



Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Jewish milestones provide for us a meaningful way of marking sacred time. They offer us a special avenue for learning and grant us a unique opportunity to bring family and friends together in celebration. All of us here at Temple Israel look forward to guiding you through this special time in the life of your family. Our goal is to have each of you look back on the process with a deep sense of pride and accomplishment. We are excited to do all that we can in order to prepare you for the day, both in mind and in spirit: we are here to guide you through your learning and to help you along the way. The entire Temple Israel family wishes you much *mazal* as you work towards this joyous occasion.

Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to be an accessible guide for you and your family from now until the time of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. We hope that it will be your source for important information, as well as a reference point for you as we move through this process: from the initial preparations through the hours of study and, finally, to the *Mitzvah* itself.

The History of the Mitzvah

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a Jewish adult who has assumed the responsibility for performing the *Mitzvot*, God's commandments for living a Jewish life. Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a status which a Jewish thirteen year-old chooses for oneself; it is a process of learning and doing which culminates in a joyous event. In this manner, one does not "have a Bar/Bat Mitzvah," one **becomes** a Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

One can look throughout the entire Bible and not find one mention of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony which celebrates a young person's full acceptance of the covenant with God and Israel. Yet while the Temple in Jerusalem was standing, the age of thirteen began to be associated with assuming religious obligations. By the times of the Rabbis it was prescribed that "at the age of thirteen one takes on the responsibility of the *mitzvot*" [*Pirquei Avot* 5:21]. The only ritual with which we are familiar from this time period is that the father would recite the *Baruch sh'Pitarani* prayer: Blessed are You, who has freed me from obligation for this boy.

The ritual observance of this coming-of-age ceremony continued to develop throughout the years, and by the sixteenth century it became customary for the Bar Mitzvah to mark this transition by reading from the Torah. When Reform Judaism developed in the 1800s, its leaders decided to replace the Bar Mitzvah rite with the Confirmation ceremony. In fact, Temple Israel did not institute the practice of Bar Mitzvah until 1940.

By the 1800s, some families began to celebrate the coming-of-age of a daughter with a festive meal, at which the girl would deliver a talk about a Jewish theme. In 1921, The first Bat Mitzvah ceremony in the U. S. was held for Judith Kaplan Eisenstein, whose father, Mordechai Kaplan, founded Reconstructionist Judaism. The first Bat Mitzvah at Temple Israel took place in 1956, under the leadership of Rabbi Gittelsohn, who insisted that the responsibilities of Jewish men and women should be the same. To this day, Temple Israel has held fast to this value of egalitarian Judaism.

A Word About the Privilege and Responsibility of Bar/Bat Mitzvah

One of the goals of our Hebrew language and Jewish Education program is to enable your child(ren) to celebrate Judaism's most unique and beautiful rite of passage, Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Preparation for Bar/Bat Mitzvah begins the moment that you elect to provide a Jewish education for your child and communicate to him/her a sense that he/she has a special place in the Jewish community and connections to our Jewish past, to Jews throughout the world and to a meaningful Jewish future. By choosing to make Temple Israel your Jewish home, you have initiated a partnership between you and the synagogue for the sake of your child.

We view Bar/Bat Mitzvah as one of the eternal moments in the life of a child and his/her family, not an end, but (like graduation from college), a "commencement." It marks the transition from Jewish childhood to the next stage of Jewish life and reflects the combined commitment of the adult Jewish community (parents, teachers, clergy) to educate, encourage and nurture our children.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is both a privilege and a responsibility. The community offers our children the highest honor that it can bestow upon a person: the opportunity to read from the Torah, to lead and to teach the congregation. It is important for all of us to communicate the expectations and responsibilities that are

complements to that opportunity. **Students and parents who wish to receive the privilege of Bar/Bat Mitzvah are required to make a prior commitment to continue Jewish education at Temple Israel at least through the Confirmation year (tenth grade). We feel strongly that Jewish study is a lifelong endeavor that nourishes and centers Jews throughout their entire lives.**

Consequently, this is what you can expect from Temple Israel:

- * A high quality and engaging educational program;
- * Love and support for your child as he/she discovers her/his abilities, strengths and learns to meet her/his challenges;
- * Thorough preparation for success when he/she is called to the Torah as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah;
- * Exciting and varied opportunities for Jewish learning;
- * Access to our clergy and our educators so that you and your family may find meaningful connections within the Temple Israel community.

Here is what we expect from you as a parent:

- * A commitment to become involved in our community and to contribute your unique expertise and gifts to our shared communal life;
- * Engagement in adult learning opportunities that will encourage you to deepen your knowledge of Judaism;
- * Pursuit of relationships with our clergy, educators and staff;
- * Attention to your own spiritual life and growth;
- * Participation with your family in Shabbat and holiday

services to ensure familiarity, comfort and a sense of belonging;

- * Recognition that you are the most important mentor/model for your child's Jewish development.
- * Temple membership in good standing prior to receiving your child's ceremony date and through Confirmation. If you need help, please confidentially speak with the Temple's Executive Director in order to adhere to this expectation.

Here's what we expect from and for your child:

- * A depth of understanding of Judaism;
- * Regular attendance at Religious School;
- * Hebrew proficiency through Hebrew school or private tutoring;
- * A connection to the other students at the Temple;
- * A sense of pride and identification with the Jewish people;
- * A commitment to continue his/her Jewish study at Temple Israel.

Students must fulfill six basic requirements in order to be eligible to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Israel.

They are:

1. Regular attendance at Sunday School.
2. Six years of Hebrew study in our Hebrew Program or the equivalent in our Hebrew Tutorial Program, and adequate proficiency as determined by the Religious School Coordinator.

If your child attends one of the Jewish Day schools in the Boston area then they have fulfilled the first two requirements.

3. Participation in the **Sixth Grade *Kallah***. As part of the sixth grade curriculum, students go away for the weekend together for the first time. The Sixth Grade *Kallah* helps students understand the true meaning of community, and what it means to be responsible for each other. Through engaging learning opportunities, as well as exciting ropes course activities, the sixth grade class bonds together as a group before their *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.
4. Engagement in a social justice project or projects as determined in conjunction with the clergy, our Director of Education and our Family Educator.
5. Student attendance at Qabbalat Shabbat services the number of times the grade the child is in. Kindergarten and 1st grade are requested to attend at least 1 Shabbat service throughout the year, 2nd grade, 2 services, 3rd grade, 3 services and so on through the 5th grade. In 6th grade each student (accompanied by a parent whenever possible) is responsible to attend 6 Shabbat experiences during this year. The options are Qabbalat Shabbat services, B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies and/or Shabbat Torah Study. In 7th grade, students are required to attend at least 3 Qabbalat Shabbat services, 4 B'nei Mitzvah services or Shabbat morning Torah Study sessions. All of our Shabbat Morning B'nei Mitzvah services begin at 10:15 a.m. Our Torah Study begins with a short service at 9 a.m. and then continues with Torah study from 9:30-10:30 a.m..

In order to keep track of those who come, there is a big jar at the front desk of the Temple with cards. The cards are entitled, "Religious School and Day School Student 'Welcome' Cards." Students fill them out and put them in the jar.

6. **In addition to the requirements above, a sixth requirement, in the form of a firm commitment, must be made. We believe that each student who is called *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah* must accept the responsibility of continuing his or her Jewish education at least through Confirmation (10th grade) at Temple Israel. Students and their parents will be asked to accept as a condition of *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* his or her completion of the Temple Israel Confirmation Program.**

PREPARING for the BAR/BAT MITZVAH:

The Process for Receiving a Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date

Families of children in fourth grade will receive an application to request a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Parents will submit six date requests in priority listing. You may request a date up to six weeks before or after your child's birth date. Those who have summer birthdates can request the month before or after the summer vacation. Ceremonies at Temple Israel will either be a single or a double. During the fall and spring months we tend to have more double ceremonies. All B'nei Mitzvah ceremonies are celebrated in the morning. Temple Israel's policy is that no one can be guaranteed a single ceremony. If you are scheduled to have a single ceremony and it is less than a year before your date, you will have the right to graciously deny a request for another family to share your date. When pairing two children, the head of the Hebrew Department, the Director of Congregational Learning and the Cantor are guided by learning styles and capacities, not pairing two children from the same secular school, and being aware of inter-family compatibility. Occasionally a family will choose a Monday or Thursday morning, which are Torah reading days as well.

Date assignments will be presented in the middle of the 4th grade year.

Orientation and Family Study

At our first meeting the Rabbis, Cantor and Director of Education, will lead a Bar/Bat Mitzvah *Shabbaton* at the synagogue on a Saturday. This *Shabbaton* will serve to welcome the incoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah 5th grade class together with their families.

1. The content of the *Shabbaton* will include a discussion about Mitzvot and Social Justice. Your thoughts, concerns, and expectations about the process of becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah will be solicited.

2. During the sixth grade year there will be eight Keshet/B'nei Mitzvah programs that will address B'nei Mitzvah related activities. These include a Torah Portion Meeting with the family and a member of the clergy, Bar/Bat Mitzvah Nuts and Bolts, Bar/Bat Mitzvah Panel, Family Torah Study programs (Who Wrote the Torah Part I and Part II), and social action planning (three sessions).

Course of Study

Following the first Bar/Bat Mitzvah *Shabbaton*, the student will continue to proceed on his/her course of study in our Religious School. An essential part of this preparatory process is the completion of Temple Israel's five-year Hebrew program and regular attendance of Religious School on Sundays; because the Bar/Bat Mitzvah represents the culmination of this first phase of Jewish learning, the synagogue will not proceed with the ceremony date if there is any indication that the student will not see his/her studies through to completion.

Day School Students

If your child has been attending one of the Boston area Jewish day schools from the 3rd grade, you are fulfilling the Hebrew Requirements of Temple Israel's B'nei Mitzvah program and you

are not required to come to Temple Israel's Hebrew School program or Sunday School. If you entered a Jewish day school after the 4th grade, a Hebrew proficiency evaluation will be required to determine how to proceed. If you leave your day school after you have received a date in our program, you must matriculate in our Hebrew School program which meets on Sunday and Tuesday (or Sunday and Thursday), or enroll in our private tutorial program, as well as our Sunday School education program in order to retain your Bar/Bat mitzvah date.

We do not require but strongly encourage day school students to attend our 7th grade Sunday School program in order to become more a part of our community. We also feel strongly that those who become B'nei Mitzvah at Temple Israel must commit themselves to a program of continuing Jewish study, either through our Monday Night High School program, Hebrew College's Prosdor program or the New Jewish High School.

Individual Course of Study

A large part of becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is spending a good deal of time in personal study, in order to prepare oneself completely for the ceremony. The individual's learning process begins approximately twelve months prior to the date of the ceremony. Cantor Einhorn, who begins this process and supervises it throughout, will meet with the student and provide him/her with Dropbox links to the audio and text files of the materials from which the student will learn. This learning process covers three stages:

(1) The first Dropbox link includes the *Qiddush*, Torah and *Haftarah* blessings in a key which is comfortable for singing for students to learn these blessings. Your child will also receive the liturgy assignment which will be read in Hebrew and English during the Torah Service.

(2) Once these prayers are learned, a second Dropbox link with your child's Torah portion will be provided.

(3) After your child has learned the Torah portion, the *Haftarah* portion will be recorded and sent along in the same fashion.

(4) Once these assignments are completed, we will ask your child to recite prayers that come before the Torah Service that they have been saying in weekly T'fillah during Hebrew School.

As a guideline, parents may keep in mind that students usually complete each of these three segments of the preparatory process in about eight-to-twelve weeks. Cantor Einhorn closely monitors each child's progress.

Individual Tutoring

As part of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process, each student is expected to spend thirty minutes a week with a personal tutor. This one-on-one session allows the student the ability to develop at his/her own pace and to receive individualized attention to any problems which might arise. There are two vehicles at your disposal for this preparation:

(1) Students will begin their B'nai Mitzvah preparation approximately ten to eleven months prior to their ceremony. In general, B'nei Mitzvah tutoring will follow the Religious School calendar. Therefore, your child's actual start date is determined by these factors. They will work with a tutor on a one-to-one basis for a 1/2 hour each week that there is Religious School (i.e. there is no tutoring on holidays, during vacation weeks or during the months of July and August). Please note that tutoring sessions may not be scheduled during the time when your child attends Religious School (Sundays) or Hebrew School (Tuesdays or Thursdays). The cost of the program is \$950. You will be billed for tutoring approximately 10 months before the ceremony and the fee is due approximately 4 months before your child's ceremony.

(2) You may arrange to have a private tutor work with your child at a mutually agreeable time and place. In this situation, the family becomes responsible for all scheduling and direct payment to the tutor.

It is our experience from years past that the second option is more expensive than the first.

Preparation

Although the student spends a good deal of time with tutors and with the clergy, the student also needs to make a time commitment of his/her own in order to be fully prepared to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Practicing twenty minutes a day, four times a week, will allow for the student to learn all the necessary material and to be comfortable with it. Sometimes, families enjoy working together on this process; it can add great meaning to both the process and the ceremony itself. However, parents should not be alarmed if their child wants to work on his/her own—every student has his/her own way of learning. Traditionally, Jews say a blessing before studying Torah, which might be a nice way for the student to mark these special study sessions. The blessing reads as follows:

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו
וצננו לעסוק בדברי תורה.

*Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-o-lam, a-she-ri-
de-sha-nu be-mits-vo-tav ve-tzi-va-nu la-a-soq be-di-vrei Torah.*

*Blessed are You, Adonai our God who guides the universe, for
making us holy with Your mitzvot, and commanding us to immerse
ourselves in the words of the Torah.*

Divrei Torah

Each Bar/Bat Mitzvah will write and deliver two short speeches, known in Hebrew as *Divrei Torah*: (words of Torah) one introducing the Torah portion and the other explaining the *Haftarah* portion. Three to four months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, the rabbi who will officiate at your ceremony will set up an appointment with your family in order to spend an hour and a half talking about the meaning of both the Torah and *Haftarah* portions. [We encourage families, from the time that they receive the Torah and *Haftarah* portions, to study them together in translation and to seek to find their deeper themes.] Following this initial meeting, the student will submit drafts of the *Divrei Torah* to the officiating Rabbi who will be there to answer any questions that arise along the way, and to guide the student through the process.

Families may request which rabbi will officiate at their child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah by contacting Cantor Einhorn's office at least six months prior to the ceremony. We try to honor everyone's request but sometimes this isn't possible.

Getting to Know Shabbat at Temple Israel

It is our goal for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony to be a meaningful ritual for the child and for the family. We think that an important way in which to understand the meaning of the ceremony is to see it as a link in the great chain of Jewish tradition which connects parents to children and families to families. In order to acquire a full sense of this tradition—its liturgy and its rites—we invite you to worship with us on Shabbat, both evening and morning services. Kindergarteners and 1st graders are requested to attend at least one Shabbat service throughout the year, second graders, two services, third graders, three services and so on through the fifth grade. In 6th grade each student (accompanied by a parent whenever possible) is responsible to attend 6 Shabbat experiences during this year. The options are Qabbalat Shabbat services, B'nai Mitzvah

ceremonies and/or Shabbat Torah Study. In 7th grade, students are required to attend at least 3 Qabbalat Shabbat services, 4 B'nei Mitzvah services or Shabbat morning Torah Study sessions. All of our Shabbat Morning B'nei Mitzvah services begin at 10:15 a.m. Our Torah Study begins with a short service at 9 a.m. and then continues with Torah study from 9:30-10:30 a.m..

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THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH SHABBAT

Starting the Torah Service

Parent(s) begin the Torah service by speaking directly to their son or daughter. Your task is to talk about what it means to you to pass the Torah scroll to your child (in no more than one page). This assignment is discussed at the D'var Torah/Haftarah meeting held with one of the rabbis a few months before the ceremony. Parents receive an outline with questions to help guide them. The parent(s) end with inviting their child to ascend the bima with the generations of the family so the Torah can be passed into the arms of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Family Participation

One of the most rewarding ways to celebrate family *simchas* and joyous occasions is to participate in them. Asking family members and close friends to participate in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service is a wonderful way of honoring them and sharing your pride. In the appendix of this booklet, you will find the forms which explain those honors which may be distributed during the service, as well as suggestions for the family members who might perform them. [Be careful to note that there is a slight difference regarding the honors for single ceremonies and double ceremonies.] It is always important to insure that those people who are participating in the

ceremony know well enough in advance about it, so that they will be able to prepare themselves fittingly.

The Rehearsal

During the week immediately preceding the date of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, there will be a full rehearsal covering all aspects of the family's participation with Cantor Einhorn. This rehearsal time is for the immediate family of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah—other honorees do not need to attend. At this rehearsal, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah reads the Torah portion *from the scroll we will use on your Shabbat morning*, so that there will be no surprises during the ceremony itself. Not only do we use this time to ensure that the service will run smoothly, but we also want to make sure that everyone in the family feels comfortable with the service and their role in it. The rehearsal is usually scheduled for Monday afternoon at 3 p.m. for a double ceremony and 3:40 p.m. for a single ceremony. (Please be aware that Temple Israel is charged a fee each time that you park in the garage at 375 Longwood Avenue and have your ticket validated at our reception desk. That fee is significantly reduced for cars that are parked after 3:30 p.m., hence we begin the rehearsals at 3:40, whenever possible.)

The Qabbalat Shabbat Service: Friday Night

“Welcoming” Shabbat with our congregational family is a wonderful way for you to begin the Bar/Bat Mitzvah weekend. At Friday evening's Qabbalat Shabbat service, which begins at 5:45 p.m., the Bar/Bat Mitzvah will lead the congregation in Qiddush – the sanctification of Shabbat. In a double ceremony, the B'nei Mitzvah chant the Qiddush together.

The Shabbat Service: Saturday Morning

On the day of your ceremony, you will be asked to arrive at Temple Israel at 9:45 a.m. –30 minutes before the service is to begin. At this time, we will ask for the immediate family to gather

in the Clergy Wing on the second floor. You will be met by Cantor Einhorn. This is the time for last minute checks and organizing. If the Bar/Bat Mitzvah has a Tallit, it will be put on at this time. Finally, we will take a moment to focus on the ceremony that is about to begin, and celebrate our Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

The Shabbat Service: Ritual Observance

On Shabbat, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and your family members are welcome to wear or not to wear those religious objects, such as a *Kippah* or a *Tallit*, as you see fit. Temple Israel will provide kippot at the entrance to the sanctuary. ***WE ASK YOU NOT TO ORDER YOUR OWN.***

We want to ensure everyone is appropriately dressed for the occasion. ***Girls should wear outfits that cover their shoulders. If a girl chooses to wear a Tallis, it should go on over the dress. Boys should wear a shirt, tie, jacket and dark shoes.***

The Sanctity of the Service

Becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a religious and ritual experience. We endeavor to engage the entire congregation during the service and seek to avoid anything that might interrupt that purpose. For that reason we do not allow photographs to be taken during the service. Following the service, there is opportunity for a professional or family photographer to take photographs with clergy direction. Please note these posed shots will replicate all of the crucial moments of the ceremony and will take about ten minutes. You are welcome to take additional photographs with your photographer after the Torah has been placed in the Ark and the clergy have left the room.

We will record the service through our sound system and you will receive a CD. The service is also live web streamed at www.tisrael.org (follow links on the left side). If you wish, we

will assist you in hiring a student who can take up close camera shots during the live web streaming and we will provide you with a link to the video for downloading at home. The fee for this service is \$40. Alternatively, if you choose to, you may video tape the service. Your camera must be placed on a tripod along the left-hand wall as you enter the room and behind the room dividers.

Hand held video cameras are not permitted. Information cards that describe the major rubrics of the liturgy, the ritual objects in our Sanctuary, and a brief history of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony are in the book racks at every seat. ***WE DO NOT ALLOW FAMILIES TO PRINT THEIR OWN PROGRAMS.***

The *Mitzvah* of Bar/Bat Mitzvah

An especially beautiful way of celebrating the Bar/Mitzvah in your family is to incorporate the *Mitzvah* of *Tzedaqah*, performing deeds of charity that help restore Justice [*tzedeq*] to the world. Cantor Einhorn's office has literature on two organizations which can help facilitate this *Mitzvah* process. The first is from Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger, an organization that encourages Jews to donate [a tax-deductible] three percent of the cost of their joyous occasions. Mazon has allocated over four million dollars to local groups which feed hungry people. The second pamphlet is from Second Helping, a Boston organization which will take the left-over food from your celebration and deliver it to people in need of a meal.

In their fifth, sixth, and seventh grade years, students work with their peers and their parents to learn about and engage in acts of social justice. As this is one of the pillars of Judaism and an important part of being a Jewish adult, their journey toward Bar and Bat Mitzvah includes a focus on their ability to act to repair the world (*tikkun olam*). In their fifth grade year, students take part in one day actions on various community justice issues and study the words and teachings of the Prophets. As they move through their 6th and 7th grade years, they commit themselves, through

conversations and research, to specific areas of shared interest. Parents of children in these grades have the opportunity to guide the experiences, organization, and actions in which the students engage.

Date Change Requests

There is some movement that takes place on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah calendar following the assignment of dates. Up to a year before your scheduled date we will do our best to accommodate a date change request. If you are requesting a date change and the date you are choosing is less than twelve months away, we may not be able to grant you your first choice.

MAKING ARRANGEMENTS

For the sake of consistency and evenhandedness, the Temple selects flowers to decorate the Sanctuary and also prepares the Saturday morning Qiddush on your Bar/Bat Mitzvah Shabbat. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah families assume the financial responsibility for these items, which are billed ten months prior to the month in which the Bar/Bat Mitzvah takes place under the heading “Bar/Bat Mitzvah Sponsorship.” If you have questions about this procedure, please contact the Temple’s Events Coordinator or the Executive Director.

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Celebrating your Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Israel



At Temple Israel, we look forward to making your upcoming simcha something that your family will always treasure. We hope you will choose to continue celebrating at Temple Israel following the service. We are pleased to offer the Levi Auditorium as well as many other function rooms not only for after the ceremony, but also on Friday evening for a Shabbat dinner following the Qabbalat Shabbat Service.

If you would like to use the Temple's facilities for your reception and your family has been assigned a double date, both families will be consulted before moving forward with the rental.

Please feel free to contact Stephanie Richman at (617) 566-3960 x 153 or via email at srichman@tisrael.org.

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We in the Temple Israel family congratulate you and your family upon reaching this exciting moment in your lives. We hope the process leading to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony will be challenging and rewarding. Again, we want to remind you that we are here to help you with all of your particular needs that arise. *Mazal Tov!* And may you go from strength to strength!

APPENDIX 1: Glossary

Aliyah (plural, *aliyot*) literally means “going up”. This is the ascent to the *bimah* to say the blessings over the reading of the Torah.

Bar is the Aramaic form of the Hebrew word “ben” which means “son”.

Bat is the Hebrew word for “daughter”

Bimah is the word for the raised platform in our synagogue where the service is conducted.

Divrei Torah is the plural form of the phrase *D’var Torah*, which literally means “a word of Torah’s teachings”. *Divrei Torah* are sermons and lessons which spring from Jewish texts.

Haftarah is not, as it sounds, ‘half-a-Torah’. Rather, *Haftarot* (the singular of which is *Haftarah*, which means “conclusion”) are given to certain Biblical sections that are read after the Torah portion on Shabbat and Festival mornings. These readings, which almost always come from the books of Prophets [*Nevi’im*], are connected to the Torah portion by either a keyword or a theme.

Kippah, also known in Yiddish as *Yarmulke*, is the traditional Jewish headcovering worn in order to show respect for God. While Reform Judaism feels that the wearing of a *Kippah* either in everyday life or in prayer is not a religious obligation, many Reform Jews do choose to do so.

Mitzvah, which is often understood as ‘good deed’, carries with it a stronger sense: a *Mitzvah*, literally, is a commandment from God. Therefore, when Jews perform deeds of love and righteousness, it is not only because they are good, but because God commands us to do them.

Qabbalat Shabbat is the service on Friday evening for welcoming in and receiving [*Qabbala*] the spirit of Shabbat.

Qiddush is the prayer for the sanctification of Shabbat and the wine.

The Rabbis, with a capital “R” were the group of Jewish sages from the first to the sixth centuries whose work, thought and guidance is compiled in both the *Mishnah* and the *Talmud*.

A ***Shabbaton*** is a Jewish weekend retreat focused on learning and study.

Tallit is the the ritual prayer shawl which is adorned at its four corners with *Tzitzit*, fringes. Jews are commanded by God to wear the *Tallit* in order to remember God’s commandments in the book of Numbers [15:39].

The Torah, which means “teaching” are the five first books of the Bible, also known as the ‘Five Books of Moses’ and the Pentateuch: Genesis [*Bereshit*], Exodus [*Sh’mot*], Leviticus [*Vayiqra*], Numbers [*BaMidbar*], and Deuteronomy [*D’varim*].

Tzedakah is the Hebrew term for “righteousness,” a theme often employed when Jews involve themselves in works of charity and *Tiqqun Olam*, repairing our world.

APPENDIX 2

List for Further Reading

How can I make my Bar/Bat Mitzvah more spiritual?

- Salkin, Jeffrey K. *Putting God on the Guest List: How to Reclaim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah*, Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1992.
- Greenberg, Gail Anthony *Mitzvah Chic* .

Where can I find books to help with my D'var Torah?

- Plaut, W. Gunther, ed. *Torah: A Modern Commentary*, New York: UAHC Press, 1981.
- Fields, Harvey J. *A Torah Commentary for Our Times*, New York: UAHC Press, 1988.
- Plaut W. Gunther and Stern, Chaim, eds. *The Haftarah Commentary*, New York: UAHC Press, 1996.

What if I want to find out about basic Jewish concepts?

- Telushkin, Joseph. *Jewish Literacy: The Most Important Things to Know about the Jewish Religion, Its People, and Its History*. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1991.
- Knobel, Peter. *Gates of the Seasons: A Guide to the Jewish Year*. New York: CCAR Press, 1983.
- Maslin, Simeon. *Gates of Mitzvah: A Guide to the Jewish Life Cycle*. New York: CCAR Press, 1979.

Where Can I Get Ideas for a *Mitzvah* Project?

- Siegel, Danny. *Gym Shoes and Irises: Personalized Tzedakah* (Books 1 and 2). Spring Valley, NY: The Town House Press, 1988.
- _____. *Mitzvahs*. Pittsboro, NC: The Townhouse Press, 1990.

Don't Forget!

The Rabbis and Cantor can always help find the right book to answer your questions or suit your interest. Don't be afraid to ask!

APPENDIX 3: Parent Blessings

Shehecheyanu

Ba-ruch a-ta A-do-nai, ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך
E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-o-lam, שְׁהַחַיֵּנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ
she-he-che-ya-nu ve-ki-ye-ma-nu. וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.
ve-hi-gi-a-nu la-ze-man ha-zeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God who guides us through the universe, for giving us life, for keep us alive, and for helping us reach this day.

Torah Blessings

Before the Reading:

Ba-re-chu et A-do-nai ha-me-vo-rach! בְּרַכּוּ אֶת־יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ!
Ba-ruch A-do-nai ha-me-vorah בְּרוּךְ יי הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד!
le-o-lam va-ed! בְּרוּךְ יי הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד!
Ba-ruch a-ta, A-do-nai בְּרוּךְ אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם,
E-lo-hei-nu, me-lech ha-o-lam, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר-בָּנוּ מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים, וְנָתַן־לָנוּ אֶת־תּוֹרָתוֹ.
a-sheer ba-char ba-nu בְּרוּךְ אתה יי, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.
mi-kol ha-a-mim,
ve-na-tan la-nu et To-ra-to.
Ba-ruch a-ta, A-do-nai,
no-tein ha-to-rah.

*Bless Adonai, The Blessed One!
Blessed is Adonai, now and forever!
Blessed are You, Adonai, our God who guides the universe, for choosing us from all people's by giving us your Torah. Blessed are You Adonai, for giving the Torah.*

APPENDIX 3: Parent Blessings (cont'd)

After the Reading:

Ba-ruch at-a A-do-nai בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
E-lo-hei-nu, me-lech ha-o-lam, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת,
a-sheer na-tan la-nu To-rat e-met, וְחַי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ.
ve-cha-yei o-lam na-ta be-to-chei-nu. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.
Ba-ruch a-ta A-do-nai,
no-tein ha-to-rah.

Blessed are You, Adonai, our God who guides the universe, for giving us the Torah of truth, which brings eternal life to our people. Blessed are You, Adonai, for giving the Torah.

Benediction

יְבָרְכֶךָ יי וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ.
Ye-va-re-ch'cha A-do-nai ve-yish-me-re-cha.
May God bless you and keep you.

יֵאֵר יי פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי וְיִחַנֶּךָ
Ya-eir A-do-nai pa-nav ei-leh-cha vi-chu-ne-ka.
May the light of God's presence shine upon you and be gracious to you.

יִשָּׂא יי פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי וְיַשֵּׁם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם.
Yi-sa A-do-nai pa-nav ei-leh-cha ve-ya-seim le-cha sha-lom.
May God bestow favor upon you, and give you peace.

APPENDIX 4

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Single Ceremony Information Sheet

Name _____

Parent's(s') Name(s) _____

Ceremony Date _____

English Reading: in the Atrium

There is an English reading designated as a family honor. You may assign it to older siblings, aunts, uncles or special family friends. (Readings begin on page 26 of this booklet.)

1st Ark Opener: Generally younger sibling(s) or cousin(s): One to four people

Torah Transmittal: This is the passing of the Torah scroll through the generations of the family. Participants include great grandparent(s), grandparent(s), parent(s) and Bar/Bat Mitzvah. If a grandparent is deceased, someone may stand in his or her place.

If someone cannot walk up stairs, the Scroll will be taken to that person at their seat. Please list the names of those who will participate:

Shehecheyanu: Parent(s)

Torah Blessing before the Torah Reading for 2nd Aliyah: Parent(s)

Torah Blessing after the Torah Reading for 2nd Aliyah: Parent(s)

3rd Aliyah (Same Ritual as 2nd Aliyah

But Reserved for Other Honorees of Your Choice):

Torah Holder: (One person) – who sits in his/her seat in the congregation

2nd Ark Opener: One to four people

Photos-Five minutes of photographs with clergy and Torah Scroll (after the service)

____ Yes ____ No

Would you like the clergy to give instructions to your guests for connecting with your reception, i.e. guests of ____ please join us (in the Levi Auditorium for a luncheon; or/meet us on Nessel Way to take the bus to____, etc.)? Please indicate plan: _____

Tzedakah Project _____

Names you would like to add to the Yahrzeit list. You may choose to add names of relatives who died at other times of the year. _____

APPENDIX 5

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Double Ceremony Information Sheet

Name _____

Parent's(s') Name(s) _____

Ceremony Date _____

English Reading: in the Atrium

There is an English reading designated as a family honor. You may assign it to older siblings, aunts, uncles, or special family friends. (Readings begin on page 26 of this booklet.)

Ark Opener: Generally younger sibling(s) or cousin(s): One to four people
(In a Double Ceremony, each family opens the Ark once. This means that your honorees open the Ark, stand by the Ark and when instructed, close the Ark)

Torah Transmittal: This is the passing of the Torah scroll through the generations of the family. Participants include great grandparent(s), grandparent(s), parent(s) and Bar/Bat Mitzvah. If a grandparent is deceased, someone may stand in his or her place.

If someone cannot walk up stairs, the Scroll will be taken to that person at their seat. Please list the names of those who will participate:

Shehecheyanu: Parent(s)

Torah Blessing before the Torah Reading for 2nd Aliyah: Parent(s)

Torah Blessing after the Torah Reading for 2nd Aliyah: Parent(s)

3rd Aliyah (Same Ritual as 2nd Aliyah

But Reserved for Other Honorees of Your Choice):

Torah Holder: (One person) – who sits in his/her seat in the congregation

Photos-Five minutes of photographs with clergy and Torah Scroll (after the service)

____ Yes ____ No

Would you like the clergy to give instructions to your guests for connecting with your reception, *i.e.* guests of ____ please join us (in the Levi Auditorium for a luncheon; or/meet us on Nessel Way to take the bus to ____, etc.)? Please indicate plan: _____

Tzedakah Project _____

Names you would like to add to the Yahrzeit list. You may choose to add names of relatives who died at other times of the year. _____

Option One
Reading by family and friends in the Atrium

We surround you with love.
Our hearts are filled with gratitude
for the gift of your life.

On this day, you have chosen a path of wisdom,
On a journey that leads to justice and peace.

We pray that you will grow each day
In compassion for the needy,
In concern for the stranger,
In love of all people.

May the One who blessed our ancestors,
All those who have come before us,
And whose shoulders we stand upon,
Bless you on your becoming a Bar (Bat/B'nai/B'not) Mitzvah.

May you grow with strength and courage,
With vision and sensitivity.
And may you always be certain of our love.

Option Two
Reading for Family and Friends in the Atrium

May you live to see your world fulfilled,
May your destiny be for worlds still to come,
And may you trust in generations past and yet to be.

May your heart(s) be filled with intuition
and your words be rich in understanding.
May songs of praise ever be upon your tongue,
and your vision clarify a straight path before you.

May your eyes shine with the light of holy words
And your face reflect the brightness of the heavens.
May your lips ever speak wisdom
And your fulfillment be in justice.

May you, live to see your world fulfilled.

Option 3

The Quest for Tikkun

As you begin the quest for your
Tikkun, your task to heal a broken
world, prepare with care as there
is much to be required of you.

Prepare your mind to be of use,
your body to serve in joy and peril.
Treasure your power to be amazed.
Sense the real; reject the false.

Find wisdom and grace in unforeseen places.
Extend your curiosity.
Resist distractions in your path.
Dare to harbor unthinkable thoughts.

Foster your authentic self,
which only you can recognize.
Receive and give compassion as you
stretch to reach beyond yourself.

Assert your right to make mistakes.
Respect the spark of life that's you;
Find the spark that lives in others.
Engage in the struggles of your generation.

A circle of love surrounds you, not as
A fence, but as a confirmation. Still,
You must see with your own ears and hear
with your own eyes, so that when your

Tikkun reveals itself, you will recognize
and embrace its gift. Beneath the brokenness
of this world lies a unity that binds us all.
May you find your place in the unity.

Lois Roisman

Option 4

May you live to see your world fulfilled,
May your destiny be for worlds still to come,
and may you trust in generations past and yet to be.
May your heart be filled with intuition
and your words be filled with insight.

May your eyes sparkle with the light of Torah,
and your ears hear the music of its words.
May the space between each letter of the scrolls
bring warmth and comfort to your soul.
May the syllables draw holiness from your heart,
and may this holiness be gentle and soothing
to you and all God's creatures.

May your study be passionate,
and meanings bear more meanings
until life arrays itself to you
as a dazzling wedding feast.
And may your conversation,
even of the commonplace,
be a blessing to all who listen to your words
and see the Torah glowing on your face.

**Access to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook
can be found on
Temple Israel's website
at www.tisrael.org**

Notes: _____
