

## Ema And Isak Mezan



This is a photo of my daughter Ema and her husband Isak Mezan, taken at her 34th birthday party. On the right is my husband Toshio in profile. The picture was taken in Plovdiv in 1987. There is no writing on the back of the photo.

When I married, I distanced myself from the Jewish community. I lived far from home and I didn't visit. My daughter was born in 1953. She was raised to feel Jewish and we celebrated both the Jewish and the Bulgarian holidays at home. She married a Jew, Isak Mezan, who was a chemist. My husband insisted on that, while I didn't. He had started feeling part of the Jewish community. He didn't have any relatives and my relatives became his. He went to Israel twice and liked to say, 'It would be nice if Emi married a Jew.' He wanted that and so did I, although I am happy with my marriage to a Bulgarian.

Emi met Isak at a wedding party and married him. They have two children: Victor, born in 1976 and Robert, born in 1980. Victor studies macroeconomics and Robert management. They are both very active in the Jewish community. Victor is already engaged to a Jewish girl, Eva Mashiyah.

My daughter graduated in dentistry and works as a dentist in Plovdiv. She is very active in the Shalom organization now. She is a member of the Consistory board. Ema ran the restored Sunday school for 16 years. We started with only six or seven children and their numbers increased over the years. We restored WIZO. We started celebrating the holidays. In 1988 we organized a celebration for Purim for the first time. Then we celebrated Rosh Hashanah, Chanukkah and Pesach. The community got so used to celebrating the holidays together that now we can't make them celebrate them at their houses too.

For ten years my daughter Ema contributed to the activities of the Middle Generation in Plovdiv. She was a member of the executive board of the Consistory in Sofia and member of the board in Plovdiv. On 15th March 2002, she and her husband took part in a collective religious wedding organized by the Joint. Five more couples from Sofia and Plovdiv participated. They had already got married in a registry office but not in accordance with the traditional Jewish laws.