

## Chapter 1: Family

I cannot say what my first childhood recollections are. I remember living in a small apartment in Tel Aviv and my family life was simply as people in Israel experienced at that time. We had a small kitchen, a tiny living room, and a small balcony with a few flowers. My mother worked full time as a secretary to the mayor of Tel Aviv. My father was the head of customs at the Jaffa port perhaps because of his fluency in seven languages, including English, since these were the days of the British Mandate when the country was called “Palestine”.

My father, Moshe, was born in Poland in 1904. His father was a rabbi but supported the family as a shoemaker. When Moshe was born, his parents were older and had thought their childbearing years had ended long before his birth. He was essentially raised as an only child, since most of his siblings had either died or moved away. Based on his subsequent behavior, towards my mother and me, I believe he must have observed and experienced both physical and emotional abuse. Years later, my cousin Yaakov told me that our grandmother was very strict, stern, and never smiled. Yaakov was a few years older than I was and he told me that he was scared of her. Perhaps he experienced the same emotions when he was young since our grandmother was my father’s mother. Throughout his life, I observed a man whose emotions were bottled up within him and who never learned how to appropriately release them.

Moshe was extremely intelligent, and excelled in all academic subjects, as well as artistically, mainly through his drawings. His exceptional intelligence was somewhat of a disadvantage for him in his youth. Because of his academic prowess, he was sent to the gentile high school, called gymnasium. Here, he was accosted and beaten regularly by the gentile kids because he was Jewish, and then received the same treatment from the Jewish kids for attending a gentile school. He never told me stories about the kind of home life he experienced in Poland, but I suspect that it was not a particularly kind environment.

In 1922, his parents sent him to the Holy Land—Israel. At that time, the country was ruled by the British and was

known as “Palestine.” At that time, all ships arrived at the port of Jaffa, which is one of the oldest ports in the ancient world, and the only port for Palestine. While my father was traveling the relatively short distance from the landing dock to a hotel, he was attacked by thieves, who beat him and stole all of his possessions.

Luckily, someone helped him with food, clothes, and lodging. Life in Israel was quite difficult at that time in the nation’s history. The land was barren in many places and Tel Aviv was not the modern hustling and bustling city that it is



*My father, Moshe*

# PALESTINE LAND OF PROMISE

## Farms Thriving, Trade Picking Up, New Cities Rising in Former Waste Places [israellycool.com](http://israellycool.com)

**I**N Palestine, according to the Rev. Dr. Maurice H. Harris, progress is fast getting into stride behind walls that are medieval, at least in years, and upon territory that is biblical in history. Dr. Harris, rabbi of Temple Israel of this city, has just returned from a three months' trip to Palestine and Syria. His mission, he said, was largely sentimental. As an Israelite he wanted to see the land of his fathers.

"Palestine, in the Bible," he remarked, "was called the Promised Land. Today it is more than that. It is the land of promise, a land of the future. Ideals of youth, muscles of youth, the brain and the dreams of youth are creating a life which makes a visitor feel that he sees a country in the making. The earlier conception of Palestine, or Jerusalem, to be exact, was a place where old, orthodox Jews wanted to die. Today it is a place where the young Jew wants to live.

"Most of the old Jews were maintained by charity. Some of that work is still going on. Conspicuous are the benevolences of Baron de Rothschild of France and Sir Moses Montefiore of England. The young groups, however, are self-reliant and self-sustained. They get help of a sort, it is true, but it is help that makes for growth. Agricultural colonies have been subsidized by Zionists, but that help will more than

This building was a palace built by the Kaiser. It rests on the Mount of Olives. I was taken up to its top by Sir Herbert, and from that historic spot looked down upon the hills and plains, the River Jordan flowing in the valley, emptying its waters into the Dead Sea. The Hills of Moab lay beyond. It was upon just such a landscape that Moses gazed on his last day.

### New Cities Rise.

"Everywhere in Palestine the work of the Jewish pioneers, the Chaltzen, is apparent. Tel Aviv is a new city adjoining Jaffa, on the Mediterranean. It has grown up like the gourd of Jonah, overnight. It was built by the young Jews, many of them youths of genius and intellect, who quarried the stones in the streets and mixed the mortar to build the houses. Almost before your eyes groups of dwellings rise up. This town is distinctly Jewish in population and character. Saturday is the legal holiday observed by all, when the community is as quiet as an American town on Sunday.

"It is in the agricultural districts, perhaps, that one can most appreciate what these pioneers are doing for the ancient land of their fathers. The Hills of Judea are still barren. Further north, however, the traveler comes upon fruit-

is owned by the Arab. He is the gaffer when a waste is turned into productive acreage. Improvements that are being carried on in Palestine today are not directed for the welfare of the Jew alone, but for the whole Palestinian population. Christian, Moslem and Jew profit alike, whether it be by the planting of eucalyptus trees, which clear the air, or the inauguration of sanitary or irrigation systems.

"In Sir Herbert Samuel the Jew as well as the Arab has a good friend. He is a man of remarkable tact in a situation that is most delicate and intricate. No man has done more to disarm the suspicion of the Arab. He is patient and conciliatory with them. But when the occasion calls he can be firm and determined. His reasonable appeals to the insurgent meetings of protest have more than once prevented an uprising against the Jews.

"Right now I do not know what he is doing in preparation for a possible problem owing to the outbreaks of the Turks in Smyrna. But that he is not unaware of his position I am certain.

"An idea of the feeling of the young Jew to his new homeland can be gained from the fact that throughout the land Hebrew has been adopted as the native tongue. It is no longer a dead language. Today it is recognized as one of the three official languages of the

be remembered that they came from different parts of the world. The Jew from Persia spoke Persian, the Jew from Poland, Polish, the Jew from America, English, the Jew from Russia, Russian. Members of these groups spoke Yiddish or Ladino, which were not languages but a jargon. Differences in tongue led to differences of opinion. One group felt the superior of another. Today all this is past. They feel that they are one people, guided by one purpose and one destiny.

"There is much that is hopeful in the young Palestine of today. My impressions of historic Palestine were not as happy, however. All the historic monuments are in non-Jewish hands. The site of Solomon's Temple, the traditional Mount Moriah, is Moslem; the famous 'Dome of the Rock.' The presumed cave of Maepelah is in a mosque at Hebron, and a Jew is only permitted to insert his hand in a crevice—for a consideration. The Church of the Nativity enshrines the birthplace of Jesus, not of David. Mount Carmel at Haifa, where Elijah made his dramatic appeal, is crowned by a monastery. The Samaritans hold Mt. Gerizim where they still make an annual sacrifice on Passover. There was nothing to recall Judaea Macabean at Emmaus. To the Jews is granted but a bit of ruined wall, remnant of that which enclosed the Temple area. There they still chant their plaints on Friday afternoon.

"But this disappointment was tempered, because it matters little if certain historic spots are held by the Church and the Crescent. To Israel the whole land is sacred. It is associated not with the life of one man—a Jesus or a Mohammed—but with a hundred. A score of places would have to be singled out where the Prophets voiced those undying messages that inspire the world today.

of the original cedars of Lebanon, their tops still crowned by lasting snow. Damascus perhaps was most interesting in that it most recalled biblical lore. The bazaars were teeming with humanity. Bedouins came to the fair, riding on asses as of yore, clad in garments that were designed before the days of Abraham. Caravans left for the desert, camels heavily laden with goods. Shepherds leading flocks were constantly seen.

"One thing that interested me greatly in Damascus was the principal mosque of the city. This once had been a church. The Moslems who entered it prayed at the tomb of John the Baptist. Mohammedanism is an eclectic religion gathering its inspiration from all sources.

"In Syria, apparently, they have no such organization as a society for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals. In factories I saw little children of 6 and less working as much as ten hours a day in surroundings that would be condemned in any Western country. Camels, the chief beasts of burden, are overloaded to an extent that is alarming. I waited one day to see the proverbial last straws that would break the backs of some of them, but they never came. The great, dumb beasts bore their burdens without complaint. But on seeing them one can understand the proverb. It must have found its inception in ancient cruelty, which has not abated with years.

"But it is hardly fair to expect kindness to animals when women and children are treated with such small consideration. Next to the camel the woman is the most popular beast of burden. Time and again have I seen Arabian women bearing heavy packs on their heads, following their husbands seated on asses.

"It may be that new standards of life will arise in Palestine, where the



*Palestine, land of promise*  
<http://arielnet.com/ref/go/1033>



*Jaffa Port with Tel Aviv in the background*  
<http://arielnet.com/ref/go/1034>



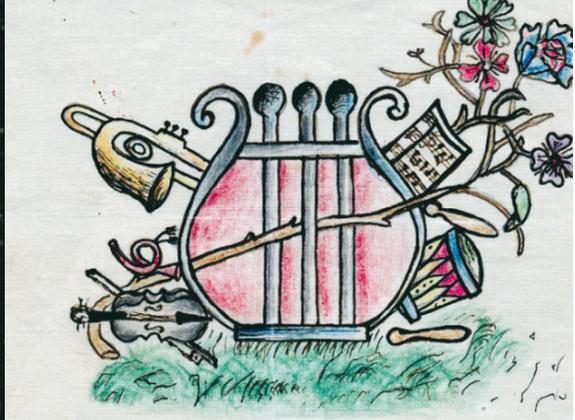
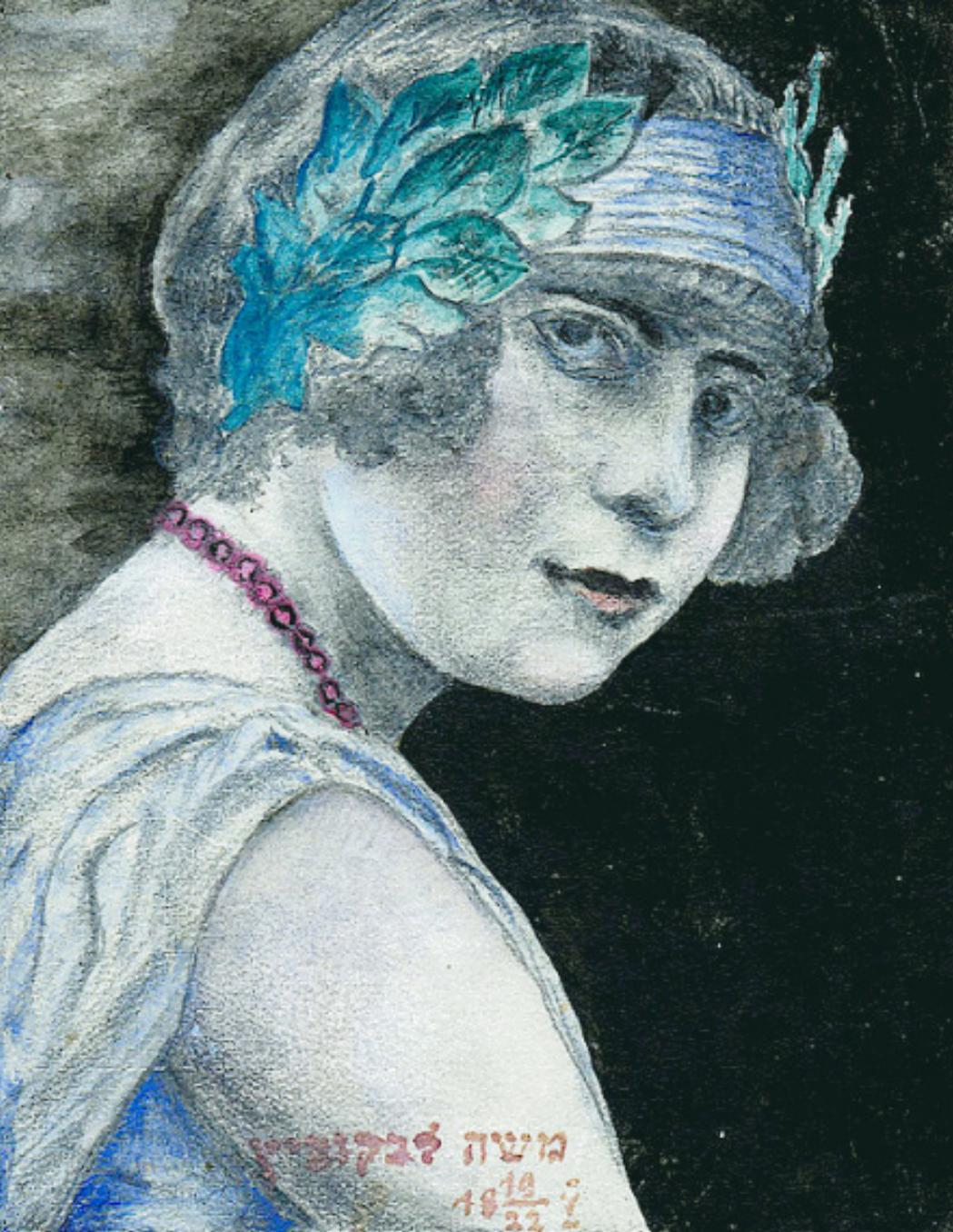


*Tel Aviv, 1915*  
<http://arielnet.com/ref/go/1032>



*Trip to Jaffa, 1920's*  
<http://arielnet.com/ref/go/1031>





today. My father joined the British Army shortly after arriving in Israel because it was a job.

Shortly after his army service, life improved for him when he was hired as a busboy at a hotel in Jerusalem. At the hotel, he quickly improved his position because of his command of many languages and his ability to manage financial transactions.

Not long after starting his work at the hotel, he became acquainted with many of the British military personnel who resided there. At that time, the British controlled the activities at the port in Jaffa. Whether it was his command of English, Hebrew, and Arabic or because he was so skilled with math, he was offered a job in the customs department at the Jaffa port. My father's primary responsibilities at the port were processing inbound freight so a command of both English, Hebrew, and Arabic was essential. He was also frequently called to assist with passengers arriving by ship who only spoke French, Yiddish, Polish or Russian. His language skills were clearly an asset.

My mother was a gentle, pretty, kind woman. She was born in Jerusalem to parents who were of Russian and German backgrounds. She had attended a seminary and received a teaching certificate for elementary school. I do not know, but I assume that her marriage to my father had been arranged since that was the custom of the time. What I mostly remember was her kindness and love for me. She took me to the ocean which was a short walk from our apartment. We would spend the day there while I built sand forts and played in the ocean. We would go to the park where I could play with other children. She prepared all of my favorite foods. Because of her teaching background, she had many children books she read to me. I loved her very much, and I know she loved me as well.

Unfortunately, my father was a tyrant. Many times I witnessed my father verbally and physically abusing my mother. She seemed to never be able to please him. He complained about everything from her cooking to how she cleaned the apartment. Nothing was to his liking. Since they argued in Yiddish and I only understood Hebrew, his complaints confused me as well. My father was ferocious towards me as well. It seemed that neither my mother nor I could do anything that pleased him. He was always angry and expressed this with physical and emotional abuse.

Both of my parents worked, so they were gone during the day. My mother was a secretary and my father worked in customs at the port. The Jaffa port turned out to be an excellent posting for someone who was charged with assist-



*My father's signature-Levkowitz*

ing the Israel underground or resistance, who at that time were trying to create a Jewish state. I later learned that my sullen, angry, detached father was part of the Stern Gang, a violent group opposed to the British rule. This group, like others, shared the aspiration that Palestine would again be the Jewish homeland.

It was a surprise for me to discover this detail about my father. Actually, it was quite by accident that I learned about his nationalistic sympathies. I was with him at the port one day when I was still a young child, and with my natural curiosity, began opening drawers, doors, and closets in search of a treasure or a toy. Imagine my surprise when I found some amazing oblong rigid pineapples and assumed they must be toys of some kind. Of course, my father nearly had a heart attack when I showed him my discovery; the pineapples turned out to be hand grenades!

Because of his position in customs, my father was aware of incoming freight consignments. Ice boxes, for example, were becoming more available for home use. These were empty boxes with two compartments: the top one was filled with ice to keep the lower compartment cold. Food could be kept cool for three or four days in these ice boxes. When a shipment of ice boxes was to be included in a consignment for Israel, the resistance groups would frequently fill them with contraband and notify my father to "clear" the shipment. I later learned that the shipments were "signed for and received by" a delivery agent known as "Gideon Ariel." The



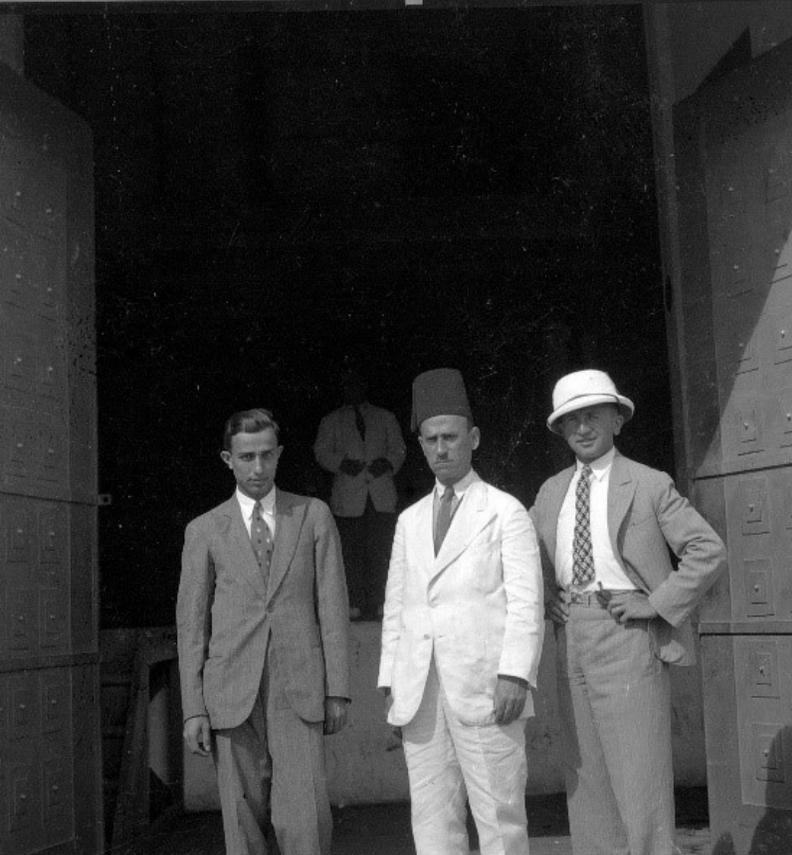
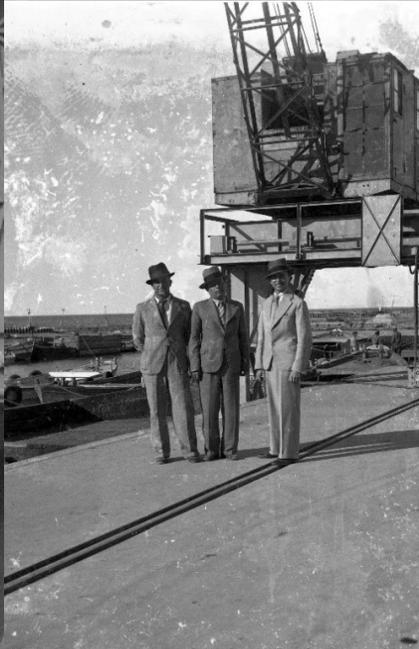
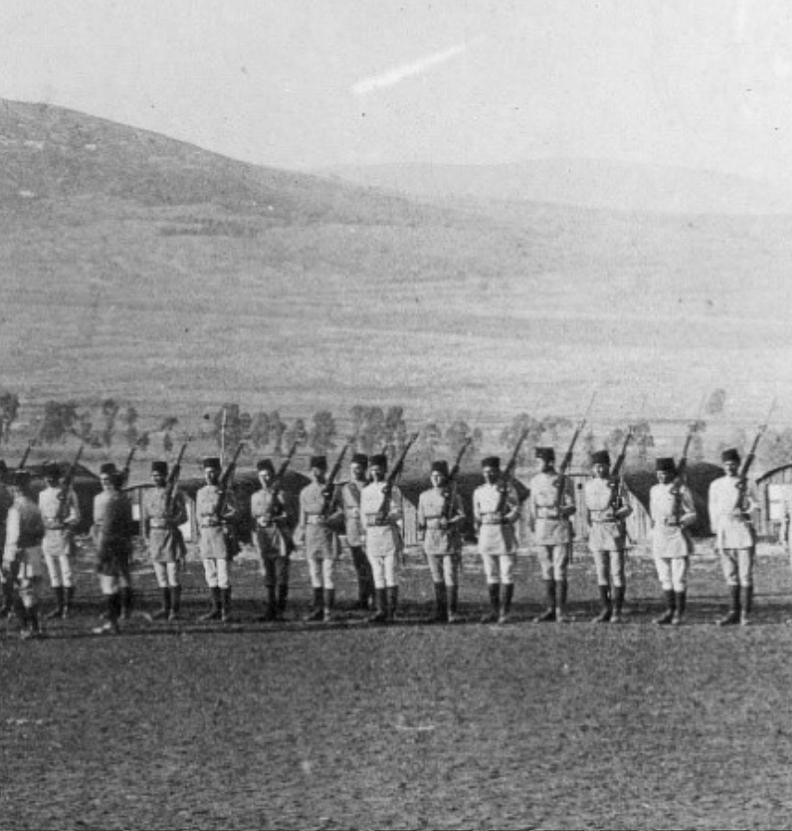
*Some pictures my father drew as a child*

<http://arielnet.com/ref/go/7000>



*My father in the Infantry of the British Army & working in various trading companies*  
<http://arielnet.com/ref/go/1028>







*Israel as seen today*  
<http://arielnet.com/ref/go/1027>

British could have hanged my father as a traitor for smuggling these weapons. I had never thought of my father as being a nationalistic underground fighter. His violent nature was obvious to his immediate family, but his working demeanor was clearly controlled and sophisticated.

Family life at home was terrible. My mother seemed to infuriate my father for reasons I could not understand, since a young boy frequently does not understand most adult issues, particularly when the arguments are in an incomprehensible language. My father worked all week at the customs office, but when he came home or stayed home on the weekends, our exchanges were usually accompanied by abusive words or brutal smacks to my face or body.

My father's anger confused and puzzled me then as it does until today. I knew that he loved me. His love towards me was never in doubt, but, for some unfathomable reason, he was unable to express his love in a way that I could recognize. The same held true for my mother. Undoubtedly, he loved her, but was not able to demonstrate his affection appropriately. Maybe he was inhibited, overwhelmed by family life, or merely lacked any comprehension of what he was supposed to do in this situation.

I knew my father had grown up surrounded by education. At that time, most pupils completed their education after tenth grade. He had received an exceptional education as a child in Poland since he had attended the Gymnasium for an additional two years of study. In addition to my father's talent for languages, he was also reputed to be a gifted painter. I heard people throughout the neighborhood talk about his drawing talent.

In 1948, after Israel was declared a state, my father obtained a new position as an accountant. But his behavior was the same as it had been when he had worked for customs. I will never know what so bedeviled my father because he never spoke about such things. Israel, at that time, was full of

people who could only lash out. There were those, of course, who turned their sadness into ferocious wit or goodness. But many people were marked by unspeakable memories of their own, or of those they loved. There is a theory that what you saw, heard, and experienced in your own childhood is what you repeat when you become an adult. In our more modern era, I think there would have been groups or government agencies intervening to help my family situation. Anger management, marriage counseling, and child-rearing assistance were all areas in which my family needed help. Sadly, for my mother and me, as well as for my lost and confused father, such help did not exist at that time.

My mother continued working every day and I went to school. Although I was in fourth grade that year, my emotions and thoughts were elsewhere. I was traumatized by my family situation. The school system was that students stayed in the same classroom and the teachers changed according to their specialty. Unfortunately, I "escaped" my family trauma during the lessons at school through imagination and day dreaming. For example, if the history teacher described an event which occurred in ancient times between the Greeks and the Persians, I sat in my school seat and imagined those events. I would develop complex war strategies or imagined conversations between Alexander the Great and his lieutenants. Suddenly, the teacher would call my name and I would be jerked back into the present day class without a clue about what had been discussed after the Alexander comment. However, the teachers never knew where my mind had been when they had been discussing other topics. I had been mentally absent during the intervening discussions. Therefore, when the question was posed to me and I appeared in a daze, the assumption was that I was stupid. Invariably, the teacher



*Israel, a small country among large ones*  
<http://arielnet.com/ref/go/2003>





*My mother, Tova, and father, Moshe*  
<http://arielnet.com/ref/go/1030>



*My mother and me, a few months old*  
<http://arielnet.com/ref/go/4001>

would embarrass or ridicule me for not knowing the answer to the question.

I played these mental games in my mind during most of my classes. Many other days, I skipped school and went to the beach instead. There I would construct complex forts and spend time in elaborate “war” games between imaginary groups. My grades suffered, but none of the teachers ever took the time or made the effort to learn why a bright student was failing so badly. In retrospect, I suspect that if one or more of the teachers had worked with me on an individual basis, they would have discovered that I had an excellent intellect but was in terrible emotional turmoil. I needed loving care and attention rather than ridicule and humiliation.

Unfortunately, none of the teachers gave me this necessary help. At the end of the school year, rather than advancing to the fifth grade, I was given a failing grade. I would have to repeat fourth grade.

My father was so physically and emotionally abusive to my mother that she eventually turned to others for solace. These events eventually would create a huge dent in my parents’ marriage. The situation was so unbearable for my parents that they divorced. I was ten years old at the time.



Divorce, of course, is never easy for anyone especially the children. Unfortunately, at that time in Israeli society, divorce was considered a scandalous act. It was so unforgivable that many parents forbade their children, my friends until then, from playing with me because of my parents' divorce. What a dreadful situation for a young child to have to experience. First, violence at home, followed by confusion after the divorce, and then the loss of companionship. I had no one to talk to or with whom I could play. It was unfortunate that the weakest and most vulnerable, the children, should be doomed with sharing the terrible burden of divorce. Not only had I lost my family, but now I had also lost my friends. Needless to say, school life was worse than ever. I was considered by the children in the school to be a dummy since I was repeating fourth grade. My classmates were younger than I was, which was another mismatch. As my family life had spiraled out of control, my school life deteriorated as well.

Mother and I stayed in the same apartment. My father moved elsewhere. It was traumatic for both of us. My father came to the apartment every day, stood downstairs and shouted my name. He prepared food for both of us but he made me come downstairs to get it so that he and my mother could avoid each other. In retrospect, this was a remarkable thing for him to do. He usually brought meat, vegetables, and milk that he must have obtained on the black market since food was rationed at that time. I never understood things that my father did, but acquiring, preparing, and bringing food to his family was an amazing thing to do.

My mother apparently continued to search for love. I was oblivious to these adult activities at that time. When her friend dropped by the apartment for a visit, I was usually sent

on an important errand. Many times, I was given a few shekels to buy candy for myself.

Eventually, my natural curiosity rose and, on one occasion, instead of leaving, I hid in a closet. I peeked through a crack in the door and watched what they were doing. This was my first vision of sex, and although I did not understand what was transpiring, I knew it was something she was not supposed to do.

Eventually, my mother became pregnant. I came to understand that the man was already married and was going to take responsibility for the baby. My mother gave birth to a daughter, Nitza. Many years later, I learned that my father had gone to the hospital and put his name on the birth certificate, despite the fact that he was not the biological father, so that this innocent little girl would not be born without a father. This was another act which was unbelievably kind from a man who had so much difficulty in showing a softer side.

After she came home from the hospital, it was the three of us, my mother, the baby, and me, living together in the apartment. Imagine that, at the age of ten, I was the man of the house.

Life went on with my mother tending to the baby and me. One day, an ambulance came to the street, and to a young boy, this was very exciting. It was thrilling, until two uniformed men entered our apartment and forcibly removed my mother. My mother screamed and resisted this attack, but she was much too small and weak to fight two strong men. I stood at the door watching, crying and was left holding the baby. Some of the neighbors helped me with Nitza and with food, but I did not understand what had happened nor why. All that I knew was that my mother had been taken away and



Nitza and I were alone. I have no recollection of how many days and nights we spent alone, however, I do remember how frightened I was, especially at night. I did my best to conceal my fear from my sister, and to this day, I am not sure if she knew of the perils we faced on a daily basis.

About a month after my mother was taken away, two women had appeared at the apartment. They took my little sister away with them and would not tell anything other than that she would be kept safe. I tried to stop them, but a small boy was no match for two grown women. Now I was alone in the apartment with no mother, no sister, and no one to help me or explain what and why these events had happened. I was confused and scared, but resolute to wait for my mother to return.

Finally, my father came and took me to his apartment which was in another part of Tel Aviv. When the door opened, I was stunned. Usually, when a neighbor would come by with food, or simply to look in on us, there would be a knock on the door. The only thing I can remember is asking him, "Where is my mother?" over and over again.

"She is in a hospital," he finally answered. I didn't know what that meant, but at least, he offered an answer.

"Where is Nitza?" I asked.

"I do not know, exactly, but I have been told that she is being cared for by loving people" was his answer. Now I had some information about my mother and sister.

Everything was so confusing to me at the time. I was in shock but had no information to consider or question. I had no idea what to ask and just retreated into my normal shell of quiet and confusion. My father told me that things would be a little different, for a while, and that I would live with him. No one would tell me anything about my sister. Many years later I learned that an engineer, who was most probably her biological father, and his wife adopted Nitza from an orphanage when she was about six years old.

I constantly asked my father about my mother. Where was she? Why does she not come home? When can I see her? I was relentless with these questions to my father. Finally, my father told me the name and location of the hospital where she had been taken. After considerable pleading with my father, he gave the fare to catch a bus to go visit her. I took the bus, by myself, to the hospital.

I recall following a nurse to a room where my mother was sitting. I wanted to understand what was going on. How could she be taken away from me like this? I was escorted to a large room and there was my mother. She was very happy to see me, held my hand, and asked me about school. I was confused about why she was there and what was happening. Her hair was messy and she had trouble concentrating. She would ask me the same questions, repeatedly. Eventually, a



*My sister, Nitza*

nurse announced to the whole room that visiting hours were over and we all had to leave. The nurse asked me to accompany her to her office, probably because I was crying.

She was very nice and gentle with me. Clearly, she recognized that I was a vulnerable young boy, scared and with no idea what was happening or what I should do. The nurse told me that my mother was quite ill and might be in the hospital for a long time. She explained that every human being was like a glass of water. Sometimes, the glass is too full and the water spills over the top edge. When this happens, they have to go to the hospital. This is what had happened to my mother. The nurse tenderly held my hand and told me that I needed to focus on my school work and to grow up to be a good boy. She told me not worry about my mother and her illness. Otherwise, this obsession could make me sick as well. The nurse assured me that the hospital would take very good care of my mother, so I didn't need to worry about her. I left the hospital not knowing any more than when I had arrived



*Miriam and I on the Yarkon River*

about my mother's condition. At least, I had been able to see her and hold her hand for a few short minutes. My tears were many, but they were short-lived as the winds of change continued in my life.

Now, I lived alone with my father. I had always been a curious child, and that created many problems and broken things. My mother had chalked up these accidents to the rambunctiousness of a young boy and ignored most of my behavior. My father, on the other hand, was very proper and neat. He had no experience with a boy who investigated the insides of a watch and then could not put it back together. Also, he did not like the messiness of collecting turtles, silk worms, and lizards.

In retrospect, I cannot imagine the difficulty my father must have experienced as his life and mine continued to spiral out of control. His wife was gone, and his son was difficult. It was not until fifty years later that I learned how deeply he had loved both of us but had been incapable of expressing that love. At that time, however, he was working full time, while I was wreaking havoc whenever and wherever I could. I did poorly at school, was truant many days, and was on a path to becoming a juvenile delinquent.

Not all of my activities were destructive, I delivered roses for money for one of the local florists. I would deliver a



*My favorite mode of transport*

bouquet of flowers—utilizing my youth, good looks, and charm—and I frequently received a nice tip. At the same time, I was already becoming an entrepreneur since I usually kept one rose for myself. By the end of the day, after delivering many bouquets, I had acquired a good supply of roses which I then sold for half price! I knew what I was doing was wrong, but I had observed that no one ever counted the flowers in the bouquets which I delivered to them. Today, I am embarrassed to admit to being a thief, but at that time, it seemed to be a creative way to supplement my tips.

Even though I was busy with my extracurricular activities, emotions of sadness began to take their toll, and I continued to do poorly at school. None of my teachers at school recognized my anguish and family difficulties. When I was daydreaming instead of listening, the teacher would insult and ridicule my incorrect response to her question. There were never any words to encourage me, nor extra help after class, nor sympathetic understanding. Often, I skipped school altogether, preferring to build sand forts at the beach. This truancy led to skipped classes and failed tests.

In Israel, where academics are prized above everything else, this was unforgivable. I was classified as a truant, a loser, and possibly as crazy as my mother. None of the parents in the neighborhood would let their children interact with



*My first experience of sports*

me. My father was, now, even more frustrated with me and told everyone, in front of me, that I was “lo utsaloch” which in Hebrew meant that I was unsuccessful now and would continue to fail in the future unless I changed my behavior. He could not cope and was at a complete loss about what to do. He could not work full time and care for a young boy.

One of my family members that cared about me was my cousin, Miriam. Miriam was the daughter of my father’s sister, Bracha. She would often take me to the Yarkon River in Tel Aviv, and I remember the thrill of riding with her on a boat. Miriam also took me fishing in the Yarkon River. It was a thrill for me, using my bamboo pole and line, to catch a fish. Of course, I always released the fish but, nonetheless, it was a great adventure for me. Miriam and I always had such fun together despite her being older than I was.

Sadly, if my father had looked more closely, he might have seen the burgeoning signs of a future. I loved to go to the arcades at the Tel Aviv beach and play with the mechanical machines. I took apart radios and watches, and spent many pleasant hours fixing my round of endless bikes. Another of my entrepreneurial endeavors was fixing other people’s bicycles. What my father failed to see was my skill and fascination with mechanical things.

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*Off to Hadassim*

My upstairs neighbor was a young girl who had been adopted by her family after the European catastrophe. The adults were older and physically unable to properly raise and care for a young girl. They had sent her to a residential school north of Tel Aviv. I suspect they must have spoken to my father about me. I believe they are the ones who suggested to my father “Why not send Gideon to Hadassim?”

Hadassim was a small, rural, residential school. It was an easy bus ride from Tel Aviv, so one day, my father visited the school. I can only guess what the conversation was like between my father and the administrator. As usual, my father made all of the decisions without discussing the idea with me. As time would reveal, my life would be turned completely around from the negativity that it was into a force of positiveness. The dean at Hadassim was quite willing and eager to accept me.

When my father told me that I was going to go to Hadassim, a residential school, rather than live with him, I was surprised and slightly confused. I was not enamored with the thought of “going away to school” as would be the expected response of most young children. My father never tried to sell me on the idea, it was more of a matter of fact, “You are going son, it is what is best for you.” At this age, there was little I could say or do, so off I went.

