

Vayakhel / וַיַּקְהֵל

No Time for Silliness

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Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Nechemia and Shlomo nervously knocked on the office door. Why had the Mashgiach called for them? They didn't think they had done anything wrong.

"Come in!" called the Mashgiach warmly.

The two bochurim walked cautiously into the office where their Mashgiach, Reb Yosef, was sitting at his desk waiting for them.

"How are you boys doing?" he asked with a smile.

"Boruch Hashem, good," Nechemia said quietly.

"I want to talk with you boys about what happened at the Shabbos seudah in Yeshiva," Reb Yosef began.

Nechemia and Shlomo exchanged a glance. What had happened on Shabbos?

The Mashgiach continued, "I always love when I get the opportunity to spend a Shabbos seudah in Yeshiva with all of my talmidim. But this week, after the cholent was served, I noticed that the two of you were laughing and cracking jokes. I was disappointed to see such amazing bochurim like the two of you acting like that on Shabbos."

"I'm sorry," said Shlomo. "We were in a silly mood and weren't acting the way Bnei Torah should. But what does Shabbos have to do with it? It's not like we were doing any melachos or moving muktzah."



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Just then, they were interrupted by a strange looking man who had appeared at the doorway to the office. He had long blonde hair, a banjo on his back, and a surfboard under his arm!

“Em... can I help you?” asked the Mashgiach.

“Sure, Rabbi!” said the man. “Hey guys, how’s it going?” he added, nodding at the two bochurim.

“My name is Matthew Sweeney, but you can call me ‘Riptide’. I’ve been looking everywhere for a Rabbi and then I saw this Yeshiva building and I was like ‘whoa, I bet there’s a Rabbi in here!’ And what do you know, here you are!”

Reb Yosef and the bochurim stared as Matthew continued.

“So I’m not Jewish or anything, but I find your whole religion fascinating. Every time I go to the beach I see that huge ocean and think ‘man, that is awesome - there must be a Creator!’

“So anyway, on Friday G-D gave me such amazing waves to ride that I realized that I need to do something in return for Him. So I decided that I’m going to keep Shabbos just like you guys do. I went home and made kiddush on a cup of orange juice. I didn’t even turn on any lights! I just sat in the dark the whole Shabbos thinking about the wonderful ocean that G-D made for me and I decided I want to become Jewish!”

“Oh no! Don’t do that!” shouted the Mashgiach, causing Nechemia and Shlomo to jump. “It’s dangerous to do such a thing if you’re not a Jew yet!”

“Don’t do what?” asked Matthew.

“You can’t keep Shabbos!” answered Reb Yosef. “Here, take my number and give me a call

this evening and we’ll talk. But don’t keep Shabbos!”

“Okay, thanks Rabbi! Bye guys!” said Matthew, as he walked out of the office.

Nechemia turned to the Mashgiach. “Why is it so bad if he keeps Shabbos if he anyway wants to be a Yid?” he asked.

“Because Shabbos is special!” said Reb Yosef. “It’s not for Goyim. Just like the Beis Hamikdash! Do you know that in the Beis Hamikdash they had a sign in Latin saying that any Goy who comes in would be *chayav misah*? And even the Romans understood and let them keep that sign there. Because the Beis Hamikdash was a *kadosh* place and only Yidden were allowed inside.

“And Shabbos is the same - it’s a *kadosh* day that Hashem gave us and only to us. When we go into Shabbos we’re entering a day of *kedusha*. That’s why ‘*Nochri sheshovas chayav misah*’ - if a gentile keeps Shabbos, he gets the death penalty, just as he would if he walked into the Beis Hamikdash.

“So you see, Shabbos isn’t just a day that we don’t do *melacha*. It’s a very special day, just for us. And we can’t act on Shabbos the way we act during the week. When we enter Shabbos, we are entering a time of *Kedusha*, just as if we were entering the Beis Hamikdash, where we would never, *chas veshalom*, act silly. We can’t talk on Shabbos the way we talk during the week. It’s a time to enjoy our closeness with Hashem, and we have to treat it with tremendous respect.”

Nechemia and Shlomo thought about this for a second. “Thank you,” they said. “From now on we will make sure to always keep in mind *Kedushas Shabbos* and treat the day with respect.”

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!



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