

TEMPLE GATES OF PRAYER  
CONGREGATION SHAARAI TEFILLA



*Temple Gates of Prayer*

*Gabriel Okner*

Growing up in Flushing, Gabriel Okner started his pre-school years at the Early Learning Center at Chabad of Northeast Queens and spent his summers at the Chabad Camp Gan Israel. His Jewish education continued at the Solomon Schechter School of Queens, where he learned Hebrew language and literature, Torah Reading Trope, Chumash, Navi, the books of Mishnah and Gemara, Jewish History, History of Modern Israel, and the importance of *כֹּהֵד כּוֹלֵנוּ בְּיַד יָד* (community service – “We Are All In One Hand”).

Besides Jewish and General studies, Gabriel participated in SSSQ's Spanish, Chess, and Robotics clubs. For four years he acted, sang and danced at the SSSQ Musical Theatre, playing the parts of Oliver Warbucks (Annie), Joseph (Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat), The Tin Man (The Wizard of Oz), and The Pilot (The Little Mermaid).

Holidays and other events at the Temple Gates of Prayer were a great part of Gabriel's life – from his Brit Milah ceremony (with Rabbi Paysach Krohn) to the congregational trip to Israel (with Rabbi Albert Thaler) to the Bar Mitzvah service (with Rabbi Mark Biller and Hazzan Moshe Bear). Together with his family and his congregation, Gabriel Okner marched at the Israel Day Parade. As an 8th-grade student of the Solomon Schechter School of Queens, Gabriel is planning to travel to Israel again this spring.