

## **My Pride in Becoming a Bridegroom**

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It is with a tremendous sense of gratitude that I speak of my wonderful personal news. I have recently become a Choson (bridegroom)! My pains and worries of the past years are very quickly fading away. How quickly and easily we forget. Not two years ago, I believed I would never come to this stage. I was in such darkness and in such painful despair. With JONAH's guidance and help, I learned to navigate those dark places. What seemed an impossibility was merely a matter of taking the risk of trusting a process that logically made so much sense (but in practicality was utterly daunting). I can't pretend it was not difficult.

I can't pretend that my life was not torn apart before it could be repaired. It was. And it was painful. But, alas, it was repaired, and is still being repaired, and will, G-d-willing, continue to be. And thank G-d, I have found a young lady who is supportive and understanding. A lady who respects me for my strength and dedication to my personal growth. It is really astounding how SSA, which was to me a source of deepest shame, has become something of a source of honor and respect from the people I trusted enough to share my struggles with. Two of my most respected mentors constantly express to me how awed they are at my courage for doing what so few do. And I agree.

Where three years ago I could not imagine living a happy life married to a woman, and only feared how I might destroy the life of a young woman, I now consider myself lucky for finding this young damsel, and her lucky for winning a man such as I. Do I feel sadness and anger about the past? Yes. Do I feel fear of the future yes?

Do I feel joy about the present? Certainly. But I believe that medley of emotions is what life is about.