

Order in The Court!

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Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

"This court will now come to order," said the judge, banging on his gavel.

Tzadok "Hatzadik" sat at the defendant's table next to his lawyer, as the judge continued.

"We are here today for the trial of the City of Jerusalem vs. Tzadok Ben Ami. The charges against the defendant -"

"I prefer to be called Tzadok Hatzadik," interrupted Tzadok.

"There will be no interruptions during these proceedings," admonished the judge. "And this court will refer to the defendant by his legal name, and nothing else."

Tzadok crossed his hands disappointedly.

"As I was saying," continued the judge.

"We are here today for the trial of the City of Jerusalem vs. Tzadok Ben Ami. The charges against the defendant include destroying city property and public disturbance. Is the prosecution -"

"I did not destroy city property!" Tzadok interrupted again, his lawyer trying unsuccessfully to keep him quiet. "I was building a mizbeiach in the park so we could bring korbanot again!"

"Tzadok," the judge said sternly. "I do not want to have to tell you again to be quiet during these proceedings. You have a lawyer who will do the talking for you. Now sit quietly and allow the trial to continue."

Tzadok turned to look behind him at the public gallery, where Rav Volender, the rov of the Jerusalem Prison was sitting and observing the trial. Rav Volender put his finger to his lips to signal to Tzadok to remain silent.

"We will now proceed with opening statements," said the judge. "Is the prosecution ready?"

"Yes, your honor," the prosecutor said, standing up. "On Friday, the 18th of Tamuz, 5783, the defendant hauled wooden boards and tools to a park in the Ramat Eshkol neighborhood of Jerusalem and began building a structure that was intended to cause a public disturbance and endanger the public."

"Lies! All lies!" Tzadok said, unable to control himself. "It was intended to bring korbanot to Hashem which would be a zechut for the public! You wouldn't understand - you are not even religious! I shouldn't even be in this court! Take



me to the Sanhedrin! They should be the ones judging me and they will say that I'm innocent!"

"Tzadok!" said the judge angrily. "Be quiet this instant or I will hold you in contempt of court!"

Tzadok spun around to look at Rav Volender, who was shaking his head back and forth.

"Counsel," the judge said, addressing Tzadok's attorney. "If you cannot keep your client quiet, this trial will have to proceed without him."

"I am terribly sorry, your honor," the lawyer said apologetically. "Can I ask for a brief recess so I can speak with the defendant outside?"

"Okay," the judge agreed. "We will take a five-minute break."

"Tzadok," the lawyer said. "Come with me outside for a moment."

Tzadok and his lawyer walked out of the courtroom.

"Maybe I can help," came Rav Volender's voice from behind them.

"Rebbi!" cried Tzadok. "Please tell this judge that he is a rasha and has no right to be judging my case!"

"That's not how it works, Tzadok," Rav Volender said patiently. "This is the courtroom we're in and you'll only get yourself in more trouble if you don't follow the rules."

"But it's so hard to keep my mouth shut when they are saying such not-nice things about me!" Tzadok complained.

"Tzadok," said Rav Volender. "I know it can sometimes be difficult to remain silent when people are saying things that you don't like. But let's talk for a minute about this week's Parsha."

"Is it Parshat Bilaam?" asked Tzadok.

"No, that's not even the name of a Parsha," said Rav Volender. "This week is Parshas Vayeishev, where Yosef Hatzadik has a dream that he will one day rule over his brothers."

"Oh I had a dream like that a few weeks ago!" Tzadok said with excitement. "But then I woke up and remembered that I don't have any brothers," he added a bit sadly.

"That's not my point," said Rav Volender. "Yosef's dream actually was real - he did end up ruling over his brothers - and -"

"You mean I might actually have brothers?" asked Tzadok hopefully.

"No, no! Tzadok you need to learn to be quiet and listen!" Rav Volender said. "What I'm trying to tell you is that Chazal say that the reason Yosef's mother, Rachel Imeinu, was zoche to have a son who ruled over his brothers was because she kept quiet even when her father secretly switched her for Leah on her wedding night to Yaakov Avinu.

"And we see from this the tremendous zechus a person can have from just being quiet."

"You mean if I don't interrupt the judge, I'll become king?" asked Tzadok. "Do you have a piece of tape? I'll tape my mouth shut so I don't accidentally talk anymore during the trial!"

"Wait a second," said Rav Volender. "I'm not promising you anything - I'm just trying to point out how important it is to remain silent."

Tzadok looked at his lawyer and Rav Volender. "Okay," he finally said. "I'll do it for you, Rebbe. Let's continue the trial, and hopefully, the judge will rule favorably."

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!

Takeaway

*The zechus of remaining silent is tremendous,
let us try to remember this next time we're tempted to fight or argue back.*

Let's Review:

- Why was the judge forced to stop mid-trial?
- What did Rochel achieve in the merit of keeping quiet?



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