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Parshas Behar

Crowded Buses

A hectic scene was taking place near the Central Bus Station in Yerushalayim. Tonight was Lag Ba'omer and buses were lined up waiting to take thousands of Yidden to Meiron for the yahrtzeit of the holy Tana, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai.

Everywhere one looked there were crowds of all types of Jews: Chassidim, Litvaks, Sefardim, Teimanim, and more were all trying to find a bus with empty seats. Organizers worked their way through the crowd, answering questions, helping people find places on the buses, and handing out sefarim for people to learn on the three-hour bus-ride. There was even one Jew yelling “chai rotel” and handing out shot glasses of wine!

Rav Volender, the Rov of the Jerusalem Prison, was one of the many people arriving at the scene. As he was making his way towards the line of buses, he noticed a familiar face nearby.

“Tzadok, is that you?” Rav Volender called.

Tzadok “Hatzadik”, who was about to board a bus headed to the airport, turned around. “Ah Rav Volender! How good to see you!” Tzadok said.

As Rav Volender approached, he noticed that Tzadok was carrying the largest sefer Zohar he had ever seen. “Where did you find such a gigantic Zohar?” asked Rav Volender.

“Oh, I wrote this Zohar myself,” Tzadok said. “I decided last week that I wanted to learn the whole Zohar in honor of Rashbi’s yahrtzeit, but it was way too long and all the words were in a funny language I didn’t understand. So I had no choice but to write my own. I made the sefer extra large so everyone who sees me carrying it will immediately know what a massive tzadik I am.”

“Uh... uh huh...” Rav Volender replied. “But if you are so interested in Rashbi’s yahrtzeit, then why are you getting on a bus to the airport instead of going to Meiron?”

“Well I actually was planning to go to Meiron,” Tzadok replied. “I’ve been living in America helping Mayor McGillicuddy - I’m his chief kabbalah advisor, you know - and I flew in special just for Lag Ba’omer so I could daven for the mayor at Rashbi’s kever. But after seeing the long lines of frum Yidden crowding onto cramped buses, I changed my mind. I mean, look at these buses - it’s like Meah Shearim on wheels! I’m heading back to St. Louis, where I will ask the mayor to build a new Kever Rashbi in the middle of Forest Park. There’s a lot more space there and there won’t be as many Jews crowding all around on Lag Ba’omer.”

“But Tzadok,” said Rav Volender. “Look how beautiful it is when there are so many Yidden together!”

“Beautiful?” Tzadok replied. “How is this beautiful? It’s just throngs of people wearing black and white as far as the eye can see. It’s so boring!”

“Tzadok,” Rav Volender continued. “In this week’s Parsha there’s a halacha about houses in walled cities. In the times of the Beis Hamikdash, if someone sold a house he would get the chance to buy it back after the Yovel came. But then the Torah says **something very interesting**. If the



house you sold was in a walled city, then when the Yovel came, unlike houses in other cities, you only had one year to buy this house back. The Torah did that so people who sold houses in walled cities would hurry up and buy them back before they lost their chance.”

“Oh I bet I know why,” Tzadok said. “It’s because the walls of cities have special segulot inside of them that make people rich, right?”

“Um, no, I never heard that,” Rav Volender said. “But there **was** something special about walled cities. You see, walled cities were safer places to live so more people lived there. The walled cities in Eretz Yisroel were packed with Yidden learning Torah and keeping Mitzvos. And Hashem wants us to realize how special it is to live in a place surrounded by frum Yidden - the more the better! You mentioned Meah Shearim - what a wonderful place for those who have the zechus to live there! Places that are packed with frum Yidden doing mitzvos are places of kedusha, places filled with Hashem’s shechinah.”

Tzadok’s eyes opened wide. “So you’re saying it’s a segulah to be surrounded by frum Jews?” he asked.

“A segulah?” Rav Volender replied. “I didn’t use that word. I’m saying it’s a wonderful thing for a Yid to surround himself as much as possible with other Shomrei Torah uMitzvos!”

“Sounds like a segulah to me! Thanks Rav Volender!” said Tzadok as he ran off into the crowd to find a seat on a bus heading to Meiron.

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!

Takeaway:

When you’re surrounded by frum Jews, you’re in a place of great holiness. It is a zechus to live in a frum neighborhood!



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