

Helping Others

By: Aharon Spetner
Illustrations by: M. Weinreb

Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller zt"l

Totty, Shimmy, and Yitzzy finished saying *aleinu* when a loud *klap* on the *bimah* made them look up. Standing there was a man they did not recognize, who began making an announcement:

“Moray v’rabbosai, I was recently diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer’s and dementia. As a result, I lost my job as an air traffic controller and can no longer support my family. In addition, I am marrying off three of my daughters next week. *Heilige Yidden*, please! Anything you can give me would be a great help. May Hakadosh Boruch Hu *bentsch* you with *shefa parnosa* and you be *zocheh* to all of the *yeshuos* and *brachos* in the world.”

After this little speech, the man walked around the *shul*, jingling change in his palm. Totty reached into his right pocket and then started patting all of the pockets in his suit.

“What’s wrong, Totty?” asked Shimmy.

“Oy, I left my wallet at home,” Totty lamented, as the man finished collecting from everyone and gave yet another *klap* on the *bimah*.

“Moray v’rabbosai,” the man said again. “I was recently diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer’s and dementia. As a result, I lost my job as an air traffic controller...”

Everyone looked sadly at the poor man and many gave him even more *tzedakah* as he walked around the *shul* a second time. Meanwhile, Totty turned to the back of his *siddur* and started saying *Tehillim*.



Meanwhile, before the man could make yet another *klap* on the *bimah*, the *gabbai* of the shul quickly walked over and kindly explained that he had already made the announcement and offered to give him a ride home.

Several minutes later, Totty closed his *siddur*. “Okay boys, are you ready to go?”

“Totty,” asked Yitzy as they put their *siddurim* away and left the shul. “You don’t usually say *Tehillim* after *davening*. Why is today different?”

“Would you boys be surprised if I told you that it has something to do with this week’s *parsha*?”

The boys smiled. For some reason, whenever they asked Totty a question, the answer seemed to be related to that week’s *parsha*.

“Well at the beginning of *Chayei Sarah*, Avraham Avinu is looking to bury Sarah Imeinu in the *Mearas Hamachpeila*. So he approaches the *Bnei Cheis* and asks them to introduce him to Efron, on whose property the *Mearas Hamachpeila* was located. He says ‘שְׁמַעוּנִי וּפְגַעוּ לִי - לִי בְעֶפְרוֹן בֶּן צִחָר - listen to me and urge Efron ben Tzochar [to sell me the *Mearas Hamachpeila*]’. And the Torah is teaching us a lesson here by showing us that Avraham Avinu didn’t just ask them to send a message to Efron. He told them to *urge* him, to do whatever they could do to help him buy the cave. Because when we help a *Yid* out it’s not enough to just do something small. We must do whatever we can to help him, just like the *gabbai* went over to help him and took him all the way home.

“But there’s more. The *Midrash* tells us that ‘פְּגַעוּ לִי’ can also mean ‘*daven* for me’. Because Avraham told the *Bnei Cheis* that if there is nothing else you can do for me, at the very least *daven* for me that I should be able to buy the *Mearas Hamachpeila*.

“And that’s a lesson for us. When someone needs help and you think that you’re not able to help him, you can **ALWAYS** *daven* for him. So when I realized that I had no money on me to give this man, I immediately opened a *Tehillim* so I could beg *Hashem* to give him a *refuah shleima* and *parnassah*. I couldn’t help him with my hands, but *Hashem* is much more powerful than me - and it costs me **nothing** to ask Him to help out.”

“Totty,” said Shimmy. “This reminds me of what you told us from Rabbi Miller that whenever we see an ambulance with its sirens blaring we should *daven* for the sick *Yid* inside.”

“Exactly!” said Totty. “You might see an ambulance and think ‘what could I do? The paramedics have it under control, and besides I don’t have their training or equipment so I couldn’t help that *Yid* anyway.’ And that’s a huge mistake. There is no such thing as a *Yid* in trouble whom you cannot help. No matter what, you can at the very least say a *kapitel Tehillim* and a small *tefillah* to *Hashem* to help him out.”

Have a Wonderful Shabbos!

let's review:

- What should we do when someone makes an appeal for help in Shul?
- In what way are we able to help any *Yid*, no matter where he is or what he needs?



To listen on the phone, Dial:

USA: 718-289-0899 | UK: 0333-015-0752 | Israel: 079-704-0089 | Canada: 438-771-0452