

Counting What Matters: Lessons from a Baron and a Dog¹

Baron Abraham Edmond Rothschild once sought an accountant for his business. He advertised the position, and a flood of candidates arrived.

The first interviewee stepped in, and the Baron asked, "Do you feel worthy of this job?"

"Of course!" the man replied confidently.

"Let's put that to the test," said the Baron, beginning his questioning.

"How much is $10 + 10$?"

"20," the man answered swiftly.

"How much is $20 + 20$?"

"40," he responded without hesitation.

The Baron continued, each question doubling the previous number. The man kept answering correctly, but after several rounds, the Baron shook his head. "I don't think you're the right fit." The puzzled candidate left.

One by one, others entered and left just as confused, Until a wise Jew stepped in.

¹ Adapted from *Be'er Haparasha - Mishpatim* יושן

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The Baron asked, "How much is 10 + 10?"

The man stood up, calmly closed the slightly open door, shut the windows, drew the blinds, and then sat down. Looking the Baron in the eye, he asked, "How much would you like 10 + 10 to be?"

He got the job on the spot.

In this week's parasha, we learn a remarkable mitzvah²: If an animal from your flock is killed by a predator, you may not eat it. It must be given to the dog.

Our sages explain that this is a reward. The dog guards the flock, and though it may have failed this time, it has faithfully protected them until now and will continue to do so. Instead of dwelling on the failure, we recognize all the good it has done³.

And this is exactly what the wise Jew in the Baron's story understood. **Life is not just about cold calculations; it's about how we choose to see our outcomes.** Some look at failure and see defeat. Others, like that wise Jew, choose to shape their own perspective.

The Torah teaches us to do the same. We will all face challenges. We will all make mistakes. But instead of fixating on

² Perek 22 Passuk 30

³ From the Sefer "Yismach Yehudah"

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where we've fallen short, we must learn to see all the good we've done and will continue to do.

Imagine a world where we measured ourselves not by our failures but by our efforts and successes. Imagine how much joy and confidence we would have!

Let's be like that wise Jew choosing to see our challenges with perspective and resilience. Let's work on embracing this Torah mindset for ourselves, our families, and our communities.

Shabbat Shalom!