



BE A MENTSCH

Rabbi Yitzchok Sanders



Learning to Wait!

פְּרִשֵׁת נֶחֱ

“Be a Mentsch” means acting with patience towards our family, Moros, Teachers, Friends and any person we meet. This is the *Middah* of סְבִלְנוּת. We have a choice how to behave and when we choose to act with *patience* and “*wait nicely*”, we become closer to Hashem and become better people. We become “*Mentschen*”. When נֶחֱ was in the תְּבֵה after the מְבוּל, he didn’t come out until he was invited out by Hashem. נֶחֱ realized that the world belonged to ה’, and he shouldn’t enter it again until he received permission. This meant נֶחֱ had to *wait patiently* inside the תְּבֵה for a whole year even though it was quite squishy and he wanted to go out. We too should remember that things don’t always happen right away and we have to have a good attitude when we don’t get what we want. We should think, “Good things happen to people who *wait nicely!*”

Similarly, we know that בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל were excited to build a home for Hashem in the desert after they left מִצְרַיִם. They spent millions of hours making the many different parts of the Mishkan, the כִּלִּים, the tapestries, and everything that was needed. Yet when it came time to begin the holy עֲבוּדָה nobody entered into it. Not even Moshe! They waited for Hashem to come first and invite them; they were patient. What super דָּרָךְ אֶרֶץ! The Torah tells us that Moshe waited to be called to enter the Mishkan, אֶל מֹשֶׁה וַיִּקְרָא ה’. It was Hashem’s home and it wasn’t proper to enter someone else’s house without first being invited. We should learn this same lesson: before entering a classroom or a bedroom, we should knock on the door and wait for an invitation to enter. Please be patient before talking, raise your hand in class and wait to be called on. This is the way בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל should do Hashem’s Mitzvos!

Let’s remember that waiting can mean *years*, not months, not weeks, not days, not minutes, not seconds. It could very well be that just like our permanent height takes many years to fully develop, so too with our dreams and hopes - they take time to come true. Let’s just be patient!

Rabbi Yissochar Frand recounts the following incident:

There was once a salesman traveling from Boston to Vermont in the middle of the winter. Getting into the security line in the airport, he begins to take off his shoes in accordance with the United States security regulation. But this time around, his worst nightmare happens.

As he gets to the other end of the conveyer belt, there is a pair of size 7 shoes awaiting him. He, however, is a size 10. Now, how the other person who is really a size seven is managing to wear a size ten cannot be known, but this man being faced with shoes much too small for his feet is in big trouble. Trying to squeeze his feet into the shoes, he is unsuccessful. Waving over the manager, the man explains what has happened. “Well,” says the manager, “we will give you a voucher with which you can go to one of the stores in the airport and buy yourself a new pair of shoes.” “I am very sorry,” replies the man, “but I don’t have time to buy myself a pair of shoes. I have to catch a flight.”

This man is wearing a yarmulke, a suit, a white shirt and a tie. As the back and forth carries on, a woman takes note of what has occurred. “You know,” she says, “I have a pair of slippers in my carry-on you can have.” So she takes out the slippers. They are pink. Now, imagine the picture: yarmulke, suit, shirt, tie... pink slippers. He may be sending the wrong message. And so he goes onto the plane wearing his socks.

Taking a seat next to another gentleman on the plane, he is told, “I saw the whole story unfolding. But you know what amazes me more than anything? You didn’t lose your temper, you didn’t use bad language and you remained calm. I don’t know where you get so much **patience** from, but you are a credit to your people.”

Wherever we go around the world, we are to be ever mindful that we stand as role models to the world. The way we act, dress and talk as Torah Jews creates an indelible impression upon all those who see us. As bearers of

the Torah's values, our every move carries with it a profound message. Indeed, if we act as we are supposed to, each and every one of us can make a Kiddush Hashem and be a credit to Am Yisrael.

Have a Great Shabbos!