



BE A MENTSCH

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Davening! פְּרִשֵׁת תּוֹלְדוֹת

In this week's parsha, we learn an important lesson about being a Mentsch. We must appreciate everything *we do have* and not complain about those things *we want but we do not have* which are making life more difficult. We have to **daven** to Hashem, work hard and be kind to others to earn the many things we want in life, whether we want good health, *simchos* or friendships. Especially when we are in third grade, it is a great time to work on our "**davening**". This means to try very hard to get the things we want done.

The Torah describes how יִצְחָק וְרִבְקָה acted when they didn't have children for ten years. The pasuk says וַיַּעֲמֵר יִצְחָק לָהּ 'לְנִכְחַ אִשְׁתּוֹ כִּי עֲקָרָה הָיָא that they davened together to have children. The Torah is teaching us how we cannot expect things to happen to us because they usually happen to everyone else. Yitzchok and Rivka had to wait ten years before they had children and even then, they were זֹנָה to have them only after they **davened!** It is important to do something, when we are not happy with something in our lives.

A similar idea is presented by Rav Moshe Trani, the Mabit, regarding Am Yisrael when Paro and Mitzrayim chased them till the edge of the Yam Suf right before Hashem told Moshe to split the Yam Suf. Hashem wanted to challenge us so we would deal with our needs by **davening**. We were surrounded by Mitzrayim with nowhere to go. Life was very scary for Bnei Yisrael! Chazal tell us we adopted the behavior of our אֲבוֹת וְאִמָּהוֹת and we began to daven. Let's learn from their example and **daven** for what we need!

Rav Moshe Tuvia Lieff relates the following moving story:

As work had been going well and a nice salary was coming his way, finally one day Nochum was informed that he would no longer have a job. Without any other option, Nochum returned home downcast with a sliver of hope that he would sooner than later rebound and find a position to support his ever growing family.

Seven years later, Nochum was still out of work. Matters were difficult as the family was struggling to get by. One day, however, Nochum received a phone call. It was a headhunter asking if Nochum would like to attend an interview. "Of course I would," he replies. And so, out went Nochum with the anticipation of returning home as a working man.

The interview went very well. However, as it came to a close, the interviewer asked a very straightforward question: "Let me ask you something," he said, "Nineteen other people are vying for this position. Why should you be given the job?" Nochum, unsure exactly what to answer and afraid that he would make matters worse than better, didn't respond confidently.

Later that night at 11pm he receives a phone call. It is the interviewer. "Mr. Rosen," he says as he clears his throat, "the job is yours." Abounding with joy, Nochum informs his wife to head tomorrow to Pomegranate, the local supermarket, and purchase all sorts of delicacies. For the past number of years, the family had subsisted on Tomchei Shabbos to get them through the week, let alone for Shabbos. Jotting down everything she could think of, Nochum's wife excitedly prepares for tomorrow's shopping spree. "Oh," adds Nochum, "please make sure to also buy a seven layer cake." Listening to her husband's instructions, his wife joyously adds on one seven layer cake to the already long list.

Tomorrow arrives and Mrs. Rosen makes her rounds. Picking up a large number of delectable food items, the family enjoys a sumptuous meal. Now it is time for the seven layer cake. Mr. Rosen speaks up, "Everyone, listen up; the cake is for Shlomi." Unclear as to what their father meant, Nochum tells the real story of what happened:

Last night I received a phone call at 11pm. It was my job interviewer telling me I had gotten the job. Why was that so? The interviewer then proceeded to tell me the following:

After I finished a long day of interviewing applicant after applicant, I closed the office's doors and went to daven Maariv. As I neared the Shul, I noticed that the parking lot as well as the entire side street was parked with cars bumper to bumper. There simply was no place to park. Finally, after much circling around, I found one. I was by now exhausted and without much energy. I then made my way into the Shul.

As I opened the doors, I was greeted with a packed Shul. Scanning the area, there literally were no seats available. With no other option and without the strength to start searching high and low for a seat, I leaned against the back wall. Just then a little boy came up to me. "Here," he said, "you look like you could have a break. You must be tired. Please take my seat." I was pleasantly taken aback. Here was a little boy who acted with such consideration and kindness. I then asked for his name. "Shlomi Rosen," he said.

Thinking that this boy must be the rabbi's son as I had just donated a fair sum of money to the Shul and it must be that the family wished to kindly reciprocate, I took a seat. But then I began to think to myself. "Rosen, Rosen, Rosen... That name sounds very familiar."

And then it hit me. I recognized that name as someone who I had

interviewed earlier that day. Touched by the boy's thoughtfulness, I rushed back to the office after davening. Looking through the list of those I had interviewed that day, I was shocked to see the name Nochum Rosen. This boy who had just offered me his seat as I walked into Shul exhausted was the very son of this man.

“And so,” continued Nochum to his family, “the interviewer called me right then and told me I have the job. He said, ‘If your son acts that way it must be because he got it from you. And if you act like that, I want you to work for me.’”

Sometimes we think that a small Tefillah or little kind act only goes so far. But in truth, it goes farther than we ever could have imagined. We always seek to put a smile on another Jew's face, act with kindness, and yes indeed, offer them our seat even when we are already comfortably at rest. We not only infuse our own lives with happiness, but the lives of so many others as well. You never know, maybe that little hello and smile will land you a wonderful job and a nice sumptuous meal.

Have a Great Shabbos!