



The Honor of the *Aliyah*

The word עלייה *aliyah* means "ascending" and refers to the act of going up to the Torah (which is read from the bima on a level higher than that of the congregation, signifying its holiness) and reciting the blessing over the Torah. Any adult Jew may be honored with an עלייה.

HOW DOES ONE HAVE AN ALIYAH?

The person honored with the עלייה comes forward when called. The reader will open the scroll and point to where s/he will begin reading. The person called to the Torah takes the *tzitzit* of the *tallit* and touches them to the first word to be read and kisses the *tzitzit*. The Torah will then be rolled closed. The one blessing the Torah holds the wooden rollers and recites the first blessing. After the reader completes reading the section for that עלייה, the reader will point out the last word read to the person who is blessing the Torah, who again takes the *tzitzit*, touches the last word, and kisses the *tzitzit*. The scroll is again rolled closed, and the person reciting the blessing holds the wooden rollers and recites the second blessing.

It is a great honor to be given an עלייה when the Torah is read in the synagogue, and it is important to fulfill this *mitzvah* (commandment) with dignity, both out of respect for God and Torah, and out of respect for the congregation, on whose behalf you will be blessing the Torah. Hence it is important to be familiar with the ritual of the עלייה and practice reciting the blessing aloud prior to the occasion, if the blessing is not familiar to you.

Please bear in mind that there are variations in custom in different

congregations, and it is appropriate to follow *minhag ha-makom* (the custom of the place in which you are). Please also note that the term *vkhg* refers not only to the honor of being called to bless the Torah, but to the section of text which is read between the blessings you will recite.

In our congregation, men and women are encouraged, but not required, to wear a *tallit* when called to the Torah. Our synagogue has *tallitot* (plural of *tallit*) in the front lobby for you to use.

1. YOU ARE CALLED TO THE TORAH

You should find out in advance (from a family member) what number your עלייה is. Traditionally, there are seven *aliyot* on Shabbat morning. At The Community Synagogue we usually have four *aliyot* for a single Bar/Bat Mitzvah and eight for a "double." Come forward to the Torah reading table as soon as you are called, using the steps in the middle of the *bima*.

2. FIND THE PLACE

The reader or rabbi will open the scroll and show you where s/he will begin reading. Many take the *tzitzit* (corner fringes of the *tallit*), touch them to the word the reader and/or rabbi points out and then kiss the *tzitzit*. The reader will close the scroll before the blessing is recited.

3. HOLD THE EITZ CHAYIM

When reciting the Torah blessing it is customary to hold the bottom ends of the wooden rollers, one in each hand. This is done to make a physical connection with the Torah over which we say a blessing.

4. RECITE THE FIRST BLESSING

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבֹרָךְ:
בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בְּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים וְנָתַן
לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ,
נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

You say:

BA-RE-CHU ET A-DO-NAI HA-ME-VO-RACH.

Congregation responds:

BA-RUCH A-DO-NAI HA-ME-VO-RACH L'O-
LAM VA-ED.

You say:

BA-RUCH A-DO-NAI HA-ME-VO-RACH L'O-
LAM VA-ED.

BA-RUCH A-TA A-DO-NAI, E-LO-HAY-NU ME-
LECH HA-O-LAM, A-SHER BA-CHAR BA-NU
MI-KOL HA-A-MIM V'NA-TAN LA-NU ET TO-
RA-TO. BA-RUCH A-TA A-DO-NAI NO-TAYN
HA-TO-RA.

*Praised be the Eternal, to whom our
praise is due!*

*Praised be the Eternal, to whom our
praise is due now and for ever!*

*Praised be the Eternal our God, Ruler of
the universe, who has chosen us from all
peoples by giving us the Torah. Blessed is
the Eternal, Giver of the Torah.*

5. THE READER READS

While the reader reads, please hold one of
the wooden rollers, to keep the scroll
open. You are welcome to look into the
scroll while the reader reads.

6. THE SECOND BLESSING

When the reader finishes reading the
aliyah, s/he will point out the last word
with the *yad* (pointer). Take the *tzitzit*
in your hand, touch them to this word, and
kiss them. Then recite this blessing:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת, וְחַיֵּי
עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

BA-RUCH A-TA A-DO-NAI E-LO-HAY-NU ME-
LECH HA-O-LAM, A-SHER NA-TAN LA-NU
TO-RAT E-MET V'CHA-YAI O-LAM NA-TA
B'TO-CHAY-NU. BA-RUCH A-TA A-DO-NAI
NO-TAYN HA-TO-RA.

*Blessed is the Eternal our God, Ruler of
the universe, who has given us a Torah of
truth, implanting within us eternal life.
Blessed is the Eternal, Giver of the Torah.*

7. AFTER THE BLESSINGS

When you have completed the second
blessing, move to the other side of the
reader (next to the cantor) to make room
for the next person or individuals being
called to the Torah. When the next *עליה* is
completed, you may return to your seat. It
is customary to take a longer route back to
your seat than that which you took to
ascend to the *bima*, signifying your
reluctance at leaving the Torah.