

# OHRNET

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## PARSHA INSIGHTS

by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair

### Solidly Spiritual

*He cannot give the right of the firstborn to the son of the beloved one ahead of the son of the disliked one, the firstborn. (21:16)*

One of the greatest men who came into this world was an unassuming rabbi who was born in Russia and lived most of his life in New York City. There are enough stories about Rabbi Moshe Feinstein to fill many books. Here is one small story which is enormously revealing.

When a Jew finishes speaking to his Creator in the *amidah*, the standing prayer, he takes his leave by walking backward three paces as a servant would take his leave of a great king. If someone is standing behind you and is still praying this prayer, the halacha forbids you to back up into a space four *amot* (approximately two meters) in front of the person still in prayer. One day, Rabbi Feinstein had just finished praying in his Yeshiva on Staten Island, New York. As it happened, someone was still praying behind him. As he was waiting patiently for this person to conclude so that he could take three paces backward and complete his service, someone told him that there was a call from Israel, a matter of urgency but not life-threatening that demanded his attention. Rabbi Feinstein continued to wait for the fellow behind him to take three steps backward. Nothing happened, so deeply was this fellow immersed in prayer. The person who had brought Rabbi Feinstein the news of the call started to become agitated:

“Please, Rosh Yeshiva, Eretz Yisrael is waiting. It’s extremely urgent!”

“What do you want me to do?” replied the great Rabbi. “There’s a wall behind me!”

We live in an era where, for many people, the Ten Commandments have become the Ten Suggestions. A mitzvah is not a suggestion; it is a reality. We may not be able to see that reality, but that doesn’t make it any the

less real. When Rabbi Feinstein said he couldn’t back up, he meant that he *couldn’t*. Not that he didn’t think it was a good idea, but, rather, the spiritual reality of the situation placed a barrier behind him as solid as any structure of brick and mortar.

This is the way a Jew must relate to his Judaism.

This week’s Torah portion teaches us that the firstborn is entitled to a double portion in the inheritance of his father. The Torah stipulates that the father may not transfer this double portion to another son whom he likes more.

Puzzling is the way this commandment is phrased. The Torah tells the father: You will not *be able* to endow the beloved son to the detriment of the disliked son.

Similarly, when a person finds a lost object, he is required to take steps to secure its return to the owner. The Torah says that a person cannot just ignore the article and assume that someone else will deal with it. You shall not hide yourself (22:3), says the Torah. Here again, the literal translation is: You will not *be able* to hide yourself.

The Torah doesn’t just demand a code of behavior from us – it demands that we become a certain kind of person. It is not enough that we don’t perform favoritism. It is not enough that we return lost objects. The Torah requires that we become the sort of people that would find it *impossible* to allow such behavior, that we ingrain G-d’s will in our heart and mind until we see spiritual walls as being like walls of mortar and stone.

• Sources: *Ibn Ezra, Avi Ezri, Rabbi Mordechai Perlman*

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# TALMUD TIPS

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by Rabbi Moshe Newman

## Ki Tetze: *Keritot* 16-22

### Does Appearance Really Matter?

*We learn in a beraita, "If human blood is on a loaf of bread, it needs to be scraped away before the bread may be eaten; if blood is between one's teeth, however, one may just swallow it without concern."*

Although the Torah prohibited consumption of animal blood, it did not ban human blood. Nevertheless, we see in this *beraita* that there is an issue with consumption of human blood.

According to the Rambam our Sages decreed that human blood that separated from the body – such as bleeding from a cut or spit from the mouth after flossing – has the status of forbidden food, just like any other item that is prohibited according to Rabbinical Law.

However, according to the Tur and the Shulchan Aruch there is no “absolute” Rabbinical prohibition against consuming human blood. Rather, there is an issue in play known as *marit ayin*, that might lead to forbidding consumption of human blood under certain circumstances. “*Marit ayin*” translates as “appearance to the eye,” which means that a person might see something that is actually permitted, but mistakenly think that it is actually something else, which could lead the person to transgress. For example, take the case of a person hanging clothing on Shabbat that became wet from rain on Shabbat or was laundered but not dried before Shabbat. One who sees the person hanging the clothes to dry might think that the person washed them on Shabbat – and mistakenly conclude that washing on Shabbat is permitted. Therefore, hanging wet clothing on Shabbat is forbidden due to the principle of *marit ayin*.

There are two major practical differences that need to be noted when discussing whether something is forbidden because it is a truly prohibited item or whether it is forbidden because of *marit ayin*.

One difference: If it is forbidden due to *marit ayin*, then if it is obviously a *permitted* item there would be no problem. For example, the *gemara* teaches the example

of fish blood in a bowl that also contains fish scales. Since it is self-evident that the blood is from fish and not from a forbidden source, there is no prohibition. Another halachic example is the need to put almond slices into almond milk when drinking it with meat to show that it is not dairy milk. Perhaps the modern equivalent of this case is leaving the *pareve* milk carton on the table when using a non-dairy coffee-creamer with a meat meal.

However, an item that is outright forbidden (such as human blood according to the Rambam) retains a forbidden status despite any “cosmetic” attempts to make it look okay.

A second practical difference that is important to note is the factor of “place.” Where is the item being consumed or the action being performed? If the problem is one of *marit ayin*, then there is an argument to be made that the problem exists only when in public since the rationale for this issue is that one might see it and get the wrong idea. However, if the problem is that there is a *clear* prohibition involved, then the prohibition should exist even in private. Accordingly, permitting swallowing blood inside the mouth is easier to understand according to the reason of *marit ayin*. If human blood is a clear item of prohibition, however, the commentaries explain that the Rabbis did not declare a prohibited status on human blood if it never left the body. (See Aruch Hashulchan Yoreh Deah 66:35, who writes about this second practical difference, and discusses at length how this would apply in light of the well-known teaching in *Shas* that “anything forbidden because of *marit ayin* is forbidden even in one’s innermost room.”)

• *Keritot* 22a

# Q & A

## Questions

1. Why must a captured woman mourn her family for a month in her captor's house?
2. What fraction of the inheritance does a first-born receive if he has a) one brother? b) two brothers?
3. What will become of a *ben sorer u'moreh* if his parents don't bring him to court?
4. Why is it a degradation to G-d to hang a criminal's body on the gallows overnight?
5. What do you do if you find a lost object that costs money to maintain?
6. Why does the Torah forbid wearing the clothing of the opposite gender?
7. Why does the Torah link the mitzvah of sending away the mother-bird with the mitzvah of making a railing on the roof of your house?
8. When is it permitted to wear wool and linen?
9. What three things happen to a man who falsely slanders his bride?
10. Although the Egyptians enslaved the Jewish People, the Torah allows marriage with their third-generation converts. Why?
11. Why is causing someone to sin worse than killing him?
12. If one charges interest to his fellow Jew, how many commandments has he transgressed?
13. What is the groom's special obligation to his bride during their first year together?
14. When is a groom required to fight in a non-obligatory war?
15. What type of object may one not take as collateral?

*All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated.*

## Answers

1. 21:13 - So her captor will find her unattractive.
2. 21:17 - a) 2/3 b) 1/2
3. 21:22 - He will eventually rob and kill to support his physical indulgences.
4. 21:23 - Because humans are made in G-d's image; and because the Jewish People are G-d's children.
5. 22:2 - Sell it and save the money for the owner.
6. 22:5 - It leads to immorality.
7. 22:8 - To teach that one mitzvah leads to another, and to prosperity.
8. 22:12 - Wool *tzitzit* on a linen garment.
9. 22:18 - He receives lashes, pays a fine of 100 silver *selah*, and may never divorce her against her will.
10. 23:8 - Because they hosted Yaakov and his family during the famine.
11. 23:9 - Murder takes away life in this world, while causing someone to sin takes away his life in the World to Come.
12. 23:21 - Three; two negative commandments and a positive commandment.
13. 24:5 - To gladden her.
14. 24:5 - When he remarries his ex-wife.
15. 24:6 - Utensils used to prepare food.

## **I Did Not Know That!**

Honoring parents and sending away the mother bird are two commandments which the Torah equates regarding their reward: "In order that He will bestow good upon you, and long life...." (Devarim 22:6) Why should sending away a bird, a simple act, share the status of a very difficult mitzvah, honoring parents? What is the connection between these two mitzvot?

When a person approaches a bird's nest to take the young, the mother bird could easily fly to safety. But instead, she stays by the nest in order to protect her young, putting herself in danger. To capture her in this position would be to take advantage of her self-sacrifice for her young, and the Torah forbids this. Surely, then, we must honor our parents, who sacrifice so much for us.

- Based on *Oznaim L'Torah*

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# ASK!

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Your Jewish Information Resource by the Ohr.edu team – [www.ohr.edu](http://www.ohr.edu)

## What's My Tribe?

Question:

*For the first time in my life, I went to Synagogue on Friday night! It was such an interesting experience. I found the people there to be so open, honest and nice. What I liked the most was the singing and the chanting of the man (I forget what you call him.) Anyway, I met this really nice girl there who is the Rabbi's daughter. Her name is Shira Chana and she showed me around and explained some things to me. I must say I felt very much at home there.*

*I'm very interested in the 12 tribes. Someone there told me that you can determine which tribe you are from by your last name. My real mom's last name was Levin. What tribe would I be from? I would also like to know the ranks and orders of the tribes. Like who was the best tribe and which tribe wasn't so good.*

*These past few weeks have been so interesting for me. I have had an opportunity to really learn a lot about who I am and I'm really proud and happy to call myself a Jew. Thank you so much for your friendship and your kindness. I know one Hebrew word besides "shalom" which is "mitzvah," and that is what you do for me.*

Shalom,

Gabriella

Dear Gabriella,

It's wonderful to hear about someone returning to Judaism and to their heritage. May G-d help you on your path.

The tribes are: Reuben, Shimon, Levi (from whom come *kohanim* or Priests), Judah (the Royal line, from whom King David and *mashiach* are descended), Issachar, Zevulun, Benjamin, Dan,

Naftali, Gad, Asher and Efraim and Menashe. There are actually 13 tribes, but since Efraim and Menashe are Joseph's sons, they are sometimes counted as one tribe, the tribe of Yosef.

The name Levin commonly indicates that a person is from the tribe of Levi, but it's not conclusive proof. Unfortunately, it's impossible in most cases to determine the tribe you are from just from your surname, as family names are a relatively recent addition to Jewish names and may be based on other factors. Most Jews don't know what tribe they are from.

And the most important point to note in your case is that tribal affiliation goes according to one's *father's* tribal identity and not by the mother's. Therefore, even if Levin would denote a Levite affiliation, it would not be transferred to you by your mother.

Regarding which tribes are "better," we believe they all have unique qualities and are all of equal value in the eyes of G-d. Here is what one of the great sages, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, says: "The nation is to represent agriculture as well as commerce, militarism as well as culture and learning. The Jewish people will be a nation of farmers, a nation of businessman, a nation of soldiers and a nation of science. Thereby, as a model nation, to establish the truth that the one great personal and national calling which G-d revealed in His Torah, is not dependent on any particular kind of calling or trait, but that the whole of mankind in all its shades of diversity can equally find its calling in the one common spiritual and moral mission and outlook in life."

By the way, "the man singing" is called the *chazan*.

- Sources: Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Commentary on Genesis 48:3-4*

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# WHAT'S IN A WORD?

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*Synonyms in the Hebrew Language*  
by Rabbi Reuven Chaim Klein

## Forget About It

The Book of Deuteronomy is especially concerned with *making sure that a Jew will not forget certain essentials*. To that effect, it warns against forgetting about G-d (Deut. 6:12, 8:11, 8:14, 8:19, 32:18), the Sinai Revelation (Deut. 4:9), the Torah (Deut. 31:21), the covenant G-d made with the Patriarchs (Deut. 4:31) and with the Jewish People (Deut. 4:23), the way the Jews provoked G-d in the desert (Deut. 9:7), the laws of the tithes (Deut. 26:13), and what Amalek did to the Jews (Deut. 25:19). In all of these cases the Torah uses the Hebrew word *shachach/shichachah* to refer to “forgetting.” While conjugations of *shachach* appear over 100 times in the Bible, there is also a lesser-known Hebrew word for “forgetting:” *nash/nashah*. In this essay we explore the usage and roots of these words and consider whether they are true synonyms.

Whereas the word *shachach* appears relatively frequently in the Bible, *nashah* remains a rarity. When Yosef named his eldest son Menashe, he said, “G-d has made me forget (*nashani*) all my hardship and all my father’s household” (Gen. 41:51). This is an unambiguous case of the word *nashah* meaning “forget.” [Rabbi Avraham Menachem Rappaport (1520-1594) in *Mincha Belulah* claims that besides the verse concerning Menashe, no other cognates of this word appear in the Bible. Nonetheless, as we will show, there seem to be a few more examples.]

Another possible case is the verse in which Moshe foretells the Jewish People forsaking G-d, “You will have forgotten (*teshi*) the Rock (i.e. G-d) who gave birth to you, and you will forget (*shachach*) the G-d who brought you forth” (Deut. 32:18). In this case, *teshi* is derived from the same root as *nashah*, except that the NUN is dropped in favor of a TAV (see Rashi there).

Other cases in which cognates of *nashah* are used to mean “forget” include Lam. 3:17, Jer. 23:39, Isa. 44:21, Iyov 39:17, and Iyov 11:6. When banning the consumption of the sciatic nerve, the Torah refers to that nerve as the *gid hanasheh* (Gen 32:33), which the *Zohar* (Gen. 170b) explains is food for the “evil inclination” that causes man to “forget” (*nashah*) his responsibilities to G-d. The *Zohar* thus understands that *hanasheh* is derived from the word *nashah*.

The Talmud always refers to a married woman’s maiden family as her *bei nasha* (“House of *nasha*”). A bevy of commentators explain that in this context the word *nasha* mean “forgetting,” for when a lady leaves her parents’ household to get married, she essentially “forgets” about her first family and joins with her husband’s. [This idea is first proposed by the English Tosafists in *Tosafot Chachmei Anglia* (to *Kiddushin* 24a), and later by Rabbi Yehuda Chalava (a son of the famous 13th century scholar Maharam Chalava) and his cousin Rabbeinu Bachaya ibn Chalava (in their respective commentaries to Gen. 41:51). Similar explanations are later proffered by Rabbi Binyamin Mussafia (1606-1675) in *Mussaf HaAruch* and Rabbi Shmuel HaLevi (1625-1681) in *Nachalas Shiva*.]

Menachem Ibn Saruk writes that the root of the words *nashani* and *teshi* is the letter SHIN alone, which represents the concept of “forgetting.” Others (including Ibn Chayyuj, Ibn Janach, and Radak) write that their root may be NUN-SHIN-HEY or NUN-SHIN-SHIN.

Rabbi Shlomo Pappenheim of Breslau (1740-1814) writes in *Cheshek Shlomo* that the root of the words *nashani* and *teshi* is NUN-SHIN, which he explains means “moving something from its natural condition.” This relates to “forgetting”, i.e. the mechanism by which information stored in the brain is “moved” (or “removed”) from its place.

Rabbi Pappenheim adds that other words derived from the NUN-SHIN root include *gid hanasheh* (“sciatic nerve,” which moves from its place), *nosheh* (“lender,” who moves his money from his possession to the borrower), *anush* (a “sick, weakly person,” whose state of health has been diverted from its proper place), and *enosh* (“mankind,” whose powers are weak in comparison to more-powerful spiritual entities).

Elsewhere in *Cheshek Shlomo* Rabbi Pappenheim writes that the root of *teshi* is TAV-SHIN, which means “weakening.” Interestingly, Rabbi Moshe Tedeschi Ashkenazi (1821-1898), the Italian author of *Hoil Moshe*, actually claims that “weakening” is the primary meaning of the NUN-SHIN root, in line with the explanation of Rabbi Pappenheim.

The Malbim (to Iyov 11:6) writes that the difference between *shachach* and *nashah* is that *shachach* implies that one could later remember that which he had forgotten, while the verb *nashah* implies something which is completely forgotten and its memory cannot be retrieved or remembered.

Rabbi Samson Rapahel Hirsch (to Gen. 8:1) explains that *shachach* implies forgetting inadvertently. On the other hand, the term *nashah* applies to somebody who treats something flippantly, such that if he forgets about it he is more responsible for his forgetfulness. Elsewhere (Deut. 4:9), Rabbi Hirsch writes that *shachach* implies forgetting as a result of focusing on something else, while *nashah* is forgetfulness that results from a weakened memory.

Rabbi Eliyahu Katz (1916-2004), the former Chief Rabbi of Slovakia and later the Chief Rabbi of Be'er Sheva, disagrees with the Malbim and Rabbi Hirsch, who understand that *shachach* and *nashah* have different meanings. Instead, Rabbi Katz argues that they mean the exact same thing, by pointing to the Targumim who tend to translate the Hebrew *shachach* and its cognates into Aramaic as *nashah*-based words. He takes this as evidence that the two words do not hold different meanings, but that *nashah* is simply an Aramaic way of saying *shachach*.

By way of metathesis, some connect the root SHIN-KAF-CHET to the root KAF-CHET-SHIN (“deny”/“weaken”) which uses the same letters. For example, Rabbi Yekusiel

- For questions, comments, or to propose ideas for a future article, please contact the author at [rklein@ohr.edu](mailto:rklein@ohr.edu)

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## PARSHA OVERVIEW

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The Torah describes the only permissible way a woman captured in battle may be married. If a man marries two wives, and the less-favored wife bears a firstborn son, this son's right to inherit a double portion is protected against the father's desire to favor the child of the favored wife. The penalty for a rebellious son, who will inevitably degenerate into a monstrous criminal, is stoning. A body must not be left on the gallows overnight, because it had housed a holy soul. Lost property must be returned. Men are forbidden from wearing women's clothing and vice versa. A mother bird may not be taken together with her eggs. A fence must be built around the roof of a house. It is forbidden to plant a mixture of seeds, to plow with an ox and a donkey together, or to combine wool and linen in a garment. A four-cornered garment must have twisted threads *tzitzit* on its corners. Laws regarding illicit relationships are detailed. When Israel goes to war, the camp must be governed by rules of spiritual purity. An escaped slave must not be returned to his master. Taking interest for lending to a Jew is forbidden. *Bnei Yisrael* are not

Yehudah Teitelbaum of Sighet (1808-1883) in *Yitav Lev* (to Ex. 10:1) writes that *shachach* (“forget”) and *kachash* (“deny”) are comprised of the same letters because if one “forgets” about G-d and one's responsibilities towards Him, then one will eventually come to “deny” His existence altogether. Similarly, when the Psalmist says, “If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand be forgotten” (Psalms 137:5), Robert Alter and the editors of *Da'at Mikra* explain that “be forgotten” (*tishkach* – a cognate of *shachach*) should be understood in the sense of “be weakened” (*tikchash* – a cognate of *kachash*).

The Aramaic word *shachiyach* (“common” or “frequent”) shares a common root with the Hebrew word *shachach*. Rabbi Moshe Shapiro (1935-2017) notes that this seems counterintuitive: If something is common or frequent, then one would expect that that it is *not* something which people will forget. Since they constantly come across it, it stays fresh in their memory. Why then are the words *shachiyach* and *shachach* related? Rabbi Shapiro explains that one's mind places all common occurrences within a certain schema of “normal.” Once data is filed away as “normal” it is taken for granted and can be easily forgotten. In fact, the Talmud (Chullin 75b) says, “People will surely remember any bizarre matter.” It is only that which is out of the ordinary that will be remembered. That which is commonplace is at risk of being forgotten. In other words, as they say in Brooklyn, you might fuhgeddaboutit.

to make vows. A worker may eat of the fruit he is harvesting. Divorce and marriage are legislated. For the first year of marriage, a husband is exempt from the army and stays home to rejoice with his wife. Tools of labor may not be impounded, as this prevents the debtor from earning a living. The penalty for kidnapping for profit is death. Removal of the signs of the disease *tzara'at* is forbidden. Even for an overdue loan, the creditor must return the collateral daily if the debtor needs it. Workers' pay must not be delayed. The guilty may not be subjugated by punishing an innocent relative. Because of their vulnerability, converts and orphans have special rights of protection. The poor are to have a portion of the harvest. A court may impose lashes. An ox must not be muzzled while threshing. It is a mitzvah for a man to marry his brother's widow if the deceased left no offspring. Weights and measures must be accurate and used honestly. This Torah portion concludes with the mitzvah to erase the name of Amalek, for, in spite of knowing about the Exodus, they ambushed the Jewish People.

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# LETTER AND SPIRIT

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Insights based on the writings of Rav S.R. Hirsch  
by Rabbi Yosef Hershman

## A Rebel with a Cause

The law of the *ben sorer u'moreh*, the rebellious son who is put to death in his adolescence at the request of his parents, is unusual in many regards. Our Sages have taught that there never was such a disobedient and recalcitrant son in the past, and there will never be one in the future. Rather, it was and will remain only a theoretical “problem,” as the conditions stipulated by law can never actually be satisfied. It was written, then, not as practical law, but a rich source of pedagogic truths, whose study is of great benefit for the educational work of parents.

Rav Hirsch’s masterful explication of the laws of the *ben sorer u'moreh* spans many pages, and distills several essential principles in education from the various details of the laws. We summarize here but a few.

The first aspect of the law that draws our attention is the age-span during which the death penalty is applicable – the first three months after a boy has reached the age of puberty, usually upon completion of his thirteenth year. We see that this period is regarded as a crucial phase in the formation of a child’s character. While this period is marked by an awakening of the latent sensual impulses and appetites, it can, and should, also be marked by the awakening of the moral strength that will guide the child away from vice and base passion. That latter awakening is characterized with the joy of discovering the truth and is fueled by the desire to adopt great and noble values – the discovery of a higher-self. Precisely when the struggle is born, the wherewithal to succeed is also born, and must be carefully cultivated as the child “comes of age.” This is when a child becomes a *bar mitzvah*, literally a “son of the commandment” and acquires the discipline and striving necessary to overcome temptation and commit to the law.

If, at the time when he is supposed to be developing seriousness and maturity, he displays such defiant conduct *zollel v'soveh*, out-and-out gluttony and drunkenness – then we

can be certain that any further effort at character training will only end in failure. The glutton’s desire for good food takes precedence over any moral considerations, such that he pilfers from his own parents. In addition, to be liable, not only must he have used the stolen money for his revelry, but he must have consumed it in the company of good-for-nothings.

To summarize: the *ben sorer u'moreh* must have displayed willful, perverse disobedience in general, excessive predilection for good food and alcoholic drinks, pilfering at home and keeping bad company. These sad criteria – which as defined have never and will never be met – should each engage our attention as parents and educators.

One of these traits in particular – gluttony – is one we sometimes unwittingly encourage. When cuisine is given high importance in the home – where the assortment of sushi or the price of wines and scotch is the gage of the happiness at a joyous occasion – we communicate base pleasure over refinement. Rav Hirsch encourages teaching and modeling moderate eating, including occasional finer cuisine, to help children discover on their own the limits of the happiness that a good steak or good wine can bring. When those limits are realized, an appetite can be developed for the finer joys of life.

Another requirement of the *ben sorer u'moreh* holds the key to child-rearing. This son can be liable only if his parents were of the same voice and heart. They must come to the judges declaring, *our child* does not listen to *our voice*. If this unity and consistency is lacking, then we fault the parents and not the child. To be successful parents, they must be equals, completely in agreement, of one heart and mind in their education of their child.

- Sources: Commentary, *Devarim* 21:18;
- Collected Writings VII, p.333 ff.

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*Profiles of Ohr Somayach students, alumni and staff*  
by Rabbi Shlomo Simon

## Benjamin Emesz (21)

Budapest, Hungary  
Queen Mary University, London, UK  
Student of Politics and International Relations (expected graduation in 2020)  
JIntern Summer 2018    Mechina Program 2019



Hungary's Jews were the last of the European Jews to be sent by the Nazis to the death camps. In May of 1944, just a month before the D-Day invasion of the Allies, and as they were losing badly on most fronts, the Germans put their extermination plans for Hungarian Jewry into effect. And they did it with a vengeance. There were over 800,000 Jews in the country at the time. Within the space of a few weeks they murdered more than half of the Jewish population. In all, over 565,000 Hungarian Jews were killed.

It was in Budapest that the righteous non-Jew, Count Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat and businessman, set up "safe houses" as extensions of the Swedish Embassy to shield Jewish families inside. All told, he saved thousands of Jews. Among them was Benjamin's maternal great-grandmother. His father's grandmother was taken by the Nazis to the Mauthausen concentration camp, where she survived by being a valued office cleaner in the camp. She also miraculously survived the Death March from Mauthausen to the interior of Germany at the end of the War in the spring of 1945, as the Nazis fled the Russians and the Western Allied forces.

The Hungary in which Benjamin was raised was a country that had a significant Jewish presence after the war. The country was under Russian administration, and the Communist Party leadership was almost entirely Jewish. But they were extremely assimilated and anti-religious. In any case, Anti-Semitism was not outwardly evident for a short period of time after the war. But that had changed by the time Benjamin was born. While still a very cosmopolitan city, Budapest was quite Anti-Semitic. Most Jews did not openly declare their religion and were very assimilated. Benjamin's mother's family was more traditional

than most. She celebrated Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, went to shul on holidays and had *mezuzot* on the doorposts. Benjamin was sent to a Jewish kindergarten.

In a public primary school, Benjamin blended in with the gentile population. He wasn't "outed" as a Jew until he was almost ready for high school. His parents decided that it wasn't safe for him to continue in public school class, so they enrolled him in the American Endowment School, an Orthodox Jewish High School in the city. He loved it there. He learned Hebrew and English (which he speaks fluently). He loved the *davening* and the kosher food and began keeping many mitzvahs. He hadn't become fully observant yet, but it was a positive experience to build upon. His family was very supportive.

Benjamin's older brother, who works for a cyber security company in London, preceded him there. Benjamin is going into his last year of University in London. Last summer he came on the JIntern program to Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem and enjoyed it immensely. So much so that he decided to return this summer and attend the Mechina Program at the Yeshiva.

When he returns to school in London, he will be living in Golder's Green, very close to the London JLE. His objective is to live up to his name – searching for *truth* and growing in his Yiddishkeit. After graduation he wants to return to Ohr Somayach as a full-time *Yeshiva bochur*.