

*Example #5*

My Dear Brandon,

When I first held you in my arms I made a covenant that I would take care of you and give you everything a little boy could ever want. I have kept my promise. I have given you the love and complete devotion of a mom and dad, an adoring big brother and sister, two sets of doting grandparents, 12 loving aunts and uncles, 16 incredible first cousins, life-long friends and a dog who sleeps on your bed every night. I also gave you a Jewish education and the Jewish community. I promised I would give you the world and I have. Now it's your turn, Brandon, to take on the world as a Jewish adult. As I made that covenant with you, today you're making a covenant with G-D to continue your Jewish education, to take on the responsibilities of a Jewish man and to repair the world. With your community service and mitzvah project you are on the right path.

Brandon, I admire many things about you. I admire that you choose your close friends not by what group they associate with, but by who they are on the inside. I admire how you stand up for friends, even if it's going against the crowd. But mostly, I admire your inner sense of appreciation for things around you and how you have never taken anything for granted.

Brandon, I am sorry that you and my father, your Grandpa Bill, will never meet. Your birthday and his are one day apart. He would have enjoyed your sense of humor, your playfulness and your piano playing. Brandon, I have something for you that I have been waiting to give you as you become a Bar Mitzvah. It's my Dad's watch...one he enjoyed wearing every day. As you wear his watch, I hope you acquire my Dad's love of books and his unbelievable optimism.

Brandon, I stood on this Bimah 13 years ago, almost to the day, as I became an Adult Bat Mitzvah, not knowing that 13 years later I would be standing here with you doing the same. My prayer for you, my dear son, as you stand here as a Bar Mitzvah, is to become more confident and realize your potential, to continue life's path of goodness and honesty and to continue a life-long commitment to Judaism and Jewish education. I pray that G-D grants you a deep understanding of life, respect for family, the strength and determination to handle anything that comes your way, to be content with what G-D gives you and to be grateful every single day. May the world be a peaceful place for you one day to raise a family of your own. May this be your blessing Brandon, and know that I love you and adore you and I always will.

Mom