

Rosh Hashanah / ראש השנה

The Verdict is In!

By: A. Ben-Ami

Illustrations by: Yocheved Nadell

Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

"Boys", said Totty. "Rosh Hashanah is coming soon and I'd like to do something to help us prepare."

"Okay!" said Yossi. "Are we going to go buy a fish head now?"

"We also need pomegranates!" said Itzik, as they headed out the door.

"No," said Totty. "Mommy will take care of all that when she shops for Yom Tov. This is something else."

Totty and the boys hurried to catch the bus. The boys wondered where Totty could possibly be taking them as they got off and walked towards what looked like some government buildings in Yerushalayim.

"Boys," said Totty as they approached the entrance to a large building. "This is a courthouse. There are criminal trials being held today and I thought before the Yom HaDin it would be a good idea for us to experience what din really means."

"Whoa!" exclaimed Yossi. "Do you mean that we might actually see someone get sentenced to jail for the rest of his life? That's such a scary thought!"

"Perhaps," said Totty as they walked into the building and towards the courtroom. "There is no



For sponsorship opportunities
please call: 732.844.3670

way to know until it happens. Just like Hashem's din on Rosh Hashanah."

Quietly, Totty and the boys entered the courtroom and took their seats. To their surprise, the defendant was none other than Tzadok "HaTzadik" - the swindler who was arrested for selling phony "segulos" outside of their shull!

"Tzadok," the judge was saying. "I have reviewed all of the evidence in this case, and I have listened to your defense. Now before I pronounce the verdict, would you like to make a statement? Let me remind you that the prosecution has done a good job of demonstrating that all of the things you sold, from the 'Har Sinai rocks' to the 'red kabbalah strings' were fake. In fact, DNA evidence has proven quite conclusively that what you claimed to be hairs from Bilaam's talking donkey were in-fact hairs from your own beard."

Tzadok stood up. "Yes Your Honor, I would like to say something. First of all, I want you to know that Rav Volender has shown me the importance of teshuva and I have been klapping 'Al Cheit' so hard that I have a bruise on my chest. I plan on learning the whole Zohar so I can sell segulot that actually work and find the real hairs from Bilaam's donkey. And if you let me go, Your Honor, I promise that I will pray for you for 40 days at the Kever Rachel that I am planning to build in Eilat."

Tzadok finished speaking and sat down.

The judge banged his gavel twice. "All rise for the verdict!" he announced.

Everyone in the courtroom stood up. Yossi and Itzik shivered in fear as they realized that Tzadok's fate would be determined by the next words the judge would say.

"Tzadok," began the judge. "Your statement just now has confirmed everything I heard and saw during the trial. As such, I hereby pronounce you 'Not Guilty by reason of insanity'. Case dismissed!" The judge banged his gavel one last time.

For a moment, stunned silence filled the courtroom. Then Tzadok leapt into the air. "Thank You Hashem!" he exclaimed. He started dancing and singing "I love You, Hashem" as he bounced out of the courtroom, skipping, hopping, and turning cartwheels down the hall.

As everyone else filed out of the courtroom, Totty turned to Yossi and Itzik. "Boys," he said. "Aside from getting a taste of what it means to be standing in front of a judge, there is another big lesson we can learn from what just happened."

"That if we're crazy we get away with things?" asked Itzik.

"No, no," Totty said, shaking his head. "In fact, that's the one thing we shouldn't learn from. But look at how happy Tzadok is, how he's celebrating that he was given freedom. That's how we should be right now!"

"But Totty," said Yossi. "It's not Rosh Hashanah yet. How could we celebrate before we actually get judged by Hashem?"

"Before?" asked Totty. "It's almost one year since last Rosh Hashanah. Hashem doesn't let us know right after Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur whether it was decided if we will make it until the next year. But now, looking back, we can see that Hashem **did** judge us for a year of life. So why should we be any less excited? It's as if we just got a letter telling us the verdict of our case - who cares if we received it late? We need to be singing our praises to Hashem, thanking Him for giving us another wonderful year of life!"

Yossi and Itzik looked at each other and then started skipping, dancing, and singing "I love You, Hashem" with Totty as they headed towards the bus stop.

**Have A Wonderful Shabbos,
Yom Tov and Year!**



To listen on the phone, Dial:

USA: 718-289-0899 | UK: 0333-015-0752 | Israel: 079-704-0089 | Canada: 438-771-0452