



On My Shoulders

This story was related by Rabbi Mordechai Einbinder, a shliach in Tarzana, California, where he is the Associate Director of Chabad of the Valley. He grew up in New Haven, Connecticut.

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Sometime after my bar mitzvah — I think I was about thirteen — I was in *yechidus* with my family. One of the major questions that were posed to the Rebbe was where I should continue my Jewish education: Should I continue in New Haven, Connecticut for another year, as we were about to enter *mesivta*, or should I go to the main Lubavitch Yeshiva on Ocean Parkway in Brooklyn, New York.

The Rebbe went around the room, asking each person their opinion. First the Rebbe asked my father. My father was a very easy-going person, the consummate Chossid, and he said, “Whatever the Rebbe says, I’m very happy with — it’s all good.”

Then the Rebbe asked my mother and she gave her typical dramatic answer, which went something

like this: “Rebbe, Brooklyn is a jungle, and he’s still very young! Let him stay with me another year.”

The Rebbe smiled and then asked me what I thought. I told the Rebbe that honestly I’m comfortable in both places but I would prefer going to New York because the environment would be more conducive for my spiritual growth.

I remember it like today. The Rebbe turned to my mother, placed his holy hands on his shoulders, smiled, and said, “*Ich nem dos oif meineh pleitzes*—I take this on my shoulders,” meaning that I should go to New York and will be fine there.

That’s the way the story unfolded. The next year I was in the big yeshiva on Ocean Parkway and everything was fine. I had a very successful year.

לזכות
בנינו ובנותינו ומשפחתם שיחיו
להצלחה רבה בכל הענינים
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יעקב
וזוגתו מרת מלכה בינה שיחיו
מאראס
ס. אנטוניה, טקסס



That year, I recall, I was in Rabbi Marlow's class, and my brother-in-law, Rabbi Zalman Lipsker, who is a *shliach* in Philadelphia, popped in all of a sudden in the middle of the year to visit me. He asked me how I was and spoke to my friends about how I was doing. He spoke to Rabbi Tenenbaum, the principal. He spoke to Rabbi Marlow. He checked out my dormitory room.

I asked him, "What are you doing here?" He said, "I care for you. I was on my way to Philadelphia, and I stopped off to see how you're doing." I said, "That's great." And that was that.

Twenty years later, I was sitting *shiva* for my father, and my brother-in-law and I were talking. He told me, "You don't really think I like you *that* much. Do you remember when I visited you on

Ocean Parkway?" I said, "Sure I remember. You were dropping by, you were on the way ..."

He said, "That's not the real story."

"What do you mean," I asked. He said,

"Remember I came to check you out. I checked out your dormitory. I checked out with your teacher how you were doing. I saw how this was and how that was. You think I have nothing better to do than to go visit you in yeshiva?"

"What do you mean? What's the scoop, Zalman?"

I asked.

He said, "I received a call from Rabbi Hodakov, and he said, 'The Rebbe wants to know what's happening with your brother-in-law Einbinder. Is he happy? Is he doing okay? I want you to go down to the yeshiva and check out the situation, and you should write a very clear and precise report of how your young brother-in-law is doing away from home.'"

And so he did.

The point of this story is an awesome one. The Rebbe was involved with the macro; with global issues. And yet he didn't forget about the sensitivity to a Jewish mother: "*Ich nem dos oif meineh pleitzes*—I take it upon my shoulders." He'll be okay.¹ **T**

1. *Living Torah*, Disc 130 Program 517.