

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING PARENT PRAYERS

Writing your Parent Prayer is a three-step process, outlined in these guidelines. Please submit your final prayers to my office two weeks prior to your bar or bat mitzvah date. **The maximum total length will be 500 words (combined, if each parent is offering a blessing).**

Blessings and Peace,

Rabbi Ranon Teller

Congregation Brith Shalom

Step 1: The Brainstorming Session

Write down some words or phrases that you wish for your child.

- Stretch beyond the ordinary wishes like “happiness” or a “good life”. Get specific.

Examples: education, passion and excitement, growth, travel and adventure, home, family and friends etc.

- Think about the uniqueness of your child. Get specific.

What makes him or her unique and special?

What do you actually wish for?

Step 2: The Framework

Writing a blessing is much like writing poetry. Find a pattern or a rhythm. Use these patterns or create one of your own. Examples:

*I pray that you*_____

*I pray that you*_____

or

*May you find*_____

*May you grow to*_____

Step 3: The Finishing Touch

Read your prayer. Reflect for a moment on what you’ve just done and what you hope it accomplishes. Then, use those ideas to create an introductory line and a concluding line.

SAMPLE PARENT PRAYER

Maya, you are gifted and talented and creative, and you aren't challenged enough. Sometimes you get bored and frustrated and impatient – because you're not yet using your potential brain power and creative energy. So here's what you have to do: you have to keep your eye out for God's hints. You are beginning your life's journey today. Look out for God's direction and guidance. Hashem will put little hints in your life to present an opportunity.

Maybe God will show you a role model, or maybe you will meet an interesting person who could become a new friend or maybe you'll learn about something somewhere and it will intrigue you... Those are God's messages. Pay attention to God's hints and explore your intuitions—because that's how you'll find your way toward satisfaction and peace.

May God bless you and keep you. Maya, God has already blessed you with a kind and pure soul, a sharp and curious mind, and a skinny little body. May God now bless you with the strength to strive toward your unlimited potential. May God keep you healthy and well.

May God shine light on you and be gracious to you. Maya, may the experiences you encounter challenge you to rise and to grow and to think. May you challenge yourself in the classroom. May you challenge yourself in your life. And may God's Grace help you succeed and excel.

May God turn God's presence toward you and grant you peace. Maya, may God's presence in your life guide you to care for those in need. May God's presence in your life inspire you to show love deep love to your family and friends. And as *you* love, may you feel *ours*—the love of your parents, the love of your family, the love of this community, and God's loving presence. We all love you so much.

SAMPLE PARENT PRAYER

G-d,

Thank you for the privilege of seeing Rachel attain this milestone;
Please bless her with a long, interesting, meaningful life, full of
health, joy, and love.

Please watch over her, protecting her from harmful people and
situations;

May all her education lead to wisdom, may her
tenderheartedness inspire her to perform daily good deeds, and
may she give back to the community and people who have given
so much to her;

And, please grant us, her parents, wisdom, strength, and patience
in raising her as she becomes a Jewish adult.

Amen