

## THE LUMBERJACK OR THE DENTIST?

### SUCCOS / PARSHAS V'ZOS HABRACHA

**Rav Eliahu Lopian** zt"l said a beautiful *moshel*, a parable. Yaakov visited his friend, David. Yaakov noticed that David's medicine cabinet was fully stocked with medicines for every possible illness. He had pills for heart and lung issues, for arthritis, and for depression. Yaakov became jealous that his friend had so many medicines whereas he had none. David looked at Yaakov in disbelief! "I wish that I would not need these medicines! You think that you are lacking because you do not have them. I am the one who is lacking because I need to take them". (Wings of Faith, Rabbi Asher Zelig Rubenstein zt"l on Shaar HaBitachon, by Rabbi Yosef Tropper)

Beryl was a lumberjack. He cut wood in the forest, using a huge saw. Mendel was a dentist.

He drilled his patients' teeth with a small drill. Beryl would have no use for Mendel's drill and Mendel would have no use for Beryl's saw. Each one had just what he needed. Similarly, **Hashem gives each person what He needs to fulfill his**

**mission in life.** If Hashem did not give a person something it is because he does not need it!

The **Torah** says (Devarim 34:10), "*And there has not ever arisen a prophet within Yisroel like Moshe, whom Hashem knew face-to-face.*" The **Rambam** (Hilchos Teshuva 5:2) says that there are those who mistakenly think that Hashem predetermined before birth who will be a *tzadik* and who will be a *rasha*. The **Rambam** says, that thinking is 100% incorrect! Every person can become a *tzadik* like Moshe Rabbeinu or a *rasha* like Yeravam ben Nevat. When the Torah says there has never been a prophet like Moshe Rabbeinu, that refers to his level of prophecy and not to his righteousness.

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**Rav Elchonon Wasserman** zt"l (Kovetz Ma'amarim, page 48) says, truthfully it is

obviously impossible for anyone to reach the level of righteousness of Moshe Rabbeinu. If so, how can we understand what the Rambam said? **Rav Elchonon Wasserman** zt"l answers the question based on a **Radak** in sefer Yehoshua (1:1).

The pasuk states, "After the death of Moshe, the servant of Hashem..." Moshe is called the "servant of Hashem". What is a servant? A servant has no property of his own. Whatever he has belongs to his master. All of Moshe's abilities, all his strength, attention, and knowledge, were all used exclusively for Hashem, his master. None of his abilities were used for personal use. They were all sanctified to Hashem.

This trait of Moshe's is something that we should all aspire to, as it says in **Pirkei Avos** (2:18), "'All of your actions should be for the sake of Heaven.'" **Rabbi Ovadiah Bartenura** zt"l explains, even at the time that you are involved

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in eating and drinking or other life's pleasures, your intention should not be to indulge your body. Rather, your intention should be that you want to be healthy, to do the will of your Creator. You should have in mind that you are eating or sleeping to have the strength to learn Torah and do mitzvos. When you relax, you should have in mind that you are doing so to refresh yourself to better serve Hashem. Then your mundane actions become holy, and you are rewarded for them. Imagine that! You sleep for eight hours and receive reward for that entire time! It says in **Mishlei (3:6)** that all your actions, even the mundane ones, should be done for the sake of serving Hashem. Although you will never reach the level of Moshe, if you can focus all your actions being done for the sake of Hashem then you will be considered a servant of Hashem, just as Moshe was. On your

level, considering the G-D given talents that you have, you will be considered a servant of Hashem just as Moshe was.

The **Talmud** (Ta'anis 22A) relates an interesting story. Eliyahu Hanavi would often appear to Rabbi Beroka. One time, in the marketplace of Bei Lefet, Rabbi Beroka asked Eliyahu Hanavi if any of the people in the marketplace, at that moment, were worthy of entering the World-to-Come. Eliyahu Hanavi pointed out two men who were worthy. Rabbi Beroka went over to the men and asked them, "What is your occupation?" They said to him, "We are comedians, and we cheer up the depressed. Also, when we see two people who have a quarrel between them, we strive to make peace." These comedians used their G-D-given talents to help others and by doing so, they earned a place in the World-to-Come.

**Hashem provides us with all the abilities and material items that we need to fulfill our personal task in this world. We should never feel jealous of what other people have.**

**If we don't have something, then we don't need it for our life's mission.**

**We should use our G-D given talents to help others.**

**If we can harness all our talents and abilities and focus solely on serving Hashem, then we can reach the level of Moshe Rabbeinu, in the sense that we can also be considered a servant of Hashem.**

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