

# Valley Chabad Bar Mitzvah Handbook and Contract

Dear Parents,

In Judaism, the Bar Mitzvah marks a most significant stage in the life of a young man. As he grows older, he will constantly reflect on this momentous occasion as a major part of his maturing process. It is this turning point at which a mere boy is suddenly transformed into a young Jewish adult as he feels the pride of being a full fledged member of the Jewish community. He identifies with his essence in a strong and positive manner and realizes he is an integral part of our beautiful tradition and rich heritage.

At Valley Chabad, the Bar Mitzvah celebration is faithful to the beauty and authenticity of Jewish tradition and will serve to inspire a young man to constantly recognize his privilege and responsibility to God, his fellow human beings and himself.

## THE VALLEY CHABAD PHILOSOPHY

### *· Personalized*

We believe that no two children are the same nor are any two families the same. We therefore strive to personalize this event to make it most meaningful, enjoyable and inspiring one for your family. We celebrate each child's individual strengths by tailor-making each Bar Mitzvah to 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 engaging and relevant to their lives in today's modern world.

### *· Not just a ceremony, but about being Jewish!*

The Bar 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 Bar Mitzvah reflects 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 his becoming a Bar Mitzvah with the Rabbis and teachers he studies with.

### *· A wholesome experience*

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

### *· Active participation through community outreach and parental involvement.*

Through being involved in the community and showing commitment to your son and his journey, we teach our children what really matters. Making the Bar Mitzvah celebration an event shared by others in the community is a wonderful commitment. We ask that the Bar Mitzvah boy invites all his Hebrew School classmates to his celebration which adds an important dimension to the experience.

## **1. Preparations:**

The cost for a Bar Mitzvah at Valley Chabad is \$800.00. Fees include having Rabbi Drizin or Rabbi Orenstein officiate at the service. This includes the purchasing of a standard Kosher pair of Tefillin (valued at \$350) and 2 meetings with Rabbi Drizin to oversee the Bar Mitzvah boys progress and provide guidance with his speech. The Bar Mitzvah boy will receive one-on-one tutoring sessions with Rabbi Yosef Orenstein. The sessions will include learning the chant of the Torah and/or Haftarah, as well as its blessings. It will also include learning the section of the prayer service, instruction on how to put on Tefillin and learning the meaning of a Bar Mitzvah. In addition this will also include the writing of the speech.

Tutoring fees are \$60 per 45 minute session and are paid directly to Rabbi Yosef. This is not included in the above Bar Mitzvah fee. Average sessions necessary are approx 15 times or more. The Tefillin should be brought to all lessons. A Tallit is the responsibility of the Bar Mitzvah family and can be ordered through Chabad.

## **2. Shabbat Attendance**

It is important that the Bar Mitzvah boy and his family become familiar with and feel comfortable in a synagogue setting in preparation for the Bar Mitzvah. This is part of the investment you will be making for your son's future. This will encourage him to be a connected and committed member of the Jewish community. With this in mind your son must attend Shabbat morning services at Valley Chabad a total of 6 times within the 6 months prior to the Bar Mitzvah.

## **3. Linking Hearts and Hebrew School**

As part of the preparation for the Bar Mitzvah, every boy will begin his journey with a Mitzvah through his participation in the Linking Hearts program. This group meets monthly on Tuesday afternoons at the Jewish Home in River Vale. Attending this program will teach your son important character building qualities as well as engaging him in a creative and enjoyable way. He will take this experience with him as he becomes an active member of the adult Jewish community. Together with this, attendance in Hebrew School on Sunday mornings is required.

## **4. Israel**

A Bar Mitzvah celebration in Israel is both beautiful and meaningful. Our affiliate Chabad Rabbi in Jerusalem will officiate the ceremony at the Western Wall in a wonderful ceremony tailored to your family. The cover for this service is included in the Bar Mitzvah fee. Using your own choice of Rabbi may not be included in this plan.

## **5. Service Options**

A. Shabbat Morning at the Hilton Hotel or the Park Ridge Hotel. This is a traditional service and the Bar Mitzvah boy receives his first Aliyah and reads from the Torah inside.

B. Havdalah Service - A meaningful and spiritual event where the Bar Mitzvah boy recites the Havdalah service and prayers applicable to this special time of the week. This includes the Havdalah prayer service and a Torah section reading. (Winter time only)

C. Sunday Morning Service.

D. Morning Service on a National Holiday (Monday or Thursday)

## **6. Aliyah**

If the service option chosen is without a Torah reading ceremony, then your son will be called to the Torah at Valley Chabad on a Shabbat morning prior to his celebration, provided he is he has reached 13 on the Jewish Calendar. This date will be made at the same time you plan his Bar Mitzvah Celebration date.

## **7. Candy throwing after reading**

Soft candies are tossed at the Bar Mitzvah boy after he has been called to the Torah. This custom signifies our wish for the child to be showered with sweetness and Mazal throughout his life. Rabbi Yosef will direct you to the most appropriate candies.

## **8. Mechitzah**

Should the service include the Torah being brought out of the ark it is tradition that out of deep respect for the Torah a partition for the service between women and men is necessary. Please be sure to discuss these details with the Rabbi.

## **9. Catering**

All catering done at a Valley Chabad service must be certifiably kosher. This means that VC must ok the caterer chosen to make sure it complies with our standards in kashrut. Generally RCBC is the accepted standard.

## **10. Printed Bar Mitzvah program**

A personalized comprehensive guide to help your guests feel welcome and comfortable will be prepared. It will have a cover with your child's photo, inside will be a biography, program, necessary prayers and readings. You will receive this as a PDF for printing. Copies are the responsibility of the family.

## **11. Cup of Blessing Ceremony**

At the conclusion of the prayer service, prior to the Kiddush, a wine ceremony takes place. This is an opportunity for female relatives to be called up and honored with a blessing and wine pouring, culminating in the filling of the Kiddush cup and the recitation of the Kiddush over it, symbolizing a cup full of blessing for the Bar Mitzvah boy. At this point the parents bestow a special blessing upon the Bar Mitzvah boy, (text provided by the Rabbi) after which the congregants are asked to say Amen.

## **12. Photography**

Pictures and video during the service is welcomed and encouraged when held on a weekday. Out of respect for the Shabbat however, no pictures can to be taken during the service held on Friday night or Saturday. We welcome the family and the photographer and/or videographer for a "Photo Session" on a weekday. Please schedule an appointment with our office.

## **13. Contract**

Upon receipt of a signed contract (copy will be emailed to the parents) Rabbi Yosef will begin the process of preparing your son for his special day.

## Bar Mitzvah Contract

|  |  |     |
|--|--|-----|
| Child's Full Name:   | Date of Birth:   |     |
|  | Jewish date of Birth:  |     |
| Child's Hebrew Name:   | Date of Bar Mitzvah Celebration:                               |     |
| Cell phone:  | Email:   |     |
| Hebrew Level: Excellent Very good OK Poor  | Hebrew School:   |     |
| Address:   | City/State/Zip   |     |
| Mother's Maiden Name   | Mother's Hebrew Name   |     |
| Mother's email:  | Mother's cell:   |     |
| Is the natural mother Jewish?  | Father is a:      Kohen              Levi              Yisroel |     |
| Father's Name  | Father's Hebrew Name   |     |
| Father's email:  | Father's cell:   |     |
| Are there any conversions in the family? If yes please explain:  |  |     |
|  |  |     |
| A check or credit card deposit of \$400.00 (50% of the fee) is required before beginning the Bar Mitzvah preparations. The balance of \$400 is due 1 month prior to the Bar Mitzvah. |  |     |
| Checks should be made payable to: <b>Valley Chabad</b>   |  |     |
| Credit card info:  |  |     |
| Credit card #  | Expiration Date: (MM/YY) /                                     | Cvv |
| Name on card:  |  |     |
| Billing Address and Zip:   |  |     |
| Parents Name:  | Rabbi's Signature:   |     |
| Parents Signature:   | Date:  |     |