

Yaakov's Bar Mitzvah  
November 28, 2009, Kislev, 11 5770  
Shabbos Vayetze

Yaakov, your parents asked me to say a few words. As I have remarked previously, Many years ago, at time of my own Bar Mitzvah in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1940, no one was certain that I would survive, let alone create a new family. Therefore, the first thing that I must do is to give thanks to the Almighty that He has permitted me to live to be here and to be present at the Bar Mitzvah of you, my grandson.

At this time of great joy it seems appropriate however, to recall that during the Holocaust one and a half million young boys and girls were murdered by the Nazis just because they were Jews. Many of them were of your age and did not live long enough to have their respective Bar or bas Mitzvah. Among those boys was my cousin (and therefore your cousin) **Yehoshua Ben Efraim Sosnowicz**, who lived with his family in Ostrowiec, Poland, and who, when he perished at the age of 12, was probably eagerly anticipating his Bar Mitzvah just as you, Yaakov, have been anticipating yours. Because of that, we, the members of your family, would like to couple your name with that of Yehoshua Ben Efraim so that the memory Yehoshua's existence will be perpetuated and his *neshomo* (soul) is elevated.

Yaakov, you now have the extra responsibility of leading the kind of life Yehoshua Ben Ephraim's parents would have liked to see your cousin lead. From what I see in your life, your middos, your learning, your pleasant personality are ideal examples to others and it is evident to me that others also see these middos in you. Your Savta, your Grandma Helen, your parents, your peers, and the community in which you live. So it seems to me that you are well on the way to fulfilling this responsibility.

It is my special privilege to present you with a certificate which records for posterity your twinning with. Yehoshua Ben Efraim Sosnowicz

READ OUT certificate.

I hope that when you look at this certificate you will think of Yehoshua Ben Efraim Sosnowicz and of the many children who perished in the holocaust.

May you be privileged in due course, to see your children and grandchildren become bar and bas mitzvah.

I love you, Yaakov and wish you **Mazal Tov!**