

ויקהל-פקודי / Vayahel-Pekudei

A Lesson from the Farm

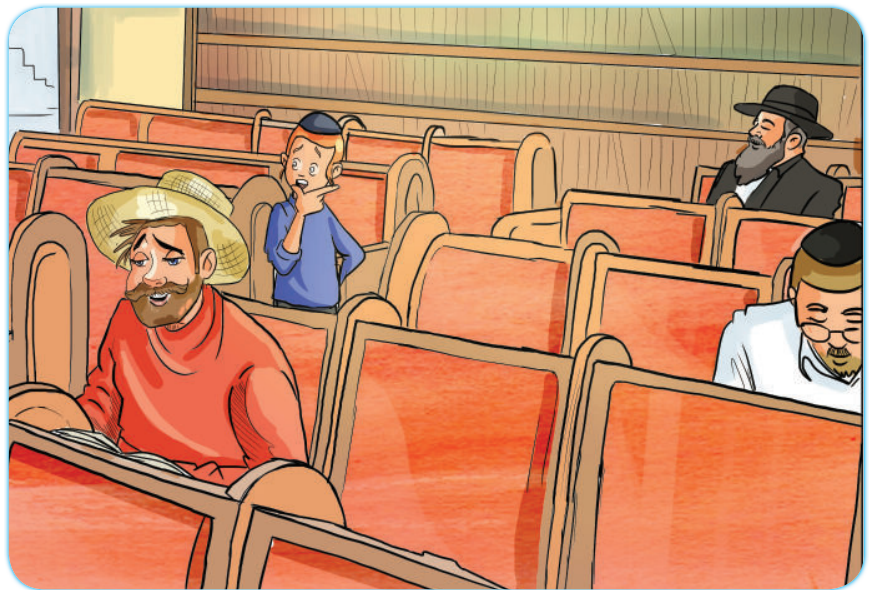
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Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Shimmy hurried into shul to learn with his chavrusa before Mincha. He smiled at the sight of the bright red tractor parked in the shul parking lot. It belonged to Richard Bazoigenstein, a farmer who from time to time would drive all the way to hear Rabbi Friedman's halacha shiur. Shimmy remembered when Farmer Bazoigenstein was still learning the Alef-Beis. It was so nice to see how he kept coming to learn more and more. And besides, he always brought fresh fruit from his farm and gave it out to the kids who came to learn. His fruit was so delicious and sweet - even better than candy!



Shimmy walked inside and saw Farmer Bazoigenstein sitting and reading out loud from a Chumash. He was clearly having difficulty reading the pesukim, but he smiled as he slowly sounded out each word.

"Hi Shimmy!" said Farmer Bazoigenstein warmly, looking up from his sefer. "How was your day in cheder?"

"Just great, thanks for asking," Shimmy responded. "We are getting close to finishing Perek Hamafkid in Bava Metzia."

"Oh that sounds just wonderful!" marveled Farmer Bazoigenstein. "I can't wait until I am able to learn Gemara too!"

"Well it looks like you are making great progress," said Shimmy politely. "I remember when you were just learning the Alef-Beis. And now look - you're already able to learn Chumash by yourself!"

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Farmer Bazoigenstein glanced down at his Chumash and then back at Shimmy. “Well actually,” he said. “I really don’t understand the words that I’m saying. Usually I use a Chumash with an English translation, but someone else is using that Chumash today.”

Shimmy appeared confused. “Well then why are you reading from the Chumash if you don’t know what the words mean?”

“Shimmy, have you ever heard of a great man by the name of Rabbi Avigdor Miller?”

“Heard of him?” said Shimmy. “I hear about him all the time! My rebbe, my father, and my mother are always talking about Rav Miller. Even my little sister Yaeli knows who he is. Sometimes I feel like my whole life revolves around Rav Miller!”

“Oh that is just wonderful!” said Farmer Bazoigenstein. “Rabbi Friedman recently introduced me to Rabbi Miller’s shiurim and I now listen to them as I drive my tractor through the fields.”

“Wow, what an amazing way to learn Torah,” said Shimmy thoughtfully. “It never occurred to me that it’s possible to learn while plowing a field.”

“It is amazing,” agreed Farmer Bazoigenstein. “And just the other day, I was listening to a shiur where Rabbi Miller talked about this week’s Parsha. He asked why the Torah spends so much time repeating things that we just learned a few Parshios ago.”

“Hmm, that is an interesting question. I think I once heard that it’s to teach us how important the Mishkan is, since it’s the place where we serve Hashem.”

“You know, Rabbi Miller actually says that is one of the reasons! But he also said that even if we didn’t know the reason, it would still be important. He says that each word of the Torah contains holy secrets. Each letter is so amazing, so incredible, so powerful, that even when we don’t understand them, or why they were written, the words are alive and have an effect on us.

“So while I’m here waiting for Rabbi Friedman’s shiur to begin, instead of just sitting around and waiting, I took a Chumash and am reading the words. I don’t know what most of them mean, but just saying them creates kedusha in the world and brings my mind and my Neshama to a new level.”

As Farmer Bazoigenstein finished speaking, Shimmy stood there with his mouth open.

“Is everything okay, Shimmy?” Farmer Bazoigenstein asked.

“Yes, yes, of course,” stammered Shimmy. “It’s just that your words just now made me realize - there are so many times that I can take advantage of what Rav Miller said. For instance, during Krias Hatorah, I don’t always understand what the baal korei is reading. But instead of spacing out, just by following inside and listening to the words I can bring more kedusha into the world and become a better person.”

Just then, Farmer Bazoigenstein stood up as Rabbi Friedman walked into the shul and started getting ready to begin his shiur.

“Thanks, Farmer Bazoigenstein!” said Shimmy with a huge smile. “You taught me such an important lesson today!”

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!

Takeaway:

The words of the Torah are not just words; they’re alive and they have an effect on you, just by reading the words, a certain spiritual achievement is achieved.



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