

The Daily Portion

- Sivan Rahav Meir

Bar Mitzva at 49

Translation by Yehoshua Siskin

"Shalom Sivan,

We have already seen weddings happening during this war but the Bar Mitzva of a 49-year-old we have yet to see.

We are in a paratrooper unit that has been serving on the northern border for two months. The machine gunner in our platoon, whose name is Robert, informed us that he never celebrated a Bar Mitzva because he was born in the Soviet Union where observing Judaism was prohibited.

In heart-to-heart conversations, he asked many questions about Judaism and Tefillin, and so we decided to celebrate his Bar Mitzva despite the war. We set the date for his birthday and everyone who could be there to share in his joy arrived for the occasion.

The Tikvat Olam organization donated an elegant pair of Tefillin and a Tallit so that today, Monday, the 21st of Kislev, Robert put on his new pair of Tefillin and was called up to the Torah, coming full circle on his 49th birthday.

Let's hope that all of us can live up to this verse regarding Tefillin:

'Then all the peoples of the earth will see that the name of the Lord is called upon you, and they will fear you' (D'varim 28:10).

Mazal tov, dear Robert,

Asaf Maki and all your fellow soldiers."

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