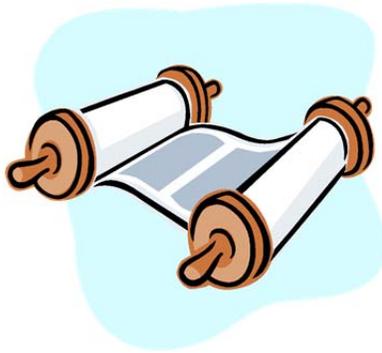


PRAYERS & BLESSINGS



Parent Blessing

After your child completes the *Haftarah* blessings, parents are invited to offer a blessing in English. Parents may either choose one of the following readings or compose a prayer of their own. If you choose to write your own prayer, please keep these guidelines in mind:

- This is a time to share some of your pride and love for your child with the congregation, and to point the way to your child becoming a good Jewish adult.
- It is not appropriate to tell your life story or that of your child, or to attempt to map out the rest of his or her life. It can be a moment to emphasize some of the essential values you want to pass on to the next generation.
- The blessing should not be retrospective, focusing instead on your hopes and dreams for the future.
- If you choose to write your own blessing, the rabbi must see it in advance. Such creative blessings are due to the rabbi *no later than the date of your first rehearsal*. Please note that if you are unable to write a blessing by this due date, you will only be able to choose one of the pre-written blessings.
- Remember the context. This is blessing at a religious service to celebrate your child's status as a Jewish adult. It may be tempting to praise all of his or her talents and accomplishments, but dwelling on unrelated subjects (such as sports or music) will detract from the religious nature of the event. Such a speech would be more appropriate at a reception after the service.
- Remember the congregation. This is not just a gathering of your family and friends, but of the community, and some things are better said in private. Thirteen-year-olds are notoriously sensitive to embarrassment, and funny or embarrassing stories about their childhood can be perceived as cruel when they're retold in public.
- Keep it short. Stay under two minutes. You can and should tell your child how proud you are at other times, and you don't need to explain all the details in this setting.
- If what you wish to say doesn't fit in with these guidelines, the Shabbat service may not be the right place for your words. Perhaps a toast at your *s'udat mitzvah*/reception is more of what you would like. By all means, take advantage of that opportunity.

Otherwise, you may choose from one of the following:

A. *Into our hands, O God, You have placed Your Torah, to be held high by parents and children, and taught by one generation to the next. Whatever has befallen us, our people have remained steadfast in loyalty to the Torah. It was carried in the arms of parents that their children might not be deprived of their birthright.*

And now, we pray that you, (CHILD'S NAME), may always be worthy of this inheritance. Take its teaching into your heart, and in turn pass it on to your children and those who come after you. May you be a faithful Jew, searching for wisdom and truth, working for justice and peace.

B. *We give thanks for this day, and for the years of growth and learning that have preceded it. Now, as our child steps forth to affirm his/her commitment to the ideals and Mitzvot of our faith, our souls are joyful, our minds are at peace. We pray that this day's service may long echo in our child's memory. May it engrave on his/her heart the understanding that this day initiates a life more firmly dedicated to the study of Torah and the fulfillment of Mitzvot, to deeds of justice and kindness, to faithful membership in the Household of Israel.*

C. *O God, we give thanks for the wondrous privilege of seeing our child grow day by day, week by week, year by year. For the health and strength You have given him/her, for the mind and spirit with which You have endowed him/her, for his/her ability to elicit and return love – for all these precious gifts, we thank You. Watch over our child on this special day and every day. Grant him/her a growing understanding of the true significance of this occasion and a deepening loyalty to everything that it represents. May the teachings of our heritage guide him/her throughout life; and may he/she lead a life worthy of Your blessings.*

D. *O God, gratefully we thank You for the joyous privilege of seeing our child attain this milestone. On this day cherished dreams and hopes are fulfilled. On this day new dreams and hopes are born. We pray that Your protecting and loving care will accompany him/her wherever he/she goes and in all he/she does. Help him/her to become all that he/she is capable of being. Give him/her strength to do all the good things that are within his/her reach. Keep him/her loyal to the best he/she has shown, and to the noblest Jewish teachings he/she has been taught. May his/her deeds find favor in the eyes of all and be worthy of Your blessings.*

*E. May you live to see your world fulfilled,
may your destiny be for worlds still to come,
and may you trust in generations past and yet to be.
May your heart be filled with intuition
And your words be rich in understanding.
May songs of praise ever be upon your tongue,
And your vision clarify a straight path before you.
May your eyes shine with the light of the Torah
And your face reflect the brightness of the heavens.
May your lips ever speak wisdom
And your fulfillment be in righteousness,
Even as you ever yearn to hear the words of
The Ancient One of Holiness*

*F. Our hearts are one on this joyous day
As you commit yourself to a life of Torah:
A life, we pray, filled with
Wisdom, caring and right action.*

*We pray that you will grow each day
In compassion for the needy,
In concern for the stranger,
In love of all people.*

*May the One who blessed our ancestors.
Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca,
Jacob and Rachel and Leah,
Bless you on becoming a (Bar/Bat) Mitzvah.*

*May you grow with strength and courage,
With vision and sensitivity.
And may you always be certain of our love.*

Amen

G. Our dearest (Child's name), may you always know what joy you have given us and our family as you attain this milestone of becoming a (Bar/Bat) Mitzvah. Your accomplishment is one to be very proud of.

May this wonderful occasion be an inspiration to you throughout your life.

May you find your place in our heritage, embrace Judaism and lead a long life of self fulfillment and compassion for others.

May you use your talents to their fullest, and always be your own person.

May you be blessed with a life filled with laughter, good friendships, and family.

May you follow all of your passions and achieve success, in whatever way is meaningful to you.

Today, as you taught us, we pray for your continued thirst for knowledge and that you will share it with others.

May God always keep you safe and lead you to all of life's wonderful opportunities and guide you through all its challenges.

H. May your dedication and determination lead you to passions that are rewarding and fulfilling.

May your instincts, intuitiveness and Jewish studies guide you safely and happily throughout your life.

May your kindness and caring continue to help others and characterize you.

May your huge reservoir of energy and innate passion for learning be used for personal growth, love of family and the betterment of community.

May your love for your family and friends bring you joy and happiness, strength and security, warmth and tradition.

May you one day enjoy your grandchildren's Bar and Bat Mitzvahs as your grandparents are today.

Most of all, may you always know, whatever doors you walk through and wherever life leads you, we are so very proud of you. You are one of the greatest and truest blessing of our lives and no matter what, you always have our love and support.

May the Holy One guard you and sustain you, helping you to be whole-hearted in your faith, studying torah and fulfilling Mitzvot. May you find favor before God and all people. And let us say, Amen.

Shabbat (Friday night) Candle Blessing

Shabbat (Friday night) Candle Blessing

קַבְּלַת פְּנִים

KABBALAT PANIM — WELCOMING

הדלקת הנרות
קדושה, ערבית
ברוכים ה' אתם
שקרי שבת

BLESSINGS FOR SHABBAT

The candles are lit before the blessing is recited.

BARUCH atah, Adonai
Eloheinu, Melech haolam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav,
vtzivanu l'hadlik
ner shel Shabbat.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי
אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו,
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק
נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת.

BLESSED ARE YOU, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe,
who hallows us with mitzvot,
commanding us to kindle the light of Shabbat.

For Kabbalat Shabbat, turn to page 12 [130].

Shabbat Candle Blessing — The mitzvah of kindling Shabbat lights in the home is an early rabbinic practice (*M. Shabbat 2:1ff*). The Shabbat candle blessing is first recorded in the ninth-century prayerbook, *Seder Rav Amram*. Lighting Shabbat candles as part of the synagogue service is an innovation of Reform Judaism.

2 [120]

Kabbalat Panim for Shabbat

Candle Blessing

Kiddush, Evening

Welcome

Shabbat Songs

You may offer one of these before kindling the lights.

AS THESE SHABBAT CANDLES give light
to all who behold them,
so may we, by our lives, give light to all who behold us.

As their brightness reminds us
of the generations of Israel who have kindled light,
so may we, in our own day, be among those who kindle light.

O SOURCE of light and truth,
Creator of the eternal law of goodness,
help us to find knowledge by which to live.
Lead us to take the words we shall speak
into our hearts and our lives.

Bless all who enter this sanctuary in need,
all who bring the offerings of their hearts.
May our worship lead us to acts of kindness, peace and love.

For Kabbalat Shabbat, turn to page 12 [130].

Help me perfect my ways of loving and caring.
Inspire me to make myself whole
so that I may honor Your name and
create a world of justice and peace.

Martin Buber

Blessings for the Reading of the Torah

Blessings for the Reading of the Torah

בְּרִכּוֹת הַתּוֹרָה

Blessings for the Reading of the Torah

Before the Reading of the Torah

בְּרַחוּ אֶת־יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ!

Bar'chu et Adonai ham'vo-rach

CONGREGATION AND THEN READER REPEATS:

בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד!

Ba-ruch Adonai ham'vo-rach l'o-lam va-ed

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר־בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים, וְנָתַן־לָנוּ
אֶת־תּוֹרָתוֹ.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

Ba-ruch Atah Adonai, Elo-hey-nu Melech ha-o-lam,
asher ba-char banu mee-kol ha-a-meem,
v'na-tan la-nu et Toh-ra-toh.
Baruch Atah Adonai, no-teyn ha-Torah.

After the Reading of the Torah

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ
הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן־לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת, וְחַיֵּי
עוֹלָם נָטָה בְּתוֹכֵנוּ. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן
הַתּוֹרָה.

Baruch Atah Adonai, Elo-hey-nu Melech ha-o-lam,
asher na-tan lanu Toh-rat emet,
v'cha-yey o-lam na-ta b'to-chey-nu.
Baruch Atah Adonai, no-teyn haTorah.

Prayer before Kiddush

This honor can be given to a Jewish or non-Jewish participant, even a younger sibling.

God of days and years, Author of life, our times are in Your hand. We thank You day by day for Your abounding blessings and, each year passes, we are grateful for all Your gifts. We gather together in special thankfulness to share in the happiness of our dear _____/these young people. Be with him/her/them always as the joy of his/her/their life/lives.

May he/she/they be blessed with health and happiness, and the strength to overcome sickness and sorrow. We pray that our lives may be filled with good and abundance of blessing; and may we have the joy of coming together for many more years, as a family united by mutual reverence and love. Amen.

If your celebration is a double, Family #1 participant will read paragraph 1 and Family #2 participant will read paragraph 2.