

Religious Education Knowledge Organiser
Year 6
Autumn (ii)
What is the significance of the Bar and Bat Mitzvah?

Substantive Knowledge – The rituals of the Bar and Bat Mitzvah

Bar and Bat Mitzvah

Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies mark the transition into adulthood for young Jews. At age 13 a boy becomes Bar Mitzvah and at age 13 a girl becomes a Bat Mitzvah.

After these ceremonies Jewish boys or girls become responsible for living according to Jewish Law. At this point, each young person has to accept the law and its obligations, participate fully in services at the synagogue and set a good example for others.

Bar Mitzvah ceremony

A Bar Mitzvah happens around a boy's 13th birthday and is part of a service in the synagogue. The boy, who has prepared for the ceremony by spending a lot of time studying it, reads from the Torah. The boy puts on the tefillin for the first time.

The rabbi gives a talk, speaking to both the boy and his family and to the rest of the community. The boy might also give a talk to the people gathered.

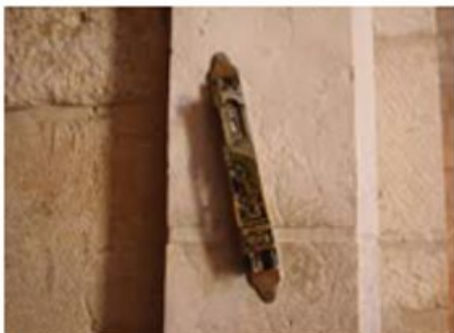
It is traditional for the boy's father to recite a prayer of thanks to God for bringing his son to maturity. The boy receives gifts and there is a celebratory meal.

The Shema

The Shema (said daily, preparing for prayer, Phylacteries, tallit and kippah). The Shema in the Mezuzah signifies a Jewish home.

What does the mezuzah symbolize?

The purpose of the mezuzah is to act as a constant reminder of God's presence. Jews will often touch the mezuzah as they go through the door. The instruction for this comes from the Torah



The Mezuzah (scroll in a case with Hebrew verses from The Torah) and keeping kashrut (the rules found in the Torah).

Shema - the central statement of Jewish belief, the sentence

The Shema

Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
יְהוָה אֶחָד.
בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד
מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Kashrut

Taking care of guests, *hachnasat orchim*, has been a big Jewish value ever since Abraham. *Ore'ach* means guest in Hebrew and comes from the Aramaic word *orach*, "way".

An *ore'ach*, then, is not just a guest, but a traveller in need of food and rest. The great 16th-century scholar Rabbi Isaiah Horowitz writes that taking in wayfarers emulates God's care for us: "For we are all guests in regard to God, passing travellers, whom God receives."

Our obligation to make our guests feel comfortable and welcome takes priority over most other laws.

Portable Knowledge – What we need to remember

The Shema is a Jewish prayer which is central to morning and evening prayers.

The Bar and Bat Mitzvah happen during adolescence when a boy becomes a man and a girl, a woman.

Core Vocabulary

Shema— to hear, obey and take action

Phylacteries— leather boxes containing scripture

Tallit— a prayer shawl worn by Jewish men after the age of 13