



Yisro / יִסְרוֹ

Doing it With Love

By: Aharon Spetner

Illustrations by: M. Weinreb

Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller zt"l

As sunlight streamed through the bedroom window, Yitzy stretched his arms out from under the blankets. He smiled at the familiar sound of Totty learning shnayim mikra in the other room and slowly opened his eyes. Sitting up, he said *modeh ani* and washed *negel vaser* from the washing cup next to his bed.

"Urg," Shimmy mumbled from the other bed, as Yitzy began getting dressed.

"Good Shabbos to you too," said Yitzy, laughing.

After getting dressed, Yitzy headed to the kitchen and opened the pantry.

"What cereal should we have today?" asked Shimmy groggily, tucking in his shirt as he shuffled into the kitchen.

"Look Mommy bought Sugarinies™!" exclaimed Yitzy, pulling out a brightly colored box.

"Ooh Yum!" said Shimmy suddenly wide awake, and both boys poured themselves a heaping bowl of cereal.

"Lekovod Shabbos Kodesh," said Yitzy, holding up a spoonful before making a *brocha* and taking a bite.

"Lekovod Shabbos Kodesh," repeated Shimmy, doing the same.

After making a *brochah acharonah* and cleaning up, the boys headed to shul with Totty.

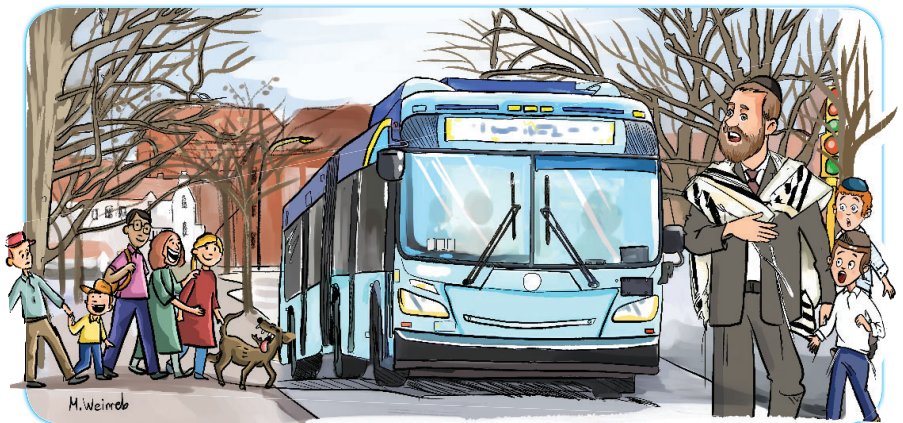
"Ah, what beautiful weather!" exclaimed Totty. "Thank you Hashem for the fresh air!"

As they walked down the block, a city bus drove by and stopped at the bus stop ahead of them.

"Huh?" said Shimmy, bewildered. "That looks like our neighbor Stevey Risnik and his father getting on that bus!"

"That can't be right," said Totty, also confused.

"Maybe it's *pikuach nefesh*," suggested Yitzy as they got closer and saw that indeed Stevey and his father, both wearing baseball caps, were among the people lined up to board the bus.



“Good Shabbos, Harvey,” Totty said to Mr. Risnik. “Is everything okay?”

“Shabbat Shalom to you too!” answered Mr. Risnik jovially. “The buses are free today in honor of Pigeon Appreciation Day, so since we don’t have to pay we can ride the bus on Shabbat!”

“Wait, money isn’t the only problem with riding a bus on Shabbos...” Totty began.

“I looked it up in Shulchan Aruch,” Mr. Riskin said, stepping into the bus with Stevey. “Nowhere does it say that you can’t ride a bus on Shabbat. Shabbat Shalom!”

The Greenbaums stood stunned for a moment as the bus drove off into the distance.

“Wait, is that true?” asked Shimmy in atonishment. “Is it mutar for them to ride the bus on Shabbos?”

“No,” said Totty firmly. “There are several halachic problems with riding a bus on Shabbos. But even if someone had managed to find a heter, I want you to think about *kabolas hatorah*.”

“Klal Yisroel definitely didn’t take buses to Har Sinai,” joked Yitzy.

“Haha,” laughed Totty. “But think about when we said *naaseh venishma*. We didn’t have to say that. We could have just accepted the Torah. But no, we shouted ‘WE WILL DO IT AND WE WILL LISTEN!’ And you know why? Because as Yidden we don’t just do what we have to do. There are all sorts of things that are technically permitted, that we don’t do. Some people only eat the very best *hechsherim* even though there are others that are perfectly kosher. You’ll find all sorts of Jews who keep all sorts of *chumros* that are not mandated by *halacha*. And do you know why that is? Because we are a people who love Hashem

so much that we WANT to serve Him in the best way possible, beyond what He requires of us.”

“So why doesn’t it say those things in *halacha*?” asked Shimmy. “If it doesn’t say it, so why do we do it?”

“Good question,” Totty said. “Let’s say I ask you for a drink and you bring me a cup of water from the sink. Does that show your love for me?”

“Not necessarily,” said Yitzy. “A waiter in a restaurant would do the same and he probably doesn’t love you.”

“Correct. But now, let’s say when I ask you for the water, you jump up, run to the kitchen, look for my favorite glass, add ice cubes, fill it to the top with my favorite chocolate-flavored seltzer - and also bring me one of Bubby’s delicious cookies on a plate. What about that?”

“I did that for you yesterday!” said Shimmy. “And I did it because I love you!”

“Exactly! And because we love Hashem we are always looking to see how we can serve Him in the best way possible. We don’t look for the easiest way to do what He asks. We want to go as far as we can to show our love for him, and not look for shortcuts around his *mitzvos*, like *chas veshalom* trying to figure out how you can ride a bus on Shabbos.”

“But Totty,” said Yitzy. “It does say this in the Torah. There is a *mitzvah* of *וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ*, to love Hashem.”

“Ah, very good,” said Totty. “So you see we are actually required to serve Hashem in this way. Because if we actually love him, then we will do everything possible to serve him on the highest of levels.”

Have a Wonderful Shabbos!

let's review:

- How do you act differently towards someone whom you love?
- What are some ways we can demonstrate our love for Hashem?



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