



Welcome to Shabbat Services at Bet Torah

December 12, 2020

26 Kislev 5781



Shabbat

Parsha Vayeshev

Genesis 38:1-30

Etz Hayim pp.233-237

Haftarah

Zachariah 2:14-4:7

Etz Hayim pp.1270-1272

Mazel Tov to

**Jodi and Larry Kravitz
on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Tyler**

Welcome to Bet Torah!

Message from the Clergy

Shabbat Shalom and Welcome to Bet Torah!

Whether you are with us every Shabbat, every so often, or experiencing our community for the first time, we are so glad you are here. Being present with people to share in meaning has always been Judaism's antidote to the loneliness and alienation we can sometimes feel as human beings. With busy lives we are in ever greater need of places in which we can feel whole, fully seen, and able to be present. That place has always been the synagogue, and we at Bet Torah strive to provide an oasis of calm and connection amidst the currents of life.

As a synagogue community, the global pandemic has prevented us from gathering in person. In response, we used the Talmudic emergency exit called *sha'at ha'dechak* or "time of crisis" in order to go online on Shabbat so that our community can connect while physically separated. The virtual space we have created provides opportunities to allow our value of inclusiveness to find its clearest expression.

A special aspect of our virtual service, the Home Torah Program, allows for aliyot in the home where the Torah is, along with aliyot from a distance. The blessings are different for each location, but the Torah readings are the same. This is an elegant solution for an unprecedented time.

We feel truly blessed to be here with all of you!

Rabbi Aaron Brusso, Rabbi Lisa Sacks, and Cantor Gil Ezring



This Week's Parsha

The Land of Sojourning

After the relative insecurity and turbulence of Jacob's life (masquerading as his brother Esau, taking flight to Laban's home, becoming the victim of deception vis-à-vis a wife and his wages, and the wrestling match of last week), Parashat Vayeshev opens with the hope of the patriarch transitioning into a calmer stage of life. One of Rashi's more famous comments is connected to the opening verse of the parashah: "Jacob was settled in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan" ([Gen. 37:1](#)): Jacob sought to live peacefully but the misery of the Joseph episode pounced on him." But more than that, inherent in the opening verse is a contradiction of sorts.

While *va-yeishev* (was settled) implies a sense of permanence and settlement, *eretz m'gurei aviv* (the land of his father's sojourning) suggests fragility and temporality. Why does Torah refer to the land of Canaan, the territory promised to the descendants of Abraham as a gift and inheritance, as a land of "sojournings"? How could the patriarch be settled in a land that was one of merely "sojournings" and not stability?

Professor Zeev Falk offers dramatic insight into our verse. Falk first demonstrates his surprise by querying, "Why is the land referred to as one of 'sojournings' rather than 'the land that I give to you' ([Genesis 28:13](#)) or 'the land of your ancestors and your birthplace' ([Genesis 31:3](#)) or 'the land of your birth' ([Genesis 31:13](#))?" Interestingly, he hypothesizes that "perhaps Jacob felt alienated and alone in the land after the rape of his daughter Dina, or he felt closer to his family in Haran or he didn't want to rely on the blessing of the land and so described his connection to the land as being one of ancestral sojourning" (*Divrei Torah Ad Tumam*, 81).

What is the wisdom behind Professor Falk's comment? One's connection to and feeling about a land may be a function of the native inhabitants, familial connections, as well as one's personal history. Far from the Land of Israel being given to our ancestors on a silver platter, each of our patriarchs wrestled with his unique relationship to it. Our patriarchal experience with respect to the land dovetails well with a later talmudic teaching: "the land of Israel is acquired through suffering" ([BT Berakhot 5a](#)). Faced with the disturbing behavior of the natives of the land, the great distance from his familial connections, and the experience of his "fathers," it is no wonder that Jacob is settled in the land of "sojourning," for he too is a stranger in the land. External and internal forces propel Jacob into this complicated relationship, and ultimately become the harbinger of a prolonged and oppressive sojourn in the land of Egypt.

By: Matthew Berkowitz, Director of Israel Programs

Weekly Commentary from
The Jewish Theological Seminary



From the Bar Mitzvah Family

Tyler

Shabbat Shalom and Happy Chanukah!

We are so excited to share this special day with our family and friends. Though a zoom service is far from what we had originally expected, Tyler has taken all the changes in stride, and we can't wait for this special milestone!

From the day Tyler started his Bar Mitzvah preparation, he would study to make sure he learned everything he needed to know, without being asked. Like clockwork, every evening after dinner, he would go to the same spot in our house, and spend time learning and practicing. His commitment is enviable and shows an incredible maturity of which we are so proud.

Spending time at Bet Torah has been such a special experience for Tyler. Having several of his best friends in class with him has certainly made his Hebrew school journey all the more enjoyable. From shabbatons and family programs to our trip to Israel with other member families and our older son Sam's bar mitzvah a few years ago, Tyler has many happy memories of time spent at Bet Torah as a child and looks forward to joining the Bet Torah community as an adult.

We'd like to extend our gratitude to Gina Fass and all of Tyler's Kulanu teachers who have provided him with such a great foundation of Jewish knowledge and values. Thank you to Seth Young, Ilana Fleischer and the entire Bet Torah staff who helped coordinate all of the behind the scenes details as we prepared for this day. Thank you to Rabbi Lisa Sacks for guiding Tyler to create his D'var Torah and to Nili Ionascu, Cantor Herman, and Cantor Ezring for spending time with Tyler each week as he learned to chant his Haftarah and Torah portions. Thank you to Rabbi Brusso for his spiritual leadership and for the role that he plays in making Bet Torah such a special place for our family and the entire Bet Torah community.

Thank you to everyone for sharing this wonderful day with us. Like everything else he puts his mind to, Tyler has worked so hard preparing, and we can't wait for him to share this day with our entire community.

With love,
Jodi, Larry, Sam, Tyler and Parker Kravitz



Honors

Friday, December 11, 2020

As I Light

Candlelighting

Kiddush

Blessing Children

Motzi

Aleinu

Shalom Aleichem

Jodi Kravitz

Jodi Kravitz

Tyler Kravitz

Marilyn Kravitz

Larry Kravitz

Tyler Kravitz

Jodi, Larry, Sam, Tyler, and
Parker Kravitz

Saturday, December 12, 2020

Shalom to All

A Prayer for the Journey

D'Var Torah

Wendy & Stuart Perilman

Nina Krantz

Tyler Kravitz

Torah Reading

Genesis 38:1-5

Genesis 38:6-11

Genesis 38:12-14

Genesis 38:15-19

Genesis 38:20-23

Genesis 38:24-26

Genesis 38:27-30

Maftir Numbers 7:10-29
Chanukah (Day 2)

Blessings

Jodi Kravitz

Congregation

Robin Harris

Congregation

Sam Kravitz

Andrew Krantz

Larry Kravitz

Tuviel Binyamin ben
Aryeh Leib v'Shavna
Gittel

Torah Readers

Sam Kravitz

Andy Benjamin

Heather Zeitz

Sandy Kellogg

Jodi Kravitz

Mark Koller

Tyler Kravitz

Tyler Kravitz

Haftarah Reading—Zechariah
2:14 –4:7 | Shabbat Chanukah

Prayer for Country

Prayer for Israel

Prayer for Peace

Ashrei

Musaf

Ein Keloheinu

Tyler Kravitz

Marilyn & Maurice Krantz

Jeff Harris

Beth Kravitz

Tyler & Sam Kravitz

Aleinu

Adon Olam

Tyler Kravitz, Josh Herr, Max
Charney, Jacob Chapman,
and Madi Lowe

Tyler Kravitz, Josh & Emma
Harris, Matthew & Alex Krantz

Parker Kravitz



The Shabbat Service

Shabbat Shalom! Welcome to Bet Torah! We are delighted that you are joining our community to celebrate the joy of *Shabbat*.

Bet Torah is an egalitarian congregation affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. It is customary that all men and boys wear a *kippah* (skullcap) during services. Head coverings are also appropriate for Jewish women. Men and women who are called to the Torah to read or recite a blessing before and after a Torah reading are also asked to wear a *tallit* (prayer shawl).

To maintain the sanctity of *Shabbat*, we remind you to please mute your microphone except when you have an assigned role during the service or are invited to unmute. Also, please keep distractions to a minimum when your camera is enabled. Photography is prohibited on *Shabbat*.

Two texts are needed to participate in the *Shabbat Service* - a *siddur* (prayer book) and a *Chumash* (Bible). (PDF links may be found on the Bet Torah website alongside the Zoom link to this service.) The *siddur* contains all of the prayers including a full English translation of the Hebrew text. We use *Siddur Lev Shalem* and also call pages for *Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals*. The *Chumash* contains the complete text and translations of the Torah and Haftarah readings.

The *Shabbat* morning service has a definitive order and is divided into three basic sections – *Shacharit* (the morning service), the Torah Service, and *Musaf* (the additional service).

Shacharit - This service includes preliminary prayers and hymns followed by the *Shema* and *Amidah*. The *Shema* expresses our belief in one God and instructs us to love God with all our heart. The *Amidah*, which is Hebrew for “Standing,” is an individual meditation that compels us to remember God and the meaning of *Shabbat*.

Torah Service - The Torah (the Five Books of Moses) is read from a handwritten scroll of parchment, without vowels, punctuation, or musical notation. Its words are chanted to a precise musical cantillation.

One portion of the Torah is read aloud each week to fulfill the commandment to study. At Bet Torah, we follow a modified version of the ancient triennial cycle. Each week we read one-third of the weekly portion so that the scroll is read in its entirety in three years.

The *Haftarah*, a passage from the prophets, follows the Torah readings. This tradition dates back to the time of the Babylonian exile, when Torah study was prohibited. Each *Haftarah* portion was selected for its similarity to a corresponding portion of the Torah, so the Jews were able to study God’s word without breaching civil law.

Musaf - *Musaf*, the third and final portion of the *Shabbat* morning service, is similar in structure to the *Shacharit* service, although shorter. This service parallels the additional sacrifices that were performed to honor *Shabbat* and Holidays at the Temple in Jerusalem until 70 C.E. At Bet Torah, we read the beginning of the *Musaf Amidah* together with the reader and conclude our prayers in silence.



Bet Torah Service Times

Sundays	9:00 am
Weekday Mornings (Monday through Friday)	8:00 am
Weekday Evenings (Monday through Thursday)	7:30pm
Friday Kabbalat Shabbat	6:30 pm
Saturday Morning Shabbat	9:30 am
Saturday Contemplative Afternoon Service	4:00 pm

A contemplative approach to *Mincha* including meditation, chanting, and words of Torah. Check the website for the Zoom link.

Candle Lighting Times

Havdalah Tonight	5:12 pm
Next Friday, December 18th	4:10 pm

Bet Torah's Mission Statement

Bet Torah is a progressive, egalitarian, participatory congregation committed to the principles of Conservative Judaism. Our purpose is to help strengthen the bonds among members of our congregation and God, the Jewish community, Israel, Jewish tradition, and the world in which we live. Wherever each member may be on his or her Jewish journey, he or she will find in Bet Torah a community where everyone can gather for prayer and celebration, learning and teaching, performance of mitzvot, and deeds of caring and *tikkun olam* (repairing the world).

