

Good Shabbos Everyone. This week's parsha begins with the word Tzav. Rashi explains that "Tzav" indicates "zerizus" - alacrity. Alacrity - moving quickly - is an important aspect of serving Hashem. Because, one who does mitzvahs with an eagerness, will be able to do more mitzvahs and do the mitzvahs more completely. The following story illustrates one Jew's eagerness to help others.

Eli was a bit concerned about the way his car sounded as they drove out of Brooklyn Friday early noon-time. But the car was driving all right, so he put it out of his mind. Unfortunately, just as they exited the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel right in front of the World Trade Center, (which still stood at the time) -Eli's car suddenly quit in the middle of the intersection. Car horns blared as drivers detoured around them. Eli and his passengers managed to push the car to the side. Then he pulled out his cell phone and called the AAA.

"How long will it take for a tow truck to get here?" he asked the operator. "It will be two hours, sir." Two hours! Eli and his friends looked at each other in dismay. It was already after one o'clock. It was a three hour trip up to Thent, a small town in up-state New York, where the group was driving to a Shabbaton.

Shabbos was at 6:09. One did not have to be a mathematical genius to realize that there wouldn't be enough time to make it to Thent in time for Shabbos. "Maybe we should go home," one of the passengers suggested. But then they wouldn't have a minyan up in Thent. Many of the other invitees had already left for the farm where the Shabbaton would be held, and they were counting on them for a minyan. "And all the food's in the car!" Eli suddenly remembered as he looked at the food that he was bringing up for the Shabbaton. "We have to get it up there somehow."

"Maybe we can get a car service to take us," another one of the guys suggested. "Good idea," Eli agreed. "I'll take care of my car. You go ahead with the food." It was a good idea. There was just one small problem: no car service was willing to come on a Friday afternoon to take them on a three-hour trip to Thent.

Once again, they were staring at each other in dismay, when a brand new Lexus came to a halt right near them. The driver stepped outside and walked over to where they were standing. "Let me take a look at your car," he offered. "Maybe I can find the problem." They watched hopefully as he marched over to the car and lifted the hood. "It's gone," he proclaimed, after studying the engine for a few minutes. "This car is going nowhere." He walked back to the Lexus and said something to the passenger inside.

Then the passenger door opened and a religious Jew stepped out. "My driver says your car is finished." His gaze took in their Shabbos attire. "Where were you trying to go? Maybe I can give you a lift or help out in some way." Eli explained about the trip to Thent. "We can't turn around and go home, because the food is in the car and they're counting on us for a minyan. We have to get there somehow."

"No problem." the man said instantly. "Here, take the keys to my car drive up there and have a good Shabbos. There's a built-in computer navigator so you won't get lost." The driver looked at his employer with astonishment. "Are you crazy? How can you give them the car? You just drove it off the dealer's lot! It's brand new!" Said the driver. The religious man shrugged. "What's the big deal? It's just a piece of plastic that happened to cost \$60 000."

Eli and his friends could not believe it. They didn't even know the man's name and he was willing to lend them his brand-new, expensive car! But they weren't going to turn the offer down. Immediately they transferred the food and seforim (Jewish books) over to the Lexus then settled down inside. Eli held the keys out to one of the other passengers. "Here you'll have to drive. I need to stay here to get my car towed."

"Don't worry about that," their benefactor spoke up. "I'll take care of the towing and I'll find my way home. Just go and have a good Shabbos." As Eli drove off he realized that he hadn't even asked the man his name! Even with the new car their problems weren't over. Traffic was very heavy and more than once they seriously considered turning back. But the thought of how the rest of the group was counting on them made them continue on. They could always spend Shabbos in a motel if it came to that. But they had to try their best.

Traffic finally eased up at around 4:30 in the afternoon. Just then Eli's cell phone rang. "This is AAA. We're in front of the World Trade Center but your car isn't here. Did you tow it already?" Eli realized that the man had the car towed-at his own expense. At 5:45, with 24 minutes left until Shabbos the Lexus pulled into the Pamoner farm in Thent. The rest of the group, relieved by Eli's arrival, were impressed by the way they had traveled in style. Shabbos was beautiful and inspiring.

After Shabbos, Eli drove back to the city, tracked down the owner of the car - Mr. Isaac Lefkowitz - and brought his Lexus back to him. "We don't know how to thank you," Eli exclaimed. "You really saved our Shabbos."

"There's even more to the story," Mr. Lefkowitz told him. "I have a very successful business, but for years I've been bothered by the way I arrive home late on Friday afternoon, with hardly any time to prepare for Shabbos. This past Rosh Hashanah, I made a resolution that I would close up earlier on Fridays." He paused, then looked at Eli. "This Shabbos was the first week I left early. And there you were, waiting outside with your car." (From Visions of Greatness Reb Yosef Weiss, Vol. 6, p.89)

We should always jump at the opportunity to do a favor for a fellow Jew. The more desperate someone is for our help, the greater the mitzvah is to help him without delay. **Good Shabbos Everyone.**

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

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