



Toras Avigdor

Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

By: Pinchas Ben-Ami

פְּרֶשֶׁת וַיְחִי

Yiddy The Lion

לזכר נשמת

הרב ר' יצחק אהרן בן הרב ר' אליהו זינגער ז"ל

נתנרב ע"י בניו

ברוך, אליהו צבי הערש, נתן, יוסף, ישראל
זינגער

Yiddy The Lion

Shimon's Story:

9:15 PM. Shimon is lying in bed, thinking ...

A funny new family moved onto our block. At first I was really excited because my mother told me they have a boy my age. Our block already has the best group of boys in the whole neighborhood, but we could always use a new friend.

At least, that's what I thought before "Yiddy" moved in. You hear that? His name is Yiddy! Can you imagine? Not Yehuda, not even Yudi — it's "Yiddy." And his family dresses so differently than all of us on the block. The funniest thing is his long curly peyos that look like ponytails.

Also, he's way too frum for our block. I knew it from the first Sunday after he moved in, when his mother invited us for supper. You can't imagine how he bentched! It took him longer to bentch than to eat. He was looking in and pointing at every word, while we sat there waiting for him to finish so we could go down to his basement to play. It felt like hours! Why can't he just be like us?! We don't bentch like that!

Yiddy's Story:

9:15 PM. Yiddy is lying in bed, thinking as he tries to fall asleep ...

I still remember sitting by supper with the whole family when Totty announced the "good news" that our family was moving. That's what Totty called it – "Good news." The truth is that I also thought it was good news at first. Mommy said that there would be much more room in the new house, and that would mean that I wouldn't have to share an eensy weensy room with Feivish and 'Fraim and Fishel.

But it turns out that it wasn't such good news. First of all, I kinda miss having Feivish, 'Fraim, and Fishel in my room. It was kinda crowded, but now I realize that it was kinda fun, too – it was a good kinda crowded.

But that's nothing compared to the real problem I have with this block. It's my new neighbor Shimon and his friends who don't like anything about me. They think my peyos are too long and make fun of me behind my back. They think I'm trying to show off and be different but it's not true — it's just my family *minhag*. That's what my Zeidy did and his Zeidy did, so why shouldn't I also do it?

And now they make fun of me because I look in the *siddur* and point at every word when I *bentch*. My Zeidy was *niftar* last year, and since then I'm very careful to *bentch* the way he always did. Mommy told me she's sure that Zeidy is looking down from *Shomayim* and smiling at me, but I don't know if it's worth it. Maybe if I start *bentching* quicker and ask Totty if I can cut my peyos a little bit shorter, maybe Shimon and the *chevra* will like me better.

1:00 AM. Yiddy's dream ...

"Yiddeleh, my little *tzaddik* — it's me, Zeidy. I came all the way from Gan Eden to visit you because I can't bear to see you so upset. I need to tell you something important.



“I’m sure your *rebbe* already taught you all about the *brachos* Yaakov gave his children before he was *niftar*. Yaakov compared them to all different types of animals. Yehuda is a lion. Binyomin is a wolf. Dan, a poisonous snake. Yissocher, a donkey. That’s strange because if it were us we probably would have chosen different examples. Kosher animals, maybe, like a sheep or a calf. Or even a cute little puppy or a sweet little goldfish. Quiet animals that wouldn’t hurt anybody — that’s the way to describe the Am Yisroel.

“But a lion?! A wolf?! A snake?! These are dangerous animals – why praise the Am Yisroel this way?

“Yiddeleh, listen to the answer because it’s an important lesson Hashem is teaching us. And especially for you. When you think about the animals the Shevatim are compared to, you’ll see that the reason they’re strong is that they’re full of energy; they’re bold and brave, and that’s what makes them so successful.

“Of course, Hakodosh Boruch Hu wants every Jew to be kindhearted and nice to everyone — absolutely! But as nice and kind as you should be to everyone around you, you also have to be full of energy to serve Hashem.

“You have to be bold like a leopard to fulfill whatever Hashem wants (Pirkei Avos 5:20). You have to be strong like a lion and energetic like a wolf to do all the *mitzvos*. That’s the great lesson Yaakov was telling the Shevatim, and the great lesson the Torah is telling us.

“Yiddeleh, you are Yehida. גֹּדֵר אַרְיֵה יְהוּדָה *Di bist ah leib!* You’re a lion! You’re in Hashem’s army and you’re proud to wear his uniform. You wear *peyos* and you make them beautiful to give *kavod* to the *mitzvah*. You *bentch* in a way a Jew *should bentch!* כָּרַע רֶבֶץ בְּאֵרֶיָה וּבְלִבָּיָא מִי יִקְיָמוּנּוּ When Yehida sets his mind to something, no one can change it!

These boys who are making fun of you now are acting very immaturely. In a year or two they’ll be embarrassed of the way they treated you! So why should you be embarrassed? Be a lion, Yehida, and charge forward, ahead of them!”

And with those last words, Zeidy disappeared and Yiddy woke up.

Have a Wonderful Shabbos !

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