



Bamidbar / בְּמִדְבָּר

Organizing and Organizing

Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

By: Aharon Spetner
Illustrations by: M. Weinreb

Rav Volender's Office, The Jerusalem Prison

Boxes and various office accessories were scattered around the small windowless office. Rav Volender, the Rav of the Jerusalem Prison, bent over to unpack yet another box, when he heard a familiar voice from the door.

"Rabbeinu! Moreinu! Kevod Harav! Rabbi! Quick, it's an emergency!"

Rav Volender quickly stood up, alarmed, but at the same time relieved to see that Tzadok "Hatzadik" was at least not wearing a prison uniform.

"What is it, Tzadok? Is everything okay? What happened?"

"Everything is wonderful! You won't believe it! I think I finally found the hairs of Bilaam's donkey in a cave not too far from here! But you recently taught me to come and ask you shaalos and not pasken for myself, so I rushed here so you can confirm that the hairs are real." Tzadok held out a handful of white hairs for Rav Volender to inspect.

"Tzadok, these look like human beard hairs - wait, why are you missing half of your beard again?"



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Tzadok looked down at the hairs in his hand.

“Oy, in my rush to come show you, I must have grabbed the wrong hairs by mistake. When I bent over to pick up the donkey hairs, my scissors fell out of my pocket and when I tried to grab it, everything else started falling out too. And then, trying to hold onto my scissors and keep my spatula from hitting the ground, while grabbing all of my ketchup packets, my glue stick started rolling into the cave. So I ran after it and forgot I was holding my scissors. I must have accidentally cut off half of my beard trying to keep from losing my stuff.”

Rav Volender looked at Tzadok’s jacket pocket, which was indeed bursting with the most random items imaginable.

“Tzadok, look at you - you’re a disorganized mess. Why do you carry all of those things with you?”

“Because I can never remember where my things are,” Tzadok explained. “So I keep as many things as I can in my pockets so I know where I can find them. Can you come with me to the cave right now?”

“I’m sorry, Tzadok,” Rav Volender said, gesturing at his cluttered office. “I just moved into my new office and I really need to get everything organized and put away.”

Tzadok looked shocked. “Is that more important than seeing the hairs of Bilaam’s donkey?” he asked.

“Of course it is,” Rav Volender said, placing some sefarim on an empty shelf. “It’s important to be organized. Maybe you should try it. And as an added bonus, your pockets won’t be as heavy.”

“Oh no, rebbi, I couldn’t do that,” said Tzadok, shaking his head. “I need everything that I keep in my pockets all the time. Like this, for example...”

Tzadok rummaged through his pockets, an assortment of pens, used candy wrappers, and bottle caps, falling to the floor, before finally producing a small plastic item in his hand.

“A guitar pick?” asked Rav Volender. “I didn’t know you play the guitar.”

“I don’t!” Tzadok said brightly. “But when I decide to take lessons, I won’t need to worry about buying a pick, because I have one in my pocket!”

“Tzadok, Tzadok,” said Rav Volender. “You know, in this week’s Parsha it talks about how the Bnei Yisroel camped in the Midbar. And the Torah tells us that each Shevet lived in the exact assigned position, and even each family, and each person, had a specific spot - according to the placement of the *degelim* - the flags.

“Now, why was that important? Why did everyone need to be in their proper place? Why not allow them to live where they wanted?”

“And the answer is, that seder - being organized, is an incredibly important part of being a Yid. Everything we do is *al pi* the Torah and *divrei Chazal*, because the life of a Yid must always be under control. We don’t even put food in our mouth before thinking about which *brocha* to make and thanking Hashem for it first.”

“I always make a *brocha* before eating,” Tzadok said proudly.

“That’s wonderful, Tzadok!” smiled Rav Volender. “But it’s important to remember that **every** part of our life must be organized. Whether it’s our office, our home, our pockets - and especially our minds. Everything must be with a seder.”

Tzadok looked down at his overflowing pockets with a frown. “I didn’t realize that I am a *rasha* because I keep things in my pockets.”

“Tzadok, Tzadok!” Rav Volender said warmly. “You’re not a *rasha* - *chas veshalom*! But in order to continue growing in your *avodas Hashem*, you need to start being more organized. Here, why don’t I help you sort the items in your pockets, and then you can help me arrange my new office?”

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!

Takeaway:

Being organized is a very important part of being a good Jew. When we’re disorganized, we don’t have the presence of mind to properly serve Hashem.



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