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## A Bar Mitzvah at Chabad of Cary

Dear Parent,

We are so happy you are considering Chabad of Cary for your son's Bar Mitzvah. We hope to be able to make this event meaningful, with inspiration that will last for years to come!

Jews have celebrated Bar Mitzvahs for thousands of years, and they have become a prominent part of our contemporary culture.

In thinking about the way to commemorate a Bar Mitzvah, we should first take a step back. What are some of the spiritual concepts we are celebrating?

- A Bar Mitzvah Celebrates the first 13 years of a child's life, childhood is a formative stage and a foundation for life.
- A Bar Mitzvah Celebrates a time when the soul begins to blossom allowing the individual to find "moral maturity" with himself.
- 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.

Which leads us to an important question: How can we infuse these concepts into the design of a Bar Mitzvah Celebration?

With this question in mind, we have set out to design a ceremony that emphasizes the "process" of maturation, responsibility, and Jewish identity. Rather than memorize a particular text for a one-time event (one that often does not have meaning for the Bar Mitzvah boy) we have chosen readings that articulate a developmentally appropriate message for your child. **These 12 Passages are** taken from the Bible, Talmud, and Jewish Spirituality. They are not just religious texts for a specific day, rather, messages for life. It is our hope that these values will become "tools for a meaningful life" as your child matures into adult life.

**The model that we have chosen is one that has been tremendously successful in communities around the country.**

Your son's ceremony includes:

- Readings of the 12 Passages
- A Speech, with reflections on the meaning of this important milestone, his path in reaching it, etc. In particular, a theme of one of the readings will be elaborated upon as well as new Mitzvot the Bar Mitzvah commits to.
- The Rabbi's explanation of the process, ceremony, and respective readings.
- As per your guidance, we call on family-members and friends for readings and/or personal reflections.
- A handout will be prepared for the all the guests containing the above readings and some additional prayers. The handout can also contain a personalized message from the family. If you like, you can also design your own cover.
- Parents, relatives, and close friends bless the Bar Mitzvah boy through our "fountain of blessings." They can also choose to convey the continuity of tradition with a "Judaic bestowal" (Tallit, Kiddush Cup, etc)
- A candy throw, in which we shower the Bar Mitzvah with sweetness

**The Ceremony can take place in one of two manners**

## *Option 1 - Shabbat*

### **WHEN:**

Shabbat Morning

### **WHAT:**

The Bar Mitzvah boy leads the prayers when the Torah is taken out of the Ark. He also studies a portion of the Torah-Reading with its cantillation marks and recites it as part of our Shabbat Morning Service. Afterwards, at the Kiddush following services, he recites the twelve Passages and shares a speech. Parents and other family members are welcome to share speeches at that time. Service begins at 9:30 am and lasts approximately three hours. Guests may arrive closer to the Torah Reading at 10:15 am.

### **FOOD:**

As of fall 2019, kosher catering for Bar and Bat Mitzvos at Chabad can be ordered through Freidi Posner at [freidiposner@gmail.com](mailto:freidiposner@gmail.com). Another option is Atara who can be reached at 713-505-9172 or [ataradelicious@yahoo.com](mailto:ataradelicious@yahoo.com)

For smaller crowds, you can choose one of the following two regular Kiddush Lunch Menus prepared by Chana and a group of women at Chabad of Cary. If choosing this option, we kindly ask that you not ask the Kiddush Team for

additional food choices/requests. Our website does list "add-on items" that your family may purchase and bring to the Chabad House.

**Deli**

Challah  
Grape juice/ wine  
Deli meat –pastrami and turkey  
Pickles  
Rye bread  
Ketchup and mustard  
Potato chips  
Coleslaw  
Cookie/ Bar dessert  
Fruit  
Seltzer and ice water

**Bagel and Lox**

Challah  
Grape Juice/Wine  
Bagels  
Lox  
Cream cheese  
Sliced tomatoes & onions  
Pasta Salad  
Cookie/ bar Dessert  
Fruit  
Seltzer and ice water

**FEE:**

This Bar Mitzvah Simcha Fee of a Bar Mitzvah at Chabad of Cary is \$750. This includes the ceremony, copies, kosher supervision of food (if done by Atara), a new pair of Tefilin, and a donation to the synagogue. Catering will be on t

**NOTES:**

Please bear in mind that videos and cameras are not used during this Shabbat Service.

*Option 2*

**WHAT:**

The Celebration is not a formal prayer service per se: It's a free-standing Judaic celebration of your son's Bar Mitzvah. We can schedule this ceremony at a time – and shape its schedule in a way – which will maximize the Bar Mitzvah meaning and celebration. The Ceremony revolves around the 12 Passages mentioned above. In addition, prayers will be recited, psalms read, and speeches shared (psalms and speeches may be recited in English) by family and friends you'd like to honor.

**WHEN:**

This Ceremony can take place on:

- A) Sunday Late Morning (on days without Hebrew School)
- B) Sunday Early Afternoon.
- C) Work/school holidays (Presidents Day, etc.)

(On a Shabbat just before the date of the ceremony, your son will get called up to the Torah at Chabad of Cary for the very first time though the celebration will take place on the date of the ceremony).

**WHERE:**

The Simcha can take place at Chabad of Cary or other (non-restaurant) locations in the area.

We've made some inquiries regarding affordable locations that are easy-going and allow you to bring in outside food (as the event will need to be kosher.) The Community Center at Bond Park in Cary seems like an excellent option. They are quite flexible and are only \$49/hour. As you will see from the link below, (search the bond park facility) there are a few available rooms.

<http://tinyurl.com/carybarmitzvah>

**FOOD:**

All Food and Liquer at the Ceremony must meet the Kosher Standards of Chabad.

There are two options for food.

A) Food prepared by Atara's Kosher Catering Atara can be reached at 713-505-9172 or ataradelicious@yahoo.com. As of fall 2019, kosher food can also be ordered through Freidi Posner at freidiposner@gmail.com

B) Family purchases all food and takes care of setup and cleanup.

The Rabbi will guide you with where food can be purchased locally. Certain other kosher items can be ordered through Chabad.

Paper goods and disposable serving utensils will be purchased by family. (Certain items like cutting boards, knives, can openers, etc can be borrowed from Chabad of Cary)

Suggested Menus Include 1) Bagels, Lox, and Cream cheese 2) Deli

**NOTES:**

Photography is permitted for a non-Shabbat Bar Mitzvah Ceremony

**FEE:**

This Simcha Fee of a Bar Mitzvah with Chabad of Cary is \$750. This includes the ceremony, use of facility (if at Chabad) copies, kosher supervision of food (whether Atara or by family), a pair of Tefilin, and a donation to the synagogue.

## *Preparation:*

About a year prior to your son's Bar Mitzvah, you should contact the Rabbi to schedule a date for the Bar Mitzvah. At that meeting, we will discuss our goals for the Ceremony and Readings. We will also chart forward the path to prepare for those goals and keep a Google Doc recording the progress each lesson.

Weekly tutoring with the Rabbi generally begin about 6 months before the Mitzvah. In these meetings we will practice the Readings, discuss what it means to be Bar Mitzvah, and learn about Mitzvot such as Tefilin.

The number of these sessions will depend on the goals for the Bar Mitzvah as well as your child's knowledge of Hebrew, etc. (If you choose to also have your child read from the Torah or lead the Musaf Service, a more substantial number of meetings will be necessary)

### **FEE:**

Tutoring will take place in 45 minute sessions. For students of the Hebrew School, it is \$30 a session, and for non-students, \$40

## *MITZVAH PROJECTS:*

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 each day (except Shabbat)
- Saying the Shema Prayer each day
- Regular (even if not weekly) attendance at Shabbat Services the year of the Bar Mitzvah.
- Over the course of the preparation process, the Bar Mitzvah boy will choose a Mitzvah Project; this has two dimensions; one of a "social" consciousness nature and the other of a 'ritual' nature (Tefilin, Mezuzah, etc) We will work with your son so that he can incorporate this into his Bar Mitzvah Ceremony.

Note: Regardless of when you schedule your ceremony and party, the actual 'Bar Mitzvah Day' is your son's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday on the Jewish Calendar. With your permission, the Rabbi will **visit your son at home on that day** – perhaps for just a few minutes – to celebrate the day's unique character.