

# IllumiNations

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CHABAD SHLUCHIM WORLDWIDE SHARE THEIR STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES.  **DollarDaily.org**

Dedicated in Memory of Harav Moshe Kotlarsky - Pioneering A Generation of The Rebbe's Shluchim

## Kibid: From One Aliyah to a Thousand Blessings

By Yosef & Sarah Shidler founder of DollarDaily.org and Kibid.org

Two years ago, I found myself standing in the middle of the American Dream Mall. It was *Chol Hamoed Sukkos*, and like everyone else, I was caught up in the festive energy of the day. But in the middle of the noise, an idea came to me—something small, almost silly:

*Post an Instagram and WhatsApp status about Chosson Torah.*

I pulled out my phone and typed, “A powerful segulah for getting married is to buy a **Chosson Torah** on Simchas Torah.”

I didn’t think much of it. But that post would end up changing my life—and, soon, the lives of hundreds of people around the world.

The reason I knew about the segulah was personal. Years earlier, as a *bochur* in Colorado Springs, I had bought the honor of **Chosson Torah** from the local shliach. I offered to pay **\$770**, spread out through the year. I finished my final payment around *Shavuot*—and three days later, I met my wife.

It was one of those moments that didn’t need explanation.

So, standing there in the mall, I figured maybe others should have the same opportunity. I added a line to my status: “If any shluchim still have aliyaos available, and if any singles want to buy one—message me. Let’s connect you.”

What happened next was unreal.

For the next forty-eight hours, my phone didn’t stop buzzing. Messages poured in from every direction—singles, parents, shluchim—all asking, *Do you still have one left? or Do you have a buyer for mine?*

Even on *Hoshana Rabbah afternoon* I was still matching names. By the time Yom Tov arrived, over fifty people had been connected.

I walked into shul on Simchas Torah glowing and shaking my head. Something had started—and it was bigger than me.

I planned to write about it right after the chagim—a story for a few Jewish websites about this impromptu project that matched dozens of shluchim with buyers in just two days. It would make headlines.

Then came October 7.

No one was thinking about segulos or celebrations. Like everyone else, I put the idea away and focused on what mattered most—our people, our pain, our prayers.

Months passed. Then, as the next Tishrei approached, the memory came back. I realized we could make this something real—a platform where anyone, anywhere, could sponsor an aliyah in a shul that needed it.

I called the web designer who had built our **DollarDaily.org** site and asked, “What would it take to make a version for aliyaos?”

Within a few weeks, the prototype for **Kibid** was up. We launched it just before *Rosh Hashanah 5785*, barely finished testing. There were bugs and issues, but somehow, it worked.

Last year, over **\$100,000** in aliyaos were sold, all directly supporting Chabad Houses who needed funds for the Yom Tov season.

This year, even before *Sukkos* began, we have already almost passed that number.

But what surprised me most wasn’t the totals. It was what started showing up in my messages afterward.

*Chaim*, who had been in the shidduch parsha for a long time and felt it was going nowhere, and his younger sister *Sarah* heard about Kibid from a friend. Half joking, they decided to buy **Chosson Torah** aliyaos for each other—each one in the other’s merit.

Five months later, Sarah stood under her chuppah. A few months after that, Chaim did too.

They still laugh about it, but they both know it wasn’t coincidence.

Before the site even existed, a man in Michigan saw one of my Instagram posts and bought an aliyah from a local shliach.

A year later, right before Yom Kippur, he messaged me.

“I totally forgot about that Chosson Torah. I’m married now. I guess it works.”

A woman named *Rivky* shared that her father, after seeing an Instagram post, had bought **Chosson Torah** in her merit. By the next Yom Tov, she was married and expecting.

Another young woman, *Chana*, had seen a post and decided to do the same. She sent a short note months later: “I’m married now.”

Last year, *Miriam* from Florida reached out with questions about how Kibid worked. After some back and forth, she decided to buy **Chosson Torah** from a shliach in Orlando and paid it off slowly. It was a sizable number, but manageable.

Two weeks after her final payment, she went out with the man who would become her husband.

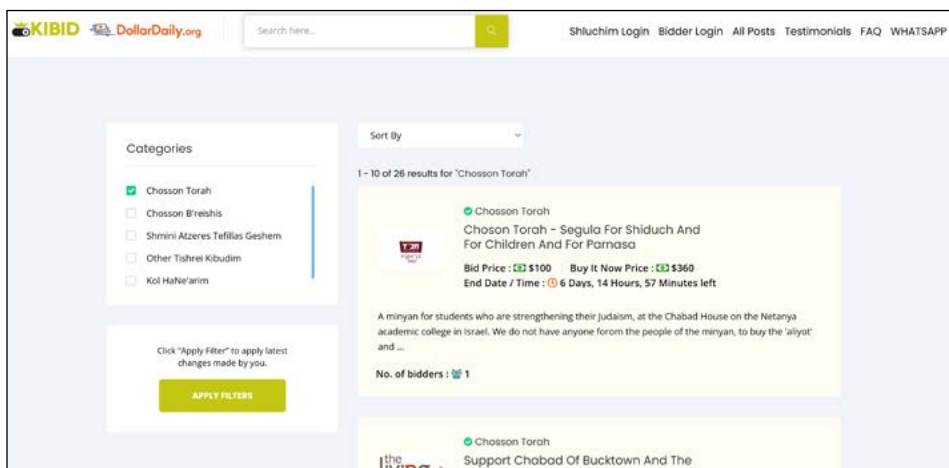
She was beyond excited to share the connection—it was obvious.

One message came from a mother who wrote, “We bought Chosson Torah last year because of your post—and our daughter got married last month.” She didn’t elaborate further, but the joy behind those few words said everything.

A shliach shared that the previous year, Kibid had helped him find sponsors for **Chosson Torah** and Chosson **Bereishis**. For the aliyaos themselves, he called up two men in his shul—one struggling with *parnassah*, the other single for many years. Within weeks, the first received a job offer that changed his life. The second began seeing unexpected doors open and his energy renewed. “Maybe,” the shliach said quietly, “we’ll still hear good news from him too.”

Another note came in “The Chosson Torah you sold for us last year got married within a few months—and the buyer already committed again for this year.” The message was brief but filled with quiet wonder.

A young woman wrote, “I bought Chosson Torah last year for my brother. He got engaged last week.” Her excitement



The screenshot shows the Kibid website interface. At the top, there's a search bar and navigation links for Shluchim Login, Bidder Login, All Posts, Testimonials, FAQ, and WHATSAPP. Below the search bar, there's a section for "Categories" with checkboxes for Chosson Torah, Chosson Bereishis, Shmini Azeres Tefillas Geshem, Other Tishrei Kibudim, and Kol HaLe'anim. A "Sort By" dropdown is also present. The main content area displays "1 - 10 of 26 results for 'Chosson Torah'". The first result is a "Chosson Torah - Segula For Shidduch And For Children And For Parnasa" with a bid price of \$100 and a buy it now price of \$360. Below this, there's a description of a minyan for students at the Chabad House on the Netanya academic college in Israel. The interface is clean and user-friendly, with a focus on providing information about the aliyah opportunities.

came through every word—a simple sentence carrying a world of gratitude.

In Nebraska, a shliach connected with a buyer through Kibid—someone completely unaffiliated, living hundreds of miles away. The buyer purchased **Chosson Torah** for \$500, and a few months later, he was married. What began as a digital connection turned into a real-life simcha.

Each of these stories, small on their own, wove together into something larger: a tapestry of unseen blessings stretching from one heart to another, from one corner of the world to the next.

*Rabbi Shneur Landa, Chabad of Netanya, shared that through Kibid was connected with a woman from New York (never meet prior) who purchased **Chosson Bereishis** in his Chabad House. They had never met.*

After he sent his yearly donor update, she responded almost immediately, full of excitement. She explained that she had bought the aliyah in the merit of her brother, who had been searching for a shidduch for years. That very week, he became engaged.

She was certain that the merit of the aliyah had opened the gates of *mazal* for her family and even invited Rabbi Landa to attend the wedding in New York.

Just hours before *Yom Tov*, a shliach from Florida called, his voice tight with worry. “Our Chabad House has really been struggling financially. With all the running costs of our programs, there hasn’t been enough for even a basic salary. We’re so behind, we don’t have food for *Yom Tov*,” he said quietly. “I don’t know what to do.”

The platform was about to close, but I told him, “Post your aliyos right now—let’s see what happens.” Within minutes he had listed them, starting at \$150.

Not long after, he called back, his voice bursting with disbelief. “Someone just bid **\$1,800!** You have no idea—you’ve saved our *Yom Tov!*” he said. Then he paused. “Wait—the guy’s on the other line. Let me take his call.”

A few minutes later, he rang back. His tone had completely changed. The bidder had explained that it was all a mistake—he meant to type **\$180**. The shliach wasn’t sure what to do. Then, an idea came to him. He decided to speak from the heart.

He told the donor how much this would mean to his family, that it wasn’t about luxury—just being able to make *Yom Tov* with dignity—and gently asked if he would consider keeping the bid as it was.

The man said he’d think about it. An hour later, the shliach called again, his voice trembling. “He’s keeping it,” he said quietly. “He said maybe Hashem wanted it this way.”

I never found out if the donor received a miracle from that act of kindness. But I know this—he created a miracle for a family who desperately needed one. And sometimes, that’s exactly how Hashem works.

And then there was the story from Chevron. A man called out of the blue, his voice filled with warmth and excitement. “You’re not going to believe this,” he began. “Do you remember last year, when I got a kibud for Simchas Torah through Kibid? There was another person who really wanted it, and at first, I wasn’t sure what to do. In the end, we decided to share it—half each, a joint zechus.”

He paused, clearly emotional. “I just had to call you today. My daughter got engaged —Baruch Hashem! As I was finishing my cheshbon for the year, I realized I never told you what happened. I wanted to say thank you—for making it possible.”

And now, to see the bracha that came from it—unbelievable.”

Then, before hanging up, he added with a smile in his voice, “I already want to buy for this year—so that next year, I can call you again and tell you I have grandchildren.”

Another story came from a girl in Flatbush who bought through Kibid two years in a row. The first year, nothing seemed to happen. But she didn’t give up. She went back to the same shliach in Boulder, Colorado the next year and did it again.

Midway through that year, the shliach called me with excitement in his voice. “You won’t believe this,” he said. “The girl from Flatbush who bought from us twice just messaged me—she’s engaged! She even wrote that she wants to thank us for davening for her two years in a row and that, of course, we’re invited to the wedding.”

Someone else sent us a message that read, “*I can’t believe I’m writing this...*” She had bought **Chosson Torah** the previous year and was now preparing for her own engagement — scheduled for *Chol HaMoed Sukkos*, just a day before *Shemini Atzeres* and *Simchas Torah*.

“It’s crazy,” she wrote. “The timing, the place — everything. I can’t believe I’m actually having this story. It’s so clear that it’s all connected.”

Her words captured what so many have felt — that somehow, in Hashem’s quiet way, the circles of Torah and life keep meeting right where they’re meant to.

It’s important to note — purchasing a kibud isn’t a guarantee. You’re not buying a result; you’re opening a new channel for Hashem’s blessings. Some zechuyos open doors right away. Others quietly rearrange the world so that when the moment comes, everything falls into place.

So nothing ever goes to waste. For some people, the brachos unfold instantly. Others haven’t seen their blessings yet. **First, try to pay as soon as you can.** As the *Tanya* teaches in *Iggeres HaKodesh*, studied on 13 Tishrei — a mitzvah is only complete when the deed itself is carried out in full. There’s a special power in finishing what we begin.

And second, remember: whether you see the results you’re hoping for or not, you did the mitzvah of tzedakah — planting goodness and kindness in the world. Every mitzvah plants something. Sometimes you see it bloom right away. Sometimes it waits for the perfect season. But it always grows.

Each story carries its own rhythm — a sister buying for her brother, a father for his daughter, a stranger sustaining a shliach’s *Yom Tov*. And behind every one of them is the same truth: that Torah itself is alive, still weaving people together, still giving freely. There’s no marketing genius behind it. No algorithm. Just Jews helping Jews — and Hashem smiling somewhere in between.

When I first posted that message in the mall two years ago, I thought I was sharing a segulah. I didn’t realize I was starting a conversation — one that would travel from phone screens to pulpits, from Nebraska to Netanya. Each year, new stories arrive. Some are dramatic; some are quiet. All of them are real. And maybe that’s the point. Kibid isn’t only about selling honors — it’s about revealing them: the honor of giving, the honor of faith, and the honor of seeing how far a single mitzvah can reach.

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