

Hebrew for the Goyim

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SUCCEED

Most Likely to Succeed. It may have started after reading *The Little Train that Could*, a story of a tiny train that completed a challenging climb up the big hill by repeating, “I think I can, I think I can, I think I can.” Or it may have been a strong willed, dominant older brother who made my early years miserable by being better than I was at everything. More likely it was my no-nonsense mother who insisted I work hard and finish well, no matter what I was doing. Somewhere along the line, embedded in my brain was a deep-rooted desire to succeed.

When a senior in Winnfield High School, I was able to pick what I wanted to run for in the “Most Likely” categories. I chose “Most Likely to Succeed.” My friends told me I’d win, which only upped the ante to succeed at being elected “Most Likely to Succeed.” The day for voting arrived - the victory was mine. After school, I boarded the yellow school bus that eventually dropped me off at a cattle guard on the long dirt road leading about 100 yards to our house. As was often the case, Daddy headed to meet me to make sure his baby girl made it to the door.

“Daddy, Daddy,” I yelled out as I ran toward him, “I was elected ‘Most Likely to Succeed.’”

“What did you say, baby?”

I shouted louder, “At school, Daddy – at school I was elected ‘Most Likely to Succeed.’”

He began to jump up and down. I ran into his huge arms for a big bear hug. One would have thought I was just elected governor of Louisiana. We reached the house momentarily and he called out, “Doll (that’s what he called Momma), come out here. Listen to this. The baby was elected ‘Most Likely to Succeed!’ Isn’t that wonderful! He kept repeating how wonderful it was - but then suddenly he got quiet and turned toward me, “Succeed at what, baby?”

I was totally dumbfounded, “Uhhh - I don’t know Daddy - just succeed I guess.”

“Baby, if you don’t know what you want to succeed at, how will you know when you succeed?”

Momma had no questions and no doubts. She jumped in immediately, “You’ll succeed, Patty, when you do what the Good Book tells you to do. Now go on in there and do your homework!”

What the Good Book says. Sure enough, the Bible (the Good Book) does say much about success. In Hebrew, the word succeed is tzah-leh-agh (צלח). To search for its meaning, here is my formula. Pray for wisdom. Study the individual letters. Find where it is used in the Bible and in what context. Agree to follow any insight God gives. If you are using my book, Hebrew for the Goyim, refer to the chapters on letters tzadi (צ), lamed (ל), and chet (ח).

Tzadi. When tzadi (צ) is found at the beginning of a syllable or word, it indicates a movement toward a specific end or limit. “It marks and actually delineates that limit it tended toward...many words containing tzadi refer this kind of pressure pushing toward some purpose, limit or form. Kaitz (קץ) is summer, end of growing time and beginning of harvest. While studying the letter tzadi, I ‘accidentally’ clicked on a television program about sedimentation, which occurs when the pressure of some force creates and

deposits sediment that eventually bonds and forms layers of rock. It occurred to me that “sedi” is tzadi, those powerful universal forces pushing the elements of nature to settle, cross-bed, bond, compact and accumulate into potential and predetermined forms. Geological stratifications are written records of these forces of fire, flooding, rain, wind and sun – all the created, sovereignly ordered elements of nature and the God of nature.”¹

Lamed. A shepherd’s crook can be used either to pull a sheep away from danger or prod it toward a good direction. Lamed can be thought of as an ox goad to direct or “teach” and is found in words meaning learn or teach. In fact, Psalm 23 speaks of the Shepherd’s rod and staff as a comforter. Lamed at the end of a syllable (לצ) suggests limitlessness for the first letter. God (לא) combines the letter alef (א), which is a sign for God/Higher Power, to the limitless potentiality of lamed.

Chet. Chet (ח) is life. Chai (חי) is life. Le- chaim (לחיים to life) gives insight into this letter chet (ח). The letter heh (ה) and chet(ח) were originally the same and the writer believes heh relates more to breathing in life and chet more to the effort or work of breathing out. Ruach (spirit רוח) speaks of movement (ח) bringing about life (ח).

How does this apply to Success?

- Tzadi points to a goal, lamed takes it the distance and chaim found in God is the ultimate goal.
- Tzel (צל) refers to a shadow or shade - sometimes the shade of a roof (Genesis 19), sometimes shade from heat (Isaiah 25:4-5). The folly of trusting in powerful leaders or government rather than trusting in the “shade” of Almighty God (Psalm 91) is referred to in Isaiah (30:2-3).
- Death is called a shadow. The Psalmist speaks of a no-fear faith, even when he goes through tzelmavet (the shadow צל of death מות), “I will fear no evil, for You O God are with me (23:4).”
- What is true success? To abide under the shadow (צל) of the Almighty (ישי) is to succeed (Psalm 91). To trust in God and not man is to be successful. God caused Joseph to prosper (מצלח matzleach – Genesis 3). To keep God’s Words in your mouth, to meditate on and observe them brings success (Joshua 1:8). God speaks in Isaiah 54:17 regarding the heritage of the servants of Yahweh who find their righteousness in God - “No weapon formed against you will prosper (succeed – yitzlach יצלח). Further, Jesus said, “What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world (that sounds “successful”) but loses his own soul?(The answer is “nothing.”) And what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” This was Jesus’ response when Peter rebuked him for saying that he had to suffer, be rejected and killed, BUT rise again in three days...and eventually come in the glory of his Father with the angels. Evidently his disciple only heard the first part!! In fact, today we might ask ourselves if we ever really heard that last part?
- And in closing, the Apostle John even links prosperity and health with a soul that is prosperous! (3 John 2). Now we’re back to what Momma said!

1 Hutchens, Pat Mercer, *Hebrew for the Goyim*, Xulon, 2007, p. 125.