it and it came into existence.

But the fact is that the Torah tells us *how* He expressed His will. It says black on white that He spoke words. That's what's written in the Torah again and again: "He said." And we have to understand that it's not merely a figure of speech, an idiomatic expression; there was actually an utterance. Like it states in Tehillim (33:6), בְּדָבָר ה' - *by the word of Hashem the heavens were made*. And you might think 'word' means a thought; so it continues וּבְרוּחַ פִּי כָל צְבָאָם - *by the breath of His mouth all their hosts*. The breath of His mouth! It means all their hosts were made by means of Hashem speaking words. So the Torah is emphasizing that something was said at that time.

Mysterious Words

Now I'm not able to tell you what that speech consisted of but whatever it was, the Torah says it was a *word* and that *word* created all the heavens;

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and then the earth and then the light and one step after another step everything was accompanied by words. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים תִּרְשָׁא הָאָרֶץ רֶשֶׁא – Hashem said, 'The earth should sprout forth grasses' (ibid. 1:11). וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים יִשְׂרְצוּ הַמַּיִם – Hashem said, 'Let the waters be filled with living creatures' (ibid. 1:20). There was a series of dicta, of commands, of words that the Creator said.

Now, that's a puzzle because was anybody around to hear these words? There were no eardrums available yet; there were no listeners! Isn't that a good question? So why did Hashem have to say? Let Him just will it into existence and finished.

Now I'm not going into the mysteries of this concept. Perhaps some other time we could discuss it but right now we're interested only in the externality of this procedure – *it was done by words*. And that has to be explained.

Words for Consumption

Now, first we must get into our heads an important principle. If you want to understand anything about our holy books, the *kisvei hakodesh*, you must first consult a principle of the Rambam. He states it in *Moreh Nevuchim* and also in *Yad Hachazakah*: Whatever is said about Hakadosh Baruch Hu is only said for human consumption. It's only said for our ears to hear because to actually speak about Hakadosh Baruch Hu Himself would be impossible. Any words used would be an entirely different language that no human being ever spoke. We wouldn't understand it.

Can you speak to a blind man about colors? Here's a man born blind and you're an eloquent orator and you're describing to him how beautiful this red flower is. And you go into raptures over the tints and the hues and explain to him the breathtaking beauty of this flower.

You're talking to the wall! He has no concept of color at all. He can sympathize with your enthusiasm, yes. It may be contagious too; he may

also become enthusiastic. But no matter what you'll say he won't ever know what it means 'the beautiful color of a rose'.

Speaking to the Blind

And therefore when the Torah speaks to us about Hakadosh Baruch Hu it's like talking to a man born blind. We have no idea at all about the concepts that pertain to the Deity. It's impossible for us to understand anything because we're talking not about something that is great, something that is very big in comprehension. No! It's something that is entirely outside the sphere of our understanding. And just like to a blind man, red and blue and pink are meaningless; as he feels the colors with his fingers, red and blue and pink are exactly the same color to him, so too us, no words about Hakadosh Baruch Hu actually mean anything.

And so when the Torah tells us something about Hakadosh Baruch Hu, the rule is that it's for our consumption; it means, it's for us to learn as a way of life. Anything said about Hashem is not said because that's how Hashem is but because that's what Hashem wants you to think He is, so that it should be what you should aspire to be yourself.

Emulating Mercy

For instance, Hashem is described as a *Rachum*; He has compassion. He's merciful. But what does mercy mean? Mercy means certain emotions pass across your nerves into your mind and they change your attitude. There's a *change*. You soften. You relent. That's what compassion is.

But Hakadosh Baruch Hu *doesn't* relent. He *doesn't* change. Whatever He is, He is always. He always is what He is. All the good qualities, the perfect qualities, He possesses without any change at all. And therefore actually the word 'mercy' doesn't apply to Hakadosh Baruch Hu at all.

Only why is He described as *Rachum*? Because מִדָּה הוּא רַחוּם אִף אֲתָה הָיִה רַחוּם: 'Just as He is merciful – it means just as He is described as having mercy – so too we should train ourselves to have mercy' (Shabbos

133b). It's for the purpose that we should emulate Him. Everything we're told about Hakadosh Baruch Hu is said only for the purpose that we should try to feel that way in order to live that way.

Speech and Consequences

And so we come back now to the puzzle in the beginning of the Torah: What does it mean, "Hashem said"? "He said, 'Let there be light,' and 'Let there be grass,' and 'Let there be birds'. He says and says and says. Of course, He didn't have to say anything. His will is enough. But He spoke! What for?

The answer is that He spoke in order to teach us the immense importance of speech. How vast is the consequence of a word! When Hashem said words, things were created. *כִּי הוּא אָמַר* – *When He said, וַיְהִי* – *it came into being, הוּא צִוָּה* – *He commanded, וַיַּעֲמֹד* – *and it arose* (Tehillim 33:9).

Hashem's speech became concretized. It became something physical and tangible; it became the world. *לְעוֹלָם ה' דְּבַרְךָ נֹצֵב בַּשָּׁמַיִם* – *Forever, Hashem, Your word stands in the heavens* (Tehillim 119:89). The heavens is the *dvar* Hashem. When you look at the sky, you're seeing the words of Hashem. That's what it is. You're looking at a concretization of His words. *וּבְרוּחַ פִּי כָל צְבָאָם* – *With the breath of His mouth, He created all the hosts of heaven, the sun and all the stars* (ibid. 33:6).

Words Are Tangible

And so when it states, *וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אֹר* – Elokim said, 'Let there be light', Hashem is supplying us with a model of what a word means. When Hashem said, *yehi* – let it be, it wasn't a word that dissipated into the air. No! It became concrete, something that was tangible!

And the Rambam is telling us that it's written for one purpose – so that we should understand our function. If the Word of Hashem could create the heavens, then we have to realize that human beings must learn that lesson and feel that every word is of the utmost importance. And that's why it

says, *Vayomer Elokim*, to give us a model of what our words are, what our words are producing.

Of course we're not Hashem, but the Torah system is *מִה הוּא אָף אֶתָּה* – If He tells us that His words are of utmost importance then it's for us to realize the importance of our speech! Just as Hakadosh Baruch Hu's speech is eternal and it stands forever, our speech also stands forever. Which means when we speak, we are creating something eternal. A word said never goes lost.

Advanced Physics

Now in physics it's true because your word is an energy. Sound is an energy. And that energy even though it is dissipated in the course of time, in a minute the sound is finished, but it's still traveling through space. Forever and ever, that energy that you released into the world is still functioning. The word that you said never goes lost.

But not only in the sense of physics is it true that the energy of your word doesn't go lost, but also in the sense that it's forever in a spiritual sense. When you say one word, you must know that word is inscribed on magnetic tape, a cassette tape that will never wear out.

And it's playing forever and ever. Like the *possuk* says, *וּמַגִּיד לְאָדָם מִה שִׁיחוּ* – *Hashem will tell a man what is his speech* (Amos 4:13). Not only He'll tell you – it means He'll play it back! On the Day of Judgment, when you come to the Next World, all those tapes that we would have liked to have destroyed – we'll be so sorry that we didn't destroy them – all those tapes will be brought forth and we'll have to listen to a playback. And again and again, forever and ever, it'll be played back over and over.

That's a Torah doctrine, *וּמַגִּיד לְאָדָם מִה שִׁיחוּ*. You don't say words that go lost in this world. Our words are just as tangible as any physical creations that a craftsman fashions! The words remain forever! Every word is forever and ever! All words! Good or otherwise!

Weighty Words

Now, understanding that will make a tremendous difference in our lives because we would like to have a perfect tape to be played back. That's why I'm careful here that people shouldn't cough during the lecture; because it'll be played back for years and years and they'll hear your cough on it. You'll be coughing for the next maybe fifty years on this tape.

All the more so when you're recording your own tape; when you're talking at home to your wife, you have to know there's a tape recorder concealed. You don't know it but it's there and someday it'll be played back to you because it's something you cannot erase; so you might as well make the very best recording that you can in this world!

Now, I know that puts a heavy burden on us, a big load on our minds, but that's the truth, a human word is of the greatest value, of the greatest consequence. That's what we're learning from Hashem's words that created worlds.

We learn from the word of Hashem that every word that you say is such a weighty phenomenon, such an important item; as important as creating worlds. And therefore it becomes imperative to measure out the use of words only for the most important functions. Now, I understand that this idea is not going to take root immediately but at least let's study it. And that's how we'll start out today's session, with that idea.

Part II. Words of Wisdom

Wise and Kind Words

Now, when Hakadosh Boruch Hu said words at *Maaseh Bereishis* it was many many things. Trillions of creations and trillions of processes came into existence. Creation was almost infinite in its results and consequences. But the common denominator of all of Creation is *גְּדֻלּוֹ וְטוּבוֹ מְלֵא עוֹלָם*. Do you recall where that is? We say it in the *yotzer* of *Shachris*,

Shabbos morning. *גְּדֻלּוֹ וְטוּבוֹ מְלֵא עוֹלָם* – *His greatness and His kindness fill the world*, which means that everything in the world is made up of those two qualities; number one, *godlo*, which means His greatness, His wisdom, and number two, *tuvo*, which mean His goodness, His kindness.

How is that so? Number one, everything in the world bespeaks the greatness of Hashem because it demonstrates plan and purpose. There's nothing in the world that doesn't show infinite design, infinite wisdom. Of course, you have to practice up before you're fully convinced, but after a while it dawns on you so clearly that it's inescapable – there's not a thing in the universe that does not demonstrate wisdom.

And the second thing that jumps out at us from Creation is *tuvo*, the Creator's kindness. Wherever you turn you can see the *chesed* Hashem. And so these are the two common denominators that we see in the results of Hashem's words. Wherever you look that's how it is, you see in Creation the goodness of Hashem and the wisdom of Hashem.

Wise Tomatoes

Now I could spend an hour talking about that, many hours – I would love to give a long dissertation right now about *godlo v'tuvo* but I'll give just one example so that we should understand this idea better. Yesterday in the afternoon I was passing by a neighbor's front yard and I saw he had tomatoes growing there. I stopped to admire them. How did that wonderful thing happen? Can you make a tomato? Can DuPont make a tomato? Will they ever be able to do it? Never in a million years! There's so much science that is necessary to know, so many intricate pieces of information in just a tomato seed that they'll never know enough to create even a poor knock-off of a tomato. As much as they try they'll never be able to replicate that machinery.

Where did the redness come from? The tomato seed had no redness in it. And that seed put into the soil is able to produce such a wonderful result,

a beautiful package of food with coloring. Just to create that color – first it's a green color hiding among the plants and then only when it's ready to eat it turns red – that needs such wisdom, such design that the greatest chemical company in the world will never be able to reproduce something similar to that.

Kind Tomatoes

But it's also *tuvo*. It's His kindness. Because why does the tomato turn red? Because red makes it more appetizing. The color attracts people, it makes you more interested in eating. It's more of a pleasure to eat a brightly colored red tomato than a tomato that has no color at all. Suppose all tomatoes looked like potatoes. You might not want to eat them. You see the Creator wants to give you more *cheshek* to eat it.

Hakadosh Baruch Hu made fruit beautifully colored so that you should enjoy them more. And it's not a harmful color. It's a beneficial color too. When you put dyes into food in most cases they're harmful, but here is a dye that's beneficial; besides for giving it an attractive color it's also good to eat. It tastes good and it's nourishing. It's good because it's *tuvo*.

And so just when you look at the tomato plant, you see right away the *godlo v'tuvo*, the wisdom and kindness, that the Creator demonstrated when He made this world.

Angelic Tailors

I can't help myself so I'll give you one more example. וַיַּעַשׂ ה' אֱלֹקִים לְאָדָם וּלְאִשְׁתּוֹ כְּתָנוּת עוֹר וַיְלַבְּשֵׁם – And Hashem made for Adam and his wife garments to cover their skin, and He clothed them (Bereishis 3:21).

So Rabbeinu Saadya Gaon says that it doesn't mean that Hashem gave them garments just like that. He didn't send angels down with measuring tape and scissors to be tailors. No, Rabbeinu Saadya learns it differently. He says that Hashem, when He created the world by means of His speech, He

created all the materials that mankind needs for clothing.

That's what it means 'He gave them *kosnos*, garments, *ohr*, to cover their skin.' When He said "The earth should bring forth plants", included in that was clothing. Hashem created such plants that supply clothing. In His wisdom and kindness He made flax, that's linen, and cotton grow from the ground. And when He said, "The earth should bring forth living creatures according to its kind," included in that was sheep and its wool. He made wool grow on sheep.

The truth is that wool also grows from the ground because what is wool? It's grass. The sheep eat grass and from the grass they grow wool. Now if the sheep would eat wool and he would produce wool on his back, even then it would be a miracle. You try to eat wool and produce wool. But the sheep doesn't even eat wool. It eats grass and changes it into wool. Suppose you have a machine that you throw in grass on one end and the other end wool comes out. If I could patent that machine, I'd become a millionaire overnight. But it'll never be patented. Hakadosh Baruch Hu is holding that patent because there's too much wisdom there for the human mind, for human capabilities.

It's Growing for Us

But not only wisdom; it's *tuvo*, His kindness. Because what is cotton for? What is flax for? Animals don't eat that cotton. Insects don't eat cotton. It'll fall into the earth and rot away if you don't pick it. There's only one purpose for the cotton – that mankind should take it and turn it into clothing. And the wool, who's that for? The sheep doesn't need that wool. And when you shear it off every season, it grows back again. What's it doing here?

The answer is that Hakadosh Baruch Hu, in His kindness, is supplying us with clothing. All types of clothing that grow by means of a dizzying amount

of miracles. And so when you see clothing it means you're looking at the *godlo v'tuvo* of Hashem.

And therefore – we could give a thousand more examples – we see that Hashem's *dibbur*, His words at *Maaseh Bereishis*, were always directed with two purposes in mind: wisdom and kindness. Hashem didn't open His mouth for nothing, just to say *d'varim b'teilim*, to crack a joke or make a good comeback, a snappy retort; only for plan and purpose, for *chochmah*. That's number one, that everything in Creation displays that Hashem spoke with wisdom. And the second purpose is kindness. Everything in Creation is for *chesed*. Tomatoes and clothing and so on. He gives us all the things we need in order to live happily in this world.

The Wise Woman

And therefore just like He spoke that's how we have to speak. Just like Hashem's word, His creation, was *גְּדֹלוֹ וְטוֹבוֹ*, it's all His goodness and His greatness, so too all of the words that we produce should be like His. *Mah Hu*, just like He, all of His words are *chochmah v'chessed*, so too that's what we have to produce; *chochmah v'chessed* and that's all.

Now, it's no coincidence that when we consult the last chapter in *Mishlei* where it describes the speech of the 'Woman of Valor' we find that it's these two ideals that are on her tongue. Here's how it's stated: *פִּיהָ פִּתְחָה בְּחָכְמָה* – *She opens her mouth with wisdom*, *וְתוֹרַת חֶסֶד עַל לְשׁוֹנָהּ* – *and the teaching, it means the doctrine, of kindness is on her tongue* (*Mishlei* 31:26).

Now, it's probable that Shlomo Hamelech is talking about his own mother. He had a wise mother and he mentions her previously in the *sefer* so probably it's his mother he's talking about, her way of speaking, but either way it's intended to be a model for all of us. I say 'all of us' because it's important to note that this *possuk*, the lesson, is not talking only to women. Only that this was Shlomo's *mashal* – we'll see later why he chose it – but this is the lesson we learn from the *dibbur* of

Hakadosh Baruch Hu when He created the world and it applies equally to women and men, boys and girls.

The Padlocked Peh

Now what does it say about this woman? Number one is that she opens her mouth with wisdom. Otherwise, she didn't speak. It's *piha paschah*; when she opens up, it's like opening up a door. A door doesn't open by itself. When you decide that you want to open it, you walk over and you open it up.

So this woman of valor when she decides to speak so she makes up her mind to open up the door and she unlocks her lips. It's not a simple process. She won't open her mouth unless she first consults herself, does it have to be said? And if she considers it and decides that yes, it is appropriate, so she takes the padlock off of her lips and says her words of wisdom. And then she closes the door again.

Of course such a person won't open their mouth frequently. If you're opening your mouth only with wisdom so there will be many occasions when the lips remain padlocked. After all, you're thinking beforehand that maybe the circumstances don't warrant anything to be said and therefore better to keep quiet.

The Rambam in *Hilchos De'os* (2:4) describes such a person: *לֹא יְדַבֵּר אֶלָּא אִם בְּדַבַּר חָכְמָה אוֹ בְּדַבַּר יְדִי* – *A wise person doesn't shoot off his mouth; he doesn't speak unless it's something of wisdom or if it's necessary*. He considers, "Am I saying something wise, instructive or is it maybe necessary?" Otherwise, forget about it.

They said about Rav, a disciple of Rabbeinu Hakadosh, that he never spoke idle talk all his days. You hear such an achievement? *לֹא שָׁח שִׁיחָה בְּטִלָּה כָּל יְמֵי* – *he never spoke unnecessary talk* (*ibid.*). And don't think it was easy. He had to train himself. But he succeeded. And the Rambam says, what's idle talk? *זוֹ הִיא שִׁיחַת רַב כָּל אָדָם* – *that's what most people*

are talking, idle talk. 'Most people' that's us. It means we have our work cut out for us.

Pause and Pause Again

Piha paschah b'chochmah means that even if someone is talking to you, **הַחֵם אֵינוּ נִבְהַל לְהַשִּׁיב** – that you're not in a hurry to answer. If somebody asks you something, so if you're a *chochom* you pause a moment before you answer. If you pause two moments, you're a bigger *chochom*. If you pause all the time and don't talk at all, then you're the biggest *chochom*.

Just because you say something, I have to answer you? One wisecrack, you think deserves another? Just because you opened your mouth, I have to open mine? Maybe I'll decide that it's not necessary.

Sometimes, it's necessary. Take your time anyhow. Even if you must answer, take your time and think it over. It's an art. Be polite, friendly. Make sure you open your mouth *b'chochmah*.

And you're doing it because you're learning from Hakadosh Baruch Hu Himself. Every time He spoke it was for the greatest plan and purpose, with endless wisdom. And that's why He did it. He created this world with words so that we should know to speak only with words of plan and purpose.

Part III. Words of Kindliness

Kind Wisdom

Now we come to the second element, **תּוֹרַת הַסֵּד, עַל לְשׁוֹנָהּ** – *the doctrine of kindliness is on her tongue*. It means that because she opens her mouth only with wisdom so everything that this *eishes chayil* says, she screens for this effect: "Will it make the listener feel good? Will it make people happy to hear my words?" If not, it wasn't said.

Now the truth is that sometimes *chochmah* will not make a person happy. If you have to rebuke somebody for misbehavior or warn him against a dangerous course that he's taking in life or if he's

doing wrong things, it may not make him happy but it's also *Toras chessed*. You're doing him a great favor even if he won't be so happy. However, in general that was the principle of this *eishes chayil* that before she spoke she considered 'Will the listener become more happy as a result of my words?' That's the epitome of an *eishes chayil*.

Now, the Gemara tells us in Mesichta Brachos (48b) a secret about women. Don't tell anybody about it but I'm going to share it with you. The Gemara says that when Shaul was coming to visit Shmuel Hanavi he asked a few girls on the road if the *navi* is in the town, and they answered with a long conversation. They delivered a speech: "The *navi* is coming here and there's going to be a celebration in the town. There's going to be a sacrifice, an offering, with a meal and people will not eat until the *navi* comes," and so on; a whole story they said.

And the Gemara is surprised by that: Why so much talking? "Is the *navi* in the town now?" That was a question. So the women should have said "Yes." That's all that was required of them.

What Is A Woman?

So listen to the secret the Gemara tells us: **לְפִי הֵם שֶׁהַנָּשִׁים רַבְרַבְנִיּוֹת הֵם** – *Women like to talk*. That's the answer. Now, the Gemara is not accusing anybody; it's just stating a fact of nature. You know, when I was a boy I lived in Baltimore and in school I learned the official motto of the city of Baltimore. It was in the Italian language: *Fatti maschii parole femmine*. All school children knew that. *Fatti maschii* – to do deeds, that's for men; *parole* – to talk, *femmine* – is for women.

Today I'm sure they've changed that but sixty or seventy years ago that was the motto there. *Fatti maschii parole femine* – to do acts, that's for men; but to speak, that's for women.

Now, the words of the Gemara, 'Women like to talk' are telling us that we should consider this not merely as a phenomenon of nature but as a creation

of Hashem. It means that we disregard all the efforts of N.O.W. (the National Organization for Women, a radical feminist rights organization) to erase the effects of nature. You know that today they try to make girls play the same games as boys. And a store in Los Angeles, in their toys department they had one section for boys' toys and another one, a separate section, for girls' toys, and they took them to court of discrimination.

But we'll go back to the days when nature was recognized and we'll ask 'Why is it that women have a nature to talk?' We'll recognize it as a fact of nature, a creation of Hashem, and we'll ask why is it so?

The Slabodka Thesis

And so I'll tell you a little Torah that they said in Slabodka. They used to say that women are a *briyah* of *chesed*. They are created for the practice of kindness; having children, raising children, running the home. They're doing deeds of helping, of compassion, of bestowing benefits all the time. Their lives are devoted to doing acts of kindness; the entire existence of women is for *chesed*.

And a great portion of that *chesed* is by means of speech; all her life she is speaking with kindness. First to little children, she coos to them and soothes them when they're crying; she sings to them. Her little boys and little girls, as they grow up she talks to them. She's always talking and counseling and soothing. When little Chaim'l falls down she kisses him where it hurts, where he bumped his finger and she soothes him with words. When Chanaleh comes home from the Beis Yaakov overworked and nervous, so her mother soothes her with *chesed l'shonah*.

And later when she's a grandmother she continues her career. She's helping with the little babies of her sons and daughters and she's pouring let's say antiseptic on the grandchildren's cuts and putting Band-Aids on them; she's applying cream on their boo-boos. And all the while she's applying

her *chesed l'shonah* as well; and her *neshamah* is becoming greater and greater. Her character is expanding because she's living up to her potential perfection.

Stay at Home, Moms

That's a Slabodka Torah. A woman is a *briyah* of *chesed*; she's created for the purpose of kindness. A man, he too has to use his tongue only for kindness, no less than a woman, but for her that's her especial achievement; that's her perfection. Sometimes women can excel in other fields but the true greatness of a woman is when she lives a life as a woman, excelling in the field of serving Hakadosh Baruch Hu according to her nature.

The truth is that's when she's happiest. A woman who becomes a judge you must know is a frustrated creature. When she puts on the black robe and holds the gavel in her hand she's only acting but inside she's not happy. For the moment she may be intoxicated by the power that she's wielding but she can't help feeling frustrated because her nature, her success, her excellence is in conducting a house, a family, and exercising the unique potentialities of her character: kindness, compassion, helping.

And it was for this purpose Hakadosh Baruch Hu endowed women with the facility of speech, even more than men. It's a fact that I've noticed that very few women stutter. Boys frequently stutter but girls rarely. And even men who are educated cannot express themselves as well as their wives. Women, once they open up, it flows with a faculty. They don't lack words. They never stop to look for the right word. A man, even an orator, sometimes he's stuck. I've noticed this for many years, that women, in their role as queen of the home, are more capable of speaking to their families than their husbands. Because they have the gift that Hakadosh Baruch Hu endowed them of *Toras chesed al l'shonah*; the gift of kindness is on their tongues.

Queen Bees

Now of course sometimes some women are like bees. A bee brings honey but a bee also stings; and a husband sometimes would be willing to give up both things. Like it says (Rashi Bamidbar 22:12) **לֹא מֵעֶקֶצְךָ וְלֹא מִדּוֹבְשֶׁךָ** – *don't give me your sting and don't give me your honey*. But the wise woman makes it her business to deliver only honey.

Now like I said before this doesn't mean that the function of speech, *Toras chessed*, is limited to women. It's merely because this *mashal* of Shlomo Hamelech happens to be talking about women, because it's an especial function for them. But otherwise it's a *mashal* for everybody because we all are expected to learn the lesson from the *dibbur* of Hashem. The *Toras chessed* must be on the tongue of every person, man and woman, boy and girl, who wants to emulate Hashem with his *dibbur*.

Everybody needs a word of consolation, a friendly expression, a compliment. People need a lift. We don't realize, what people need more than anything else in this world are a couple of kind words. When a man comes home tired from his day in the office or in his shop, he had so much friction with customers, with his supervisor, with others, and he's knocked out and nervous and tired, so if there's a wise wife at home, she greets him with a couple of nice words. "Chaim, I'm glad to see you. I made a nice supper for you today."

Appease the Police

You don't realize how much people crave to hear **חֶסֶד עַל לְשׁוֹנָה**. Everyone; even the Irish policeman on the corner. Don't think he doesn't want kind words. He may look stern standing on the corner. I once told a policeman, "People appreciate seeing you around here."

"It doesn't look like it," he said. "Nobody talks to me."

He thinks people don't like him. All day long he's trotting around on his horse or he's walking the beat and nobody talks to him. He thinks people

resent his being there and watching them. He's waiting for a kind word and your function is to provide it. And if you're obligated to the Irish policeman then surely to your wife and husband and children and neighbors. Even the rabbi of your shul; trust me, he needs kind words too.

And therefore if we're serious about it, we have to make a resolve that going forward whatever we say will be wisdom and kindness. And so wherever you go tonight when you leave this place – if you'll be going home or to the *beis hamedrash*, wherever you'll go – go with the resolve that whatever you say will be kindness and wisdom.

Healthy Flattery

And look for ways to practice. Imagine now you're going to a *bar mitzvah*. As you come into the hall, before you pick up your place card you make up your mind: "Tonight I'm going to speak only the way Hashem taught us to speak. I'll only open my mouth for wisdom and kindness."

And as soon as you come in and see your old cousin Jake, you see he's not the same man. You didn't see him for twenty years and he's balding now. He put on a few pounds too. So you say "Jake! So good to see you. You look exactly like you did twenty years ago." Ah! Jake is a new man now.

Once you get the hang of it, so you see your old aunt across the room and you walk over to her with this lesson in mind. You say "Hi Aunt Bertha! It's unbelievable how young you look." You made her night!

Get into the habit of making people feel good. It doesn't cost any money. The cheapest kind of *tzedakah* is saying nice words. And don't worry that it's false and it's flattery. If necessary, flatter too. Don't make any mistake, you get *Olam Haba* for that. You're fulfilling your function in this world.

Emulating The Creator

And if a person would always keep in mind the great principle of learning from Hashem's words,

that the tongue was created not as a weapon to inflict hurt but it's limited to the purpose of wisdom – the wisdom of putting liniments, soothing compresses, consoling, encouraging, kind words – then our lives would be transformed into lives of achievement. Because most of our existence is lived in the world of words! Deeds are only a minor part of our lives. The major part of our existence is speech and if the speech would be utilized properly then you're living successfully.

You're fulfilling the great lesson that Hakadosh Baruch Hu taught us when He spoke words on the Day of Creation. *Vayomer* and *vayomer* and *vayomer* again and again. After all, He didn't have to speak to Create. There was no reason for it except that we should learn from His ways. Just like He spoke only for the purpose of wisdom and kindness, that's what we'll try to do as well. As much as possible we'll fulfill the great program of *פִּיהָ פְּתוּחָהּ בְּחִכְמָה*, *opening our mouths only with wisdom*, *וְתוֹרַת חֶסֶד עַל לְשׁוֹנָהּ*, *so that only the ways of kindness should be on our tongues*.

Have A Wonderful Shabbos

LET'S GET PRACTICAL

One Minute, Wise and Kind

This week I will *bli neder* choose one minute every day to practice emulating Hashem's words at *Maaseh Bereishis*. For one minute every day, while I'm talking to someone, I will focus on watching what comes out of my mouth. I will only open my mouth with *wisdom* to say words that are needed, and with *chessed*, to say words that will bring comfort and happiness to the one I'm speaking to.

This week's booklet is based on tapes:

R-53 - Great By Silence | 154 - Career of Encouragement | 503 - Five Worlds of David | 572 - Tongue of Kindliness | 645 - Gift of Speech

Listen: 718.289.0899 Press 1 for English and 2 for Thursday Night Lectures



When Hashem created the world, what came first, the chicken or the egg?



It's a big problem for the scientists, a problem they can't answer. What came first? If the egg was first, then there was no mother to hatch it. But if the chicken was first, so how did the chicken come? It's a problem for them.

And the answer is, both were first. Hashem said, "Let there be chickens sitting on eggs." When the world was created there were thousands, maybe millions of chickens sitting on eggs at the very beginning of the world. That's the only way to solve the problem. Otherwise there are too many contradictions.

When Hashem made the world, He made it ready, functioning. Right at the beginning of *briyas haolam*, He put metal into the earth; He put iron into the earth. Trees were growing and rivers were flowing and chickens were sitting on eggs. Everything was put there. Just like when Adam HaRishon was created, he didn't wait for someone to come along and give him a pair of eyes. As soon as he was born, he had a pair of eyes and he could talk and he had a full set of teeth too. Same thing, so as soon as the earth was created, it had everything that it needed.

That's what the *chachomim* say, that *בְּלִי מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית* *בְּקוֹמְתָן נִבְרָאוּ* (Chullin 60a). All of Creation came into being *b'komasan*; it means the world came into being as a fully functioning and complete world. And included in that is that there were old chickens and young chickens and chicks and chickens sitting on eggs too. *ה' בְּרָא - He created, יֵשׁ מֵאֵין - out of nothing*; everything came into being immediately, functioning immediately. And so the world came into being with chickens sitting on eggs.

TAPE # E-171 (December 24, 1998)

Toras Avigdor : Parshas Bereishis