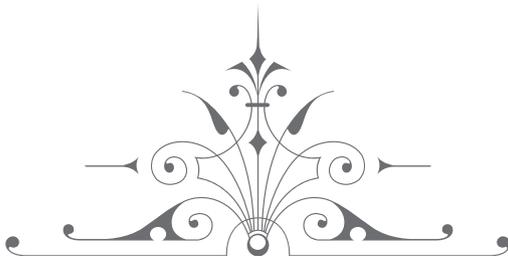


My Way

by
Shabtai Ziv



Contento de Semrik

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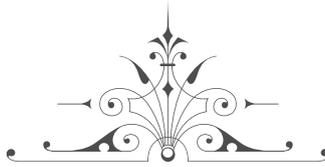


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Foreword

I would like to dedicate this book to my beloved wife, Ruchama, who has accompanied me for close to 60 years; also, to my children, Tal, Itai and Yuval who are both loving and generous, traits most important to me.

I decided to add some opening remarks to my book after realizing that in the book I didn't give enough attention to certain events that were important in my life and affected me greatly.

So, for example, when Itai and Yuval finished their officers' course or when I had a heart operation, or built our house in Ramat Gan and more.

So, also, the book doesn't mention names of various people whom I worked with, some of whom have already died: Prof. Yehezkel Kishon who was a close friend and my personal cardiologist, and another friend—Uzi Brenner—who was very close to me.

In the various jobs I filled, it was suggested to me to write my memoirs, but I refused.

Today, as I reach the age of 80, I decided to review the different moments I have experienced.

Usually I follow pretty typical paths, but sometimes you have to try new directions, and this I have done—“my way.”

Chapter 1

Chickens in the Police Station

Rosh Pina, at the foot of Mt. Canaan and the city of Safed, dipped in evergreen. Tall trees, ancient, between them, in their shade, one-or-two story houses. Jerusalem stone covering the outer walls, arched windows, wooden shutters, entryways behind decorated iron gates. In between the houses, narrow alleyways, sometimes with stairways leading to other courtyards. To the midst of this beauty and tranquility we move from Jerusalem.

We are the Zevald family.

My father Shlomo (Solomon) and my mother Zippora, nee Zephaniashvili. I—Shabtai, the oldest child, born June 24, 1933. Four years younger than me, my brother Hayyim (born 1937) and my sister Ruthie, born three years after Hayyim (1940) when we were already in Rosh Pina.

As I said, we moved to Rosh Pina from Jerusalem, where we had lived in the Zichron Moshe neighborhood. I had one grandmother—Rahel—(my mother’s mother) who was a warm and loving woman whom I was very close to. Her husband—my grandfather, Shabtai—died before I was born and I was named for him.

The family’s roots were in Georgia (Russia) but they were long-time veterans of the country. My mother had other brothers and sisters: Hana and her husband and their adopted daughter Esther; Ben Zion, who was religious and made the blessing over the wine every Friday evening, Mazal who lived one house over with her two sons, Moshe and Hayyim.

My grandmother lived at 11 David Yellin Street in Jerusalem, an old house with an inner courtyard and one shower shared by all the tenants. Around the courtyard lived a number of tenants: my grandmother Rahel lived in a room and kitchenette of her own, the Katchelskis (the family of Efraim Katzir—a future president of the country), my Aunt Hannah (whom I have already mentioned), a single woman whose name I don’t remember, and another family. This was in the 1930’s; there was no electricity, only kerosene lamps.

On the other side, my father’s whole family from Poland perished in the Holocaust. He was the only one left from

his large family, and he came to Israel in 1928. When he arrived in Israel, he worked on paving roads and later joined the police force.

I remember my father as average in height, athletic, with blue, shining eyes. He was very industrious, honest, always volunteering when needed. He usually dressed in his police uniform and was very dedicated to the family and saw to all our needs. Though he was rather restrained in showing his feelings to us, we always felt that he loved us.

I remember my mother as a very pretty woman. She had black hair, usually worn in a bun on her neck, brown-black eyes—warm eyes since she was a very warm, loving woman who hugged us a lot. She wasn't formally educated but she had a lot of life-wisdom.

She worked primarily at home for the family, and also managed the family budget, which wasn't very large. Our home was always neat and clean and her delicious fresh meals graced our table every day.

She insisted that we have a full breakfast in the mornings, including fresh eggs, before we left for school. We often couldn't finish it all and ended up hiding the bread in our pockets and taking it with us. We loved her food. My mother was very concerned with our education and encouraged us to work hard and to study. She talked to us a lot and took an interest in what we were doing. I wasn't such a big talker but my brothers had a lot to tell her and always found her to be a good listener.

The family tale of how my parents met went like this: Hanale, my mother's sister, was married, and her husband was a sergeant in the police force. One day, my father, who worked with him, came to their home, took one look at my mother, and immediately proposed to her that she marry him.

My first childhood years were spent in Jerusalem where I attended kindergarten. I remember my teacher was Yigal Yadin's mother (he would one day be the chief of staff, a member of the Knesset and a minister, as well as a world-renowned archeologist).

I started first grade in the Takhkemoni school in Jerusalem. I mostly remember the big yard at that school. In the middle of that year, when I was 6, we moved to Rosh Pina, because my father was appointed head of the police station there.

I attended a (religiously) traditional school, the only one there. The school was co-ed and every morning we recited the "Adon Olam" prayer, with kippot on our heads:

*"Lord of the Universe Who reigned before anything
devised was created,
Though only after everything was generated by His wish,
He began to be called by his epithet Sovereign.
After the end of all reality, too*

*He will continue his awesome reign alone.
He has existed and He exists, and He will continue
existing gloriously...”*

(translation from Nehalel siddur, Michael Haruni)

At first we lived in the “Spitz” house and then we moved to another house on that street.

About two years later, we moved to Afula, following my father’s new appointment. We rented the Magazini house (a home preserved till this day); one story, covered in Jerusalem stone with a yard, three rooms in a row, and a kitchen. Soon after, we went to live in the police station in Afula.

We children used to play in the yard of the station, and I, who loved animals, raised chickens that ran around free in the yard. I would throw them their feed and watch them running after me, pecking the ground and picking up their food. The hens would lay eggs; there were also yellow chicks that I would pick up from the ground, pet gently and return to their mothers.

Most of my elementary school I did in Afula—grades 3, 4, and 5, but I can’t remember the name of the school. The girls in my class collected “golden wrappers”—the crinkly papers that fancy chocolate was wrapped in. I collected them too and gave them to the girls. Near the



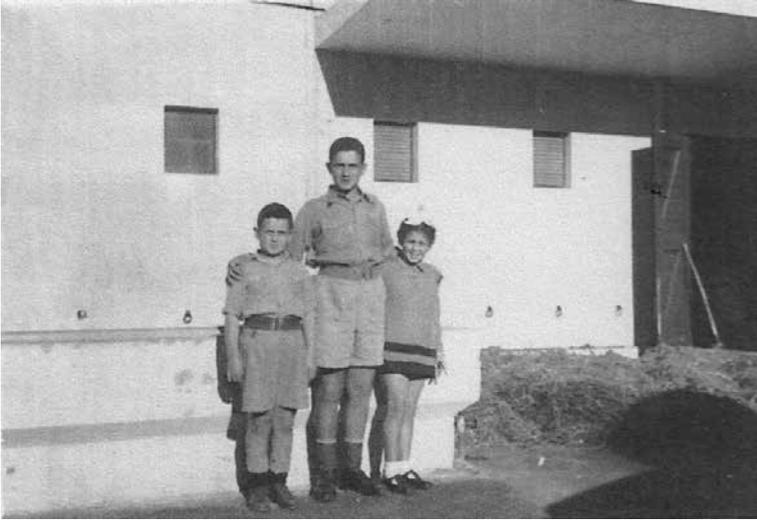
My Childhood





My Parents





At the police station in Rosh Pina: I'm in the middle with my brother Hayyim and my sister Ruthie.



In Rosh Pina with my classmates, I'm on the right.

school was a public garden and there, on the tops of the trees, were all different kinds of birds, and I loved listening to their singing. I and my school friends spent many hours playing in that garden. We played marbles, digging holes in the ground and trying to pitch the marbles into the holes with our thumbs. We even had the fancier kinds of marbles called “specials.”

When I was in the 6th grade, we went back to Rosh Pina. But this time we lived at the police station which was about a kilometer and a half from the settlement. So, every morning I would march off to school and return during the noon hours. I loved school and my studies which I found to be very interesting. I was a good student and made sure to do my homework. Since our home was pretty far from the school, I didn't get to see my classmates much after school, so much of my spare time I spent reading—books like *The Elders of the Bilbai School*.

I was also pretty athletic and did lots of sports: running, ball games, and more. I was pretty big for my age and most of my friends only came up to my chest.

My friends at that time included Gideon Raskin (whose brother would one day be the mayor of Rosh Pina), Dubi, Dr. Ohovski's son (the local doctor), and Prof. Gideon Mor's daughter, Orna. Prof. Mor was the head supervisor of the Institute for the Study of Malaria, a disease which

hit the Jewish settlements very hard in those days. (Orna eventually married a young Arab man and her son is Guiliano Mor, the actor.) Orna was our trainer in face-to-face combat which we learned in the Hagana.

I liked animals a lot. I had a dovecote near the window in the yard of the station; I raised chickens with their eggs and chicks.

One day a big, greyhound type dog followed me to school and waited for me till I finished and came back home with me. My mother wouldn't let me keep him in the house so I would bring his food out from the house to the yard. Since then, I have kept dogs whenever I could.

One of the places we all liked to play in was the wadi of Rosh Pina where we would go during school recesses; afterwards we'd climb up Mt. Canaan. Usually I was the one who organized the kids to go play in the wadi since I was considered their leader and they all followed me. The wadi was a wide expanse of meadow with shrubs, trees and stones. I remember this time of my life as quite wonderful.

I want to tell you a bit about my siblings. As I mentioned, Hayyim was 4 years younger than me and Ruthie was three years his junior. Hayyim and I slept together in the same room all the years, while Ruthie, as the only girl, had her own room, which didn't bother us. Hayyim and I

have always been very different from one another. While I was and still am very conservative, even-tempered, not used to sharing what I was going through with parents or friends, he would tell everybody everything, especially our mother, who loved to be involved in our lives. He was also quite a little manipulator.

I remember one time Mother bought a sausage that disappeared when it arrived. We looked all over for it, for where, after all, could a sausage disappear to? After a while we found it almost totally eaten under Hayyim's bed. Even though we weren't alike at all, we still played together and with our friends, and Ruthie played with her own friends.

My bar-mitzvah party was celebrated in the yard of the police station in Rosh Pina. My call-up to the Torah was celebrated in the Sefardi Synagogue in Jerusalem. My mother's family were of Georgian ethnicity and were considered Sefardim (of Spanish descent).

I remember reading and chanting the "haftarah" (the prophetic portion read with the Torah reading on the Sabbath of one's bar-mitzvah—turning 13).

From the time of my bar mitzvah, I have felt the obligation to fast on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). Actually, I started fasting before I was even 13, but after the bar-mitzvah I started attending synagogue and felt the obligation to fast.

We considered ourselves a religiously traditional family. My mother kept a kosher home but did not attend synagogue services. My father recited the blessing over the wine on Friday nights, but we children were permitted to be freer in our observance. We could turn on lights on the Sabbath. We celebrated the main holidays like Rosh Hashana, and on Passover we read the Haggadah and ate only matzot (unleavened bread). And so I have observed all my life.

After finishing elementary school, I went to high school in Tiberias, since Rosh Pina had no high school. The trip on the bus every morning from Rosh Pina was very long and arduous, and I would hitchhike—something my parents didn't like at all. They decided to rent a room for me with a family in Tiberias, a room with its own entrance. I felt quite grown up—too old to have to report to anyone where I was going or when I'd be back.

In the mornings, I'd go to school, return for lunch with the family and then do my homework and see my friends in the afternoons. I had a close friend named Danny Gur (a professor later on in life). Tamar Erez—whose parents had a bookstore—was my girlfriend. I remember I would enter their store, see what new books had come out and go immediately to the library to borrow them. I quickly realized that the publishing pace couldn't keep up with my reading.