

## The Loud Sounds of a Soft Voice

Based on the weekly Shmuess given by HaRav Shaya Cohen, Rosh HaYeshiva, Yeshiva Zichron Aryeh

לעילוי נשמת גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנוח | הרב יוסף חיים בן מאיר | הפאל חיים דוב בן בן-ציון שלום | ר' ברוך בן ר' יהודה | שרה בת ר' יחזקאל | ראובן יוסף בן יהושע | דב בעריש בן פסח צבי  
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In this week's Parsha, the Torah says (16:1), "And Korach the son of Yitzhar, the son Kehas, the son of Levi, and Dasan V'Aviram took." The Medrash Tanchumah comments on this Pasuk, "The word taking only means drawing them with soft words. With this Korach drew all the great people in Klal Yisrael, and the Sanhedrin to follow him. By Moshe, it says (referring to Moshe asking the Nesiim to count Klal Yisrael), 'And Moshe and Aharon took these men.' Similarly it says (referring to Viduy), 'They should take with them words, and return to Hashem.' It also says (referring to Paraoth's officers taking Sarah), 'And they took the women to the house of Paraoth.' It says 'And Korach took,' that with soft words he drew their hearts."

Upon initial analysis this Medrash is perplexing. The Medrash begins and ends by stressing the point that the "taking" over here is referring to persuading them with a soft voice. However, the three places that the Medrash equates to what Korach did make no mention of a soft voice. Why does the Medrash assume that all these places refer to taking with a soft voice?

It must be that the Medrash understood that the only way to effectively influence anyone is to speak with a soft voice. Therefore, in all of these situations it had to be with a soft voice, as this is the only way that someone will be receptive. Now if we thread this idea through each of the situations given, we can see the extent to which this idea holds true. In the first situation Moshe is offering the Nesiim a leadership position that comes with prestige, yet even in

this situation where the Nesiim are being offered something that is beneficial to them it needs to be done with a soft voice. Furthermore, by Viduy where someone is talking to themselves and there would seem to be no resistance it won't penetrate unless it is done softly. This extends one step further, where Paraoth's officers had the power to force Sarah to the palace, and yet to be effective it had to be done softly. This Medrash illustrates how crucial it is to speak gently and softly, and how speaking in a harsh or loud tone is an ineffective way of communicating.

We can take this idea one step further. Not only does this Medrash illustrate the power of a soft tone to penetrate the heart, it also shows that a soft tone can convince someone of something that is irrational. Korach's attack was absurd! Moshe Rabbeinu was appointed by Hashem, and the entire Klal Yisrael were witness to this appointment. How can these Gedolim be convinced of something foolish to think Moshe is acting on his own? Add to this the fact that Moshe's devotion and selflessness were extraordinary! Despite all of this the Medrash tells us that due to Korach's soft words he was able to persuade them. We see from here that not only do soft words have the power to penetrate, they also have the ability to break down any resistance and fully disarm a person, making him vulnerable to nonsensical ideas. It is clear from here that if we want to influence ourselves and others with the truth, we must maintain a soft tone in order to have a positive effect.



## Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

In this week's Haftorah, we encounter the following Pasuk:

"For Hashem will never abandon His people for the sake of His great name, for Hashem undertook to make you, His people. As for me, far be it from me to sin against Hashem and refrain from praying for you..." (Shmuel I 12:22,23)

One might question why Shmuel did not say, "Far be it from me to sin against you and refrain from praying for you..." Why is it a sin against Hashem not to pray for someone?

Shmuel's words can be understood in light of what occurs in Heaven when we experience suffering, as described in the following Pasuk (Yeshayah 63:9): "In all their troubles, He is troubled, and the angel of His Presence will deliver them." The Mishnah in Sanhedrin (46a) further elucidates this concept: "When a person suffers (referring to one who is sentenced to death in a court of law), what expression does the Shechinah use? 'My head is too heavy for me, my arm is too heavy for me' (expressing sorrow and concern)." If Hashem is so deeply saddened by the shedding of the blood of the wicked, how much more so is He affected by the suffering of the righteous!

While refraining from praying on behalf of a person may be considered a sin against that individual, the greater offense is against Hashem Himself, who feels the suffering of each of His children— even those who have sinned and deserve capital punishment—on an infinitely deeper level.



## ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

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According to our understanding, everything that will happen to us throughout the year is predetermined by Hashem on Rosh Hashanah. If we choose not to make Hishtadlus and simply stay in bed, it can potentially open us up to receiving a new decree, which may be worse than what was initially ordained for us. Therefore, although our Hishtadlus may not bring about positive outcomes directly, it acts as a means of preventing further harm from what has already been decreed.

Based on the above, there may not always be a significant difference in the daily actions between someone with bitachon in Hashem and someone without it since even those with bitachon have an obligation to make efforts. However, the underlying intention behind their actions will vary greatly. Someone lacking bitachon will engage in hishtadlus throughout the day, believing that their success solely depends on their own efforts. They will experience constant stress, similar to a businessperson who believes that they are solely responsible for their earnings and must find lucrative deals to succeed. On the other hand, someone with bitachon knows that whatever they receive is already predetermined above, and their hishtadlus is simply fulfilling their obligation to prevent any changes in the divine decree. Such a person does not experience the same level of stress throughout the day because they understand that unless they neglect their obligation, they have essentially received what is destined for them. This can be likened to a secretary in a successful company who has a fixed income assured, but still needs to fulfill their obligation of answering phone calls and taking messages in order to maintain their position.

Therefore, embracing bitachon and shifting our intent can indeed bring about profound improvements in our stress levels, happiness, and overall life experiences.