

B.mitzvah Check List for Parents

- Have you purchased a talit for your child?
- Have you decided when to present the talit—at the beginning of the service or in the Cantor's office before the service? Who will present? Parents or grandparents? Someone else?*
- Do you know when you are serving as a greeter for a prior b.mitzvah service? Do you know your responsibilities that day?*
- Have you reviewed the blessing (in Hebrew and English) over the candles and motzi (over bread)—the honors that you are given on the Friday night before the b.mitzvah? (Your child is leading Kiddush, the blessing over wine.)*
- Have you contacted Jodi Friedman to review any set up needs you may have, including whether or not you will be having a brief kiddush and motzi in Shalom Hall and when you would like the building to be available for you to take photographs, etc?
- Did you remind your child to bring their fancy shoes to the rehearsal? And did you remind your child to bring their binder too with their d'var Torah, Hebrew name talk, thank you speech, and any other printed material?
- Do you and your photographer understand the photography policy?*
- Have you completed the Honors Sheet (English names portion) and returned it to Jodi Friedman 30 days prior to the b.mitzvah?*
- Have you gathered the full Hebrew names of all those being called for an Aliyah to the Torah and returned to Cantor Berlin 14 days prior to the b.mitzvah?*
- Has your child prepared two to three sentences about the person after whom they were named to share just before the b.mitzvah aliyah?
- Has your child incorporated their tikkun olam/mitzvah project into the d'var Torah, or written a one paragraph description of what they did (or will be doing?) (This isn't required, but offered if it's meaningful to the child and the family.)
- Has your child prepared a brief thank you speech, thanking the congregation for the gifts, teachers for their help, parents and family, etc.?*
- Have you practiced chanting your Aliyah blessing in Hebrew?*
- Have you checked on your child to make sure that they are practicing the Hebrew prayers, English prayers, Torah portion and d'var Torah out loud, daily?
- Have you written your **personal prayer to your child** that you will share at the ark at the beginning of the Torah service (2-3 minutes total; about 300-375 words total) and have you sent it to Rabbi Briskin to review?*
- Have you discussed **tzedakah contributions in honor of your child**, including but not limited to purchasing a leaf on our Tree of Life Simcha board; Clergy Discretionary Funds; Shir Ami Funds; or any other meaningful organizations such as Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger?*
- Have you and your child discussed donating a portion of their gift money to an organization that is meaningful to them (including, perhaps, the organization that was connected to their mitzvah project)?

Tallit Presentation Template

You (or the person you designate) will be given the opportunity to present the tallit to your child. You can share whatever words you choose, however, if you are looking for some guidance, please feel free to use some or all of the language below. If the tallit has special significance, such as you purchased it during a trip to Israel, or it was worn by your child's grandparent when they became b.mitzvah, please feel free to include that information as well.

The reason one wears a tallit, is because of the biblical commandment found in chapter fifteen of the Book of Numbers in which commands us to affix fringes to the corners of our garments as a way to remember all of the commandments.

Wearing a tallit is significant because it serves as a constant reminder of your responsibility as a bar/bat mitzvah to observe the sacred obligations of our tradition.

Today I/we present you with this tallit and wearing it is the first mitzvah you fulfill as you become bar/bat mitzvah. I/We hope that when you wear it in the future, it will remind you of this special moment in your life.

We love you very much.

After remarks are shared, the tallit should be placed over the shoulders of the b.mitzvah. The b.mitzvah will then recite the blessing for the wearing of the tallit.

Thank You for Being a Shabbat Greeter

Dear Friends,

We know you are eagerly anticipating the day when your child becomes bar or bat mitzvah (b.mitzvah) here at Shir Ami. We look forward to celebrating this *simcha* with you, your extended family, and friends.

That said, there are families who will also experience this joy in the weeks before you experience yours. We ask you to help assist them by serving as Shabbat greeters. Doing this will add to your overall experience and the experience of the family you are assisting.

Shir Ami strives to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *hachnasat orchim*, welcoming the visitor into our midst. You can play a vital role in helping us live by our values. One of these roles is serving as a greeter at a Shabbat B. Mitzvah Service. Just as your presence will help bring joy for another family (maybe someone you know well, maybe not) on their special day, know that another family will be there to help you celebrate when your child ascends the *bimah*.

We ask you to be greeters for a few reasons. First, for people who are new to Shir Ami (visiting relatives, friends who aren't part of the Shir Ami community), being warmly greeted by a member of our community sends a wonderful message of hospitality. Second, because you are representing Shir Ami, you can help us maintain an expected level of decorum during the service so that neither our b.mitzvah nor their families are distracted by unusual amounts of movement or noise. Third, if you haven't been to many (if any) b.mitzvah services at Shir Ami, you can get a better sense of the service and the environment we aim to create.

The following instructions can help guide you with your greeting duties:

- 1) Please arrive at Shir Ami no later than 9:45 a.m. (for a morning service) or 4:00 p.m. (for a Havdalah service).
- 2) When you arrive, please check in with the Shir Ami Staff member on duty who will be available to help throughout the morning.
- 3) As congregants arrive, please welcome them warmly to Shir Ami, make sure they have received a program, and be available if they have any questions about the synagogue/service.
- 4) Please wait in the hallway, just outside of the sanctuary, for latecomers for the first twenty minutes of the service. After 20 minutes, please join us in the sanctuary and be

full participants in the service. Please remind latecomers to silence their cell phones before entering the sanctuary

- 5) During the service, if you notice anything could be a distraction (large groups, usually teenagers, leaving at once, or making noise), please do your best to intervene (standing near the kids making noise, meeting the group in the hallway and asking that those who do not “need to go” return quietly to the sanctuary, etc.) We ask that you use your discretion in maintaining decorum while also being friendly and welcoming.
- 6) If you see a situation that requires a higher level of intervention, or if an emergency situation arises, please notify the Shir Ami Staff member, our security guard, or one of our custodians who may also be able to assist you.

A final note: It is preferred and expected that you stay for the entire service. It’s also beneficial for both parents (where applicable) and your child to be present, even if your child wasn’t formally invited to the b.mitzvah. Just observing and participating in the service will give you a better sense of what to expect when it’s your child becoming b.mitzvah.

We are most grateful for your service and thank you in advance for helping one of our b.mitzvah families just as they will help you in the weeks ahead.

L’shalom,

Rabbi Charles K. Briskin

Cantor Julie Berlin

Phil Nordlinger

Director of Operations



Shabbat Friday Night Blessings Blessing Over the Candles

The candles are lit before the blessing is recited.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל
שַׁבָּת.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik
ner shel Shabbat.*

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us
to kindle the light of Shabbat.

Kiddush—Blessing Over Wine

Introductory Biblical passage (Genesis 1:31, Genesis 2:1-3) remembering Creation.

וַיְהִי עֶרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֶר יוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי.

וַיְכַלּוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל צְבָאָם. וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה, וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי, מִכָּל מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה. וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ, כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְכָל מְלַאכְתּוֹ, אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת.

*Vay'hi erev vay'hi voker
yom hashishi.*

Vay'chulu hashamayim v'haaretz v'chol tz'vaam.

Vay'chal Elohim bayom hash'vi-i m'lachto asher asah.

Vayishbot bayom hash'vi-i mikol m'lachto asher asah.

*Vay'varech Elohim et yom hash'vi-i vay'kadeish oto,
ki vo shavat mikol m'lachto asher bara Elohim laasot.*

And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

The heaven and the earth were finished, and all their array. On the seventh day God finished the work that God had been doing, and God ceased on the seventh day from all the work that God had done. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because on it God ceased from all the work of creation that God had done.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְרָצָה בָּנוּ, וְשָׁבַת קִדְּשׁוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הִנְחִילָנוּ זִכְרוֹן לְמַעֲשֵׂה בְּרָאשִׁית, כִּי הוּא יוֹם תְּחִלָּה לְמִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ, זִכָּר לִיצִיַּאת מִצְרָיִם, כִּי בָנוּ בְּחֶרֶת וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁתָּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים, וְשָׁבַת קִדְּשָׁךְ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הִנְחַלְתָּנוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשָּׁבַת.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, borei p'ri hagafen.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'ratzah vanu,
v'Shabbat kodsho b'ahavah uv'ratzon hinchilanu, zikaron l'maaseih v'reishit. Ki hu yom t'chilah
l'mikra-ei kodesh, zecher litziat Mitzrayim. Ki vanu vacharta, v'otanu kidashta, mikol haamim.
V'Shabbat kodsh'cha b'ahavah uv'ratzon hinchaltanu. Baruch atah, Adonai, m'kadeish haShabbat.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the all, who finding favor with us, sanctified us with mitzvot. In love and favor, You made the holy Shabbat our heritage as a reminder of the work of Creation. As first among our sacred days, it recalls the Exodus from Egypt. You chose us and set us apart from the peoples. In love and favor You have given us Your holy Shabbat as an inheritance. Blessed are You, Adonai, who sanctifies Shabbat.



HaMotzi—Blessing Over Challah

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאֲרֶץ.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, haMotzi lechem min haaretz.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who brings forth bread from the earth.

Photography Rules for B.mitzvah

Professional photos are permitted in the sanctuary during b.mitzvah services. We hope this will make planning for formal posed photographs easier and we hope you will enjoy seeing the photos of your child and family “in the moment” during the service.

A few guidelines for you and your photographer for formal poses before the service:

1. Formal photographs may be taken before the b.mitzvah service.
2. Your photographer is free to remove the Torah from the ark (provided they are comfortable handling the scroll).
3. Please return everything to the way you found it
4. Your formal photographs must be completed 30 minutes before the beginning of the service (9:45 am for a morning service and 4:00 pm for a Havdalah service)

A few guidelines for you and your photographer for photographs during the service:

1. No flash photography may be used.
2. The sound of the shutter must not disturb people.
3. The photographer must remain in one of the two designated areas at the rear of the sanctuary. The photographer is not to wander around.

Rabbi Briskin or Cantor Berlin will provide further instruction to the photographer if necessary on the day of the b.mitzvah service.

Honors Sheet for the B.Mitzvah of:

1) _____
First Middle Last
(Child's name as you wish it to appear on the cover of the program and the Aliyah).

1a) _____
Child's informal first name (what most people call him or her).

2) _____
Date of B.mitzvah e.g. January 1, 2020.

3) _____
Child's full Hebrew name followed by parents' Hebrew names.

4) _____
Parent(s)' (English) names.

**Please return this form to Jodi Friedman
at least four weeks prior to your child's B.mitzvah date.
jafriedman@shiramipa.org**

Name: _____ B.Mitzvah date: _____

5) **Presentation of Tallit:** _____

6) **Younger sibling(s) to read opening prayer(s)** _____

6a) **Additional reader of English prayer (optional):**

7) **Opening and closing of ark before Torah reading. Two is preferred, but up to four people:**

English Names

8) **Passing of Torah:**

Names of child's parents, example: Adam and Eve Cohen _____

Names of child's grandparents (if they will participate in Torah passing)

9) **Torah Aliyot participants: Please complete the Aliyah information page at the end of this honors section.**

10) **Dressing the Torah: Up to two people. (If the service is "partnered" each family may have one person for this honor.)**

English Names

Name: _____ B.Mitzvah date: _____

11) Opening and closing of ark for after the Torah reading. Two is preferred, but up to four people:

English Name

12) Names and relationship of those family members to be mentioned prior to Mourner's Kaddish:

13) Friday night candle blessing & kiddush: (List parent(s)' and sibling(s)' names as you wish them to appear in the Friday evening service program):

English Name

14) Estimated number of guests (for number of programs to be printed): _____

Adults: _____ Children: _____

15) Saturday following the Service: will you be having a reception in the building? (Check all that apply.)

Short Kiddush _____ Full luncheon/party _____ Evening party _____

16) Primary contact name and best phone number/email for questions:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____ B.Mitzvah date: _____

ALIYAH INFORMATION

An aliyah is the reciting of blessings before and after the Torah reading.

Each family has **three aliyot** in addition to the b. mitzvah child.

Up to six people can be called for each aliyah. (Use another page if needed.)

HEBREW NAMES: INCLUDE THE HEBREW FIRST NAME OF THE PERSON'S FATHER AND MOTHER.

example: Chayim ben Moshe v' Rivka (Moshe and Rivka are Chayim's parents)

FIRST: ENGLISH NAME HEBREW NAME FATHER'S HEBREW NAME MOTHER'S HEBREW NAME

SECOND: ENGLISH NAME HEBREW NAME FATHER'S HEBREW NAME MOTHER'S HEBREW NAME

THIRD--PARENTS AND OLDER SIBLINGS:

ENGLISH NAME HEBREW NAME FATHER'S HEBREW NAME MOTHER'S HEBREW NAME

FOURTH— B.MITZVAH CHILD:

FULL ENGLISH NAME: _____

HEBREW NAME: _____

EILU d'varim she-ein lahem shiur,
she-adam ocheil peiroteihem
baolam hazeh
v'hakeren kayemet lo laolam haba.
V'eilu hein:
kibud av va-eim,
ug'milut chasadim,
v'hashkamat beit hamidrash
shacharit v'arvit,
v'hachnasat orchim,
uvikur cholim,
v'hachnasat kalah,
ul'vayat hameit,
v'iyun t'filah,
vahavaat shalom bein adam lachaveiro.
V'talmud Torah k'neged kulam.

אלו דברים שאין להם שיעור,
שאדם אוכל פירותיהם
בעולם הזה
והקרו קיימת לו לעולם הבא.
ואלו הן:
כבוד אב ואם,
וגמילות חסדים,
והשקמת בית המדרש
שחרית וערבית,
והקנסת אורחים,
ובקור חולים,
והקנסת כלה,
ולגות המת,
ועיון תפלה,
והבאת שלום בין אדם לחברו.
ותלמוד תורה כנגד כלם.

ברוכים הבאים
מוֹדֶה / מוֹדֶה אֲנִי
שירי שבת
ציצת
מה טוב
אשר יצר
אלהי נשמה
נשים בכל יום
לעסוק
והערבנא
אלו דברים
קדיש דרבנן

THESE ARE THINGS that are limitless,
of which a person enjoys the fruit of the world,
while the principal remains in the world to come.
They are: honoring one's father and mother,
engaging in deeds of compassion,
arriving early for study, morning and evening,
dealing graciously with guests, visiting the sick,
providing for the wedding couple,
accompanying the dead for burial,
being devoted in prayer,
and making peace among people.
But the study of Torah encompasses them all.

← SIBLING
READING

כבוד אב ואם *Kibud av va-eim* — honoring one's father and mother. What can it mean to honor? Sometimes honoring one's parent is not easy. The word *kibud*, honor, has as its root *קבד* *kaveid* — heavy; it can be a burden to honor another. In honoring those who have given us life or sustenance, we honor the Source of Life. Elyse D. Frishman

והשקמת בית המדרש *V'hashkamat beit hamidrash* ... arriving early for study ... The Rabbis understood this to convey enthusiasm and earnestness. Yoel Kahn

תלמוד תורה *Talmud Torah*, the study of Torah offers the knowledge of what is right and how to live justly. Jewish study includes the expectation that the lessons will be applied to life.

אלו דברים *Eilu d'varim* ... These are things ... based on Peah 1:1

שאדם אוכל *She-adam ocheil* ... of which a person enjoys ... Shabbat 127a

ALTERNATIVE BLESSING
BEFORE THE READING OF THE TORAH

HOLY ONE OF BLESSING,
Your Presence fills creation.
You have enlightened this path
with the wisdom of Torah,
giving it to the Jewish people
as their particular way.
Blessed are You, Merciful One,
who gives this Torah to the Jewish people.

ALTERNATIVE BLESSING
AFTER THE READING OF THE TORAH

HOLY ONE OF BLESSING,
Your Presence fills creation.
This Torah is a teaching of truth,
whole and balanced,
and from it comes eternal life
for the people who embrace it.
Blessed are You, Merciful One,
who gives this Torah to the Jewish people.

Mazal Tov! Within the next few months you will become b.mitzvah; we are looking forward to celebrating this special moment in your life with you.

In addition to leading the service and chanting from the Torah, you will have the opportunity to teach the congregation a lesson based on your interpretation of the Torah portion. This is called a D'var Torah, literally a "word of Torah." The overall idea is for you to take a text that is 2500 years old and make it personally meaningful and relevant. Don't worry, I will help you explore the verses and make connections, especially if the Torah portion is particularly difficult.

You and I will meet four or five times in the weeks leading up to you becoming b.mitzvah. I **now utilize an automatic scheduling program so your parent can schedule on their own without having to call our office.** Feel free to schedule our meetings back to back with your meetings with Cantor Berlin if that is convenient. Generally we will meet in person, however, meeting via Zoom remains an option.

Before our first meeting, I ask that you read the English translation of your verses of Torah. (Depending on the verses, it may be helpful to read additional English verses before and after to better understand the full story.) You can find the English verses in your Torah booklet.

During our first meeting we will explore and review your portion in general and verses of Torah in particular. By the end of your second meeting, you should have a general idea of the lesson you'd like to teach.

Once the d'var Torah is complete (after four or five sessions) you should begin to practice reading it out loud so that you can be more familiar and comfortable with it. You will also practice reading your d'var Torah during your rehearsal with Cantor Berlin.

You may also want to use these additional helpful web resources:

www.myjewishlearning.com (look under Texts→Weekly Torah Commentaries);

www.ReformJudaism.org (look under Learning-→Torah)

Finally, an Important Note for Parents: I encourage you to study the portion and the supplemental materials with your child. This will familiarize you with the portion, help you better understand what they are learning, and enable you to have meaningful conversations about Torah and life with your child. Please discuss what they are learning, help clarify questions (as best as possible) and encourage your child. You may even suggest some ideas about how to make it relevant to their lives. However, please let your child prepare the early drafts of the *d'var Torah* on their own and review first with Rabbi Briskin. You can help fine tune the *d'var Torah* closer to its completion.

Thank you for your assistance, understanding, and partnership.

I look forward to sharing in this sacred journey with you.

L'shalom,

Rabbi Charles K. Briskin

One Page Outline for the D'var Torah

The *d'var Torah* is normally 2-3 pages (or 600-900 words), printed and double-spaced. To help you prepare, we've provided this outline below for you to follow if you choose.

The first two words of your *d'var Torah* should be: Shabbat Shalom!

First Paragraph:

What is the name of your portion? What book of the Torah and which specific chapters does it come from? What happens in the entire portion and/or in the verses you are reading. Please use the "Introduction to the Parasha" (post it note tab #1) page in the purple/blue "*Parashat Ha'Shavuah: The Weekly Torah Portion*" booklet, and other sources that Rabbi Briskin provides.

Second Paragraph:

What is the most interesting thing that happens in the portion? Why is it interesting to you? What questions do you have when reading these verses?

Third Paragraph:

What do some Jewish thinkers have to say about this portion? The *Parashat Ha'shavuah* book and other handouts provided by Rabbi Briskin will provide some guidance to answer this question.

Fourth Paragraph:

What are your own thoughts about what these other thinkers have to say and teach? Do you agree with what others think? Or do you disagree? Why?

Fifth Paragraph:

Can you make a personal connection to the idea or subject you find most interesting? Can you give an example of something that you experience in your own life that connects you to the Torah portion? If not, can you offer some of your own general ideas and comments?

Sixth Paragraph:

What does this portion and the ideas you have written about so far teach you about what it means to be a b.mitzvah, a person of responsibility?

Seventh Paragraph:

Conclusion—take everything you've written and summarize it two to three sentences.

(While you are not required to talk about your mitzvah project during the *d'var Torah*, hopefully we can connect it in a way that makes sense. Otherwise, you will have the opportunity to talk about it at a different part of the service.)

The last sentence of your *d'var Torah* should be: "Please join with me in singing *She-he-che-yanu*." (You, Cantor Berlin and I will lead the chanting in Hebrew. We will provide the text for you.)

B.mitzvah Thank You Speech

Towards the end of the service, your child will receive the following gifts from the following groups:

1. A Kiddush cup from the Women of Shir Ami and the Men's Club
2. A Tzedakah Box from the Board of Directors
3. A Certificate of Bar or Bat Mitzvah from the Board of Directors
4. A year of membership to SHAFTY, and a \$25 gift certificate for a J-Crew (7th/8th grade) event.
5. A \$3,250 gift certificate to be applied to a future trip to Israel with NFTY (the Reform movement's national youth group).

Your thank you speech can follow this general order:

- 1 Thank the Shir Ami Board of Directors, Women of Shir Ami, Men's Club, SHAFTY and NFTY for the gifts you just received (you do not need to say what each gift was).
- 2 Thank Rabbi Briskin, Cantor Berlin, and any other teachers/tutors you would like to recognize for helping you to make it to this moment.
- 3 Thank anyone else—grandparents, parents, siblings, family who came from far away, etc.

The thank you speech need only be a half a page, at most.

If you have any questions, please ask Rabbi Briskin or Cantor Berlin

Dear Friend:

Thank you for accepting the honor of being called to the Torah. Attached you will find a link to a website that provides the [chant of the blessings before and after the Torah reading](#) for your review as well as the Hebrew and transliteration of the blessings.

When you are called for your *Aliyah* to bless the Torah, please come up the stairs just to the right side of the readers table (as you are facing it).

Once the bar/bat mitzvah has finished chanting the verses of Torah for that *Aliyah* and after you have said the blessing after the reading, please remain on the *bimah* for the next *Aliyah*. Please move to the other side of the bar/bat mitzvah.

Rabbi Briskin or Cantor Kohlbrenner will direct you.

Blessing Before the Reading of Torah

Reader(s): Ba-r'chu et Adonai ha-me-vo-rach!

Congregation: Ba-ruch Adonai ha-me-vo-rach l'o-lam va-ed.

Reader(s): Ba-ruch Adonai ha-me-vo-rach l'o-lam va-ed.

Ba-ruch a-tah Adonai, Eloheinu meh-lech ha-o-lam,
a-sher ba-khar ba-nu mi-kol ha-a-meem,
v'nah-tahn lah-nu et to-rah-toe.
Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, no-tayn ha-to-rah!

Praise Adonai, to whom our praise is due!

Praised be Adonai, to whom our praise is due, now and forever!

Blessed are You, Eternal One, our God, who has chosen us from all peoples by giving us the Torah. Blessed are You, Adonai, Giver of the Torah.

Blessing after the Reading of Torah

Reader(s)

Ba-ruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu meh-lech ha-o-lam,
a-sher nah-tahn la-nu toe-rat eh-met,
v'chah-yay o-lam nah-tah b'toe-chay-nu.
Ba-ruch ata hAdonai, no-tayn ha-to-rah.

Blessed are You, Eternal One, our God, Sovereign of the world, who has given us a Torah of truth, and planted in our midst eternal life. Blessed are You, Eternal One, who gives the Torah.

Guidelines for the Parents' Blessing

We invite you to use this moment to offer a blessing to your child just before she or he will take Torah into their hands. This blessing acknowledges this moment in the life of your child and your family and provides an opportunity to look to the future.

Because this blessing takes place before the chanting of the Torah, Haftarah, or the d'var Torah (speech), it is very helpful when the blessing is loving, heartfelt and brief.

We encourage you to speak about character traits that your child possesses rather than their specific achievements.

Because the blessing is about recognizing this moment, we encourage you to look forward rather than looking back. Of course, making connections to a child or family's connection to Shir Ami is appropriate, however, the focus should be forward looking rather than backward.

The parents' blessing should be about two to two and a half minutes long (which translates to about 300-375 words). One parent can offer it, or the parents can alternate paragraphs.

The pages that follow contain several examples of parent blessings that have been offered at b.mitzvah services. Please feel free to use these for inspiration and guidance.

A Blessing for Elijah

As we stand here in the eyes of God, I cannot help but to reflect on all of the challenges, including a pandemic, that has led you here today. While your childhood days begin to fade and you begin to step into adulthood, we know that you will continue to grow from the obstacles that still lay ahead.

Remember to be forgiving but also strong enough to admit when you're wrong. Never forget to speak your mind and remember that the right thing to do isn't always easy but worth the extra work.

Always have faith in yourself for while you'll be your worst enemy you will also be your best friend.

See yourself with kindness and spread that kindness amongst others.

May you make a positive imprint among this world not only with your words but with your actions as well.

Allow your curiosity to guide you and never stop seeking for knowledge.

And above all never forget that you have family and friends that love you unconditionally and will always be there to guide you.

No words can express the love and pride that we feel in this moment and the many moments to come. You will forever be my baby boy and we love you, now, always and forever.

Parent's Prayer for Danielle

Our Dearest Danielle,

We are so proud as we stand with you and share in this milestone of your life. We cannot but reflect on your journey so far from the child you were to the wonderful young lady you are today.

Although you will always be our baby girl, we see the smart, sensitive, caring, kind, and considerate person with a passion and curiosity in life that you have grown into and we are so very proud of you.

Now in the eyes of G-d, as your childhood days have past and your steps into adulthood begin, we know you will continue to grow as you face life's challenges and become a strong, independent person.

Here is what we wish for you:

- Continue to be kind to people and may you receive kindness in return.
- Never forget that you have family and friends that will always be there for you.
- May you always feel comfortable in coming to Mom and I for help.
- Be open to new friendships and relationships
- Remember to be forgiving but also to be strong enough admit when you have wronged and to apologize.
- Never be afraid to speak your mind.
- May you make a positive difference with not only your words but also your actions.
- Remember to always try to do the right thing and not just the easy thing.
- Listen a little more than you speak, be open to other opinions and points of view and as much as possible work towards reaching common ground.
- Never lose your curiosity and passion for life, always have the courage to challenge yourself and don't shy away from making mistakes as some of the best lessons come from them and make you better and stronger for it.
- Always have faith in yourself and know that the only limit is what you place on yourself and not what others try to place on you.
- Be humble, but proud with your achievements.

We wish all these all these things and more for you.

We are honored to share this achievement with you today as you become a Bat Mitzvah.

(Example of a parent blessing read with alternating paragraphs)

Logan,

As we stand with you
on this most blessed day,
we cannot help but think
of the journey you have made
from the child you were,
to the young man you have become.

*We see the smart,
funny, kind,
considerate person
you have grown into.
We are very proud of you.*

Now you stand
at the beginning of your journey
into adulthood.
You will continue to grow
and face challenges.

Here is what we wish for you:

Continue to be kind to people.
May you receive kindness in return.

*Remember that your family and friends
are here for you.
May you feel comfortable coming to us for
help.*

Be open to friendships and relationships.
May you be rewarded with new and healthy
connections.

*Speak your mind.
May you make a positive difference with
your words.*

Listen a little more than you speak.
May you be open to other points of view,
and thereby seek common ground.

*Have the courage to challenge yourself in
new ways. Make mistakes.
May you learn from them and improve.*

Do your best without worrying
that you aren't as good as someone else.
May you derive joy from your
accomplishments.

*We wish all these things and many more for
you.*

**We are honored to be with you today as
you become a Bar Mitzvah.**

Parents' Prayer for Jake's Bar Mitzvah

We give thanks for you, Jake, our wonderful son who we are so blessed to share our days with. We pray that you continue on the path that we have set for you- that you live your life happily, surrounded by family and friends, and with the important sense of the connection to your ancestors- those who are here in the synagogue today, those who proved their incredible ability to survive life's worst, those who we lost, and those who could not have known that they would one day have a Bar Mitzvah in their family. We pray that you continue in his Jewish tradition and passes it on to future generations.

We hope that you have great success in the pursuit of your happiness, and pray that you continue to find some of it in the service of your fellow humans. We know that you have the intelligence and kindness to make an important difference in our world. We wish for you the patience and perseverance to carry you through in all that you attempt. We pray for you to come into your own as the amazing adult we know is there. We give thanks for you, Jake, as you are called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah.

We love you.

For our dear son Jacob,

The time has come when your father and I must admit to ourselves that you are on the road to becoming a man, despite the occasional eye rolls, meltdowns and moping around the house.

This day holds so much meaning for you and our family. As we stand up here on the Bimah and are about to hear you read from the Torah like our ancestors have for generations, we feel a connection to not only all those who came before us in the past, but also to those who read from the Torah present day. You also represent the future of our faith, and my hope would be that you carry on the traditions that you've learned at home and in this wonderful community.

Six months ago when we met with the Rabbi to begin your studies, he asked you what it meant to become a Bar Mitzvah. Without hesitation, you replied that it meant you became responsible for yourself. The Rabbi agreed and added that the responsibility included fulfilling your covenant with God from this point forward.

I hope for you that Tzedakah, charitable acts, be a constant pursuit in your life, and you remain focused on not only your individual success but also the betterment of the community. I hope that you pursue a path in life that brings you happiness and fulfillment. May you continue to feel an unwavering spiritual connection to God and those around you, and that this brings you comfort during life's challenging moments.

You have a loving, caring soul that seeks justice and you are determined and strong in standing up for what you believe. Your ethical compass is extraordinary for a person of your age and we hope that you continue to be a force for good in the world and strive to make it a better place.

We love you so much and continue to be amazed by your constant growth and development. Your silliness brings joy and lightness to our lives and I cherish every day we've spent together. We are so very proud of you and your accomplishments. We will always be here to love and support you. Mazel Tov on becoming the first person in our family to become a Bar Mitzvah, what a tremendous accomplishment!

MODEL PARENT BLESSING.
WRITTEN FOR DEVON BY BARBARA AND JOHNNY

Dear Devon,

As we stand here proudly before you on this day of your Bar mitzvah, it is our hope that we have imparted on you over the years the beliefs and traditions of the Jewish people and that you will continue with these values over the course of your life and in turn , pass them on to your children.

The Torah is the closest thing to what we know God wants of us and it has survived because the Jewish people have cherished it. As you read from the Torah may you feel enveloped by its heritage and in its power know that you are ready to fulfill the covenant of God by being responsible for the obligations of Jewish life; by working for justice and peace, searching for wisdom and truth, and bringing compassion and devotion. We know that you will do so with pride and joy and will cherish this precious inheritance.

Devon, a blessing is a favor or gift bestowed by God, thereby bringing happiness. You have truly been a blessing to us. Your kind, caring, humorous, generous and joyful way has not only been a blessing to us but to all you encounter. We wish that you continued to be blessed with a life of love, laughter, prosperity and health.

Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, a famous 18th century Chasidic Rabbi who emphasized living life with joy and happiness, tells us “the entire world is a very narrow bridge and the main thing is crossing it without fear.”

As you walk along this narrow bridge, we pray that you will be strong in spirit and character. Always be a good friend and that you find a path in life that brings you the happiness and satisfaction that you deserve.

May all the gifts hidden inside you find their way into the world,
May all the kindness of your thoughts be expressed in your deeds,
May all your learning lead to wisdom,
May all your efforts lead to success,
May all the love in your heart be returned to you,
May God bless your body with health and your soul with joy,
May God watch over you night and day and protect you from harm,
May all your prayers be answered.
We love you.



B.Mitzvah Donations Form

Please mail to: Jodi Friedman @ Shir Ami, 101 Richboro Road, Newtown, PA 18940
Questions? Call 215-968-3400 x. 105

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____

Phone: _____ Amount \$ _____ Check # _____

This donation is made in honor of _____ becoming a B. Mitzvah

_____ **Circle of Giving:** Supports membership for all regardless of ability to pay.

_____ **Rabbi Charles K. Briskin's Discretionary Fund:** This fund allows Rabbi Briskin, at his discretion, to provide emergency assistance/scholarships to congregants and others in need, supplement congregational programs in need of additional funding, and to support local, national, and international non-profit organizations.

_____ **Cantor Julie Berlin's Discretionary Fund:** Used to assist needy individuals, as well as to support community causes or worthy institutions at the discretion of the Cantor. In addition, the Fund is used for educational and musical activities at Shir Ami.

_____ **Rabbi Eric Goldberg's Discretionary Fund:** Utilized by the Rabbi to assist those in need, for programming not covered by our budget or for Tikkun Olam. All expenditures are at his discretion.

_____ **Israel/Camp Scholarship:** Provides financial assistance for our children and teens to attend URJ-affiliated camps and NFTY programs in Israel.

_____ **Israel Tiyl:** Defrays the cost of the Israel Trip for our 8th and 9th grade students so they can embrace the importance of supporting Israel.

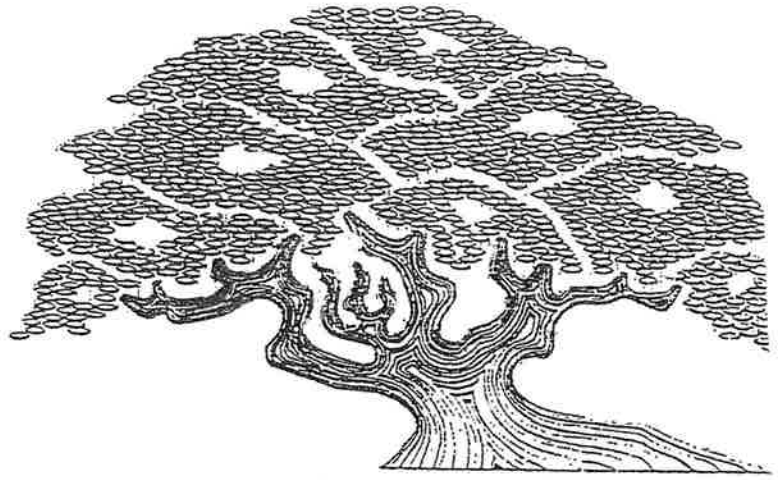
_____ Another Shir Ami Fund of your choice.

Shir Ami
101 Richboro Road
Newtown, PA 18940

215-968-3400
e-mail: jafriedman@shiramipa.org

TREE OF LIFE **Order Form**

Return this form and your check
to the Temple office.



NAME _____ PHONE # _____

ADDRESS _____
(Street) (City) (Zip)

I would like to order the following leaf for the TREE OF LIFE:
(Please type or print in block letters)

Line One _____ (15 letters & spaces)
Line Two _____ (26 letters & spaces)
Line Three _____ (30 letters & spaces)
Line Four _____ (26 letters & spaces)
Line Five _____ (15 letters & spaces)

15 letter & spaces

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30 letters & spaces

26 letters & spaces

15 letters & spaces

The cost of a single leaf is \$200. Payment in full must be received at the time of the order. You may reserve a leaf for the future by pre-paying.

I am enclosing a check for \$ _____.

Signed _____ Date _____