

Your "Masei Book"

Toras Avigdor

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Junior

By: Ari Ben-Ami

Illustrations by: Yocheved Nadell

Yitzy walked with his father down the hallway in Maimonides Hospital trying to find Uncle Refoel's room. Uncle Refoel had been in the hospital for almost three months already but the doctors had just moved him to a new floor, so they were having trouble finding the room.

They knew it was Room 738 but it wasn't so easy to find. Yitzy decided that if he would ever own a hospital, he would make sure to have big flashing red numbers near every door so that visitors would have an easy time finding the room they were looking for.

Yitzy was doubly nervous because he didn't like hospitals altogether. His cousin Shmuly came here every Shabbos just to visit people but Yitzy couldn't imagine doing that. He always felt scared and uncomfortable seeing sick people in the hallways attached to all sorts of wires and tubes and machines.

Finally, a nurse helped them and they found Uncle Refoel's room. It looked like Uncle Refoel was just finishing talking with a doctor when they walked in.

"Wow! Baruch Hashem!" Uncle Refoel said with a huge smile, shaking the doctor's hand. "This is amazing news! Thank you so much!"

Totty rushed forward. "Refoel, what's going on?" he asked with a hopeful look on his face.

Uncle Refoel looked like he was going to pop out of his bed. "It's a neis!" he said. "Dr. Wamahoui just told me that the last test they did showed that the disease is completely gone! I can leave the hospital tomorrow!"

"Baruch R o f e i Cholim!" said Totty as he turned to Yitzy, who had started organizing some of the sefarim next to Uncle Refoel's bed. "What are you doing, Yitzy?"

"Well," said Yitzy, "since Uncle Refoel is leaving tomorrow, I thought I'd help him get his stuff together. It'll be my last chance to fulfill the mitzvah of *bikur cholim*."

"Oy, Yitzy, you're so sweet," Uncle Refoel said. "But would you mind handing me that notebook on the bottom of the pile? I need to write something down before I forget."

Yitzy handed him the notebook. As Uncle Refoel opened it, Yitzy saw that it was filled with pages and pages of dates.

"Uncle Refoel," said Yitzy. "Why are you making your own calendar? We could have brought you a calendar. We have a bunch of extra ones at home."

"Thank you, Yitzy," said Uncle Refoel as he showed Yitzy the last page in the notebook. "But it's not a calendar — it's my 'Masei Booklet.'"

Yitzy looked at what was written on the page:

- Thursday Chukas-Balak - Doctor Wamahoui says that the disease is spreading and they want to start a new treatment tomorrow.

Sponsored in honor of:

Mazel Tov to the Stern family on the birth of their son may they see much nachas.

- Sunday Pinchas - Been on the new meds for 2 days. It makes me dizzy and nauseous but b'ezer Hashem it will help. Yitzzy came by to visit today. It was nice seeing his smile.

- Tuesday Pinchas - Feeling much better. The nurses say that my body adjusted to the medication, baruch Hashem.

- Wednesday Pinchas - Had emergency surgery yesterday on my liver. I'm on a different floor now — it's called the Recovery Floor.

- Thursday Pinchas - Back in my room. A lot of blood tests today. Doctors want to be sure I didn't get an infection.

- Sunday Matos-Masei - Moved to the seventh floor today. Baruch Hashem, I got the window bed.

Yitzzy then watched as Uncle Refoel added a new line:

- Monday Matos-Masei - Baruch Hashem, moving back home tomorrow!

"Masei booklet?!" said Yitzzy. "What's that? Why did you keep notes of everything that happened to you here? If it was me, I would want to get out of this building and forget all of this happened!"

Uncle Refoel closed the notebook and handed it back to Yitzzy with a smile. Yitzzy flinched as he saw the IV line going into Uncle Refoel's arm but he moved closer to the bed to hear Uncle Refoel.

"Yitzzy," he said, "In this week's parshah, the Torah spends a tremendous amount of pesukim telling us every single place the Am Yisroel stopped in their forty years in the Midbar. They went from here to there and then they left there and went to here. Over and over again — a lot of pesukim! Doesn't that sound a bit strange?"

"Rav Avigdor Miller explained that it's not just where we end up that's important. Every single step in our journey through life is important. Everything that happens to us is from Hashem and each little detail, no matter how painful or boring it may seem, is for our good! And remembering each little thing Hashem does for us is super important if we want to be true ovdei Hashem.

"I went through many painful things in the hospital: surgeries, blood tests, scary news from the doctors. But I know that each and every little thing was actually a gift from Hashem to help me grow and become closer to him. And now that I'm leaving the hospital, I have a notebook filled with everything that happened and I can look at it

and remember all the gifts and lessons Hashem gave me along the way."

"Wow," said Yitzzy. "I didn't think those pesukim were teaching us anything!"

"But I want to tell you one more thing, Yitzzy," Uncle Refoel continued. "One of the things I learned during my journey from one floor to another and from one room to the next is how important bikur cholim is. You've done an incredible mitzvah coming to visit me so many times and cheering me up. I really owe you a lot of hakaras hatov. And I know it wasn't easy for you because you feel uncomfortable around me and the other sick people here."

"Well, yeah," Yitzzy said. "It's scary to see sick people. It makes me afraid and I don't know what to think or say."

Yitzzy thought he might have hurt his uncle's feelings, but Uncle Refoel continued smiling. "Yitzzy," he said, "Do you know what Rav Avigdor Miller says that we should say whenever we see a sick person?"

"Refuah sheleimah?" Yitzzy asked.

"Yes," said Uncle Refoel, "but that's what you say to the person you're visiting. But to yourself you have to say, 'Thank you, Hashem, for not making me sick like that person. Thank you, Hashem, that I am healthy and don't need to be in a hospital!' Whenever you see a sick person, it's not an accident. That's part of **your** journey that you could write about in your Masei Booklet. Hashem is reminding you that you are healthy and that you should appreciate not needing IV lines or oxygen. A good old regular healthy day is the best part of our journey through life.

Totty and Yitzzy said their goodbyes to Uncle Refoel and left. As they walked through the lobby they passed a boy in a wheelchair with a broken leg, Yitzzy smiled at the boy and wished him a refuah sheleimah. Then he turned to Totty and asked if he could borrow his pen.

Yitzzy took out a piece of paper from his pocket and wrote down: "Monday Matos-Masei — Visited Uncle Refoel. Baruch Hashem, he's better! And I saw a boy with a broken leg — baruch Hashem, I have two healthy legs!"

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!



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