

The Daily Portion

- Sivan Rahav Meir

A journey of transformation and faith

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Every year I post this message before we start reading the Book of D'varim and I inevitably receive moving responses from people who tell me that this was just the message they needed to hear.

The Book of D'varim, which we will begin to read on Shabbat morning in shuls around the world, opens with the following words:

“These are the words which Moshe spoke to all Israel.”

The entire Book of D'varim consists of Moshe's parting speech to the Children of Israel.

But if we look back, we will recall that Moshe's first encounter with God at the burning bush looked very different. Moshe Rabbeinu refuses to take on the mantle of leadership, insisting that “...I am slow of speech and slow of tongue” and “I have never been a man of words.”

What happened? How did a person who started off with a speech defect end his life orating such an eloquent and powerful speech?

Our sages explain that our identity is not determined by our given traits but by our mission in life.

Our shortcomings do not prescribe our destiny. Moshe Rabbeinu was tasked with a divine mission and a vital role: to take the Children of Israel out of Egypt, to give them the Torah, and to lead them into the land of Israel. To accomplish this mission, he transformed himself into a leader, prophet, and guide.

If only we could view ourselves and those around us with such optimism and faith. Don't feel stuck in the negative image that you have created of yourself in the past. Certainly, God does not regard you in this way.

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