



# Update . . .

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5769 Kislev



*Yehuda Kohn shares his heart for abandoned children with visitors.*

## Four Weddings and a Blessing!

*by Yehuda Kohn, Beit Elazraki Director*

Itzik, Zuri, Yossi & Dani are getting married and for us this is milestone in our work and in their lives - breaking their cycles of distress.

Itzik was only five years old when he arrived to us all dirty and neglected. We raised him through thick and thin. He finished high school and simultaneously earned an engineering degree while serving in the army. One day he visited us with a sweet girl from a good home. He asked us to talk with her parents, who didn't really know much about his background. When we invited the parents over, they were shocked - having no idea this was where Itzik grew up! They were worried at first, but listened to our story. That same evening we started talking about the menu, the

photographer & the bride's dress. December 14<sup>th</sup> is their big day!

Zuri grew up in our home with his four siblings. Today, he is part of an elite army unit that combines military service with religious studies. Zuri fell in love with a neighborhood girl whose parents knew his troubled background. He tried dating her, but her parents forced them to separate. Devastated, Zuri came to me and asked that I speak with them. When I spoke with her parents, they understood that Zuri, himself, is a real mensch! That same night they got engaged and on December 23<sup>rd</sup> we will proudly walk him down the aisle.

Yossi had suffered terrible neglect when he arrived at our home with his brother. Despite the difficulties he faced

in school, he managed to graduate high school. A few months ago he met a lovely girl from a wonderful family, who has just finished her military service. Though her parents are a bit concerned and though Yossi and his fiancée are young, they are determined to build a loving home and family together. There is no doubt they will succeed, and we will celebrate their wedding on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009!

Dani was a determined little boy from the first day he arrived to our place. Stubborn and persistent he earned top grades in school, served in an elite combat unit in the army, received outstanding grades on his psycho-technical exams and was accepted to the finest, most prestigious universities in Israel. Today he studies electronics. Dani always wanted to marry a fine girl from a great family. He met a bright young woman from a wonderful family. On January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009 we will celebrate as Dani's dream comes true.

These are our children; our life project. Four weddings are ahead of us which cannot lack anything. This is not easy given the financial strains we face these days, but we are just like Dani, Itzik, Zuri & Yossi – stubborn and ambitious! Any assistance you can give us will be truly blessed, making you part of our

children's lives, part of our family, part of these unforgettable celebrations - against all odds.

**Yehuda Kohn** has been the director of Beit Elazraki Children's Home since 1991. Upon arrival nearly 18 years ago, he discovered almost all children in the home were from second and third generation distressed homes. His mission has been to break the generational cycle of distress. During his tenure, Yehuda has transformed Beit Elazraki into one of the largest and most respected programs in Israel for at-risk kids. He is most proud to be "father" to hundreds of fatherless children.

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