



It was during the end of the 1970s. Migdal Ohr's first students graduated, and there was a need to find for them a place which they could matriculate to, a Yeshiva suitable for them.

Migdal Ha'Emek in those days had very little to offer, and so I sought a solution in an attempt to establish a new Yeshiva in the city. However, very few agreed to leave their home and move to a place with no established community.

I traveled to Lod to consult with my father, Rabbi Yisroel Grossman, a Rosh Yeshiva there. He did not provide me with an answer, and instead called the faculty for a conference.

He began the meeting by saying that there were children who for years did not merit to receive a proper Jewish education, but thanks to many efforts, this has changed in recent years. He further pointed to the change that occurs at home when a student comes back infused with the values he has learned.

My father said, that to continue this positive trend, we are required to make a sacrifice and start a Yeshiva for them, he said. "Is there anyone who is willing to make the sacrifice, move to another location and leave behind his job?" my father asked.

The attendants were dumfounded by his call. Although it was hard to say no to my father, it still was an immense demand, and no one was willing to make the leap into the unknown.

Father did not wait long for a response, and announced he would go and become the head of the new Yeshiva himself. Since he could not lead both institutions, he was resigning his post in Lod, he said.

The faculty was again shocked. How could my father leave his illustrious post as a leading teacher to start a new Yeshiva for youth, they wondered.

He smiled at me and said: "Yitzchak Dovid, let's go to Migdal Ha'Emek."

In our weekly parsha we read about self-sacrifice for the sake of Judaism.

The Talmud recounts: "This too did Thaddeus of Rome teach: What reason did Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah see that they delivered themselves, for the sanctification of the Divine Name, to the fiery furnace? They argued a minority to themselves: if frogs, which are not commanded concerning the sanctification of the Divine Name, yet it is written of them [in our weekly parsha], "and they shall come up and go into thy house . . . and into your ovens, and into thy kneading troughs."¹ When are the kneading troughs to be found near the oven? When the oven is hot, they reasoned. We, who are commanded concerning the sanctification of the Name, how much the more so."²

This reasoning needs a closer examination. What does it mean that frogs were "not commanded," they were explicitly decreed by G-d to do so in the plague? Furthermore, what was there for Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah to learn here?

An answer is that the frogs at large were commanded to enter every crevice in the Egyptians' homes, but some chose to sacrifice themselves and enter the ovens to fulfill G-d's commandment. There is no greater sanctification of G-d's name.

That was Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah's reasoning. One can continue living his life in peace, but truly sanctifying G-d's requires self-sacrifice of the highest degree.

Father was not young and had already led several Yeshivos and served as a communal leader. Now he was going to leave his post yet again for the sake of Jewish education.

It was not easy for him, he who had achieved such prominence in the Jewish world, but father was an outstanding example for self-sacrifice for anything Jewish.

He came to Migdal Ha'emek and spent the entire week educating young Jewish men and teaching them Torah.

Many of those young men later became Torah scholars in their own right, including some who now lead the Migdal Ohr institutions.

In his last days, he would tell us: "I will ascend to the Heavens with my students from Migdal Ohr."

¹ Shmot 7:28.

² Tractate Pesachim 53b.