

תשורה

MEMENTO

אז | א
אליעזר ווענגער

From the Bar Mitzvah celebration of

אליעזר שיי ווענגער

29 Adar 5786

Eliezer's grandfather, Rabbi Sholom Ber Schapiro, receives a dollar from the Rebbe on the day of his son Yaakov's bar mitzvah. The Rebbe asked him to give a speech at the bar mitzvah.



Rabbi Schapiro speaking at his son's bar mitzvah, as per the Rebbe's request earlier that day.



B"H

FOREWORD

In celebration of the auspicious day of your bar mitzvah, dear Eliezer, we present you with the following gift - a collection of bar mitzvah letters from the Rebbe.

In the early years, before a standard text was established for the Rebbe's mazal tov letters (for births, brises, bar/bas mitzvahs, weddings, etc.), the Rebbe would send a unique letter each time. Eventually, the Rebbe decided to create a standard letter that could be sent to everyone, with slight modifications as needed. Presented here is a series of bar mitzvah letters from over the years. The Rebbe entrusted your Zeidy Mindel with transcribing his orally dictated letters.

Another part of Zeidy Mindel's work for the Rebbeim was the ground-breaking children's monthly magazines, *Talks & Tales* (English) and *Shmuessen* (Yiddish) which your Zeidy Mindel wrote during the course of over forty five years. Each and every article in the Talks and Tales had the distinction of the Rebbe's careful editing before going to print each month. On the occasion of your bar mitzvah taking place at the end of Adar-erev Rosh Chodesh Nissan-we present here two unique articles with some of the Rebbe's edits: one on an Adar issue, and another on the very last issue of the Talks, Nissan, 5749.

We wish you, dear Eliezer, that HaShem bless you to be a true Chossid, Yorei-Shomayim and Lamdan, according to the wishes of the Rebbe, and to cause much true yiddishe-chassidishe nachas to your parents and grandparents.

Zeidy and Bubby Schapiro

An Early Bar Mitzvah Letter from the Rebbe
18 Teves, 5712 (1951)

ב"ה, י"ח טבת תשי"ב
ברוקלין.

ואברך סך

שלום וברכה

במענה על ההודעה אשר נקטיה לבר מצוה
ובקשה ברכה בסב"לך:

הנני בזה להביע ברכתי, אשר כלסון
כ"ק מידת אהמויך וצוקללהיה נבגים ז"ת, תה"י
ירא ס"ים תמיד ולסון זמטביע רוב נחת, הסידיען נחת.

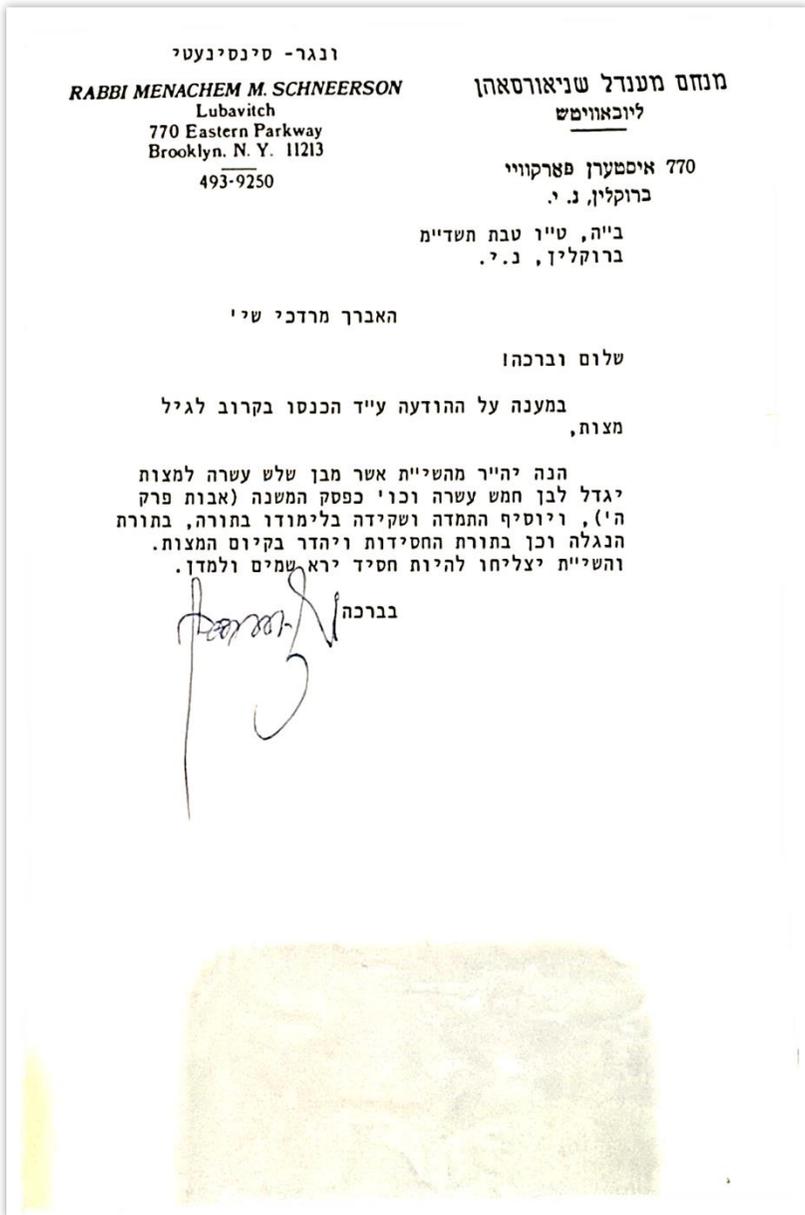
הי"כר, כ"ק מ"ה אהמויך, אשר די בר
מצוה סאכריס מלעגט סקן (אצל הנשיאים) פנהיפסן
נקטה אדם, (וכסניתן הסאכר להעתיק הס"יכו לפעמים
את הסתלה).

זאת אוסרת, אשר הבר מצוה צריך לדקח
שעליו להשיג מעל תואר אדם, טוהו הי וחר סקולה
בארבעה תוארים, אדם, איש, גבר, אנוש, (ראח קונטרס
חורת החסידות, פ"ו, ד"ה ויבוא סלק תשי"ט, קונטרס
סיב, פ"ב) וצריך לעבוד בזה חי"כך ולא לתנית על אחר
זמן, וטו סס"עין בידו הנקטה אדם, (ראח ס' הפולדות
פ' ס"ד).

בברכת הצלחה בלימוד תורה
ביראת ס"ים

The Rebbe's Standard Bar Mitzvah Letter

Letter sent to Rabbi Mordechai Wenger, Eliezer's father.



**An English note by the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Mindel,
seemingly sent along with a bar mitzvah letter.**

Page Two

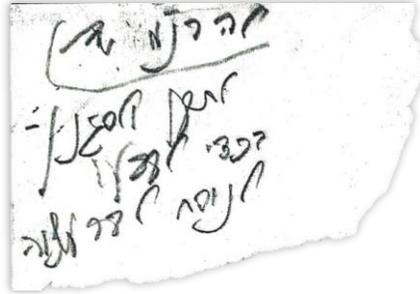
P.S.

This additional note in English is to help you remember the main contents of the Rebbe's *re'as* message to you on the occasion of your Bar Mitzva:

It is a blessing that you should advance in your devotion and diligence in your Torah studies and the observance of the Mitzvos - as a full-fledged Jew; that this includes, of course, the Mitzva of v'ohavto lre'acho komoch, the Great Principle of the Torah; expressing your love for the members of your family, and your friends, and all Jews in your surroundings by showing them a living example how a Jew should conduct himself in the everyday life in accordance with the Torah and Mitzvos, and more so on the holy days of Shabbos and Yom Tov. And G-d will bless you.

Preparing the Rebbe's English Bar Mitzvah Letter

After the standard Nusach was made, the Rebbe instructed his secretary, Rabbi Mindel, to draft an English version of the letter (later, the Rebbe instructed that a second version should be made for those who notified him before their bar mitzvah - see next page).

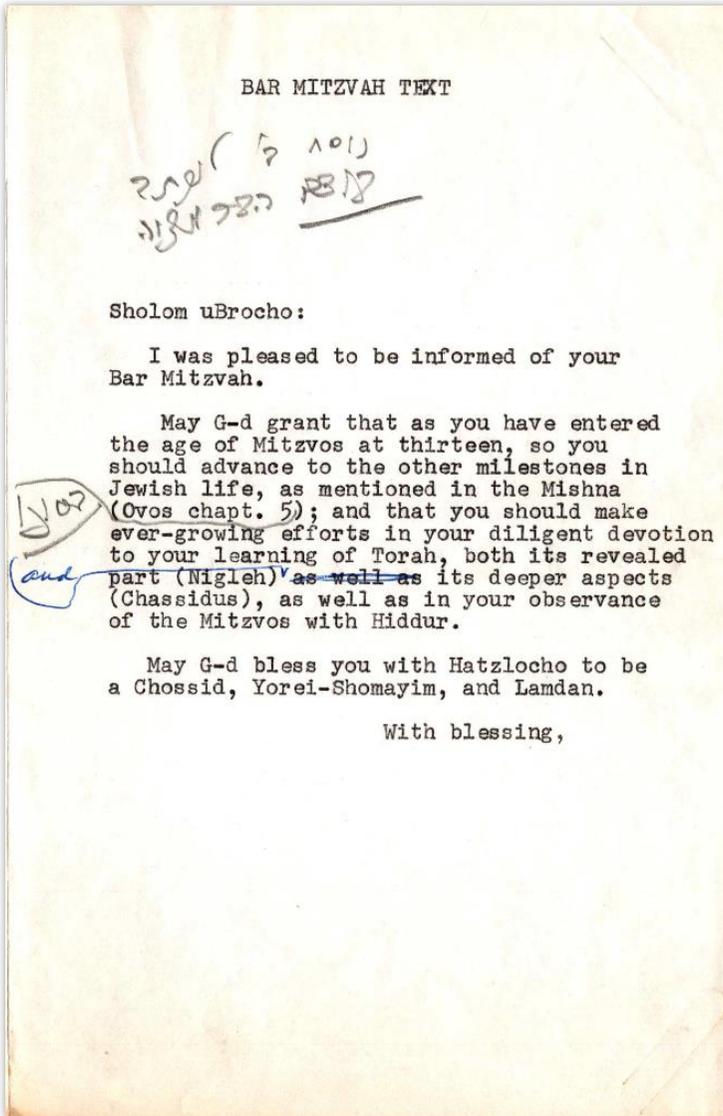


להרנ"מ שי'

לתקן ולסגון - בכדי לקבעו לנוסח לבר מצוה

The Rebbe's English Bar Mitzvah Letter

The Rebbe's edits on one of the English drafts. (Note the Rebbe's addition that does not appear in the standard Hebrew letter.)



נוסח ב' לנכתב
קודם הבר מצוה

(בסופו 5. Chapt. Ovos)

The Rebbe's telegram to the orphans in Eretz Yisroel for
their bar mitzvah celebration – 20 Av, 5736 (1976)

מברק

מכבוד קדושת אדמו"ר שליט"א מליובאוויטש

לחגיגת

בר־מצוה

של יתומי מערכות ישראל

בי"ה, כ"ף מנחם אב ה'תשל"ו

**לכל אחד ואחד מהברי־מצוה יתומי־המלחמה והחבלנות
בארצנו הקדושה — שליט"א.**

שלום רב וברכה!

בימי הנחמה שלאחרי ימי החורבן, אשר „מפני חטאינו
גלינו מארצנו“,

משתתף הנני בשמחתך לרגל הגיעך לגיל **בר מצוה**,

ויהי רצון שתקבל עליך ובשמחה עול תורתנו תורת חיים
ומצותי, ותקיימם מתוך בריאות ומנוחה,

כי ירום השם קרן עמו ישראל ויתן שלום בארצנו, וגדול
זכות התורה והמצות להגן על הארץ ועל עמנו בכל מקום
שהם ולהפיל אימתה ופחד על כל אויב ומתנקם,

וסגולה מיוחדת במצות תפילין אשר, כהודעת חז"ל, ע"י
קיומה כל עמי הארץ יראו ממך,

וע"י כל זה תגרום נחת רוח אמיתי לאביך, השם יקום דמו,
אשר מעולם האמת בו הוא נמצא משגיח בהנעשה אתך,
מתענג עונג רב בהנהגתך הטובה ושמח שמחה גדולה
בראותו אשר הולך אתה מחיל אל חיל בתורתנו תורת
אמת ומצותי.

בברכת מזל טוב לך ולכל המשפחה — שליט"א

מנחם שניאורסאהן

A standard bar mitzvah letter, to which the Rebbe added a two-page explanation in English as to the significance of a bar mitzvah.

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, N. Y. 11213
493-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ. י.

ב"ה, יו"ד כסלו תש"מ
ברוקלין

האברך שי

שלום וברכה!

במענה על ההודעה ע"ד הכנסו בקרוב לגיל מצוה,

הנה יהי רצון מהשם יתברך אשר מבין שלש עשרה למצוה יגדל לבן חמש עשרה וכן כפסוק המשנה (אבות פרק ה'), ויוסיף התמדה ושקידה בלימודו בתורה, בתורה הנגלה וכן בתורה החסידות ויהדר בקיום המצוה, והשם יתברך יצליחו להיות חסיד ירא שמים ולמדן.

בברכה


נ.ב.

הבא לקמן נכתב בשפת המדינה בכדי שתוכל, אם תרצה, להראות לחברייך שי ברוח מצוה ואנבה לרעך כמוך, שאם בכל ענין צריך להיטיב לאחרים, על אחת כמה וכמה בעניני היהדות, התורה ומצוה'.

At first glance, it is strange that the day of Bar Mitzvah, which is so important that the Zohar declares that for the Bar Mitzvah boy it is almost like the Day of Mattan Torah, when Jews first received the Torah and Mitzvos, yet, insofar as Tachnun is concerned, which is omitted even on the so-called "Minor Holidays," if it does not occur on Shabbos or Yom-Tov (or any other day that Tachnun is not said) - Tachnun is said by the Bar Mitzvah boy, as on any ordinary weekday.

One of the explanations is as follows:

When one considers that human capacities are limited in general, especially the capacities of a boy at the start of his fourteenth year, yet he must assume all the duties and responsibilities of a full-fledged Jew, and, moreover, fulfil them with joy, in keeping with the rule: Serve G-d with joy - the question begs itself: How is he going to carry out all that is expected of him? Especially, being a member of a people which is a small minority among the nations of the world; and even in this country, where one has every opportunity to carry out all religious duties, most people are more interested and engaged in the material aspects of life?

The answer is that the Torah and Mitzvos have been given by G-d, the Creator of the world, and of man, and He knows all the difficulties that a Jew may encounter. G-d has surely provided every Jew with the necessary strength to overcome any and all difficulties to live up to G-d's Will, for G-d would not expect someone to do something which is beyond his capacity.

If, however, there should be a moment of weakness, when carrying out G-d's Will is not in the fullest measure of perfection, G-d, in His infinite goodness, makes it

- 2 -

possible to "say Tachnun" - to do Teshuvah. Indeed, as the Alter Rebbe explains, Teshuvah is basically for lack of perfection in Avodas Hashem.

Therefore, on the first day of becoming a full-fledged Jew, and after fulfilling the very first Mitzvah, namely, Shema, by which a Jew declares his total commitment to G-d and obedience to all His commandments, the Bar Mitzvah boy does say Tachnun the following morning and afternoon (provided it is not Shabbos or Yom Tov etc.), for the essence of Tachnun is Teshuvah, and there is the assurance that "Nothing stands in the way of Teshuvah."

This knowledge will, moreover, also stand him in good stead when he will involve himself in the great Mitzvah of v'ohavto l're'acho komoicho, to bring the alienated closer to Yiddishkeit. For remembering the rule that "Nothing stands in the way of Teshuvah," he will eagerly and compassionately apply it to them, especially as in most cases the failure to observe fully the Torah and Mitzvos is due to extenuating circumstances.

With all the above in mind, and being fortunate in growing up in a family where Yiddishkeit is a living experience in the everyday life, you will start out on your way of life as a full-fledged Jew with confidence, and will proceed from strength to strength, and be a source of true pride and joy to your dear parents and family, and to all our Jewish people.

A Bar Mitzvah *Droshe* from Rabbi Nissan Mindel

A bar mitzvah *droshe* that Rabbi Nissan Mindel prepared for Herb Rosin, son of the Frierdiker Rebbe's nurse Manya. Manya was very close to the Mindel family and even lived in the same neighborhood of Long Beach.

My dear Rabbis, dear parents, and dear friends:

My Bar Mitzvah takes place in the week of the 12th day of Tammuz - a day which I have learned to cherish since I spent last summer in the Lubavitcher Camp Gan Israel.

The 12th of Tammuz is the birthday - and Bar Mitzvah day - of the late Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneerson of saintly memory.

I have been told that on the day of his Bar Mitzvah, he asked his father, the Lubavitcher Rebbe before him, the following question:

"In the Siddur Nusach Chabad (arranged by the Old Rebbe, author of the Tanya and Shulchan Aruch, and Founder of Chabad) it is written at the beginning of the Morning Prayer, just before we say Mah Tov (which, by the way, is taken from my Sidrah, which I read this morning) - that one should say:

הריני מקבל עלי עצות עשה של ואהבת לרעך כמוך -

'I accept to fulfil the Mitzvah of loving my fellow Jews as myself.'

asked
"What -/this Bar Mitzvah boy, seventy years ago - is the connection between this Mitzvah and early morning prayer?"

His father answered him: "When we pray, we ask our Heavenly Father to provide all our needs. It is only right that we should wish to please Him in some way, before asking for His favors. Now, nothing please a father more than to see all his children live in peace, harmony, and love for each other. As all Jews are G-d's beloved children, it pleases G-d when we declare our love and affection for our our fellow-Jews, and He grants our requests and prayers."

This Bar-Mitzvah message - the message of Ahavas Yisroel - was the guiding light which guided the late Lubavitcher Rebbe

all his life. Many years later, when he was the head of the Lubavitcher movement, living in Soviet Russia, he showed what Ahavas Yisroel really meant to him. For he devoted every day of his life to helping his fellow-Jews in every way, especially in their religious life. He knew that his life was in danger every day, for the Soviet government considered him their Enemy Number One, but he did not give up. Finally he was arrested, and there seemed no hope that ~~xxxxxx~~ his life would be spared. But with the help of G-d he was saved and freed from prison. Strangely enough, his freedom came to him on his birthday, the 12th of Tammuz.

I mention this to you, my dear friends, not only because my Bar Mitzvah coincides with the Bar Mitzvah of the late Lubavitcher Rebbe, but also because he was a dear friend of my parents. I shall try to be worthy of his friendship, and I shall try to make his Bar Mitzvah message also my Bar Mitzvah message and guiding light.

Before I conclude, I would like to quote/just a few words from the Bar Mitzvah drosho which the late Lubavitcher Rabbi delivered at his Bar Mitzvah, seventy years ago. It begins as follows:

איתא במדרש תילים: רבי אליעזר אומר: אמרו ישראל לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא: רבונו של עולם, רוצין אנו ליגע בתורה, אבל אין לנו פנאי. אמר להם הקדוש ברוך הוא קיימו מצות תפילין ומעלה אני עליכם כאילו אתם יגיעים בתורה יומם ולילה. "It is written in Midrash Tillim: Rabbi Eliezer says: The Jewish

people say to G-d: Master of the Universe, we wish to study the Torah diligently, day and night, but we have no time. Replied G-d to them: Observe the Mitzvah of Tefillin, and I will count it as though you study the Torah diligently day and night.

"In another Midrash, our Sages say: A person may tell others to do things, but he himself does not do them. G-d is not like that. The commandments which G-d gave to the Jews, are the same which He

Another Bar Mitzvah *Droshe* Prepared by Rabbi Mindel

This *droshe* was written shortly after the previous one.

My dear Parents, revered Rabbis, and good Friends:

Of all the 613 Mitzvoth of the Torah, which I am now duty-bound to observe, as any adult Jew, the Mitzvah of Tefillin is the one that symbolizes Bar Mitzvah more than any other.

Our Sages of the Talmud, in the Gemoro Kiddushin (daf lamed-hey, omud aleph) say: הוקשה כל התורה כולה לתפילין - "The whole Torah has been compared to the one Mitzvah of Tefillin."

Why is the Mitzvah of Tefillin so important in general, and for a Bar Mitzvah boy in particular?

The explanation may be found in the following Midrash Tillim: רבי אליעזר אומר: אמרו ישראל לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא: רבונו של עולם, רוצין אנו ליגע בתורה, אבל אין לנו פנאי. אמר להם הקדוש ברוך הוא: קיימו מצות תפילין ופעלה אני עליכם כאילו אתם יגיעים בתורה יומם ולילה.

"Rabbi Eliezer says: The Jewish people say to G-d: Master of the Universe, we wish to study the Torah diligently, day and night, but we have no time. Replied G-d to them: Observe the Mitzvah of Tefillin, and I will count it as though you study the Torah diligently day and night."

The Tefillin consist of two parts: Tefillin-shel-yad, which is put on the hand, facing the heart; and the Tefillin-shel-Rosh, which is put on the head, facing the brain. This symbolizes that the Jew must sanctify his thoughts in the head and his feelings in the heart to the service of G-d.

But the Tefillin-shel-yad is put on first. This shows that in Jewish life the important thing is the deed. Action comes first, that is to say - the fulfillment of the Mitzvoth is our first duty; the understanding of the Mitzvoth is second to it.

This is the great principle of our Torah and Jewish way of

life. It is the principle of Na'aseh - first; and then - v'nishma, with which we first received the Torah at Mount Sinai.

Rabbi Eliezer's saying may therefore be understood as follows:

Some Jews may wish to study the Torah first, in order to understand the Mitzvoth, and then begin to fulfill them. But they find that the day and the night are not sufficient; not even the whole life-time is sufficient to understand everything about the Torah and Mitzvoth; for the Torah and Mitzvoth are endless and without limit. And so G-d says to them: This is the wrong approach. Observe the Mitzvah of Tefillin. First comes the shel-yad and then the shel-rosh. And so the Torah says:

"And it shall be a sign upon your hand and frontlets for your eyes". The guiding sign for the Jew is to fulfill the Mitzvoth first, and the very fulfillment will open his eyes to understand and appreciate the beauty of Jewish life. In this way the Jew becomes attached to G-d and to his people, which is symbolized by the Reztuos - the leather straps of Tefillin.

This is why a Jewish boy, when he becomes Bar Mitzvah, begins to put on the Tefillin, and is called up to the Torah. For the principle which Tefillin teaches us applies to the whole Torah and Mitzvoth; it is the guiding principle in Jewish life.

I shall always cherish the Mitzvah of Tefillin, and all the other Mitzvoth of the Torah, which unite me with my people and with G-d, and I hope and pray that, with G-d's help, I will be a credit to my Yeshivah, the Hebrew Academy of Long Beach, to my teachers, and to my parents and friends. I hope and pray that I may fulfill the expectations of the Lubavitcher Rebbe (Shlito), who was gracious enough to receive me a few days ago and to give me his blessing.

I thank you all for coming to share in my great Simcha, and for you, my dear parents, my heart is certainly full of gratitude, for making this day so much more meaningful to me. Thank you very much.

The Rebbe's bar mitzvah

Rebbetzin Channa's recollections of the Rebbe's bar mitzvah.

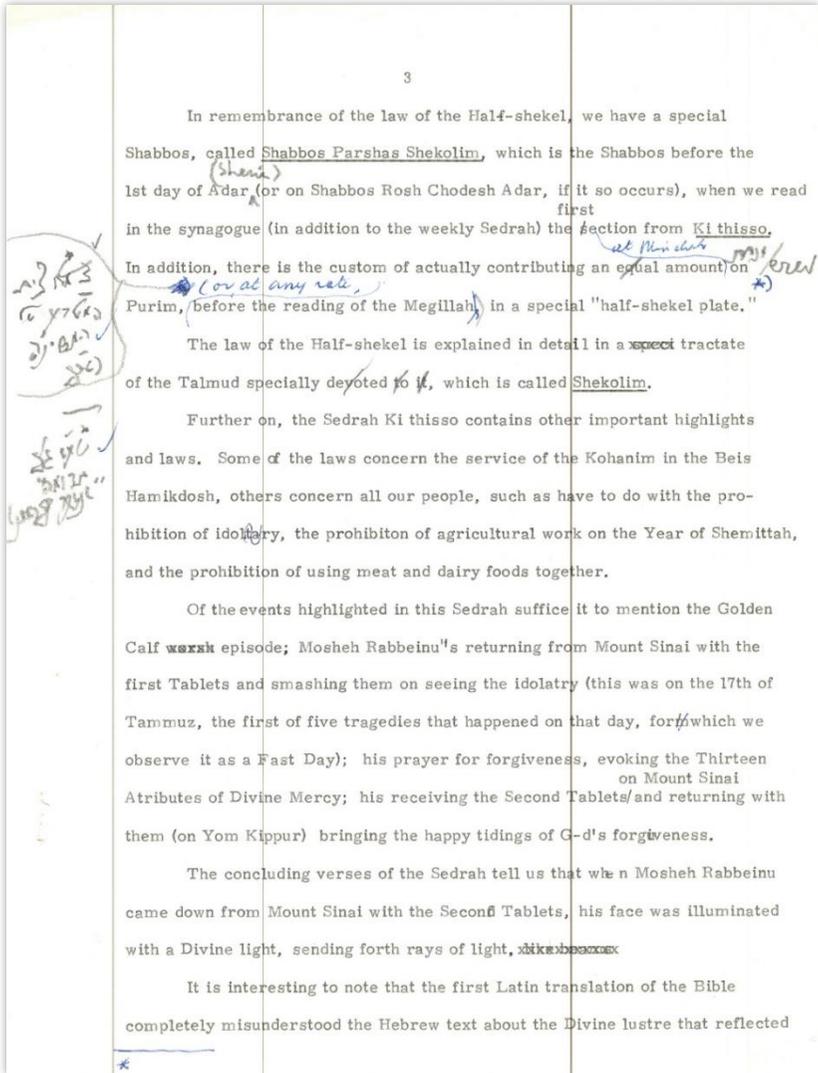
- An excerpt of an article by Nissan Gordon -

— צו בר־מצוה איז ער געווען אַ גאון עולם — זאָגט די רביצין מיט אַ טאָן פון זיכערקייט און ציילנדיג דערביי די ווערטער, ווי זי וואָלט ניט וועלן משנה זיין פון דאָס וואָס זי האָט געהערט, וואַרשיינלעך פון איר גרויסן מאַן.

פון דער גרויסער בר מצוה וואָס איז געפראָוועט געוואָרן אין יעקאָטערינאַסלאָוו געדענקט די רביצין עד היום, אַז נאָך דער דרשה, וואָס האָט שטאַרק אויסגענומען ביי אַלע אורחים, האָט דער בר־מצוה בחור זיך שטאַרק פאַנאָדערגעוויינט, און קוקנדיק אויף אים האָבן אַ צאָל געסט אָנגעפאַנגען וויינען. זי האָט געהערט אַז דער מאַן איז באַשטאַנען אַז דער בר־מצוה בחור'ל זאָל אים געבן עפעס אַ צוזאָג, וואָס דער צוזאָג איז געווען האָט זי ניט קיין אָנונג, אָבער זי געדענקט אַז שבת צו־נאַכט ווען דער בר־מצוה בחור האָט מסכים געווען צו געבן זיין וואָרט, ווי דער פּאָטער האָט פאַרלאָנגט, איז געוואָרן אַ גרויסע שמחה מיט ריקודים ביז שפעט אין דער נאַכט אַריין.

ווער ווייסט ? ... אפשר האָט זיך שוין דאָן גערעדט שטילערהייט צווישן פּאָטער און זון וועגן זאַכן וואָס שטייען ברומן של עולם פון בית חב"ד ? ...

The Rebbe's edits on Talks & Tales - Adar I 5741



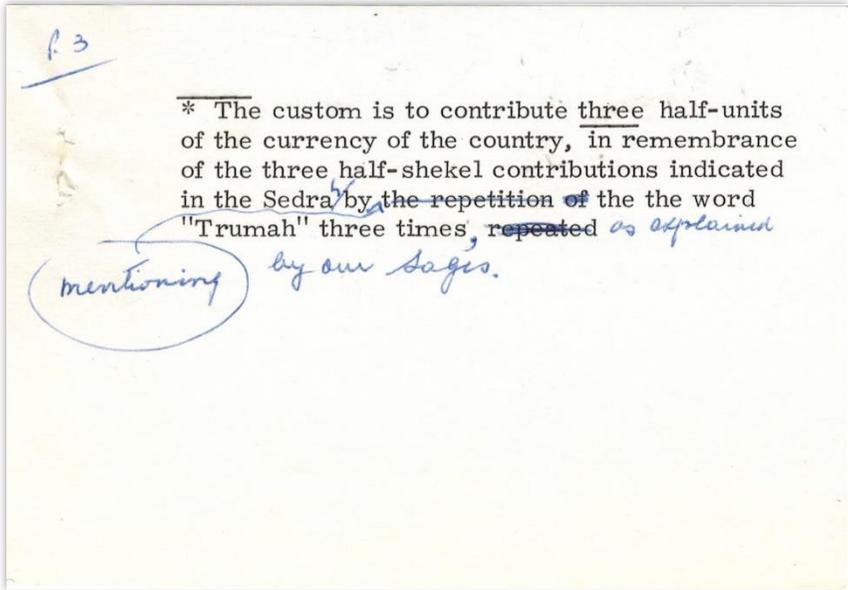
...*Shabbos Parshas Shekolim*, which is the Shabbos before the 1st day of Adar (**Sheni**)...

...there is a custom of actually contributing an equal amount on **מנחת ערב** Purim (**עכ"פ**) **מחצית המטבע של המדינה** (***3** before the reading of the Megillah) ...

* ע"ש ג"פ "תרומה" שזכר בפרשתנו

The law of the Half-shekel is explained in detail in a tractate of the Talmud specially devoted to it, which is called *Shekolim*.

Rabbi Nissan Mindel translated the Rebbe's addition into English:



The Rebbe's edits on the last issue of Talks & Tales
Nissan 5749

7-23-89 THU 22:46 RABBI MINDEL P. 01

*FOR TALKS, NISSAN, 5739
FAX: 3/23/89*

IN NATURE'S WONDERLAND
THROUGH THE EYES OF ANIMALS

As you read these lines, your eyes are focused on the black letters and words neatly arranged on this page. You read something interesting, something that may be new to you, fascinating; it may even "open your eyes" and keep your interest long after you finish reading; and it makes you think. ~~Whatever~~ you read, and ~~whatever~~ you see, make an impression on your mind; your eyes create images in your mind, some strong, some weak images, and your ability to think enables you to sort out these images: ^{you} pay little or no attention to those that are unimportant, ^{and of no interest to you, ~~images~~} ~~and xxxxxx~~ ^{learn and} ~~those~~ ^{notice} that are important, ~~xxxxxx~~ you can gradually enrich your life - for your own benefit as well as for the benefit of others around you, ~~especially those that are near and dear to you.~~

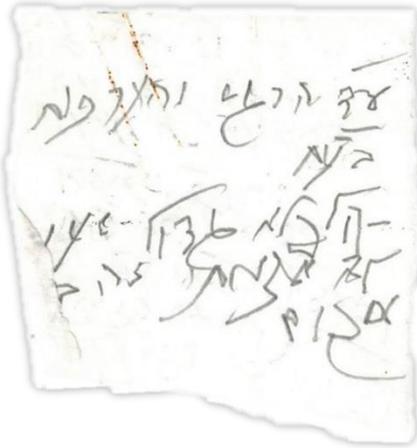
Probably for

Animals, on the other hand, do not use their eyes to read and learn and shape their thinking the way humans do. ~~For~~ ^(to) nearly all animals, the ability to see is a matter of life or death, and for most of them, it is little more than that. For this reason, and because there are so many different kinds of animals on land, in the sea, and in the air, the Creator has provided each kind of animal the kind of eyes and eyesight that is best for it to find its food, and avoid danger, so that the species should be able to survive. In every case, the way an animal sees fits its particular needs - the way it catches food, how it evades its enemies, if it's an animal that flies, swims or crawls,

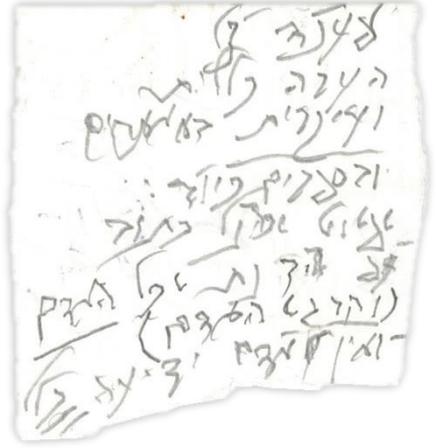
.. whatever you read and whatever you see makes an impression...
~~For~~ **Probably for** nearly all animals, the ability to see is a matter of life...

The Rebbe explained this last edit on a separate note:

Side 2



Side 1



לפענ"ד צ"ל הערה כללית ועיקרית במאמרים ובספרים כיו"ב:

שפשוט שכהנ"ל כתוב ע"פ הבנת שכל האדם (והרגש האדם) - ואין לאדם ידיעה כלל ע"ד הרגש והערכות בע"ח

-[ולפלא גדול שעו[ד] לא מצאתי זה ב[שום] מקום

