

This week the *parsha* recounts the deaths of the sons of Aharon. The Torah tells us that in response to this major tragedy, "*vayidom Aharon*" – "Aharon fell **silent**."

This same word is used by David Hamelech in Tehillim 37, where he insists that in the face of evildoers, "*Dom LaHashem vehitcholel lo*" – "Be **silent** towards Hashem and be patient with Him." This is followed by "*Al titchar bematzliach darko b'ish oseh mezimot*" – "do not fret... because of a man who executes malicious plans."

The silence being employed by Aharon Hakohen and promoted by David Hamelech is anything but a shortage of words or a lack of response. On the contrary, it is a thundering, profound, heroic expression of patience and trust in Hashem – a silent surrender to and affirmation of our *emunah* that Hashem will both help us through tragedy and protect us from those who execute malicious plans.

We had the honor this week of hearing from Holocaust survivor Janet Singer Applefield. Her stirring story of strength in the face of evil, of surviving and overcoming tragedy, was very moving and powerful. At the end, she asked our students to retell her story and pass it on to someone else. She empowered them to be emissaries of her story – to be carriers of the memory of those she lost.

May our students merit to sustain and perpetuate the stories, memories, and traditions of her family and of all those who perished.