

Interview with Mohel,

Audio starts at 11:25

Those days there was great danger to the mohel and to the doctors and to the owners of the homes that hosted us. According to Russian law of the time they could've arrested them and given them long prison sentences or send them to camps, we ignored this and Jews helped us, and the doctors literally risked their lives, there was an old woman who took upon herself to prepare a mitzvah feast for every bris. She wasn't wealthy, she lived on bubkis, she gave us her apartment to circumcise the Jewish boys and she was in the kitchen and prepared whatever she had, 12.40, We had to drive there by car for 40 minutes and came to that building. No one asked the address because it would put them at risk. Then we would make a bris. How did we make the bris? And perhaps this is what pushed me to becoming a mohel. There was no sign of any of the American medical equipment, we were 50 years behind the rest of the world. It was terrible. Nothing was disposable, everything was reused with the same instruments, that's the way it was. Later when I had my own bris and I became close to Judaism I got connected to Lubavitch, that's also a long story, In my days and in my age cohort everyone was being forced to go to Afghanistan. Nobody had a desire to go there, so I had a serious problem. A few months later an emissary of the Lubavitcher Rebbe came for some personal reason, I'm not sure why, so I met him and told him my problems and he took my name and my mother's name and said he will get a blessing for me. After he got a blessing for me the situation changed. A man came who I hardly knew and said that for a small amount of money we can bribe someone to be enrolled in a university. The bribe didn't help because even the university students were drafted, 16.00 I looked for a university where I could observe Shabbos, where they didn't insist students come on the Sabbath, and there was a university that's not too far from the Marina Rocha synagogue and I selected to major in medical bio chemistry which is very close to medicine so I became freed from the military, After I had devoted some of my time to these studies I figured it's worthwhile to make use of this and afterwards I went along to circumcisions and asked the doctors who were making great sacrifices to show me and teach me some medicine I needed to know that I was lacking from my education. When I came to America I was a qualified Mohel, I'd already done a few hundred circumcisions alone and in America I saw how they do it on an American style so I completed my training.