

Unprotected Riches

By: Aharon Spetner
Illustrations by: M. Weinreb

Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Ari Holtzbacher had just finished learning with his father and was about to head to bed when there was an urgent knocking on the front door.

"I'll get it Totty," Ari said, closing his Gemara.

Ari opened the door and to his surprise there stood the Horki Rebbe!

"Rebbe!" Anshel Holtzbacher said, from behind Ari. "Please come in! Is everything okay?"

The Rebbe walked into the house and Anshel ushered him into the living room, while Ari quickly ran to bring him a drink.

"Reb Anshel," the Rebbe said. "We desperately need your help. I have just found out about a Yid who was hiking through the Amazon Jungle before Rosh Hashanah. When he reached the confluence of the Amazon River and the Rio Negro, a group of savage tribesmen kidnapped him. They are demanding a massive reward in order to set him free. This is *mammish pidyon shvuyim!* We need your help immediately!"

"Why of course!" Anshel said, reaching for his checkbook. "But why didn't the Rebbe use the funds from the Horki keren tzedakah instead of coming to me so late at night? The Rebbe knows that I would gladly replenish the fund afterward."

"Reb Anshel, put away your checkbook," the Rebbe said. "The kidnappers are from the remote tribe of Dingo Dongo. They have very little contact with society and do not value the American dollar.



We have no time to act - they are cannibals who may chas veshalom eat this poor Yid! We need to pay them in pure gold as soon as possible!”

“Oy gevald!” Anshel said, jumping up from his seat. “Ari, quickly get me the keychain from my jacket pocket. We will go to my vault right away.”

Ari’s heart beat rapidly as he brought his father the keys and they headed to the basement. He had never been allowed to see Totty’s vault before.

Down in the basement, Anshel Holtzbacher led them to a closet behind the boiler. He placed his hand on a panel on the wall which moved aside as the sensor recognized his fingerprint. They then went down a narrow staircase which led to the largest, thickest door that Ari had ever seen.

Anshel started removing various keys from the keychain and inserting them into the many locks on the stainless steel door. After a series of clicks, he slowly pulled the massive door open revealing blinding mounds of gold and silver. Wow! Ari had never seen anything like it!

Anshel reached into the vault and scooped out a small fortune’s worth of shiny gold coins, placing them into the cloth bag that the Rebbe was holding. “My private jet will be available at 6am tomorrow morning to fly the money to the jungle,” he said.

“Thank you so much, Reb Anshel,” the Rebbe replied, placing the bag into a pocket in his bekeshe. “My gabbai will be at the airport first thing in the morning.”

“Totty,” Ari said, still staring at the massive vault and its contents. “I have never seen so much riches in my entire life - this looks like it is more than the Bnei Yisroel took from the Mitzrim when they left Mitzrayim.”

“Arel’e,” the Rebbe said. “You can be sure that the Bnei Yisroel took even more gold and silver than this out of Mitzrayim.”

“Where did they keep it?” Ari wondered. “They couldn’t possibly have massive vaults like this in the *midbar*.”

“They didn’t need vaults,” the Rebbe said. “While here in Boro Park we need strong houses and safes to protect our valuables, and in the Amazon Jungle a Yid is at risk of being kidnapped, in the *midbar*, the Bnei Yisroel had an even better protection: the *Ananei Hakavod* - the Shechinah itself protected the Yidden from the extreme desert heat during the day, the cold temperatures at night, and any animals – or people who act like animals – who would dare attack them.

“Hakadosh Baruch Hu is our protector. Never for a second should you think that this brick house or steel vault is what is keeping us safe. The only One guarding the Am Yisroel is Hashem.”

Have A Wonderful Yom Tov!

Takeaway:

On Sukkos we remember how we left Mitzrayim with gold and riches. We were in the open desert and vulnerable to attack, but Hashem protected us and ‘til today, He is our Protector.



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