

**Good Shabbos Everyone.** The Torah tells us this week, *"You are standing today, all of you, before Hashem, your G-d... from the hewers of your wood to the drawers of your water"* (Devorim 29:9-10) Why does the verse list "hewers of wood" and "drawers of water?" One beautiful lesson we can learn out from this verse is perhaps the following: All Jews, even those who are unlearned in Torah like "simple" hewers of wood and drawers of water, can reach elevated heights "before Hashem, your G-d." The following story illustrates this point.

Rebbitzin Mirl was the wife of Reb Yitzchak Meir of Mezhibuzh, and the daughter-in-law of Reb Avraham Yehoshua Heschel of Apta. She was known to be a saintly soul. Once she was in shul, and hearing an unaccustomed bustle, she opened the door that led from the women's section to where the men were assembled, to ask what had happened. She was told that Reb Yaakov the wagon-driver had died.

"What?!" she cried aghast. "Is Reb Yaakov dead? Do you know who Reb Yaakov was?"

And when she had calmed down from her sudden anguish, she said: "It once happened that on a freezing winter's day I was left without a single splinter of firewood in the house. I went off to Reb Yaakov. He immediately harnessed his horse, drove off to the forest, and came back with a wagon stacked high with firewood. I stoked up the stove in the beis midrash, and dozens of people were then able to sit there and study Torah.

"On another occasion I ran out of water — not a single drop left. Again I went off to Reb Yaakov, and he brought me a huge barrel full of water, so that I was able to cook in honor of Shabbos."

"Master of the Universe!" she pleaded in conclusion. "May it be Your will that from every piece of wood that he brought, an angel be born — to speak up now on his behalf. And may all those drops of water be transformed into so many merits — to turn out and greet him as he arrives in the World Above!"

When her husband the Tzadik Reb Yitzchak Meir of Mezhibuzh came to shul a little later, the chassidim told him what his rebbitzin had said. "I marvel at it!" he said. "Where did the woman get that divinely-inspired gift of ruach hakodesh? For what she said down here is exactly what they said in the World Above!"

From this seemingly simple story, we can learn some very important lessons in our dealings with others. Namely, it is extremely important to treat every honest Jew with respect, regardless what their spiritual stature may appear to be. Because in truth, we do not know the greatness of the neshoma - soul which may be behind the face of a Jew. As the Mishna teaches us, "do not look at the container, rather look at what it contains." (Avos 4:20) Therefore, the next time we have interactions with a Jew who seems to have a lowly job, etc., let us all try to look deeper, to look at his neshoma, not his material position in this world. **Good Shabbos Everyone.**

A Refuah Shleimah to Shusha Malka bas Golda

*"Anyone who brings merit to the masses, no wrongdoing will come into his hands."* Avos 5:21

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