



Toras Avigdor

Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

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Y.P.P.

Thinking of Others

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Mordechai & Chani Chopp



Thinking of Others

Uri was running down the block as fast as his legs could carry him. He couldn't wait to get home to tell Totty that the extra fifteen minutes they had spent learning even after Avos Ubanim had ended were really worth it! This was the first time he got over a 90% this whole year and he was so excited. Even his rebbi had recognized his effort and given him the new "Multicolored E-Z Snap-On Siren Light" for his bike that he had been hoping to get for two months already.

Suddenly, Uri tripped on the sidewalk and went flying through the air. As he landed on the sidewalk he heard a loud crack. "Uh oh," said Uri, he had twisted his ankle and it really hurt, but worse: the bike-light in his back pocket had cracked into a thousand pieces!

Just then Uri heard a squeaking noise. Looking up, he saw Mr. Starr riding quickly towards him in his wheelchair. Uri remembered when Mr. Starr had slipped on the ice last winter and hurt himself. He still hadn't healed and the doctors weren't sure if Mr. Starr would ever walk again. To make things worse, his wife had passed away in the summer and now he was all alone.

Mr. Starr made a fake hatzalah siren sound as he pulled up alongside Uri. "Uri Shtayner, from shul, right? Are you okay?"

Uri shook his head. "I think so. Except that my ankle is hurting and the bike light siren that my rebbi just gave me because of my good mark on the chumash test cracked into a million pieces. I've been waiting for this prize for two months and now it broke after I had it for less than five minutes!"

"Oy vey," said Mr. Starr, leaning over and trying to help Uri to his feet. "That's terrible! I know how that feels. I've also lost important things in my life and it's not easy. But don't get too down about it. As bad as it feels, it'll get better. Trust me."

Mr. Starr's warm smile and kind words already made Uri feel a little better. As Uri walked around and tested his ankle, Mr. Starr reached into his pocket and took out his wallet. "I was just at the 99 Cent Store buying things and I saw a very shticky bike light there. I'd like to give you a five dollar bill so that you can buy it for yourself. You deserve it for doing well on your chumash test."

"Wow! Thanks so much, Mr. Starr!" Uri said as he turned in the direction of the 99 Cent Store. Suddenly, Uri turned back around. "Can I ask you something that might be a little strange?"

“Sure,” said Mr. Starr, “We’re friends now!”

“Well, I heard about your accident and how you can’t walk. That’s pretty sad. And also your wife passed away in the summer. That’s even sadder. How is it that you’re able to think about my problems when really you have your own stuff to worry about? I don’t think I could do that. When I was lying on the floor and saw you coming, I was thinking about my problems – my ankle and my broken prize – not about your problems.”

Mr. Starr smiled. “The truth is that it’s something I learned from Rav Avigdor Miller *zecher tzaddik livracha*. You remember when Yosef Hatzadik was in



prison in Mitzrayim? It's not easy being stuck in jail far from your family and friends. It's a pretty yucky situation to be in. And it's even worse when you know that you're probably never going to get out.

"But Yosef didn't let that affect him. He didn't get lost in his own problems and ignore other people. When the *Sar Hamashkim* and *Sar Ha'ofim* had bad dreams and they were upset, Yosef noticed their sad faces. He asked them, 'Why do you look so sad today?' He didn't just walk past them because he had his own troubles to deal with.

"If you think about it, it was just because of that that Yosef got out of prison! If Yosef had walked around all sad about being locked up, if he hadn't paid attention to other people's problems, he would never have heard the dreams and the *Sar Hamashkim* would have never told Pharaoh about him! He would still be in prison now!"

"Wow!" said Uri. "I would be able to go to Mitzrayim tomorrow and visit Yosef Hatzadik?!"

"Ha! Not quite, Uri. I was exaggerating a little bit. But the point is, Yosef would have been stuck there for the rest of his life if he hadn't been friendly.

"Rav Miller says that the Torah is teaching a very big lesson here. The mitzvah of caring about others doesn't stop just because we're involved with our own problems. In fact, it makes the mitzvah much much bigger. Big enough that Hashem might reward you just like he rewarded Yosef!

"Ever since I learned that, I decided that no matter what I'm going through I will still be as cheerful as possible and try to help others who are sad or need help."

Uri looked at Mr. Starr with amazement. "Thank you so much for sharing that with me," he said. "I'm going to try to be like Yosef Hatzadik from now on – just like you taught me."

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!



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