



## A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

by Arel Kirshstein



You'd think that after moving from the crisp air in the mountains of Bogota, Colombia, to the oppressive temperature of the desert of *Ma'ale Adumim*; from the comfortable lifestyle in the Exile, to a tedious employment cleaning the dorms of messy teenagers in the Old City of Jerusalem; that frustration might be prevalent among your concerns. Such is not the case with our trusty cleaner, *Avraham*. He cleans and smiles with a congenial aura designated for those determined to be happy.

And although he smiles and converses as friendly as can be, we know that his job is, by no means, easy. We know the mess we often leave in our dining room, after a hard day of eating. Yet when we arrive at the dorm after morning *seder*, no matter how messy our dorm was in the morning, it is now clean.

Just picture it. Every day, after descending the stairs to the dining room, a subtle spectacle awaits us. The floor is spotless; tables are properly fitted with plastic table cloths, despite an often unsatisfactory failure of the daily *toranut*. Lunch is neatly laid out awaiting our consumption; our stainless steel countertop sparkles with cleanliness. And all of this is done in the few hours while we're at morning *seder*.

But throughout the rest of the day, and the following night, we unconsciously make messes, sometime forgetting to take care of them. The dorm falls into disrepair quickly; the cleanliness degenerates into a swirling vortex of entropy. And daily *Avraham* has to deal with this dark law of thermodynamics. Entropy is a hard cookie, and who knows it better than *Avraham*.

We all know the saying, "cleanliness is next to Godliness", and however weird the saying is, in it exists a semblance of truth. Cleanliness keeps our world in order, our lives functional, and our rooms livable.

I am not asking for much. The subject of cleanliness has been crossed and recrossed, and wreaked havoc on many a lunch break, but we need to appreciate a few details. And they are these: *Avraham's* sacrifice in making

*aliyah*, his tireless effort to keep our dorms clean, and the good nature he always displays. And just maybe, after appreciating and respecting *Avraham* a little more, we might overturn an obsolete strategy. From being careless, to an approach aligning with *Avraham's* principles of hygiene and perpetual cheer. And maybe after all the dust settles (hopefully allegorically) we will have made this world a little bit easier to live in.

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*Arel grew up in Charleston, SC and graduated from the Feinstone Yeshiva High School of the South in Memphis, TN. He was of the Founder of the School's Book Club and was stage Manager for the School's Production of "The Real Inspector Hound" and "The Comedy of Errors". He was a participant in the Memphis "Fed Challenge" organised by the Federal Reserve Bank.*

*Arel's favorite part of Orayta is: "Rav Binny's Chumash Shiurim. It's because we look at the whole picture and come up with our own ideas on the text before we go into the Commentaries and see what they see. I feel that I'm learning Chumash instead of just learning how Rashi learned Chumash".*

*After Orayta, Arel is planning on studying at Yeshiva University.*