

## Receiving a Torah Honor: A Step By Step Guide (See Last Page for Glossary of Hebrew Terms)

### 13 Steps to the Perfect *P'tikhah* (Opening the Ark)

1. Come up to the *bimah* near the end of *Ain Kamokhah* (first paragraph on p. 139) and stand to the right of the *aron kodesh*.
2. Open the ark as the *shaliah tzibbur* begins to chant the next paragraph, *Vayehi binsoah*
3. After page 140, assist the *gabbai* in removing the scroll from the *aron kodesh* and hand it to the *shaliah tzibbur*.
4. Close the ark before the *shaliah tzibbur* recites the verses on page 141.
5. Follow the *shaliah tzibbur* during the procession
6. Return to your seat
7. Return to the *bimah* by joining the procession when the Torah is being brought back to the ark (p. 153)
8. When procession reaches the *aron kodesh*, open the curtain
9. Take Torah from the *shaliah tzibbur* and place gently in the ark
10. Stay facing the *aron kodesh* through “*Etz Hayyim He*” (p. 154).
11. Close the ark
12. Shake everyone’s hand. Respond “*Barukh tihyeh* (to a man) or *b’rukhhah tihyi* (to a woman)” to a “*Yasher koah*”
13. Return to your seat

### 11 Steps to the Perfect *Aliyah*

1. Come to the *bimah* at the appropriate time
2. State your Hebrew name (yours and your parents) clearly to the *gabbai*
3. Stand on right-hand side of Torah
4. Allow reader to show you the place and kiss it with *tzitzit*
5. Take hold of the *atzei hayim* and say first blessings
6. Look on with reader
7. At end of reading, kiss place reader shows you with *tzitzit*
8. Take hold of *atzei hayim* and recite blessing for after the reading
9. Shake everyone’s hand. Respond “*Barukh tihyeh* (to a man) or *b’rukhhah tihyi* (to a woman)” to a “*Yasher koah*”
10. Move to other side of reader (to the left of the Torah)
11. After the next *aliyah*, return to your seat

## 15 Steps to the Perfect Hagbah (Raising the Torah)

1. Come to the *bimah* after the *maftir* portion
2. Note the chair where you will be sitting down with the Torah
3. Roll the scroll to a point where a seam is mid-way between the two *atzei hayyim* (the wooden posts)
4. Open the scroll slightly
5. Pull the Torah down so that the edge of the table is half-way between the bottom and top of the Torah.
6. Push down on the bottom handles, so that the Torah begins to be vertical.
7. Bend your knees.
8. Push the Torah up and straighten your legs (you are now standing up and so is the Torah)
9. Turn around so that the congregation can see the words in the Torah.
10. If you feel confident, unroll the Torah slightly so that at least 3 columns are showing.
11. Walk to the chair and lower yourself carefully, with the Torah still vertical
12. Hold the scroll while it is tied and dressed
13. Settle the scroll on one of your shoulders and hold it until it is time to return it to the *aron kodesh* (the ark)
14. Shake everyone's hand. Respond "*Barukh tihyeh* (to a man) or *b'rukhhah tihyi* (to a woman)" to a "*Yasher koah*"
15. Return to your seat

## 10 Steps to the Perfect Gelilah (Rolling and Tying the Scroll)

1. Come to the *bimah* after the *maftir aliyah*, along with the *Hagbah*
2. Stand near the chair where the *Hagbah* will sit
3. As the *Hagbah* sits, grab hold of the upper handles
4. Once the *Hagbah* is seated, roll the scroll tightly together
5. Place the *hagorah*—the belt—around the Torah and buckle in place.
6. Turn the buckle so that it is over the "front" side of the Torah (in the gap formed by the two sides of the scroll).
7. Place the *me'il*—the cover—on the Torah
8. Place the *yad* on the Torah
9. Shake everyone's hand. Respond "*Barukh tihyeh* (to a man) or *b'rukhhah tihyi* (to a woman)" to a "*Yasher koah*"
10. Return to your seat

## Torah Service Glossary

### People and Roles:

*Cohen*—a descendant of the “priestly” clan within the Levites. The first aliyah at any Torah reading is reserved for a Cohen.

*Gabbai*—Assistants during the Torah service. One gabbai stands on either side of the table from which the Torah is read. The “chief gabbai,” or Gabbi Rishon, calls up each honoree to the reading. The gabbaim also direct the traffic flow, correct mistakes during the reading, announce pages, and assist honorees.

*G'lilah/Golelet*—the person who “rolls” and ties the scroll

*Hagbah*-- the person who “raises” the scroll, formally called the magbiah (male) or magbihah (female).

*Levi*—a descendant of the tribe of Levi. The second aliyah at any Torah reading is reserved for a Cohen. If no Cohen is present, a Levi is given the first aliyah, and all subsequent aliyot are given to Yisraelim.

*Maftir*—An “extra” aliyah on Shabbat or holidays usually given to the person who reads the Haftorah.

*Oleh/Olah*—the person who “goes up” to the bimah during the Torah reading to receive an “aliyah.” The person recites a blessing on the Torah before and after a passage is read. On Shabbat there are 7 aliyot, plus an extra “maftir” aliyah. The number of aliyot varies on other days. Originally the person receiving an aliyah would also read the appropriate passage. Nowadays, the official reader acts as a sort of agent for the honoree.

*P'tihah*—The person who “opens” and closes the ark as the Torah is taken out to be read and/or when it is put away following the reading.

*Shaliah/Shelihat Tzibbur*—the “agent of the people,” i.e. the person chanting the service

*Yisrael*—a Jew whose father is not a Cohen or a Levi. Once a Cohen and/or Levi are given the first and/or second aliyot, all subsequent aliyot are given to Yisraelim.

### Objects:

*Aron Kodesh*—the “ark” containing the Torahs

*Atzei Hayyim*—the “trees of life,” or wooden polls of the Torah to which the parchment is attached, and which serve as handles.

*Bimah*—the “raised platform” or area where the reading is done

*Hagorah*—the “belt” that holds the two sides of the scroll together

*Me'il*—the “cloak” or cover for the Torah

*Tzitzit*—the “fringes” on a tallit (prayer shawl), often used to kiss the place at the beginning and ending of an aliyah passage.

*Yad*—the pointer used by the reader, often shaped like a “hand.”