

# TRY, TRY AGAIN

*by Rabbi Raymond Beyda*

*"Yitzhak's servants dug in the valley, and found there a well of springing water" Beresheet 26:19*

The events surrounding the sale of the birthright of the seed of Abraham and the dramatic intrigue of the "theft" of the blessings of Yitzhak are interrupted by seemingly mundane, unimportant details of disputes between the servants of Yitzhak and the subjects of Abimelekh over digging of wells. The commentators, realizing that every detail included by Hashem in His Holy Torah is of utmost importance for eternity, explain the wells to relate to future events in the history of our people, especially the Temple periods. The strange names of the wells reveal insights as to the causes of the destruction of the Batay Mikdash our holy Temples.

There is also a timeless, ethical lesson for all. One should always fight adversity and persist to complete a worthwhile task. If Yitzhak Abinu a'h dug a well but failed to find water, he dug elsewhere until he succeeded. If enemies disputed his rights to the water, he went to another site and dug there. Eventually, he found water that no one disputed and he called the well Rehovot - wide space. This is the way a person should approach adversity whether in material projects or spiritual pursuits. Should one have difficulty in one's initial efforts to learn Torah, one should not despair because at the end of the day success is imminent. [Hafetz Hayim]

A story is told about Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berdichov a'h who was on a mission to raise funds to pay the ransom for some Jews who had been abducted. After traveling to many towns and villages he was yet unsuccessful in collecting the required funds. He began to doubt his decision to take on this effort. "Perhaps I was wrong to accept this responsibility. I have not raised the money and I have lost weeks of time that I could have spent learning in the bet midrash [study hall]."

One day Rabbi Levi Yitzhak was witness to the arrest of a Jewish thief by the authorities. After giving him a good beating the authorities locked him up in the local jail.

"You should learn a lesson from this and never attempt robbery again," advised Rabbi Levi Yitzhak.

"No way" replied the thief, "If I failed today that doesn't mean I won't succeed the next time."

"If a criminal does not give up in his wicked pursuits how much more so must I persist in order to achieve Torah goals. If I don't succeed today -- that doesn't mean I will not win tomorrow," said the great sage to himself.

In 1979, about three years after I had returned to my study of Torah on a daily basis, Rabbi Noah

Weinberg, Shlit"a, the Rosh Yeshivah of Aish Hatorah in Yerushalayim came to visit our small synagogue on the New Jersey shore. During seudah shelisheet [the 3rd Shabbat meal] I strategically sat next to the Rav. "I have been trying to learn Gemara [Talmud] with one of the young Rabbis in our Kollel", I related to him, "Yet every time I prepare it seems like I just don't get it right. I think it just might not be for me."

"Don't give up, " he advised, "Just keep on trying and one day you will begin to understand."

His words of encouragement gave me the impetus to keep on trying. Now, over twenty years later, I proudly can say learning Torah is my greatest joy in life --a pursuit that was successful due to persistence. If at first you don't succeed --try --try again!

Shabbat Shalom

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