

Notes: May 1 2021

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: What Is Success?

What does success mean to a believer in Yeshua?

How do you know you are succeeding as a believer in Yeshua?

When we look at the definition of success...

Success (the opposite of failure) is the status of having achieved and accomplished an aim or objective. Being **successful** means the achievement of desired visions and planned goals. ... The **dictionary** describes **success** as the following: “attaining wealth, prosperity and/or fame”.

I don't believe this definition is sufficient for us to identify how we are successful as believers in Yeshua.

Success tends to be a worldly aspiration based on the vision and goals accomplished through the world's eyes.

Wealth and prosperity

Fame - the state of being known or talked about by many people, especially on account of notable achievements.

I am not saying that believers are to take a vow of poverty, but rather perspective as it pertains to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The dollar is the reserve currency of the world, yet is funny money in the Kingdom of Adonai.

Fame is a double edged sword in that all it takes for a notable achievement today is “going viral” on social media. The only real achievement is that you said something other people have noticed, whether good or bad. Yet was anything truly achieved. I would equate going viral one's 15 minutes of fame.

The most impressionable tend to be teens who have billions of marketing dollars thrown in their direction to influence their decisions or should I say influence their parent's decisions. Marketer's goals are to sell product and thus succeed in the market place.

Then you have television influence promoting affluence and success through the world's definition of fame and wealth. In the 80s you had Robin Leach and his show “Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous” giving us a glimpse into the lives of rich and “powerful” people. You had television shows based on wealth and power – Dallas, Dynasty and Falcon Crest.

The new millennia is somewhat different in that it really doesn't promote those who already are rich and famous but actually created wealth and fame. The Kardashians were an already affluent family in the 90s, yet through their television show became celebrities and extremely wealthy. They succeeded on their name recognition, yet what did they truly accomplish.

The world identifies this as being successful, yet what did they truly succeed at?

Wealth and fame can be a fickle pair, they can be addictive and they can be detrimental. For some there is never enough wealth or fame to satisfy. It in essence becomes a drug.

We have seen this dynamic of pursuing wealth creep into the Body of Messiah, whereby evangelists promote a prosperity message through the use of Scripture, typically “sowing a seed” that will lead to heaven opening the gates of prosperity through your obedience to the message your hearing.

The body of Messiah is using the world's definition of success and infusing Scripture to promote another Gospel. Taking the parable of the Sower and the Seeds to prime the pump for giving to a specific ministry...

Mat 13:8 But others fell into rich soil and produced grain, a hundred or sixty or thirty times as much as had been sown.

Combined with a “prophetic” message to encourage you further to support the ministry, more often than not leads to the ministry than the ministered “reaping the benefits”.

Tapping into one's desire to succeed is an industry unto itself, thus there is something inside us that aspires to be successful. Yet, can the world's view of success coincide with Adonai's view of success.

We read of Yeshua's interaction with a rich man and his pursuit of eternal life...

Mat 19:16 A man approached Yeshua and said, "Rabbi, what good thing should I do in order to have eternal life?" He said to him,

Mat 19:17 "Why are you asking me about good? There is One who is good! But if you want to obtain eternal life, observe the mitzvot."

Mat 19:18 The man asked him, "Which ones?" and Yeshua said, "Don't murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal, don't give false testimony

Mat 19:19 honor father and mother and love your neighbor as yourself."

Mat 19:20 The young man said to him, "I have kept all these; where do I still fall short?"

Mat 19:21 Yeshua said to him, "If you are serious about reaching the goal, go and sell your possessions, give to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven. Then come, follow me!"

Mat 19:22 But when the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he was wealthy.

Mat 19:23 Then Yeshua said to his talmidim, "Yes. I tell you that it will be very hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Mat 19:24 Furthermore, I tell you that it is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God."

Needle's eye. Yeshua's image may be literal, a camel and a sewing needle, or he may be referring to the protective narrow passage at the entrance to a walled city called a "needle's eye." Either understanding conveys Yeshua's intended outcome.

Thus the "recipe for succeeding in that which Adonai has set before you will not be based on one's net worth.

Psalm 1 provides us with a hint...

Psa 1:1 How blessed are those who reject the advice of the wicked, don't stand on the way of sinners or sit where scoffers sit!

Psa 1:2 Their delight is in Adonai's Torah; on his Torah they meditate day and night.

Psa 1:3 They are like trees planted by streams—they bear their fruit in season, their leaves never wither, everything they do succeeds.

Psa 1:4 Not so the wicked, who are like chaff driven by the wind.

Psa 1:5 For this reason the wicked won't stand up to the judgment, nor will sinners at the gathering of the righteous.

Psa 1:6 For Adonai watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked is doomed.

All the self help books and books written about how to succeed do not include the ultimate book on obtaining success, not based on the world's defining but based on the author of the world's defining.

Torah is the key for succeeding, not based on the world's view, but based on Adonai's view. We acknowledge this every Shabbat during our time of prayer when we open the Ark and bring to mind the promises Adonai has made through His Covenants with Isra'el. Promises made available to those who embrace them...

Pro 3:17 Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace.

Pro 3:18 She is a tree of life to those who grasp her; whoever holds fast to her will be made happy.

Thus a standard, a benchmark, a goal has been set for us as believers in Yeshua that we can succeed. Yet, even in the world and its definition of succeeding, there are challenges along the way. Curve balls, pot holes detours and even dead ends. Those successful in the world must encounter and overcome these challenges. It is no different for us as we aspire to succeed in Adonai.

Psa 11:1 [*For the leader. By David.*] In Adonai I find refuge. So how can you say to me, "Flee like a bird to the mountains!"

Psa 11:2 See how the wicked are drawing their bows and setting their arrows on the string, to shoot from the shadows at honest men.

Psa 11:3 If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

Psa 11:4 Adonai is in his holy temple. Adonai, his throne is in heaven. His eyes see and test humankind.

Psa 11:5 Adonai tests the righteous; but he hates the wicked and the lover of violence.

Psa 11:6 He will rain hot coals down on the wicked, fire, sulfur and scorching wind will be what they get to drink.

Psa 11:7 For Adonai is righteous; he loves righteousness; the upright will see his face.

Adonai tested Avraham at least 10 times from the moment He established a Covenant relationship with him.

Adonai would test Moshe in order to overcome his doubt, lack of faith and insecurity.

Thus Adonai tests those whom He loves, in order to strengthening them, not to break them. Testing is to see where we are at and thus reveal to us what we need to do further. In this case the testing of our faith is meant to strengthening us further, causing us to be even more resolute, immovable in our faith. Consider Psalm 19 from this week's Omer reading...

Psa 19:1 [*For the leader. A psalm of David.*] The heavens declare the glory of God, the dome of the sky speaks the work of his hands.

Psa 19:2 Every day it utters speech, every night it reveals knowledge.

Psa 19:3 Without speech, without a word, without their voices being heard,

Psa 19:4 their line goes out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world. In them he places a tent for the sun,

Psa 19:5 which comes out like a bridegroom from the bridal chamber, with delight like an athlete to run his race.

We are in the midst of running the race of life. Success is not determined during the race, only progress. Whether you succeed is only determined upon completing the race. Winning is one thing for their can only be one who finishes first, yet this race is not about who finishes first, but rather who finishes.

Now, consider what is available to you while you are running your race. During a marathon, there are water stations for runners to rehydrate, while our rehydration is available not at a specific station but at anytime throughout our race.

Psa 19:6 It rises at one side of the sky, circles around to the other side, and nothing escapes its heat.

Psa 19:7 The Torah of Adonai is perfect, restoring the inner person. The instruction of Adonai is sure, making wise the thoughtless.

Psa 19:8 The precepts of Adonai are right, rejoicing the heart. The mitzvah of Adonai is pure, enlightening the eyes.

Psa 19:9 The fear of Adonai is clean, enduring forever. The rulings of Adonai are true, they are righteous altogether,

Psa 19:10 more desirable than gold, than much fine gold, also sweeter than honey or drippings from the honeycomb.

More desirable than gold...in other words something that money, no matter how much of it you may have can buy. It cannot be purchased or acquired. It must be embraced.

Psa 19:11 Through them your servant is warned; in obeying them there is great reward.

Psa 19:12 Who can discern unintentional sins? Cleanse me from hidden faults.

Psa 19:13 Also keep your servant from presumptuous sins, so that they won't control me. Then I will be blameless and free of great offense.

Psa 19:14 May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be acceptable in your presence, Adonai, my Rock and Redeemer.

Thus the goal, the desired outcome the Psalmist is preparing you for, the success is not just being in the presence of Adonai, but to be deemed acceptable in His presence. Thus it is not about limping over the finish line, but to finish your race strong. I recall watching the last 400 meters of various marathons where runners have already run 26 miles. You get to see various scenarios play out. When one is running unchallenged, they likely maintain their pace and finish the race. Yet when someone is being challenged by another who is in pursuit, the one leading is threatened that they will lose their position, thus you see each quickening their pace, each trying to outperform the other with the simple aspiration of finishing before the other. Thus after 26 miles you see runners sprint to the finish as if they were only running 100 meters. This is what is known as finishing strong.

You are not in competition with each other but are seeking the position of being acceptable in the presence of Adonai.

Rom 10:1 Brothers, my heart's deepest desire and my prayer to God for Israel is for their salvation;

Rom 10:2 for I can testify to their zeal for God. But it is not based on correct understanding;

Rom 10:3 for, since they are unaware of God's way of making people righteous and instead seek to set up their own, they have not submitted themselves to God's way of making people righteous.

Rom 10:4 For the goal at which the Torah aims is the Messiah, who offers righteousness to everyone who trusts.

Rom 10:5 For Moshe writes about the righteousness grounded in the Torah that the person who does these things will attain life through them.

Rom 10:6 Moreover, the righteousness grounded in trusting says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend to heaven?' "—that is, to bring the Messiah down—

Rom 10:7 or, " 'Who will descend into Sh'ol?' "—that is, to bring the Messiah up from the dead.

Rom 10:8 What, then, does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart."—that is, the word about trust which we proclaim, namely,

Rom 10:9 that if you acknowledge publicly with your mouth that Yeshua is Lord and trust in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be delivered.

Rom 10:10 For with the heart one goes on trusting and thus continues toward righteousness, while with the mouth one keeps on making public acknowledgement and thus continues toward deliverance.

Rom 10:11 For the passage quoted says that everyone who rests his trust on him will not be humiliated.

Humiliation is a result of failure the opposite of success. Thus if you are not humiliated, you must have succeeded.

The world's definition of success is not applicable when viewing how Adonai identifies success. Adonai has revealed an enormous amount of treasure to us that is His Word that is the currency of the Kingdom. And thus you will know if you have succeeded when you stand accepted before Adonai. Thus for now, know that He has provided you with everything you need for the race you are running and I will end with this final sports analogy.

“Leave it all on the field”

That is give everything you have in running this race so that you don't second guess yourself, because when your race is finished, that is when you leave time for eternity, there is no more running, there is no more race for Yeshua has affirmed to us, after warning upon warning, a litany of challenges...

Mat 24:13 But whoever holds out till the end will be delivered.

And Sha'ul conveyed to Timothy...

2Ti 4:1 I solemnly charge you before God and the Messiah Yeshua, who will judge the living and the dead when he appears and establishes his Kingdom:

2Ti 4:2 proclaim the Word! Be on hand with it whether the time seems right or not. Convict, censure and exhort with unfailing patience and with teaching.

2Ti 4:3 For the time is coming when people will not have patience for sound teaching, but will cater to their passions and gather around themselves teachers who say whatever their ears itch to hear.

2Ti 4:4 Yes, they will stop listening to the truth, but will turn aside to follow myths.

2Ti 4:5 But you, remain steady in every situation, endure suffering, do the work that a proclaimer of the Good News should, and do everything your service to God requires.

2Ti 4:6 For as for me, I am already being poured out on the altar; yes, the time for my departure has arrived.

2Ti 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

2Ti 4:8 All that awaits me now is the crown of righteousness which the Lord, "the Righteous Judge," will award to me on that Day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for him to appear.

Sha'ul left it all on the field.

This is success!