

The Hat On Your Head

Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

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Erev Shabbos Parshas Zachor 5780

The Yudkowskys walked into the Flybar Costume Store to buy their Purim costumes.

“Look, Mommy! There are the Kallah dresses!” squealed Miri as she ran off to pick out her costume.

Meanwhile Yitzy and Shmuli headed with Totty towards the boy’s section, where Shmuli picked out a police costume. Yitzy’s eyes fell upon the most realistic-looking US Army uniform he had ever seen.

“Wow,” said Yitzy. “It looks so real! It even feels like a real uniform! And Totty, it’s on sale - it’s not too expensive - can I please get it?”

Leil Purim 5780

The Yudkowskys arrived in Shul for Krias Megillah, Shmuli dressed as a policeman and Yitzy in his soldier’s costume. As Yitzy got to his seat, he looked up and saw an adult also wearing a soldier’s uniform! He didn’t know they sold them for adults too!

“Yitzy,” whispered Shmuli excitedly, “that’s Lieutenant Steve Cohen! He recently became

from an actual real soldier! I heard he drove a tank in the Iraq war! I bet he came straight from the army base specially to hear our zeidy read the Megillah!”

Yitzy was fascinated by seeing an actual real American soldier in Shul. It was one thing to be dressed as one, but this was the real thing - it looked so cool!

Erev Shabbos Parshas Zachor 5781

Yitzy and Totty Yudkowsky walked into Yoshi’s hat store. Yitzy’s Bar Mitzvah was in a month and he was getting his very first hat! Yitzy looked with amazement at the huge selection of hats as the salesman picked a few off the shelf.



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“How does this one look?” Totty asked Yitzy as he put a particularly nice hat on his son’s head.

Yitzy looked at himself in the mirror and a strong feeling came over him. “Wow,” he thought. “It looks so real!”

Leil Shabbos Hagadol 5781

The Yudkowskys arrived in Shul for Kabbolas Shabbos, Yitzy wearing his brand new Bar Mitzvah suit and hat. As Yitzy got to his seat, he looked up and saw all the other men, dressed just like him. It made him feel good and important, and helped him daven with extra Kavanah.

On the way home from Shul, Yitzy turned to Totty. “Totty,” he said, “today reminds me a lot of Purim last year, when I dressed up as a soldier. Do you remember that soldier, Lieutenant Cohen, who came to Shul in his army uniform? He looked just like me, but it was obvious that there was a difference. He was a real soldier, while I was just wearing a Purim costume

“But tonight when I came to Shul wearing something I never wore before, I felt different. I was dressed just like all of the bochurim and Tottys in shul but I felt that it was more than just a costume - it felt like that’s who I am now!”

Totty smiled. “Yes, Yitzy,” he said. “When you were wearing the uniform last year, it was just a costume - it didn’t mean anything. But Lieutenant Cohen is an actual soldier, so when he wears his uniform it shows that he is a soldier in the US Army.

“But now, you actually are a soldier! The black hat is the uniform of a true Torah Jew, and when you wear it, you are showing that you are a real soldier in Hashem’s Army.”

Yitzy beamed. “Wow, it makes me feel so choshuv!” he said.

“Yes, it does,” said Totty. “But you need to be careful!”

“Why?” asked Yitzy. “So it doesn’t get dirty?”

“No, that’s not what I meant,” said Totty as they turned the corner towards their house. “Simply wearing a black hat doesn’t make you a Tzaddik. In fact, it puts more responsibility on you.

“Think about a soldier. Imagine if a soldier gets his brand new uniform, but then doesn’t do all of the things a soldier is supposed to do.”

“I would think that he would get kicked out of the army!” said Yitzy. “Wearing the uniform without doing the job is silly!”

“That’s right,” said Totty. “And Rav Avigdor Miller compares the hats that Torah Yidden wear to the Migbaos, the hats that the Kohanim wear in the Beis Hamikdash. The word ‘Migbaas’ means ‘to lift up’. A hat makes your head look bigger. But a bigger head means that you need to fill it with important things.

“Don’t think that just wearing your hat makes you perfect. It only opens room for you to become great, but as a Bar Mitzvah, it is now your job to become a true Torah Yid and to fill your head up with the ideas of the Torah!”

Have A Wonderful Shabbos



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