

Vayeishev / וַיֵּשֶׁב

Crickets at Stacy Park

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Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

The boys of Torah Prep School in St. Louis excitedly boarded the school buses waiting outside the school. The eighth-grade class was completing Meseches Makkos, and an exciting community-wide siyum was being held at Stacy Park.

"Did you hear?" Moishy Friedman asked his friends as they took their seats on the bus. "Elefant's Bakery baked over one hundred cakes for the siyum!"

"Ooh yum!" exclaimed Chaim. "My mouth is watering just thinking about it!"

"And the 'Ballooner Rebbe' will be there too!" said Eli.

"The Ballooner Rebbe?" asked Moishy. "Who's that?"

"His real name is R' Moshe Finer," said Rabbi Bromberg, who was sitting nearby. "He actually used to live in St. Louis and he makes the most amazing balloon creations. He even wears a streimel made out of balloons."

"Oh wow, that sounds so fun!" Moishy said, bouncing up and down in his seat. "This is going to be the best siyum ever!"

Just then Rabbi Golombeck's phone rang.

"Hello?" he said, answering the call. "Wait, what do you mean? We reserved the park for this date two months ago! Did you explain how important this is?"



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The bus grew quiet as Rabbi Golombeck spoke on the phone, sounding more and more worried, until he finally hung up. Turning to the Rebbeim, he said “That was Louis Notowitch. He and Aron Perel just arrived at the park to take pictures of the siyum, but he said that Mayor McGillicuddy and his staff are there preventing people from entering the park.”

“What, why?” asked Rabbi Pentelnik.

“Apparently it’s his dog’s birthday and he wants to have the whole park for his family to celebrate.”

“How can he do that if we booked the park for the siyum?” Rabbi Kula asked.

“Should I tell the bus driver to turn back?” suggested Rabbi Bromberg.

Rabbi Golombeck looked out the window. “Well we’re almost at the park. We may as well see if there’s anything we can do.”

Meanwhile, the children all looked at each other nervously. What was going to be with the siyum? How could the mayor just cancel it on them without any notice? The older boys began saying Tehillim, while some of the younger children started to cry.

The bus pulled into the parking lot and the boys saw how beautifully the park had been set up for the siyum - the Ballooner Rebbe had even made an entire archway out of balloons! But sure enough Mayor McGillicuddy’s staffers were standing there preventing anyone from entering the park.

Just then a loud screech was heard and everyone looked to see Mayor McGillicuddy running from his limousine.

“Who filled my limousine with crickets?!?!?” he shrieked.

Sure enough, thousands of crickets were pouring out of the mayor’s vehicle.

“That’s it! I’m leaving! They can have the park! I didn’t want to have a picnic here anyway!” Mayor McGillicuddy said, his face red with rage. And turning to a staffer he added, “and get me another limousine to take me home - I can’t ride in a normal car!”

As Mayor McGillicuddy stomped about like an angry toddler, the boys and their rebbeim all cheered and sang “We Love You Hashem” as they went into the park to celebrate the siyum.

Later, as everyone was enjoying the delicious cake, Rabbi Golombeck stood up.

“Boys, I would like to point something out about what happened today. In Parshas Vayeishev, it says about Yosef ‘כִּי בֶן זְקוּנִים הוּא לוֹ’ - that he was the son of Yaakov Avinu’s old age. It took a long time for Yaakov to have a child with Rochel Imeinu, and that’s why he loved Yosef so much. And Rav Avigdor Miller explains that sometimes Hashem makes it seem like all hope is lost before he brings the yeshua, so that it will be 100% clear to all that it was Hashem Who rescued us when there was nothing left for us to do.

“Similarly today, the mayor had blocked our use of the park. There was nothing we could do. And then, suddenly out of nowhere, at the last minute, Hashem sent thousands of crickets to infest the mayor’s limousine and cause him to leave in anger. We have no choice other than to recognize from this that Hashem is the only One Who can save us, not just today, but with every single event in our lives.”

As Rabbi Golombeck finished speaking, the Ballooner Rebbe walked over and handed him a huge yellow and brown cricket he had made out of balloons.

“Here,” he said. “This is something by which you can remember how Hashem saved this special day for you and your talmidim.”

Have a Wonderful Shabbos!

Takeaway:

When things are going tough I’m always going to remind myself, over and over again, that Hashem is running the show and He can always save me.



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