



Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller zt"l

Sefer Devarim sponsored by:



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פי תצא

Your Worst Enemy

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Your Worst Enemy

The Village of Horki, 5594 — 1834

“Yabababa bum biddy bum bum bum...”

Berel the innkeeper sang to himself as he wheeled a large barrel of whiskey into his busy inn, stopping to straighten the simple sign over the door which read “Berel’s Inn”. A royal delegation from the king’s palace was due to arrive in the village of Horki and Berel needed everything to be perfect.

“Yankel,” Berel instructed his son. “Make sure that there are fresh candles in all of the rooms.”

“Yes, Totty,” Berel replied, hurrying off to replace the candles.”

Berel wiped down the bar counter and rinsed some pewter mugs. The sound of royal trumpets in the distance made him jump up. Berel ran outside to welcome the royal visitors, but was shocked to see them ride right past his inn. He ran after the entourage until they stopped at a building down the road. Berel noticed a new sign over the door: “Zanvil’s Deluxe Inn”.

“Zanvil’s Deluxe Inn?” Berel exclaimed. “But I’m the innkeeper in Horki! What’s going on?”

Berel watched in dismay as Zanvil rolled out a royal red carpet in front of the king’s men, who disembarked their horses and entered the “deluxe” inn.

“Oh how could he do this?” thought Berel. “I need to come up with a plan.”

Berel hurried back to his inn and sat down at his desk. He pulled out a piece of paper and a feather quill and started writing.

“Hmmm,” thought Berel. “I could put up signs around Horki telling everyone that Zanvil’s Deluxe Inn is full of rats... but wait - that would be

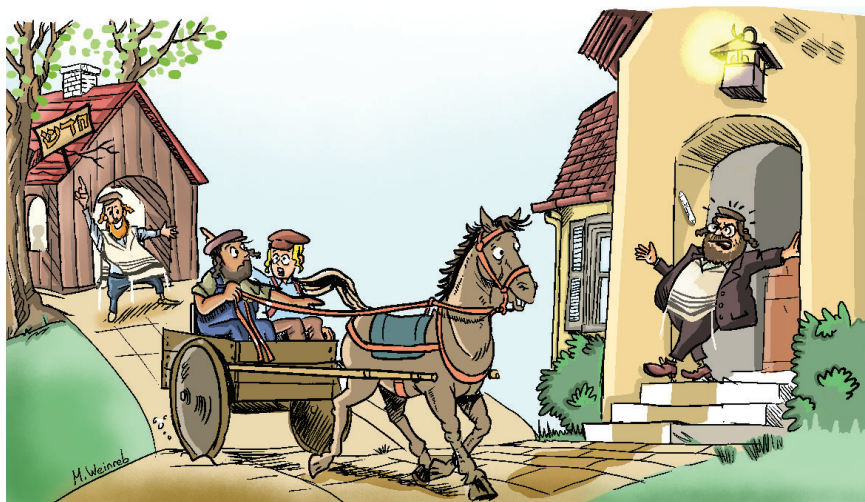


sheker - oh I know! I can tell everyone about the time that Zanzvil thought that whiskey was just apple juice with wine in it - that will make people want to come here for my quality schnapps. Hmmm... or even better, how about I put up signs telling people how Zanzvil makes terrible scrambled eggs... Oooh so many good ideas!" Berel scribbled line after line about all the terrible things he knew about Zanzvil. "He'll be out of business by the end of the week!" Berel laughed to himself.

As the rays of the setting sun cast a golden glow over the village, Berel, folded up his paper, put it in his pocket, and hurried to the Horki shtibel for mincha. After mincha, the holy Horki Rebbe got up to speak.

"In this week's parsha, Moshe Rabbeinu tells us of the mitzvah to remember what happened to Miriam when she spoke *loshon hora* about Moshe Rabbeinu. Now you have to realize that if the Torah didn't tell us that it was wrong for Miriam to have said what she said, we would not have even realized that it was *loshon hora*. That's how careful we have to be when we say things about another Yid."

Berel shifted uncomfortably in his seat, trying to think of why his situation was different.



The rebbe continued. "This is something we all need to be careful with. Imagine you have a business and your friend starts competing with you. Chas veshalom someone might now view this friend as their enemy because they are a threat to their *parnassah*. Maybe they'll start coming up with a list of terrible things to tell people about their friend so they won't do business with him."

Berel froze. Did the rebbe know?

"But guess what? That Yid is not your enemy! You want to know who the real enemy is?" The rebbe looked directly at Berel. "The real enemy is YOU! That's right, you think someone is your enemy because they are going to cause you to lose *parnassah*, but no no no, that's not how it works! *Parnassah* is from Hashem! Hashem is the one who decides whether your business succeeds. But now, because you decided to listen to your *yetzer hora* instead of to Hashem, you just became your own worst enemy - and the only person you're hurting is yourself!"

Berel sat shocked that he had fallen into the *yetzer hora*'s trap. How could he have forgotten that Hashem is the one in charge and trying to hurt Zanzvil would only hurt himself. As Berel walked out of *shul*, he tore up the paper in his pocket and threw it away.

"Reb Zanzvil!" Berel called as he walked back towards his inn.

Reb Zanzvil turned around.

"Reb Zanzvil," said Berel, "congratulations on opening your inn! It should be with much *hatzlocha*! And if there is any advice I can give you on running your business, please don't hesitate to ask."

Have a Wonderful Shabbos!

let's review:

- Why shouldn't Berel be nervous about Zanzvil opening another inn in Horki?
- Who is Berel's real enemy? Why?