

**One Hundred Questions  
That every Bar/Bat Mitzvah should answer**

**Bible**

1. What is your Hebrew name and the Hebrew names of your father and mother? After whom were you named in Hebrew? What do these names mean?
2. What is a sidrah? What is a parasha? In what book is your Bar/Bat Mitzvah parasha found and with what does it deal?
3. What is a haftarah? From what book is your BM haftarah taken? What is its connection with the Torah portion of the week?
4. What are the names of the 3 main divisions of the Bible? What is the Hebrew name for the Bible? Why do Jews prefer not to use the term "Old Testament"?
5. Name the five books of Moses? What do they generally deal with? What took place at Mt. Sinai?
6. Why was King David's reign considered such an important episode in Jewish history?
7. Who were the early kings of Israel and why was the country later partitioned into Israel and Judah?
8. Define a prophet. Name 3 important prophets and explain some of their unique ideas.
9. What is the Talmud? Why was it called the Oral tradition?

**Synagogue**

10. What are the three terms for a synagogue in Hebrew and how does the modern synagogue live up to them?
11. Describe the tallit and tefillin and explain why and when they are worn.
12. How is a Torah written? How is it treated and why do we accord it so much respect?
13. What is an aliyah? On what special occasions other than BM does one usually receive an aliyah? What is a Mi Shebeirach?

**Siddur**

14. Define the terms siddur and machzor.
15. What is the importance of the Sh'ma and what do its 3 paragraphs say? Try to recite the first paragraph by heart. Why are there trope marks in the Sh'ma?
16. What is Shacharit, Mincha, Maariv? What prayer is an indispensable prayer found in all of these?
17. What is the Hallel service and when is it recited? When is Musaf recited?
18. What is the meaning of the Aleinu prayer? Is it always recited only at the end of the service?

**Home**

19. What is so special about being Jewish? Do parents have responsibilities along these lines? What about you?
20. What is a mezuzah? Where would you find one? What does it signify?
21. What ritual objects are basic to making a home Jewish?
22. What does kosher mean? Why is kashrut an essential expression of the Jewish tradition?
23. What are the rules concerning milk and meat products? What does halacha mean? What role does it play among Jews today? What is the difference between halacha and minhag?
24. What is the blessing that a Jewish woman recites over Sabbath candles and when are they kindled? What prayers are recited by parents to their children on Friday night? What prayer is recited by a husband to his wife on Friday night?
25. What is kiddush? On what occasions is wine used in Jewish ritual?
26. Recite "hamotzi". What is bikat hamazon? Explain the contents of the first paragraph of this ritual.

**Sabbath and holidays**

27. Why does the Jewish calendar change every year? What is the Hebrew word for calendar? How does the calendar differ from the Julian calendar?
28. Name some Hebrew months of the year and the major holidays that occur during these months.
29. Why is the Sabbath considered a cornerstone of Jewish tradition? How is it observed traditionally? Why does it have meaning for our society?
30. What is the havdalah ceremony? What objects are used and what do they symbolize?
31. In what ways is Yom Tov (Festivals and High Holy Days) like Shabbat? In what ways are they different? Why do traditional American Jews observe the first two and last two days of Yom Tov, unlike the practice in Israel?

**Sukkot**

32. Why do we celebrate Sukkot and what is the significance of the Sukkah?
33. What are the 4 species used on Sukkot and what do they represent?
34. Why is Kohelet read on Sukkot?
35. What is the Yizkor service and how often is Yizkor recited during the year?
36. Explain Sinchat Torah and what Hakafot are.

**Passover**

37. What is the meaning of Pesach?
38. What is Chametz and what are the requirements for making a home ready for Passover?
39. Name some of the rituals of the Seder. What is the Haggadah?
40. Why is the biblical book Song of Songs read during Passover?
41. When did the battle of the Warsaw Ghetto take place? Why should the Holocaust be remembered, and why on Passover? Do you think there is a relationship between Amalek and the Nazis?
42. What does “counting the Omer” mean and what is Lag B’Omer? How many days are there between Pesach and Shavuot?

**Shavuot**

43. What does Shavuot mean and what is its significance?
44. Name the Ten Commandments and explain why they are still important to follow. What does “revelation” mean?
45. Why is the book of Ruth read on Shavuot? What is the attitude of the book to the proselyte (convert)?
46. What is Tisha B’Av? What is its significance for us today?

**Minor Festivals**

47. What is the historical background of Chanukah? Why is it considered a minor festival?
48. In what order are the candles kindled on Chanukah?
49. What is the Megillah, or Scroll of Esther?
50. What is the story of Purim and how does it reflect anti-semitism? What are we commanded to do on Purim?

**High Holy Days**

51. What is the meaning of Rosh HaShanah and what does the day stress?
52. When is the Shofar blown and what does it symbolize? When was the Shofar blown in biblical times?
53. What are some of the special prayers recited from the machzor on Rosh HaShanah? What special day prepares us for Rosh HaShanah approximately 2 weeks in advance?
54. Explain how Jews “confess” their sins and how do Jews “repent”?
55. Why is the Sabbath between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur called Shabbat Shuva?
56. What is the importance of Yom Kippur and why do we fast?
57. What is the Kol Nidre prayer? What does it have to do with the theme of Yom Kippur?

58. What are some of the special prayers recited on Yom Kippur? Why is the book of Jonah read on Yom Kippur afternoon? What is the N'ilah service?

**Life events**

59. Why are the ceremonies of "Brit Milah" and "Pidyon HaBen" so significant for a Jewish boy?
60. When is a Jewish girl named?
61. What do we mean by performing a mitzvah? What do the terms Bar and Bat Mitzvah signify?
62. Why is it essential to continue a formal Jewish education after Bar and Bat Mitzvah?
63. Why do we insist that the meal following a Bar/Bat Mitzvah or a wedding be kosher?
64. Define the following terms: chuppah, ketubah, sheva brachot. To what do they relate?
65. Why do Jews break a glass at the end of the Jewish wedding ceremony?
66. Why do we stress simplicity and economy in celebrating a happy or a sad milestone in Jewish life?
67. Do Jews believe in divorce? What is the meaning of "get"?
68. What are some of the traditions regarding a Jewish funeral and a House of Shiva?
69. What is the most appropriate way to show sympathy for the bereaved?
70. Why do we recite the Mourner's Kaddish and when is it recited? Are there other forms of the kaddish prayer?
71. What do Jews believe about heaven and hell?
72. What is a Yahrzeit?
73. What is an unveiling? Must it be a formal ceremony?

**Beliefs**

74. What do we mean about the Jews being the "chosen people"?
75. Define "messiah" and explain how the Jewish belief in the Messiah differs from the Christian belief.
76. What is the Jewish view concerning Jesus.
77. Should a Jewish home have a Christmas tree?
78. How does Judaism feel about Jews marrying non-Jews?
79. Why is it important for a Jew to belong to a synagogue? What does it mean to be a "good Jew"? Does that differ from being a "good person"?
80. What does "tzedakah" mean? Why is it important for a Jew to support worthy causes?
81. What are the functions of a Rabbi and Cantor? What does their training involve? What is a shaliach tzibbur? Who can be a shaliach tzibbur? What is a gabbai?
82. What is Orthodox Judaism and what is an Orthodox Jew's way of life. What is a yeshiva?
83. Explain Reform Judaism. How does Reform differ from Orthodoxy? What is Hebrew Union College?
84. Describe Conservative Judaism and what it stands for. How should a Conservative Jew observe the mitzvot? What is the Jewish Theological Seminary?

**History**

85. Who was Ezra and what was his importance in connection with Torah?
86. Identify Hillel and the Pharisees. What are some of Hillel's famous sayings? Where would you find them?
87. Who was Rabbi Akiva and what was his connection with the Talmud?
88. What is the meaning of Midrash?
89. Define the term halacha.
90. Define diaspora and draw a map showing chronologically the rise of large Jewish communities outside of Israel. Where were the first siddurim written? Where was the most famous commentary on the Torah written?
91. Who was Moses Maimonides? What did he write and why is he regarded as the foremost Jewish philosopher? Where did he live?
92. What is the importance of the guidebook "Shulchan Aruch"? Can a Jew live by it today?
93. What is a "chassid"? What did the Chasidic movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century contribute to modern Judaism? What is the Lubavitcher movement?
94. What is the world Jewish population today? American Jewish population? What was the Jewish population in Poland before the Holocaust? Why are we so concerned about a declining Jewish population?

**Israel**

95. What does Zionism mean and when did the movement begin?
96. What roles did Theodore Hertzl and Chaim Weizman play in shaping the movement?
97. What is the Balfour Declaration and what did it mean to the Jews?
98. Who were the great personalities in the State of Israel since establishment in 1948?
99. What kind of government does Israel have and what is its relationship with Jews in the diaspora? How does the Israeli government differ from that of the United States?
100. Explain the following: U.N. Resolution 242; PLO; West Bank; Palestinian Autonomy

**Torah and Trope**

101. What are the three reasons for trope?
102. When reading Torah, what is a “correctable” error?
103. What is the difference between a triennial and an annual reading? Is an annual reading more “correct” according to halacha?
104. What are the 4 Shabbatot that have special haftarot? What are the three weeks of rebuke? What are the 7 weeks of consolation?
105. On Shabbat, is the maftir part of the 7<sup>th</sup> aliyah? What parasha do we read at mincha? On what other days do we read Torah?
106. Is the trope melody always the same? When does it change? Are there “incorrect” melodies?
107. Must the Torah be read from a scroll on Shabbat? Are haftarot read from scrolls? Are there differences between Torot?
108. What aliyah is granted to the person reading the haftarah on Shabbat?
109. If you were to read the Chumash at home, what blessing might you say?
110. Who developed and codified the Torah trope and when?