



Toras Avigdor

Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

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פֶּסַח

Respecting Chol Hamo'ed

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Respecting Chol Hamo'ed

“Hi Shimmy, Hi Yitzy! Happy Chol Hamo'ed!”

The Greenbaum boys, who were just coming back from shul, looked up to see their neighbor, Stevey Risnik getting out of the back seat of his parents' car, wearing a t-shirt, baseball cap, and large backpack.

“Gut mo'ed, Stevey,” both boys responded with a smile.

“So where did you guys go today?” Stevey asked.

“We went to shul to learn,” said Shimmy. “What about you?”

“Learning???” asked Stevey, aghast. “On Chol Hamo'ed?”

“Yeah, why not?” Yitzy asked, perplexed. “And besides, today Anshel Holtzbacher sponsored Avos uBanim. He gave out amazing prizes and he even brought the Horki Rebbe to speak to all of the children.”

“But it's Chol Hamo'ed!” Stevey replied. “You're supposed to go on trips! Today we went to Sea Monster World! I got to see the sharks, whales, and dolphins put on an amazing show together - they danced to music in the water! Tomorrow we're going to the Chometz factory, and the next day my father got us tickets to the World Frisbee Championship! We've got box seats and I'm going to get my frisbee autographed by Yvon Shtunk, the world-famous frisbee thrower!”

“Wait, you're going to a chometz factory on Pesach?” Shimmy asked in surprise.

“Yeah, what's wrong with that?” asked Stevey. “It's not like we're going to eat it. But the whole place smells delicious and they're having a special show about how amazing chometz is. They even have this catchy song all about eating chometz and it plays on the speakers throughout the whole tour. It's the closest thing to eating chometz that you can do on Pesach!”

The Greenbaum boys thought that this was the silliest thing they ever heard, and it was probably ossur too, but they continued listening politely as Stevey continued.

“My family always makes sure to go on the very best and most exciting trips on Chol Hamo’ed so that the holiday isn’t boring. Why don’t you come with us tomorrow? It’s chometz like you’ve never experienced it. It’s much more exciting than going to a learning group - this is vacation time, not a time to learn Torah!”

“That’s not what the Horki Rebbe said today,” said Shimmy. “In fact, he talked about the Gemara which states that ‘someone who doesn’t respect the Yomim Tovim, it’s as if they did Avodah Zarah’. And the best way to respect Yom Tov is by learning Torah.”

“Now that doesn’t make any sense,” said Stevey. “How is learning all day respecting the holiday? I would think wildly fun trips are the way to do that.”

“Well,” said Yitzky. “The Rebbe said that Yomim Tovim are a way to recharge our ‘ruchniyus batteries’. The whole year all sorts of things keep us busy, like dentist appointments and shopping - and adults have to go



to work. But now we can't do any of those things, so it's a chance for us to reconnect with Hashem by spending time learning his Torah."

"That doesn't mean it can't be enjoyable," added Shimmy, holding up the big box in his hand. "Look, Yitzy and I won a camera at the raffle after learning today! And tomorrow, the Holtzbachers arranged for us to go on a trip to the nearby forest with the Horki Rebbe, who is going to show us all of the amazing things that Hashem created. There are all sorts of incredible plants and animals there and each one is so fascinating. They even have trees which produce the fancy expensive wood that they used to build the Aron Kodesh in the Horki Beis Midrash."

Stevey's eyes opened wide. "I heard they have frogs in the forest. Is that true?"

"Yep!" said Yitzy. "And you can see the baby tadpoles swimming in the ponds there! Last year the Horki Rebbe explained how important those frogs are to the forest and its animals. They eat mosquitos so there are less of them to bite us, they are food for some birds, and the tadpoles actually filter the water to keep it clean! And that's just a tiny bit of the incredible ways you can see Hashem's wonders in a walk through the forest!"

"Hmmm," thought Stevey. "That sounds even more interesting than the chometz factory. Do you think the Rabbi would mind if I came along?"

"Of course not!" both boys said graciously.

"Thanks!" Stevey said. "I'm curious to learn more about how you respect Chol Hamo'ed! I want to do that too!"

Have a Wonderful Yom Tov!

Takeaway

Chol Hamoed is a time to recharge our Ruchniyus batteries and think about the lessons of Pesach.



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