



אָחֵרִי - קִדּוּשִׁים / Acharei - Kedoshim

Obeying Our Parents

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Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Thursday Afternoon, University City, MO

The Berkowitz family made their way to the checkout line at Schnucks grocery store.

"Totty!" whispered Eliezer excitedly as they approached. "That's Mayor McGillicuddy! What's he doing at the store?"

"That's funny," said Shlomo Dov. "I never imagined that the mayor does his own shopping."

As if to answer their question, the mayor greeted the Berkowitzes with a wide smile.

"Welcome to Schnucks!" Mayor McGillicuddy said jovially. "As your mayor, it is my highest priority to go out of my way to help the loyal citizens of University City. And that's why my assistant, Cameron, will be bagging your groceries for you today!" Whispering to his assistant, he added "Cameron, where are the news camera crews? They should have been here by now."

"Boys," said Totty, "can you please help me load the groceries onto the conveyor belt?"

"Of course, Totty!" they replied, and quickly, Shlomo Dov, Eliezer, and Avrohom Chaim began taking all of the items out of their cart and putting them onto the conveyor belt.

Meanwhile, a loud commotion was heard from the next checkout lane, where another family was checking out.



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“No, Matt!” the father was saying angrily. “We’re not buying that candy. Just help me finish up here and we’re leaving.”

“Well then I’m getting this bottle of lemonade!” Matt replied stubbornly.

“Put that back! Michael, what are you doing behind the register - get back here! Why don’t you children ever listen to me?”

The Berkowitzes did their best to ignore the rowdy family and continued to help Totty.

“Here, Totty,” said Avrohom Boruch, bending down. “Your credit card fell on the floor.”

“Thank you so much!” Totty replied with a smile.

Meanwhile, Mayor McGillicuddy watched the two families as his assistant filled the grocery bags as quickly as he could.

“Thank you, Mister Mayor and Cameron,” the Berkowitzes said politely as they finished checking out.

“Oh I’m always happy to work hard for my constituents,” Mayor McGillicuddy replied, puffing out his chest. “It’s just too bad the camera crews haven’t gotten here yet so you could be in the news with your beloved mayor.”

“Oh that’s quite alright,” Totty said. “We don’t need the publicity.”

“Who said anything about publicity?” the mayor answered. “I’m just here to help. But Cameron,” he added, turning to his assistant. “You should call them and find out why they’re not here yet.”

“Right away, Mister Mayor,” Cameron replied.

“You know,” Mayor McGillicuddy said, turning back to the Berkowitzes. “It’s always impressive to see how well Jewish children listen to their parents. I think that if I ever have children, I’ll become Jewish so my children will obey me too. Well, bye now, and don’t forget - ‘Vote McGillicuddy!’”

“Kinderlach,” Totty said as they waved goodbye to the mayor and walked outside. “You made a beautiful kiddush Hashem by acting so nicely and respectfully in the store.”

“Yeah,” said Shlomo Dov. “And we even made Mayor McGillicuddy want to become a Yid!”

“Well,” Totty said, opening the trunk of the car. “I’m not so sure about that - do you really think someone should become a Yid just so his kids will listen to him?”

“Well no, but isn’t it a nice perk?” Eliezer said, placing a bag of groceries into the trunk.

“I want you all to understand something,” said Totty. “The Mitzvah of honoring and fearing our parents is not a ‘perk’ of Yiddishkeit. It’s meant to teach us how to have Yiras Shomayim.”

“How does putting groceries on the conveyor belt teach us Yiras Shomayim?” asked Shlomo Dov.

“You see,” Totty said, “Right after the Mitzvah of ‘קִרְשִׁים תִּהְיֶה’ - You should be Holy’, the Torah teaches the Mitzvah of ‘אִישׁ אָמוֹ וְאָבִיו תִּירָא’ - Everyone should fear his mother and father’. And that is because in order for a person to learn to fear his Father Hashem, he must first start with fearing his physical mother and father from when he is young.

“The point of listening to our parents isn’t to benefit the parents, it’s to get us used to listening to the people whom we are grateful to for bringing us into this world and raising us. And then, as we get older and see more and more how it’s really Hashem who is ultimately responsible for creating us, keeping us alive, and providing us with happiness and wellbeing, we will naturally continue to fear and listen to Him in the same way that we did to our parents when we were younger!”

“Thank you for that beautiful lesson,” said Shlomo Dov. “And thank you Hashem for giving us beautiful Mitzvos like fearing our parents which help us get closer to You!”

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!

Takeaway:

The first mitzvah that “makes us holy” is listening to our parents.
This prepares us for a lifetime of listening to Hashem.



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