



Shelach / שְׁלַח

A Medal for McGillicuddy

Toras Avigdor

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Junior

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Sunday Afternoon, University City, Missouri

BAP BITTY BAP DITTY BOP BA!!!!

Moishy and Dovid Friedman ran to the window at the sound of trumpets blasting. What was going on???

"Mommy, Totty!" they cried. "Look! It's a marching band coming down our street! When was the last time you saw a marching band in University City?"

The Friedman family all hurried outside to get a better look. It seemed like the entire neighborhood was out watching the spectacle.

"It's Mayor McGillicuddy!" someone shouted. "He just came back from Washington DC - look! He's wearing the Presidential Medal of Freedom! President Carriz just awarded it to him because of his program to distribute free copies of the book he wrote to poor immigrant children!"

From all around came shouts of "Mr. Mayor, Mr. Mayor!" and wild cheering as the neighborhood all celebrated their generous leader who did so much to help the poor and the needy.

Monday Morning, Torah Prep Boys' School

The recess bell rang and everyone ran to the schoolyard. All anyone could think about was the



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amazing parade for the mayor the day before. Moishy stood in the middle of the schoolyard, stuck a piece of aluminum foil on his shirt, and announced “I’m Mayor McGillicuddy!”

Chaim and Eli quickly ran next to him with imaginary trumpets. “Bap bitty bap ditty bop ba!!!” they chanted, in their best imitation of yesterday’s trumpets.

The rest of the class quickly gathered behind them, each boy pretending to be another member of the marching band.

As they marched around the schoolyard, the boys from the other classes gathered around. “Mr. Mayor, Mr. Mayor!” they chanted. Boys asked for Moishy’s autograph and everyone had a grand time pretending Moishy Friedman was Mayor McGillicuddy.

When the end-of-recess bell sounded and the boys headed back to class, they were still talking about the mayor and his parade.

“Isn’t it so cool?” Chaim was saying. “Our very own mayor got the medal from President Carritz himself! I can’t wait until I go to camp this summer and tell all my friends from Cleveland and Chicago. Their mayor didn’t get a medal!”

The boys were all so busy laughing and talking happily about Mayor McGillicuddy and his medal, that they hadn’t noticed Rabbi Pentelnik enter the classroom.

“Kinderlach,” Rabbi Pentelnik interrupted them, “I don’t understand why you’re so excited about the mayor - there are much bigger and better things to be excited about!”

“You mean like the President?” asked Shmuli. “Because he’s in charge of our whole country?”

“No, no,” smiled Rabbi Pentelnik. “I’m talking about all of you wonderful kinderlach! You all have a medal that is much more important than the one the mayor received!”

Everyone looked around. Nobody was wearing a medal, unless you counted the bit of aluminum foil still stuck to Moishy’s shirt.

“Look!” cried Rabbi Pentelnik, gripping his tzitzis in his hands. “We are all wearing tzitzis - this is a much greater medal than the mayor has.”

Moishy raised his hand. “But anyone can just go into the Kollel bookstore and buy tzitzis for just a few dollars - you can’t buy the Presidential Medal of Freedom just like that.” he said.

“Ah, but that’s where you’re wrong,” said Rabbi Pentelnik. “Not anyone can just wear tzitzis. Only a Yid gets to wear that special badge. Of course a goy can figure out how to get his hands on some tzitzis, but just like nobody would respect anyone who makes a fake Presidential Medal of Honor, so too, tzitzis only means something when worn by a Yid.

“Our goyishe neighbors, they are proud to have a mayor who did some small good deed and they think he’s a tzadik. But even you young boys in school are bigger tzadikim than any goy. And we aren’t led by some goyishe mayor - we are led by the Gedolei Yisroel and the Melech Malchei Hamlochim - Hakadosh Boruch Hu!

“Now think - you saw a magnificent parade for the mayor. But that is nothing compared to the parade that we deserve for being the children and servants of Hashem! Bimheira b’yomeinu when Moshiach comes, we will have such magnificent honor, and all of the goyim of the world will be singing our praises and how great Hashem, our King is. But for now, we have to keep that in mind - any time we see someone getting kovod for something other than being a Yid - that our kovod for being the Am Hashem is millions and millions of times greater than that!”

When the bell rang at the end of the school day, the boys all walked out with their hearts bursting with pride. Not because they were pretending to be Mayor McGillicuddy, but because they were actually special, and whether or not the goyim on the street knew it, they knew it and it felt so good to wear a medal that even the mayor couldn’t wear.

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