

במדבר-שבועות / Bamidbar-Shavuos

Sitting in the Front Row

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Toras Avigdor Junior

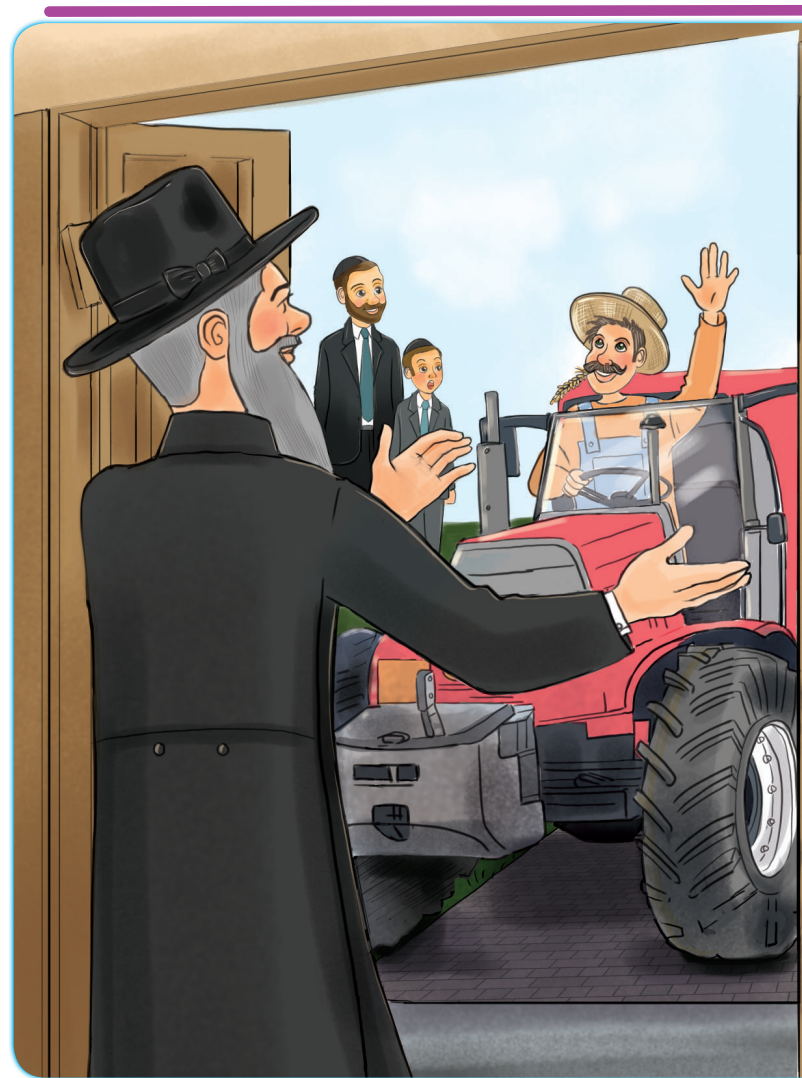
Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

It was a beautiful spring day as Shimmy and Totty walked to Shul for the Rov's weekly halacha shiur. The shiur was really meant for adults, but Rabbi Friedman made it so interesting that Shimmy loved going, even if he didn't understand everything the Rov was saying. He always learned something new and Shimmy already knew more halachos than all of his friends as a result.

As they arrived at Kehillas Bnei Avigdor, a loud rumbling noise made Shimmy look up. To his surprise, there was a big, bright red tractor driving up to the shul entrance! And sitting on top of the tractor, dressed in overalls, was Richard Bazoigenstein, the local farmer.

"Hi Richard!" came a familiar voice from the shul entrance. Shimmy looked up to see Rabbi Friedman waving to the farmer. "I'm so glad you were able to make it today!"

"Hi Rabbi!" said Richard with a big smile, as he parked his tractor and climbed down from the giant machine. "I'm so excited to come learn Torah! And you won't believe it, but I got all the way up to 'lamed' today with my Aleph Beis learning. I know more than half of the letters!"



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Shimmy looked on curiously as Farmer Richard parked his tractor and headed towards the entrance. Was he going to the shiur as well? He wondered what someone who didn't even know all of the Aleph Beis could gain from a shiur like this.

They all walked into the shul, and to Shimmy's surprise, Mr. Bazoigenstein took a seat in the front row, right next to him and Totty. The Rov handed out photocopies of a tshuva from Igros Moshe and started the shiur. It was a very interesting shiur that talked about how if someone wasn't sure whether he said birchos haTorah that he could have in mind during the brocha of Ahava Rabbah to be yotzei birchos haTorah. They read the tshuva from Rav Moshe Feinstein inside, and while Shimmy didn't understand everything the Rov was saying, it was still very fascinating and he learned some interesting things about brachos on mitzvos and how Ahava Rabbah can work as birchos haTorah in certain situations.

A couple times during the shiur, Shimmy glanced over at Mr. Bazoigenstein. He looked confused and most definitely couldn't actually be following along in the Igros Moshe if he didn't know any letters past lamed!

After the Shiur, as they were walking out of Shul, Shimmy heard Mr. Bazoigenstein talking on his cell phone as he climbed back onto his big red tractor. "Belinda!" he was saying, "The Rabbi's class was so interesting! He said we're supposed to say a brocha for learning Torah every morning! I already knew that, but it was so great to hear it again!"

On the way home, Shimmy turned to Totty. "I don't understand something," he said. "Why did Mr. Bazoigenstein come to the Rov's shiur? He doesn't even know how to read and he obviously

didn't understand anything the Rov was saying. And not only that, but he sat in the front row! Isn't that kind of silly? I mean, I don't understand a lot of what the Rov says, but at least I understand the main points. But it seems like Mr. Bazoigenstein is just wasting his time!"

"Not at all," said Totty. "You see, on Shavuos morning we say in Akdamus, 'קביעין בן תהיון בהנהו' - *קְבִיעִין בֶּן תִּהְיוּן בְּהִנְהוּ* - You should be a part of the groups of the tzaddikim'. And Rav Avigdor Miller explains that this means that even if someone doesn't know any Torah or how to learn, but just by the fact that they come to a group of Torah learning, that gives them a cheilek in Olam Haba.

"And Akdamus continues, 'וְתִזְכּוּן דִּי תִיְתְּבוּן בְּעֵלָא' - *וְתִזְכּוּן דִּי תִיְתְּבוּן בְּעֵלָא* - and you should be zoche to sit in the front row'. Rav Miller says this means it is a zchus to sit in the front, to show that Torah is so important to you that you want to be in the front row, that you want the kavod of being in the front when it comes to Torah."

Shimmy smiled. Totty was talking about Farmer Richard, but it also made him feel good to hear this, that he was getting schar for coming and sitting in the front row of a shiur, even though he didn't understand everything the Rov was saying.

But Totty continued, "Shimmy, it is important to remember, though, that as great as it is to go to a Torah shiur and sit in the front row in a shiur, but that's not enough. To really be in the 'front row' means to be someone who makes Torah the most important thing in his life. By devoting your life to learning and understanding the Torah, we will be zoiche to really sit in the 'front row' in Olam Habah.

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