

The Giant Little Mitzvos

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Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Basya sat at the dining room table, frowning at her Chumash homework. At the other end of the table, Yitzy was chazering the gemarah he learned in school that day, while Totty tested Shimmy on Mishnayos baal-peh.

"Basya, is everything okay?" asked Mommy as she walked in from the kitchen.

"I don't know," Basya said, still staring at the paper in front of her. "Usually I am able to figure out the answer to Morah Esty's extra-credit question, but I'm stumped on this one."

"What's the question?" asked Mommy.

Basya looked up. "The Torah says that someone who eats blood gets koreis, the worst punishment in the Torah. Why does eating the blood of a kosher animal deserve such a terrible onesh?"

"Hmmm," said Mommy. "That sounds like a tough question. But dinner is ready now in the kitchen. Why don't we think it over as we eat?"

Followed by Totty and the boys, Basya and Mommy walked to the kitchen to eat the hot supper of spaghetti and meatballs that Mommy had prepared. Everyone made beautiful brachos and ate the delicious and healthy food.



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“Thank you so much for the delicious supper, Mommy,” said Yitzy as he got up and carried his plate to the sink. “I’m going to shul to learn with Avrumy. I’ll see you later!”

Basya and Shimmy got up as well, thanked Mommy and started leaving the table.

“Basya, Shimmy,” called Mommy. “Aren’t you forgetting something?”

Basya and Shimmy stopped, confused. What did they forget? Maybe Mommy was going to serve chocolate cake for dessert?

Mommy and Totty frowned at the childrens’ blank stares. “You really don’t know what you forgot?”

“No...” said Basya slowly. It didn’t seem like they were about to get a treat. In fact, it felt like they were about to get into trouble for something.

“Look at the table,” said Totty. “Do you see the mess you left here? You are big children, you should know better than to just run away from the table leaving your dirty plates here for Mommy to clean up.”

“I’m sorry,” mumbled Basya as she and Shimmy quickly went and took their plates to the sink.

“Thank you,” said Mommy. “You know we’re quite surprised that you children are still forgetting to clean up after yourselves. We would expect better from such good kinderlach like yourselves.”

Basya and Shimmy looked down at the floor. “We’re so sorry, Mommy. We will make sure to be more careful going forward.”

After a moment, Basya continued, “but can I ask a question? I feel like you were really upset at us for

this. I understand it’s important and we should try harder to clean it up, but why are you so upset about something so small like carrying one plate to the sink?”

Mommy continued to smile. “Isn’t that just it, Basya? If it’s so easy to do, in a way it’s worse than something that is hard. Because what is stopping you from doing it if it’s so simple?”

Something suddenly clicked in Basya’s brain. “Wait! I think that’s the answer to Morah Esty’s question! Because who wants to eat blood? It’s disgusting - I can’t imagine it tastes very good. So if someone can’t even keep an easy little mitzvah like not to eat blood, then maybe that’s why the Torah gives such a big punishment - because there’s no excuse for not keeping an easy mitzvah like that.”

“What a great answer!” exclaimed Totty. “And you’re not going to believe this, but that is **exactly** what Rav Avigdor Miller says about the issur to eat blood! Because it is so easy to avoid, that’s why the punishment is greater. That’s why we need to be extra careful to make sure we’re not doing something wrong, especially if it’s such an easy thing to not do. And the same goes for mitzvos that are super easy to do. Why would you want to miss out on getting schar when it takes so little effort?”

Basya grinned from ear-to-ear. “Thank you, Mommy and Totty, for teaching us this important lesson. I will make sure going forward to always keep an eye out for little mitzvos that I might accidentally overlook.”

Basya paused and then walked back to the table. She picked up the empty salad bowl and water pitcher and carried them to the counter, so excited to get another “easy” mitzvah!

Have a Wonderful Shabbos



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