

The Wedding Day Of My Older Brother Kemal



This picture represents one of the happiest days we celebrated as a family. It was taken the wedding day of my older brother Kemal who was my best friend, my buddy and my confidant with whom I was infinitely close. On the very right is my brother Kemal, next to him, myself Lazar, and our oldest brother Davit is on the very left.

My older brother Kemal (Yomtov) was born in 1925. He attended Kabatash Highschool, unfortunately dropped out of school in 8th grade because the prospect of earning money was more appealing. A friend of ours from Ortakoy named Sami Katalan arranged work for my older brother in a coal factory as "garçon de bureau" (office worker). Here he learned typing with 10 fingers and some commercial business deals. He did his military service in Ankara at the Defense Ministry. It lasted for 36 months as a transcriber. On his return from the military, he worked as a salesperson at the Ankara Hosiery Store in Beyoglu (on the European side, the street where currently where retail shopping is done, and where coffeehouses and restaurants are).

My older brother met Selma Aygun Behar who worked in the glove manufacturing workshop where Davit worked (unfortunately I do not remember much about Selma's family). They dated for a while and married in 1954 in the Zulfaris Synagogue. I cannot remember the evening reception unfortunately. Meri was born in 1956, and their younger daughter Suzi in 1959.

Meri met a young man named Moris Salti who she loved very much while she was studying in the Nishantashi Girls' Highschool and married in 1971 in the Neve Shalom Synagogue. The evening reception took place in the Galata Tower. The young couple had daughters named Sibel in 1973 and Selma in 1977. Both of the children attended the B'nai Brith school. They entered the workplace after graduating from highschool. Sibel became a professional in the logistics department in a firm and married Kemal Kuzir in 1995 in the Neve Shalom Synagogue. We celebrated the evening in the Surmeli Hotel [a hotel of the European side] (unfortunately I do not

have too much information about Kemal). Sibel has two daughters ages 6 and 2.

Selma on the other hand worked at the rabbinate in the accounting department after finishing highschool. She married Mordo Salinas in 1999 in the Neve Shalom Synagogue. We celebrated the evening all together at the Surmeli Hotel (unfortunately I do not have too much information about Mordo). Selma left work after giving birth to her son in 2002, she has not returned to work yet.

Unfortunately my niece Meri became a diabetic at a very young age. Aside from the fact that she never learned to take care of herself, her addiction to cigarettes also caused us to lose her in June of 2006. We interned Meri in Haskoy Jewish cemetery.

My older brother Kemal's younger daughter Suzi on the other hand, graduated from the Private Shisli Highschool. After a brief experience with working, she married a young man named Jeffi Bardavit (unfortunately I do not have much information about Jeffi) in 1979 in the Neve Shalom Synagogue. We held the wedding celebration at Palet 2 [one of the restaurants on the shores of the Bosphorus on the European side]. They had a son they named Semih in 1980. Semih graduated from the Marmara University Faculty of Business Administration after finishing Nishantash Anadolu Highschool. Suzi never got along with her husband and unfortunately they divorced in 1995. Suzi started working at the Grand Rabbinate as soon as she was separated, currently she works there, she manages her life. Her son Semih works in a private import export firm. Jeffi immigrated to Israel in 2005.

We lost my older brother Kemal, who was the one I enjoyed spending time with most among all my siblings, who I shared everything with and who was a friend and pal for me, unfortunately, in 1982 from pancreatic cancer; we interned him next to my father in Haskoy Jewish cemetery. His wife Selma died from congestive heart failure in 1986, we interned my deceased sister-in-law in Haskoy Jewish cemetery next to my brother.