

April 12, 2023

A Time for Silence

Shalom,

The Torah portion for this week is called **Shemini** and means “**Eighth**.” It speaks of the eighth day of the consecration of the priests. It is found in **Leviticus 9:1–11:47** and it tells of YHWH manifesting His glory to the people of Israel after they had finished the Tabernacle and the inauguration of the priesthood. It also records the deaths of Nadav and Avihu, sons of Aaron, who offered **an offering formulated in their natural minds instead of being faithful to God’s protective instructions**.

Fire came out from the presence of Adonai, and devoured the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.
(Leviticus 9:24 TLV)

Now **Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu** each took his own censer, put fire in it, laid incense over it, and **offered unauthorized fire before Adonai**—which He had not commanded them. So fire came out from the presence of Adonai and consumed them. **So they died before Adonai**. Then Moses said to Aaron, “This is what Adonai spoke of, saying: ‘To those who are near Me I will show Myself holy. Upon the faces of all the people I will be glorified.’” **Then Aaron kept silent.** (Leviticus 10:1-3 TLV)

For everything there is a season and a time for every activity under heaven: ... a time to tear apart and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak; (Ecclesiastes 3:1,7 TLV)

The inauguration of the Levitical priesthood was followed by an awesome response to the obedient presentation of the burnt offering to the Lord, **fire came from His presence and devoured the sacrifice**. It was an amazing and joyous occasion showing the favor God had for His people. However, the joy and beauty of the event was marred when two of Aaron’s sons who, in their role as priests, offered **their own humanly-devised incense formula**, and were caught, **without the protection God had provided, in the magnificent and limitless glory of God, and died instantly**.

God had previously explained the need for being in His presence with the protective cover of His own hand.

But He also said, “You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live.” (Exodus 33:20 TLV)

As we meditate, we can see what a shock this would have been to all who were present, but most especially to Aaron, the father of these two men. The scripture records Aaron's response in Leviticus 10:3 as, "**Then Aaron kept silent.**" That was an amazing response to the loss he must have felt, and an especially important lesson for all of us.

"Words are cheap," it has been said. **People often use words like they have no responsibility to use them wisely.** No! **Words are containers for what you believe,** and they may be of great value, but also may be used with great cost and negative consequence.

Death and life are in the control of the tongue. Those who indulge in it will eat its fruit.
(Proverbs 18:21 TLV)

There are times, and this is verified by the Word of God, that the correct response will be silence. Certainly, **when you do not know what to say, it would be wise to say nothing,** but it is amazing how often people just open their mouths and begin to speak without wisdom, and even blasphemously, using human understanding and reason without any revelation from God.

Even a fool, who keeps quiet, is considered wise, discerning, if he seals his lips.
(Proverbs 17:28 TLV)

Set a guard, Adonai, over my mouth. Keep watch over the door of my lips. (Psalms 141:3 TLV)

Aaron might have allowed his words to speak anger to God, yielding to his grief, without any understanding of what had just occurred. **People often blame God for things that happen, and in so doing, alienate themselves from His grace** that is constantly available to everyone.

There are times when we simply do not understand, and although we have become accustomed to speaking our frustrations and making sure that everyone around us knows how unhappy and discouraged our circumstances make us feel, the wisdom of the Lord will direct us at those times to simply hold our peace and remain silent **until He shows us what to speak.**

Many yield to **speaking too much,** and that they must let you know exactly what they are feeling, or their emotional state, not realizing that in their wordiness, they are establishing with their words, exactly the opposite of things they desire.

In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.
(Proverbs 10:19 KJV)

Let the Lord direct you when to speak and what to say. Do not fall for the lie that you must make people understand how you feel. When you **keep your words** in a **positive**, and **Spirit-led** vein, you will use words as they were intended to be used to **build, and not tear down.** Our words are a gift from God to speak and establish **His will on earth as it is in Heaven. No exceptions!**

In quietness and confidence,
Terry

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