



**Bar Mitzvah of  
Asher Jack Straus**

אֲשֶׁר בֶּן בְּרִדְעֵי זֵרִיאַן

***Asher Jack Straus***

**March 5, 2022  
29 Adar 1 5782**

***Parashat Pekudei***

Dear friends,

We are so delighted that you will be able to celebrate with us as Asher becomes a Bar Mitzvah. Although we cannot be together physically, we are grateful that modern technology allows us to be together in spirit, as Asher becomes a Bar Mitzvah—a son of the mitzvot (commandments, or sacred obligations). Thank you for being a part of our circle of family, friends, and community.

When Asher becomes a Bar Mitzvah, he is considered an adult in the Jewish community, and therefore is responsible for his actions and beliefs. As an adult, he takes on the responsibility of fulfilling the moral and ethical commandments of Judaism.

Following are a few things about our service that might be helpful:

### **Jewish Ritual Items**

During the service, many people wear a prayer shawl. The fringes on the *tallit* remind us of the *mitzvot* (commandments or sacred obligations) in Judaism. Today Asher will wear a *tallit* for the first time. We will present it to him.

Many people may also wear a *kippah* or *yarmulke* (Hebrew or Yiddish for head covering). It is a sign of humility - reminding us that there is Something Greater (in other words, God) than humans.

Because we will not be together physically, we will share on the screen prayers from our Siddur, or prayer book. The *Shabbat* (Sabbath) morning service begins with opening blessings appreciating the gift of life, followed by *Barechu*, the call to worship, *Yotzer Or*, a blessing thanking God for the act of creation and then the *Shema*, Judaism's central prayer affirming our faith in one God. We celebrate our freedom and pledge to work for the freedom of everyone who is enslaved as we sing *Mi Chamocho*—the song our ancestors sang after they crossed the Sea of Reeds. The service then continues with the *Amidah*, which begins with a blessing connecting us with our ancestors.

Then we join in a prayer that affirms and appreciates the ways that God can be a source of strength in our lives. We continue with a prayer that reflects how we can live lives of holiness, and then we bring this section to a close with a prayer for peace. Our service continues with the Torah service. The *Torah* is made up of the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It contains the wisdom, ideas, customs, and laws of the Jewish people. The words are handwritten in Hebrew on a scroll made of parchment.

Each week Jews read from a specific portion of the *Torah*. The portion from which we read this Shabbat is *Pekudei*, from the Book of Exodus. There will be a total of two *Aliyot*. Before each *Aliyah* is chanted, a blessing is said, expressing gratitude for the gift of learning from the Torah. When Asher chants the blessing over his second *Aliyah*, he officially becomes a Bar Mitzvah! After that, he will share his *D'var Torah*, teaching us something that he learned from studying this portion.

Before we conclude the Torah service, we will sing a prayer for healing, the *MiShebeirach*. It is customary to share the names of those who are in need of physical, emotional or spiritual healing, in the hope that our prayers will raise their spirits and be a source of uplift for those who love and care for them. We invite you to share names out loud or type them in the chat feature.

Our service nears its end with the *Mourner's Kaddish*, a prayer remembering those who have died. At the conclusion of the service, Asher will say a few words to Scott Bremen, who is next in line to become Bar Mitzvah. As is the custom in KHN, Asher will give Scott a Kiddush cup as a gift. Asher will then lead us in blessings over wine and bread, thanking God for food that sustains our bodies and souls.

Finally, please know that even though our service will be held over Zoom and live-streamed, we are all an integral part of the experience.

Therefore, we encourage you to participate in whatever way feels most authentic and comfortable for you--by praying or reading the translations or beautiful interpretations of the prayers out loud, or simply by sitting quietly and listening to prayers as they are said. We are grateful that you are able to help create our virtual *kahal*, or congregation!

Many people choose to honor a significant moment in a person's life, such as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, by making a donation in that person's honor. We welcome your donation to KHN in honor of Asher becoming a Bar Mitzvah, if that is meaningful to you. Our address is found at the end of the booklet.

Thank you for being with us to share in Asher's special day. We are grateful for your presence in her life, and in ours.

Britney and Ryan Straus

### **Participants in Service:**

#### **Torah Service:**

**Passing of the Torah through the Generations:  
Grandfather David Straus**

**Parents Britney and Ryan Straus**

#### **Dressing Torah:**

**Ari Straus**

# סדר קריאת התורה

## Torah Service

### **Aliyah #1: Exodus 40:17-19**

**Blessing:** Ryan and Britney Straus

**Torah Reader:** Asher Straus

### **Aliyah #2: Exodus 40:20-22**

**Blessing:** Asher Straus

**Torah Reader:** Asher Straus

### **Beit Din:**

**Margot Cohen, Elizabeth Fagin, Stephanie Sahanow**