

Shalom

Rabbi Gedalia Schwartz was my Rebbe, Posek and friend since I became a Rabbi. I looked forward to his weekly shiur for Rabbis which he delivered from Chicago Beth Din. I received the Mareh Mekomot via email printed them called the number, put my phone on speaker, had my pen and paper and was ready for the shiur. When you telephoned you announced your name Rabbi Schwartz would heartily say "Shalom Aleichem Rav Hartman" with such respect and affection,. This statement was stated to all the callers. Rabbi Schwartz respected all the Rabbis and treated us with much more respect than we deserved.

I first met Rabbi Schwartz personally after I became a Rabbi and wife and I with family visited her mother AH who moved to Boro Park after she became a widow. I went to daven @ YI of Boro Park where Rabbi Schwartz was Rav. I went to say Shalom Aleichem and told him I knew his son-in-law Rabbi Yehoshua Goldman ZL from Yeshiva. He had a great reputation.

I told Rabbi Schwartz where I was a Rabbi and he said he knew the European Rav, Hyman Papkin when he Rabbi Schwartz was Rav in Providence, RI and he (Rabbi Papkin) was Talmid chacham. Rabbi Schwartz then told me about a SHUT from 1917 from New Bedford, Mass. to Rabbi Avraham Yudelevitz in 1917 about a Schihta knife. This Rabbi Yudelevitz published 7 volumes of SHUT and with the help of Dr. Nathan Kaganoff ZL the famous librarian we found this Question and answer. I translated it, but this showed me Rabbi Schwartz's impressive knowledge of SHUT of Rabbanim from countries around the world in addition to his comprehensive knowledge of SHUT of Rav Moshe Feinstein ZTL and Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin ZTL.

Whenever we spoke he always reflected on the fact that we both learned by Rav Dovid Lifshitz ZTL and the Rav ZTL. He would joke that he can remember when Rav Dovid's hair and beard were black. I spoke to Rabbi Schwartz on many complicated questions and what always impressed was how he brought you into his thinking. He did not simply tell you the answer. Rabbi Schwartz was the same person whether on the telephone or when he saw you in person. He always treated you with utmost respect; much more than we deserved. Let me cite one example. I substituted for a Rabbi in a town near me which is a popular resort and people from around the country come there to have Bar/Bat Mitzvah or a wedding. I had to be Mesader Kiddushin for a couple who belonged to Conservative synagogue and wanted their Rabbi to participate. I told them that was not possible, but then I thought let me call Rabbi Schwartz and discuss this issue with him. He asked me "can this rabbi read Hebrew/ Aramaic"? I said yes and he said let him read the Ketubah based on Psak of Rav Moshe and if he can sing let him sing the words when Kallah and Chatan walked to Chuppah. I said yes and Rabbi did both honors and bride and bridegroom were so

excited and happy. This is a great Posek who paskens according to Halacha, but gets the whole picture.

Since his Ptirah I have reread the sefer "Shaarei Gedulah" and in particular the sections where he writes about Jewish life when he grew -up in Newark, NJ. My parents AH were contemporaries of Rabbi Schwartz, but they grew-up in the Bronx and Lower East-Side with similar stories. His description of Jewish life in his youth presents a comprehensive picture of what Rabbi Schwartz how to do to become such an outstanding Talmid chacham.

When my mother AH passed away he was the first person to call to extend nichum Avelim. It was so comforting to hear his voice. As an aside my mother knew his two brothers, Rabbis Saul and Maurice who were Rabbis in the Bronx. My mother managed the office of the Vaad Harabanim of the Bronx and knew all the Rabbis.

Rabbi Schwartz had a wonderful sense of humor with a beautiful laugh. A couple belonged to the Conservative synagogue and the wife once asked me if I knew Rabbi Schwartz. I said yes and she told me she grew-up in Philadelphia and when she attended Temple University she taught in his Hebrew school. Please give him her regards, but she added in those days people called him Rabbi George Bernard Schwartz and not Gedaliah Dov. The next time we spoke I gave him her regards with the name change and he issued a hearty laugh and said yes he was known as George Bernard and her family was the last of the true "Conservative Jews." Some people deny they had an English name or played sports or knew sports people. Not Rabbi Schwartz. He immediately said he used his English name for many years until changed to Gedaliah Dov.

Perhaps this story captures the essence of Rabbi Schwartz; a Talmid Chacham who was friendly with all people and respected all people ,and did not deny the fact that there was a period of time when he used his English name.

Rabbi Schwartz won the Latin Award in high school and he once humbly told me he could write a Teshuvah in Latin. He was humbly proud of his extensive secular education.

He leaves a rich legacy to his family, to the Rabbis who called him Rebbe and to Klal yisroel

Yehi Zichro Baaruch

Rabbi Barry D. Hartman