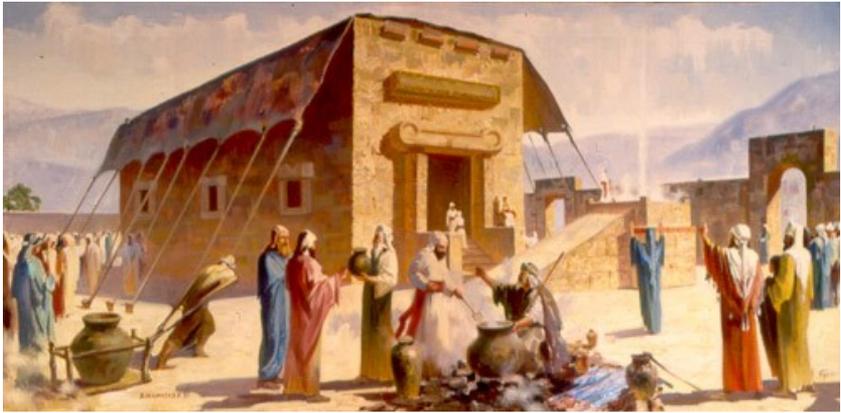




# *Welcome to Shabbat Services at Bet Torah*

May 1, 2021

19 Iyyar 5781



## **Shabbat**

Parsha Emor

Leviticus 22:17 - 23:22

Etz Hayim pp. 722-727

Haftarah

Ezekiel 44: 15-31

Etz Hayim pp. 735-737

## **Mazel Tov to**

**Babak Mehrara and Nirit Rosenblum  
on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Noah**

**Steve and Robyn Chapman  
on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Jacob**

# 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

## *Uncertainty and the Omer*

As we journey through these days and weeks, we find ourselves in the midst of *Sefirat Omer*, the counting of the Omer (the sheaf of barley offering, a ritual that took place in Temple times). Fittingly, this week's parashah contains the original commandment: "And from the day on which you bring the sheaf of elevation offering—you will count off seven weeks. They must be complete: you must count until the day after the seventh week—fifty days; then you will bring an offering of new grain to the Lord" ([Lev. 23:15–16](#)). In biblical times, the counting of the Omer was more than a mere ritual to the Israelites who worked the land. It was a concrete symbol that opened the summer season with the ripening of the barley and the bringing of an offering to the Temple. They would count the days until the presentation of the "two loaves" that were baked from the first of the wheat harvest and brought to the Temple on Shavu'ot. After the destruction of the Second Temple, this period became associated with mourning and uncertainty. Why?

Three compelling reasons are cited for connecting the period of the Omer with mourning and sorrow. First, the counting of the Omer today reminds us that it is impossible to observe the original ritual of presenting an offering of barley to the Temple. As such, the period is a constant reminder of the loss of the Temple and the oppression and dispersion that followed. Second, [Tractate Yevamot 62b](#) tells of Rabbi Akiba's loss of 24,000 students. Though numerous versions of this story appear (with radically different numbers of students) in other sources, the Omer period became woven into the Jewish consciousness as a time of mourning for Rabbi Akiba's disciples. Third and most compelling, Nogah HaReuveni, one of the founders of Neot Kedumim, a nature reserve of the biblical landscape in Israel, explains convincingly that this period was a time of great uncertainty for the Israelite farmer. [Tractate Bava Batra 147a](#) underscores this point, teaching, "The northern wind is beneficial to wheat when it has reached a third of its ripening and is damaging to olive trees when they have blossomed. The southern wind is damaging to wheat when it has reached a third of its ripening and is beneficial to olives when they have blossomed." Because of the instability in the weather, one is wholly unsure if the crops will yield plenty or famine.

As I reflected on the counting of the Omer, I thought not only of these three connections but also about the biblical background of this tradition. That is to say, during this period, we journey literally and figuratively from the certainty of Israelite enslavement in the land of Egypt to the certainty of the gift of Torah. Between these two poles of certainty, we must wrestle with the radical uncertainty (represented by the chaotic winds characteristic of this time in the Land of Israel) of our journey. Through the chaos and unpredictability, we are blazing a path to blessing, hope, and redemption.

By Rabbi Matthew Berkowitz, Director of Israel Programs

*Weekly Commentary from  
The Jewish Theological Seminary*



# From the Bar Mitzvah Family

## *Jacob*

We are so grateful to celebrate Jacob's bar mitzvah with all of our family, friends and the Bet Torah community. While it's not what we may have expected, we are grateful for the ability to celebrate this milestone in Jake's life with all of you in a virtual way. Jake practically grew up with Bet Torah from Nursery school through Hebrew school and the community has seen our family through Emily's baby naming in 2017, Ben's bar mitzvah in 2018, and other significant events in our lives.

Today's parsha, *Emor* talks about the Jewish holidays, rules for the holidays and tradition. *Emor* draws upon "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth", questioning whether physical harm be inflicted as compensation. We read about interpretations from key sources such as Sarna and Ibn Ezra and most importantly how the Torah doesn't permit physical retaliation. We found this parsha to be particularly relevant today, given large scale conflict between countries, but also smaller scale conflicts, whether individually or within various ethnic or religious groups.

Jake's hard work and dedication in preparing for this day are admirable and we could not be more proud of him. We are grateful for the care and support of Rabbi Brusso and Rabbi Sacks and the on-going patience and commitment from Nili Ionascu and Cantor Ezring every week during this process. We also want to take a moment to thank our family and friends, who provided ears to listen, and shoulders to lean on, as we all needed through this process!

Mazel tov to Noah and the entire Mehrara family! We are excited to be sharing this simcha with you.

With love,  
Robyn, Steve, Ben, Jake and Emily



# From the Bar Mitzvah Family

## *Noah*

Shabbat Shalom!

Thank you to all of our family, friends and Bet Torah community for helping us to celebrate our Simcha today, albeit virtually! During this tumultuous year, separated physically from our friends and family, it is an occasion such as this which brings true meaning, pride and joy.

A very special thanks to all of Noah's esteemed Bet Torah teachers including Rabbi Brusso, Rabbi Sacks, Cantor Ezring, Nili Ionascu, Gina Fass, Robin Wald and all of the wonderful Bet Torah educators and staff for their encouragement, support and caring in preparing Noah for this special day. Bet Torah is a unique and vibrant community and home for our family with many happy memories.

Noah has embraced his learning of Jewish studies and especially Hebrew both here at Bet Torah through his many experiences as well as at Camp Ramah in the Berkshires. Noah marks the final bar/bat mitzvah celebration for our family, the 5<sup>th</sup> to be exact, which is bittersweet!! Noah has gained invaluable knowledge and Jewish values through his education and experiences at Bet Torah. We feel so very fortunate as a family to be a part of this spiritual and engaging Bet Torah community.

Noah, we are very proud of your accomplishments during this challenging year of learning and studying for your Bar Mitzvah! You reached this milestone in your Jewish life with determination and encouragement despite the physical distance between you and your Bet Torah educators and friends. We hope this will serve as a strong foundation for your Jewish life, guiding you through life's challenges and adventures and pushing you to keep asking many questions.

We wish the Chapman family a warm Mazel Tov on Jacob's Bar Mitzvah!

With love, warmth and appreciation,  
Babak, Nirit, Maya, Ellie and Leyla



# Honors

## Friday, April 30, 2021

A Prayer for Lighting Shabbat Candles

As I Light

Candlelighting

Kiddush

Blessing Children

Motzi

## Saturday, May 1, 2021

Shalom to All

A Prayer for the Journey

D'Var Torah

### Torah Reading

Leviticus 22: 17-20

Leviticus 22: 21-25

Leviticus 22: 26-28

Leviticus 22: 29-33

Leviticus 23: 1-3

Leviticus 23: 4-8

Leviticus 23: 9-14

Hosafa Leviticus 23: 15-18

Acharon Leviticus 23: 19-22

Maftir Leviticus 23: 19-22

D'Var Torah

Haftarah Reading—Ezekiel  
44: 15-31

Prayer for Congregation

Prayer for Country

Prayer for Israel

Prayer for Peace

Ashrei

Ein Keloheinu

Aleinu

Adon Olam

Chapman Family

Ben and Jane Rosenblum

Jacob Chapman

Noah Mehrara

Babak Mehrara and Nirit  
Rosenblum

Rick Schwartz

Sas and Arman Mehrara

Brian Schwartz

Jacob Chapman

### Torah Readers

Nirit Rosenblum

Robyn Chapman

Steve Chapman

Ben Chapman

Eli Schwartz

Jacob Chapman

Leyla Mehrara

BenZion Rosenblum

Noah Mehrara

Noah Mehrara

Jacob Chapman and Noah  
Mehrara

Adi and Jennifer Rosenblum

Cindy and James Chapman

Ben and Jane Rosenblum

Judy Chapman

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

Jacob Chapman

Noah Mehrara

Kayla and Jonah Schwartz



# 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	8:38 pm
Next Friday, May 7th	7:40 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).

