



Welcome to Shabbat Services at Bet Torah

November 6, 2021

2 Kislev 5782



Shabbat

Parsha Toldot

Genesis 27:28 - 28:9

Etz Hayim pp. 157-161

Haftarah

Malachi 1:1 - 2:7

Etz Hayim pp. 163-165

Mazel Tov to

**Larry and Judie Frantz
on the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Hayley**

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.

Like many synagogue communities around the world, we have innovated to respond to the challenges presented by the global pandemic. We continue to use the Talmudic emergency exit called *sha'at ha'dechak* or "time of crisis" in order to provide a multi-access experience on Shabbat so that our entire community can connect while some remain physically separated. The virtual space we have created provides opportunities to allow our value of inclusiveness to find its clearest expression.

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 Challenge of Tomorrow's Blessing

Parashat Toledot opens in life and closes with the threat of death. Having wrestled with infertility, Rebekah and Isaac finally give birth to Jacob and Esau. Far from being an uneventful pregnancy, Rebekah becomes troubled by a feeling of “struggle” in her womb and goes to inquire of God. God tells Rebekah that two nations are in her womb and that one of those nations will serve the other (NB the Hebrew: *rav ya'avod tzair* is ambiguous, meaning either “the older (Esau) will serve the younger (Jacob)” or “the older (Esau)—the younger (Jacob) will serve”). Once the two are born, we telescope to a fateful episode in which Jacob is in the midst of a “Martha Stewart” moment, cooking lentil stew, when his famished older brother comes in from the field. Esau demands to have some of the lentil stew, but Jacob drives a hard bargain and, in return, demands that Esau give him the birthright. Esau agrees and fills his stomach; Jacob is content in his manipulative ways and leads himself further down a path of alienation. Still, Torah concludes this episode with a curious statement—namely, “Thus did Esau spurn his birthright” (Gen. 25:34). How are we to understand this editorial comment?

Ramban says, concerning “spurn his birthright,” that “One who despises the word will suffer thereby” (Prov. 13:13). But Torah has already explained the reason that Esau acquiesced to the sale. This was because he was already in mortal danger from his profession (hunting animals). It was likely that he would die while his father was alive, and the birthright carried no meaning until the passing of the father. So of what benefit was the birthright to him? After having eaten and drunk, he returned to his hunting in the field, which was the reason he despised his birthright. “For there is no desire in fools” (Eccles. 5:3) except to eat and drink and to fulfill their momentary desire, not caring about tomorrow.” So Ramban suggests that it was not simply a spontaneous act on the part of Esau. The picture he paints of Esau is of both a deliberate and reckless character. According to Ramban, Esau is resigned to his fate as a hunter. Because he has chosen a dangerous vocation and seems to live recklessly, he has no reverence for the future.

Consciously or unconsciously, many of us engage in dangerous habits—living wantonly and selfishly without regard for the future. We spurn “birthrights” every day as we continue to smoke, overeat, abuse others, overwork, etc. The challenge in each of our lives is to recognize and value “tomorrow’s blessing.” We cannot simply live our lives in the moment. Ephemeral pleasures often give way to long-term suffering. Unlike Esau, we must come to recognize that some things are far more valuable than physical satisfaction.

By: Matthew Berkowitz, Director of Israel Programs

Weekly Commentary from
The Jewish Theological Seminary



From the Bat Mitzvah Family of *Hayley Frantz*

The joy of celebrating Hayley's bat mitzvah and joining together in-person with our Bet Torah community, family and friends is a double blessing. We are grateful for everyone who traveled far and near to participate in this milestone with us, and also for those who are taking advantage of the available technology in order to participate in this service virtually. We are especially fortunate for the presence of our beloved father and grandfather, Dr. Donald Frantz and for the virtual participation of our beloved mother and grandmother, Marilyn Zuckerman in Chicago. As ever, we remember with love our mother and grandmother Paula Frantz and our father and grandfather Landon Zuckerman, of blessed memory, who would be so very proud of Hayley today.

It is our sincere hope that Hayley will build upon the strong spiritual foundation she found at Bet Torah to always embrace Jewish tradition and find a multitude of blessings everywhere. Hayley formed many important Jewish and social connections at Bet Torah Nursery School, under the direction of the incomparable Mindy Citera. Hayley continued to nourish her Jewish learning in Hebrew School, youth programs and most recently in a Rosh Hodesh group and as a Madricha-in-training. We wish to acknowledge the leadership of Gina Fass, Amy Portnoy, Loen Amer, Robin Wald and many teachers whose dedication helped deepen Hayley's Jewish and personal identity. We are most grateful for the spiritual and moral guidance of Rabbi Aaron Brusso, who helps us to feel a connection with the sacred. We are deeply appreciative to Rabbi Brusso, Rabbi Lisa Sacks, Morah Nili Ionascu and Cantor Gil Ezring for their patient instruction while preparing Hayley to become a Bat Mitzvah. We also thank Seth Young and Ilana Fleischner for working with us during these ever-changing times to make everything seamlessly come together.

Hayley, we are incredibly proud of the dedication you have shown and the knowledge you have demonstrated at the bimah today. As a volunteer with Adopt-A-Dog and by organizing a walk to raise money for JDRF you gave your time to help your community, embracing the Jewish value of "tzedakah". You stand out by your intelligence, bold inquisitiveness, generosity, appreciation of justice, beauty inside and out and as a fierce defender on the soccer field. We look forward to seeing what exciting things come next for you.

Shabbat Shalom!
Judie, Larry, Jonathan, Rayna & Samantha



Honors

Saturday, November 6, 2021

Ark Opening	Debbi Ferman & Abby Chargo	
Torah Carrier	David Zuckerman	
Shalom to All	Eric Zuckerman	
D'Var Torah	Hayley Frantz	
Torah Reading	Blessings	Torah Readers
Genesis 27: 28-30	Joanna Segal	Laurie Zuckerman
Genesis 27: 31-33	Scott Posner	David Zuckerman
Genesis 27: 34-37	Congregant	Sandy Kellogg
Genesis 27: 38-40	Jonathan Frantz	Judie Frantz
Genesis 27: 41-46	Congregant	Hana Gruenberg
Genesis 28: 1-4	Donald Frantz	Leslie Johnson
Genesis 28: 5-9	Larry Frantz	Hayley Frantz
Maftir Genesis 28: 7-9	Hayley Frantz	Hayley Frantz
Hagbah	Scott Levine	
G'lilah	Deena Levine	
Haftarah - Malachi 1:1-2:7	Hayley Frantz	
Ark Opening	Stacey Follman & Abby Reuben	
Prayer for Country	Dan Zuckerman	
Prayer for Israel	Congregant	
Prayer for Peace	Jennifer Johnson	
Ashrei	Jonathan, Rayna & Hayley Frantz	
Torah Carrier	Larry Frantz	
Ein Keloheinu	Bet Torah Friends	
Aleinu	Jonathan, Rayna, Hayley & Sammi Frantz with cousins Julia & Allie Levine, and Alexis & Max Zuckerman	
Adon Olam	Jonathan, Rayna, Hayley & Sammi Frantz with cousins Julia & Allie Levine, and Alexis & Max Zuckerman	
Hamotzi	Donald Frantz	



Next Week's Parsha

Breaking Routine to Encounter God

With the threat of fratricide hanging over his head and in light of his parents' wish, Jacob makes a quick exit from Beersheba and heads toward Haran, where he will presumably find a loving and loyal wife. As Jacob's journey ensues, a cryptic episode unfolds at the beginning of our parashah. Torah narrates, "Jacob left Beersheba and went to Haran. He came upon a certain place and stopped there for the night, for the sun had set" (Gen. 28:10–11). Jacob prepares his makeshift bed in the wilderness and dreams of angels ascending and descending a mystical ladder. Gordon Wenham writes, *Other biblical stories of travelers overtaken by nightfall tell of them being put up for the night by people living in the area. That Jacob is forced to bed down under the stars may suggest his distance from human habitation, or his estrangement, or simply affirm that providence overruled the traditional custom of finding lodging in someone's house. (Wenham, Word Biblical Commentary: Genesis, 221)*

Is there another perspective on Jacob's wilderness encampment?

Genesis Rabbah 68:10, a collection of midrash on the book of Genesis, relates, "For the sun had set"—read that God extinguished the sun; that is, God caused the sun to set prematurely, so that God might speak with Jacob in privacy. God's action may be understood by the parable of the king's admirer who visited him occasionally. The king would command, "Extinguish the lamps, extinguish the candles and lanterns—for I wish to speak with my friend in secret."

While Wenham spells out a query of the circumstances under which Jacob falls into his deep sleep, the midrash hints at a deep and insightful answer: shelter is not provided for the patriarch because God wishes to be the one to protect and communicate with Jacob. According to Genesis Rabbah, God is setting the stage for a personal tête-à-tête with Jacob—a meeting that can only unfold under the curtain of secrecy and darkness. Indeed, the midrash goes even deeper: it speaks to the closeness and intimacy of the relationship between God and Jacob. The message being communicated to the servant must be delivered in the confines of a closed space, and so a sacred place and appointed time are chosen for the revelation that Jacob receives. The setting is the wilderness. Stripped of distraction, here Jacob can now focus on the divine.

So too is the case with us. To encounter God and sanctity in our lives, we must remove ourselves from the daily routine—to visit a sick friend or relative, to make time for learning or to show our solidarity with Israel. Removing ourselves from routine is not an inconvenience. It is an indispensable step toward encountering the Image of God.

By: Matthew Berkowitz, Director of Israel Programs

Weekly Commentary from
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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).

In the interest of providing the safest environment in the building during COVID, we require that everyone is fully masked at all times while inside. Leaders of the service will have the options to unmask. Other modifications of the service have been made to ensure the greatest degree of health safety. Please feel free to take mask breaks and socialize out of doors. Hand sanitizer is available throughout the building and ushers are here to help you in any way they can.

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
Tuesday Mornings (in person and on zoom)	7:15 am
Weekday Mornings (zoom only) (Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday)	8:00 am
Weekday Evenings (Monday through Thursday)	7:30 pm
Friday Kabbalat Shabbat	6:30 pm
Saturday Morning Shabbat	9:30 am

Candle Lighting Times

Havdalah Tonight	6:27 pm
Next Friday, November 12th	4:20 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).



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Shabbat at Bet Torah