



How do you repay the cost of your life?

by [Menucha Chana Levin](#)

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A young orphan boy, Yared Worde lived a hand-to-mouth existence on the streets of Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. Without any family to care for him, he managed to survive – just barely – by scrounging for food. Finally he went to live in an orphanage but there at the age of 12 he became very ill. At that bleak moment, Yared's difficult life took a miraculous turn.

A kind Irish nurse who worked in the orphanage took care of him and brought him to a doctor who diagnosed his rheumatic heart disease. This doctor referred him to an organization in Israel called Save a Child's Heart. Flown to the Wolfson Medical Center in Holon, young Yared underwent heart surgery and was granted a new lease on life.

Save a Child's Heart (SACH) was created through the dedication of the late Dr. Amram (Ami) Cohen. After immigrating to Israel from the United States in 1992, this first-rate surgeon joined the staff of the Wolfson Medical Center and served as the Deputy Chief of Cardiovascular Surgery and Head of Pediatric Cardiac Surgery.

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In 1995 an Ethiopian doctor, referred by a mutual friend at the University of Massachusetts, contacted Dr. Cohen. He requested Dr. Cohen's help for two children in desperate need of heart surgery. Since that beginning, SACH has mended the hearts of more than 2,500 children from many countries around the world. All the children are given the best medical treatment no matter their race, color, gender, religion, or financial situation.

Yared asked himself, how does one repay the cost of one's life? His answer: by emulating his benefactor's kindness to others. So Yared Worde returned to Ethiopia to help orphans like him have a better future. Today he is the Director of the "Saint Yared School"



Yared Worde on his recent visit to the



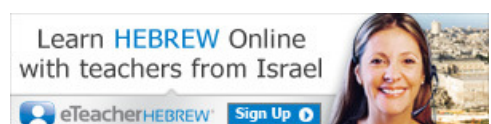
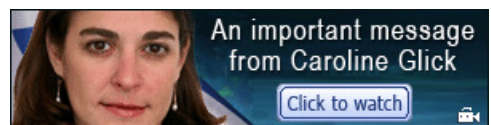
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in Addis Abba, a school combating poverty by providing education to the city's most desperately poor children. Yared turned down a full scholarship to an American university for a Master's Degree because he felt it is more important that he remain in Ethiopia, run the school and give as many indigent children as possible the chance for a future through education.

Two years ago Yared met a very ill young orphan named Tamru who was in desperate need of life-saving heart surgery. He had been sent to the hospital in Addis Abba from his orphanage in North Ethiopia. Yared immediately contacted Save a Child's Heart for assistance. Until Tamru was well enough to fly to Israel to undergo open heart surgery, Yared personally took care of the boy. When Tamru returned to Ethiopia after his successful surgery at the Wolfson Hospital, Yared took him into his own home to give him the necessary follow up care.

In his recent return visit to Israel, Yared met children from Ethiopia, Angola, Zanzibar, Uganda, Moldova, the Palestinian Authority and Iraq, all brought to Israel to undergo life-saving heart surgery. Sharing his own experiences, he gave them hope and encouragement. In turn, seeing these children of all backgrounds playing together brought him joy. Yared also met with the doctors who had treated him 13 years ago.

Sadly, Dr. Ami Cohen was no longer among them. He died in a tragic accident while climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa in 2001. This year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death which left a deep void in the hearts of all whose lives he touched. Still, his project Save a Child's Heart continues to thrive, transcending political divisions and creating warm understanding between Israel and the world. Dr. Cohen lives on in another way as well. Yared and his wife Netsanet were recently blessed with a baby girl. In tribute, they chose to name their daughter Anna Ami.



Dr. Ami Cohen ztl and his patients

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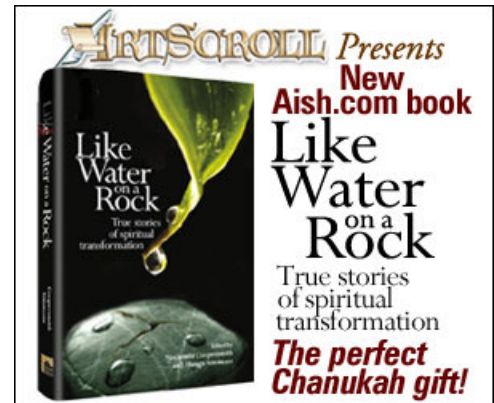
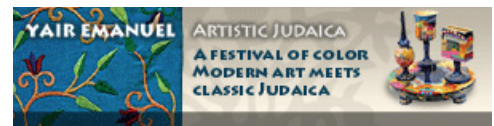
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**Sam Omekara**, December 11, 2011 4:00 PM  
 Blessings from above.

Reading this story only gives us a glimpse of the blessings from heaven unto men, through the human vessels. It is the 'Divine Touch'.

**ruth housman**, December 11, 2011 2:40 PM  
 The Worde: about this article

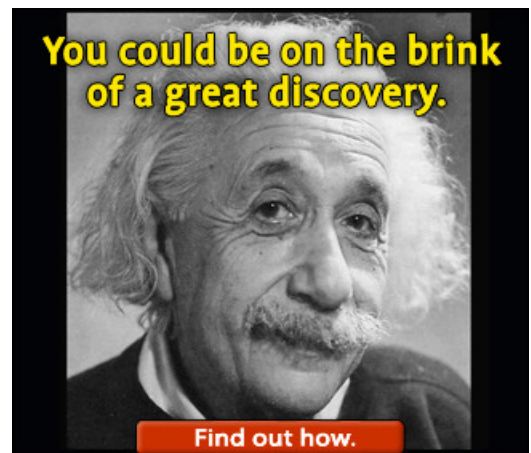
I can only quote from a popular song in responding to an article truly, about HEART: Don't you know, the word is LOVE? (The Beatles).



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