

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

by Rabbi Pinchas Avruch

"G-d said to Moshe: 'Say to the Kohanim (Priests) the sons of Aaron, and you shall say to them...' (Vayikra/Leviticus 21:1) Faced with the glaring question of why G-d's instructions had to include two directives to speak, Rashi explains the redundancy as a warning to the adults to educate the children.

But the question remains: "say to them" in its context is an order to Moshe to speak to the adult Kohanim; how does Rashi read it as a command for the adults to teach the children?

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (1) resolves this, elucidating that the Torah is teaching us a fundamental lesson in child raising. If children are taught that service of G-d is a difficult challenge but that it must be done, that fulfillment of the mitzvos (Divine commands) is a trial that one must muster the fortitude to withstand, then the child may well tell himself that maybe his parents had the strength of conviction pass the test, but he himself does not possess mettle, or the desire, to fight the fight. But when a parent communicates to his child that an apparently difficult situation is not viewed as a challenge, rather it is valued and appreciated as an opportunity to forge and strengthen his relationship with the Divine, then the lesson is entirely different. The child witnesses the parent's passion and inculcates that directive for himself.

Thus, Moshe had two instructions for the Kohanim: not only to be fastidious and scrupulous in observance of G-d's commands, but to do them with a passion and an appreciation that it is an opportunity that is relished. This second instruction, Rashi explains, may be literally communicated by Moshe to the adults, but will ultimately be communicated by the adults to the children.

Have a Good Shabbos!

Kol HaKollel is dedicated to Niki Karp for her three years of dedicated service to the Milwaukee Kollel. We will miss her & hope Hashem grants her blessing and success in her new endeavors.

(1) 1895-1986; Rosh Yeshiva/Dean of Mesivtha Tifereth Jerusalem in New York City; the leading Halachic/Jewish legal decisor of his time and one of the principal leaders of Torah Jewry through much of the last century

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