



Vayera / וַיֵּרָא

Listening To Our Gedolim

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Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Ari Holtzbacher was excited. Tonight his father was taking him to “Four Towns”, the fanciest restaurant in town!

“You’re really going there?!” Ari’s friend Shimmy told him. “Stevey Risnik, my next door neighbor, said that his family goes there a lot and it’s the best food in the world!”

“Well, my parents, as a rule, don’t take us out to eat in restaurants. But tonight he has an important business meeting with Joel E. Munz, the President of the Jolly Munz Candy Factory, and he’s taking me along so that he can have an excuse to not stay too late.”

Later that evening, Ari and his father arrived at Four Towns restaurant, but suddenly his father stopped before entering.

“Why aren’t we going in?” Ari asked.

Anshel Holtzbacher pointed at a sign on the wall of the building. There, printed in large letters was a statement from the Horki Beis Din saying that it was assur to eat at Four Towns restaurant.

“What, why?” asked Ari. “The signs saying that it is kosher are still up.”

“It’s true. But if the Beis Din says we can’t eat there, then we can’t eat there. I’ve been hearing rumors about the Horki Rebbe putting his foot down to stop the immersion in gashmiyus that’s happening nowadays. People are going to fancy restaurants and buying fancy cars and making fancy simchos and it’s not the way of the Am Yisroel. Besides for the waste of money, it’s training us to think too much about Olam Hazei and forget about our real focus which is Olam Habo! That’s where the best pleasures will be; better than the most expensive and fanciest restaurants in the world.”

Just then, Ari looked up to see Shimmy’s neighbor Stevey Risnik and his father walking with their large dog towards the restaurant entrance.



“Wait, Stevey!” called Ari. “There’s a sign from the Horki Beis Din saying we can’t eat there.”

Stevey looked at the sign and then at Ari. “Maybe you can’t,” he snorted. “The kosher sign is still up, so we can eat there,” and he walked with his father into the restaurant.

As Ari watched the Risniks walk into the restaurant, Joel E. Munz approached.

“Hi Anshel, Ari!” he said in his loud booming voice. “What are you waiting for? Why aren’t we going inside to eat?”

“I’m sorry Joel,” Ari’s father said gently. “But we can’t eat at this restaurant today.”

“Why not?” asked Mr. Munz, confused. “The sign says ‘kosher’ in big letters.”

“Yes, but there is another sign over here from the rabbis of our community which forbids us from eating here.”

Mr. Munz peered at the English translation at the bottom of the sign from the Beis Din.

“I don’t understand. This letter doesn’t even say why you can’t eat here. I mean, look - there are even people with Yarmulkes inside! Do you just listen to your rabbis, no matter what they say?”

“We do,” smiled Mr. Holtzbacher. “Tell me, have you ever heard the story of Lot and Sedom?”

“Oh yes!” Mr. Munz said, nodding vigorously. “I remember that well from when I went to Hebrew school as a boy.”

“Well, if you pay attention to what the Torah says there, you will notice that Lot did not get saved until

after he insisted strongly that the angels (whom he thought were men) stay as guests in his home. That is something Lot learned from his rabbi, Avraham Avinu. And only because of this loyalty to his rabbi’s teachings, Lot merited to be saved from Sedom.”

“Are you saying that fire is going to rain down on this restaurant?” asked Mr. Munz, looking up nervously at the sky.

“No, I’m not,” Mr. Holtzbacher said, smiling again. “But we too are loyal to our rabbis, and will not eat at a place which they do not approve of.”

“Fascinating,” said Mr. Munz, rubbing his chin.

Just then the door of the Four Towns restaurant was flung open and several people staggered out, holding their stomachs in pain.

“It must be food poisoning!” Ari heard one of the people say.

Indeed, it did appear that many people in the restaurant, including the Risniks, seemed to have fallen sick due to the food they were eating.

After taking the scene in for a moment, Mr. Munz exclaimed! “Wow! Hashem saved us from food poisoning, just like he saved Lot from Sedom! And all because we listened to your rabbi! Anshel, I would love to meet this rabbi of yours - do you think you could arrange that?”

“It would be my pleasure,” Mr. Holtzbacher warmly replied. “In the meantime though, why don’t we head over to my house. My wife’s food is at least as good as the food they serve here - and much healthier too!”

Takeaway:

Just like Lot listened to his rebbe and was saved from Sedom, we too follow our rebbeim and our gedolim whether we understand it or not.

let's Review:

- Why is Ari going to a restaurant?
- What zechus protected Lot from the fate of his neighbors in Sedom?



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