

Yakov Kil' Among The Jews In Riga Synagogue



This is my husband Yakov Kil' (sitting, first to the right) among the Jews in the synagogue in Riga. The picture was taken in 1970.

I met my future husband in synagogue on a Jewish holiday. There were a lot of young people on that day. He came up to me and we had a talk. Young people meet easily. We liked each other and started dating. In 1959 we got married. I had a religious wedding, in accordance with all rites and customs. Our marriage was registered in the state marriage registration office, and at home we had a chuppah. The rabbi came to wed us. Our wedding was very beautiful. Of course, Mother couldn't afford a wedding party for me. Both, my husband and I worked and we put aside money for the wedding.

My husband was born on 31st October 1931 in Dvinsk, in my father's native town. His name is Yakov according to the passport, but the double name Evsey-Yankle is written in his birth certificate. There were four children in the family. The family was very religious. All traditions were observed. The children were raised Jewish. During the war the family was in the evacuation. Then they moved to Riga. My husband finished compulsory school, worked at a plant.

We lived in our basement apartment after I got married. My mother and sister occupied one room, and we the other. Of course, it was hard, but we were young and in love, so we did not fear hardships. In 1960 our son Leo was born. His Jewish name is Leib, after my father-in-law. He had his bris milah. There was a minyan. All was done in line with the rite. It was very dangerous at that time and people were convicted for it. Of course, we did it gingerly, trying to do everything quiet for the neighbors not to hear anything. We could not help doing that. It was very important for me and for my husband that our son was a Jew. In 1969 our daughter Anna was born. We call her Channa at home.

My husband and I always marked Jewish holidays. We did it traditionally as we found it important. Our children knew Jewish traditions, rites. Of course, it was not easy. In Soviet times it was hard to buy matzah. If we could not buy it, we baked it. We had all necessary things. My husband made

some notched rolls to make holes in matzah and we baked good matzah at home.