

Margarita Kohen's Two Sons Sami (Samuil) And Ouri (Solomon) Kohen



My two sons Sami [Samuil] and Ouri [Solomon]. Ouri is only 9 months old and Sami is 11 years old. The photo was taken in 1951 in Plovdiv. There is neither a stamp on the back of the photo, nor any other inscription.

We were raising our kids in a Jewish spirit although my husband was a communist and atheist. They are both circumcised. Sami was an excellent student at school. He had received excellent marks and certificates. Whenever I was at a parents' meeting the teacher didn't miss the opportunity to compliment me that I shouldn't go there at all. Outside school he was playing the piano and had a tutor in French. He even enrolled in the Musical School but he gave up and dropped out. He enrolled in an ordinary school. My husband, who was a very clever and practical man, used the holidays to teach him how to tune pianos so that he would have a vocation. My biggest desire was for him to study Medicine because that was my unfulfilled dream. (After the high school I wanted to go to Sofia to study for midwife but my mother didn't agree). But he chose his own path – he graduated from the Law Department in Sofia. As an award for his graduation I decided to sponsor his move to Israel. So in 1965 he went to his aunt in Israel and lived there for thirty years. In 1968 he got married there.

My younger son Ouri has only primary education. He got meningitis which the doctors discovered at a late stage and it transformed into schizophrenia. We did everything possible to deal with the disease. We even sold part of the house – we were all the time spending money on doctors but it was irreversible. Now he is in the mental institution in the village of Petkovo.

My both children were raised in Jewish self-awareness. They knew what Pesach was, we celebrated Purim. We weren't meticulous about sticking to the ritual but we celebrate the holidays and still do. I even remember that once I was alone with my younger son at Pesach. My older son was already a student in Sofia and my husband was in the town of Hisarya because of the mineral baths there. No matter what the circumstances were I had ordered and put everything according to the ritual because of Ouri, so that he would know what that was, and – all of a sudden – my husband came back home and we were very happy and had great fun.