

תשפ"ד · Bnos 5784

Parshas

Vaeira

אחינו כל בית ישראל הנתונים בצרה ובשביה העומדים בין בים ובין ביבשה המקום ירחם עליהם ויציאם מצרה לרוחה ומאפלה לאורה ומשעבוד לגאלה השתא בעגלא ובזמן קריב ונאמר אמן:



Story

SHIFRI SINGS A SOLO

Mrs. Rakower read the notice aloud to her students:

The Bnos Chavah High School will sponsor a student choir to entertain at concerts as well as in hospitals and old-age homes. All students who wish to try out should see our Music Teacher, Miss Berkowitz, during club hour next Wednesday.

The announcement was received with mixed feelings. Esther Rosen, who couldn't sing two notes straight, said, "Who needs it?" Penina Stern, who liked to sing but liked the sewing club better, said, "Why can't we have it after school instead?" Raizie Hollander also liked to sing (sometimes, in the middle of the class while writing a composition, Raizie's teacher would ask her to please stop humming), but was afraid she wouldn't be accepted in the choir.

But Shifri Kimmel? As soon as Mrs. Rakower had mentioned the word "choir," Shifri's eyes lit up. As Mrs. Rakower continued reading, Shifri's eyes lit up even brighter. By the time Mrs. Rakower finished reading the announcement, Shifri was practically floating through the air and out the door to be first on line to see Miss Berkowitz, even though it was only Friday and she'd have to wait over Shabbos and then four more days until Wednesday.

Shifri loved to sing. Shifri Kimmel sang beautifully. But her friends hated to listen to her, because, you see, no one could stand her attitude.

"Don't I sing better than anyone else?" she would ask.

Or, when the girls had a party, Shifri would appoint herself the leader. "Let's sing *tuv lurg*," she would say, even though the other girls didn't like that song very much, and Shifri knew they didn't. But she didn't care. And that annoyed her friends.

Or, if she was on the program for a school assembly, she would brag about her performance, as if she were the whole program. So, even though everyone liked Shifri's singing, no one liked her.

And everyone hoped she'd learn a lesson or two in *.rt lrs and vubg*.

Shifri always dreamed of being accompanied by a choir. She knew that Miss Berkowitz would want her in the choir more than any other girl in the school. In fact, without her the school might very well drop the idea of a choir altogether! After all, who could imagine a Bnos Chavah High School choir without Shifri Kimmel as its star soloist? Well, Shabobs couldn't go by quickly enough for little Miss Kimmel, nor could Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. Nor could her teachers and classmates wait for the days to go by so that they wouldn't have to hear the "star" make so much noise about it – in addition to not doing her own work, and interfering with everyone else in the class. Wednesday came and, when club hour arrived, everybody stood aside in the hall to avoid being run over by the girl who wanted so much to be first on line for the choir.

“Do you want to join the choir, Shifri? Do you really want to?” Miss Berkowitz teased.

To Shifri this was no tease, this was an insult! “Do I want to join the choir?” she thought to herself. “They should beg me to join the choir. Without me what kind of a choir could they have?”

“Of course,” she told Miss Berkowitz. And she sat herself down in the first seat.

Other girls came in, and took seats. Then Miss Berkowitz began auditioning them, asking each girl to stand in front of the room and sing one song.

“A little louder,” she’d say gently, “and don’t be bashful.”

“But not by myself,” the girl would say.

“Then I’ll sing with you,” Miss Berkowitz would reply, and so she would – and the girl would relax.

And so the auditions went until Shifri’s turn came. She stood and sang – she didn’t need encouragement – and, of course, she was accepted.

“We must begin practicing because time is short. In two months we’ll give a concert for the school mothers,” Miss Berkowitz told them.

The first two practice sessions were simple. There was no solo for Shifri – at least, not yet.

But Shifri knew it would come.

Sure enough, at the third practice session, Miss Berkowitz said: “Next week we’re going to learn a new piece with a solo part for Shifri Kimmel.”

Of course, Shifri felt elated. The other girls didn’t, though. Neither did Miss Berkowitz.

But what could anyone do? Much as they didn’t like Shifri’s pride and lack of humility, she still sang better than anyone else in the school. Already tickets were selling fast because, even though people didn’t want to hear her talk, they still wanted to hear her sing.

At the fourth rehearsal, Miss Berkowitz sat at the piano and began to teach the girls a soft, sweet choral arrangement of Mah Tov.

Then she turned to Shifri. “Now you come in, softly and sweetly,” and she taught Shifri her part.

It took two sessions to learn Mah Tov, but they learned it well – so well in fact that Miss Berkowitz decided to teach them one more song with a big choral arrangement. “Only this one,” she

said, “is not so soft. This is strong, a grand finale.” It was a new version of Kol Rinah that started out with a bang, with Shifri Kimmel leading the bang. And all through the classes and in the halls between classes, all the girls, even those not in the choir, were singing or humming the songs for the concert.

And Shifri? If she wasn’t singing or humming, she was boasting about her parts, especially the solos.

On the night of the concert, the seats filled quickly. Ladies were standing in the aisles and in the back of the auditorium. Backstage, the girls were nervous, but Miss Berkowitz was calm and she did her best to keep them calm, as well.

Finally the performance began. It was really lovely -- clear voices, a pretty picture to look at, and good songs. First, the choir sang the songs everyone knew, and, in some of them, asked the audience to join in. Then came intermission, and after that, another two songs. Then Miss Berkowitz stepped to the microphone.

“And now, our school choir presents two special musical numbers. First Mah Tovv, followed by Kol Rinah. Our solist will be Miss Shifri Kimmel.”

Miss Berkowitz turned around to lead the choir while Shifri stepped up to the microphone.

As Miss Berkowitz lifted her hands ready to begin, a hush crept over the large audience. Then Miss Berkowitz lowered her hands as a signal, and the choir began to sing, in gentle tones, the words of Mah Tovv – while Shifri took a deep breath and started to sing, with a strong bang, the words of Kol Rinah.

First everyone was stunned, as if not realizing what happened. Then a lady in the audience started to giggle – and quickly covered her mouth to keep from embarrassing poor Shifri. Suddenly, half the audience was white-faced with shock and the other half was trying to keep from laughing. After a few seconds, the hall was utterly silent. No one knew what to do or say – except Shifri Kimmel. She ran to the back of the stage, and cried. Did she cry!

Miss Berkowitz rushed to her side, and soon Mrs. Rakower was standing on her other side.

They told her to forget what happened, but Shifri paid no attention. They told her the ladies in the audience would be disappointed if she didn’t come back.

Still, she paid no attention. She continued crying.

Mrs. Rakower spoke softly to Shifri.

“Shifri, I know how embarrassed you must be feeling now. I know how special your singing is, and how much it means to you. But I think that right now you have to think about your audience.

They’re out there, waiting to hear you, and I’d like you to pull yourself together and go out to them.

After all, when Hashem gives you a special talent, He doesn’t give it to you just so that you can boast about it – He gives it to you so that you can share it with others and do good with it. As embarrassed as you feel now, this is not the time to think of your pride. Please think of the audience you’d be disappointing.”

Shifri stopped crying. She realized Mrs. Rakower was right, but she was too ashamed to go back on stage. Then she began to hear a chorus: “We want Shifri! We want Shifri!”

It was from her friends in the choir. Then the whole audience joined in. Finally Shifri wiped away her tears and smiled. As she walked back on stage, she received a standing ovation.

(Reprinted from The Best of Olomeinu)

Parsha Quiz

**See how much
you know!**

1. Why didn't Moshe want to be the spokesman?
2. Who became the spokesman?
3. Who was the oldest son of Yisroel?
4. What is the other name of Yisroel?
5. Who were the sons of Levi?
6. Who is the daughter of Levi?
7. How long did Levi live?
8. Whom did Amram marry?
9. What are the names of their children?
10. Who was Korach's father?
11. Who was Aharon's wife?
12. What was her brother's name?
13. What was he famous for?
14. What were the names of Aharon's children?
15. Who was Elozor's son?
16. How old were Moshe and Aharon when they spoke to Pharaoh?
17. With what did Aharon perform miracles?
18. What was the first miracle Aharon performed before Pharaoh?
19. Were the magicians able to do the same?
20. What happened to the magicians' rods?
21. How long did each of the makos last?
22. Where did the Jews live?
23. Where did Pharaoh want the Jews to bring korbanos to Hashem?

Recipe

Cinnamon Waffles

Ingredients:

2 cups Glicks Flour

4 teaspoons Haddar Baking Powder

1 teaspoon Gefen Cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup sugar

2 cups milk

2 eggs

1/2 teaspoon Gefen Vanilla Extract

Topping Ideas:

dairy caramel sauce

hot fudge sauce

whipped cream

blueberry jam

vanilla ice cream with fresh berries

1. Combine dry ingredients in a bowl. Add wet ingredients and mix until smooth—I like to use an immersion blender for this.

2. If you have a waffle maker, grease the grids with cooking spray and pour batter over the grids until completely covered. Bake until ready and serve with maple syrup or one of the topping ideas above.

3. If you don't own a waffle maker, simply use a frying pan and turn these into pancakes. Over a low flame, grease frying pan with oil and pour in 1/4 cup batter for each pancake. Flip when bubbles break through the top and fry until golden on the other side. Serve hot topped with maple syrup or any of the ideas above.

Middah of the Week

Bein Adam Lchaveiro

We want to hear from you!!

Questions, comments, or suggestions?
Email us at bnos@agudah.org.
