

The Daily RYS 10/17/06 Speech

From the Mussar Movement Volume 1, Part 2 page 197.

He was as careful in his speech as in his actions. It goes without saying that he refrained from whatever was prohibited by the Halachah. For this we have R. Israel's own testimony. Upon reproving one of his disciples for his words, R. Israel remarked: "Insofar as evil gossip (lashon hara) is concerned, you cannot tell me, 'Remove a beam from between your eyes,' and, it seems, not with respect to idle chatter either." But even in speech that is permitted, he avoided superfluous verbiage and would weigh and count his words to make them conform to standards of propriety and refinement. One of the scholars of the generation observed on a specific occasion: "R. Israel does not squander words. Every sound or word that issues from his mouth is first considered and reflected on. He purifies them like a silver smelter and weighs them in a chemical balance."

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