

THE SECRET TO SUCCESS!

PARSHAS VEZOS HABRACHA

Some of the most successful people failed miserably. However, they maintained a **strong focus on their ultimate goal** and succeeded beyond their wildest dreams.

Michael Jordan is known as one of the greatest basketball players of all time. In his sophomore year, he failed to make the varsity basketball team due to his height. He was considered too short to play. Michael kept his focus on his goal of succeeding as a basketball player. He persisted, practicing hard perfecting his game. His burning desire to be the best and his refusal to give up, eventually led to him becoming one of the greatest basketball players of all time. (Goal Setting Success Stories from wordpress.com)

Moshe Rabbeinu was able to speak to Hashem whenever he wanted to. His prophecies were crystal clear. The Torah tells us that there will never again be a prophet such as Moshe. The **Rambam** (Laws of Teshuva 5:2) says that although there will never again be a prophet like Moshe, there can be a tzadik like Moshe. The **Rambam** says, "**Every person** can become a tzadik, as our teacher Moshe".

HaRav Elchonon Wasserman zt"l (in his sefer Kovetz Ma'amarim, page 48) questions this **Rambam**. He says that **it is impossible** for anyone to be able to reach the level of Moshe Rabbeinu. What does the **Rambam** mean that every person has the potential to become a tzadik such as Moshe?

HaRav Elchonon Wasserman says that Moshe is described as, being a "servant of Hashem". The **Redak** in the beginning of

Sefer Yehoshua says that a "servant of Hashem" is one who puts all his energies, focus, and attention to serve Hashem. Even when being involved in one's daily activities, his focus is to serve Hashem.

Rabbi Yossi says in **Pirkei Avos** (2:17), "all your deeds should be for the sake of Heaven". Even our eating, drinking, and sleeping should be done "for the sake of Heaven". When we do these everyday actions, we should try have in mind that we are doing them to have the strength to serve Hashem properly. Even if we feel distressed and feel the need to go for a walk, our intention should be that we want to calm down to serve Hashem better. (**Yalkut May'am Loez**)

HaRav Elchonon Wasserman continues that each person is given various capabilities in different measures. Some are given more

*"And Moshe, servant of Hashem, died there...".
(Devarim 34:5)*

*"Never again has there arisen in Israel a prophet like Moshe...".
(Devarim 34:10)*

strength, more wisdom, more understanding, more compassion, etc... Furthermore, some are given more wealth, honor, or prestige. Every person was given exactly what he needs to fulfill his personal and specific mission in life. Nothing extra was given to us that is not needed to complete our mission in this world. Thus, by definition, we are obligated to use all that we have been given to serve Hashem. If we do so, then we will attain the level of Moshe

Rabbeinu. Obviously, we can't attain the actual level of Moshe. Even if we were to use all our efforts for thousands of years, we wouldn't even reach the level of Moshe's ankles. However, that is because we were not given the strength and understanding that Moshe was given. **If we use all the abilities that Hashem has given us to serve Him, then we can also attain the level of being a "servant of Hashem", just as Moshe was. This is the explanation of the Rambam.**

Hashem has given each of us unique abilities and has placed us in different situations in life. Our goal should be to use our unique talents to serve Hashem. We should focus on this goal in all that we do. Then, even our mundane actions become mitzvos. To the extent that we succeed in focusing on this, we will be considered "servants of Hashem", just as Moshe Rabbeinu was.

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Rabbi Yaakov Finestone is the director of JEP Queens. For almost 50 years JEP Queens has been in the forefront of kiruv. JEP has changed the lives of thousands of Jewish children enrolled in public schools and kiruv schools. Many are shomrei Torah and mitzvos today because of JEP.

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