

## The Order During Bar Mitzvah

The sons are trained by the abba and the rabbi in the Scriptures. During their time of training the abba and the rabbi notice the subjects in which the son shows a special understanding, insight, or interest. They notice the things that they have difficulty understanding and try to bring those things into clarity for the son. But on the day of Bar Mitzvah, when the son presents his grasp of the commandments, they emphasize the things they do comprehend, avoiding the subjects with which they have had difficulty. During the last week before the Bar Mitzvah the father centers on the specific materials in each category of study that the son especially grasps. He makes it clear to the son the things he will ask him about on the day. He goes through the book and marks the things upon which the son should center his final days of study. He should be freed from any other work or study to concentrate all his time on learning the commandments.

The father must be very sensitive to his child to promote “revelation” within his heart. Ask him questions, and when the son shows just a small bit of insight, this must be fanned with encouragement. “Our Abba is beginning to speak to your heart!” “That is revelation.”

For instance, in going over the Ten Commandments, if the son comes up with an example concerning the meaning of one of the commandments so that the abba can see that he is really understanding the spirit of this command, the abba can say, “Son, of all the Ten Commandments, I can see that you have special understanding of what our Father was trying to communicate to His people. I will have you speak about this one at your Bar Mitzvah.”

So, as the day begins each of the sons with their parents come into the gathering room where the Body is waiting. The chairs are set up facing a raised platform and some sort of speaking podium. The parents sit behind the podium facing the Body. Each in turn stands with his child. (In Sus the abbas drew lots to see who would go first, second, etc.) The abba presents his son and then says something like, “This is my son, in whom I am well-pleased. I will lead him through the materials which we have studied together, and he will express to you what he has learned in these recent days of studying with me and in his life growing up in the Body of Messiah, being trained as he listened in the minchot, in training, and as he walked along with me and the other disciples with whom I entrusted him. He has gained much in his years of childhood, and today as he stands before you, he will briefly summarize those things that are engraved in his heart.”

Then turning to his son he will say, for example, “So now, son, we will start with the beginning of all things... in the garden, and I want you to speak about what you have learned concerning...”

The abba will then introduce each subject of importance and let the son speak what he has learned. This whole section of the Bar Mitzvah should last only about twenty minutes. The abba should be able to help the son in things he forgets and encourage him all the way through. When he is finished with the things he has studied, the abba says that this part of the study is now finished and later his son will again stand with the rabbi.

They sit down together and let the next abba and son stand.

(Four sons are about the maximum that could be done at any Bar Mitzvah celebration because it will be very exhausting for the Body to sit longer than that. If there are fewer sons perhaps they can be given a longer time, but it is really sufficient and can be very difficult for the sons. It is not that the Body needs to hear EVERYTHING they have learned. The abba knows that his son knows the commandments, he is only showing the Body an overview of the things the son knows.)

After all four sons speak there should be a break for a glass of punch, etc., and the Body returns in half an hour to continue with the rabbi’s section of the celebration. Here the rabbi goes over with each son, one after the other, the proverbs, which he has specifically selected for that boy, letting the son explain the ones of which he has good insight. Let the son share any deep wisdom he has gained in the form of proverbial lessons over his years in the Body, etc. This should be about ten minutes for each son, and the rabbi can also speak about each son, or give charges to each son...

**There can be another short break after this section of the celebration.**

**Then comes the time for the vows.**

**This time it is the abba and the imma who stand in turn with their child. The parent speaks what is on his heart for his child, or reads something special he has written for his child. The son then responds with his vows to his parents, expressing things he remembered from his childhood that stuck with him – lessons he learned, touching experiences. (The rabbi, or responsible friend, should help the child to write down their vows to their parents beforehand, so that if the child gets confused or emotional in the celebration he can always pick up his book and read it to the parents. Otherwise they may be overcome and will not be able to get out what they really want to say. But it should not be the parents who help their child write it because it needs to be kept especially for this time.)**

**When the child finishes speaking, he can embrace his parents. Then the son is directed by his parents to speak to the Body. The son turns now toward the Body. He speaks his desire to follow the God of his parents in however this comes forth from his heart. But the rabbi should help him to know what to say at this time. This is not something that will need to be judged, or questioned by the Body. Of course the Body can speak at this time if any special prophetic word comes (as in part of the celebration), but it is not like when someone stands up and says they want to be saved and the Body expresses their reservations, etc. All the reservations, questions, advice, etc., needs to be given to the son in the weeks before his Bar Mitzvah. This is why it is very important that the parents tell the people in the Edah about their desire to present their son for Bar Mitzvah soon, and ask that the brothers and sisters help them in this time of preparation (just like they do when a bride is being prepared) by spending time with the son, talking to him, sharing wisdom with him, making him know that everyone in the Body is very interested in him. Any reservations from the Body must be worked out during this time of preparation. The son will not have been allowed to come to this point in his Bar Mitzvah and then have someone stand up and say, “I have a reservation.” The only thing that Body can say if this son has been brought into this celebration by his abba is “Amen,” when this son expresses his heart to be saved.**

**After the “Amen,” the parents (overjoyed) take the son to his place again to sit down, until each family in turn has spoken and received their “Amen.”**

**Then a prophet will announce that we are going to the water to receive our sons into the Body of Messiah... The father and the rabbi of each son goes in together to baptize the son. Hands are laid upon the son after baptism for the Holy Spirit which has been upon this child from the womb, would now come into the child...**