

Aaron: A time to speak, a time for silence, and a time for peace

Source Sheet by Jeremy Wiederhorn

Exodus 4:14

(14) The LORD became angry with Moses, and He said, “There is your brother Aaron the Levite. He, I know, speaks readily. Even now he is setting out to meet you, and he will be happy to see you.

שמות ד':י"ד

(יֵד) וַיִּחַר־אַף יְהוָה בְּמֹשֶׁה
וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא אֶהְרֹן אֶחֱיֶיךָ הֵלְוִי
יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־דַבֵּר יִדְבַר הוּא וְגַם
הִנֵּה־הוּא יֵצֵא לִקְרֹאתְךָ וְרֵאךָ
וְשָׂמַח בְּלִבּוֹ:

Shabbat 139a:14

And Rabbi Mallai said: It is stated in the verse: “And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and He said: Is there not Aaron your brother the Levite, I know that he can surely speak, and also behold, he is coming out to greet you, and he will see you and be glad in his heart” (Exodus 4:14). Rabbi Mallai taught that **as reward for** Aaron’s lack of jealousy at seeing his brother Moses rise to greatness, as it is stated: “**And he will see you and be glad in his heart,**” he merited to become the High Priest, and **for the breastplate of judgment** to rest **on his heart.**

שבת קל"ט א':י"ד

ואמר רבי מלאי בשכר וראך
ושמח בלבו זכה לחשן
המשפט על לבו:

Ramban on Exodus 4:14:1

(1) **I know that he will surely speak.** Meaning, I know that he will speak on your behalf, because he loves you, even if I do not command him. Moreover, he is coming forth on his own toward you, and when he sees you, he will rejoice in his heart. He will not be jealous of your lofty level in that you were chosen for this honorable mission. Later, Hashem needed to say to Aharon (v. 27): “Go toward Moshe, to the desert,” only for the sake of giving him directions, and not as a command. It might also be possible that Aharon heard that Moshe had left Midian and he left on his own to greet him, and when he was on the road Hashem said to him (v. 27): “Go toward Moshe, to the desert,” for that is where you will find him.

Targum Jonathan on Exodus 6:28

(28) And it was in the day when the Lord spoke with Moshe in the land of Mizraim, that Aharon gave a listening ear, and heard what He spoke with him.

רמב"ן על שמות ד'י"ד:א'

(א) ידעתי כי דבר ידבר הוא כלומר גלוי לפני שידבר בעבורך ברצונו לאהבתך, ואפילו לא. צויתיו. וגם הנה הוא מעצמו יוצא לקראתך וראך ושמח בלבו, ולא יקנא בך למעלתך על השליחות הנכבדת הזאת ומה שהוצרך לומר לו לך לקראת משה המדברה (פסוק כז), בעבור כי הודיעו הדרך אשר יבא בה ויתכן ששמע אהרן בצאת משה ממדין ויצא מעצמו לקראתו, ואחר כך בדרך נאמר לו לך לקראתו המדברה כי שם תמצאנו:

תרגום יונתן על שמות

ו'כ"ח

(כח) וְהָיָה בְּיוֹמָא דְּמַלִּיל יי עם משה בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם הָיָה אֶהְרֹן מְצִית אֹדְנִיָּה וְשָׁמַע מֵה דְּמַלִּיל עִמִּיהּ

Leviticus 10:1-3

(1) Now Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu each took his fire pan, put fire in it, and laid incense on it; and they offered before the LORD alien fire, which He had not enjoined upon them. (2) And fire came forth from the LORD and consumed them; thus they died at the instance of the LORD. (3) Then Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD meant when He said: Through those near to Me I show Myself holy, And gain glory before all the people." And Aaron was silent.

ויקרא י:א-ג'

(א) וַיִּקְחוּ בְנֵי־אֶהֱרֹן נְדָב וְאַבִּיהוּא אִישׁ מַחֲתָתוֹ וַיִּתְּנוּ בָהֶן אֵשׁ וַיִּשִׂימוּ עָלֶיהָ קִטְרֶת וַיִּקְרְבוּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֵשׁ זָרָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא צִוָּה אֲתֶם: (ב) וַתֵּצֵא אֵשׁ מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַתֹּאכַל אוֹתָם וַיִּמָּתוּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: (ג) וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־אֶהֱרֹן הֲוֵא אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר יְהוָה | לֵאמֹר בְּקִרְבֵי אֶקְדֹּשׁ וְעַל־פְּנֵי כָל־הָעָם אֶכָּבֵד וַיִּדַּם אֶהֱרֹן:

Berakhot 6b:14

Rav Pappa said: The primary reward for attending a house of mourning [*bei tammaya*] is for the **silence**, which is the optimal manner for those consoling the mourners to express their empathy.

ברכות ו' ב:י"ד

אָמַר רַב פַּפְּא: אֲגָרָא דְּבֵי טַמְיָא — שְׁתִּיקוּתָא.

Ramban on Numbers 16:4:1

(1) ויפל על פניו (1) only Moses, not Aaron; Aaron preserved his dignity by not displaying any reaction to the rebellion at all, seeing that he was the one who had aroused this jealousy. Although his silence and lack of defense of himself could be

רמב"ן על במדבר ט"ז:ד:א'

(א) ויפול על פניו ולא ויפלו כי אהרן במוסרו ובקדושתו לא ענה דבר בכל המחלוקת הזו ויהי כמחריש וכמודה שמעלת קרח גדולה ממעלתו אבל הוא עושה כדבר משה

interpreted as an admission that the insurgents were right, he obeyed Moses' instructions as one obeys the decree of one's king.

ומקיים גזירת מלך:

Pirkei Avot 1:12

(12) Hillel and Shammai received [the oral tradition] from them. Hillel used to say: be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving mankind and drawing them close to the Torah.

משנה אבות א'י"ב

(יב) הֵלֵל וְשַׁמַּי קִבְּלוּ מֵהֵם.
הֵלֵל אָמַר, הָיִי מִתַּלְמִידָיו שֶׁל
אַהֲרֹן, אוֹהֵב שְׁלוֹם וְרוֹדֵף
שְׁלוֹם, אוֹהֵב אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת
וּמְקַרְבֵּן לַתּוֹרָה:

Bartenura on Pirkei Avot 1:12:1

(1) **"Be of the disciples of Aharon, loving peace and pursuing peace"**: They explained in Avot DeRabbi Natan how Aharon loved peace: When he would see two people quarreling, he would go to each one of them without the knowledge of his fellow and say to him, "Behold how your fellow is regretting and afflicting himself that he sinned against you; and he told me that I should come to you so that you will forgive him. And as a result of this, when they bumped into each other, they would kiss each other. And how would he bring people closer to the Torah? When he would know about someone that

ברטנורא על משנה אבות

א'י"ב:א'

(א) הָיִי מִתַּלְמִידָיו שֶׁל אַהֲרֹן
אוֹהֵב שְׁלוֹם וְרוֹדֵף שְׁלוֹם.
פָּרְשׁוּ בְּאֲבוֹת דְּרַבִּי נָתָן, כִּי צַד
הָיָה אַהֲרֹן אוֹהֵב שְׁלוֹם,
כְּשֶׁהָיָה רוֹאֶה שְׁנֵי בְּנֵי אָדָם
מִתְקוֹטְטִים הָיָה הוֹלֵךְ לְכָל
אֶחָד מֵהֵם שֶׁלֹּא מִדַּעַת חֲבֵרוֹ,
וְאוֹמֵר לוֹ רְאֵה חֲבֵרְךָ אֵיךְ הוּא
מִתְחַרֵּט וּמַכָּה אֶת עַצְמוֹ עַל
שֶׁחָטָא לָךְ, וְהוּא אָמַר לִי
שֶׁאֲבֵא אֵלֶיךָ שֶׁתִּמְחַל לוֹ,
וּמִתּוֹךְ כֵּךְ כְּשֶׁהָיוּ פּוֹגְעִים זֶה
בְּזֶה הָיוּ מִנְשָׁקִים זֶה אֶת זֶה.

he committed a sin, he would befriend him and show him a friendly demeanor; and that man would be embarrassed and say [to himself], “If that righteous man would know my evil deeds, how much would he distance himself from me? And as a result of this, [that man] would change for the better. And this is what the prophet testifies about [Aharon] (Malachi 2), “In peace and in straightness did he walk with Me and he brought back many from sinning.”

וְכִיצַד הָיָה מְקָרֵב אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת
לְתוֹרָה, כְּשֶׁהָיָה יוֹדֵעַ בְּאָדָם
שֶׁעָבַר עֲבֵרָה הָיָה מִתְחַבֵּר
עִמּוֹ וּמְרַאֶה לוֹ פָּנִים צְהָבוֹת,
וְהָיָה אוֹתוֹ אָדָם מִתְבַּיֵּשׁ
וְאוֹמֵר אֵלָיו הָיָה יוֹדֵעַ צְדִיק זֶה
מֵעֲשֵׂי הָרָעִים כִּמָּה הָיָה
מִתְרַחֵק מִמֶּנִּי, וּמִתּוֹךְ כֶּךָ הָיָה
חוֹזֵר לְמוֹטָב. הוּא שֶׁהִנְבִּיא
מֵעִיד עָלָיו (מִלְאכֵי ב' ו')
בְּשָׁלוֹם וּבְמִישׁוֹר הֵלַךְ אֶתִּי
וּרְבִים הִשִּׁיב מֵעוֹן:

Sanhedrin 6b:3

Rather, the judge must assure that **the true judgment will** prevail at all costs and metaphorically **pierce the mountain, as it is stated: “For the judgment is God’s”** (Deuteronomy 1:17). **And similarly, Moses would say: Let the judgment pierce the mountain. But** by contrast, **Aaron**, whose role was not that of a judge, was **a lover of peace and a pursuer of peace, and he would apply peace between one person and the other, as it is stated: “The law of truth was in his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found in his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and turned many away from iniquity”** (Malachi 2:6).

סנהדרין ו' ב:ג'

אלא יקוב הדין את ההר
שנאמר (דברים א, יז) כי
המשפט לאלהים הוא וכן
משה היה אומר יקוב הדין
את ההר אבל אהרן אוהב
שלום ורודף שלום ומשים
שלום בין אדם לחבירו
שנאמר (מלאכי ב, ו) תורת
אמת היתה בפיהו ועולה לא
נמצא בשפתיו בשלום
ובמישור הלך אתי ורבים
השיב מעון