

Dressing the Torah - Gelilah

“*Gelilah*” is the term used to describe rolling, tying, and dressing the Torah scroll including all of its ornaments, which is done by the *goleil*. Historically rabbis viewed this honour as having the spiritual reward of all the *aliyot* (readings and blessings over the Torah readings) combined, and thus this task was traditionally reserved for the most distinguished members of the congregation.

Moreover, so great is the desire to guard the Torah’s sanctity that there is a widespread belief that if a Torah scroll was to fall, anyone who witnessed it, or even in proximity, should fast for forty days. From this stance, one understands part of what makes the honour of *Gelilah* particularly important.

What to expect:

1. During the seventh reading, please make your way towards the centre of the sanctuary as the Gabbai will soon call the honourees for *Hagbah* and *Gelilah*. At this time, please make your way to the Torah on the side where the reader read.
2. Begin to gather, with the help of the Gabbai, the garter, Torah cover, and any ornaments meant to cover the Torah scroll.
3. Walk with *magbiah*, the person fulfilling the honour of *hagbah*, helping to ensure the safety and sanctity of the Torah scroll. If the person is a bit unsteady, help to safeguard the Torah.
4. As the *magbiah* sits on the designated chair to the left of the Ark of the Covenant (as you are facing it), help to roll the Torah scroll closed, ensuring that the parchment is taut and safely between the top and bottom disks of the handles.
5. With the Torah scroll facing the *magbiah*, fasten the garter with the latch facing the person holding the Torah (the front of the scroll), replace the Torah cover with the decorated side toward the *magbiah*, and any ornaments such as a breast plate (same side), *yad* (pointer) and crown before helping to place the Torah scroll on the stand.