

Carrying the Torah - Processional

The liturgy of the Torah Service creates the re-enactment of our ancestors' march through the wilderness with the holy ark, metaphorically collapsing history and continuing the journey through time and space to include our active participation.

The Torah is then held in all of its splendour before the community as we chant the central doxologies of our faith, namely, the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4) "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one" and verse 34:4 of Psalms: "One is our God, great is our Lord, holy is His name," and "Proclaim the Lord's greatness with me; let us exalt God together"

The words of Deuteronomy 13:5: "Walk after God your Lord," are taken literally to form the procession as the Torah is then carried amongst the congregation, often with others following behind. This rite symbolizes that we all have access to our most sacred text and, by extension, to God. To show our respect, the entire congregation stands when physically possible until the Torah finds a resting place.

To note, the two below verses imply that one holds a Torah scroll in one's right arm (and rests it on the right shoulder) as Torah came from God's right hand. So too, according to Kabbalah, Jewish mysticism, God's "right hand" stands as a metaphor for Kindness in opposition to judgment and severity; thus, another reason to hold the Torah on the right..

1) "From His right hand was a fiery Law for them" - [Deuteronomy 33:2](#)

2) "And His right hand will embrace me" - [Song of Songs 2:6](#).

What to expect:

We will arrive at the Torah Service (after the silent *Amidah*) on page 168.

1. Please come towards the centre of the sanctuary during *Kaddish Shalem* (Page 167 in *Siddur Lev Shalem*) so that you can ascend the *bimah* and stand in front of the Ark upon its completion.
2. The *gabbai* will hand you a Torah. Make sure the front (the embroidered side) is facing away from you and that the top part of the Torah is leaning on your right shoulder as you take your place in the centre of the *bimah* facing the congregation.
3. After the *Shaliach Tzibur* (prayer leader) sings: *Echad Eloheinu, gadol Adonainu, kadosh Sh'mo*, it is customary to turn towards the ark and bow (being careful with the Torah's ornaments such as the crown) as the words *Gadlu L'Hashem Iti, un'rom'mah Sh'mo Yachdav* are sung.
4. Turn to face the congregation and start walking right toward and down the right aisle and around the sanctuary coming back to the centre of the space through the main isle on the other side.

5. Once you arrive at the *shulchan* (the reader's/leader's table), someone will take the Torah from you and you may return to your seat.