

The Strange Kid

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Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Knock knock

"Good morning, girls," Mommy said from the doorway. "It's time to get up."

Chanala and Shevy opened their eyes and said Modeh Ani. After they leaned over to wash Negel Vaser from the washing cups next to their beds, Chanala rubbed her eyes and looked up. "Mommy, are you feeling okay?" she asked.

"Thank you for asking," Mommy said with a weak smile. "I was up a lot last night with the baby, so I'm still pretty tired."

"Oy, Mommy, please go back to sleep!" said Shevy.

"Yeah," said Chanala. "We can take care of ourselves and help Elazar get ready for cheider."

"Wow, that would be amazing," Mommy said, relieved. "Thank you so much!"

The two girls quickly got dressed for school, and while Chanala got breakfast ready, Shevy went to wake up Elazar.

After quickly eating breakfast, the girls went to the living room, where they started folding the laundry that Mommy had left.

About twenty minutes later, the girls heard Elazar rinsing his cereal bowl in the sink and looked up as he walked out of the kitchen to leave for school.



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“ELAZAR!” exclaimed Shevy. “Why are you dressed like a Kohen Gadol?”

Elazar paused by the front door, indeed dressed up like a Kohein Gadol. “Because Chanukah’s next week!” he said with a huge grin.

“Um... we get dressed up for Purim, not Chanukah,” said Chanala.

“I know that!” said Elazar. “But we are learning about Chanukah in cheider and I was really impressed by Matisyahu the Kohein Gadol, I want to serve Hashem just like him so I thought it would be a good idea to dress up in this costume today.”

“A good idea?” Shevy said. “You can’t go to school dressed up in a Purim costume!”

“All of your friends will laugh at you!” Chanala added.

“So what, I don’t care,” responded Elazar defiantly.

“But we care,” said Shevy exasperated. “This is like the time you brought a bucket of water to the shul’s *Simchas Beis Hashoeiva*. Everyone was looking at you like you were that Tzadok Hatzadik character from Toras Avigdor Junior!”

Just then Totty came up the stairs of the building, carrying his tallis bag.

“Good morning, Totty.” Shevy said. “Can you please tell Elazar that he can’t go to cheider dressed like a Kohein Gadol? It’s so embarrassing when he does weird things like that.”

Totty looked at Elazar and his costume. “Elazar,” he said. “You make a good looking Kohein Gadol, but your sisters are correct. You can’t go to cheider like that.”

Disappointed, Elazar headed back to his room to change into normal clothes.

Totty then turned to Chanala and Shevy. “Girls,” he began. “While of course you were right that Elazar can’t go to school dressed like that, I still want you to be a bit more careful with how you speak to him when he does these silly things.”

“But he’s not a baby anymore,” said Shevy. “He needs to learn that things like that aren’t normal.”

“He does need to learn that,” agreed Totty. “And we should teach him that with kindness. But there’s something else. You know, Yosef Hatzadik was different from his brothers. He acted differently, he had dreams that his brothers found strange, and they were bothered by him. So of course, Yaakov Avinu told Yosef that he needed to correct some of his actions. But then the posuk says “וְאֶבְיֹנוּ נִשְׁמַר אֶת הַדְּבָר” that Yaakov Avinu kept an eye on him. What do you think that means?”

“That Yaakov Avinu was on the lookout to make sure that he didn’t do anything else that was out of the ordinary?” offered Chanala.

“No,” smiled Totty. “You see, when a person is a little bit different, often it is because Hashem made him different for a special reason. Yosef Hatzadik was different because it was necessary for his job as the leader of Klal Yisroel - after all, he was the Melech of Klal Yisroel in Mitzrayim for almost 80 years, longer than any other Melech that Klal Yisroel ever had! Now any ordinary person can’t become a Melech. It takes someone with special qualities, and naturally such a person is different.”

“Totty, are you saying that Elazar is going to become a king???” Shevy asked incredulously.

“No, Shevy,” answered Totty. “I have no idea what Hashem has in store for any of us. But if Elazar sometimes acts a bit different, we shouldn’t look at it as a bad thing. We should be aware that Hashem gave him special skills - and who knows what he will accomplish with them? So while we need to remind him that he can’t wear a Purim costume in Kisleiv, we should also help him and encourage him to become an Eved Hashem and to use the gifts Hashem gave him to become a great person!”

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!



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