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Parshas Bamidbar

Visiting Bubby

“Hi Miram Chana!” said Chayala as the girls walked into their classroom. “Wanna come over after school?”

“Thanks, but maybe another time,” Miram Chana said warmly. “We are going to my Bubby’s house today.”

“Oooh how fun!” said Batsheva, “What are you going to do?”

“Um... I dunno...” Miram Chana said. “Probably just sit in her living room and talk.”

“But she’s your Bubby!” protested Batsheva. “She should do something fun with you guys!”

“My Bubby loves to dance!” said Blima, who was sitting nearby. “When we come over she puts on music and we all dance together in her living room. It’s so fun!”

“My Bubby took us to the ocean and we rented a boat and spent the day on the water,” said Chayala. “You should do that! Or rock climbing - that’s what we’re doing next week!”

“Girls,” said Miram Chana, “my Bubby is 96 years old, *bli ayin hora*. She can’t take us boating, or rock climbing, or even dance with us in her living room. She can barely walk, even with her walker and cane. When we visit her, we usually just sit in the living room. We talk and she tells us stories.”

The classroom got very quiet. “Oh, I didn’t know that. I’m sorry,” said Chayala, as the teacher walked into the classroom and the girls quickly took their seats.

Later, at Bubby’s house

“Miram Chana! Don’t sit like that”, said Bubby. “It’s not good for your posture. Look at how Genendy and Nechy are sitting. It’s much healthier to sit straight like them.”

“Oh, sorry,” said Miram Chana, straightening herself in her chair.

“Don’t apologize to me!” Bubby said. “It’s for your own good! And why aren’t you eating any of my oatmeal raisin cookies? They’re full of wonderful nutrients!”

Miram Chana took a cookie from the plate on the coffee table, and quickly mumbled a brocha before taking a bite.

“Miram Chana!” said Bubby. “How can you just mumble a brocha like that? Did you even stop for a second to appreciate that Hashem gave you these wonderful cookies?”

“Sorry,” Miram Chana apologized again.

Miram Chana ate her cookie in silence as her two sisters excitedly chatted with Bubby about school and asked her questions about the “olden days”.

“Miram Chana,” said Bubby suddenly after a few minutes. “Why are you so glum? Where is that beautiful smile of yours?”

“Um... it’s kind of hard to explain,” Miram Chana said.

“Nonsense,” said Bubby. “Tell me what’s on your mind.”

Miram Chana didn’t know how to explain what was bothering her without making Bubby feel bad, so she started by talking about what Chayala had said about her boating trip with her Bubby.

“Ah,” Bubby said. “I see what’s going on. You want a young, energetic Bubby like your friends have. You wish I would take you on a boat, or maybe sky-diving or even jump off a cliff into a river with you?”



Miram Chana smiled as Bubby went on.

"I know sitting here is not as exciting as it must be for your friends to go running around with their Bubbies. But let me tell you why it's actually even better to have an old, wrinkled Bubby like me."

"Oh Bubby," Miram Chana said kindly. "You're not old and wrinkled."

"Nonsense!" Bubby said. "Why just yesterday I was looking everywhere for my false teeth until I finally found them stuck between the wrinkles in my face!"

Miram Chana laughed at Bubby's joke as Bubby continued.

"In this week's parsha Hashem says 'וְהָיָה לִי הַלְוִיִּים - and the Levi'im will be Mine'. And do you know what Rav Avigdor Miller says about this possuk? He says that the reason the Levi'im are so special is because Levi lived longer than all of the rest of his brothers - he lived 137 years.

After all of the other Shevatim were *niftar*, Shevet Levi still had their Great-Zaidy to teach them how to live. This is why Shevet Levi never got involved with any of the bad things in Mitzrayim. And this is why Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam came out of Shevet Levi. Because when you have an old Zaidy or Bubby to teach you what to do, you are zoche to live a better life in this world and the Next World.

"So I may not be able to take you boating or dance with you, but I have the wisdom of many years that you can learn from and become better Ovdei Hashem as a result."

Miram Chana smiled. After all, Totty and Mommy took them on many fun trips - but having an old Bubby was something she had that none of her friends had!

Have a Wonderful Shabbos!

Takeaway:

The earlier generations are closer to Har Sinai and it is a privilege to be connected with them. We should try to be around our Zaidies and Bubbies as much as we can.



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