

GLOSSARY

Aliyah/Aliyot (plural): Going up (to recite the blessings over the Torah).

Bar/Bat Mitzvah: Literally, “Son/Daughter of the Commandments” that is, a responsible member of a people intimately connected with the commandments.

Bima: The raised platform at the front of the sanctuary from which the student and clergy lead the service and read from the Torah.

B’nai Mitzvah/B’not Mitzvah: Children of the Commandments – the plural of Bar Mitzvah is B’nai Mitzvah (also used when one student is male, the other female), the plural of Bat Mitzvah is B’not Mitzvah.

D’var Torah/Haftarah: “D’var” translates as “words of.” A D’var Torah means words that comprise a teaching of Torah. A D’var Haftarah is a teaching on the Haftarah portion. At Har HaShem, our students teach the congregation as part of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah with their D’var Torah or Haftarah.

G’lilah: The honor of dressing the Torah.

Haftarah: The section of the Book of Prophets read after the Torah portion on Shabbat and Festivals. The theme of the Haftarah usually compliments the Torah portion.

Hagbah: The honor of raising the Torah after the Torah reading has been completed.

“Kiddush Luncheon”: Kiddush, means “making holy.” It is the lunch (or light lunch) that follows the blessings we say to express the sanctity of Shabbat immediately following the B’nai Mitzvah service. This meal is for the entire community who come who to the service. It is an opportunity to do the mitzvah of feeding the hungry as it includes your invited guests and all who join us for Shabbat morning services. The custom at Har HaShem is for the families to provide anywhere from a light meal to a catered luncheon.

Maftir: Maftir means “concluding section.” Students chant the Maftir portion of the Torah reading and then chant the Haftarah. The concept of the Maftir section of the Torah portion is that the student conclude the Torah chanting.

Minhag: Custom

Mitzvah: Commandment (A mitzvah is more than a good deed.)

Motzi: The said over the Challah.

Oneg: Oneg literally means “joy,” and refers to the sweetness we add to honor Shabbat by serving light snacks/dessert after a Friday night Shabbat service.

Simcha: A joyous celebration.

Torah: The Torah is the first five books in the Bible, or the five books of Moses. In the broadest and truest sense it means “all learning.”

Torah Chanter: Torah chanters do not do the blessings (unless asked), but rather chant from the Torah scroll. At Har HaShem, Torah chanters have been trained in the melodies to which the Torah is chanted.

Torah Portion: Typically, Torah portions are three to four chapters long. In Orthodox synagogues and some Conservative synagogues, Jews chant the entire three to four chapters. In most Reform synagogues, we chant a shorter portion. At Har HaShem we typically chant 24-28 verses, with the students chanting the final ones.

Tzedakah: Tzedakah is translated as “righteousness.” Often confused for charity, which is money given out of a feeling of benevolent love and by choice, Tzedakah is money given because it is just or right. We are commanded to give Tzedakah. When we give Tzedakah, we are usually giving money to help others.

Yad: Literally, “hand.” The yad is the pointer the Torah reader uses to keep his or her place during the Torah reading as we may not touch the Torah scroll directly with our fingers.