

For the crown of his G-d in upon his head. (6:7)

Because he wears the crown of G-d upon his head, a *nazir* has specific laws concerning his lifestyle, i.e. where he may go, what areas he may frequent, what he may consume. He is dedicated to Hashem, having chosen to live on an elevated spiritual plane. While some may consider his choice a bit extremist in nature, he is motivated by a profound desire to achieve spiritual ascendancy. A *nazir* is an adult who has made a choice. Children and young adults do not necessarily have the ability or wherewithal to assume such a positive life change, so they often “go with the flow,” living life in accordance with the environment their parents have chosen for them. I say parents, because, indeed, they are the ones who make the choices by which their children will live, at least until said children are old enough – or adult enough – to make the correct choice.

Economics often plays a critical role concerning where parents choose to live, the school/*yeshivah* they select for their children to attend, or the environment in which they are raised. In some situations, parents make a choice, often against extreme odds, to provide for their children the best education, the finest tutors, an environment that is conducive to spiritual/moral growth, that will alter their child’s spiritual trajectory. This does not mean that those parents who are unwilling or unable to sacrifice for their child’s spiritual growth are doing something wrong or careless; it just means that the other parent who is willing and able to sacrifice is doing something extremely constructive.

Children – even when they grow up and become adults – often do not realize (and more often do not acknowledge) their parents’ sacrifices. Some are so busy blaming everyone for their personal failures, that they do not allow themselves the insight to see/think where they might have been had their parents not sacrificed for them. Then there are those who do realize – and do acknowledge – and never forget that who they are and what they have become is firmly-rooted in their parents’ sacrifice. The following story, which is well-known to some, and should be to others, is a powerful lesson in sacrifice and *hakoras hatov*, gratitude.

Horav Shmuel HaLevi Wosner, zl, was a *talmid chacham*, Torah scholar, *posek*, *halachic* arbiter, and *Rav* without peer. He merited to live over a century – a life fully devoted to Torah and its dissemination. His son related that one *Shabbos*, following the *seudah*, meal, he asked his grandmother what merit she had to have a child (like his father) that illuminated the Torah world with his brilliance and encyclopedic knowledge.

His grandmother replied, “It is no secret that I was blessed with an extraordinarily sweet, yet powerful, voice. Word soon got out in Austria [they lived in Vienna] that my school was home to a girl who had a voice without peer in the entire country. My principal called for me one day and asked me to audition for a man, who happened to be a representative of the state opera. He had heard about my voice and was willing to offer me a leading role in the opera. I replied that observant Jewish girls do not sing in the presence of men. The principal countered that this man had the ability and power to alter the present economic status of my family forever. I remained committed to my upbringing and refused to sing. When he saw how obstinate I was, he passed

along his offer through the Austrian minister of education.

“Word spread to the newspapers concerning Rosa/Rachel Schiff who refused to audition for the National Opera, despite the most lucrative offers imaginable. Indeed, the publicity generated an incredible *Kiddush Hashem*, sanctification of the Name of the Almighty. My father, *Rav* Ben Tzion Schiff, was a close *talmid*, student, of the saintly *Chafetz Chaim*, and, whenever the sage visited Vienna for medical purposes, my father would visit with his *Rebbe*. One day (I was eighteen years old at the time), my father made an appointment to visit with him. He brought me along, together with my mother. It was his intention to ask the *Chafetz Chaim* to bless me with a suitable *shidduch*, matrimonial match. My father went into the room where the *Chafetz Chaim* was, with the intention of informing him about my refusal to join the National Opera and my request for a *brachah*, blessing.

“The holy sage was ‘up on the times’ and asked my father about a girl named Schiff who had made a tremendous *Kiddush Hashem* by refusing to