



Toras Avigdor

Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

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פרשת תולדות

How's Your Mood?

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לעילוי נשמת מרת רבקה בת מזה"ר אליהו ע"ה

How's Your Mood?

“Hey chevra, watch this!” said Yanky Feldman as he sped past his friends on his new mountain bike and made a short stop in front of the yeshiva. Yanky was on top of the world. Last week he won the yeshiva’s *mishnayos* contest, and his Zeidy had bought him a new speedbike as a reward for all his hard work.

“Yanky,” said Zeidy as he pulled the new bike out of the trunk of his minivan, “This is for you! I want the *z’chus* of having a *cheilek* in your learning. If your Totty and Mommy let, you can use the bike to go back and forth to yeshiva every day.”

And that’s why Yanky was on his new bike at school today instead of his old scooter. Yanky considered his new bike his “*mishnayos* bike” because he was going to use it everyday *l’sheim Shamayim*, to go back and forth from yeshiva and the after-school *mishnayos* program. And so, Yanky proudly locked his bike around the oak tree and ran up the steps to his classroom to make it to his seat before the bell rang.

Just like every day, Rebbi Kaplan began the day with a short vort on the *parsha*, something the boys could take a life-lesson from. “In this week’s *parsha*,” Rebbi began, “the *pasuk* tells us that Eisav came home from hunting in the forest, ‘and he was *ayeif*.’ *Ayeif* here means he was tired and wiped out – he was discouraged. He was sad because his grandfather, Avraham Avinu, had just passed away. Basically, he was what we would call today, ‘in a bad mood.’ ”

“But that ‘bad mood’ “ said Rebbi Kaplan, “was the beginning of the end for Eisav. Because when Eisav saw that his brother, Yaakov, was cooking up a good lentil cholent, that made him even hungrier. And because Eisav was so discouraged and hungry, he made a deal with Yaakov — “How about we make a trade?” said Eisav. “You give me that big bowl of red cholent and I’ll give you my rights to the *bechora*.” Ooh-ah, was that a mistake! To trade away the *bechora* for some beans?! It’s like your little brother trading away his new remote control drone for a lollipop! And there’s ‘no backsies!’ What was Eisav thinking?!” asked Rebbi.

“And the answer is that he wasn’t thinking! Because sometimes when things go wrong, when you have a bad day or even a bad hour, you lose control and you make wrong decisions. And that’s what we’re learning from this *pasuk* — that you should be very careful not to let a disappointment make you lose your footing. Don’t be like Eisav and let some bad news make you lose your head,” concluded Rebbi.

I don’t get it! Yanky thought to himself. Who would do something like that?! To give up something valuable just because you’re in a bad mood? Nobody with half a brain would do that! Usually Rebbi’s divrei Torah are so practical, I don’t know about this one. But soon, Yanky forgot all about what Rebbi had said, and it was just another regular day of school.

After a long school day — a little too long, he thought — Yanky walked out the yeshiva doors and down the steps, all the while reviewing the the fourth perek in Bava Kama by heart: שׁוֹר שֶׁנִּגְחַ אַרְבָּעָה וְחֲמִשָּׁה שְׁוֹרִים זֶה אַחֵר זֶה, יִשְׁלַם לְאַחֲרוֹן שְׁבָהֶם.



“HEY!! Where’s my bike?!” yelled Yanky. “My new bike! Who took it?” he said, as he looked down at his lock lying on the ground around the tree. It hit him like a ton of bricks — his bike was stolen!

“I can’t believe it! I can’t believe this is happening to me. My *mishnayos* bike, the bike that I dedicated for serving Hashem! And now some *ganav* has it?! It’s not fair! You know what? Forget about the whole thing! I don’t need this whole *mishnayos* thing anyways!” said Yanky dejectedly as he began to walk home, thinking about how he would tell his Zeidy that all the money he spent on the new bike was wasted.

“Yanky, is everything okay? Why are you walking home today?” It was Yanky’s rebbi calling to him from his car.

“Rebbi, you’re not gonna believe what happened. My bike was stolen from in front of the yeshiva!” “That’s terrible!” said Rebbi Kaplan. “I still remember when that happened to me when I was twelve years old. I’ll never forget it — it’s a horrible feeling. Hop in and I’ll drive you home.”

Yanky climbed in and Rebbi reminded him to put on his seat belt. “If it once happened to you, Rebbi,” said Yanky, “then you know how I’m feeling. My Zeidy bought me the bike because of all the work I put into *mishnayos*, but now that it was stolen, I don’t want to do extra *mishnayos* any more.”

“Well,” said Rebbi Kaplan, “I definitely understand how you’re feeling. I remember that feeling, that pit in my stomach. But I want you to think about the *d’var Torah* we said in yeshiva today. Remember how Eisav made a decision when he traded away something valuable for a bowl of red beans? And why did he do it? Because he let a bad mood get the best of him. So whatever you decide about *mishnayos*, don’t be like Eisav; wait a bit before you make such an important decision” said Rebbi Kaplan as he dropped him off in front of his house.

The next morning, as Yanky was scooting to yeshiva on his old scooter, he thought: *This is my mishnayos scooter! I’m not going to make the same mistake Eisav did. The yetzer hara is not going to fool me!*

Have a Wonderful Shabbos

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