



Toras Avigdor

Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

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קִשְׁפָּטִים

Holy Money

In memory of

חיים שמואל בן יצחק מרדכי

Sidney Gross (Pittsburgh)

May his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren
follow the path he and יבלח"ט Savta set forth.

Parshas Mishpatim

Holy Money

Continued from last week...

Tzadok had just removed the leashes from his frog and giant chimpanzee and before Rav Volender could stop him, the animals were running amok through the streets of the Old City.

“Quick, Tzadok!” Rav Volender cried out. “We need to catch those wild animals before they damage anything!”

Tzadok and Rav Volender ran through the streets of the Old City trying to catch the animals. Huffing and puffing, they arrived at Sha’ar Yafo just as the frog crashed through the window of a storefront in a shower of broken glass. Meanwhile, the chimpanzee jumped up on a pushcart full of bananas, tipping it over and sending fruit flying.

“Stop that crazy monkey!” yelled the Arab banana merchant. “He is ruining my precious bananas!”

The chimpanzee responded by throwing a banana at the man’s face, splattering him with mashed bananas. People everywhere started screaming and the ape began flinging bananas at everyone, creating a massive slippery mess.

Tzadok tried his best to fix the situation. “Makat Tzefardeia and Makat Arov are over!” he cried. “Stop being wild and come back home with me!”

Just then, two policemen arrived. “Are these your animals?” one of them asked Tzadok.

“Yes, and I’ve never seen them act like this before!” Tzadok said, close to tears.

“Well, you’re under arrest for endangering the public and irresponsible handling of animals,” the other policeman said, as he put Tzadok’s hands behind his back and handcuffed him.

“Oy, Tzadok,” sighed Rav Volender. “I’m so sorry but I’m late for work. I guess I will be seeing you at the jail shortly, one way or another.”

Later, at the jail

Tzadok sat in his jail cell, thinking things over. How had he managed to land himself here twice in less than a year? Just then he looked up and saw Rav Volender approaching.

“Hello, Tzadok,” Rav Volender began. “I’m afraid you missed my Mesilas Yesharim class, but after lunch I’m giving a Gemara shiur. We’re learning Mesechta Bava Kama.”

“Bava Kama?” Tzadok asked. “I’ve never heard of that. What’s it about?”

Rav Volender looked surprised. “You never learned Bava Kama? It’s all about the halachos of theft and damages. It’s very important for a Jew to learn these things.”

“That sounds boring,” said Tzadok. “I want to start doing teshuvah! I need to learn about Ruchniyut and how to become closer to Hashem!”

Just then a guard arrived and unlocked Tzadok’s cell.

“Tzadok,” said the guard. “The judge has instructed us to release you. You just need to sign this form that says you will pay fifteen thousand Shekels for the damages you caused to the store owner, the banana stand, and the injuries people received from slipping on the banana peels.”

“What?” cried Tzadok. “How am I going to pay that? I don’t have any money!”

“Well,” said the guard. “Why don’t you get a job to help you pay for it?”



“A job???” Tzadok exclaimed. “But I need to do teshuvah! I need to say Tehillim all day and come up with new segulot that will give me a kapparah! I don’t have time to do something silly like getting a job!”

“Tzadok, Tzadok,” said Rav Volender gently. “You can’t do teshuvah just by saying Tehillim. Do you know what the Torah talks about immediately after Matan Torah?”

“Akeidat Yitzchak?” Tzadok guessed.

“No, no,” said Rav Volender. “The Torah immediately continues with Parshas Mishpatim, which talks about all of the halachos of one who steals, injures, or causes damage to other people’s property.”

“I don’t understand,” said Tzadok. “Why doesn’t it talk about something more Kadosh right after Hashem gave us the Torah?”

“Because it is Kadosh!” Rav Volender replied. “Hashem gave us the Torah to teach us how to live in this world! Do you know that if you take or use something that is not yours without permission, you’re stealing from Hashem? Because everything in this world is His! One of the most important things we can learn are these halachos because they remind us that this is Hashem’s world and we are just passing through.

“Our entire lives need to revolve around the knowledge that we are living on this earth for Hakadosh Baruch Hu. And that means living by the rules that Hashem put in place. This includes being careful not to touch anything that is not ours and, of course, paying for any damages that we may cause.

“So Tzadok, to be a good Jew you must immediately get busy with learning how to live in Hashem’s world. And you can start your path to teshuvah by paying your fine so you can fix the damages you caused.”

Tzadok thought this over for a minute. Then he signed the form and walked out of jail, a free man once again.

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!



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