

The Protocol and Etiquette for a Torah Aliyah

When you are selected to receive an **Aliyah** to the **Torah** (being called up to the **Torah**) by your relative or friend who is celebrating a **Simchah**, you have been given a great honor. You will be intimately interacting with the **Torah** before our Congregation of family and friends. Thus, it is important that you familiarize yourself with the **Torah** honor protocol and etiquette so that you will more fully enjoy and appreciate the **Aliyah** experience and do honor to the **Torah**, your family or friends, and yourself.

Before the **Simchah**, familiarize yourself with the **Brachot** (blessings) which you are required to recite/chant in Hebrew:

1. The blessing before the reading by the **Baal Koreh** (**Torah** reader), with the repetition of the Congregational response
2. The blessing after the reading is completed

A copy of these blessings, in large type in both Hebrew and transliterated English/Hebrew will be given to you by the celebrating family honoring you. Please study it. There is no need to bring it with you when you are called up for your honor because there is an identical large type copy on the reading stand. A Synagogue official will tell you when it is your turn to go up to the **Bimah** (pulpit) for your **Aliyah**.

The procedure is as follows:

- a. Stand to the left of the **Torah** Reader, and the **Gabbai Rishon** (**Bimah** caller) will ask you for your Hebrew name (unless it has previously been provided by the family). For example, Joseph son of Jacob and Sarah will be pronounced **Yoseph ben Yaakov**. Obtaining your correct Hebrew name and providing it to the **Bar/Bat Mitzvah** family in advance is extremely helpful.
- b. Stand at the right side of the **Torah** Reader, take hold of a corner of your **Tallit** with a **Tzitzit** (long fringe) attached, setting the **Tzitzit** on the **Torah** (or, for women not wearing **Tallit**, the embroidered cloth provided) at the place where the **Torah** Reader points, and then bring the **Tallit/Tzitzit** to your lips momentarily. Now say the *first blessing* in a clear, audible voice while holding on to the handles of the **Torah** ("it is a tree of life to them that grasp it"). After the Congregation says its response, *repeat that response*.
- c. When the reading of your portion of the **Torah** is completed, again take the **Tzitzit** of your **Tallit** (or the embroidered cloth), place it at the point where the **Torah** Reader indicates, and kiss the **Tallit** or cloth as before. Then recite the blessing that comes *after* the Torah reading.
- d. After the blessing is recited, step next to the **Gabbai Sheni** and wait there while the next honoree goes through the procedure you have just completed. When the honoree succeeding you is finished and takes your place beside the **Gabbai Sheni**, you may leave the **Bimah**, first shaking hands with those at the **Torah**, the Rabbi, Cantor, President or others on the **Bimah** who will greet you with the exhortation, "**Yeasher Koach**" ("may you go from strength to strength" for a man or "**Yeasher Kochech**" for a woman. The proper response to this is "**Baruch Te-hee-yeh**" for a man, or "**Brucha Te-He-yee**" for a woman ("May you be blessed"). You then may return to your seat in the Sanctuary and receive the good wishes of family and friends for the honor you have just received.