

Chapter Nine

“I’m sorry I called you a snob,” Chani said. “I was just so hurt for your brother that I lost my temper.*

I just looked at the banana I was holding. I didn’t know what to say. Chani continued.

“I spoke about it with my parents later. They explained to me that other people might not feel the same way we do about Shmuli, and that other people might not be comfortable with everyone knowing about their private* lives.”

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“When Shmuli was born, it was a big shock to everyone. I was only eight years old at the time, but from what I’ve heard, all our relatives* were very upset. My parents had four beautiful children — if I do say so myself!” Chani smiled her famous smile. “And then Shmuli was born. They knew right away that something was wrong. My parents sat down and talked about how they were going to deal with* the situation.

“It took them some time, but in the end, they realized that it was really a compliment from Hashem that He had given them a child who needed special care and attention.* It was as if

*I lost my temper = התרגזתי ואיבדתי שליטה *private = פרטיים

*relatives = קרובי משפחה

*to deal with = להתמודד עם

*attention = תשומת לב

Hashem was saying, ‘I know you can do it.’ So they decided to do everything they could to help Shmuli be the best he could. More than that, I think that my parents are happy that they have a special child. My father always says that Shmuli has a holy soul.* He can never think of doing anything wrong. Of course, my parents passed that feeling of pride* and love on to us. We would never hide* Shmuli — he’s the heart and soul of our family!”



I was so surprised. Things were very different in my family. Would Chani understand? I thought for a minute about how to explain this. I had never talked about it with anyone else, so I wasn’t sure where to start.

“Avrami and I are the only two children in our family,” I said. “I was born after my parents had been married for many years, and they were always very proud of me. When I was eight years old, Avrami was born, and everything changed. My parents

*soul = נשמה

*pride = גאווה

*hide = מחביאים