

PARENT BLESSINGS FOR BAR or BAT MITZVAH

Mazel tov on your child's bar/bat mitzvah! You will be called upon to bless your child during the Torah service. Just before your child offers the *aliyah* blessing before his or her fourth section of Torah reading, the Rabbi will explain the significance of the *aliyah* blessing as the traditional "bar/bat mitzvah moment." This is a great spot in the service for you to offer a blessing over your child – with the Torah open before you, and your child is about to be called by their Hebrew name as "Bar/Bat Mitzvah." Below are several bar/bat mitzvah blessings for you to review and from which you should choose a blessing to present. It is appropriate for you to personalize the blessing and make it special for you and your family. You may combine verses that you like from different blessings and add a few lines of personalization. Please remember that this is not a speech and we need to be sensitive to both length and content. You will be doing your blessing in the middle of the Torah service; your child will still have one more section of Torah to read after you speak. Once you have selected a blessing and personalized it to any extent, please share a copy with the officiating rabbi. We will not share it with your child before the service. We are happy to help you in crafting a blessing that appropriately captures your sentiments on this day of *simcha*. Again, Mazel Tov on this important milestone,

Rabbi Jonathan Roos

CHOOSE ONE OR COMBINE TWO:

1. 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 her (his) commitment to the ideals and Mitzvot of our faith, our soul is joyful, our mind is at peace.

*Ba-ruch a-ta Adonai,
Eh-lo-hei-nu meh-lech ha-o-lam,
sheh-heh-cheh-ya-nu, v'ki-y'ma-nu,
v'higi-a-nu la-z'man ha-zeh.*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שֶׁהֵחֵינּוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ
וְהִגִּיעֵנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.

2. We pray that this day's service may long echo in our child's memory. May it engrave on her (his) 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.
3. O God, make me a worthy example to my children. Let nothing estrange me from them and from You. Help me, too, again and again to renew my attachment to the Covenant of Israel, to walk hand in hand with my child in the ways of righteousness and truth. Amen.

(OR for both parents together)

O God, make each of us a worthy example to our children. Let nothing estrange us from them and from You. Help us, too, again and again to renew our attachment to the Covenant of Israel, to walk hand in hand with our child in the ways of righteousness and truth. Amen.

ANOTHER OPTION on p. 262 in your child's prayer book, *Mishkan T'filah*:

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, [*name*], may always be worthy of this inheritance. Take its reaching 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.

May the One who has always been our Guide inspire you to bring honor to our family and to the House of Israel.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, שֶׁנָּתַן לִי אֶת הַזְכוּת וְאֶת הַכְּבוֹד לְתַת לְךָ/לָךְ תּוֹרָה.

Baruch atah, Adonai, shenatan li et hazchut v'et hakavod lateit l'cha/lach Torah.

Blessed is Adonai our God, who gives me the honor and privilege of entrusting you with Torah.

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 your becoming a Bar/t Mitzvah.

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

Amen.

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 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.

ANOTHER OPTION:

MAY YOU BE BLESSED WITH PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING --WITH WISDOM
AND COMPASSION, IN YOUR HEART AND IN YOUR DEEDS

MAY YOU HAVE THE STRENGTH TO CONTAIN CONFLICT AND SEEK JUSTICE
WHEN IT IS DUE

MAY YOUR KINDNESS SERVE AS AN EXAMPLE TO THOSE AROUND YOU

MAY YOUR ENTHUSIASM FOR LEARNING CONTINUE THROUGHOUT YOUR LIFE
AND BRING YOU JOY AND FULFILLMENT

MAY YOU BE PROUD OF YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND NEVER SHAMED BY
YOUR FAILURES.

MAY THE MEMORY OF YOUR CHILDHOOD BE A SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT
AND LAUGHTER FOR YOU

MAY YOU KEEP THE TRADITIONS OF JUDAISM ALIVE, AND COME TO KNOW
ISRAEL IN AN ERA OF PEACE

MAY YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS A PEOPLE, A RICH HERITAGE, TO WHICH YOU
BELONG AND FROM THAT YOU ARE CONNECTED TO ALL WHO DWELL ON THE
EARTH

MAY YOUR JUDAISM NOT BE SOMETHING INHERITED, BUT SOMETHING TO BE
DISCOVERED

GRATEFULLY WE GIVE BLESSING FOR THE JOYOUS PRIVILEGE OF SEEING OUR
DAUGHTER ATTAIN THIS MILESTONE AS SHE STEPS FORTH TO AFFIRM HER
COMMITMENT TO THE IDEALS AND MITZVOT OF OUR FAITH.

AMEN

Another Option: *Parents Prayer (can be divided at the break lines so each parent reads a section)*

What I wish for my Daughter/Son,
I wish for all our children.
I wish for you to be a
Person of character
Strong but not tough,
Gentle but not weak.

I wish for you to be
Righteous but not self-righteous
Honest but not unforgiving.

Wherever you journey, may your steps be firm
And may you walk in just paths
And not be afraid.

Whenever you speak, may your words
Be words of wisdom and friendship.

May your hands build
And your heart preserve what is good
And beautiful in our world.

May the voices of the generations of our people
Move through you
And may the God of our ancestors
Be your God as well.

May you know that there is a people,
A rich heritage, to which you belong
And from that sacred place
You are connected to all who dwell on the earth.

May the stories of our people
Be upon your heart
And the grace of the Torah rhythm
Dance in your soul.