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Don't Give Up

By: Rabbi Ari Jakubowicz (Originally Published 2006)

The best response to failure is another attempt.

In this week's Parsha, the Torah tells us about the wells that Avrohom Avinu had previously dug. They were subsequently filled in by the Philistines, and Yitzchok's attempts to dig these wells again and dig new ones were met with opposition.

He persevered, however, and even when he didn't find water right away, he dug elsewhere.

Even when the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Yitzchok's herdsmen, he picked himself up and dug elsewhere. Eventually, he succeeded in digging a well without encountering any difficulties, and he thanked Hashem.

The Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan (1838-1933), tells us that this story is applicable to our daily lives. We are constantly striving for success. Whether it is in the ongoing struggle of earning a livelihood, or in the difficulties we may have in understanding a particular aspect of Torah learning, we always encounter challenges.

Very often, possibly even more often than not, all of our attempts are met with failure. Although we may feel disheartened by our lack of success, and we entertain thoughts of abandoning our undertakings, the Chofetz Chaim tells us to keep the story of Yitzckok and the wells in our minds. This will serve as a reminder to persevere in our worthy endeavors.

King Solomon writes, "For though the righteous one may fall seven times, he will arise" (Proverbs 24:16). Let us try to emulate the righteous and eventually we will meet with success.

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