# Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

## Yom Kippur / יוֹם כִּיפּוּר

# Just Do Teshuva!

By: **A. Ben-Ami**
Illustrations by: **Yocheved Nadell**

"Genendy," Totty said to his oldest daughter as she hung up the phone. "Do you realize that about half of what you and Miriam Chana just discussed on the phone was Lashon Hora?"

"Ummm, I guess you're right, Totty," said Genendy quietly. "But it's just so hard for me to be careful with how I speak about others. What am I supposed to do?"

"We can discuss some ideas to help you with Shmiras Halashon," answered Totty. "But first, you need to do *teshuva* and say you're sorry to Hashem."

"But Totty," Genendy said. "How can I do *teshuva* first? Morah Tziporah told us that doing *teshuva* before getting rid of the *aveirah* itself, is like going to the *mikveh* while holding something *tamei*, which of course won't make a person *tahor*. And I'm not sure yet how to stop talking Lashon Hora, so what's the point in doing *teshuva* now?"

"Well Genendy," said Totty. "I'm sure you remember this from Novi, but I want to talk about a story that happened shortly after the Bnei Yisroel entered Eretz Yisroel.

"After the tremendous *nissim* in the war of Yericho, all of the *goyim* were terrified. The next city the Yidden conquered was 'Ai'. But here a tragedy happened, 36 Yidden died! The Bnei Yisroel were

*For sponsorship opportunities*
*please call: 732.844.3670*

very surprised. Nobody was supposed to die when Hashem was fighting with us!

"Yehoshua and the Zekeinim cried out to Hashem, asking why this happened. Hashem said that someone had stolen from the city of Yericho. Everything in Yericho was supposed to have been destroyed. Nobody was allowed to take **anything** and someone didn't listen to Hashem!

"So to find out who was guilty, they did a sort of *goral* using the Choshen."

"Totty," said Shmuly, who had just walked into the living room and was listening to the story. "With my Rebbe we learned the *pshat* of the Metzudas Dovid, that Yehoshua made everyone walk in front of the Aron."

"Ah, that's great!" smiled Totty. "Let's tell the story according to that *pshat* - that's even **more** exciting!

"So Yehoshua had all the men of the Am Yisroel walk past the Aron. But as everyone walked by, Shevet Yehuda got stuck - they couldn't move, they were frozen in place! The *aron* was 'saying' something here. It seemed obvious that the guilty one was from Shevet Yehuda.

"So now Yehoshua had the entire Shevet Yehuda walk in front of the *aron* and this time the Mishpacha of Zerach got frozen in place. 'Aha,' said Yehoshua, 'he's from this *mishpacha*'. So Mishpachas Zerach now walked by and the family of Zavdi got frozen. Finally the family of Zavdi walked by the *aron* and everyone walked successfully by, except for one man named Achan, who got frozen in place.

"Now it was clear who the *ganav* was. The Gemara tells us that Yehoshua asked Achan if he took something from Yericho and he said 'No! I didn't take anything!'. Yehoshua was worried that because of this *aveirah* Achan would lose his Olam Habo. That's the worst thing that could happen to a Yid! Yehoshua wanted to help him, but he knew there was no way he would admit his *aveirah* now after he had already denied it.

"So listen to what Yehoshua did, he **tricked** Achan into doing *teshuva*! Yehoshua told him that if he would admit what he did, he would be saved (Yehoshua really meant that his Olam Habo would be saved, but Achan thought it meant he wouldn't get punished at all). So Achan came clean. He admitted what he did. He said 'אָנֹכִי חָטָאתִי לַה... וְכָךְ זֹאת וְכָזֹאת עָשִׂיתִי - *I sinned before Hashem... and I did such and such*'.

"Yehoshua 'tricked' Achan into saying *viduy* - that means admitting our *aveiros* to Hashem - so that he could get Olam Habo!"

"But Totty," asked Genendy. "How is that *teshuva*? Achan only said that because he thought he wouldn't get punished. It doesn't sound like he was really truly sorry. It reminds me of when you tell us to apologize to each other when in fact we don't really mean it."

"Exactly!" said Totty. "Because while of course in order to do a real *teshuva* one must completely leave the bad actions behind and decide to never do them again, but even so, just saying the words 'I'm sorry' and 'חָטָאתִי' is a *mitzvah* already. It's the *mitzvah* of *viduy*! And we see from this *gemara* about Achan, that even doing just part of *teshuva*, just admitting to Hashem that you did an *aveirah*, even when you don't regret it, that can already save you!

By saying *viduy*, just the words alone "Hashem I regret doing an *aveirah*!" - even if we don't mean it at all, most of the *onesh* is removed!!!

"Wow, Totty" Genedy said, "I feel so sorry for doing the *aveirah* of Lashon Hora before. I think I'll call my friend Miriam Chana right back and ask her if she wants to start learning Daily Chofetz Chaim with me!"

**Have a Gemar Chasimah Tovah!**

**To listen on the phone, Dial:**

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

© Copyright 2021, Toras Avigdor | For sponsorship opportunities please call: 732.844.3670