

A Mishkan for Praise

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Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Rabbi Greenblatt finished his morning Chumash shiur and got ready to put on his tallis and tefillin when he looked up and saw none other than Mayor McGillicuddy walk into the shul!

The mayor looked around for a minute, before walking over to the seforim shelf and taking a siddur. Rabbi Greenblatt watched curiously as Mayor McGillicuddy opened the siddur upside down and frowned at the unfamiliar Hebrew letters.

"Can I help you, Mister Mayor?" asked Rabbi Greenblatt kindly, approaching the mayor.

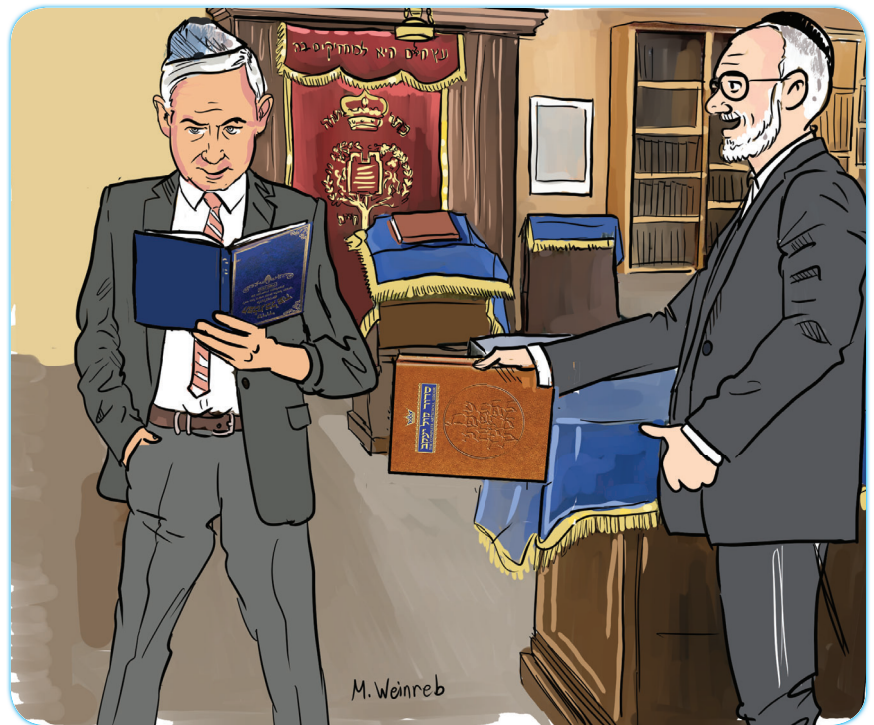
"Oh yes, Rabbi," the mayor answered. "My dog Cuddles is very sick and I thought 'why not pray?' And I know that you Jews pray in the synagogue every morning, so I thought I'd come and pray with you. But your prayer book is very hard to read, and all of the page numbers are upside down."

"Here," the Rov said, handing the mayor a different siddur. "This is the Artscroll Siddur - it has an English translation, which I'm sure will be easier for you. The congregation is about to start here, from Pesukei Dezimra."

Mayor McGillicuddy gratefully took the siddur as the Rov went back to his seat and put on his tallis and tefillin.

Davening proceeded uneventfully, but right before Borchu, Rabbi Greenblatt noticed the mayor put his siddur back on the shelf and walk out. The Rov shrugged and continued davening.

When Shacharis ended and the Rov had finished putting his tallis and tefillin away, he was approached by Aron Perel, one of the members of the kehillah.



“Rabbi Greenblatt,” said Mr. Perel. “The shul phone just rang with a call from City Hall. They said that the mayor requested that you come to see him immediately about an urgent issue.”

“Oy,” sighed Rabbi Greenblatt. “My car is in the shop - I don’t really have a way to get to City Hall right now.”

“I’d be happy to drive you there,” offered Mr. Perel.

“Thank you, that would be a big help,” the Rov said.

A few minutes later, Rabbi Greenblatt and Mr. Perel arrived at City Hall and went up to the mayor’s office. Mayor McGillicuddy was sitting at his desk, a large picture of himself hanging in an ornate frame on the wall behind him.

“Thank you so much for coming, Rabbi,” the mayor said.

“How can I help you?” asked the Rov.

“Well, as I told you earlier, my dog Cuddles is sick.”

“I’m a rabbi, not a veterinarian,” Rabbi Greenblatt answered. “What was wrong with your prayers this morning? Don’t you think that they helped?”

“How were they supposed to help?” asked the mayor. “Everything in the prayer book was about praising and thanking G-D. I came to the synagogue to ask Him to make Cuddles better, not to thank him. I need him to help me, and then I’ll thank him. Can you please give Cuddles a blessing? I think I once heard that you people have a magical prayer called ‘meeshebeirak’.”

“Mi shebeirach is said for people, not animals, as far as I’m aware,” the Rov replied. “But I give you a blessing that your dog should feel better.”

“Amen!” answered Mayor McGillicuddy, his voice full of emotion. “Thank you so much. I would like to make a donation to your synagogue.” The mayor opened his drawer and handed an envelope to the Rov.

“Thank you very much,” Rabbi Greenblatt replied. “Have a wonderful day.”

“Let’s see how much the mayor donated,” the Rov said to Mr. Perel as they walked out of City Hall.

The Rov opened the envelope and stared inside.

“Figures,” he said with a sad laugh, handing the envelope to Mr. Perel.

Mr. Perel looked inside to find a coupon for 10% off at a local pet store.

“Maybe we can buy some dog leashes to keep the kids from eating all of the food at the shul kiddush,” joked Mr. Perel.

Rabbi Greenblatt laughed. “You know, Aron, there are things this mayor will just never understand,” he said as they got back into the car. “The mayor today came to shul and supposedly said *Pesukei Dezimra*, which starts with “מְזִמּוֹר שִׁיר הַנוֹכַח הַבַּיִת”. This *kapittel Tehillim* starts off mentioning the dedication of the *Beis Hamikdash*, but instead it goes on to thank and praise *Hashem*. And that’s because the whole purpose of the *Beis Hamikdash* and the *Mishkon* was to sing to *Hashem*, to praise Him, and to show our gratitude to Him. A goy thinks ‘what can *Hashem* do for me’. But as *Yidden*, we know that *hakoras hatov* to *Hashem* is our first and foremost responsibility.”

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!

Takeaway:

The great *avodah* of a *Yid* is to always thank *Hashem*.

let’s Review:

- What is our *davening* all about, is it about asking for things from *Hashem*?
- How does the *Mishkon* teach us to thank *Hashem*?



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