

Arrested for Avodah

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Toras Avigdor

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Junior

Thursday Morning, The Jerusalem Prison

The prisoners took their seats in the prison Beis Midrash as Rav Volender walked in to give his weekly shiur on Parshas Hashavua. As he placed his seforim on the shtender, a man with half-a-beard walked in and sat down in the back.

"Ah, Tzadok!" Rav Volender said warmly. "How nice of you to come visit! It's always a pleasure to see you at my shiurim!"

Tzadok "Hatzadik" smiled at Rav Volender as the shiur began. Rav Volender was speaking about Parshas Pinchas and why it talks about the korbanos.

"You might wonder what korbanos are doing in Parshas Pinchas," Rav Volender said. "After all, Sefer Vayikra is where the Torah tells us about the avodah in the Mishkan and Beis Hamikdash. So why are we suddenly bringing it up again now?"

"And the answer is because the Torah tells us that Moshe Rabbeinu was going to die soon. That would be a tremendous blow to Klal Yisroel. So the Torah goes back to talking about the korbanos to help raise us up again.

"Why do we bring korbanos? What was the purpose of the Beis Hamikdash? Coming to the Beis Hamikdash and seeing the Avodah would make a huge impression on us - the korbanos lifted us up by constantly reminding us that serving Hashem is the most important thing in the world, unlike the silly idols which the Goyim were busy serving. Even nowadays, there are all sorts of silly mishegasim which threaten to distract us. And that is why our service to Hashem is an ever-important way of demonstrating to ourselves and the world that we are devoted only to Hashem."



As soon as Rav Volender finished speaking, Tzadok rushed up to him.

“Thank you for the incredible *shiur*, Rebbe,” he said breathlessly. “It was like you were speaking directly to me. I’m going to start working on this right away!”

“That’s wonderful, Tzadok!” Rav Volender said. “I am so happy to hear that!”

Tzadok said goodbye and rushed out of the Beis Midrash, but Rav Volender looked concerned.

“Tzadok, wait!” he called. “What did you mean that you’re ‘going to start working on this?’”

But it was too late. Tzadok had already hurried off and did not hear Rav Volender calling him back.

Friday Morning, The Jerusalem Prison

Rav Volender finished preparing his Shabbos droshah and headed out of his office to supervise the cooking of the Shabbos food in the prison kitchen. He observed a pair of prisoners chopping potatoes, and another one boiling noodles. As he approached yet another prisoner stirring the massive cholent pot, he was surprised to see none-other than Tzadok “Hatzadik”, who was now wearing an orange prison uniform, chopping onions on the counter.

“Oy, Tzadok, what got you arrested this time?” Rav Volender asked.

“Rebbe, I promise it wasn’t my fault!” said Tzadok, a tear leaking from his eye, either out of sadness or because of the fumes from the onion he was cutting. “I was just doing exactly what you told me to do!”

“And what exactly did I tell you to do?”

“Well you said we need to bring *korbanos*,” Tzadok explained. “But since we no longer have a Beis Hamikdash and the last time I tried building one

on Rechov Shmuel Hanavi I got arrested, I decided to just build a *mizbeiach* in the park. But before I got even halfway done, the police showed up and arrested me!”

“But Tzadok, I never told you to build a *mizbeiach*,” Rav Volender said.

“Yes, but after you said how important the *korbanos* are, I realized the lesson must be that we need to start burning animals to Hashem right away!”

“Oy vey,” said Rav Volender shaking his head. “I think I need to start ending my *shiurim* with a clear ‘takeaway’. Tzadok, we can’t bring *korbanos* nowadays. It’s actually an *aveirah* to bring a *korban* anywhere except the Beis Hamikdash.”

“But then where should I burn Fluffy?”

“Fluffy?” asked Rav Volender, confused.

“Yes, my little sheep, Fluffy. I want to bring him as a *korban* to Hashem!”

“Tzadok, I just said that we are not allowed to bring *korbanos* nowadays. We don’t have a Beis Hamikdash. Instead we go to *shul*.”

“I’m supposed to burn my sheep in the middle of Shul?” asked Tzadok in wonder.

“Tzadok, Tzadok! You need to learn to listen! It’s **assur** to bring a *korban* nowadays! Instead, we go to *shul* and speak to Hashem. When we go to *shul* and daven to Hashem with the proper *kavanah* together with many other *yidden*, it can have the same effect on us just as if we brought *korbanos*.”

“Well, if that’s the case,” said Tzadok, “I will make sure to daven as hard as I can. And I’m sure Fluffy will appreciate it too!”

Have a Wonderful Shabbos!

Takeaway:

Going to a Shul is a tremendous opportunity for a wonderful experience. But we have to go in with the right attitude so that we get uplifted.



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