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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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**CONTRIBUTORS**

Gur Aryeh Herzig  
Shmuel Landesman  
Mordechai Schmutter  
Rabbi Nachman Seltzer  
Esther Horowitz | Tziri Hershkovitz  
Rochel Isaacson | Devorah Klein  
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Yael Mermelstein | Batya Ruddell  
Linda Shapiro | Ruchi Twerski

**COORDINATORS**

Esther Henny Ehrlich | Tziri Hershkovitz

**DESIGN**

Israel Bitton

**PHOTOS**

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**ADVERTISING**

Duvid Frankel **ADVERTISING MANAGER**  
Avi Wagschal **EXECUTIVE SALES**  
Freidy Schondorf **OFFICE SALES**  
Temmy Ziemba **LAKEWOOD SALES**

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207 Foster Avenue, Brooklyn N.Y. 11230  
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E-MAIL: Magazine@hamodia.com

**UK OFFICE**

113 Fairview Rd. London N15 6TS  
(020) 8442-7777 FAX: (020) 8422-7778  
Advertising email: ads@hamodia.co.uk

**ISRAEL OFFICE**

16A Petach Tikvah St.  
P.O.B. 1306, Jerusalem  
(02) 595-2888

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### Until the Last Moment

**The photo of the Rosh Yeshivah, Hagaon Harav Gershon Edelstein, zt"l, seems to tell its own story — the story of a lifetime lived in total avodas Hashem (Parashas Behaalos'cha/June 7). Then, after reading the inspiring articles Inyan offered its readers, I turned back to the cover photo and studied it some more.**

**To read about the tzaddik engrossed in his Torah learning up until the moment of his petirah is reminiscent of tzaddikim of bygone eras.**

**May his legacy continue to inspire, and help us aspire to ever greater and more in our avodas Hashem.**

N.E

### New Cuisine

I was quite excited to see the recipes of Menuchah Armel in *Inyan* Cookery section. (Parashas Naso/ May 31).

My daughter is a friend and neighbor of Mrs. Armel in Israel. She introduced me to her cookbook, *Straight to the Plate*, and it has become one of my favorites. I look forward to seeing more of her great recipes in future *Inyan* magazines.

Thank you for consistently bringing such a great variety of interesting articles to your readership.

Mrs. Naomi Roberg

### Learn and Lein

Rabbi Marks,

Thank you for your *dikduk* column and comments on *trop*. As a new *baal korei* I appreciate your latest piece, "Who Is Sent Away?" (Parashas Naso/May 31). Being aware of the *Gemaras* where these *pesukim* are expounded adds greatly to preparing to *lein*. Not only does it allow one to study Torah while *leining*, it helps to punctuate the sentence while reading it so that there is a conscious thought in the punctuation.

I try to research both the *Toldos Aharon* and *Torah Temimah* on the *parashah* to add to the study of *leining* and would appreciate if you could direct me to your other columns explaining the use of *trop* in understanding the *Gemaras* and *halachos*.

Lastly, you mention in note #3 that Rabi

Yehudah explains the Torah according to its *taamim*. Can you share with me where this is from?

H.S.

#### Author's Response:

Thank you for your letter.

Sorry, I don't know of any *sefarim* that discuss *halachos* according to the *taamim*.

Regarding the view of Rabi Yehudah, although I haven't found a source for this, it appears so from many *pesukim* and rulings of Rabi Yehudah. I have a collection of over 30 such examples, and some of them have been printed in this column in the past.

Thank you again,

Rabbi Yehudah Marks

Thank you for your letters and comments. Ideas and opinions expressed in these letters are not necessarily those of *Inyan's* editors. We reserve the right to edit letters. Letters and emails must include your name, address, and daytime and evening phone numbers. See address on the Table of Contents page.



by RABBI AVRAHAM CHAIM CARMELL

# Gezunt, Parnassah and Nachas

The episode of the *Meraglim* ended with the devastating decree that the entire generation would die in the desert. Only their children, or grandchildren, would merit to enter Eretz Yisrael.

Immediately after that, they were instructed that when they do eventually take possession of the land, all private *olos* and *shelamim* sacrifices must be accompanied by *nesachim*. These were meal offerings comprised of fine flour and oil, together with the libation of wine on the *mizbe'ach*.

The *Tana D'bei Eliyahu Rabba* (29) says that this was to cheer up the Yidden after their mishap. The Rebbe Reb Bunim of Peshischa explained that this is based on the *passuk*, "Give wine to the one who feels lost, and strong wine to embittered souls" (*Mishlei* 31:6). How does putting wine on the *mizbe'ach* help pick up the spirits of the Yidden after the sin of the *Meraglim*?

After believing the frightening reports of the *Meraglim*, the Yidden cried that Hashem was taking them to Eretz Canaan to be slaughtered. In *Devarim* (1:27), Moshe Rabbeinu tells us that they said that Hashem was going to do this to them because He hated them! The Seforno explains that they attributed this to the fact that they had sinned with the *egel hazahav* (golden calf).

How could they believe that Hashem had given up on them, when He continued to protect them with the *Ananei Hakavod* and gave them *mann* from Heaven without skipping a day (*Nechemiah* 9:19-21)? And did they really think that the kings of Canaan were too formidable an enemy?

Hashem had promised each of the *Avos* that He would give their descendants Eretz Yisrael. He reiterated this promise to *Bnei Yisrael* before taking them out of Mitzrayim with wondrous miracles. Surely He could bring them safely into Eretz Yisrael.

Perhaps they were thinking that since they had sinned, they no longer merited a supernatural conquest (which was the case) and would have to defeat the enemy through war.

Invading an enemy country costs lives. I once read about the preparations for D-Day, when the Allies invaded Nazi-occupied France from the southern coast of England. The British and Americans had amassed an army of one million soldiers ready to cross the English Channel in a huge armada.

The plan was to send the troops over in three waves. The commanders-in-chief estimated that 75% of the first contingent would not make it. The 25% who did break through would engage the Germans so that 50% of the second wave would make it through. Hopefully 75% of the last group would overcome the enemy. Even if the groups were not of equal size, the number of expected casualties was staggering. That is the price of war.

The Yidden did not doubt that the *tzaddikim* among them would succeed in taking possession of Eretz Yisrael, but they feared that they, who had sinned through the *chet ha'egel*, would be the cannon fodder to enable the conquest to take place.

Their mistake was that Hashem does not view any of his children as just numbers to be



crunched in order to achieve a result. Every Jew, whatever his behavior, is precious in the Eyes of Hashem, as the Navi tells us, “Because no outcast shall be cast away from Him” (*Shmuel II* 14:14). *Tzaddikim* have said that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* loves the greatest *rasha* more than we love a *tzaddik* because of his potential for *teshuvah*. As a result, even before a *rasha* does *teshuvah*, Hashem continues to sustain him and give him what he needs.

The *Tomer Devorah* (ch. 1) goes even further and points out that nothing exists without Hashem’s infusion of life, so even *while* the *rasha* is committing a sin, Hashem is giving him life and energy. This is the first *middah* of “*Mi Kel kamochoh* (who is like Hashem)?” (*Michah* 7) – to go so far in His acceptance of a human being just as he is, hoping he will come to his senses.

If *Bnei Yisrael* had realized this, they would have trusted that Hashem had their best interest in mind with His plan to bring them to Eretz Yisrael, despite the fierce opposition the Canaanites would put up.

This was the message of the *nesachim* given straight after the decree to die in the desert.

The Seforno notes that *nesachim* for public sacrifices previously had been given with the *korban tamid* in *Parashas Tetzaveh* (*Shemos* 29:40) and the *mussafim* (*Vayikra* 23:13, 18, 37). This *parashah* introduced the *mitzvah* of *nesachim* for an individual.

What is the message of the *nesachim*? My father, Rabbi Aryeh Carmell, *zt”l*, used to say (based on Harav Samson Raphael Hirsch, *zt”l*) that the *minchah* offering brought by the poor man (*Vayikra* 2:1) is an expression of his recognition that despite his strained circumstances, he does get his basic needs from Hashem.

A person’s fundamental requirements are: sustenance, health and some measure of pleasure in life. These three are represented in the *minchah* by the flour, which forms a man’s staple food – bread. Oil in Hebrew is called *shemen*, which is the same root as

*shamen* – plump. A sick person is lean and haggard. The pleasant-smelling incense, brought together with the *minchah*, represents the enjoyment of life that everyone can find at some level.

In the *nesachim*, this is replaced by wine. Wine is a luxury item that actually raises one’s spirits and puts one into a better frame of mind.

Reb Bentzion Ostrovitzer, *zt”l*, related that once when the Rebbetzin of the Sfas Emes, *zy”a*, was critically ill in Otvotzk, the Sfas Emes came to visit her. After *Shacharis*, he asked for strong schnapps and drank together with those present. This was unusual, because he rarely was seen drinking such strong liquor. He explained the verse quoted at the beginning of this article, “Give wine to the one feeling lost,” as follows: When a person is beset by troubles, he sometimes loses his perspective and gets caught up in the problem facing him.

At times, the only way to lift himself out of his troubled state of mind is to drink a small amount of alcohol, which will temporarily raise his spirits. Then he can focus on his *emunah* and regain his trust that all Hashem does is for his good.

This was the lesson taught now. When one is bringing a sacrifice to Hashem and dashing blood on the altar of Hashem to increase *kiddush shem Shamayim*, he must not forget that at all times Hashem is sustaining him and desiring to give him pleasure. Never should he let the thought enter his mind that he is a victim of some Divine plan for the general good, disregarding his personal life.

The Torah emphasizes that this applies to the *ger* too. Even though this is a commandment for *ha’eizrach* – the citizen (*Bamidbar* 15:13), the proselyte who has joined the congregation is given the same message (*ibid.* 14-16).

He, too, is part of the “*invei hagefen*,” which my father would quote as being an acronym for *gezunt*, *parnassah* and *nachas* – the three fundamentals of existence! ■

*Rabbi Avraham Chaim Carmell studied in Manchester and Gateshead Yeshivos in England and in Yeshivas Ponevez. In 1980 he began teaching in Boston Kollel, Yerushalayim. His articles have appeared in Hamodia since its inception.*



Business Weekly  
Under the auspices of  
HARAV CHAIM KOHN, SHLITA



Restoring the Primacy of Choshen Mishpat

DEDICATED  
לע"נ הרה"ח ר' נחמי  
ב"ר שלמה אלימלך ז"ל  
BY HIS SON,  
R' SHLOMO WERDIGER

Yehuda ran a small *sefarim* store in his yeshivah; he sold *sefarim* during the lunch break.

One Thursday afternoon, Shlomo came by. "My cousin is becoming bar mitzvah this Shabbos," he said. "Any *sefarim* you can recommend?"

Yehuda suggested various *sefarim*, but Shlomo didn't consider them suitable.

"A new *sefer* just came out about *tefillin*," Yehuda said. "Take a look at it."

Shlomo perused the *sefer*. "This looks very interesting!" he said. "I think my cousin will like it. How much is it?"

"It's new, so I don't remember the exact price," replied Yehuda, "I have to check the price list, but it's about \$30."

"That should be fine," said Shlomo.

Yehuda checked the price list. "The *sefer* costs \$28," he said.

"Great!" said Shlomo. "I'll take it. Please gift-wrap it!"

Yehuda wrapped the *sefer*; Shlomo took it.

The following week, Yehuda met Shlomo. "How was the bar mitzvah?" he asked.

"It was lovely!" replied Shlomo. "My cousin read the *parashah*

## CASE FILES

# Misquoted Price

By Rabbi Meir Orlian, Halachah writer for BHI

really well and gave a *lomdishe drashah*. He loved the *sefer*!"

"I'm glad to hear," said Yehuda. "I wanted to tell you, though, that I misread the price list. \$28 was the line above, but this *sefer* is actually \$31, so you owe another \$3."

"You can't change the price now," objected Shlomo. "I already gave my cousin the *sefer*!"

"I'm not changing the price," argued Yehuda. "\$31 was the price all along. I just misread the price list."

"Anyway, small price differentials, less than a sixth, don't carry a monetary claim of *onaah* — unfair pricing," added Shlomo. "We learned about that last year (*Bava Metziah* 49b)."

"This was a clear error, though," replied Yehuda.

Yehuda and Shlomo approached Rabbi Dayan and asked:

**"Does Shlomo have to pay the correct amount listed in the price list?"**

"Indeed, *onaah* has a three-tier system: 1) A differential of less than a sixth is considered *mechilah*; 2) A sixth must be returned, but the sale remains intact; 3) More than a sixth, the aggrieved party can nullify the sale (*C.M.* 227:2-4).

"Nonetheless, these laws apply only to a misjudgment in evaluating the price. However, if there was a concrete error, like an erroneous scale measure, error in quantity, etc., the error must be corrected, even less than a sixth, and even much later. This does not fall under the laws of *onaah*, but rather those of *mekach taus* (an erroneous sale). If not possible to correct, the sale can be voided (*C.M.* and *Sma* 232:1).

"Similarly, if the price was agreed upon according to a catalogue or price list, and the seller mistakenly read the wrong price, or he mistakenly read from an outdated catalogue rather than the current one, the price should be corrected, even if less than a sixth differential.

"This is because here the mutual agreement of the parties was to set the price according to the price listed in the catalogue. The misquoted price was not due to a misjudgment in evaluation, which by its nature fluctuates, but rather to a concrete error, similar to an error in measuring (see *Hayashar V'hatov*, vol. 18 [5775], pp. 71-107, *Hachiluk bein Onaah l'Psika b'Taus*).

"We find basis for this distinction in the following *halachah*. If an employer hired workers and agreed to pay them like the other workers, but he quoted them a lesser wage, he is required to pay them the amount paid to the other workers, as agreed. This is because the stated wage was erroneous in regard to the intended contractual agreement to pay like the other workers (*Rema* and *Nesivos* 332:4; *Sma* 332:10).

"Even the *Shach* (332:15), who disagrees with this ruling, would presumably agree if the employer also erred unintentionally.

"Thus," concluded Rabbi Dayan, "Shlomo is required to add the \$3."

**Verdict: A misquoted price due to a clear error, not a misjudged evaluation, is considered an erroneous transaction, not *onaah*; it should be corrected even if the differential is less than a sixth.**

## HOTLINE

# Un-guaranteed?

Submitted by the *Bais Hora'ah*

**Q:** My friend asked me to serve as an *areiv* (guarantor) on a loan. When I agreed, he brought me the loan contract he received from the lender, and I signed on as an *areiv kablán*.

After signing, I found out that my friend's financial situation is unstable, and I'm concerned that he will not be able to repay the loan and I will be obligated to pay. May I renege on signing on as an *areiv*, or is it too late for me to back out?

**A:** As long as the loan has not been issued, an *areiv* is entitled to renege on his guarantee, even if he already signed the contract and performed a *kinyan* to formalize the agreement (*Shulchan Aruch, C.M. 131:1*).

Although a *kinyan* usually finalizes a transaction, guaranteeing a loan has an *asmachta* element to it: The obligation is not absolute, because if the borrower pays the loan, the guarantor does not owe any money. In many cases, an *asmachta* invalidates a commitment a person has made. When it comes to an *areiv*, however, the *asmachta* generally does not invalidate the guarantee. The guarantor's willingness to follow through on his commitment, because he benefits from being considered credit-worthy by the lender, overrides the *asmachta*. In your case, however, you would prefer not to gain this benefit of being deemed credit-worthy, so you may renege (*Sma* *ibid.*).

According to this approach, if the *kinyan* was made in a "*beis din chashuv*" — which negates the issue of *asmachta* (*C.M. 207:15*; see *Inyan*, March 2, 2022/BHI #599). — the guarantor is not allowed to renege (*Ulam Hamishpat*).

In addition, other *Poskim* rule that the *Sma's* explanation does not apply to an *areiv kablán*, because there is no issue of *asmachta*. Because the lender may approach an *areiv kablán* for payment without approaching the borrower first, his guarantee is absolute (*Tiferes Shmuel 131*; see *Machaneh Ephraim, Areiv 1*, and *Avnei Nezer, Even Ha'ezer 407*), and he is therefore not entitled to renege.

Other *Poskim* argue that even a guarantee issued by an *areiv kablán* has an *asmachta* element, because we don't know for certain that the lender will approach the *areiv* and not the borrower. Furthermore, if the borrower offers to repay the loan (even from *ziburis*, a low-quality property), the lender may not demand payment from the *areiv* (see *C.M. 129:15*; *Shu"t Rashba 2:158*, cited in *Beis Yosef 129 Mechudash 2*; *Ketzos Hachoshen 129:1*, and *Mishpat Haareiv 22*). This *asmachta* element is enough to entitle the *areiv kablán* to renege, according to these *Poskim*.

Ultimately, the *Rema* (*C.M. 131:1*) rules that even an *areiv kablán* may back out before the loan is given.

Other *Poskim* offer a completely different reason why an *areiv* is allowed to renege: We assume that an *areiv's* commitment to guarantee the loan begins only when the money is actually handed over to the borrower (*Mordechai, B.B. 652*). Therefore, as long as the money hasn't changed hands, the *areiv* hasn't committed to guarantee the loan yet, and he is therefore allowed to renege — even if there was a *kinyan* that negated the *asmachta* (*Bach, Erech Shai 131:1*).

The *Poskim* also discuss a case in which an *areiv* reneged on his commitment (even in the presence of witnesses), but the lender did not find out about it, and he issued the loan only because he was relying on the *areiv's* guarantee. Some *Poskim* write that as far as *hilchos areiv* is concerned he may renege. Although he might be causing damage to the lender, this is not considered direct causation (*garmi*), because it is not clear that the lender will suffer from the *areiv's* withdrawing from the commitment, as the borrower is likely to repay the loan. If the lender does end up suffering a loss, it is only a *grama* (indirect causation) on the part of the *areiv* (see *Mishnas D'Rabi Eliezer, Mahadurah Basra 131:1* who rules that the *areiv* is not obligated to repay the loan in such a case).

Others note, however, that the consensus from the *Poskim* seems to be that an *areiv* cannot negate his guarantee unless he is in the presence of the lender, because the lender is relying on his guarantee when issuing the loan. So unless he makes it clear to the lender, directly, that he is no longer making that commitment, he is still obligated to repay the loan if the borrower does not (*Nesivos 122:3*; *Kesef HaKodashim 122:2*; see *Shu"t Maharashdam, C.M. 38*; *Pischei Teshuvah 182:4*).

## MONEY MATTERS

### Yored L'sedei Chaveiro #2 (Enhancing Another's Property)

#### Entering to Enhance

Based on writings of Harav Chaim Kohn, shlita

**Q:** Is it acceptable to enter another's property to enhance it, or to take assets to invest them on the owner's behalf?

**A:** Although, in general, a person who takes or uses another's property without permission is considered a thief, a person who intends to enhance his fellow's property or invest assets for the owner is not. This is because he does not intend to possess or retain the property for himself (*Rivash #515*; *Beis Yosef, C.M. 375*).

For this reason, the gain is the owner's, and the enhancer is entitled only to compensation for his efforts. The owner cannot exempt himself from paying just because he did not instruct the enhancer. One who benefits another is not presumed to do so gratis, even if he did not state beforehand that he expects compensation (*Rema, C.M. 264:4*).

Nonetheless, a person should not enter another's property to enhance it without the owner's knowledge, even if the owner knowingly left it in disarray. *Beis din* should remove one who enters without permission (*C.M. 285:4*) ■

The Business Halacha Institute serves the community in all areas of monetary law according to halachah. Please contact our confidential hotline with your comments or halachic questions at 877-845-8455 or ask@businesshalacha.com.



by RABBI FISHEL SCHACHTER

*P.T.A. – Points, Tips & Attitudes*

# Pischu Li Pesach



our honor! Are you going to charge me just because I did my holiday shopping early?"

"Yes! You were caught leaving the store with full wagons two hours before

it opened."

Not only is it not good to be overanxious, sitting next to someone who is overanxious can be quite unnerving, if not outright dangerous. If you do not believe me, why don't you ask any of the passengers sitting on an Asiana Airlines flight about to land in Daegu, South Korea?

A passenger in his 30s opened one of the plane's doors minutes before it landed. That was minutes *before* – not after – and when the plane was still about 700 feet above the ground on its way down. No one was seriously hurt, but it triggered a lot of alarm onboard. Some had difficulty breathing.

It may be interesting to note that officials gave the man's surname as Lee but not his full name. This is common practice in South Korea. I guess that rule of not divulging an arrested person's real name was designed with the thought in mind not to embarrass the accused person's friends or family.

Maybe we ought to learn a thing or two from the South Koreans.

Mr. Lee claims that he meant no harm. He was simply in a big rush to get to his appointment as quickly as possible. Well, they sure took him off the plane quickly, but I don't think he arrived at his intended appointment all that soon. The next appointment he arrived at was at a hearing in court.

Of course, the story triggered lots of nervous stomachs for airline passengers. As if they didn't have enough to worry about until then.

A South Korean Transport Ministry official explained there is no need for extra concern. You see, it is possible



to open emergency exits only at or near ground level because the pressure inside and outside the cabin is similar. I do not know why, but that does not necessarily allay my concerns all that much.

*"Im Hashem lo yishmor... shav shakad shomer."*

I am not an aerospace engineer, but what piqued my interest was the comment about it being possible to open the door only at or near ground level because the pressure inside and outside is similar.

A story I once heard from Harav Moshe Tuvia Lief, *shlita*, came to mind. Many years ago, a bridge or an overpass in Minneapolis collapsed, taking cars down with it – including a car driven by a *yungerman* from the community.

I don't know this *yungerman's* name, but let's call him Nachshon.

Fortunately, for Nachshon, he went down at the very



## Chessed is the equilibrium. We can't afford not to have it on our side.

beginning of the overpass, only a few feet from the water. His car landed horizontally and for now was still above water, but the danger was far from over. Nachshon knew it would be only a minute or two before the car would be submerged. He desperately tried to open the door, but it refused to budge.

For the few weeks prior, Nachshon had, indeed, been submerged — in a world of *chessed*. Nachshon joined a *shiur* given in shul on the Chofetz Chaim's *Sefer Ahavas Chessed*. He was particularly moved by one *perek* in the *sefer*.

In the third *perek*, the Chofetz Chaim reminds us of that inevitable scale we will have to face after I20.

We hope that our *mitzvos* will outweigh our *aveiros*.

Alas! It's not so simple. Even if, according to our count, our *mitzvos* are well ahead, that does not mean we are out of the woods. In *Shamayim*, it would have to be decided which *mitzvos* count fully and which ones are too incomplete to be registered with their full weight. The same is true for considering the full weight of our sins. As a result of this yet-to-be-determined weight or value factor, two *neshamos* can come up with the same count of respective good and bad deeds but wind up with the scale weighing down on opposite sides.

More often than not, we may be in desperate need of *chessed* and *rachamim* to refigure the pressures on both sides to reach a positive outcome.

Why would one person merit such *chessed* reconfiguration more so than another would? It's simple, explains the Chofetz Chaim. For those who engage in *chessed* down here, they'll be judged with *chessed* up there.

Nachshon's *Maggid Shiur* used the world equilibrium. If the sum total of our life deeds square off one facing the other, one act of *chessed* or judging someone else *l'chaf zechus* can shift the balance of justice to mercy and literally tilt the scales in the right direction. The act of *chessed* is not just one more for the count. It adds weight to all the *mitzvos* we did.

Nachshon was so inspired that he boosted himself into a world of *chessed*. He did whatever he could to help whomever needed assistance in his community. This included a lot of self-sacrifice, endeavors that most, even good-hearted, people shied away from. When challenged that perhaps he was taking this to an extreme, Nachshon just kept singing his refrain. *Chessed* is the equilibrium. We can't afford *not* to have it on our side.

Now Nachshon was fighting for his life. His vehicle was sinking and the door stubbornly refused to open.

The events of the next minute came in a whirlwind. If Nachshon's situation wasn't precarious enough, a metal girder that must have fallen from the bridge's frame came crashing through his back window. The car was filling up with water at a horrific speed. Was it time to say *Viduy*?

Suddenly, when it looked like all was lost, the door swung open and Nachshon was swept out of his car into the water. Rescuers saw his head bobbing in and out of the water and raced to save him. Nachshon was pulled out seconds before he lost consciousness.

Hours later, investigators interviewed him at the side of his hospital bed. The government was eager to hear from many people, as quickly as possible, in order to piece together a preliminary report. Nachshon gave them a play-by-play detailed report of the harrowing sequence of events.

One of the engineers sitting there thrust his clipboard onto a chair, shook his head and whistled in amazement. "Young man, do you realize what a miracle happened to you? No way in the world could you have pushed the door open. No human being would have the power to push away the water pressure against the door. When that metal girder that must have fallen from the bridge came crashing through your back window, what were you thinking?"

"I was thinking that I should prepare for departure to the Next World!"

"Wrong," said the engineer. "It saved you. You see? Your car filled up with water as you were still trying to get the door open. It was possible to open the door only because now the pressure of the water inside pushing out was equal to the pressure of the water outside pushing in! Your attempt at the last moment to open the door was successful because the force you mustered was enough to break the *equilibrium*..."

Nachshon never let him finish his statement. He was almost dancing on his bed with excitement!

The Chofetz Chaim knew it all along. *Chessed* is the equilibrium, the push to life!

So, if you are in a rush to get somewhere fast, please don't open doors prematurely. Rethink your life and those doors won't open a moment too late! ■

*Rabbi Schachter is a member of the Vaad Hanhalah of Yeshiva Mevakshei Hashem, as well as a Maggid Shiur for Dial-a-Daf Torah Communications Network and the Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation. A sought-after speaker, author of many books including his latest, "Did This Ever Happen to You?" and numerous children's tapes.*





## inspiration

VISIONS PARASHAS SHELACH  
HAFTARAH: YEHOShUA 2:1-24

by REBBETZIN TZIPORAH GOTTLIEB

# Unlikely Shidduchim

### What Does the Haftarah Say?

This week's *haftarah* begins with Yehoshua facing a new reality. The Jewish people, whom he led, had entered a new era.

Still within the 30 days of mourning for Moshe Rabbeinu, the new era began on 5 Nisan with the dispatch of two spies, Pinchas and Calev, to scout out the land of Canaan. Thus began Yehoshua's life mission: the conquest and settlement of Eretz Yisrael.

Morality as we know it was not part of the prevailing cultures of ancient Canaan. Hashem wanted His people to do battle against cultures that had sunk to the depths of defilement so that we would emerge with a clearer identity of what we aren't and would never want to be. Hashem made us face seven Canaanite nations, each of whom had developed a culture that was exactly the opposite of the Divine attributes that let us find Hashem in ourselves and in the world.

The spies' first stop was Rachav's inn. Rachav apparently exemplified her society. She had corrupted Hashem's trait of *chessed* into the kind of giving that we would call utter immorality.

Who was Rachav? The Targum calls her an innkeeper, but the *Gemara* points out that she was also engaged in immoral acts. This certainly fits the society in which she lived. Her establishment, which was in the city walls, was a natural choice for the spies — it would be the last place anyone would expect to find them. Besides providing a relatively safe shelter, the proprietress Rachav would be the best source of information they could have ever tapped into. She was available to the Who's Who of Yericho, which meant that she knew all of the *hock* that Yericho had to offer, a goldmine of intelligence for the spies. Rachav seemed as natural to Canaan as a fish to water, or so it seemed.

The only thing incorrect with this assumption is that it is totally wrong.

The plan didn't work. The head of Yericho's police knew about the illegal entry almost immediately. They questioned Rachav, who affirmed their suspicions that the strangers were spies. She "helpfully" pointed out the direction in which the men had supposedly fled, and added that they could capture them if they set out immediately. As soon as they left, Rachav quickly hid the two men on her roof, covered and camouflaged by stalks of flax. Then she revealed what had been her deepest secret.

She knew that the day would come when the Jews would enter the Land and conquer it as Hashem had promised. Since the sea had split 40 years earlier, her faith in Hashem's ability to reverse the course of nature for the sake of His people had changed her entire perception of life. Her next words revealed how deeply events had changed her spiritually: "Hashem, your G-d, is the G-d of the heavens above and the earth below."

She asked them to promise by Hashem, in Whom they both believed, that when the day of the inevitable battle arrived, they would save her and her family from death. The words she used were "save our souls." Malbim writes that this was reflective of the fact that she knew that the kind of life she was living was spiritual death. She wanted desperately to be given a chance to reenter reality in a way that the word "life" had meaning.

The spies agreed to her request, but they told her that there had to be a sign by which they would recognize her house in the fury of battle, and chose the same scarlet thread she used to allow her clients





## EVERYTHING THAT HAD BEEN CORRUPTED BY CANAANITE SOCIETY WAS TURNED UPSIDE-DOWN BY THIS DECISION.

to anonymously enter her parlor.

Everything in her that had been corrupted by being a member of Canaanite society was turned upside-down by this decision. Reversing the effect of a sin through using its “weight” and its impression on your soul and society, brings Hashem back to your world and the world as a whole, measure for measure.

The decision was made; the spies returned to the Jewish encampment and told Yehoshua Bin Nun, “Hashem has given the entire Land into our hands, and the inhabitants ... have melted away from fear.”

### What Does the *Haftarah* Mean?

The end of the story is even more complex. Yehoshua married Rachav, who like Rus became the ancestor of great *tzaddikim*. Eight of her descendants were *Neviim*: Neriah, Baruch, Sheralah, Yirmiyahu, Chilkiyah, Chananel and Shulem, all *Kohanim*, and Chuldah Haneviah. The recurrent theme of great people emerging from utter corruption is difficult. The *Gemara* instructs you to look into the family when you choose a husband for your daughter. The *Beraisa* (*Sofrim* 15:10) goes as far as saying that many children resemble the mother’s brothers.

Don’t we begin every *Shemoneh Esrei* by recalling that we are descendants of the *Avos*, and that their merit can save us? Doesn’t the Torah command us not only not to marry non-Jews, but specifically to destroy the Canaanites and not let them live? How could Yehoshua marry Rachav? How far does *teshuvah* go?

Rambam deals with both questions. In *Hilchos Melachim* (ch. 5) he says, “No war, neither a *milchemes hareshus* nor a *milchemes mitzvah*, should be waged against anyone until they are offered the opportunity of peace, as *Devarim* 20:10 states: “When you approach a city to wage war against it, you should first

propose a peaceful settlement.” This includes the seven Canaanite nations, and even Amalek.

While this may explain why Yehoshua agreed to spare Rachav, it doesn’t tell us why he married her.

Rambam comes to the rescue again: *Teshuvah*, he says, “brings near those who were far removed. Previously, this person was hated by Hashem, disgusting, far removed, and abominable. Now, he is beloved and desirable, close and dear” (*Hilchos Teshuvah*, ch. 7).

The real question is why the past is not only viewed as somehow gone (which in and of itself is beyond the way we think), but why and how evil can be turned into good.

The Gra describes the power of the Jewish soul in his *peirush* on *Shir Hashirim* (1:2). We are strong enough to enter the farthest dimensions of spiritual reality, and uplift it.

What that means concretely is that it is the very fact that you are chosen, and that the blood of the *Avos* flows in your veins, that makes this the deepest of all brands of *teshuvah* possible.

### The *Haftarah* Is Telling You to Make Unlikely *Shidduchim*

Your soul is strong enough to make a *shidduch* between your *yetzer hara* and your *yetzer tov*. “Envy, desire, and the pursuit of honor take you out of the world” (*Avos* 4:28). This can refer to your inner world; through these traits you block yourself from the most real and authentic *you*, the part where the *Avos* are still there inside you. Turn envy into spiritual ambition. Turn desire into a commitment to uplift the material world by embracing it as an expression of Hashem’s giving, and by accepting the restrictions He uses to keep you from being destroyed by its magnetism. Turn your unceasing desire for acknowledgment, appreciation and acceptance into wanting to live a life of significance.

You are there! You’re ready to begin the era of “entrance to the Land,” the era of serving Hashem in the real world where the miracles that took place daily in the *Midbar* aren’t on the menu anymore. Hashem will help you, and will help us all reach the final and real return to being beloved, close and dear. ■

by MATIS GLENN

# BACK IN KOVNO

An interview with Rabbi Moshe Sheinfeld and Mr. Shmuel Stern

Background: Students Center building

## KOVNO, LITHUANIA

A bastion of Litvishe Jewry immortalized in a trove of countless stories of its illustrious Rabbanim and citizens, Kovno was once home to over 50 shuls, filled with *ehrlischer* Yidden.

Bordering the Yeshivah town of Baranovitch, Kovno was led by Gedolei Yisrael the likes of Harav Yitzchak Elchanan Spector and Harav Avraham Duber Shapiro, author of *sefer D'var Avraham*. Sadly, this *kehillah kedoshah* was engulfed in the fires of the Holocaust. A ghetto was established in the city and was ultimately decimated. Kovno is also home to the hallowed ground on which Harav Elchanan Wasserman, *Hy"d*, was martyred by the Nazis, *ym"s*.

Today, hundreds of Israeli Jews, mostly distant from their heritage, travel to Kovno to study medicine in its university. Seeing that there were no resources for them and that many were intermarrying, *R"l*, Reb Ze'ev (Willie) Stern, *z"l*, a London businessman, opened a Jewish Students Center to cater to their needs.

But it wasn't until the center hired its first full-time Rav, Harav Moshe Sheinfeld of Yerushalayim, that Kovno began to once again become home to *shomrei Torah umitzvos*.

We say of Yerushalayim in our *tefillos* on Tisha Ba'av, "*For You, Hashem, have destroyed it in fire, and in fire You will rebuild it.*"

And what is the fire that is rebuilding Kovno? The flames of *shor she'nagach es haparah*. The flames of *Chumash* with Rashi, *sifrei halachah* and *mussar*, ignited by Rabbi Sheinfeld, a unique *talmid chacham* with a heart overflowing with love for *Klal Yisrael*.

Rabbi Sheinfeld and Mr. Shmuel Stern, grandson of Reb Ze'ev, who lives in Yerushalayim, spoke with Hamodia about their mission to save the new Jews of Kovno.



**MR. SHMUEL STERN:** My grandfather, Reb Ze'ev (Willie) Stern, from London, had a business in Kaunas (Kovno), Lithuania. He wanted to operate in a free economic zone. He was walking in the streets one day, in 2010, and heard Hebrew. He went up to the person to ask what the story was, and the man told him that he was an Israeli student studying medicine in Kaunas.

Mr. Stern looked into the student community there and saw there were no Jewish facilities. The students from Israel who were not necessarily religious — although some of them were — generally left home for approximately six years to study medicine and came to a place without any Jewish infrastructure; these people were on their own.

There was at the time, a high percentage of intermarriage, because these students, without a very strong religious background, were landing on foreign soil with no kosher food and no one to help them. They ended up becoming lost to the Jewish nation; they would often intermarry and ended up staying in graduate medical schools, getting an EU medical license and moving elsewhere in Europe. My grandfather, who himself was a Harvard graduate, understood the difficulties of being a Yid alone in a gentile population and decided he was going to do something to help these Jews in Lithuania, and that's when he opened the Jewish Students Center.

Yesterday, we met a Rav of a *kehillah* in Manhattan, also a Harvard graduate. He said that a single, unmarried person in the United States college system has a very small chance of maintaining a Jewish identity. He's going to come out of the system looking different than how he came in.

My grandfather graduated around 60 years ago, but the situation has deteriorated since then. I travel to Kaunas frequently; I used to travel with my grandfather monthly to oversee the business there.

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** After I got married, we lived in Yerushalayim, and I was learning in Yeshivas Nachlas Halevi'im in Haifa; we were a typical *kollel* family, but after three years we needed *parnassah*. It became difficult in our area, rent increased, and after discussing it with my wife, we decided it was not possible to continue.

I started to think about what we could do for *parnassah*, and then *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* sent me a friend who told me about a group of families in Migdal Ha'emek. They wanted four or five families to build a community, with an organization called Nefesh Yehudi. We moved there, and my job was to study with university students two or three times a week.

I remember the first time I prepared a lesson with students. I approached my *Rosh Kollel* and shared my concern. "This is the first time that I'm talking with secular people, and I don't know how to learn or study with them." He opened *perek shor she'nagach es haparah* in *Bava Kamma* and told me to read the *mishnah* with them, ask them questions back and forth, and it would be interesting to them.

I tried to invest my soul in the students I was learning with; I wanted them to leave the classes with a lot of *tochen* and Torah values that would have a lasting impact.

Before every session I would prepare for several hours. Such planning is necessary when you're talking with secular students.

Slowly, *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* sent me *hatzlachah*, and they started coming to me. After a few years, I started going to a few universities — in Haifa, the Kinneret, Tzfas. I gave *shiurim*, and



*baruch Hashem*, we saw the fruits of our labor. Everything is *siyatta diShmaya...* being *machzir ha'atarah leyoshna*.

When you study Torah with someone, you can see an immediate change; they are like a newborn baby.

After about four years of seeing success in this endeavor, I saw a small advertisement in a newspaper, which is in and of itself *hashgachah*. From the time we moved to Migdal HaEmek, we never read the newspapers. One day, I saw a lot of extra newspapers for free and for some reason decided to take one home. On the first page, the advertisement said that somebody was looking for a couple to do *kiruv* in Eastern Europe.

I saw that the organization publishing the advertisement was none other than Nefesh Yehudi, the same group I had worked with previously. Within a short time, we found ourselves in Kaunas.

We first came, as Mr. Stern said, for a period of 10 months. On a good day, we had about 30 students at the facility. But slowly we grew, to the point where today, nearly every Israeli student comes to us in some capacity. We're open 24/7, and of the 500 students coming to us at various times, we now have between 150 and 250 students coming to us daily.

I believe that the Torah itself does the *kiruv*; we don't need to do much else. Just give them a *blatt Gemara*, *parashas hashavuah*, *Mesillas Yesharim*, *Michtav MeEliyahu...* it doesn't matter very much what they're learning in particular; you can see the change in their souls right away. But with the young men, I emphasize Gemara... There's nothing like it; Gemara connects them more

*shiurim* for everyone, I talk about *hashkafah* as it relates to the *parashah*.

### **So, you don't appeal to them with guitars.**

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** The main thing is Torah. But we follow the example of Avraham Avinu and bring them in the door with two things – food and a smile. We serve kosher food in the Kovno cafeteria every day from 12 noon until 4 p.m., and it draws people in.

**MR. STERN:** We're the “home away from home” for these students; parents call asking us to take care of their kids.

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** Most of the students are post-army too, and they're looking for a place to put their heads.

On our first trip to Kovno, we met Mr. Stern after landing in Lithuania. He came bearing bottles of water for us, which was greatly appreciated, as we could not bring water on the flight.

**MR. STERN:** I travel to Kaunas frequently; I used to travel with my grandfather monthly to oversee the business there, which still exists. So, I was there to greet Rav Moshe when he landed. And as he said, it was a bit more of a desert then, but he's managed to build it up. Now Jewish life is thriving, but then it was still in its early days.

### **What did the Center do in its early days?**

**MR. STERN:** The Center started off quite small, providing kosher food to the Jewish students. Mr. Stern eventually brought in a Rabbi to give *shiurim*; he was there on an ad hoc basis and would drive in from Belarus. Well, now the borders are a bit funny over there, but at the time, Belarus was not far from Kaunas. Eventually, somebody moved in, but Rabbi Sheinfeld's was the first permanent position there. He came for a 10-month stint, and it's now been over 10 years, because he realizes the importance of what he's doing.

A lot of our fundraising goes into subsidizing the food in our Center; we charge the students around the same price as the university does for non-kosher food. This is possible only because of our supporters.

### **How many Israeli students were there at the time?**

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** There were about 60 or 70 when we first started, and more and more started coming to our Center. They came to us for kosher food, for which Reb



*Reading of the megillah on Purim.*

than anything, as Chazal say, “*Hamaor shebah machziro l'mutav*” (Eicha Rabba 2). With the young women, I give *shiurim* in *halachah* for the most part. Then in the general

Ze'ev Stern, with his huge Jewish heart, put in a lot of effort to facilitate. It was his "baby."

**MR. STERN:** Very often when we see a problem, either individually or in the community, people think, "It's not our problem," that someone else is going to deal with it. When my grandfather saw a problem that was not in his neighborhood, he asked himself, "What can I do about this?" He found out why there were Israeli students there to begin with... he found out it was due to lack of space in Israeli medical schools.

And it's not just Lithuania. They go all over Europe; there are thousands of Israeli students in Hungary, Italy, the Czech Republic.

The shul is a museum; the Students Center uses it at times, including for *Selichos*.



**MR. STERN:** We provide the full gamut of Jewish services and facilities our community needs in order to tempt them to spend their time within our Center. We have activities such as basketball nights... whatever is trending at the

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** Today, more than 50% of Israeli medical students study abroad.

**MR. STERN:** One of the big issues is that many of them don't return to Israel. And so... we should never need it, but some of the emergency rooms in Yerushalayim are staffed entirely by Arab doctors.

**Can you describe how the Center operates?**

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** We have a cafeteria on the first floor and a study room upstairs, where students can come at any time – night or day – with a coffee and cake station.

We have almost daily *shiurim*, and on Shabbos and Yamim Tovim, we have a full house for our programs.

time. We have a shul, computer stations in the upstairs study area, quiet areas... We do our best to make sure that these guys do whatever they need to do, in the environs of our Center, to keep them from mingling as much as possible with the general population.

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** We have three main rules for the students: They aren't allowed to bring in non-kosher food, they can't be *mechallel Shabbos* openly (such as taking out their cellphones), and the last rule – which is the hardest for many of them to follow – is that they may not bring non-Jewish friends to the Center.

**MR. STERN:** Our core policy was to stem the tide of intermarriage, so this rule ensures that the Center maintains that mission.

**Do the students follow the rules?**

Mr. Ze'ev (Willie) Stern writing a letter in a *sefer Torah* and attending the subsequent *hachnasas sefer Torah*, a few months before his *petirah*, which was around Purim in 2020.



They do! Very, very few students refuse to come because of the rules.

**How many students are men and how many are women?**

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** It's about half and half.

**Are there minyanim?**

**MR. STERN:** Whenever we have 10 men willing to *daven*. It really depends... each year is different.

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** *Baruch Hashem*, Shabbos and Yamim Tovim we have full *minyanim*.

**What sort of guidance do you give the students for when they leave university, especially for those who are showing progress and are ready to embrace Yiddishkeit fully?**

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** You must understand that over 90% of the students who come to our Center are totally secular and know nothing about Judaism. To bring them to observance usually takes a few years. I keep in touch with them after graduation. Most of our students return to Israel after university.

As one example, one of our students was on the verge of getting engaged to marry a non-Jewish woman. Harav Moshe Shapiro, *zt"l*, *Rosh Yeshivah* of Shev Shmaita, visited our Center every year. I told this boy that a very famous Rav and *mekubal* would visit and that he should talk with him. Harav Shapiro shook the student's nose! The boy was bewildered. He asked us, "Why did the Rav do that?" I *davened* to Hashem for *siyatta diShmaya* to put the right words in my head. I told him that the *mekubal*

must have seen *charon af* – anger in *Shamayim* – over what the boy was about to do.

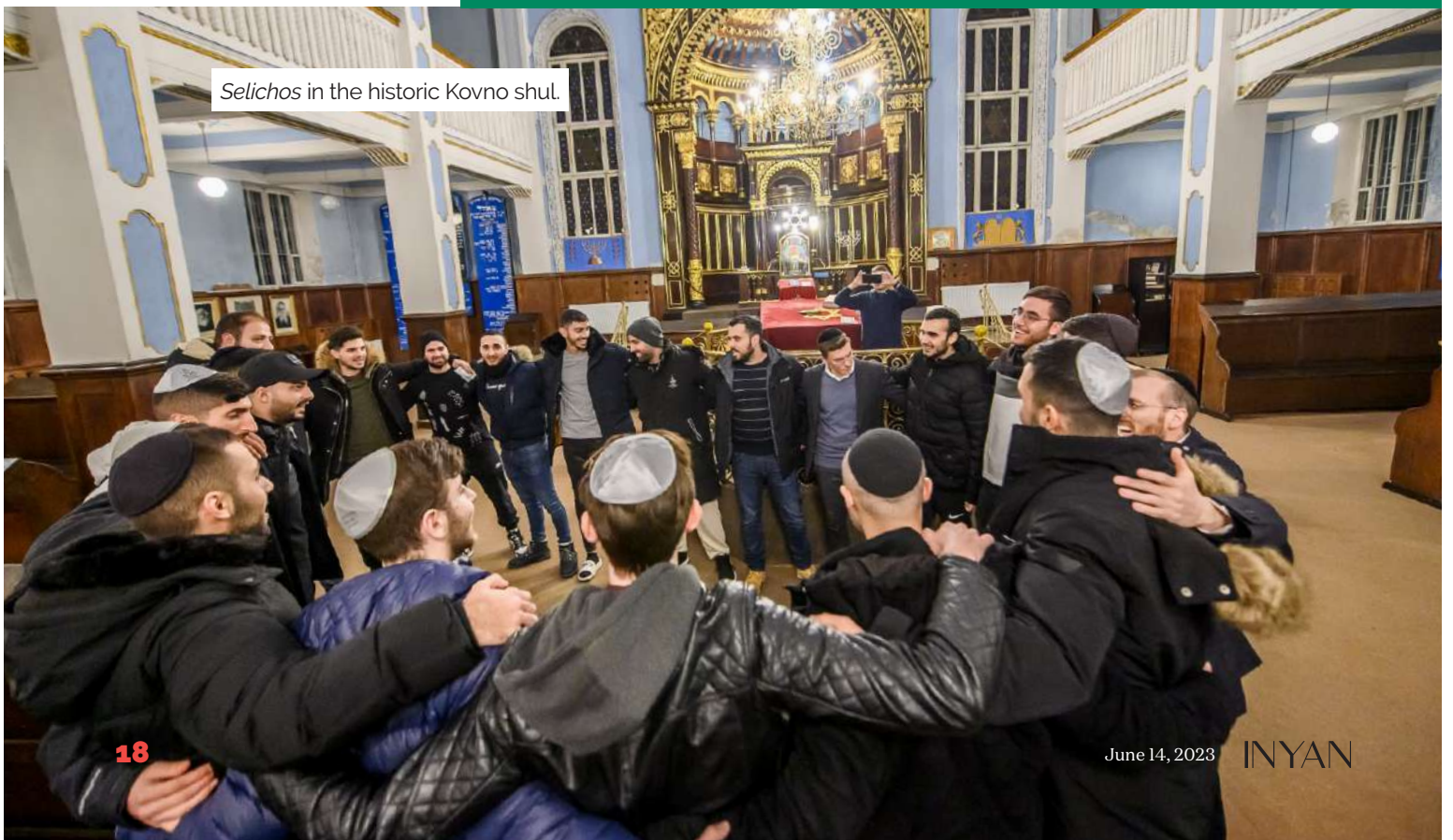
Last summer, I found out that he had become a complete *ba'al teshuvah* and is now married. He became a geriatric specialist. As a *frum* doctor, he was faced with a serious problem. The hospital he was working in had an



Visit from Harav Shimon Galai.

understanding among doctors not to fight to preserve the lives of elderly people, though they didn't say it outright.

**MR. STERN:** From Rabbi Sheinfeld's lessons, this young man understood that something was wrong, and he



*Selichos* in the historic Kovno shul.

changed his life's direction, moving to pediatric medicine.

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** He now works in a hospital in the south—he says that every doctor fights for the lives of sick children in the hospitals. I've brought his questions on *Hilchos Shabbos* to our *Posek*, Harav Shraga Kallus, *shlita*.

**MR. STERN:** We have them for six years, where they come on a daily basis, but it's a slow and steady progression, like the story of Rabi Akiva and the drops of water on stone. Not all of them change quickly, and we don't even want them to. We want them to find their own pace. But the common denominator among all of them is that they leave with a greater appreciation for *halachah* and for Yiddishkeit. Very often they tell us, "We discovered Judaism in Lithuania; we were born in Israel, we lived in Israel, yet we discovered Yiddishkeit in Lithuania."

One of our students asked for a pair of *tefillin* six months ago. He had been coming to *tefillin*, and of course we're not judgmental—we accept it for what it is—but one day Rabbi Sheinfeld gently asked the boy why he didn't wear *tefillin*. He answered that he's an *istinis*, a sensitive person, and can't bring himself to wear used *tefillin*. Rabbi Sheinfeld called me, and I went to a *sofer*, bought *tefillin* and sent it to Kovno.

This student has come so far that in the Rabbi's absence due to our current fundraising trip, he gave the *Chumash/Rashi shiur* Friday night!

#### How long had he been under Rabbi Sheinfeld's tutelage?

**MR. STERN:** About five years.

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** And this student remembers everything, even things I said four years ago.

#### Have any of the students wanted to leave in the middle of their studies to go to yeshivah?

Almost all of them will complete their education in university, but we did have one student who wanted to leave at the beginning of his third year. I urged him to stay, so he wouldn't regret later if he didn't become a doctor.

He wanted to leave because he is a *Kohen* and was worried about how he would keep the *halachos* of *tumas ha'meis* as a doctor in Israel. I introduced him to Hagaon Harav Yitzchak Zilberstein, *shlita*, with whom he consulted. He remained in university, but now, *baruch Hashem*, he is married with a family, and he is in his fourth year of *Dayanus* study in Bnei Brak!

#### What progress has the Center made in stemming the tide of intermarriage?



**MR. STERN:** We've been seeing a lot of marriages between the Israeli students themselves, which we are very proud of. I'm a *Kohen*, and I've done two *pidyon haben* ceremonies on children born in Kovno. Rabbi Sheinfeld brings in *mohalim* from other parts of Europe for his own children as well... the Rabbi [Sheinfeld] recently had a boy, and the *mohel* was from Vienna.

At the *bris* of Rabbi Sheinfeld's son (L), performed during the pandemic, when finding a *mohel* was difficult

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** At one *pidyon haben*, not only was the student's baby redeemed, but the grandfather came and redeemed the baby's father [the student] as well.

**MR. STERN:** We recently built a *mikveh*, which has developed such a great reputation for *kashrus*, that Rabbanim from all over Europe send people to us for *geirus*, including the London *Beis Din*. Mr. Duvid Singer of Heritage Tours was instrumental in establishing the *mikveh*.

#### That brings me to another question: Rabbi Sheinfeld, how do you raise your own family in Kovno?

**REBBETZIN SHEINFELD:** Our oldest son is actually going to Eretz Yisrael for yeshivah now. When they were younger, we used to have three *frum* families and a *cheder*.

**MR. STERN:** Once upon a time, we had a budget for the three families: the Rabbi, a *melamed*, a *mashgiach* and their families. Unfortunately, due to budgetary constraints, we've had to lessen the *frum* presence there... we'd love to increase it again.

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** When one of my sons turned *bar mitzvah*, a group of *talmidim* from Chevron Yeshivah came to visit. It was after Simchas Torah, and the atmosphere



was very festive; a lot of our students told us that they had never seen such a thing before — a group of 60 *avreichim* so full of joy and singing. One of our students told me afterward that he ended a relationship he had with a non-Jewish woman after being inspired by the event.

**MR. STERN:** This group came because Kovno is “on the map” of places that people visit because of its history and *kivrei tzaddikim*.

**Speaking of Kovno’s rich history as a center of Torah Jewry, how much do you emphasize the city’s past, its Gedolim and the tragedy of its destruction during the Holocaust?**

**MR. STERN:** At least once a year, the Rabbi takes a large group of students on a trip to show them what Yiddishkeit was in the city and to connect them with their heritage.

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** Kovno’s history fills the atmosphere here, but it’s not our main focus, because there is a danger of people looking at it just as the past, as they would other historical events and places. For virtually all the tourists who come here, 90% of their intention is to see just the history aspect; in our Center, we are building the future.

Of course, we take the students to the *kevarim* of Harav Elchanan Wasserman, *Hy”d*, the Dvar Avraham, *zt”l*, Harav Yitzchak Elchanan Spector, *zt”l*, and the place where Harav Wasserman was killed *al kiddush Hashem*. But even there, I speak about taking the past and using it to build the future.

**What is it like for the students to learn Gemara in the Center?**

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** These are very smart young men; they catch on rather quickly, though most do not know how to read *Rashi* at first. The layout of the *Gemara* is confusing in the beginning, but they really get into it. Two of our students with whom I learn *b’chavrusa* mentioned a problem they were having a few years ago. They were excited to listen to a press conference from Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, but it was scheduled for 8:30 p.m., during our *seder*. As the time approached, I closed my *Gemara* so as not to make them feel uncomfortable. They looked at each other, and after a visible struggle within themselves, they decided to continue learning!

I almost started crying. After *seder*, I told them that what they did was an *Akeidas Yitzchak* — a sacrifice for Hashem that is so precious in His eyes. I asked them to give me a *brachah*; we do this with our students when they sacrifice for any *mitzvah*... for *shmiras Shabbos*, *kashrus*, etc.... all very hard to keep in Kovno. They asked me what I could possibly want. I said that in order to continue our *avodas hakodesh* in the Center, we need money. I asked that they put their hands on my head and bless me that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* should send his *brachah* to this place. On my way home from the Center, I received a phone call from a donor whom we hadn’t heard from for a

long time. He asked, “Do you need money?” I stopped the car and told him what had just happened.

**Are there any non-Israeli Jews who attend the Center, i.e., Lithuanian natives?**

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** We’ve had only two; one has graduated already.

**You both mentioned earlier that parents are concerned with sending their kids abroad. Has the war in Ukraine caused parents and students to be worried?**

**MR. STERN:** The Lithuanians are worried because they were a former USSR state, but the Israelis aren’t so concerned.

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** The main impact of the war on us has been financial; everything is more expensive now.

**What’s your “pitch” when fundraising?**

**MR. STERN:** Because we provide the full gamut of Jewish services, we try to find what speaks to the individual. For some, it’s the kosher food, for others it’s the *kollel* program where the students learn *Gemara*...

**What are your greatest challenges and successes with your students?**

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** My main challenge is when I don’t succeed in helping them manage their own challenges.

Also, I have to fight every year with the university to allow the students to not take their exams during Yamim Tovim and Shabbos. Every two years there is a new “personality” in the university. We also struggle with raising our own children.

**MR. STERN:** They schedule exams and events on Shabbos. This last year there was an exam on Yom Kippur. We tried meeting with the dean, but he wouldn’t listen to us. He says he doesn’t recognize religion, even though there are no exams on Christian holidays. We wrote about it in Israeli newspapers and publicized our plight. The issue got the attention of the president of Israel at the time, Reuven Rivlin.

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** I get tremendous *sippuk* from the students whom I’ve reached. We see it with the students and couples who continue to ask us *she’eilos*. This is true even with students who didn’t come frequently to our Center — they reach out to us later, which shows the impact we’re having.

**What are your plans for the future?**

**Rabbi SHEINFELD:** We want to increase the activities of the Center.

**MR. STERN:** We are trying to raise funds to refurbish a new building we purchased. ■



# In Conversation With **Rabbi Eliezer Marcus**

*Rav, Congregation Sha'arei  
Tefilla, Providence, RI*

*Would the Rav please provide a bit of background information?*

I grew up in Toronto, where I attended the Mesivta of Toronto headed by Harav Chaim Mendel Brodsky. I learned in a small yeshivah led by Harav Chaim Ilsin in Eretz Yisrael, and later in Brisk, under Harav Dovid Soloveitchik, *zt"l*. I also learned under Harav Yitzchok Lichtenstein, presently *Rosh Yeshivah* of Yeshiva Torah Vodaas, when he had a yeshivah in Monsey. Subsequently, for seven years, I learned under Harav Shlomo Miller at Kollel Avreichim Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies in Toronto.

Before coming to Providence, I was the Rav of the Young Israel of Greater Buffalo for several years. I served, and continue to serve, as Rabbinic Administrator for the Vaad Hakashrus of Buffalo (BVK).

*Your father, Rabbi Raphael Marcus, z"l, served in the rabbanus in New York as well as at the B'nai Torah congregation in Toronto for over a quarter of a century. How did his legacy impact your life and your rabbanus?*

Actually, my father passed away before I turned 20, so the opportunities to be influenced by him were limited.

My father was gifted with the ability to make *rabbanus* and personal relationships seem natural. That made a big impression on me as a child, and I aspired to emulate that. He was relaxed, easygoing and did not easily get upset, even if people annoyed him. I remember once walking with him to shul when someone started to hurl insults at him. My father calmly acknowledged the fellow and continued walking. He realized this person was bitter about life, and

it had nothing to do with the Rabbi.

After learning at Mir Yerushalayim in Eretz Yisrael for a short time, principally under Harav Nachum Partzovitz, *zt"l*, he returned to the United States at the behest of his parents and entered Hebrew Theological College-Beis HaMidrash LaTorah in Skokie (a Chicago suburb), when his future father-in-law, Harav Aharon Soloveitchik, *zt"l*, was the *Rosh Yeshivah*.

My father was a tremendous *pike'ach*. He had a gift for understanding people — each according to his or her level — and therefore was able to provide people with what they needed, whether emotionally or otherwise. From observing him, you gained an understanding of the greatness of doing a *chessed* for another Yid.

Perhaps that is why his shul drew such a colorful assortment of people.

It is noteworthy to mention my mother, Rebbetzin Rochel Leah Marcus, *shetichyeh*. She was the backbone and partner in all my father's accomplishments. Her *tznius* and humility are remarkable. She has been an *almanah* for many years; the grace and fortitude with which she faces life's challenges serve as a guiding light for us. We continually consult with her on how to face life's trying moments. She moved to Eretz Yisrael to live near my siblings.

*It seems that your father was a person of great humility.*

Yes. In fact, that was probably one of his defining qualities. If you asked anyone who knew him, they would tell you that he was extremely self-effacing. In no way did he hold himself to be above anyone else.

*Who was another major influence in your life?*

As I alluded to earlier, Harav Aharon Soloveitchik was my grandfather. My father married his daughter. He passed away before my 14th birthday, so there were not many opportunities for me to interact with him. Still and all, his image was certainly ingrained in us and has impacted my adult life and my *rabbanus*. He served as a role model with regard to striving for *gadlus baTorah, middos tovos* and other qualities.

My grandfather used to relate the following story, which my father would tell over in his name: A Jewish newspaper writer asked various Rabbanim what was the principal work of a Rav. Harav Chaim Brisker answered that the main calling of a Rav is to do *chessed*. My father took that comment very seriously as far as determining what was the objective of his *rabbanus*. It was obviously an *avodas hachayim* for him, which impacted me and, I would add, the rest of the family.

Harav Shomo Miller was a great influence on me, since I merited to be a member of his *kollel* for several years. I was in his proximity on a daily basis, observing and sometimes posing a question to seek clarity in a *sugya*.

When responding to any question, Rav Shlomo would ask: What is the *retzon Hashem* in this situation? Here is an example: After shuls were closed for many weeks due to COVID, at a certain point, the governor of New York allowed shuls in New York State to reopen with certain restrictions. The permission notwithstanding, there was a lot of pushback from people who were fearful, and there were varying positions among Rabbanim about what to do. I contacted him about this. Rav Shlomo's clear and emphatic guidance that we could reopen, greatly helped me during that period; he clearly viewed that as the *retzon Hashem*.

*What impelled you to decide to enter the rabbanus? Was it due to your distinguished family background, as your father and grandfather and other forebears of yours were Rabbanim?*

I would say it stemmed from observing my father. Through his actions, my father conveyed the idea that the key to a meaningful life is to have a positive impact on other people. The more grounded someone is in Torah, the more his *ruchniyus* overflows, and influences other people.

Interestingly, my uncle Rabbi Jay Marcus, my father's brother, who served as Rav of the Young Israel of Staten Island for many years, is the founder and *Rosh Yeshivah* of Yeshivat Reishit in Eretz Yisrael. My brother, Rabbi Shmuel Marcus, is Rav of the Young Israel of Queens Valley in Kew Gardens Hills.

My great-great-great-grandfather was the Beis Halevi, who was a great-grandson of Rav Chaim Volozhiner.

*Please tell us about the shul and how you came to Providence.*

Just to give some historical background, the Providence Hebrew Day School building, where the shul is located, has been hosting a *minyán* for its *talmidim* since the early 1970s. Since *baalei battim* from the community attended the *minyán*, it brought the students into contact with the local *frum* community and became a community of sorts.

It became established as Sha'arei Tefilla in 2009 by a group of families who desired to form a *kehillah* through which they could grow together in their *ruchniyus*. Rabbi Dovid Schwartz, a member of the Providence Community Kollel, was the first *Mara d'Asra*. He essentially laid the foundation for the shul, and its early success was due to his outreach and warm relationships with the *mispallelim*. He encouraged each person and family to grow in Torah and *mitzvos*.

I'll give you an idea of the learning that takes place in the shul. On Sunday mornings, we have a *shiur* as part of the Yorucha project of Bais Havaad of Lakewood, a learning program that's designed to enable *frum* businessmen to gain in-depth knowledge on how to run their businesses *al pi halachah*. The Bais Havaad has developed a very professional learning syllabus, with accompanying *shiurim* and personal guidance on topics such as *dina d'malchusa dina, gezel akum* and how to market a business according to *halachah*. They provide pamphlets and *marei mekomos*, the basis of the *shiur* that takes place.

Nightly learning takes place in our *Beis Medrash*. I give a *halachah shiur* – presently we are doing *hilchos tevilas keilim* with the *Shach* and the *Taz*. I also give a *dvar halachah* each evening between *Minchah* and *Maariv*.

For the women, I give a *mussar/hashkafah shiur* on *Mesillas Yesharim*. Before each Yom Tov, I speak on the essential theme of the Yom Tov.

I give a broader type of *halachah shiur* on Shabbos, each week focused on a different topic.

There is a sense of cohesiveness among our members in terms of their *she'ifos* – they are all growth-oriented *bonei aliyah*, trying to make progress in their Torah learning, observance, *middos* and *chessed*. Yet, they are a diverse group in terms of background – we have *geirim* and *baalei teshuvah*, in addition to those who were raised *frum*.

In general, it is noteworthy to mention that Providence has a strong Torah community. It is remarkable how many people have *chavrusos* and make time to learn. Our community is fortunate to have in its midst the Yeshivah Gedolah of Providence whose *Rosh Yeshivah* is Harav Eliezer Gibber, *shlita*. Rav Gibber, a *talmid* of Harav Yaakov Yitzchok Ruderman, *zt"l*, and Harav Yaakov Moshe Kulefsky, *zt"l*, of Ner

Yisrael in Baltimore, serves as a tremendous asset to our community.

*Any meaningful memories you can share about your years in the rabbanus, about Yidden you inspired or significant events?*

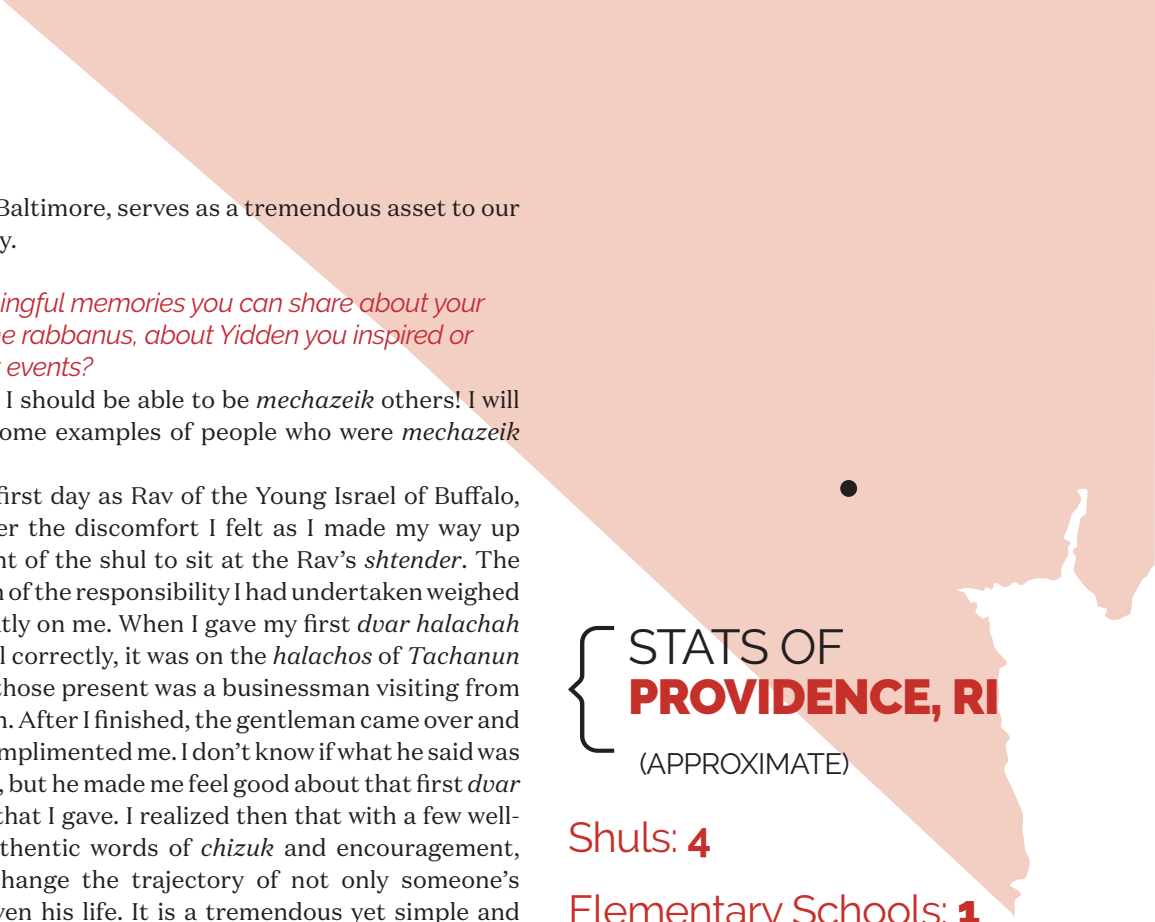
*Halevai* I should be able to be *mechazeik* others! I will give you some examples of people who were *mechazeik* me.

On my first day as Rav of the Young Israel of Buffalo, I remember the discomfort I felt as I made my way up to the front of the shul to sit at the Rav's *shtender*. The realization of the responsibility I had undertaken weighed down greatly on me. When I gave my first *dvar halachah* – if I recall correctly, it was on the *halachos* of *Tachanun* – among those present was a businessman visiting from out of town. After I finished, the gentleman came over and warmly complimented me. I don't know if what he said was really true, but he made me feel good about that first *dvar halachah* that I gave. I realized then that with a few well-meant, authentic words of *chizuk* and encouragement, you can change the trajectory of not only someone's day but even his life. It is a tremendous yet simple and easy *chessed* to do and just needs a little forethought. Even well-established Rabbanim will appreciate such feedback.

Here is a story that gives a flavor of what it is like to serve as a Rav outside of the major Torah centers. A bishop in Buffalo once requested to meet with me. It wasn't entirely surprising, because he was known for his warm support for the State of Israel. At the meeting, he told me that his wife is Jewish, and therefore, his sons are Jewish and he wanted them to have a bar mitzvah. It was interesting that he saw them that way. I noted the irony of his approaching an Orthodox Rabbi about this. He said he had already checked out the more "progressive" movements and found them empty of substance.

How often does a *galach* come to the Rabbi and request a bar mitzvah? He set up a learning session for them, but eventually, he moved out of Buffalo so it was short-lived. I lost touch with him, but I believe they held some sort of bar mitzvah event in New York. I was thinking that perhaps this unusual happening was the result of some ancestor of theirs *davening* for his *einiklach* in *Shamayim*.

There was an elderly gentleman in my shul in Buffalo who did not have a strong learning background. He came from more of a Modern Orthodox background and had grown up in Philadelphia. At that point, he was in his 80s; he was very frail and needed assistance in getting around. One day, I asked if he would like to make a *chavrusashaft* with me, to which he agreed. He did have an affinity for *Maseches Kesubos*, so we started to learn it together every week. It was an act of *mesirus nefesh* for him. His wife would drive him to the shul, but his walk from the car into the building took some time, and maneuvering the stairs was an ordeal. Then, after 45 minutes of learning,



## STATS OF PROVIDENCE, RI (APPROXIMATE)

Shuls: **4**

Elementary Schools: **1**

Yeshivah High Schools: **0**

Girls' High Schools: **1**

Yeshivah Gedolos: **1**

Mikvaos **1**

Eruv: **YES**

leaving was also difficult. Still and all, if for some reason he was unable to come, he would be so disappointed! I offered him an ArtScroll *gemara* to make it easier, but he insisted on a regular *gemara*. I would explain a *Rashi* over and over if need be. Sadly, he passed away just before I left Buffalo.

It was inspiring to see this individual surmount formidable obstacles in order to learn Torah, even for just under an hour. Do we go out of our way for a *mitzvah* when it is a bit difficult? I found this experience to be a tremendous lesson in *ahavas haTorah* and *ameilus baTorah* that all of us can learn from.

*Thank you, Rabbi Marcus. We wish you much continued hatzlachah in your avodas hakodesh.* ■

*Photo credit: Jewish Rhode Island-Sarah Greenleaf*

# A WORLD THAT WAS



Harav Shlomo Tzvi Strasser (C) greeting officials of the Joint Distribution Committee in Austria, Vienna, in the early 1950s.

Any additional information regarding Rabbi Strasser and/or the other individuals in the photo would be greatly appreciated.

LOCATION:

▶ ***Austria, Vienna***

DATE:

▶ ***circa 1950s***

SUBMITTED BY:

▶ ***Mr. Yoel Rosenfeld***

## READERS' RESPONSES

17 Shevat 5783/February 8, 2023



Recently, *Inyan* featured a picture of the Amshinover Rebbe. You wrote that his great-grandson is the present Rebbe in Boro Park. In fact, the Amshinover Rebbe in Eretz Yisrael is his great-grandson, and the Rebbe living in Boro Park is a grandson of his nephew. When the Rebbe escaped to Japan, a nephew joined the Rebbe's immediate family, eventually coming with him to America.

You also wrote that the Rebbe was instrumental in "helping thousands of *talmidim* from European yeshivos escape to Shanghai via Russia and Japan." The number of people who received visas from Sugihara (the Japanese consul) was roughly 2,500, of which about 500 were yeshivah students. The decision for the *talmidim* of the Mirrer yeshivah to take the Japanese route was made by the elder *talmidim* of the yeshivah. It is true that the *talmidim* of the Lubavitcher yeshivah who had escaped to Vilna were told by their Rebbe to do whatever the Amshinover Rebbe did, and they, together with the *talmidim* of the Lubliner yeshivah, were definitely led and influenced by Reb Shimele (Harav Shimon Shalom Kalisch, the Amshinover Rebbe), *zy"á*, to take this route despite the risk. There were others, as well, who decided to join.

In Japan and Shanghai, the Rebbe was one of the leaders, as he was a very wise man and did much *chessed*. Many people, including yeshivah *talmidim*, would come to him for *chizuk*. There is a famous story about the Japanese who were in control of Shanghai after entering the war with America. They summoned the elders of the Jewish community to a meeting (due to the pressure from the Germans about the Jews they were harboring in Shanghai). At that meeting, they asked, "Why do the Germans hate the Jews?" The Rebbe answered, "Because we are Asians." That was all the Japanese needed to hear. The Rebbe later said, "I don't know what possessed me to say that — it was what the *Eibershter* put in my mouth."

I heard from my father, Rav Shaul Licht (who was a *talmid* of Harav Aharon Kotler, *zt"l*, in Kletsk and with him in Japan), that on his way to Japan, Harav Reuven Grozovsky, *zt"l*, traveled on the same ship as the Amshinover Rebbe. The ship anchored on Shabbos, and Reb Shimele refused to disembark until Motzoei Shabbos. However, Rav Reuven held that Sunday was Shabbos. (Due to the international dateline, there was a big question as to which day was Shabbos in Kobe, Japan.) Out of respect for the Rebbe, Reb Reuven did not disembark until nightfall. When Rav Reuven came to see Rav Aharon, who was already in Japan, he asked him, "When do you keep Shabbos?" Rav Aharon told him that he kept Shabbos — on Shabbos.

(This was before they received the *psak* from the Chazon Ish to keep Shabbos on Sunday.) In Reb Dovid Mandelbaum's book about the Lubliner yeshivah in Shanghai, a different

version of this story appears about the Rebbe's arrival to Japan. However, my father was present when Rav Reuven came to Rav Aharon, and I heard this story from my father.

The custom of the Amshinover Rebbe's delay in their *davening* and *mitzvos* is obviously an old one, as my father told me the Rebbe would eat *afikoman* (in Shanghai) when it was already morning.

Thank you for continuing the column *A World That Was*, as it is important to keep the memory of these *tzad-dikim* alive — people who had an *achrayus* for Klal Yisrael and from whom we can learn.

**Yosef Licht**  
**Kew Gardens**

I was surprised to read that Harav Shimon Shulem Kalisch of Amshinov has a great-grandson who is today Rebbe in Boro Park, Brooklyn. Harav Shimon Shulem escaped to Shanghai during the war. His son, Reb Meir'l, *zy"á*, succeeded him as Rebbe in Eretz Yisrael. The Rebbe had a son-in-law, Reb Chaim Milikovsky, whose son is the Amshinover Rebbe, *shlita*, in Eretz Yisrael. He resides in Bayit Vegan.

The Amshinover Rebbe in Boro Park is a great-grandson of Harav Yosef of Amshinov, a brother of Harav Shimon Shulem, both of whom were sons of Harav Menachem, *zy"á*. During the war, Reb Itzikel, the son of Harav Yosef, nephew of Harav Shimon Shulem, ran together with his uncle to Kobe, Japan, and thus he survived the war. After the war, Harav Shimon Shulem urged his nephew to open a *Beis Medrash* in America. Reb Itzikel's son, Harav Yosef, *zy"á*, was *niftar* two years ago, and his grandson, Harav Menachem Kalisch, *shlita*, is today Amshinover Rebbe in Boro Park.

**Shia Landau**

An amazing story about the Amshinover Rebbe can be found in the book *The Fugu Plan*, by Marvin Tokayer.

This book tells the full story of Mr. Sugihara and the Mir yeshivah.

**Leo Mandelbaum**  
**Raanana, Israel**

*Readers: If you have any additional information about the photo(s) on this page, please contact us at [aworldthatwas@hamodia.com](mailto:aworldthatwas@hamodia.com) or fax (718) 853-9103.*



# Prayer & Passion

## OF GRASS AND TREES

We continue with our commentary on the *perek* of *Mizmor Shir L'Yom HaShabbos*.

*Tzaddik katamar yifrach, k'erez baLevanon yisgeh*, A *tzaddik* will flourish like a date palm, like a cedar in the Lebanon he will grow tall.

In a previous *passuk*, Dovid HaMelech likened the wicked to blades of grass. Grass grows very quickly, almost as soon as it is planted, but when not watered adequately, it can quickly turn brown, then white and even wither away. By contrast, it can take years for a date palm or cedar tree to fully develop, but once it has grown, it can remain strong and healthy for many, many years.

At times, the wicked achieve meteoric success, accomplishing their evil goals in a short time. Often, they fall as quickly as they rise, as was the case with Haman.

The *tzaddik*, by contrast, spends a lifetime on self-improvement, climbing the spiritual ladder carefully, one rung at a time. His hard-earned achievements are his forever, and even when he stumbles, he garners his inner strength to correct his mistake and can even surpass his previous level.

There is another message in the comparison between the withering grass and the strong date palm and cedar tree. An incredible, indisputable fact of history is the fall of many mighty empires and the continued existence through the kindness of Hashem, of an often oppressed and persecuted *Klal Yisrael*. We are the mighty cedar tree that, *b'ezras Hashem*, will continue to exist no matter what our enemies plot against us.

*Adapted from "Service of the Heart," published by ArtScroll/Mesorah*



## timeless truths

ADAPTED BY  
RABBI MOSHE BAMBERGER

An important lesson  
in *hachnasas orchim* —  
hospitality — is to show  
your guest his bedroom  
before feeding him;  
**this way, he may  
eat calmly...**

THE KOTZKER REBBE

*(Chassidim Mesaprim, Rabbi Y.L. Levin, z"l)*

*Rabbi Moshe Bamberger, Mashgiach Ruchani for Beis Medrash L'Talmud/Lander College for Men, is the author of several highly acclaimed books published by ArtScroll, including his newest work, Great Jewish Inspiration.*





## off your chest

by AVRAHAM Y. HESCHEL

# The *Shidduch* Age Gap

The ongoing *shidduch* crisis is a popular topic of conversation, but the primary cause is not being addressed. We know from statistics around the world that on average, there are 6% more boys born each year than girls. Currently, in the Chassidische *kehillos*, boys and girls start *shidduchim* at the same age. That leaves 6% percent of the *bachurim* without a *bas Yisrael* their age to marry. This is why we have such large number of older *bachurim* in the Chassidische world, far more than older single girls.

Because, *baruch Hashem*, our community is steadily growing — at an estimated rate of 5% a year — the solution is an obvious one. All that is needed is an age gap — that on average, a *bachur* be approximately one year older than his *kallah*.

In the Litvishe world, because the average *bachur* starts *shidduchim* when he is three or four years older than the average girl, the age-gap issues cause the opposite crisis. The natural growth of the community means that there are up to 15% more girls entering *shidduchim* each year than boys. This has been addressed by *Gedolei Roshei Yeshivah* calling for *bachurim* to start *shidduchim* earlier and seek to marry girls closer to their age.

Now it is time for the Chassidische world to address it as well. Either the boys need to start *shidduchim* a year later or the girls start a year earlier on average, or ideally, a combination of the two.



### A Concerned *Askan*

The ultimate decision on whether any changes need to be made in the current system can be made only by the spiritual leaders of the various *kehillos*. Because I have been contacted on several occasions by very well-intentioned *askanim* asking me to advocate this cause, I will take the opportunity to explain why I respectfully disagree with their conclusions.

For one thing, far more research would have to be done to ascertain whether the facts that this theory is based on are correct. While I understand that extensive statistics provided by Litvishe *mosdos* were carefully analyzed, I am not aware of any such broad-ranging studies done in the Chassidische *kehillos*. While Chassidische *bachurim* do technically start *shidduchim* at the same age as the girls do, there is some anecdotal evidence supporting parents feeling more pressured to conclude a *shidduch* with a

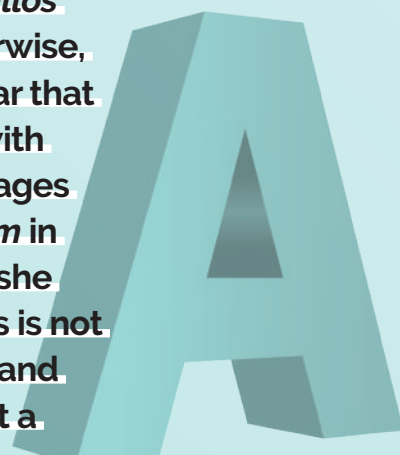
daughter than a son, which suggests the possibility that some sort of average age gap might actually already exist.

Furthermore, a key element of the crisis in the Litvishe world is that there are too many older girls, and there is a reluctance among *bachurim* to consider marrying someone older than they are. This issue doesn't apply in the Chassidishe world, where it is the boys who supposedly outnumber the girls. The parents of 18-year-old girls have no reason to prefer an 18-year-old *bachur* over an available 20-year-old. The supposedly needed age gap should therefore be happening on its own. A significant percentage of the "leftover" 18-year-old *bachurim* from previous years — who are now 20 or 21 — theoretically should be marrying the 18-year-old girls now entering *shidduchim*. While this in turn means that not all 18-year-old *bachurim* will have a prospective mate their age, this will simply force them to wait another year or two until the *basherte* moment arrives — once again ensuring the age gap is alive and well.

This isn't merely a matter of statistics. I believe that there is a hashkafic component as well. *Chazal* gave us a time frame when to start *shidduchim* for *bachurim* — *shemoneh esrei l'chuppah*. While the Chazon Ish and other *Litvishe Gedolim* strongly held that this applied equally in our current circumstances, there were others who did allow *bachurim* to start at a later age. In recent years, after the *askanim* raised awareness of the *shidduch* crisis in their *kehillos*, primarily caused by the fact that the *bachurim* were starting *shidduchim* so late, leading *Roshei Yeshivah* decided to revisit the issue. They urged that the suggested age be brought somewhat closer to the number given by *Chazal*.

In the Chassidishe *kehillos*, the age-gap issue — assuming that it really exists — was not created because of something that we mortals did. It is the *Ribbono shel Olam*, the ultimate *Mezaveig Zivugim* Who decided that more boys than girls should be born each year, and He will make sure that there is a *shidduch* for each one. It seems incomprehensible to suggest that Yidden should not follow the clear-

**Until and unless the spiritual leaders of these *kehillos* decide otherwise, it seems clear that tampering with the starting ages of *shidduchim* in the Chassidishe communities is not an option — and therefore not a solution.**



cut words of a *mishnah* and begin *shidduchim* at a later date because of birth statistics.

Similarly, I find it hard to believe that the proponents calling for change really think that it is a practical or wise idea to start listening to *shidduchim* for girls at the age of 16 and a half — or even at the beginning of 12th grade. I suggest that they first consult with leading *mechanchos* before even suggesting such a notion.

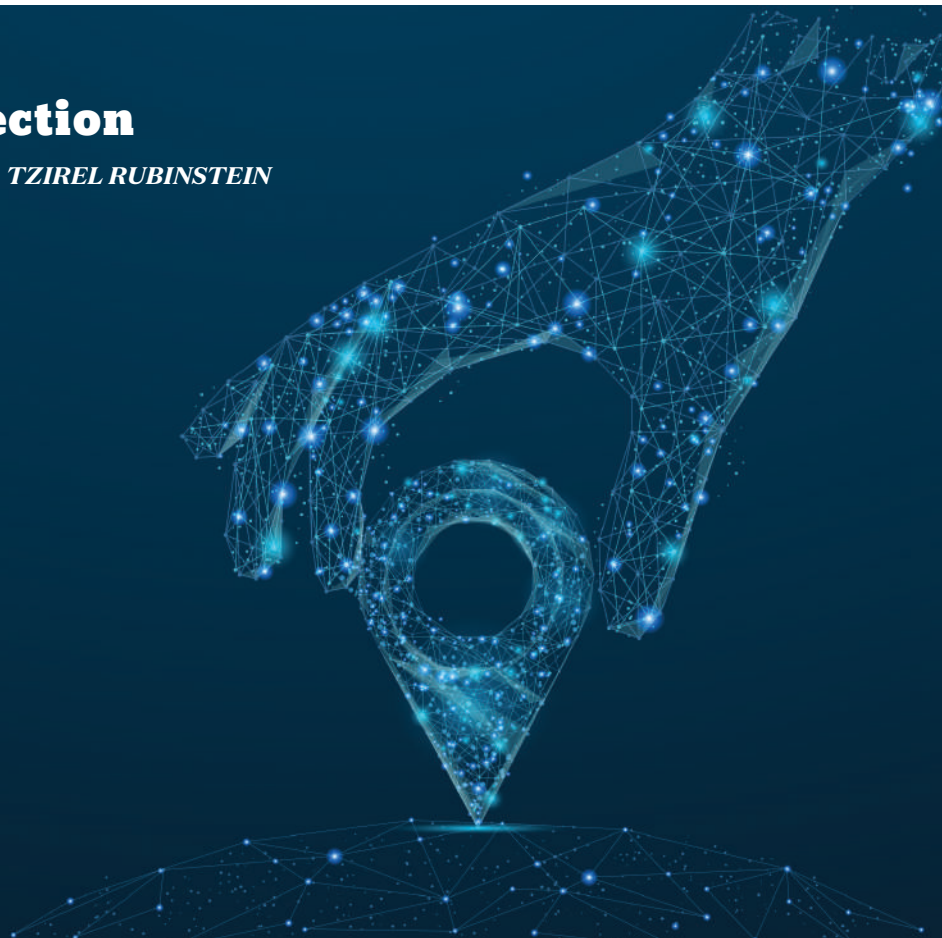
Until and unless the spiritual leaders of these *kehillos* decide otherwise, it seems clear that tampering with the starting ages of *shidduchim* in the Chassidishe communities is not an option — and therefore not a solution. Ever since records of this sort have been kept, more boys have been born each year than girls — and Hashem, in His infinite wisdom, ensured that they found *zivugim*.

There is no doubt that a *shidduch* crisis exists. There are far too many older *bachurim* and older girls still waiting out there — and we all are obligated to do our *hishtadlus* to help them. In addition to *davening* for all those in need and trying to *redt shidduchim*, we must do everything possible to encourage more people to become professional *shadchanim*. Our community has *bli ayin hara* grown exponentially, but the number of *shadchanim* has not grown apace. Parents of top *bachurim* or girls with stellar reputations report that weeks, even months, go by without a single phone call. Those whose children are considered in the average range have it even harder. Let us put our energies and resources into playing our role, and leave the rest up to Hashem. ■



## direction

by MRS. TZIREL RUBINSTEIN



# SHIDDUCH

# GFS

DIVINE  
DESTINY

### MY STUDENTS

**Q:** I am a high school teacher who is concerned about her students' futures and their entry into *shidduchim* in a year or two. (I teach eleventh- and twelfth-graders.) If there was something you wished girls like my students knew before they entered *shidduchim*, what would it be?

Many of my students have told me that they read this column, and some confess to be fearful of the *shidduch* experience and what they may face.

What advice would you give them if you were in my position?

## LET THEM BE

**A:** "Girls should be girls" and they shouldn't be having formal discussions about *shidduchim* in high school. The underlying goal for teaching high school girls is to prepare them for the future as an *eim b'Yisrael* and *akeres habayis* by imbuing them with a true love of Torah and *mitzvos*, as well as teaching them practical *halachah* and the priorities of a *frum Yiddishe* home. They should also be enjoying everlasting friendships and exploring their talents with the variety of extracurricular activities, building their confidence and productivity which are valuable tools to successfully forge ahead in life. The topic of *shidduchim* should not be on the agenda. **Burdening them with premature discussions about the *shidduch* process would be preempting the fear while robbing their innocence and free spirit, as well as some of the best years of their lives.**

### WORRY LESS, DO MORE

However, as a concerned and devoted teacher, you are in a pivotal position to provide your students with the wherewithal that will affect their perspective and the way they handle themselves when they encounter the *parashah* of *shidduchim* in the near future. As a respected mentor and role model, you possess the ability to empower your students with the beauty and strength of true *emunah* and *bitachon*. This empowerment is the absolute antidote to the fear and anxiety so many girls face these days while in the *shidduch* process and even after, when they become wives and mothers. **True *emunah* and *bitachon* isn't a mindset that can be acquired from one day to the next; it's a work of a lifetime that requires constant input in the home and at school. It is the best gift we can give our children so they can forge through life by worrying less and doing more.** I recently noticed with astonishment a full-page ad in a secular publication that read, "ANXIETY IS IN A PLACE WHERE G-D IS NOT." It is interesting to note that even the outside world is beginning to realize the absolute truth.



### EIN OD MILVADO

It is believed that most girls these days are raised in a cushy environment, with the smallest decisions micromanaged by their parents, in addition to every physical need taken care of. As comfortable as that may sound, many girls, as a result, have great difficulty getting out of their comfort zone, which becomes necessary while in the *shidduch* process. Ironically, it is at this same juncture that many parents tend to take a step back, allowing their daughters to make the monumental *shidduch* decision on their own, which most are not capable of. This new responsibility, accompanied by false expectations that plague many girls, is often a problematic combination resulting in feelings of anxiety, a most common obstacle in bringing a good *shidduch* to fruition. **Empowering our girls with the absolute knowledge that "Ein od Milvado — there is none other than Hashem" Who orchestrates every aspect of our lives, would be giving them the ultimate tool they need to deal with *shidduchim* and the challenges that typically follow.** So, when difficulties envelop us and a curveball is sent our way, it is strong *emunah* and *bitachon* that will maintain calm, clarity and an upbeat attitude.

## MESSAGE BOX

**May you and all our esteemed moros and mechanchos be zocheh to inspire and empower your students with the unshakeable *emunah* and *bitachon* of "Ein od Milvado" that will carry them through every stage in life for generations to come. The magnitude of your *s'char* is immeasurable.**

Your questions are welcome. Please email to [shidduchgps@hamodia.com](mailto:shidduchgps@hamodia.com). To mail or fax see page 3.



# INTERVIEW WITH ART

# Malka Sch

by MENUCHA CHANA LEVIN

Background: *The Great Shofar*. In this painting, the use of poured acrylic paint helps create an atmospheric background for the subject of the moment we all wait and long for.



ARTIST

# Schallheim

After finding out that artist Malka Schallheim lives in the same neighborhood of Ramot in Yerushalayim as I do, I was interested in visiting her home and art gallery. As soon as I entered, my eye was caught by her beautiful colorful oil paintings on the walls. Some are realistic, others more abstract, but all are captivating.

Then we sat down, and she told me the story of her life:

My hometown was in Suffolk County, Long Island, which had a very small Jewish community. As the only Jewish child in my high school, I wasn't happy and always felt like a misfit. The youngest of four children, we were raised by a single mother. We were American-style traditional Jews who observed some of the holidays, such as Pesach and Chanukah. My grandfather in Brooklyn kept the *mitzvos*, but he never talked about that with us, so I grew up lacking a real



View of Yerushalayim from my neighborhood of Ramot

connection to *Yiddishkeit*.

My art teacher in high school encouraged me when I was young. She even let me spend time in the art room on my own, which, of course, I greatly enjoyed. I was also interested in music at the time and learned to play the flute, but as my music teacher wasn't particularly encouraging, I chose to focus on art instead.

Sadly, my mother passed away very suddenly when I was only 16, and I found myself having to decide about my future on my own. My siblings suggested I should go to a junior college in Massachusetts, which I did. Later I attended the Pratt Institute for Art in New York when I was 17. Then I found out I had a half brother living in Manhattan. I had only one phone conversation with him in which he mentioned I had a cousin living in Israel. I was very eager to travel but hadn't been sure where to go and what to do about my art. Soon I found myself on a plane headed for Eretz Yisrael. Traveling on the bus from the airport to Yerushalayim, I was amazed to see flourishing orange groves and knew I had arrived in a very special place. My connection to this land would continue to grow and later inspire my artwork.

Through *hashgachah pratis*, my previously unknown cousin turned out to be a *baal teshuvah* who helped me to also find my way to a fulfilling Torah life. I started to attend the women's branch of Ohr Somayach in my search for meaning and how to integrate my art with *Yiddishkeit*. Later, I went to Gateshead,

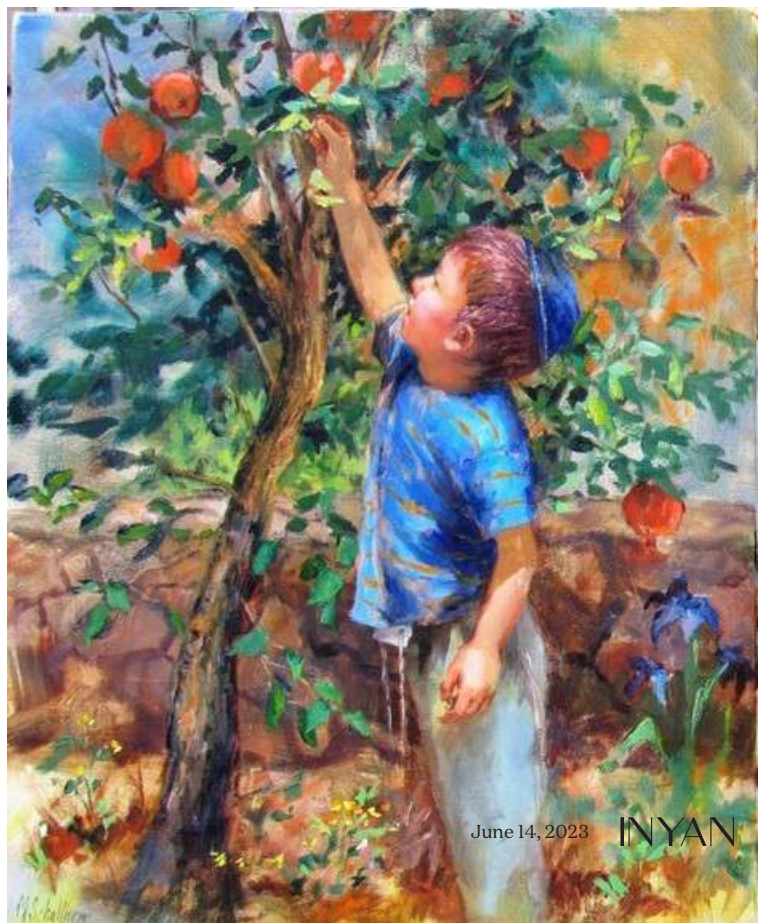
where I studied for two years. Upon my arrival, I did experience culture shock, but the people there were very kind and supportive. I was able to utilize my art by painting pictures and murals for a *siyum*.

When I returned to Yerushalayim, my cousin and his wife found a *shidduch* for me. My husband and I found an apartment in Ramot — then a brand-new neighborhood in northwest Jerusalem — and we are still living here 35 years later. After my marriage, I began to teach art to young children (mostly cut-and-paste pictures), and worked in graphics. Then I did some layout work at Hamodia for a woman on maternity leave until I had to resign for the very same reason. So, I found myself a stay-at-home mom but continued to draw and paint with friends. At that time, someone advised me to try oil painting, since it provides the best market, and people are attracted by the vibrant colors.

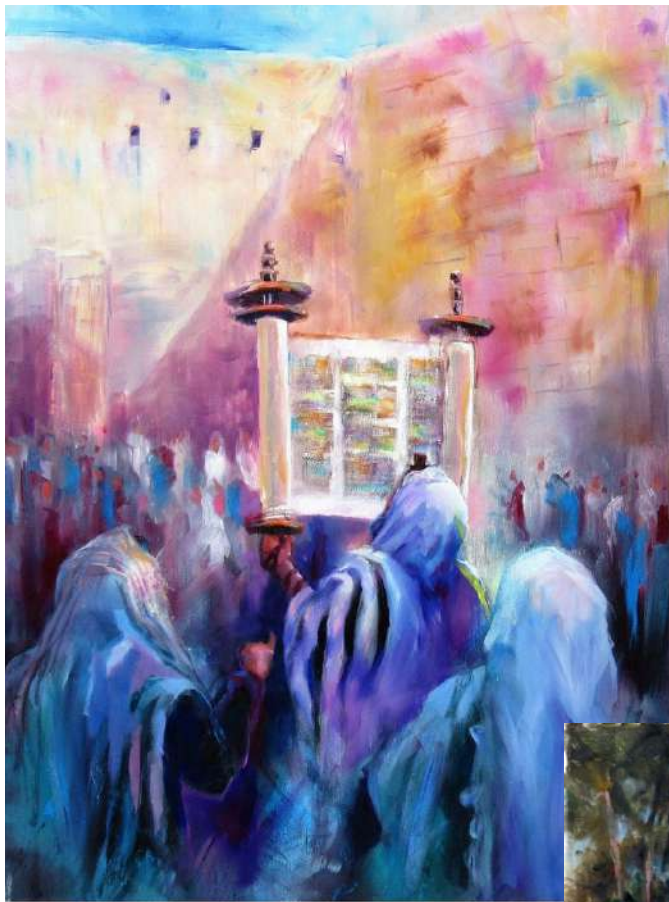
I took a course and started to do more oil painting, including landscapes and portraits. My very first painting had an unfortunate accident, falling down on the floor, which left a hole in it, though I taped it up. Years later, someone offered to buy that first painting, but for sentimental

*Boy Picking Pomegranates*

A painting of our youngest child in the garden of our home.



June 14, 2023 INYAN



*Hagbah at the Kosel* is another one of my contemporary paintings

reasons, I refused to sell it.

Then I began to experience a great deal of *hashgachah pratis* and success through an art gallery in Meah Shearim. My reputation began to spread by word of mouth, and at one point, I was delighted to have three days of sales in a row! Since then, my work has been purchased and displayed in homes around the world. I find inspiration for art everywhere, in a field of wild flowers or viewing hills and mountains, which revive my soul, connecting me to the beauty of Eretz Yisrael. My favorite pictures, for which I have received the most positive feedback, are the one of the little boy learning *alef-beis*, the portrait of the Gerrer Rebbe, the House in Rechaviah and the view of Tzfas from Meron.

Time management and marketing make being a freelance artist challenging. Marketing my artwork takes time and effort, having to balance the practical aspects of finding *parnassah* with creativity. One must be disciplined to work freelance, making time for art and family, plus juggling holidays such as Purim, Pesach and home responsibilities. I had to learn how to combine my art with family life. I once spoke to Rebbetzin Altusky about the challenge of being an artist trying to find time to do *chessed* for others. She assured me to “do something for yourself too.”

I am aware that Jewish art has changed in the past 20 years. *Frum* people used to prefer very

traditional pictures that resembled photographs, but now they choose modern abstract styles, so I started doing more contemporary artwork as well. My husband has always been very encouraging about my artwork. I also teach art at community centers and privately and find that art is a catalyst for relationships, which gives people energy. One disabled woman I teach loves art and eagerly looks forward to her lesson each week. I feel art and the process of creativity are truly gifts from Hashem, the Ultimate Artist. ■

*Malka Schallheim may be contacted via Hamodia.*



(Top) *View of Tzfas from Meron*. I photographed this scene shortly after Lag Baomer one year.

To me it connected the two holy cities together.

(Right) *The Gerrer Rebbe*

This was a commissioned portrait. *Baruch Hashem*, the client felt I really captured a glimpse of the holiness of the Rebbe.







nonfiction

Short Story

As told to **RABBINACHMAN SELTZER**

# THE BAR MITZVAH BECHER



When a friend of mine was at a local wedding hall, Simchas Gila\*, to book it for his son's wedding, he got to talking with the owner, who commented, "When you run a wedding hall you meet every kind of scenario," he said. "But even I was taken by surprise by a story that recently happened here."

Of course, my friend was intrigued by this statement and encouraged him to explain what he meant.

He told the following fascinating story.

• • •

Today there are many people who use a wedding planner. The purpose is to ensure parents of the *chassan* and *kallah* do not have to remember on their own, every single detail of the big day. The planner knows what time the *chuppah* is supposed to begin, when they want to start the first dance, and comes equipped with all sorts of necessary items, like candles to hold while walking to the *chuppah*, the glass to break and the wine to use. And because he keeps track of all the little details, parents can focus on their children and enjoy the *simchah*.

Anyway, a few days after a recent wedding in Simchas Gila, the father of the *kallah* called me up. After thanking me for the beautiful affair, he told me the wedding planner had brought a silver *becher* to the hall to use under the *chuppah* – and somehow it had been misplaced at some point during the wedding.

"I wanted to know if any of your staff came across a silver *becher* and brought it to your attention."

"Regrettably, no," I said.

"Okay, is there any way you can do some research and try to figure out what happened to it?"

"Hmm. Where was it when it disappeared? When do you remember seeing it last?"

"Let me think. From what I recall, the last time I saw it, the *becher* was sitting on the head table. I wasn't paying much attention to it, but later, when I looked for it again, it was no longer there."

"Great, now you've given me a starting point. I'll look at the camera footage and then I'll have a better idea of what happened."

I told him I'd call if I had any news.

• • •

I accessed the system, and after zooming in on the head table following the *chuppah*, I was indeed able to see the *Kiddush* cup standing tall right in the center.

When had it gone missing?

I watched as people came over to the *mechutanim* and wished them *mazel tov*. Rabbanim took their seats on the dais and were served the first course. Family members congregated and shmoozed.

After about half an hour, I saw a somewhat familiar face making his way over to the head table. I knew that face, though I didn't know his name. I studied him for a minute or two, and then I knew who he was: one of the people who came to my Simchas Gila on a regular basis to eat supper. Every hall has individuals like this – those who have a difficult time paying for the basics and don't have enough money to pay for a good meal. They come to eat at wedding halls, and *Klal Yisrael* welcomes them as members of the family.

This was the man making his way to the head table.

I watched in fascination as he stood in front of the silver *becher*, staring at it. Nobody paid him any attention. The man lifted the *becher* off the head table. I watched as he held it in his hand and studied it from every angle. He looked in one direction and then the next. Satisfied that nobody was looking at him, he slipped the *becher* into his jacket pocket and left the hall.

And so, we had solved the mystery of the missing *becher*... or so we thought. The big question now was what to do next.

I called over a few of my staff and showed them the guy on the screen.

"Yes, he comes here a lot," was their first reaction.

"Right. The next time he comes in, please let me know."

"Will do."

• • •

The man returned to Simchas Gila three nights later. Two hours into that night's wedding, a waiter came in to let me know. Slipping on my jacket, I left my office and entered the hall, where I found him sitting at one of the tables, consuming a blintz with relish.

"Can I speak with you for a second?"

He looked up at me and nodded. He seemed to know what this was about and followed me to a quiet corner of the hall.

"Look," I said. "I know you took a silver *becher* from the head table at a wedding last week. I need you to bring it back."

He looked at me. There was some sort of emotion in his eyes that I was finding hard to identify.

"I did take the *becher*," he admitted at last. "And I will bring it back to you. But you should know that the *becher* is mine."

His response shocked me. "What are you talking about?"

"It's my *becher*. I saw it on the head table and knew it looked familiar, so I went over to get a better look. It's my *becher* and I can prove it."

"How on earth can you prove that?!"

"I received it for my bar mitzvah," he shot back, "and it even has my name on it!"

Now I was really taken aback. Could it be?

"I'm going to go home and bring the *becher*," he said, "and then you will see that I'm telling the truth."

• • •

Ten minutes later he was back, cup in hand.

"Look. Do you see the names?"

I looked at the names engraved on the

**FOR A LONG TIME, I TRIED FINDING HIM, BUT I WAS NEVER ABLE TO TRACK HIM DOWN. EVENTUALLY, I BEGAN USING THE *BECHER* FOR WEDDINGS — TELLING MYSELF I'D RETURN IT IF WE EVER MET AGAIN."**

cup.

"Binyomin Chaim\*. That's my name and this is my *becher*."

"Let's say you are right," I told him. "How did it get to the wedding planner?"

"I don't know. All I can tell you is that I received this *becher* as a present. During those years, I couldn't live with my own parents, and a nice family named Eisen gave me a home. I know I had the *becher* with me while I lived with them, but when I moved, I couldn't seem to find it."

"So, this is your *becher*?"

"One hundred percent."

"Okay," I said, "now I need to make a phone call."

• • •

The wedding planner answered right away.

"It's Shea from Simchas Gila."

"Good to hear from you. Any word on the *becher*?"

"Yes, I found it."

"Wonderful."

"Agreed, but I do have a few questions for you. It turns out that the person who took the *becher* may have a real connection with it. Let me ask you this: When you were a child, did your parents

ever take in *bachurim* who had nowhere to live?"

He was silent for a few seconds.

"Yes," he said at last.

"Well, could this *becher* have belonged to one of those *bachurim*?"

"It does belong to one of them. His name was Binyomin Chaim, and he lived in my parents' home. I guess he misplaced the *becher*, because we found it after he had already left our home and moved on. For a long time, I tried finding him, but I was never able to track him down. Eventually, I began using the *becher* for weddings — telling myself I'd return it to him if we ever met again."

"Well, you can now keep your word," I said, "because the person who took the *becher* goes by the name of Binyomin Chaim. He recognized the *becher*, examined it for a while and concluded that, indeed, it was his."

"Wow, that's some story."

"Yes, it is."

"Please tell Reb Binyomin Chaim he should take the *becher* home with my *brachos* and that I am gratified at finally being able to do the *mitzvah* of *hashavas aveidah*."

When I got off the phone, I told Binyomin Chaim about the conversation and that the wedding planner was happy it was being returned to him.

Binyomin Chaim slipped the *becher* back into his pocket and returned to his seat, and I returned to my office. (I told the waiter to bring him another blintz.) There I sat and thought for a long time about judging another person favorably and the *nisayon* of jumping to conclusions. There's always another side to every story. ■

*As heard from the father of the chassan*

*\*All names in the story have been changed.*



## fiction

by BRACHA ROSMAN

*The family is preparing for their relocation to a safe house together with Peri. Mark Greenberg may be tracked through Peri's cell phone. Menachem is worried about the levayah being pushed off.*

### "I HAVE ROCHEL'S

number in my contacts," Faigy said to Menachem. "Do you want it?"

Menachem shook his head solemnly. "They came here for her *simchah*."

"I know." Faigy uncrumpled her tissue and cried into it.

"I don't think we should call her," Menachem said. "Losing a mother is heartache enough, but she's a *kimpeturin* too, so her emotions are even more fragile now. I don't want to ask her questions to increase her pain."

"Right." Faigy dried her eyes, but they watered again. "I can't stop thinking about them."

"Me too," Menachem's voice was thick. "All those years of doing everything to be safe."

"I know," Faigy wailed. "They were so careful." She blew her nose. "So what should we do? Just wait until Shimi calls?"

Menachem ran his fingers through his short beard. "I don't think we have a choice. These circumstances are very different. When the police are involved, it could, unfortunately, take a few days."

"Can't you expedite things?"

"I'll speak to Gary. He may be able to pull some strings."



Pierce lay on his bunk in the dark, listening — between his fake bouts of coughing — to the usual sounds that bounced off the prison walls. The dimness around him obscured the smirk on his face. Nothing, not even the risk of harming himself, would stop him from getting to a phone.

The jingling of keys in the distance caught his attention, and his ears pulled back like those of a dog about to leap. He rolled off his cot as the sound drew closer and fell to the floor. His fits of coughing increased as the jingling grew louder. When the guard's boots were visible, Pierce grabbed his throat with both hands — the universal sign for choking. He thrashed around on the floor, his mouth open.

"Hey!" someone shouted. The sound of running feet vibrated down the corridor.

The rattling keys stopped in front of Pierce's cell, and he tightened his grasp on his throat, convulsing on the concrete



ground like a freshly caught fish in a dry bucket. The blood rushed to his head as he squeezed his trachea tighter with his thumbs. The room twirled before his eyes, blurring the form standing over him. A wave of blackness washed over him, and Pierce's clutch on his neck instantly released. Air fed his starving lungs, and his chest rose and fell erratically. Eyes closed and mouth agape, he listened.

"Is he conscious?"

"Don't know."

"Let's get him to the infirmary."

"I'll call it in."

Some moments later, Pierce lay limply as the men lifted him onto a stretcher. One arm dangling from the gurney, he was wheeled out of his cell and down the long corridor.



"Sorry to rush you," Davis said, "but please pack quickly. We want to leave before any well-wishers come to visit. The van is waiting out back."

"Where did Ma put the suitcases we came with?" Daniel said.

"Just use a plastic shopping bag," Shimi said. "There's no time to look for them." He pulled a few bags from a container in the cabinet. "Here."

They emerged from the kitchen together and entered the ransacked living room.

Daniel's mouth opened.

"Try not to look." Shimi put his arm around him. "*Baruch Hashem*, everyone is okay. Let's focus on the good."

Daniel bent down and picked up Mr. Moskowitz's painting from the floor. "Look what he did! The frame cracked."

"I'm sorry. I know how much the painting means to you."

"Why would he throw it on the floor like that? He could have ruined it!"

"Daniel," Shimi fingered the crack, "Why don't you bring the painting along? We'll get some wood glue to fix the frame."

Daniel placed the painting inside the bag and followed his father up the steps.

Rochel met them at the top. "I'm almost packed. How about you?"

Daniel's eyes darkened. "Mark's such a *vilde chayah!*"

"We're focusing on the good," Shimi squeezed

## CAST OF CHARACTERS:

**The Sanders Family:** After witnessing a crime and having her life threatened, Peri and her family joined WITSEC and were sent to Wrigley Lake, Oregon, with false identities. Peri, her husband, Shimi, and their single children — Daniel, age 22 (learning in yeshivah), Esti, age 9, and Shalom, age 3 (born after the ordeal was over) — now live in Israel.

**Evan Pierce:** The criminal Peri testified against, serving a life sentence in a maximum-security prison.

**Rochel and Akiva Diamond:** Peri and Shimi's daughter and son-in-law, who have settled in the community. They have two children, Eli and Malky.

**Inspector Kramer:** FBI agent in Washington, D.C. who runs the Orientation Center for WITSEC and handled the family's case throughout, until their departure for Israel.

**Agent Baker:** The FBI agent assigned to the case in New York when Pierce first threatened Peri.

his son's shoulder. "Remember? No one was hurt. Everyone is safe. The painting is in one piece. The frame can be fixed."

"Sorry," Davis called up to the second floor. "We're leaving in four minutes."

Daniel stuffed his clothing into the bag and grabbed his *tefillin* from the shelf. Mr. Moskowitz's secret was in his *siddur*, but he didn't want to risk taking out the letter while the agent was around.

"Let's go," Shimi called.

Everyone raced to the back of the house and was in the waiting van in minutes.

"I'll see you at the safe house," Davis said before shutting the door.

No one spoke as the van drove through the dark streets.

Daniel's head dipped to his chest, and he jerked it upward, trying to stay awake. It had been an emotionally draining day, and it was close to midnight.

"Sleep," Shimi said. "The agent said it's an hour's drive."

Daniel closed his eyes and leaned his head back.

"I hate that Mark has our phones," Rochel said. "I bet he's looking through all our family pictures. It's so creepy."

"Creepy or not, it's *hashgachah pratis*," Shimi said. "They'll use the phones to find him."

"Serves him right," Daniel said without opening his eyes. "He did it to himself."

“How about trying to sleep, Rochel?” Shimi coaxed. “Both of the kids are.”

“I can’t, Ta. My mind is like a whirlwind. I have so many questions. Like, what’s going to happen when my in-laws hear the fake news about Ma? And all Ma’s friends, and,” her brows arched in horror, “Grandma Vera! She can’t think that Ma was — ”

“Ooh,” Shimi said, “You’re right. I didn’t think about her. If she finds out, she’ll call Bobby and Zeidy in Israel!”

“She also may have a heart attack, *chas v’shalom*,” Akiva said. “She’s not a youngster.”

“*Oy vey*. This is going from worse to... worse.”

“What do we do?” Akiva asked.

“There’s nothing we can do right now in this van,” Shimi said. “But I will speak to Agent Davis when we get to the safe house.”



Emily was glad when Davy parked their car in the hotel’s parking lot — the day had been long and tiring.

“I can’t wait to get into bed.” She covered a yawn.

“Me too.”

“Maybe I should check in with Rochel first and see how things are.”

Davy turned off the engine. “I think it’s too late to call her.”

“You’re probably right. I’ll just text her.” She pulled her purse onto her lap and searched for her phone. “I’ll text Peri too. I want to know how her meeting with that criminal went.”

Davy laughed. “It wasn’t a meeting, Em.”

“Whatever it was, it was very unusual.”

“That it was. But you’ve got to hand it to Shimi. It was a pretty smart idea. He’s got a whatchamacallit? A... a *Gemara kope*.”

“I think it’s *kup*.”

“*Kope, kup*, the point is, he thinks differently than I do. I like it. It’s a deeper understanding of things. Akiva’s got it too. His mind is sharper than ever. Just this morning, he told me what the Rabbi spoke about in synagogue — pretty clever stuff. I’m impressed, Em. The Rabbi’s a real scholar. He knows a lot.”

“He knows a lot of what, exactly? Physics? Economics? Astronomy?

Chemistry? Mathematics?”

“Are you implying those are the subjects that make you intelligent?”

“Hello! Yes. Mathematicians have some of the highest IQs. You can’t get smarter than that!”

“So biased.” Davy tsked.

“Biased?” she touched her shoulder lightly with her fingertips. “*Moi!*?”

“Yes, *toi!* Rabbi Weber knows more about the Torah and its teachings than any intellectual. That, my dear, is also intelligence. True intelligence, if you ask me.”

Emily spun around to face her husband. “Don’t you go turning religious on me, Davy! You hear? I won’t have it! One is enough. Thank you very much!”

“Whoa! Emily. Where did that come from?”

“Those are almost the identical words Mikey said. It’s like *déjà vu*.”

“Maybe he said them because they’re true.”

“Davy, stop. You’re scaring me!”

“I’m just stating a fact. Akiva and I talk a lot about Torah. It’s very thought-provoking and quite fascinating.”

Emily covered her ears and faced forward. “I’m not listening.”

“Covering your ears won’t change the facts.”

Emily began to hum.

“You’re acting like a little girl, Emily. I was just complimenting our son and his Rabbi. There’s no need to get so riled up.” Davy shook his head.

“I thought you’d be happy to know that Akiva and I still have a close relationship.”

Emily stopped humming and dropped her hands. “Of course I’m happy. You just threw me for a loop.”

“I didn’t mean to. Sorry.”

“No. I’m the one who should be sorry. I totally overdid the caffeine today, and my nerves are shot. I didn’t mean to bite your head off.”

“Well, ouch.”

“Sorry, Davy.”

“Forget it,” he said. “It’s behind us.”

Emily studied her husband as he unfastened his seat belt. This conversation may have been behind them, but something told her it wasn’t over.

**To be continued...**



Recipes, styling and  
photography by **PESSI PILLER**



## Shabbos Salads

*Dips, or “salatim” as Israelis like to call them, have become a staple on many heimishe Shabbos and Yom Tov tables. There’s just something special in the experience of warm, fresh, crusty challah with dips that makes it a part of my oneg Shabbos. So, although my grandmother claims that no one eats any food after too many salatim, in my house they’re here to stay. My sister is the queen of dips; she makes a variety of dips, each one better than the next. Below is a sampling of the ones our family likes best.*

### Deli Quinoa Salad

**Yield: 4-6 servings**

*This is a nice twist on the typical deli salad people enjoy serving alongside the egg salad or as part of the main. It’s adapted from a dairy version I make that is a true crowd-pleaser.*

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large sweet potato, diced
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon parsley
- 1½ teaspoons garlic powder
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 2 cups raw quinoa, cooked according to package instructions
- 1 yellow bell pepper, diced
- 1 red pepper, diced
- ½ cup diced pastrami
- ½ cup diced Mexican turkey
- ½ cup raisins

#### Dressing

- ¾ cup tahini paste
- 4 tablespoons maple syrup
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- ¼ cup water

#### DIRECTIONS:

Place diced sweet potato on a lined 9x13-inch pan. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with parsley, garlic powder, salt and pepper. Roast in the oven on 350°F for an hour, stirring in between, until edges are brown and crispy.

Place all dressing ingredients into a 1-pound container, and shake well to mix.

To assemble the salad:

Place quinoa in a bowl, and top with vegetables and deli. Drizzle dressing on top. Sprinkle with raisins. Mix right before serving.



## Marinated Eggplant

**Yield: 2 lb container**

*This is by far the most requested dip in my family. If you're an eggplant lover, this one is for you! The roasted garlic dip is the easiest dip. It's just two ingredients, but it's so full of flavor. No one would believe how simple it is to make!*

### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds of eggplant (about 3 medium eggplants), diced
- 2 cups oil
- ¾ cup vinegar
- ¼ cup honey
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper

### Roasted Garlic Dip

*Yield: 1½-pound container*

- 5 heads of garlic, roasted
- 5 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 cup mayonnaise

### DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place diced eggplant onto a lined cookie sheet. Pour oil over the eggplant and mix to coat. Roast for 1 hour, stirring halfway through. Then raise the oven to broil, and broil for 5-10 minutes, stirring every 3 minutes until the edges are browning and very crispy. (No need to worry if it's a bit burnt; it softens as it sits in the marinade.) Remove from oven and allow to cool.

Once cooled, transfer the eggplant to a 2 lb. airtight container using a slotted spoon, and try to drain as much of the oil as possible. Then add vinegar, honey, garlic, salt and pepper. Shake well to combine. This tastes best after it sits a bit.

**For the garlic dip:** The easiest way to roast garlic:

Cut off a little bit of the top of the garlic head. Place onto a piece of aluminum foil. Drizzle 1 teaspoon olive oil on the cut of each head. Wrap the garlic tightly with the foil and place into a small baking pan. Roast on 350°F for an hour. Remove from the oven and cool completely before separating and peeling the cloves.

Place roasted garlic cloves into a ½-pound container with the mayonnaise. Blend with an immersion blender until fully combined.





## Chummus Board

Yield: 6-8 servings

*This takes the classic chummus and makes it into a center-of-the-table-worthy dish. It presents beautifully and tastes even better. Thank you to my brother-in-law for the inspiration.*

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb. container chummus
- 3 tablespoons olive oil

#### Roasted garlic

- 1 head garlic
- 1 teaspoon olive oil

#### Roasted jalapeño pepper

- 1 jalapeño pepper
- 2 teaspoon oil\*

#### Roasted chickpeas

- 1 can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 10 oz. sautéed mushrooms
- Parsley
- Paprika
- Pine nuts
- Techina

### DIRECTIONS:

**Roasted garlic:** Cut off a little bit of the top of the garlic head. Place onto a piece of aluminum foil. Drizzle 1 teaspoon olive oil on the cut. Seal the garlic tightly and place into a small baking pan. Roast on 350°F for an hour. Remove from the oven and cool completely before separating and peeling the cloves.

**Roasted jalapeño:** Slice 1 jalapeño pepper and remove seeds and veins. Place into a cupcake tin with 2 teaspoons oil. Roast on 400°F for 20 minutes, until edges are browning; it burns really easily so keep an eye on it.

**Roasted chickpeas:** Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place chickpeas onto a lined baking sheet. Drizzle oil and sprinkle the spices. Mix to coat well. Roast for 30 minutes, until slightly crispy. Stir halfway through.

Sauté mushrooms in a bit of oil. Add salt and pepper, to taste.

**To assemble the chummus board:** Spread the chummus over a flat platter. Drizzle olive oil on top. Sprinkle the chickpeas around the border of the platter. Place jalapeño pepper, roasted garlic and mushrooms over the top. Then sprinkle parsley, paprika and pine nuts over the chummus. Last, drizzle techina over the entire platter.

*Many ingredients are prone to infestation. Local Rabbanim should be consulted for specific guidelines on how to avoid transgressions related to insects.*



by MORDECHAI SCHMUTTER



# The One Sheet

If you're planning on getting married nowadays, you won't get far without a *shidduch* résumé. Ask anyone. Well, not anyone with a child of marriageable age, because none of those people had *shidduch* résumés.

But definitely ask any *shadchan*, and they will confirm it, in their unbiased opinion. You can't be the one person without a résumé, trying to get married via a stack of Post-its that the *shadchan* scribbled hastily, based on lengthy voice notes and Motzoei Shabbos memories of conversations that went down at the Friday night *seudah*.

In the olden days, nobody had *shidduch* résumés. What on earth did we do? Maybe everyone kept it all in their heads; I don't remember. There were a lot fewer people; I know *that*.

Definitely for most of Jewish history there were no résumés. People just handwrote whatever information they had, and then the singles sent in a drawing of themselves. Then there was a whole *hock* about "Is it *tznius* to send a drawing? Because I hear that anyway the drawing is not always accurate."

Even when I got married, there were no pictures. I mean, pictures existed. You developed your film and you got one copy, so you would have to send around the one copy. And the guy was like, "Oh, she has red eyes! I don't know..."

So there had to be a better way. Better ways keep coming along all the time, so *iy"H* soon a better way than this will come along. It had better. But in

the meantime, we might as well learn how to write a *shidduch* résumé that makes you stand out but also looks exactly like everyone else's so no one reads too much into it.

The better way can't get here soon enough.

Basically, it's like a job résumé, in that it has the person's schooling, work experience, volunteering... Never mind that most people have never gotten a job off a résumé. Most job recruiters want résumés, because it gets you out of their face. They're sick of hearing about unemployed people's sad lives all day. This way, they can just pretend to read it.

And like a job résumé, it's difficult to know exactly what to put on it. Some job résumés have a "Hobbies" section for some reason. No one cares. No one says, "Ooh, he likes bowling! He's going to be great when we go on our bowling retreat once a year." You know what *should* have a Hobbies section? *Shidduch* résumés. You want to put on the *shidduch* résumé that she's into bowling, not because it's important for the marriage but because it's somewhere to go on a date.

NOTE: Bowling is actually *not* a good date idea. It's *your* turn, and then it's *her* turn, and then it's *your* turn, and then it's *her* turn, and then you bring her home.

"When... when did we talk?"

But you can't put a Hobbies section on for now, because no one else puts it on. You don't want to do anything that no one else does. I sent my daughter's

*shidduch* résumé to one *shadchan*, who said, “You put in too much information. You’re oversharing.” So I said, “I overshare for a living!”

I’m oversharing right now, as we speak.

Here’s what you put in:

**NAME:** Also write your nickname so he knows who to ask for when he comes to the door. In case the parents aren’t sure.

**HEIGHT:** This is the single most important item on the résumé. Everything else can be changed, really. You must write your height, but, *baruch Hashem*, not your weight. Height even comes before date of birth.

**DATE OF BIRTH:** Also write your age, in case the prospective guy is bad at math.

**CONTACT INFO:** Include your home address, so people can look it up on Google Maps and see if it’s nice.

**PARENT INFO:** This should include their height, where the father learned and whether he still gives that yeshivah money when they send him mailings.

**SHUL:** You need to write this, even though where the family davens might have less to do with *hashkafah* and more to do with walking distance or which shul has good cholent. I don’t ask my *she'eilos* during *davening* anyway.

**Rav:** Putting down the name of a Rav is a good indicator that you have *shaychus* to a Rav. Unless he’s the Rabbi of the shul, in which case, maybe you wrote him in because he sits up front in the shul that is closest to your house.

The *best* indicator of an actual ongoing relationship with a Rav is if you manage to include the best times to call him.

**SIBLINGS:** If the single in question has siblings, you need to write all about them, even if you’re not particularly proud of their accomplishments.

In fact, even as far as the *shadchan* who told me that there was too much on my daughter’s résumé, she was saying that I put in too many references or too many *poskim* (the résumé looks worse the more *poskim* you put on it, counterintuitively). But she agreed that I should keep things like where her brothers go to yeshivah. Note that the only solid piece of information we’ve written about the girl so far is her name and her height, and now we’re already on siblings. The résumé should look like it was written by a neighbor who was not informed until the very last second which kid exactly she was writing about.

I think if you *really* want to know about somebody, ask for a résumé about one of their siblings. Then you can read it and find out about *them*. That’s why a lot of times if you submit your daughter’s résumé to a *shadchan*, the *shadchan* is like, “Ooh, can you send me her *brother’s* résumé?”

And you get all offended.

**MECHUTANIM:** You want to write in all the families that your other kids are married to, because it shows that you’re a desirable family.

IF YOU ARE A GUY, YOU ALSO MIGHT WANT TO MENTION WHETHER YOU EAT *GEBROKTS* AND HOW MANY HOURS YOU WAIT AFTER *FLEISHIG*. IF YOU’RE A GIRL WHO IS NOT AFRAID TO BE *FLEISHIG*, THAT IS A GREAT THING TO MENTION THAT WILL HAVE PEOPLE BREAKING DOWN YOUR DOOR.

The family is not going to know your *mechutanim* from Yehupitz, unless they, too, have relatives in Yehupitz.

But it’s going to show that other people are willing to get involved with you. They don’t want to be the only one.

That’s why if this is your oldest kid, it’s going to be a little harder to marry him off, because no one wants to go first on anything. But it’s like getting the first pickle out of a jar, which — okay, I heard that ridiculous pickle *mashal* a thousand times at my *chasunah*, and I’m so sick of it. It’s a weird analogy. What does it even mean? The kid doesn’t want to come out? It doesn’t quite make sense. Is this why they serve pickles at weddings? I don’t know where the *minhag* came from to put them out 12 hours before the wedding starts, though.

**EDUCATION AND JOB EXPERIENCE:** This part is *exactly* like a job résumé, down to previous employment and honor roll and that time she was a counselor at Camp Noonewantstodrivethatfar.

**REFERENCES:** This is so the parents can call your friends during dinner and play conversational chess to figure out what you’re concealing. You can’t just write, “References available upon request.” You have to put in a bunch of people that the parents can call to verify that you’re not an ax murderer.

“Yeah, someone that they know and prepped beforehand vouched for them, so it’s okay.”

Um, maybe we should put in references for the references.

But not everybody in your life has a complete picture, so you want a mix of names: a teacher, a family friend, a single friend, a married friend, a divorced friend, a widowed friend, a co-worker, a boss, a person you used to date, and one person who’s met you once and doesn’t know why you put their name on your résumé.

And this way, even if they don’t call anyone, it tells them that you have at least four friends! And your parents have at least one.

**WHO I AM:** This is the part at the bottom in which you write about yourself in two sentences, as an afterthought.

If you're having problems writing this, I would say – at the risk of being morbid – what do you want people to say at your *levayah*? Write that.

1. "I'm so young!"

Make sure to also mention that you're kind, caring, a good friend, family-oriented and that you like to laugh, are frum but worldly but not *too* worldly and that you're sometimes serious but you like to have fun. In case the other person hasn't met a human being before.

Other great adjectives to stick in about yourself: *outgoing* ("I'm going out, right?"), *thoughtful*, *warm but sometimes logical*, *engaging* ("I hope to get engaged, right?") *great sense of humor* (eye roll), *creative*, *articulate*, *frank*, *patient*, *likable*, *observant*, *polite*, *teachable*, *balanced*, *approachable*, *brave*, *classy*, *clean*, *curious*, *inspiring*, *realistic*, *relatable*, *supportive* and *sturdy*.

If you are a guy, you also might want to mention whether you eat *gebrokts* and how many hours you wait after *fleishig*. If you're a girl who is not afraid to be *fleishig*, that is a great thing to mention that will have people breaking down your door.

You can't write anything negative about yourself, obviously. If there's something less than positive about you, people will have to get it from context that, for example, there is a good quality that you didn't mention. And then hope it's not just that you *forgot* to mention it.

"Hey, she didn't mention that she likes *chessed*. Does that mean she *hates chessed*?"

**WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR:** Ask yourself: What do you want people to say at *his levayah*?

This is where you write that you want someone who is serious but fun, is *chessed*-oriented (*chessed* starts in the home) and is always striving to grow, in case you find something about them you don't like.

You also want to write that you're looking for someone out of the box. No one on the planet is looking for someone in the box. They want a spouse they can pick out of a crowd.

Basically, "out of the box" means "different in some way but I can't tell you how." How about you tell me on your résumé what you consider "the box"? Do you mean "not like my brothers"? Because there's a limit as to how far out of the box you want the person to be. Like if the person is sitting across from you, saying, "I sew *tachrichim* for dogs!" you'd be like, "Oh. Well, that's *too* far out of the box."

Or not. I don't know you.

Finally, you want to proofread your résumé before you send it out. For example, make sure that you wrote that you're looking for someone "kind and communicative," not "kind *of* communicative."

You also want to make sure your *shidduch* résumé has impeccable grammar, so people don't think you're uneducated. Though if you *are* uneducated or have no attention to detail and are looking for the same, then maybe you *do* want people to know that.

The other thing to remember is that like a job résumé, it's a one-page autobiography all about you, so it can't be more than one page or people will decide they no longer want to hear about you. This is why it's best to get married young, before enough things have happened in your life to go on to a page two. If your life is so interesting that you need a second page to describe yourself, no one wants to read about it. Especially when making the most important decision of their lives. People don't like having a *lot* to read; they like having very *little* to read and then analyzing every word that's there way too intensely and trying to infer stuff. *That's* a better use of their time.

So you get like two sentences. The résumé is supposed to show how unique you are and sell you, but creativity on a résumé is absolutely discouraged. You have to make it sound like everyone else. But maybe it's not supposed to be about you or what you're looking for. Like with a job résumé, it's not about who you are; it's about who you know. The *shidduch* résumé is mostly just a list of people you know.

The *shidduch* résumé is the equivalent of the old lady in your neighborhood who says, "You're in your 20s; she's in her 20s; go out!" That's basically all it says. "She's in her 20s! You don't know the family? They're from there! Their brother goes here!"

Basically, it's a piece of paper to wrap around your photo when you send it around so the mailman doesn't get in your business.

And then people can overanalyze the photo.

"Why is she wearing pink?"

Because that was the color at this wedding. Not her choice.

"Why is her face orange?"

OK.

A good résumé will be vague enough that the *shadchan* can sell it to the largest number of guys. If you write a unique résumé that's good for just one guy, who knows if this *shadchan* knows that one guy? Should that prevent her from setting you up? You want a résumé she can sell to 100 guys. Our goal here is to make the job easier for the busy *shadchan* who doesn't know you and will charge thousands of dollars for her services so that she doesn't have to *get* to know you. All she has to do is match up compatible yeshivos and Bais Yaakovs, and she's done.

So there you have it: how to write a *shidduch* résumé. Now all you have to do is send it out into the world and sit back and wonder why people aren't breaking down your door. I mean you did put your address on it. Was it something in the résumé? Or maybe there's a step two – I don't know. We'll cross that bridge when we get there. We did our *hishtadlus*. ■

*Mordechai Schmutter is a freelance writer/editor as well as a published author. He can be contacted through Inyan.*

**Caution:** Taking the ideas and halachos expressed in this article literally can be hazardous to your health.