



Adapted from the sefer **חמין במוצאי שבת** and **חידוטי דזעיר אנפין** collections of maamarim given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech 5768

Zecher Rav, a biography of Rav Yonah Ehrentrau of Petach Tikvah relates a wonderful story that took place on the final Yom Kippur of his life.

Rav Ehrentrau had gone home after *Musaf*, and returned to his shul for *Minchah*. The members of his shul were shocked to see that he went to his place and began davening with only his *talis* over his shirt. They certainly weren't used to seeing him *daven* without his *begged elyon*, a Rabbinical frock coat. However, they were even more surprised that, unlike every other married man in shul, the Rav wasn't wearing a white *kittel*.

Some of the *mispallelim* suspected that the Rav, who was quite elderly, was suffering from senility, and simply forgot to wear the customary garments.

After Yom Kippur, they discovered the reason for Rav Ehrentrau's choice of clothing. A relative of the Ehrentrau's was staying in their house for Yom Kippur, and she had fallen asleep in the room where the Rav had placed his *kittel* when he came home after *Musaf*. The Rav was afraid that if someone would enter the room to retrieve his *kittel*, they would wake her up. He even prevented the woman's husband from entering the room. That was the story behind his unusual appearance at *Mincha*.

This story portrays the behavior of a person who has perfected his *midos*. He didn't hesitate to daven without a *kittel*, even though every member of his shul took the idea of wearing appropriate, customary clothing very seriously. He did so with the understanding that it might lead some



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people to whisper that the Rav must be senile. All in order to avoid the possibility of waking a sleeping relative.

When I read that story, it reminded me of a similar incident that occurred with my grandfather zy”a. One night, the hour was getting very late and he still hadn’t returned home. Family members went to look for him and eventually found him sitting and learning in a beis medrash.

While my grandfather had been engrossed in his learning, someone who was accustomed to sleeping in that shul, fell asleep next to him and rested his head on a corner of his coat. My grandfather was afraid that if he stood up, he would wake up his sleeping companion. Therefore, he decided to remain where he was and learn, even until morning.

In the Mishnah (8:9 יומא), we learn that Yom Kippur cannot atone for *aveiros bein adam l’chaveiro* until you appease the injured party. There is certainly no need to wait until Erev Yom Kippur to appease someone. It would be far better to approach Rosh Hashanah, cleansed of our sins, especially *aveiros bein adam l’chaveiro*.

We should learn from the stories of these tzadikim how careful a person should be not to harm someone else. My grandfather would have been totally justified if he woke up the man who fell asleep on his coat, and Rav Ehrentrau would have been justified if he had woken up a sleeping relative had he entered the room to retrieve his *kittel*. Nonetheless, these gedolim preferred not to rely on that justification.

Here, in the Beis Medrash of my grandfather zy”a, we should be inspired to follow in his footsteps, taking care to protect the *kavod* of others.

ואז נזכה לשנה טובה ומתוקה אכי”ר



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