

Bar Mitzvah Ceremony Overview

After all that study, practice, and preparation, it's time to celebrate! Here's an overview of the Bar Mitzvah Ceremony features that we offer at Chabad of Laguna Niguel.

Note: *The exact recitals, Torah readings and honors that your son will do is up to you. The Rabbi is here to advise and guide you in your decision.*

Ceremony

- **Shema Yisroel & Torah Procession:** The Bar Mitzvah boy removes the Torah from the Ark, and leads the congregation in reciting **Shema** and **Echad Elokeinu**. He then carries the Torah around the Shul before setting it down for the Torah Reading.
- **Torah Reading:** The Bar Mitzvah boy reads from the Torah in the traditional tune. There are seven individual readings (**Aliyot**) in the Parshah, followed by the smaller **Mafkir** portion and the **Haftarah**.
- **Family Aliyot & Honors:** Throughout the Torah reading, family and friends may be honored with Aliyot. This gives them the opportunity to recite a blessing on the Torah, which conveys blessings on the Bar Mitzvah boy and his family as well.
We highly recommend notifying the honorees in advance, and encouraging them to review the blessings ahead of time.
- **Candy Throw:** After the Bar Mitzvah boy is called to the Torah, candies are thrown at him by the congregation. This custom signifies our wish that he be showered with sweetness and mazal throughout the rest of his life.
- **Bar Mitzvah Boy's Speech:** After the Torah is returned to the Ark, the Bar Mitzvah boy shares a few words with the congregation. This sermon will be prepared by the Rabbi, with the input of the Bar Mitzvah boy and his parents.
Additionally, the Bar Mitzvah boy has the opportunity to share short insights on the Torah Reading, prepared by the Rabbi, in between Aliyot.
- **Al Tirah:** At the conclusion of the service, the Bar Mitzvah boy leads the congregation in singing the Al Tirah prayer.
- **Cup of Blessing Ceremony:** Following the service, the Rabbi calls upon family members and friends to pour a small cup of wine into the Kiddush goblet, each representing a different blessing for the Bar Mitzvah boy.



Celebration

There are a number of ways to celebrate this special occasion with Chabad. In addition to the ceremony, we offer the following suggestions:

- **Shabbat Lunch:** It is highly recommended to follow Shabbat Services with a Kiddush (Shabbat Lunch) in honor of the Bar Mitzvah. The Kiddush can range from light refreshments or a buffet lunch to a sit down luncheon, and the menu is open as long as our Kashrut standards are met.
Please keep in mind that our regular worshippers will take part in the Kiddush as well.
- Other options include a Sunday Brunch or Friday Night Shabbat Dinner.
- If you are planning a separate reception outside of Chabad, we expect that it be conducted in keeping with the spirit of the Mitzvah. This means that the food be catered kosher, and that the reception not take place on the Shabbat before nightfall.

Synagogue Fees

Unlike most synagogues, Chabad of Laguna Niguel does not require two years of membership in order to do a Bar Mitzvah. We are open to the entire Jewish community, regardless of observance or affiliation.

Being that Chabad is supported by the generosity of the community, however, we suggest a minimum donation of \$500 in connection with the Bar Mitzvah. This covers use of the facility, honors and Aliyot at the ceremony, and the Rabbi's services.