



Welcome to Shabbat Services at Bet Torah

May 8, 2021

26 Iyyar 5781



Shabbat

Parsha Behar-
Bechukotai

Leviticus 25:39 - 26:46 Etz Hayim pp. 744-753

Haftarah

Jeremiah 16:19 - 17:14 Etz Hayim pp. 763-765

Mazel Tov to

**Dennis and Denise Stogsdill
on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Brody**

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

Between Heaven and Earth

Fertility of humans and of the land is the essence of divine blessing. It is the theme of the first commandment of Torah—"Be fruitful and multiply ([Gen. 1:28](#))."¹ It is the sacred wish of each couple in the Torah as they desire to see the next generation. It is the notion that also encapsulates the divine promise for the loyal observance of mitzvot. Parashat Behukotai opens in this vein, with a condition and the promise of God's blessing. The two opening verses of our parashah speak of the harmony between heaven and earth, the bridges between the two, and the necessity for each of us to view ourselves as a sacred link. [Leviticus 26:3–4](#) teaches, "If you follow My ordinances, observe My commandments and do them, then I will give rain at their proper season and the land will give its produce and the tree will yield its fruit." As one reads these verses, one is struck by the harmony of their content and the symmetry of their language. Note well that observance of the mitzvot is connected not just to our well-being, but also to that of the Land of Israel. Our environment responds to our spiritual behavior. If our spiritual lives are lived in accordance with the essence of Torah—according to the order of Torah—then the natural environment will mirror that same sense of order. Even more striking is the spatial description in each verse connecting heaven and earth. Rashi, the great medieval commentator, points out a possible difficulty in the first verse: "You might think that the verse in its entirety is speaking of the observance of mitzvot, but when it states, *'imbehukotaitelkhu'* ('if you follow my ordinances'), Torah wishes to send the message, *'she teyuamelimba-Torah'* ('that you will labor in the discipline of Torah')." Accordingly, in the first verse, we have references to Torah, Divine Revelation, the Commandments (human), and action or movement from God to humans connected by the act of doing. Action becomes the bridge between God and man. Similarly, we find this harmonious structure in the second verse, the rains from the heavens, the land, and the trees of the field. Again, think spatially: the rains from the heavens, the produce sprouting from the land, and the trees that connect heaven and earth. Just as action is the bridge between Torah and mitzvot, and the tree is the bridge between heaven and earth, so too do humans represent a link between heaven and earth. In so many verses throughout Tanakh, the human being is compared to a tree. Even in the haftarah of Behukotai, from the Prophet Jeremiah, which declares, "Blessed is one who trusts in God, whose trust is the Lord alone, he will be as a tree planted by waters." So what do we have in common with a tree? A tree derives its energy from a distant source, it needs water from heaven and earth, it needs nutrients, and it aspires heavenward. So too do we. We derive our lives from God, we need the "water" of Torah, we need nourishment, and we ideally aspire heavenward. May each of us become a bridge between heaven and earth. May we learn Torah and mitzvot and follow them; and may we continually reap the earth's bounty. May we always be *'k'etzshatul al mayim'* (as a tree nourished by bountiful waters).

By: Matthew Berkowitz, Director of Israel Programs

Weekly Commentary from
The Jewish Theological Seminary



From the Bar Mitzvah Family

Brody

Shabbat Shalom!

We are so grateful to share this special day in our lives with our family, friends and the Bet Torah Community. While we wish we could be sharing the special day with you in person, are so lucky to be surrounded by so much love and support virtually.

We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to all the people who helped prepare Brody and our family for this milestone today. Special thanks to Rabbi Brusso, Rabbi Sacks, Cantor Ezring and Nili Ionascu for your wisdom, encouragement, patience and humor in helping Brody to prepare for this day. In addition, we wish to thank Seth Young, Gina Fass, and all of the religious school teachers for creating a safe and welcoming home for Brody and our entire family.

We are so incredibly proud of you Brody. The commitment you made in preparing for today is a testament to the mature, inquisitive, thoughtful and sensitive young man that you are becoming. We hope that the pride and love you feel today, continues to drive you in future endeavors, and that this foundation will guide you to lead a responsible and meaningful life.

We thank you all for sharing this special day with us.

With Love,
Denise, Dennis, Ethan and Brody



Honors

Friday, May 7, 2021

As I Light

Candlelighting

Kiddush

Motzi

Aleinu

Denise Stogsdill

Denise Stogsdill

Brody Stogsdill

Brody Stogsdill

Brody and Family

Saturday, May 8, 2021

D'Var Torah

Torah Reading

Leviticus 25: 39-43

Leviticus 25: 44-46

Exodus 25: 47-54

Exodus 25:55 - 26:2

Exodus 26: 3-5

Exodus 26: 6-9

Exodus 26: 10-46

Maftir Leviticus 26: 44-46

Haftarah - Jeremiah 16:19 -
17:14

Prayer for Country

Prayer for Israel

Prayer for Peace

Ashrei

Ein Keloheinu

Aleinu

Adon Olam

Blessings

Gene Strum

Marissa Fayer

Sharon Kahn

Carole Strum

Meredith Moss

Chanan ben D'vorah
v'Dennis

Brody Stogsdill

Brody Stogsdill

Torah Readers

Denise Stogsdill

Russ Fayer

Susan Cohen-Silberman

Ethan Stogsdill

Ben Moss

Susan Cohen-Silberman

Jay Schechter

Brody Stogsdill

Brody Stogsdill

Dennis Stogsdill

Meredith and Lucy Moss

Becky Coffman

Brody and Bet Torah Friends

Brody and Family

Brody and Family

Brody and Family



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	8:46 pm
Next Friday, May 14th	7:47 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).

