



# Bat Mitzvah

HANDBOOK AND GUIDE

## WELCOME!

In Judaism, the Bat Mitzvah marks the most significant stage in the life of a young woman. As she grows older, she will constantly reflect on this momentous occasion as a major part of her maturing process. It is a turning point where a girl is suddenly transformed into a Jewish Adult. Feeling the pride of being a full-fledged member of the Jewish nation, identifying with her essence in a strong and positive manner, and realizing she is an integral part of our beautiful traditions and rich heritage.

This feeling and commitment help inspire her to continue to grow into the best possible version of herself.

At Chabad of Fremont, the Bat Mitzvah celebrations are faithful to the beauty and authenticity of Jewish tradition. It is a ceremony, which will bring your daughter to deep recognition and appreciation of her special role as a part of the Jewish Nation.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

### ▫ **Personalized**

We believe that no two children are the same and no two families are the same, and we, therefore, strive to personalize this most meaningful lifecycle event to make it most meaningful, enjoyable and inspiring for your family. We celebrate each child's individual strengths by making each Bat Mitzvah fit the unique needs of the child

### ▫ **Meaningful and Relevant**

Our goal is to instill in each child the meaning and relevance behind what it is they are doing, so the experience is meaningful and relevant to their lives in today's day and age.

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## ▫ Not just a ceremony, but about being Jewish

The Bat Mitzvah is much more than a ceremony, it is about who we are. Our focus is on experiencing the joy and depth of being Jewish. The ceremony is only one part of that. The training and preparation for the Bat Mitzvah reflect that as well. The child is taught the meaning of what it means to be Jewish and is given time to ask and reflect on her becoming a Bat Mitzvah with the teacher she studies with.

## ▫ Enjoy the whole experience

It is not just about the destination and the journey should be meaningful and enjoyable as well. We want your child to always remember her Bat Mitzvah and the training that preceded it, as a joyous experience.

# STANDARDS & PROCEDURES

The following Bat Mitzvah information guide will outline the aspects, options and policies at Chabad.

## 1. Year of Bat Mitzvah at-a-glance

- Choose your date and the type of ceremony
- Private training (duration of time will depend on the child)
- Choose and implement “Chesed Project”, “Mitzvah Undertaking”, and write “Bat Mitzvah Speech”

## 2. Candle Lighting

One of the most special mitzvot for a Bat Mitzvah is the Mitzvah of Shabbat candles. This mitzvah helps instill in Jewish girls the sense that they can illuminate their families and world through their personal acts of goodness and kindness. In preparation for her Bat Mitzvah, your child will make it a weekly practice to light Shabbat candles in the months leading up to the ceremony.

### 3. Date & Ceremony

Preparation for a Bat Mitzvah takes 3 – 12 months. This depends on each girls' current level of knowledge.

## BAT MITZVAH SERVICE

The following is a description of a typical Bat Mitzvah service, which is approximately one hour, and includes prayers as well as reading selected verses from the Torah portion and D'var Torahs (speeches).

- Welcome & Introduction
- Passing the torch through the generations of the family.
- Candlestick presentation by girl's mother.
- Prayers led by Bat Mitzvah girl
- Hebrew Reading by the Bat Mitzvah Girl
- Cup of Blessing or Candle lighting Ceremony
- Parents' Greeting
- Yivarechicha Blessing
- Candy Throw and Congratulations from Everyone
- Mazel Tov sung
- Reception (optional)

## CEREMONY OPTIONS

### Havdalah Service

The service can begin anywhere from one hour after Shabbat ends. The Bat Mitzvah girl welcomes everyone and speaks about the Havdalah ceremony. She honors close family members by having them participate in parts of the service.

Havdalah is recited by the Rabbi and the Bat Mitzvah girl recites special Saturday night prayers.

The ceremony continues as described previously.

## Sunday Morning or Evening Ceremony

A Sunday Bat Mitzvah follows the ceremony template. The service can be followed by a brunch or a reception.

## Friday Night Candle Lighting

In a Friday evening service, the Bat Mitzvah girl leads the women and girls in the candle lighting and blessing. In the winter, the candle lighting will be at the beginning of the ceremony, and in the summer, the candle lighting will be after the Bat Mitzvah ceremony but before the Shabbat evening service. Please remember that videos and cameras are only allowed until the Candle lighting service. After the service, the Kiddush is recited by the Rabbi and the family of the Bat Mitzvah girl then hosts either dinner or dessert reception.

## 5. Pictures & Music

If a ceremony is on Friday Evening, pictures and music are allowed until candle lighting. There is no limit to music and pictures during a weekday event.

## 6. Private Training

During these sessions, she will receive an in-depth immersion into the basics of Judaism such as:

**The Meaning Of Bat Mitzvah** – A deep appreciation and understanding of this transformational life cycle event.

**12 Torah Passages** – An in-depth study of the 12 Pesukim (verses). These 12 Torah passages are the fundamentals that define our faith and practice

**Great Jewish Women in History** – A comprehensive study of the role of Jewish women throughout history with relevant lessons for life in the 21st century.

**Special Mitzvot Connected with Bat Mitzvah** – Understand the meaning and traditions connected with the Mitzvot of being a Jewish Woman.

**Ahavat Yisrael – Love for A Fellow Jew** – This unit will focus on and develop a sense of responsibility for the people around us (your daughter will choose a Chesed project for her Bat Mitzvah).

She will also prepare her own Torah readings and prepare the various speeches and insights she will be delivering during her Bat Mitzvah ceremony.

## **7. Chesed Project, Mitzvah Undertaking, and Bat Mitzvah Essay**

As part of becoming a responsible Jewish Woman, each Bat-Mitzvah girl should choose a Chesed – Kindness Project. Some examples are: ‘adopt’ a senior with regular visitation, raise money for poor families, volunteer for a Jewish organization, study with someone who needs help, befriend someone who needs a friend, send cards and care packages to victims of terror in Israel. You will be given a chesed report that your daughter will complete to describe her chesed project.

As a way of implementing the lessons learned, each Bat-Mitzvah girl should choose a ritual mitzvah in honor of her Bat Mitzvah to observe for at least 1 week; e.g., make a blessing before eating, say the Shema, study Torah 15 minutes a day, honor & observe the Shabbat or give charity. You will be given a mitzvah report that your daughter will complete to describe her mitzvah undertaking.

## **8. Bat-Mitzvah Party**

Although not necessary, many families have a Bat Mitzvah party in addition to the ceremony. Chabad requires that any parties associated with the Bat Mitzvah serve only kosher food. There are numerous kosher catering options and venues and we will be most happy to assist you.

We will provide you with an honors list that includes a list of honors to be given to various family members, friends together with a description of what the honors are.

We will also provide you with all the prayers. Sample Programs and invitations are available upon request.

## 10. Your Investment

Your investment in your daughter's Bat-Mitzvah experience is as follows:

Siddur - \$18

Candlestick - According to your preference

Private Weekly Training- \$45 per 45 minutes-1-hour session

Many families choose to make a donation to Chabad in honor of the ceremony. (suggested donation of \$1000)

As always, no child will be turned away from Chabad for lack of funds. If necessary, other financial options can be discussed at the first meeting.

## 11. Guidelines

- The celebration should take place on or after the girl's 12th birthday
- Bat Mitzvah Girl must attend our Sunday school program as well as private Bat Mitzvah lessons & Bat Mitzvah Club.
- Bat Mitzvah Girl (and hopefully entire family) must attend Shabbat services three times as well as all holiday services the year preceding her Bat Mitzvah.

- The family is responsible to buy the candy that is thrown. The candy must be kosher and pareve (not dairy). Kosher symbols are a K or a U inside of a circle.
- Sunkist Gems are an example of kosher candy and highly recommended, as they are soft.
- All Food and liquor served after the service must meet the kosher standards of Chabad
- Bat Mitzvah Girl should commit to joining Cteen for a year after her Bat Mitzvah

Mazal Tov