



Toras Avigdor

Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

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שְׁלַח

Don't Clown Around!

Mazel Tov

Shoshana Raiza Rosenberg

on her Bas Mitzvah



Don't Clown Around!

Yitzy and Basya were standing with Totty in the post office at the back of the very long line. They had never been so bored in their life. Time seemed to have come to a standstill as they waited to mail this week's Toras Avigdor to their cousin Pinny in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Yitzy tried his best to think about the mishnayos he learned that week in school, but it was very hot in the post office and that made it hard to even think.

"Look, Totty!" Basya exclaimed. "That's our neighbor Mark working behind the counter! I didn't know he worked here! I'm sure he'd let us cut the line so we don't have to wait another four hours."

"Yeah," said Yitzy, "and then I could get back home and finish learning my mishnayos."

Totty looked at his children, horrified. "Chas v'shalom!" he said. "We could never do that. Even if Mark would offer that to us, we'd have to politely say no. Do you know why?"

Just then there was a loud commotion as the door to the post office banged open and Totty, Yitzy and Basya looked on as two clowns stumbled in, carrying huge boxes. They bumped into an old lady near the door and then, ignoring the long line, they walked up to the counter.

"Pardon us, pardon us," one of the clowns said as he pushed an old man in a wheelchair out of the way. "We're from the circus and we're late for the show, but we MUST mail these packages today!"

The clowns shoved their boxes onto the counter and the clerk started to prepare them for shipment. The other clown turned to face the crowd. "It's a good thing we're clowns, right?" he grinned, bending down to pick up his bright red clown nose which had fallen off and rolled under the old man's wheelchair. "Nobody cares about giving up their place in line to a friendly clown!"

Ten minutes later the clowns left, tooting their little handheld horns. Totty turned back to his children with half a smile.

“Kinderlach,” he said quietly so the other people in line couldn’t hear. “I think Hashem just answered my question. Look around at how annoyed everyone is.”

“But Totty,” Yitzzy said, “if we could get out of here faster, we could go home and learn. Isn’t learning Torah more important than worrying about whether a few people are upset?”

Totty leaned over to whisper to Yitzzy and Basya when they heard someone behind them muttering, “What a bunch of clowns! I can’t stand when people think they’re more important than other people! I’m going to call their boss at the circus and give him a piece of my mind! If his workers are so inconsiderate, then he’s doing a pretty bad job training them. They probably learn such behavior from him!”

Totty leaned over and whispered: “Now imagine if we had asked our neighbor Mark to allow us to cut the line. Instead of being angry at clowns, those people would be muttering about us. Now, about us would be bad enough, but what would have made it worse is that they’d be speaking about our Boss! We would have given them the impression that Hashem’s people don’t know how to care about other people and that would make Hashem look bad!”

Totty paused as the line moved and they stepped forward a quarter of an inch.



“Let me tell you a story,” he said. “When I was in Yeshiva, there was one bochur who loved learning. He loved it so much that you would often see him running out of his house at 6 am with his shirt only half-buttoned as he yelled for the bus driver to wait for him. While everyone else walked into the beis midrash, he would run, pushing his way in to get through the door because he didn’t want to waste a minute.

“We all thought this bochur was the biggest tzaddik. None of us loved Torah enough to run to the beis midrash! But then one day the mashgiach saw him cutting the line in the yeshiva dining room because he wanted to get back to the beis medrash. The mashgiach called him over and told him that he was doing one of the **WORST AVEIROS IN THE TORAH!** Nobody could believe it. How could loving Torah be an aveirah? And not only that, but one of the worst aveiros?!

“But the mashgiach said that running out with his shirt a mess, yelling in the street early in the morning when people were still sleeping, and pushing to get into the beis midrash were all a chillul Hashem! People would look at him and say, ‘That’s a yeshiva bochur?! That’s one of Hashem’s people?’

“The way we act has to always make people say, “Wow! You see those people – if they really behave so nicely and so politely – better than any other people – then their Boss, Hashem Elokei Yisroel, must really be perfect.” That’s called making a Kiddush Hashem! And that is one of the **GREATEST MITZVOS IN THE TORAH!**”

Have a Wonderful Shabbos !



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