



Malky Hirth a"h

by Yechiel Sofer

It is unusual for a levaya of a seven year old girl to attract such a huge crowd. But Malky Hirth was not a usual child. Last Wednesday evening, a life changing levaya took place at Shiras Devora high school in Lakewood. Malky was a seven-year-old girl who was seriously ill for most of her life. She battled leukemia since she was two years old. Malky inspired so many people and brought together thousands of people all around the globe to daven for her, do mitzvos and accept all sorts of kabbolos so that she would become better.

All of the thousands of people who attended the levaya, walked away awed and shaken to the core. Was it the massive crowd? Or the awe-inspiring hespedim? Or was it just the stories after stories being told about this young girl, as if she was an elder rebbetzin? Perhaps all of the above. Something shook everyone to the core and brought them to the realization that, "Hashem hu Elokim, ain od milvado".

Malky may have been seven years old, but she wasn't a child. Her wisdom and maturity defied her age.

Indeed, Rav Shlomo Feivel Shustal Shlita, rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva Ne'os Yaakov, in his hesped, kept repeating, "Such wisdom and maturity in a child this age is highly unusual".

In a video clip that became famous, Malky implores everyone to keep Shabbos, "It will be a zechus for you and will be a zechus for me". This video indeed inspired people to "Keep Shabbos for Malky".

Malky had an amazingly positive outlook and was always cheerful. She would constantly speak of her love for Hashem and would loudly thank Him for her life even though she suffered so much. She inspired her doctors and nurses as well as anyone else she came into contact with.

Just a few months before she passed away, while lying in her hospital bed, Malky spontaneously began singing a song into her mother's phone. A nurse practitioner who heard it was so moved by her song that she asked permission from the family to have it professionally recorded with musical accompaniment by friends of hers who are musicians at the Peabody musical institute.

This song, titled "Oh Hashem" spoke about thanking Hashem for her life. This came from the heart of a seven-year-old girl who was so sick her entire life and knew she was dying. The song so inspired everyone who heard it that Dr. David Loeb, head of oncology at Johns Hopkins Medical Center in Baltimore, where Malky was treated, sent it around to his entire staff. Included in his memo, Dr. Loeb wrote; "I know we often say about our patients that they are 'wise beyond their years', but Malka was truly an 'old soul'. She and her parents touched everyone they met in ways that are hard to imagine, considering how young she was". What a Kiddush Hashem!

Malky lived with Hashem. She constantly spoke to Hashem, praying to be healthy, and thanking Him for her life at the same time. Once when she was on the way to the Emergency room for a fever, Malky turned to her parents and said, "I thank Hashem for my life. Even though I would like it to be different, I know He has a plan for me. The best possible plan."



Malky Hirth a"h

by Yechiel Sofer

Every word that came out of her mouth was full of wisdom. In an amazing recording which has gone viral, Malky gives "Mussar to a depressed teenager, "You should be happy you're living on this world... don't think you are a nothing. You are a princess; you are Hashem's child... You are Hashem's princess. You should be strong. You should be happy. A Yid is always supposed to be happy, even when it's hard!" Her choice of vocabulary and clarity of expression was unparalleled. Malky was very sensitive and excelled in the midda of hakoras hatov. As her life was coming to an end, she used her newly found talent of painting canvass paintings, to express her appreciation to all her caretakers. Malky painted beautiful paintings for each of her doctors and nurses. She was careful to thank everyone and not make anyone feel bad. Once during a particularly difficult procedure, Malky was waving her hands and crying out in pain. She later was beside herself that she caused such a "Chillul Hashem". When the nurse came back into the room, Malky apologized and told the nurse it was her own fault the nurses were having such a hard time finding and poking her veins, because she "was moving around too much". The nurse was stunned to hear this from such a young child, and from then on, Malky became her favorite.

Only a few weeks before she passed away, Malky told her parents she must go buy a gift for her primary nurse. At that time Malky was barely walking and was not up to going anywhere. Malky, with her trademark "gevurah" insisted she go to buy a gift for her nurse. So her dedicated parents trudged out, late at night, carrying Malky to their car. They drove to the nearest mall and helped Malky go through racks of jewelry and other gift items, until Malky deliberately and carefully chose what she felt was the perfect gift. Then she insisted they drive to another store to pick out a card. Again she carefully chose the card she felt would be "just right". After getting a gift bag and matching stuffing, Malky was ready to head back. By now it was very late at night, but Malky wasn't done yet. In her beautiful and articulate way, Malky composed a touching poem thanking her nurse for all she has done for her. This was typical Malky. Expressing her appreciation in a defined and mature way, well thought out and executed.

Malky had a tremendous chavivus hamitzvos. This past Yom Kippur she was so weak she barely could move off the couch in her home. Yet when it came time for Ne'ilah she insisted they bring her slippers and walk her all the way to Bais Medrash Govoah, so she could daven Ne'ilah in the yeshiva. The next day she had to rush to the hospital for a terrible eye infection. The infection caused her to be very agitated. When her father brought into her room a set of Daled Minim her mood immediately changed. She lovingly gave the lulav and esrog a kiss, and her mood was immediately transformed. During sukkos she insisted on eating every meal and shaking her lulav in the hospital Sukkah, eleven flights down. This was no easy task, transporting her with her IV pole, but Malky wouldn't consider otherwise.

The last Motzei Shabbos of her life, exactly 72 minutes after shkiah, Malky expressed her feeling that she was about to leave this world. She asked that her siblings come so she could part from them. She blessed each one with a specific and detailed brocha designed just for them. She asked



Malky Hirth a"h

by Yecheil Sofer

to hold her baby sister and told her parents to "teach her when she gets older about me, and tell her how much I loved her". She also told her father that she wants to be buried in a "special place" and later clarified in "Eretz Yisroel" because she was never there in her lifetime. Although she lived a few more days after that, perhaps at that time she felt her neshamah yeseirah leaving her body for the last time.

Klal Yisroel stormed the heavens with tefillah for her recovery. Last Tuesday night, a kinnus was held at the Bais Horaah of Lakewood, where grown men literally cried out to Hashem to spare her life. Women and girls all over the world – at the Kosel, at Tehillim groups, on conference calls didn't stop crying to Hashem on her behalf.

But it wasn't meant to be. Early Wednesday morning Malka Breindel Hirth passed away peacefully in her mother's arms, during her sleep.

Her parents who were dedicated beyond words to her care and didn't leave her bedside, fulfilled her final wish and buried her in a "special place in Eretz Yisroel". Late Wednesday night Malky was flown to Eretz Yisroel and was buried in the most "special place" on Har Hazeisim right across the mokom haMikdosh.

Malky created a tremendous kiddush Hashem during her short but packed lifetime, and she was zoche to create a kiddush Hashem in her passing. Her Levaya both in Lakewood and in Eretz Yisroel touched everyone. As one person put it, "it was a real life-changing experience".

Malky's grandfather Rav Mordechai Hirth, as well as her uncles, Rav Yeruchim Olshin and Rav Leib Gorelik, and Rav Shlomo Feivel Schustal delivered hespedim. Malky's father, Rav Shmuel Hirth, rosh yeshiva of Yeshivas Nefesh Hachaim of Lakewood, captured the moment with his almost 40 minute hesped. He portrayed the holiness of this pure Neshamah, and brought out the kiddush Hashem she generated during her lifetime. Rav Shmuel's hesped left his listeners with a feeling of chizuk and encouragement: Olem Hazeh Prozdor Liolam Habaah.

Let us learn from Malky and not waste our time on frivolous things. Malky literally touched hundreds maybe thousands of people to elevate themselves and to be mekadeish Sheim Shomayim. While her loss is irreplaceable, her life-lessons are timeless.

Yehi Zichra Boruch.