


d'st

My Bar Mitzvah

Chabad of the Rivertowns



Mazel Tov! Your son is growing up, He'll soon be celebrating the biggest event of his adolescent life: **His Bar Mitzvah.**

Jews have celebrated Bar Mitzvahs for thousands of years, and they have become a prominent part of our contemporary culture. We see it as a 'coming of age'; a time to be fully counted in the 'Jewish Community'; a time to celebrate one's Jewish identity.

All true.

But, as you plan a Bar Mitzvah with your son, you may have some more questions:

- What is the deeper meaning of becoming a Bar Mitzvah?
- What is its significance?
- How has it been celebrated through history?
- How do we celebrate the Bar Mitzvah at Chabad?
- What does the preparation process entail?
- Where's my place as a parent in the Bar Mitzvah?
- Where does my family fit in?

1

What is a Bar Mitzvah.....

A Look at Bar Mitzvah Through the Lens of the DEVELOPMENTAL SPECTRUM



As you watch your child grow into an adult, you are observing the 'unfolding' of his persona. As time passes, developmental stages are reached and actualized, and a new level of identity blossoms. It's the natural flow of life. We can call it the developmental spectrum. At a certain point on this continuum, a child is ready to step beyond childhood. Still short of adulthood, the youth enters a 'post-childhood' phase. At this stage, he is ready to accept responsibility for his actions, and ready to 'step-up' as a reliable functionary in family and society.

In Jewish tradition, Bar Mitzvah is that stage; it's exiting childhood and crossing the threshold into 'post-childhood'. We want to make the most of this stage...

But, for thousands of years, we've seen it as more than the natural unfolding of the psyche. We see Bar Mitzvah as a time when the soul begins to 'blossom', allowing the individual to find 'moral maturity' within him/herself. It's seen as a point of time when we can begin to find a crystallization/awareness of our values which we know to be correct - and have that awareness guide our conduct.

In Judaism, SPIRITUAL CELEBRATIONS find PHYSICAL EXPRESSIONS

In Jewish thought, 'celebrations of the spirit' also need to be 'celebrations of the body'. A Bar Mitzvah is a multi-dimensional event, celebrating a number of spiritual, psychological and emotional events in the child's and family's life. So a Bar Mitzvah event needs to find TANGIBLE ways to express all these facets. In planning a meaningful Bar Mitzvah, we need to identify the psycho-spiritual facets of celebration and then bring them to tangible expression in our celebration.



What are some spiritual CONCEPTS we are celebrating?

A Bar Mitzvah celebrates the first 13 years of a child's life; childhood is a formative stage and is a foundation for life.

A Bar Mitzvah celebrates the child's commitment to living his life as a Jewish adult.

A Bar Mitzvah celebrates our Torah, which gives us a world-view and guidance on how to lead a meaningful life.

A Bar Mitzvah celebrates the idea that this boy is now taking his rightful place as part of the Jewish community.

A Bar Mitzvah celebrates the new link in the chain of Jewish continuity.

To think about: How can we infuse these important concepts into the design of the Bar Mitzvah celebration?

2

How we celebrate at Chabad....

At Chabad, the Bar Mitzvah celebrations are faithful to the beauty and authenticity of Jewish tradition. We hope that the Bar Mitzvah "journey" brings your son to a deep recognition and appreciation of his special role as a part of the Jewish nation.

PERSONALIZED

We believe that no two children are the same and no two families are the same and we therefore strive to personalize this most meaningful life cycle event to make it most meaningful, enjoyable and inspiring for your family.

NOT JUST A CEREMONY

The Bar Mitzvah is much more than a ceremony, it is about who we are. Our focus is on experiencing the joy and depth of being Jewish. The ceremony is only one part of that. The training and preparation for the Bar Mitzvah reflects that as well. The child is taught the meaning of what it means to be Jewish and is given time to ask and reflect on his becoming a Bar Mitzvah with the rabbi's and teachers he studies with.

ENJOY

It is not just about the destination but the journey should be meaningful and enjoyable as well

COMMUNITY

Through our own community involvement we show our children the importance of community. Making the Bar Mitzvah celebration a more communal event by inviting his Hebrew School classmates adds an important dimension to the experience.

PARENTS

Your child's Bar Mitzvah experience is greatly enhanced when the parents are involved and participate in their child's Bar Mitzvah preparation.

We at Chabad would like to create everlasting memories as your son celebrates his Bar Mitzvah. As per your guidance, we design the ceremony to include family and guests in any of the services.

The following are some things that can be incorporated into any one of the services.

- ◆ Parents' Speech
- ◆ D'var Torah, address by the Bar Mitzvah boy
- ◆ Rabbi's Comments
- ◆ Yivarechicha Blessing By Bar Mitzvah boy's father
- ◆ Candy Throw
- ◆ Mazel Tov melody



3

Preparation Time Line.....



PRELIMINARY MEETING:

Approximately 18 months prior to your son's Bar Mitzvah, we will have our first meeting. The primary objective of this first meeting is to become familiar with the Bar Mitzvah journey.

FOLLOW UP CALL

The Bar Mitzvah coordinator will call you to plan a Bar Mitzvah date

PERSONAL MEETING ONE

12 months prior to the Bar Mitzvah date the Rabbi and coordinator meet with you to schedule tutoring and to personalize the details your son's ceremony.

TUTORING

Tutoring begins 6-9 months prior to the Bar Mitzvah. All tutoring takes place at Chabad. Tutoring sessions last 30 minutes. Please ensure that your son reviews every night for 10- 15 minutes.

PHONE MEETING

4-5 months prior to the Bar Mitzvah the coordinator will contact you by phone to review progress, get feedback and discuss caterers and set up of the Synagogue.

PERSONAL MEETING TWO

1 week prior to the Bar Mitzvah. During this meeting we will cover final details such as family honors or Aliyot. This meeting will also serve as the rehearsal and Tefilin ceremony.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

9:30 am	Service begins
10:00 am	Time to indicate for guests to arrive
10:30 am	Reading of the Torah Portion
11:15 am	Speech
12:15 pm	Parents speech
12:30 pm	Kiddush (The Bar Mitzvah family should sponsor a Kiddush or a full luncheon)

For other ceremony and service options please talk to the Rabbi.



4 OTHER COMPONENTS...

TALIT & TEFILLIN

During the tutoring your son will learn how Tefillin are made and all about their significance and how to don the Tefillin. This mitzvah helps instill discipline, purpose, and provides a meaningful way to connect with G-d. Each family needs to purchase a new Talit and Tefillin for their child. Having a new pair is very important for each child and teaches them the value of a mitzvah.

TROPE TRAINER

In order to facilitate the tutoring your son must come to the first lesson with a copy of Trope Trainer. TROPETRAINER™ software from Kinnor Software is the best way to get the lessons and exercises, readings and blessings that enhance and accelerate the learning process of chanting Torah and Haftarah.

RITUAL MITZVAH PROJECT

The Torah is a program for life, a 'user's manual' if you will. This isn't just theoretical; the Torah's ideas need to find expression in actual conduct. In light of that, we strongly encourage the Bar-Mitzvah boy to adopt specific practices. For example:

- ◆ Designating a Tzedaka box in his bedroom and placing a coin there every day (except for Shabbat).
- ◆ Regular (even if it's not weekly) attendance at Shabbat Services
- ◆ On your son's 13th Hebrew Birthday, he becomes Bar Mitzvah on this day he begins his fulfillment of mitzvot. A beautiful way to mark this day is to gather with immediate family and friends in synagogue where the Bar Mitzvah boy will don Tefillin for the first time.

CATERERS

Caterers and Kosher stores

RIKI MALKI CATERING

Phone: 917 806 8152

www.rikiskitchen.com

POMP N' PLATTERS

Phone: 973 539 4314

SUPERSOL OF WESTCHESTER

Phone: 914 472 2240

FOREMOST GLATT KOSHER CATERERS

INC Phone: 201 666 9942

For additional caterers please contact
the Rabbi

GUIDELINES

- 1. Boy should be after 13th birthday (according to Hebrew birthday) on the day of his Bar Mitzvah celebration.**
- 2. No photography or video unless the service is on a weekday or Saturday night after dark.**
- 3. All Food and liquor served after the service must meet the kosher standards of the shul. Please see the list of appropriate caterers for your reception.**

5

SPONSORS

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

Moshe Sobel - Drumming @

www.shemsdrums.com

**Dan Monselise - Challah, Roglach,
cakes etc @ www.Kosherchallah.com**

**Riki Malki - Riki's Kitchen Kosher
Caterer @ Rikiskitchen.com or 917
806 8152**