

Jozef W.



This is me when I was three or four years old. I was in Presov with my mother and the picture was taken in a studio. The photographer gave me a racket, a bird was singing and I had to smile.

From the age of 3 I used to go to a religion teacher in Chmelov, where we learned the Torah. He had a classroom in the basement of one richer Jewish citizen, and that's where he taught us, Jewish children starting from 3 years of age, the Bible [Humash: The five books of Moses - Editor's note] and Hebrew. Apparently he also taught us to write in the Latin alphabet, because when I entered 1st grade of people's school, I didn't like it. I was constantly bored, because I already knew it. That happens very often to Jewish children in normal schools.

Then I attended elementary school, for four or five years, I think. I don't know if it was a state school or a church school. I know that the principal was named Jarmay, a Hungarian name, but of course spoke Slovak and also taught in Slovak. Then my mother decided that besides Slovak I have

to also learn German. Back then it was this trend, as it was the international language of Central Europe. No only Jews, but also many of those who wanted to succeed in that geographic region, needed to know German.