

Slow and Steady Wins the Race

written by Ozer Bergman
August 30, 2021



Reb Noson zal (of blessed memory) once commented that before he became a chassid (disciple) of Rebbe Nachman zal, he was far from being diligent in his Torah study.

"I very much wanted to study a lot. But what happened was, everyday I would come to the beis hamidrash (study hall) and there was some obstacle. So instead of starting off strong, I would only be able to learn briefly. Before I knew, there was something else. And then something else. So I would give up on that day and tell myself, 'Tomorrow I start.'"

"But it was always something, the next day and the day after that. I gave up and became a total batlan (do-nothing). What happened? After I met the Rebbe zal and told him about this, he said, 'Abisseleh iz oikh gut, a little bit is also good.'"

So the next time I went to the beis hamidrash and saw that I wasn't going to be learn a lot, I would remember what the Rebbe said, 'Abisseleh iz oikh gut.'

"So I would learn a little and then tell myself, 'OK. I'll learn a little more.' And I did. Little by little I moved out of despair and became very diligent in my Torah study.

"What also helped me was the Rebbe's suggestion to not get stuck on every difficulty, thinking that I had to figure it out now. Too often, the return wasn't worth the time and effort spent. The frustration would just kill all my enthusiasm for Torah study. So I would just make a mark in the margin that I had an unanswered question.

"'The Torah is poor in one place, but rich in another' (Yerushalmi, Rosh HaShanah 3:15). By increasing one's breadth of Torah knowledge, one is often able to resolve his unanswered questions."

(Rendered from Avanehah Barzel #89)