

Havurah Shalom



- Your honor:** **Magbiah (lifts the Torah scroll)**
- When to go up:** When the Gabbai calls first “HaMagbiah” and then “HaGoleil” or “HaGoleilet” (after the Torah readings are completed).
- What to wear:** Wear a kippah and a tallit (prayer shawl). If you are not wearing them, we have them at the back of the sanctuary.
- What to do:** When you are called to the Torah, you’ll be asked your Hebrew name and your parents Hebrew names.
- When indicated by someone on the bimah, go up to the Torah scroll, grab the handles and unroll it a little (ideally until you see 3 columns of text – but the more you unroll it the harder it will be to lift it and balance it when lifted). Slide the bottom of the scroll towards you and over the edge of the bima. Using the edge of the bima as a fulcrum, push down on the scroll handles, taking on more of the weight and balancing it, until it is almost vertical or vertical, then raise it over your head. Turn and show the text of the Torah to the congregation for few seconds, then walk to a seat indicated by those on the bimah, lowering the scroll as you go.

See back for a little about these roles – magbiah and goleil

A little about these roles:

The verse “And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people” (Neh. 8:5) is the biblical precedent for raising an open scroll so that the entire congregation can view the script. The person who lifts the Torah traditionally opens at least three columns of the scroll before raising it up as high as possible, and then slowly turns to show the script to all assembled. This allows everyone in the congregation to see the text and proclaim “v’zot ha-Torah” (this is the Torah [that Moses placed before the Children of Israel]; Deut. 4:44). Some worshipers raise the edges of their tallit toward the script and then kiss the tzitzit , though the halachic (Jewish law) requirement is merely to bow toward the open Torah.

“ Hagbah” is the term for raising the Torah, which is performed by the magbiah; “gelilah” is the word for rolling up and tying the Torah scroll and replacing its cover and ornaments, which is done by the goleil. Talmud does not appear to separate these two functions, referring primarily to the latter (Meg. 32a). Indeed, at one time, the person who received the last Aliyah may have performed both of these duties. However, having one person responsible for both holding the Torah and tying the binder around the scroll could be fraught with hazard and presumably led to the decision to share the honor between two people. Although these activities do not require the recitation of a blessing, Hagbah and gelilah are considered religiously significant roles. Some Rabbis viewed the honor of gelilah as having the spiritual reward of all the aliyot combined, and thus this task was traditionally reserved for the most distinguished members of the congregation. Over time, hagbah became the more coveted task.