



BET TORAH

Welcome to Shabbat Services at Bet Torah

May 22, 2021

11 Sivan 5781



Shabbat

Parsha Nasso

Numbers 5:11 - 6:27

Etz Hayim pp. 796-805

Haftarah

Judges 13: 2-25

Etz Hayim pp. 813-815

Mazel Tov to

**Marissa Leighton
on the Bar Mitzvah of her son, Miles**

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 Blessing of Happiness

One of the centerpieces of Parashat Naso is the Priestly Blessing. God speaks to Moses and commands him to communicate the text of the ritual blessing with his brother Aaron: “Thus you will bless the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘The Lord bless you and protect you! The Lord deal kindly and graciously with you! The Lord bestow His favor upon you and grant you peace!’ Thus you will link My name with the people of Israel, and I will bless them” (*Num. 6:22–27*).

While those in the Diaspora may be familiar with the ritual of *Birkat Kohanim* from the High Holiday or festival services, in Israel the Priestly Blessing (also known as *dukhening*) is recited daily during the repetition of the morning ‘*Amidah*. As Jacob Milgrom points out,

The first part of each line invokes the movement of God toward His people, the second, His activity on their behalf . . . God initiates six actions: bless and protect; shine and be gracious; bestow and grant peace. However, the transitional “and” may indicate consequence: blessing results in protection; God’s shining face results in grace; the bestowal of God’s favor results in peace. Thus the Priestly Blessing may actually express three actions. (JPS Commentary: Numbers, 51)

What exactly do we hope for in God’s blessing?

Joseph Bekhor Shor spells out the breadth of blessing that is showered on the people: “May God bless you with many children, a healthy body, wisdom, length of days, greatness, in your going out, in your coming in, in the city, in the field, in your basket, in your kneading trough, in happiness (i.e., may your heart be full in its portion)—the word *berakhah* (blessing) is connected to all of these.” His list beautifully includes “children, a healthy body, wisdom, length of days, greatness, etc.” Methodologically, our exegete scours Tanakh for notions that are explicitly connected to the word *blessing*. Broadly speaking, the blessing connects to self, family, community, and existential happiness.

Perhaps the most challenging of the Bekhor Shor’s inventory is *happiness*, which he defines as “being content with one’s portion.” As I read this section of our commentator’s reflections, I was reminded of the congregation’s response as the priests give their blessing during the ‘*Amidah*. We cover our eyes as if turning away. Vision has the potential to distract us. Covering our eyes and using only the sense of hearing forces us to internalize and turn inward. As we shift orientation, physically and spiritually, the Bekhor Shor reminds us to dwell upon and create a sense of inner peace—not to let our eyes wander, seeking happiness elsewhere, but rather, to reflect on all the *berakhot* of our individual lives and respond with a feeling of *hakkarat hatov* (recognizing the good). As we approach Shavu’ot, in which we commemorate the giving of Torah, I can think of no better lesson that we as individuals and as a community need to internalize.

By: Matthew Berkowitz, Director of Israel Programs

Weekly Commentary from
The Jewish Theological Seminary



From the Bar Mitzvah Family

Miles

With Love from the Leighton Family,

We are very grateful to be able to share Miles' becoming a Bar Mitzvah with all of our family, friends and the Bet Torah community. While it is not what we had initially imagined, we feel blessed to be able to celebrate this milestone during uncertain and difficult times as our ancestors did many years ago continuing the traditions so important to Jewish life. We are very proud of Miles' commitment to his Jewish learning throughout his Bar Mitzvah preparation and the many years leading up to this day. We look forward to Miles' continued learning and involvement in the Bet Torah community and the Jewish community at large.

Miles' Parashat, Nasso, means "to Lift Up". In studying his parashat, Miles' felt connected to the question, what does it mean to be a Sage or a Saint? Is it better to be one or the other. What does it mean to be a positive influence in the community and how today's world and life can sometimes make that difficult. In doing this work, Miles reinforced his own feelings about being a good person, a good friend and a good member of the community. He has always been a gentle soul and a person who wants people to support each other and get along. We are most proud of Miles' devotion to his family, both his sisters, Hannah and Avery, his cousins whom he is very close with and especially the relationship he has with his grandparents. Miles extends that devotion to his friends and school community and we know he will continue to honor and respect all people and use his gentle strength to lift up those who need a boost.

Miles' hard work, time and dedication in preparing for this day are commendable especially during the always changing environment and we could not be more proud of him. We are grateful for the many years of support and care of Rabbi Brusso given to Miles and our entire family. Working with Rabbi Sacks throughout this process has been a true blessing and a gift. Thank you for the continued patience and teaching of Nili Ionascu and Cantor Ezring each week, this day is so much a reflection of your devotion to the young Jewish community. Not to be overlooked is the help of Ilana Fleischner facilitating all of our meetings and seamless preparations getting to this day. Thank you for your time and support through this process. We also want to thank all of our family and friends who have been with us through this process and we are so blessed to have you in our lives.

Although many of our loved ones are not with us today, we feel their strength and love in Miles, Hannah and Avery every day. You are forever in our hearts and guiding us down life's path. We live each day holding you in our hearts but you are especially thought of today, Terry, Gigi, Uncle Lee and Aunt Iris. Thank you for providing the example of unconditional love and support encouraging us all to be our best selves each and every day.

Shabbat Shalom,
Marissa Leighton



Honors

Friday, May 21, 2021

As I Light

Candlelighting

Kiddush

Blessing of Children

Motzi

Aleinu

Shalom Aleichem

Saturday, May 22, 2021

Shalom to All

D'Var Torah

Torah Reading

Numbers 5: 11-15

Numbers 5: 16-26

Numbers 5:27 - 6:4

Numbers 6: 5-8

Numbers 6: 9-15

Numbers 6: 16-21

Numbers 6: 22-27

Maftir Numbers 6: 22-27

Haftarah - Judges 13: 2-25

Prayer for Country

Prayer for Israel

Prayer for Peace

Ashrei

Ein Keloheinu

Aleinu

Adon Olam

Alisha Miller

Marissa Leighton

Miles Leighton

Harmon Millrod

Harmon Millrod

Miles Leighton

Miles & Marissa Leighton

Marissa Leighton

Miles Leighton

Torah Readers

Marissa Leighton

Rabbi Brusso

Marc Goldstein

Daniel Miller

Harmon Millrod

Daren Loewinger

Miles Leighton

Miles Leighton

Miles Leighton

Allison & David Rosenberg

Giti & Avi Epstein

Joey Alerhand

Avery Leighton

Uncle Sean, Aunt Talia and
Cousins Aaron & Maya

Cousins Aiden & Brody

Cousins Harper & Sienna

Blessings

Hannah Leighton

Congregation

Congregation

Alisha Miller

Avery Leighton

Elana Loewinger

Miles Leighton

Mordechai Shlomo
ben Shmuel Ya'akov
uMiriam Malka



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	9:02 pm
Next Friday, May 28th	8:00 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).

