



*Congregation Temple Sinai
New Orleans*

TEMPLE SINAI
**B'NAI MITZVAH
HANDBOOK**

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WHOM TO CONTACT

Below is a chart that will help you determine whom to contact in case you have questions about any aspect of the B'nai Mitzvah process.

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VOCABULARY

Below you will find are some important Hebrew words that will be used throughout this guide and throughout Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation.

Aliyah	Literally “going up,” this refers to one who ascends the bimah to recite the blessings over the reading of the Torah or for other bimah honors.
Bar	Aramaic version of the Hebrew word ben, meaning “son.”
Bat	Hebrew for “daughter.”
Bimah	The raised platform on which the service is conducted.
D’var Torah	Literally, “a word about the Torah.” A d’var Torah is a sermon or teaching based on the Torah portion.
Haftarah	Not “half a Torah,” as it sounds, but rather the name for the additional biblical passage read after the Torah. Most Haftarah selections are from the books of the prophets (Nevi’im) and are connected to the Torah portion through focus on a similar theme.
Kabbalat Shabbat	The Friday evening service that “welcomes Shabbat.”
Kiddush	The prayer for sanctification of Shabbat, said over a cup of wine or grape juice.
Kippah	The head covering also known in Yiddish as a yarmulke. While Reform Judaism does not require kippot to be worn, Reform Jews may choose to do so in everyday life or during prayer in order to show respect for God.
Mitzvah	Though colloquially used to refer to a good deed, mitzvah literally means “commandment” and refers to the sacred obligations that we Jews are required to perform.
Motzi	Blessing recited over food, specifically bread.
Parashah	A Torah “portion.” Each week’s Torah portion has a specific name based on the topic or a key word at the beginning. For example, the Torah portion about Noah is known as “Parashat Noah.”
Siddur	The Hebrew word for “prayer book.” Siddur comes from the Hebrew word for “order,” indicating that our liturgy proceeds in a defined order from beginning to end.
Tallit	The fringed prayer shawl worn by some Jews during morning prayer. The tzitzit (fringes at the corners) remind us that we are obligated to the commandments.
Torah	Literally “teaching,” it refers to the first five books of the Hebrew Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). The Torah is also known as the Five Books of Moses, or the Pentateuch.
Tzedakah	From the Hebrew word for “righteous,” tzedakah refers to the works of our hands that help alleviate suffering and bring wholeness to the world.

B'NAI MITZVAH MEANINGS AND MYTHS

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is an ancient Jewish practice.

Although not mentioned anywhere in the Bible, the Bar Mitzvah seems to date back at least as far as the second century, where the Talmud notes that “at age thirteen a boy becomes responsible for the commandments.” Traditional Judaism regarded the age of thirteen as the point at which a father is released from responsibility for his son’s conduct. Though the practice of Bar Mitzvah has evolved throughout the ages, many believe that by the Middle Ages in Europe, a boy of thirteen would demonstrate his new status in the community by reading from the Torah scroll, leading the community in worship, and offering an original interpretation of the weekly Torah portion. These essential practices have been retained to the present day. The demand for equality in the twentieth century gave rise to the practice of Bat Mitzvah for girls, which has become universal in Reform synagogues.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is ultimately about responsibility.

While the process of Bar/Bat Mitzvah necessitates the acquisition of skills such as chanting Torah and Haftarah, studying Torah, and speaking in public, these do not comprise the essence of Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The key is the word mitzvah: a sacred obligation. By becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, a child learns his/her responsibilities to the community and acquires the motivation and experience to respond to a noble challenge. In so doing, s/he emerges as a “Jewish adult:” one who has responded to the Jewish understanding of maturity.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony is not a performance.

It is a celebration and a commemoration of a child’s effort and personal growth. The service is a religious ceremony, not a show. More to the point, the only mistake one can make at a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is to lose sight of this fact.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony emphasizes the centrality of Torah in Jewish life.

A child’s primary honor at the service is therefore to chant from the Torah scroll. Torah tells the story of our people and describes our experience of God. The Torah has served as the source of Jewish wisdom for millennia and it unites the Jewish people today as a common source of inspiration and hope.

The reception which follows is a continuation of the celebration.

Please try not to think of it as a separate party or event. Traditionally called a se’udat mitzvah, (meal in honor of the performance of a mitzvah), it is a special and sacred occasion. Setting aside a portion of one’s abundance to help the poor and needy can demonstrate that the morning’s celebration represents an ongoing commitment to others. MAZON: A Jewish Response To Hunger suggests that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family contribute a portion of gift money and 3% of the expense of the catering towards feeding the hungry. Read more at www.mazon.org.

One does not “have” a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. One becomes a Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Although it may seem trivial at first, the language is important here. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony signifies that a young person is entering a new stage of life that will ultimately lead to adulthood. It is a time of taking on new responsibilities and establishing behaviors that will be carried on through the rest of one’s life.

TIMELINE

Event	Approximate timing
Assignment of Bar/Bat Mitzvah date	3 years prior
Begin private instruction/tutoring	6-9 months prior
Mitzvah project	6-9 months prior
Family meeting (Rabbi Reimer)	4-6 months prior
D'var Torah family meeting (Rabbi Reimer)	2-3 months prior
Pulpit training	2 months prior
Family rehearsal	Week of ceremony
Friday night service	Evening prior to ceremony
Family meeting in Rabbi's study	Morning of ceremony, 10:00 a.m.
Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony	Shabbat morning, 10:15 a.m.

ASSIGNMENT OF BAR/BAT MITZVAH DATES

Approximately three years before the child's 13th birthday, families will meet for a B'nai Mitzvah family meeting. In this meeting, the Temple and the family will go over all necessary and pertinent information in the Temple Sinai B'nai Mitzvah process, including how to request a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date.

B'NAI MITZVAH TUTORING

Students will commence their formal training with the B'nai Mitzvah faculty approximately six to nine months before the child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Tutoring is conducted on an individual basis by the B'nai Mitzvah faculty under the supervision of Cantor Colman and Ann Kientz.

At their first tutorial session, Cantor Colman will provide each student with all their Bar/Bat Mitzvah material, including their specific Torah and Haftarah portions, and a specially prepared audio file that can be accessed on the internet or any smart device. Please notify Cantor Colman if you believe your child qualifies for special needs education, in which case s/he would benefit from an earlier start to tutoring. Furthermore, if it is determined during B'nai Mitzvah training that the student might benefit from additional time with tutors, s/he may be asked to attend additional tutoring sessions.

MITZVAH PROJECT

Becoming a son or daughter of the commandments is a serious responsibility to take on as one approaches adulthood. Part of the B'nai Mitzvah process involves understanding what it means to do God's work in the world. Therefore, prior to becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, each

student will participate in an extended community service project of ongoing personal significance which will fulfill the obligation of gemilut chasadim (acts of loving kindness). The options for this project are almost endless, and each student should find a project that has meaning and significance to him or herself.

We urge you to choose a project that you and your family care about. This could mean volunteering in a nursing home, residential facility, or hospital; a research-based project; a walk-a-thon to raise money for a cause of your choice; an animal-care related project; any kind of “drive” at your school or in your community to support a cause; helping at a shelter; collectives; “adopt an elderly neighbor”; and so forth.

We invite families to use a timeline that will ensure the most meaningful experience for their child. Some students complete their project before their Bar/Bat Mitzvah, others adopt a project that is ongoing, and still others complete their project after they become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The sooner you start thinking about the mitzvah project, the more meaning you will get out of the experience. If you have any questions, please be in touch with Rabbi Reimer. The mitzvah project process is reviewed during your d’var Torah family meeting.

On pages 10 to 16, we have included a list of suggested organizations that students and their families could work with for the project.

FAMILY MEETING WITH RABBI REIMER

Rabbi Reimer will meet with parents prior to the commencement of formal Bar/Bat Mitzvah study, four to six months in advance of the child’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. At that time, Rabbi Reimer will explain the entire B’nai Mitzvah preparation procedure and review family requirements and responsibilities. Parents will have the opportunity to ask questions and share specific insights concerning their child to make the training more meaningful and effective.

FAMILY SESSION WITH RABBI REIMER

Each family will meet with Rabbi Reimer approximately two to three months prior to the ceremony. The purpose of this session is to:

- Begin the process of learning about and discussing the d’var Torah (speech).
- Review your family honors (aliyot, etc) and yahrzeits.
- Most importantly, provide an opportunity for the family and rabbi to get to know each other.

Rabbi Reimer’s assistant will contact you to set up these meeting times.

PULPIT TRAINING

Approximately two months before the ceremony, the student will meet with Cantor Colman in the sanctuary to become more familiar with the setting where the ceremony will take place. Students will practice all their material and chant directly from the Torah scroll at the pulpit.

FAMILY REHEARSAL

Cantor Colman will meet with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student and his/her parents a week prior to the ceremony for a final run through. At that time, the student will practice all his/her material, including the d'var Torah, and the parents will rehearse their parts as well. This rehearsal will be coordinated through the Cantor's office.

FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICE

The parents of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate (and/or other family/friends) will be called up to light the Shabbat candles at the beginning of the service and again to lead the Kiddush and Motzi at the end of the service. In addition, for families who choose to do so, Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates will be presented with a tallit and a tallit blessing by his/her parents or an individual of the family's choice.

B'NAI MITZVAH REQUIREMENTS

The following are requirements in order to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Sinai.

- **ELIGIBILITY** – The celebration of becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Sinai is a privilege afforded only to members in good standing. To do so, a student must be at least 12 ½ years old and enrolled in and attending Temple Sinai's Religious School.
- **TUTORING** – Conducted under the supervision of Cantor Colman and Ann Kientz, our tutoring program includes the individual and specialized attention each student deserves.
- **MITZVAH PROJECT** – Each student, with the help and involvement of their family, will select and complete an extended community service project of ongoing personal significance.
- **SHABBAT SERVICE ATTENDANCE** – To strengthen liturgy and Hebrew skills, gain familiarity with the Shabbat service, and feel comfortable on the day of your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah, we expect that 6th graders and their families attend six Shabbat services, and that 7th graders and their families attend seven Shabbat services during the year.

PREPARATION AND STUDY

Materials for Preparation

When your tutoring begins, you will receive all the materials needed for preparation, including a master booklet of your Torah and Haftarah with commentary, a copy of the prayers, and a link to a recording of your passages on www.soundcloud.com.

Suggested Study Schedule

- 1) Practice the service for the taking of the Torah from the Ark.
- 2) Write a d'var Torah interpreting your parasha (Torah portion), and discuss why Judaism and becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is important to you.
- 3) Learn to read and chant your Torah and Haftarah blessings in Hebrew.
 - i. To begin, study the first three verses of the Torah portion. Learn to read and chant each word carefully. You should then continue learning a verse each week, until you have learned the entire Torah portion. Read and discuss the English translation of your Torah portion with your parents. You will then be assigned the unvocalized Torah portion (your Torah portion without vowels and without punctuation).
 - ii. Begin by studying the first three verses of the Haftarah portion. You should then continue learning at least one verse every week until you have learned the entire portion. Read and discuss the English translation of your Haftarah with your parents.
- 4) As you get closer to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony (usually about two months before), Cantor Colman will take you into the sanctuary so you can practice all your material on the bimah. We will take the Torah from the Ark and you will chant your portion directly from the Torah scroll. Before you know it, you will feel completely at ease on the bimah.

MITZVAH PROJECT OPTIONS

Our synagogue has established relationships with the following non-profits. After an initial meeting with Ann Kientz to discuss the mitzvah project, we can also suggest other opportunities depending on the interest of the student.

APEX YOUTH CENTER – APEX COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT, INC.

www.apexyouthcenter.org

(504) 358-APEX (2739)

APEX supports, innovates, and creates programs and services focusing on the needs of young people from age five through 25 in our communities. They offer mentorship programs as well as homework help, tutoring, computer access, non-violent video games, team sports, music, and art.

The center offers services during the day for children between the ages of 12 and 18, with special activities and programs in the evening for teens and young adults between the ages of 15 and 25.

Volunteers circulate and facilitate positive social interaction, teaching the necessary verbal and non-verbal communication skills to resolve conflict and develop relationships.

BEACON OF HOPE RESOURCE CENTER

contact@beaconofhopenola.org

www.beaconofhopenola.org

(504) 309-5120

Beacon of Hope Resource Center revitalizes New Orleans neighborhoods using volunteers to help residents rebuild their homes and communities. With the help of over 30,000 volunteers we have completed 1,700 homeowner projects, replanted 25 miles of green space, and renovated 10 parks and playgrounds in the Lakeview, Gentilly, and Lower 9th Ward neighborhoods.

Beacon of Hope is mobilizing its resources in response to the recent catastrophic flooding in Louisiana. We are working in conjunction with local organizations that are managing volunteers and providing resources to homeowners in affected areas. In order to best serve the residents of Louisiana impacted by the flooding that took place in August 2016, we are also in partnership with SBP, formerly St. Bernard Project, and *The Baton Rouge Advocate* to broaden our reach and provide a complete package of services to restore neighborhoods. This association will blend our proven model for recovery with SBP's highly effective restoration and rebuilding programs to bring individuals and communities back to their former status.

CAMP RESTORE

www.camprestore.org/volunteering/volunteer-opportunities/

(504) 242-2636

Camp Restore has partnered with more than 80 nonprofits across Greater New Orleans with a wide range of work year-round. Volunteer opportunities fall under the themes of Environment, Human Care, Grassroots, and Construction.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES – ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW ORLEANS

www.ccano.org

(504) 523-3755

The Catholic Charities' focus in New Orleans has been on saving and restoring properties and meeting the basic needs of the poor.

COMMON GROUND RELIEF

www.commongroundrelief.org

(504) 312-1729

We are a community-initiated volunteer organization offering assistance, mutual aid, and support. This work gives hope to communities by working with them, providing for their immediate needs, and emphasizes people working together to rebuild their lives in sustainable ways.

Through Common Ground Relief, we have provided a vehicle for over 47,000 people of all ages and backgrounds to volunteer in the recovery of the area. We have gutted over 3,000 homes, provided for the basic needs of thousands of New Orleans residents, and founded a now independent health clinic and women's shelter. We meet the residents who need help in rebuilding their flood damaged homes and offer assistance for new construction in New Orleans at our [Anita Roddick Advocacy Center](#). Common Ground Relief also offers a community gardening program and a job training program.

GROW DAT YOUTH FARM

www.growdatyouthfarm.org/volunteer

(504) 300-1132

The mission of Grow Dat Youth Farm is to nurture a diverse group of young leaders through the meaningful work of growing food.

On our farm we work collaboratively to produce healthy food for local residents and to inspire youth and adults to create personal, social and environmental change in their own communities. Grow Dat is a place where people from different backgrounds and disciplines come together in research and practice to support public health, local economies and a sustainable food system in South Louisiana.

Individuals (ages 10 and above, minors must be accompanied by guardians) are welcome to help with farm tasks such as weeding, non-native plant removal and harvesting on select days during the farm season (October 1st - July 1st). Volunteers are welcome during weekday mornings, Tuesday-Friday, from 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. We will not host drop-in volunteers during the following periods: week of Mardi Gras, week of Thanksgiving, weeks between Christmas and New Year's Day, July 1 - October 1.

Just show up at the farm ten minutes early with good shoes you don't mind getting dirty, a water bottle, snacks, and a hat. Be ready to sign a liability waiver.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

www.habitat-nola.org/volunteer/

(504) 861-2077

This well-known organization's purpose is to build affordable housing. Volunteer opportunities include building homes, maintaining a community garden, and assisting at the New Orleans Habitat for Humanity retail outlet that sells donated goods in order to raise funds for programs and provide affordable home repair goods and furniture.

HANDS-ON NEW ORLEANS

info@handsonneworleans.org

www.handsonneworleans.org/

(504) 827-6854

This organization connects volunteers of all ages to city-wide service projects in areas ranging across the board. Visit HandsOn New Orleans' project calendar to find an opportunity that meets your interests.

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS INC.

www.juniorachievement.org/web/ja-gno

(504) 569-8650

Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans, Inc. is a local office of Junior Achievement USA (JA), the world's largest and fastest-growing non-profit economic education organization. Junior Achievement empowers young people to own their economic success. Our volunteer-delivered, K-12 programs foster work-readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy skills, and use experiential learning to inspire kids to dream big and reach their potential.

Junior Achievement is a not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to inspire young people to succeed in a global economy. Since its founding in 1919, JA has contributed to the business and economics education of young people throughout the world.

A want versus a need. How to balance a checkbook. Don't you wish that someone had taught you those things as you were growing up? Now there is someone. YOU. All we need is your enthusiasm, life experience, and a willingness to teach children about how you took chances

and shot for the stars. Junior Achievement provides the training, curriculum, and a classroom ready to meet you.

LOWER NINTH WARD LIVING MUSEUM

rebecca@l9livingmuseum.org

www.l9livingmuseum.org/wp/

The Lower Ninth Ward Living Museum was created to celebrate the rich history of this unique neighborhood. Only one in five residents have been able to return to their homes, so many stories will be lost if we as a community fail to actively remember. The Living Museum features oral histories from community members, exhibits of key events from the history of the Lower Ninth Ward, and cultural events that entertain and educate.

The Living Museum is operated by volunteer professionals and interns. We are currently accepting applications for interns to conduct interviews with local residents (audio and video), solicit artifacts and ideas from community members, work on permissions for exhibit materials, develop marketing materials, compile videos (for exhibits and the website), contribute to social media, and perform a variety of other tasks vital to the operation of the museum.

The workload and schedule are flexible, depending upon an individual's strengths, skill sets, and interests. Previous experience not required, but passion for the Lower Ninth Ward and social justice are!

PARKWAY PARTNERS

info@parkwaypartnersnola.org

www.parkwaypartnersnola.org/index.php/get-involved/volunteer/

(504) 620-2224

Parkway Partners is a non-profit organization that empowers citizens to preserve, maintain and beautify green space in New Orleans. The storms and flood destroyed more than 50,000 trees in Orleans Parish. Parkway Partners works to restore the urban forest to public spaces.

There are many different ways to volunteer your time with Parkway Partners:

- Start or join an urban garden
- Join in a workday at one of our urban gardens
- Volunteer on a regular basis at a schoolyard garden
- Coordinate a neighborhood tree planting project
- Donate a tree for one of our tree planting efforts
- Help plant trees
- Help out at the monthly 2nd Saturday Program
- Provide greenhouse support
- Water plants outside
- Help inside the office with data entry, house plant watering and pruning

PROJECTS WITH PURPOSE

info@projectswithpurpose.com

www.projectswithpurpose.org/

(504) 934-1000

Experience “voluntourism” and make a difference! PWP designs all facets of custom volunteer events tailored to any group’s interests. Spend a day having fun and giving back, while PWP takes care of all the details.

PWP has executed events building homes, landscaping parks, revitalizing neighborhoods, refurbishing educational spaces, packing kits for schoolchildren, making care packages for veterans, and anything else you can imagine.

REBUILDING TOGETHER NEW ORLEANS

info@rtno.org

www.rtno.org/

(504) 581-7032

A continuing volunteer effort to improve the quality of life of low income homeowners, particularly those who are elderly, disabled, veterans, or single head of households with minor children, through home repair and revitalization of New Orleans’ neighborhoods.

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS AND ACADIANA

help@secondharvest.org

www.no-hunger.org/volunteer/

(504) 734-1322

Providing food access, advocacy, education, and disaster response in Southern Louisiana. With your support, Second Harvest provides more than 30 million meals annually and helps **100,000+ people every month.**

ST. BERNARD PROJECT

info@sbpusa.org

www.stbernardproject.org/

(504) 277-6831

SBP’s mission is to shrink the time between disaster and full recovery by ensuring that disaster-impacted citizens and communities recover in a prompt, efficient, and predictable manner.

Since its founding in 2006—in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana—following Hurricane Katrina, SBP has directly rebuilt homes for more than 1,170 families with the help of 150,000 volunteers across seven states.

In one day, a single volunteer—with no previous construction experience—can:

- Mud/spackle several rooms
- Install a new floor
- Paint a small house

You will literally help rebuild a family's home. This may include hanging insulation or drywall, mudding/spackling, sanding, texturing, priming, painting, laying floors, and/or hanging trim, doors, and baseboard.

While there is no experience necessary, if you have significant experience in any of these areas or in framing, electrical, plumbing and/or cabinetry, please inform the Volunteer Department prior to your arrival so that we can assign you to a specialty team.

JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER OF NEW ORLEANS – UPTOWN

www.nojcc.org/index.php

(504) 887-5158

The Jewish Community Center of New Orleans strives to promote and ensure the strength and well-being of our Jewish community.

YOUTH REBUILDING NEW ORLEANS

www.yrno.com/

(504) 264-3344

YRNO engages local youth in the betterment of the New Orleans community. Volunteers help reduce blight by rebuilding distressed and foreclosed homes. The finished homes are sold to teachers to stabilize neighborhoods and positively impact the education system.

THE CHOICE FOUNDATION

marissa.allweiss@choiceschoolsno.org

www.choicefoundation.org

The mission of the Choice Foundation is to promote school choice in Louisiana by the exemplary operation of charter schools.

BRIDGE HOUSE/GRACE HOUSE

kgardere@bridgehouse.org

www.bridgehouse.org/

(504) 821-7133

Bridge House/Grace House provides long-term residential gender-specific treatment to men and women in our community who have become dependent on alcohol or drugs so that they may lead sober and productive lives. Innovative and comprehensive clinical, vocation-based programs and residential services, with varying levels of care, are offered in an atmosphere that validates each individual as an important member of our community while promoting

personal responsibility in a life of recovery. These services are offered regardless of one's ability to pay.

Help provide wholesome, hot meals to hundreds of people in need.

**LOUISIANA SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS
(LASPCA)**

info@la-spca.org

www.la-spca.org/

(504) 638-5191

The LASPCA has been committed to serving the needs of people and animals in New Orleans and across the region for more than 125 years.

Attend a volunteer orientation to learn more about the Volunteer Program and the opportunities available. Individuals aged 12-14 years old are required to volunteer as a team with a parent or adult guardian. Volunteers under the age of 16 are not eligible to be trained as Animal Care Volunteers. Both team members must complete each step of the volunteer process and must always volunteer together at any events.

THE HEBREW BIBLE

While Torah refers specifically to the first five books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), in its broadest sense, Torah encompasses all of Judaism's teachings, old and new. Torah opens our eyes to the Jewish world around us. Torah is the embodiment of all that we Jews hold sacred.

As a Bar/Bat Mitzvah you will have the opportunity to study a great many things. The Torah portion chosen especially for you contains valuable lessons. The challenge is to put these lessons into practice. We hope that the more you study Torah the more you will realize how relevant its teachings are to your life today. Your teachers will help you understand that Torah can and does serve as a practical guide to help us lead productive and meaningful lives.

Here is a general outline of the contents of the **Bible** (Tanach).

I. **TORAH** – (Also known as the Hebrew Bible, Five Books of Moses, Chumash, Pentateuch)

The Torah is read consecutively, a few chapters each week throughout the year, beginning and concluding on Simchat Torah.

- A. **Genesis** (B'reshit)
The story of creation to the death of Joseph in Egypt.
- B. **Exodus** (Sh'mot)
The story of Egyptian slavery, the rise of Moses, the crossing of the Red Sea, the giving of the Ten Commandments, and the building of the Tabernacle.
- C. **Leviticus** (Vayikra)
Laws of sacrifice and ritual purity, and vivid descriptions of the rituals of the Tabernacle.
- D. **Numbers** (B'midbar)
The wanderings of the Israelites in the desert and challenges to Moses' authority.
- E. **Deuteronomy** (D'varim)
Moses bids farewell to the Israelites as they prepare to enter the Promised Land. A repetition of some of the more important laws, including the Ten Commandments.

II. **PROPHETS** (Nevi'im)

Your Haftarah most likely comes from this section of the Bible, and it is matched with your Torah portion according to subject matter.

- A. Chronological history picking up where the Torah left off:
 - 1. Joshua
 - 2. Judges
 - 3. Samuel I & II
 - 4. Kings I & II

- B. The teachings of the Prophets themselves:
 - 1. Isaiah
 - 2. Jeremiah
 - 3. Ezekiel
 - 4. The twelve so-called minor prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

III. WRITINGS (K'tuvim)

The five scrolls (megillot), Wisdom Literature, historical books, and miscellaneous sacred books.

- A. Psalms
- B. Proverbs
- C. Job
- D. Song of Songs (read on Pesach)
- E. Ruth (read on Shavuot)
- F. Lamentations (read on Tisha B'Av)
- G. Ecclesiastes (read on Sukkot)
- H. Esther (read on Purim)
- I. Daniel
- J. Ezra/Nehemiah
- K. Chronicles I & II

THE JEWISH WORSHIP SERVICE

Avodah (worship) allows us to look deep into our hearts, minds, and souls to communicate more effectively with God. One vehicle we use today is prayer. Prayer is not easy for most of us. We need tools to help us better communicate, so we have a prayer book. Our siddur provides us with a set order of the prayers. New prayers and prayer books are constantly being written to reflect the times in which we live and the events going on around us. Yet, there are certain liturgical passages which have endured since biblical times.

Understanding the flow of the liturgy we hope will help us understand the meaning of the prayers and maybe even help us to know God and ourselves that much better. So here is an overview of the Shabbat morning liturgy. Follow the road map and your spiritual journey will be a great trip!

Introductory Prayers

These prayers prepare us for worship. They get us in the mood for prayer, and they consist of blessings and verses expressing praise and thanks to God. These prayers culminate with the **Reader's (Chatzi) Kaddish**, which separates the introductory section from the official beginning of the prayer service.

The Sh'ma and its Blessings

The **Bar'chu** (call to worship) marks the official beginning of the formal service, declaring as our ancestors did in the ancient Temple that it is our duty to praise God who is deserving of our praise. The two paragraphs, which follow, provide the answer to why we pray.

The first paragraph (**Yotzer**) deals with creation and how God renews the work of creation daily. The theme of God's maintaining order within the universe is emphasized, such as the rising and the setting of the sun and the order of the seasons.

The second paragraph (**Ahavah Rabbah**) thanks God for spiritual illumination as compared to natural light in the first paragraph. The themes of Torah, mitzvot, and God's choosing us in love are stressed.

This leads naturally to the ultimate statement of faith and trust in the one, true God – the **Sh'ma**.

The **V'ahavta**, which follows the Sh'ma in Deuteronomy, reminds us that the unity of God leads to our duty to love God. Belief leads to loving obedience. Performing mitzvot is a tangible manifestation of this love.

Redemption (G'ulah)

God is praised as the great redeemer and savior who brought us out of slavery in Egypt and has saved us from persecution in every generation. This section culminates with the chanting of verses from Exodus chapter 15 (**Mi Chamocho**), which recalls the crossing of the Red Sea.

The T'filah (Amidah)

For Shabbat, this section consists of seven blessings. During the weekday services, 13 additional petitionary blessings are added.

- 1) **Avot V'imahot** God of our ancestors
- 2) **G'vurot** God's protection
- 3) **K'dushat Hashem** God's holiness
- 4) **K'dushat Hayom** Sanctification of the Sabbath day
- 5) **Avodah** Acceptance of worship
- 6) **Hoda-ah** Thanks and gratitude
- 7) **Shalom** Peace

The Torah Service

The Torah scroll is removed from the Ark with the reciting of biblical verses. The parashat ha-shavuah (the specific Torah portion designated for that week) is chanted. This is followed by the chanting of the Haftarah (an additional biblical portion, usually from the Prophets).

Aleinu

The first section relates specifically to the people of Israel and our God. The second section is universal in theme and culminates with the messianic hope as expressed by the prophet Zechariah that "On that day God will be one and God's name will be one."

Kaddish

A statement of praise of God – contains no reference to death. The Kaddish is a public testimony to God's holiness and God's greatness. Written in Aramaic (not Hebrew!), the Kaddish was originally recited after the reading of a biblical passage or following a scholarly lesson. It alludes to a messianic hope. The earliest reference to the Kaddish as a prayer for mourners occurs in the 13th century.