

Noach / נח

Learning from Animals

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Toras Avigdor

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Junior

"Totty," said Moishy from the back seat of the car. "Why are we stopping?"

"I'm not sure what's going on," Totty replied. "It looks like they closed the entire Delmar Boulevard. I guess we'll have to go around."

"Why does it smell like animals?" asked Dovid. "It reminds me of when we went to that farm on Chol Hamo'ed."

"That is a very good question," Totty said. "I smell it too."

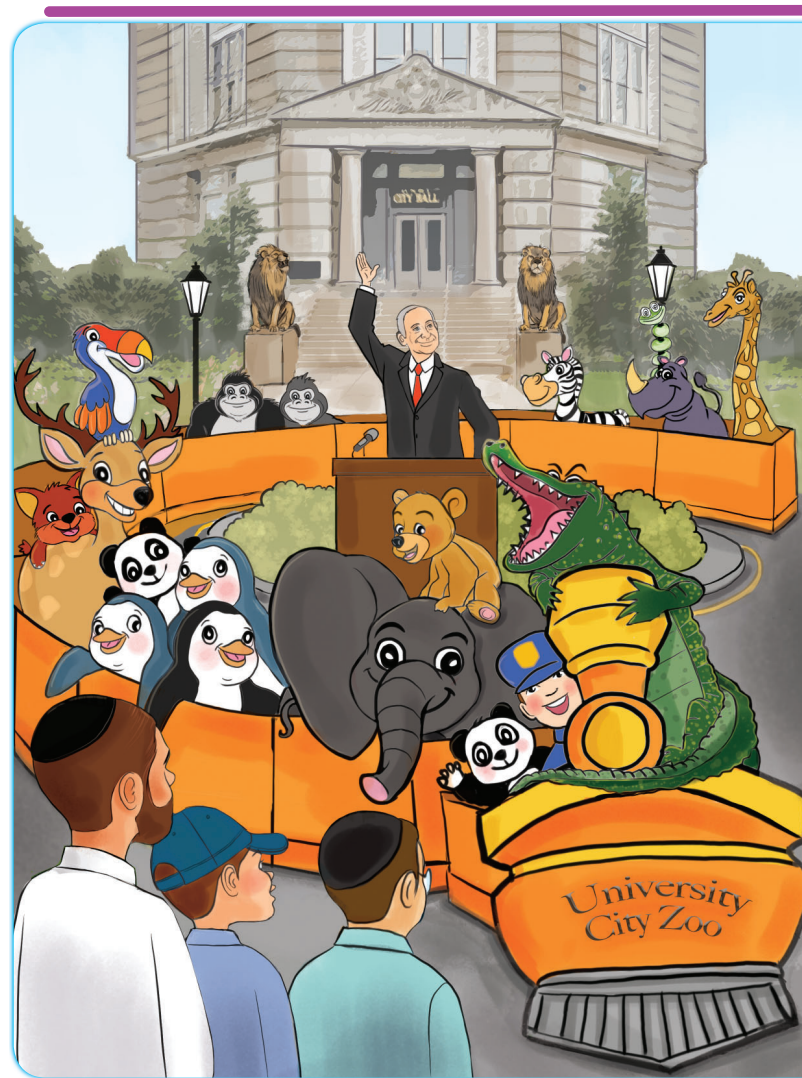
Just then the Friedmans heard what sounded like the roar of a lion.

"Let's go check and see what's happening," Totty said. "It sounds exciting!"

Totty parked the car and as they all got out and started walking towards the commotion, the smell of animals grew unmistakably stronger.

"Look, Totty!" said Dovid. "There's a huge crowd of people by City Hall!"

As they got closer they saw that there were indeed many animals in front of City Hall - and the mayor was standing at a podium in the middle! It looked like most of the animals were in the kind of train that one would



נתנדב לזכות זיווג הגון לחוה בת רינה ולכלל כלל ישראל

usually find in a zoo. And where there were usually statues of lions at the steps of City Hall, there were instead two actual live lions!

“Has the mayor lost his mind?” asked Moishy, bewildered. “There’s a loose crocodile on top of that train!”

“We’d better not get too close,” said Totty.” It doesn’t look like any of the animals are on leashes or in cages.”

Just then, Mayor McGillicuddy’s voice came over the loudspeakers that had been set up. “My dear residents of University City,” he began. “It is my great pleasure to announce to you the inauguration of the new University City Zoo that we will be building on Alfred Avenue, off of Woodson Road.”

The mayor puffed out his chest importantly. “I have managed to get these animals donated from President Carritz herself. What an honor to be able to give these gentle animals a new home right here in our city!” he exclaimed to wild cheers from the crowd, while one of the gorillas climbed out of the train and broke a street lamp in half.

“We’d better move further back,” Totty wisely told his boys. “It looks like that rhinoceros is about to jump out of the train.”

The Friedmans backed away from the wild scene as the mayor continued to speak about how he thought it was such a brilliant idea to use the new Zoo Train to bring all of the animals to their new home.

“Don’t worry that we haven’t built any cages yet!” the mayor shouted joyfully. “We have strictly told the animals that they must behave until we finish building the zoo! Everyone is safe!”

The boys hurried after Totty to the car so they could get as far away from the madness as possible. As they drove away, Totty said “boys, you know what we just saw is an important reminder of how great Tzadikim are.”

“The mayor is a Tzadik?” Dovid asked. “He doesn’t seem like one.”

“No, no,” laughed Totty. “I’m talking about what the animals remind us of. All of the animals in the world today only exist because of Noach the tzadik! If not for Noach there wouldn’t be any animals! In the zchus of Noach, the world and the animals were saved from the mabul.

“And that’s a lesson for us about how important tzadikim are. Don’t make a mistake and think that tzadikim are just to give brachos or to be on gedolim pictures. The tzadikim are the ones who keep the world in existence – just like Noach did in his days. And that means that every time we see animals, whether it’s on a trip to a farm, a squirrel climbing a tree, or passing by City Hall, it’s an important reminder that this world and everything in it exists solely because of the zchus of the Tzadikim in every generation. They are the ones whose Torah and Mitzvos keep the world going.”

“Totty,” said Moishy. “So shouldn’t we go on a trip to the zoo every day so that we remember this lesson?”

Totty smiled. “I don’t know about every day,” he said. “And we definitely want to wait until they build some cages for the wild animals. But Moishy, we don’t need to go to the zoo to learn this lesson. We can even learn it when we look in the mirror.”

“But when I look in the mirror I see a boy, not a monkey,” Moishy said, puzzled.

“Ah, but it’s not just animals,” Totty said. “If not for the tzidkus of Noach, you and I wouldn’t be here today either, because there would be no people in the world! When you wake up in the morning and look at your hands and feet, after thanking Hashem for giving you such an amazing body, remember that everything we have is because of Noach Hatzadik and the other tzadikim in all the generations – even today – who serve Hashem every minute of their lives. That’s a very important lesson to remember. It’s not President Carritz or the rich businessman or the people who make big inventions who keep the world going. It’s only in the zchus of the tzadikim that the world continues to exist!”

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!



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