



Sam's Bar Mitzvah FAQs for the Service



Welcome to Sam's Bar Mitzvah! We are thrilled that you are here to share this important *simcha* (joyous occasion) with us. When Sam is called to the Torah today, it will signify the culmination of a year of intense study, Jewish learning, and volunteer work. Becoming a Bar Mitzvah (literally, "son of the commandments") is when Sam accepts the obligations of Jewish adulthood.

What will Sam do today? Sam will chant in Hebrew from the Torah (a handwritten parchment scroll containing the first five books of the Old Testament), lead our prayer services, and present his learning and interpretation of this week's readings in a *d'var Torah* (words of Torah). Sam has been studying with his tutor, Cindy Friedman, and the clergy of Anshe Emet for a year to prepare for this day, and we are grateful to them.

What is Sam wearing on his head and arm? Those are tefillin (sometimes called phylacteries). In fulfillment of the verse (Deut. 6:8), "You shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for a reminder between your eyes," Jewish adults bind tefillin onto their head and upper arm every week-day. The boxes contain the text of the four places the Torah mentions the mitzvah of tefillin, written by a scribe on parchment.

What is Sam wearing on his shoulders? Sam is wearing a tallit (prayer shawl), which is worn by some Jewish adults during morning services. Sam began wearing his tallit, a gift from his Bubbee and Poppa Zayde, when he turned 13.

How will the service proceed? Marsha will begin by leading us in P'seukei D'Zimrah, the preliminary blessings and psalms, and then Sam will lead Shacharit, the morning service. Sam will then deliver his *d'var Torah* and will read from the Torah. The portion is split into three sections, or *aliyot*, and several people will be called to the Torah for the honor of blessing the reading of the Torah. After the Torah reading is complete, the Torah will be raised for all to see, then wrapped and dressed. and Rabbi Siegel will speak to Sam. Sam will conclude the service and then everyone will have a chance to wish him Mazel Tov over unmuted Zoom.

How can I follow along in the service and Torah reading? We have provided PDFs of the service and the Torah reading in advance, and will also post them in the chat for you. Translations are available alongside the Hebrew text. Everyone will be muted during the service, but we would love for you to sing along and say amen from your homes.

What will Sam be reading for his Torah portion today? Sam's full Torah portion is Bereshit (Bereshit 1:1 - 6:8), the very first section of the Torah. On Saturday morning, he will read the entirety of it, which contains some of the most well-known sections of the Torah, including the Creation, Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden and the ejection from it, Cain and Abel, a whole lot of begatting, and the first mention of Noah. On Monday mornings, we read only a part of the Shabbat portion, so this morning Sam will read Bereshit 1:1-13, which tells the story of the first three days of Creation.

What is Sam's Hebrew name? Sam's Hebrew name is Shmuel Avichai. He is named for his paternal great-grandparents, Sam Levin (Miffie's father) and Chaim Nagorsky (Sy's father).

Who is with you today? In order to have a full service, ten Jewish adults need to be present. We are very lucky to have been in a "Corona family" for several months with the people in the room with us today. They are our dear friends Robin Mordfin, Gil Matar, Ariela Housman, and the Schwartz-Faier family: Debbie, Jim, Aaron, Zev, and Isaac. Thankfully, that just gets us to eleven (not counting Isaac, who is not yet 13).

What's with the candy? There is a long tradition at *s'machot* (the plural of *simcha*) of wishing people a sweet life by throwing candy at them. We invite you to eat something sweet in Sam's honor as we pelt him with candy on your behalf after he finishes his Torah reading.

How can we add to your joy today? We are so glad you asked! Just by being with us on the Zoom today you are increasing our joy, so thank you for that. We would be delighted if you would use a festive background on our Zoom today as well. Everyone will be muted for the duration of the service, but at the end of the service, we will "spotlight" each of you and unmute you for a moment so you can wish Sam a hearty mazel tov. This may take a while, but we would love for you to stay on if you can. And finally, don't forget to [sign Sam's Kudoboard](#) please!

Thank you all for being with us today. Every single one of you has been an important part of our family reaching this incredible day, and we are very grateful.

