

## Bar Mitzvah Of Yako Izidor Yakov



This is the photo of my bar mitzvah. The photo was taken on 20th or 22nd April 1933 in Ruse. I was born in 1920 in Ruse. I was the eldest of three children in the family. I didn't have a nanny, because my family was poor. I didn't experience much anti-Semitism in my childhood. My bar mitzvah was an exciting day for me. I was 13 years old. It was quite hard preparing for the speech I had to deliver. At that time there was a literature teacher in Ruse who wrote very nice speeches on demand, and I had to learn the speech she wrote for me by heart; there were a lot of foreign words, which meant I could not understand it and I found it very hard to remember it. Since in the

biblical sense bar mitzvah is the first wedding, I received many presents. My father, for example, gave me my first wristwatch. Since my father was a traveling salesman, he could not go to the synagogue on every Sabbath, but he always returned for the Jewish holidays, because his trips in the countryside lasted around a month, a month and a half. There was a mezuzah at home. My father had a tallit and prayer books. I also received a very interesting present from my eldest uncle, Robert Melamed: an ink stand. It was made from some artificial product resembling a horn. It also included a very nice pen and a paper knife. I also remember my uncle's words: 'I am giving this to you, so that you can place it on your desk when you become a director.' And I really did that, when I became chairman of the artistic council of the Puppet Theater in Ruse in 1970.