

THIS TOO SHALL PASS

By: Robert S. Sher

Have you ever heard the ancient folktale about King Solomon, who attempted to humble one of his most trusted ministers by sending him on a search for a magic ring that did not exist?

As legend tells it, Solomon told his minister the ring had powers. If a happy man looks at it, he becomes sad; if a sad man looks at it, he becomes happy. The minister searched and searched and searched and, in the end, he came up empty handed.

Along the way, however, a jeweler – knowing no such ring existed – inscribed a gold ring for the minister to give to King Solomon with the Hebrew expression, "Gam zeh ya'avov," or "This too shall pass."

A surprised Solomon read the inscription, immediately realizing all his wisdom, wealth and tremendous power were fleeting things because one day he would be nothing but dust.

The message of this tale is quite poignant today and we should keep in the back of our minds every day that "This too shall pass." These are new times that present new challenges and no one knows to expect. We don't know how long it will take or how bad things may get, but the economy will turn around and things will get better.

I've written it before, but I must repeat it now. It is time to get into survival mode.

There is no time to sit around and watch things get worse. Just do something now to get the business back later. You can staff up when things turn around. Don't waste your energy feeling sorry for yourself. Instead, take positive steps to prepare for an increasingly volatile business climate.

Times of great loss present unusual opportunity. Go out and seek these opportunities, whatever they may be. Keep a laser focus on what your customers really need and make sure you continue to run a tight core business. Revise pricing to reflect the state of the economy and stay close to your customers. You must always be in sales mode.

Stay focused and lead from a position of reality. Look for growth prospects and new business. Kick up that positive attitude because it can, and it will, go a long way. Please don't complain and certainly don't whine. No one wants to hear it. Find something good in the face of adversity.

Step up the networking a notch. Get in touch with old friends through letters, emails or phone calls. Meet for coffee. The Internet makes it easier than ever to network. Try to

reach out to others through the latest online social networking tools like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Start a blog focusing on your business expertise and send it out to your online network.

When one door closes, another one always opens – if you are there to walk in - stay and make it happen. Seize the moment. While we cannot predict this economic downturn's impact, we can take positive steps to prepare for an increasingly volatile business climate.

Focus on short term goals, reward yourself for hard work and find the entrance to your next big break.

Often people look for excuses as to why things are the way they are. They procrastinate. If you think you cannot do something and take on that mindset, it could become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Remember, action is a better outlook on life. Do something every day and don't wallow in self pity. If you want to be someone, only you can make it happen. Yes, "this too shall pass."

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