

## **And he shall take up the ashes... He shall remove his garments and don other garments and he shall remove the ashes. (6:3,4)**

Every day – the same process. Every day began the same way, with the same service, the same ritual. The *avodah* was filled with details – minute details, necessary details, but it was always the same. The routine never changed. The daily routine began with the *Terumas HaDeshen*, lifting the ashes from the *korbanos*, sacrifices, of the previous day. The ashes that had accumulated were then removed. The *Kohen* placed wood on the Altar, so that the fire would burn continuously; the first and last *korban* that was offered daily was the *Korban Tamid*, which incidentally means “always,” “constant” – no change.

In other words, the service in the *Bais HaMikdash*, the center of spirituality for *Klal Yisrael*, followed a constant routine: no innovation; no spontaneity; no *chiddushim*, novel approaches. There was a daily schedule, a constant process that never varied. Why?

**Horav Noach Weinberg, zl**, teaches that the Torah is presenting us with an important lesson – a lesson in: how to service Hashem; how to become a *talmid chacham*, Torah scholar; and how to “make it” to be a success at the Torah endeavor of one’s choice. Sustained growth, a growth that will endure, is not the result of sudden bursts of inspiration without follow-up. Growth is the product of constant, consistent and continuous actions that demand unwavering commitment and persistence. Many people can write a *dvar Torah*; many people can even author a book of *divrei Torah*; but day in and day out, constantly – that takes commitment. I will never forget listening to a remarkable young speaker who kept the audience entertained and, at times, even spellbound for an hour. Next to me was a contemporary of that speaker who commented to me, “I could also do that.” My response was honest, perhaps too honest: “You could, but he did.” There are so many gifted young men who, upon viewing the success of others remark, “I could also do that.” Sadly, it is all talk, because to “do that” requires a life of commitment, continuity and sacrifice.

**Rav Weinberg** guides us about how to achieve constancy, consistency and continuity in our actions – how to achieve true success in life. Interruptions destroy one’s work. One can accomplish much more with one hour of straight, continuous study than with two hours riddled with interruptions. These breaks destroy one’s train of thought and limit one’s ability to retain what he has learned. To cook a pot of water, the pot must be on the fire until the water has boiled. If the pot is removed, the process must begin all over again.

Impatience and lack of discipline are challenges that not only hamper positive growth, but also convince us to settle for minor successes when, indeed, we are still far from achieving our goal. The United States Navy Seals are the elite of America’s special forces. They are taught to view every challenge with determination and resolve, to be persistent in seeking success and relentless in fighting to the very end. Three of their mottos have always been an inspiration: “The only easy

day was yesterday;" "Failure is not an option;" "Never quit." In laymen's terms, to achieve success at anything – be it spiritual growth, acquisition of Torah knowledge, *middos*, character refinement –requires patience, discipline, tenacity and consistency. Taking the water off the fire will never provide a hot cup of coffee.