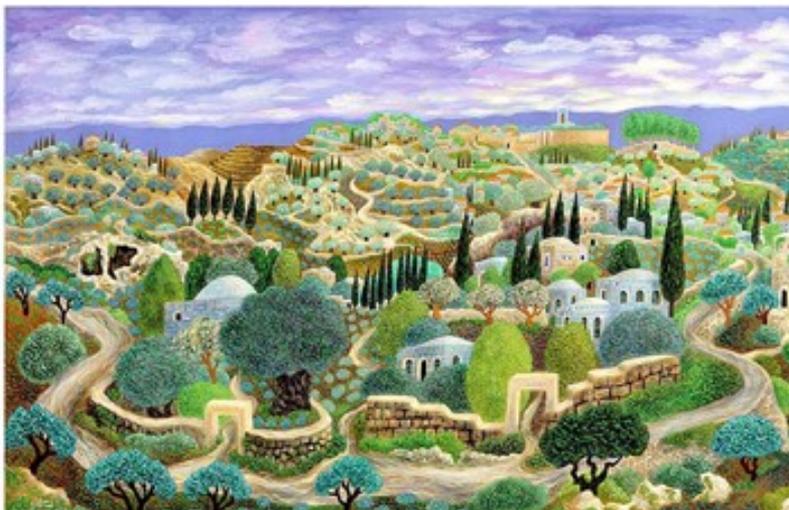




Welcome to Services at Bet Torah

January 9, 2021

25 Tevet 5781



Mincha

Parsha Vaera

Exodus 6: 2-13

Etz Hayim pp. 351-354

Mazel Tov to

**Daniel and Stephanie Lewis
on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Alex**

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

Promises Broken and Kept

*Promises, promises
I'm all through with promises, promises now
I don't know how I got the nerve to walk out...
Oh, promises, promises
This is where those promises, promises end
I don't pretend that what was wrong can be right
Things that I promised myself fell apart
But I found my heart
Oh, promises, their kind of promises
Can just destroy a life
Oh, promises, those kind of promises
Take all the joy from life
Oh, promises, promises, my kind of promises
Can lead to joy and hope and love...*

This week's parashah, Va'era, is all about promises: ones that are kept and ones that are broken, perhaps reminding us of the promises that Dionne Warwick sang about in her 1968 top-ten hit. The parashah begins with God speaking to Moses: "I have remembered My Covenant... I shall take you out from under the burdens of Egypt... I shall take you to Me for a people and I shall be a God to you" ([Exod. 6:5-7](#)). God threatens Pharaoh with plagues unless he lets God's people free. When Pharaoh does not let B'nei Yisrael go, God fulfills those promises—destroying lives as a consequence, but laying the groundwork for redemption.

Pharaoh, on the other hand, promises Moses four times that he will send B'nei Yisrael out of Egypt if the Egyptians see some relief from the plagues. Each time the respite is provided, Pharaoh breaks his promise, effectively increasing the severity of the Egyptians' punishment. His attempt to look strong in the face of his people—hardening his heart and holding out on Israel's God—ironically has the opposite effect.

Promises, whether between a ruler and their people, between God and humanity, or amongst ourselves, create different experiences depending on who upholds or breaks the promise and who is on the other side. Warwick's song expresses this spectrum of experience, as does our parashah. May we remember that our own promises do not just involve our hearts, but others' as well. May those promises lead us to love.

By: Emily Barton
Student, The Rabbinical School of JTF, Class of 2017

*Weekly Commentary from
The Jewish Theological Seminary*



From the Mincha Bar Mitzvah Family

Alex Lewis

Shabbat Shalom!

We are thrilled that you are able to join us (virtually!) as Alex is called to the Torah for the first time as a Bar Mitzvah. We are so proud of Alex's hard work and dedication as he reaches this milestone. And congratulations to Seth Klayman and his family on his Bar Mitzvah this morning. We're glad our families could share this weekend with each other.

Thank you to all of Alex's Bet Torah teachers, Nili, Gina, the rabbi, and the cantor, for helping Alex on his journey to reach this special day. Also, as always, thank you to the Bet Torah staff for their support and guidance, especially during these unprecedented times. We know that Alex's experiences and education at Bet Torah are some that he will hold with him as he continues on his journey.

We hope to see you all -- in person! -- soon.

With love and thanks,

Stephanie, Dan, Alex, Ethan, and Annie



Mincha Honors

Friday, January 8 2021

As I Light	Stan Harmon
Candlelighting	Bubbe Hannah
Kiddush	Seth Lewis
Blessing Children	Jody and Darrin Klayman
Motzi	Seth Klayman
Aleinu	Alex Lewis
Shalom Alechem	The Klayman Family

Saturday, January 9, 2021

Shalom to All	Stan Harmon
Ashrei	Alex and Dan Lewis

Aliyah	Blessings	Torah Reader
Exodus 6: 2-5	Ethan Lewis	Alex Lewis
Exodus 6: 6-9	Dan and Stephanie Lewis	Seth Lewis
Exodus 6: 10-13	Eliezer Schlomo ben Daniel Noach v'Shulamit	Alex Lewis
Prayer for Our Country		Jason Lewis
Prayer for Israel		Marla Lewis
Prayer for Peace		Stephanie and Dan Lewis
Aleinu		Ethan, Alex, and Annie Lewis



The Mincha/Maariv 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 Saturday afternoon service is divided into three major parts: *Minchah*, *Maariv*, and *Havdalah*.

Minchah begins with *Ashrei* and includes the Torah service. The bar/bat mitzvah may deliver a *D'var Torah*—a commentary about the week's Torah portion.

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.

Maariv follows the *Minchah* service and is a short service that includes the *Shema* and its blessings, the *Amidah*, and the concluding prayers.

Havdalah is the ceremony of separation to mark the end of Shabbat. Blessings are recited over wine, spices, and a special candle. We end by wishing each other *Shavuah Tov*—a good week!



Bet Torah Service Times

Sundays	9:00 am
Weekday Mornings (Monday through Friday)	8:00 am
Weekday Evenings (Monday through Thursday)	7:30 pm
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	5:28 pm
Next Friday, January 15th	3:33 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).

