

Sample Parent Blessing

GUIDELINES: Must be less than 700 words (2 pages, double-spaced)

Wow! Here we are *Sarah. What an incredible journey it has been to walk along side you over the last two years in your path to becoming a Bat Mitzvah. First Mazel Tov – you led so beautifully. Over the past weeks, we watched you think deeply about things that are important to you, watched you share with passion something that was meaningful to you. And you engaged us and taught us. I'm so so proud of you.

Your mom and I were asked to bless you. Well to be honest, I've never really blessed anyone before. Although we all know what a blessing is . . . I felt the need to look it up . . . **to bless is to:** make somebody/something holy; protect; wish somebody well; give a desirable quality to somebody; thank somebody.

For your mom and me – you were our first biggest blessing together (and we felt so so thankful and lucky to have you). Within months of having you, you shared with us some of those qualities that are real *Sarah traits. That smile which can light up a room anywhere – and that laugh and sense of humor. But what was most immediately precious about you, honey, was that soft sweet spot in your heart and soul that has the ability to care so deeply about life and people around you, that certain sensitivity that knows when someone else is in need or in distress. It's that part of you that has always touched me. Its one of the things that I'm most proud of and its that part of you that I want you to cherish most about yourself and never lose site of. The other remarkable thing about you *Sarah is your toughness and persistence (even under pressure). Even when things get very difficult you never quit and you can even find the energy to fight even harder. A beautiful smile, an ability to laugh, real humanity, and perseverance. All blessings.

And then there is the blessing you've given us which is the reason we are all here. Together with your two sisters, you decided you wanted to become Bat Mitzvah. This was not an easy task (and you knew it). It was a little less than two years ago, you had never been to Hebrew school. Although we had gone to high holiday services and enjoyed some Jewish traditions, we never belonged to a temple. But you came to me and wanted to join TBE. It really was and is quite remarkable. Maybe a part of it was that you wanted to explore your culture. Maybe a part of it was that you wanted more community. Whatever the reasons, you have blessed me through this process. First, I have been awed by your perseverance. Second, we have begun to develop real traditions together as a family. And the third blessing, has been developing community. This community has embraced our mixed family. It's the love and joy and values that are shared here. Wanting to make a difference in other peoples lives – wanting to make a difference in our lives.

Although you have clearly given me and your friends and family many blessings – it is obvious today that you too have been blessed. Your family and friends (Jews and those from other faiths alike) have come to share in this occasion with you from far and near - including some from Holland, Canada, California, Chicago, New York, and New Jersey. All to share in this journey with you. To both show love and support to you and to us . . .and also to learn from you. Unfortunately, as you know, there are also many family members that aren't with us today. Your passion for life would be a blessing to all of them.

Finally, I want to bless you (in all of the meanings I mentioned above) by saying what I try to say every day before leaving school. *Sarah – make someone smile today. . .you can change the world. I love you and am so proud of you.