

Kinder Torah

בס"ד

Parashas Masei

The Best Job

"Shalom Mr. Fried! Long time no see. You look great!"
"Baruch Hashem. Thank you Avi. I also feel great. I can honestly say that I have never been happier or more contented in my life."
"That is fantastic, Mr. Fried. What is your formula for success?"
"The last time we met, I was looking for a job. I applied for a very high position. I was one of 71 applicants. The boss personally chose me for the job."
"You must have felt great."
"I did. It is a very respected position. Everything I do has great importance. I report directly to the boss. He appreciates my work very much, and we have developed a close relationship."
"I see why you are so happy, Mr. Fried. Is the work difficult?"
"Yes. It is also very satisfying. It brings out my best qualities. And the pay is outstanding."
"Mr. Fried, that is fantastic! Where can I get a job like that?"
"It is very simple, Avi. When you say *Kriyas Shema* every morning, you accept *Ole Malchus Shomayim* (the Yoke of Heaven) and *Ole Mitzvos* (the yoke of mitzvos). This is your job. Hashem chose the Jewish people from among the 71 nations of the world to be His agents in this world. We accepted this job at Har Sinai, and we reaffirm it every day."
"Mr. Fried, how do you know that it is such a great job? Accepting a yoke sounds like a burden."
"Read the words of the blessing that we say after *Kriyas Shema*. They describe our job."
"True and firm, certain and enduring, upright and faithful, beloved and cherished, desired and pleasant, awesome and mighty, correct and acceptable, good and beautiful is this (acceptance of *Ole Malchus Shomayim* and *Ole Mitzvos*) to us for all eternity."
"There are sixteen words in this statement. They correspond to the sixteen verses in the first two *parshios* of *Kriyas Shema*. They also correspond to the fifteen times that the letter 'vuv' is included in the statement. The sixteenth time is the word 'emmes', whose letter is 'vuv'.¹"
"Mr. Fried, I am speechless."
"Correct. Our job is beautiful and exalted beyond words. Now do you see why I am so happy?"
"I am reporting for work this minute. I want this job too."
"Avi, may you be *matzliach* (successful) in your work."
"Amen."

Kinderlach . . .
We have the world's best job. We are Hashem's agents. He loves us, and He chose us to do His work. Besides being the most respectable position, it has great side benefits. It brings out the best in us, and the pay is better than any other job. *Kinderlach*, when you say *Kriyas Shema* and the subsequent blessing, think about how great it is to be Hashem's agent. Accept *Ole Malchus Shomayim* and *Ole Mitzvos* with a happiness that is beyond words.

It Takes Time

"Doctor Kalt, I can't take it anymore."
"What is the problem Mr. Hayes?"
"This hot weather. Every day is summer. 365 days a year. Hot and humid. I can no longer live here in the tropics. I want to move to the North Pole."
"That's quite an extreme change, Mr. Hayes. Do you realize that at the North Pole it is freezing cold winter 365 days a year?"
"I don't care. It will be a pleasure after this heat."
"You may feel like that for the first few hours or even the first day or two. However, after that you will become very cold and uncomfortable. You body cannot take such an extreme change in such a short time."
"But I want to live there Doctor Kalt."
"Then you have to make a gradual change Mr. Hayes. Move a little farther north, where the weather is a little cooler. When you become accustomed to that weather, make another move farther north. You will become accustomed to the cooler weather over there also. Keep moving farther and farther north, slowly, and deliberately. Eventually, you will reach the North Pole. By then you will be accustomed to the climate."
"What you are saying, Dr. Kalt, is that a drastic change must be made patiently, and in slow steps."
"Precisely."



"These are the journeys of the Children of Israel" (Bamidbar 33:1). The Malbim zt"l asks, why did the Children of Israel need to wait forty years before entering the Land of Israel? Hashem could have brought them in immediately. The answer is that they were not ready. They had sunken into the lowest level of *tumah* (impurity) in *Mitzraim*. They could not pull out of it immediately, as their many mistakes in the *midbar* (desert) proved. And so, they needed time. To slowly but surely purify themselves. Only then, would they be ready to enter the Holy Land.

Kinderlach . . .
Some things happen quickly. Others take time. Working on improving ones *middos* (character traits) takes time. It is a long-term project that lasts a lifetime. For this, we need patience. Changes do not happen overnight. Progress is made, but there are also setbacks. Two steps forward, one step back. Listen to the words of the verse, "For though the *tsaddik* may fall seven times, he will arise" (Mishlei 24:16). Have patience with yourselves, *kinderlach*. Become *tsaddikim*.

It Is Fair

"Naftoli dear, why are you crying?"
"It's not fair, Imma."

"What is not fair?"
"He got away with cheating and did not get punished."
"What happened?"
"He looked at my test paper and copied down some answers. The teacher did not see him."
"Calm down Naftoli. Don't cry. You don't have to worry. Hashem is running the world. He rewards everyone for their good deeds, and punishes them for their sins. Just look in this week's parasha."
"I don't recall anything about cheating on a test."
"Correct, Naftoli dear, but the Torah does speak about *orei miklat* (refuge cities), set aside to protect those people who accidentally killed someone. The killer had to flee from his home to the *ir miklat*. This exile, although it protected him from being killed by the victim's relatives, was also a punishment. Leaving your home, family, friends, and livelihood was very difficult in those days."
"Imma, is that fair? Why did the victim have to die? What did he do wrong? And why did the killer have to flee? After all, it was only an accident. Where is Hashem's justice that you were speaking about?"
"Naftoli, the gemora (Makkos 10b) explains what happened. One man killed another intentionally, but there were no witnesses to convict him. He escaped punishment. Another man killed someone accidentally, and there were no witnesses to convict him either. He also escaped the punishment of exile, or so it seemed. Hashem guided the events in such a way that these two men found themselves at the same inn one day. The murder was sitting under a ladder and the one who killed accidentally was climbing down the ladder. Suddenly, he fell on the other man and killed him. Witnesses saw the whole event."
"That was no coincidence."
"That is what the gemora says. The murder got the death penalty that he deserved. And the accidental killer got the exile that he deserved."
"So it is fair after all."
"Exactly."

Kinderlach . . .
"I'm going to teach him a lesson. He can't get away with that." Stop and think for a minute. In teaching him a lesson, are you going to do something that the Torah forbids? Are you going to take revenge? Are you going to speak *loshon hora*? Are you going to hit him? Are you going to embarrass him? These things are all forbidden. "But he can't get away with that. He has to know that he did something wrong." That is correct. You should try to tell him in a way that is permissible. However, you should not try to punish him. That is not your job. Hashem is running the world. If he deserves a punishment, he will get it. Hashem has many messengers. You do your job, and leave Hashem to do His job. That's the fair way.

¹ for further explanation see Shaar HaRachamim, Maggid Tzedek pp. 230, 231