

# BAR & BAT MITZVAH

## Judaism Practices

1. What is the literal translation of Bar Mitzvah? [1 mark]

A) Son of the commandment B) Adult C) coming of age D) real man

2. Give two differences between a Bar Mitzvah and a Bat Mitzvah [2 marks]

Bar = son, Bat = daughter/ Bar Mitzvah occurs when a boy is 13/ Bat Mitzvah occurs when a girl is 12

3. Describe two aspects of a Bar Mitzvah ceremony. [4 marks]

The boy will have learned to wear the Tallit and Tefillin correctly for prayer in the synagogue

The boy will have learned to handle and read the Torah and will read a portion as part of the ceremony

The boy's father will make a blessing "Blessed is he who has freed me from the liability of this one" – this shows that he is no longer responsible for his upbringing

The rabbi gives a sermon > part of this will be to remind the boy that he must follow the commandments all his life

4. Explain the importance of a Bar Mitzvah.

[5 mark]

Son of the commandment – the boy is now responsible for following the 613 mitzvot as part of the covenant with Moses at Sinai

The boy can now take a bigger role in public worship including handling and reading the Torah, being part of the minyan and taking part in specific prayers and duties

5. 'The practice of Bar Mitzvah is irrelevant today.'

[12 marks]

Reasons to agree:

it is outdated > such an old concept > seems sexist today

13 is not an adult in many societies > it is too young > still in education in the UK until at least 18. Many Jews in the UK cannot truly read Hebrew but just learn the bit they have to for their celebration. Many Jews in the west today do not follow all the commandments so why go through the ritual?

Reasons to disagree:

It shows that the boy is under the covenant with Moses > Sinai > freedom > etc  
It means that the boy can be part of the minyan, take on a more active role in public worship. Just because something is old, doesn't make it irrelevant e.g. marriage, parenthood, education etc  
Not sexist: in reform girls have Bat Mitzva