



Re'eh / רֵאָה

Worthless Antiques

Toras Avigdor

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Junior

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Eretz Yisroel, near the Yam Hamelach

"Totty!" cried out Ezzy. "Look what I found!!!"

"What do you see, Ezzy?" asked Totty, as he approached with the other two children.

Ezzy was peering down into a large crack behind a big rock in the side of a hill. "I think there's a cave in here!" he said excitedly.

"Oh wow!" exclaimed Chaim Zanvil. "Maybe this is the cave that Dovid Hamelech hid in when he was running from Shaul! Or maybe where Rabi Shimon bar Yochai hid from the Romans!"

Yitty peered into the hole. "It's too dark to see anything," she said.

Chaim Zanvil pulled out the flashlight he won at the last Avos u'Banim raffle and shined it into the hole. "It looks like there's stuff down there!" he said excitedly. "But I can't tell for sure because the hole is too small."

Ezzy, who had walked away, came back with a big stick. "Here, let's try to see if we can make the hole bigger," he said.

Chaim Zanvil and Totty also found sticks and they started to pry the loose dirt away from the hole. After a minute, most of the dirt fell away and they were indeed looking into a large cave!

"Totty," asked Yitty. "Is it safe to go inside?"



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"We better be careful," said Totty, examining the rock surrounding the cave. "It's probably okay to just stand here at the entrance, but we don't want to go more than a few feet inside, in case it *chas veshalom* collapses."

The Ribnitz family cautiously walked inside as Chaim Zanvil shined his flashlight around. There were markings on the wall and it looked like there was what was once a stone table. Someone had definitely been in this cave and it had been a long, long time ago.

Suddenly, they saw a glint of gold as Chaim Zanvil's flashlight swept across the floor. Ezzy ran forward and cleared the dirt away. Then he and Chaim Zanvil bent down and picked up a very heavy object.

"What is it?" asked Yitty. "It's too dark to see."

The children carried it outside and were shocked to see a sort of statue covered with the most beautiful sparkling jewels.

"WOW!" said Ezzy. "There were probably Pelishtim in this cave and this was one of their *avodah zarahs*!"

"We need to call the Israel Antiquities Authority right away!" said Chaim Zanvil. "It's the law!"

"Yeah!" agreed Ezzy. "And then maybe Professor Futersak will give us a reward and we'll be in the newspapers, just like those kids who found that silver plate near the Kineret!"

As the children started to discuss what kind of amazing reward they would receive for turning in this ancient artifact, they were startled by a loud **CRASH!** They looked up and were shocked to see Totty smashing the statue with a big rock! Emeralds, rubies, and diamonds fell off of the statue, which Totty was crushing as he repeatedly drove the rock into it, sending slivers of it flying everywhere.

The children were aghast. "What is Totty doing?", they wondered. "Uh, Totty," said Chaim Zanvil, "Is it not the law that we have to turn that in?"

But Totty seemed not to hear as he gathered up all of the pieces of the statue and hurried with it down

towards the water. The children ran after him and watched in horror as Totty hurled the statue, piece by piece, deep into the Yam Hamelach.

Finally, after every last piece of the *avodah zarah* was gone, Totty turned back to the children. "Kinderlach," he said. "It says in this week's *parsha* 'ופסילי אלהיהם תגרעון', that we must chop down and destroy the *avodah zarahs* of the *goyim* in Eretz Yisroel. This wasn't a one-time *mitzvah* - the *mitzvos* in the Torah are forever!

"Now the *goyim* in the world, along with the people in this country who act like *goyim*, think that *avodah zarah* is a 'beautiful piece of art' that must be studied and preserved. But that's not what the Torah teaches us. That *getchke* was an item of terrible *rish'us* and *tum'ah*. It was a symbol of the *goyim's* belief that we don't need to serve Hashem *chalilah*. And the Torah tells us that something like that is so terrible, so dangerous, that even nowadays when nobody believes in it anymore, we still are *mechuyav* to completely and utterly destroy it."

"But Totty," said Chaim Zanvil. "Isn't it illegal to do that? The law says we have to turn it in!"

"Chaim'l," said Totty. "And if the law said that we have to eat *chazer*, would we eat *chazer*? *Chas veshalom*! Just because some *resha'im* in the Israeli government decided to make a law, that doesn't give us the right to disobey what it says in the Torah. Being a *Torah Yid* means doing what Hashem says, no matter what the *Goyim* and those who act like them say."

"Look, Totty!" said Yitty. "There are a few pieces of the *getchke* that fell to the floor - can we throw them into the Yam Hamelach so we can also do this *mitzvah*?"

"Of course!" exclaimed Totty with a smile, as the three Ribnitz children tossed the last remaining pieces of the *avodah zarah* into the water, happy to get rid of a small piece of evil from Hashem's world.

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!



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