

## Despite the Birds

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# Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

*Continued from last week*

"Okay," Basya said as her friends arrived at her house carrying stacks of papers. "Let's see what everyone made!"

Basya led her friends into the dining room where they laid out all of the pictures they had drawn for the coloring books that they were going to distribute to all of the sick children in the hospital.

"These are amazing!" gushed Basya. "Look at this one! The crocodile looks like it is jumping out of the paper! Who drew this?"

"I did," Devorah said shyly.

"I'm so glad you joined the project, Devorah," Basya said warmly, looking at another one of Devorah's drawings. "Your art is really professional."

Devorah blushed at the compliments.

"Basya, where are your drawings?" asked Malky.

"Right here," Basya said, opening a folder containing more sheets of paper. "I hope the kids in the hospital enjoy coloring them in," Basya said, gathering up all of the papers and placing them neatly inside her folder. "Come let's go to my uncle's print shop. He said he can print it today."

As the girls walked, they couldn't stop talking about how much the children in the hospital were going to enjoy their coloring books. It felt so good to be able to do such a big chessed.

"Hi Uncle Ben!" Basya said as they walked into the print shop.

"Hi Basya," Uncle Ben said, looking up from the big machine he was working with. "Are you guys ready to go to print?"

"We sure are! Thank you so much for agreeing to print this for free!"

"It's my pleasure," smiled Uncle Ben. "Let's see what we have."



Basya handed Uncle Ben the papers, which he then fed into his massive scanner. The girls watched as the scanner gobbled up each page and spit them out in a neat pile. "When should we come back to pick up the coloring books?" Basya asked.

"How about in five minutes?" smiled Uncle Ben.

"Five minutes?" Basya asked, astonished. "You can print it that quickly?"

"See for yourself," Uncle Ben grinned, pointing at a massive printing machine that was spitting out the finished coloring books at an incredible pace.

"Unreal," breathed Malky. "It's like magic!"

"Thanks Uncle Ben!" said Basya a few minutes later as they carried the huge stacks of coloring books out of the shop.

Later that day the girls arrived at the hospital full of excitement, but when they reached the entrance, they were stopped by a group of police officers.

"Excuse me, what are you carrying?" one of the officers asked.

"These are coloring books which we made for the sick children," Basya said brightly.

"I'm sorry," the officer replied. "We can't allow you to bring unauthorized reading material into the hospital."

"What?" asked Basya, confused. "Why not?"

"It's a new regulation from the New York Department of Education. All reading material must be approved by the state before being distributed to children."

"But it's not reading material," protested Channie. "These are coloring books."

"I see words on the cover," another officer said. "And if I'm not mistaken, words are meant to be read." The other officers nodded in agreement.

"What? That's ridiculous!" Malky said.

"I'm sorry, but the law is the law," the first officer said firmly.

With tears in their eyes, Basya and her friends hurried to the parking lot, where Totty was parking the car.

"Totty, it's not fair!" Basya sobbed, as she told him what happened. "I don't understand! We are trying to do such a big mitzvah and everything was going so well - how could Hashem let this happen?"

"Well Basya," Totty said. "I can't tell you why Hashem does what He does. But I can tell you one thing. In this week's Parsha, Hashem made a 'bris' with Avraham Avinu, the *Bris Bein Habesarim*, where He told Avraham to cut animals and Avraham walked between the pieces, and the shechinah passed between them as well.

"A treaty, an agreement, with Hashem! Can you imagine anything better than that? And then what happens next? The Torah tells us that birds came to eat the meat and Avraham Avinu had to spend the whole day chasing them away! Why did Hashem do that?"

"And the answer is, that the Torah is teaching us that just because you are doing the right thing and things are going well, you still have to watch out for the Satan, who will try to cause problems. We are never able to sit back and relax and assume everything is going to be okay. Life is about constant avodah, constant work, to make sure that our mitzvos are done properly."

"So what are we supposed to do now?" Basya asked.

"I guess we need to do more *hishtadlus*," Totty said, pulling out his phone. "I'll call Anshel Holtzbacher. He has connections in the government. I'm sure he can help us."

Five minutes later, Totty walked with the girls back to the hospital entrance.

"Oh hi girls," said the policeman who had stopped them earlier. "We were just told that your coloring books have been approved. Have fun distributing them to the children!"

**Have A Wonderful Shabbos!**

### Takeaway:

*Doing mitzvos and getting close to Hashem does not come easy, problems will always crop up, but we learn from Avraham and push forward anyway.*

### Let's Review:

- What mitzvah were the girls trying to do?
- How are the Department of Education officers similar to the birds from our parsha?



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