

## **STUDYING YOUR PARSHAH**

**Diamond, James. *Stringing the Pearls: How to Read the Weekly Torah Portion* (220.1 DIA)**

Provides a structured method for reading and understanding the Torah, leading Jewish learners through one portion from each of the five biblical books to give examples for further individual study.

***The Torah: A Women's Commentary* edited by Tamara Cohn Eskenazi (220.1 ESK)**

Provides commentary on individual Torah portions from the world's leading Jewish female Bible scholars, rabbis, historians, philosophers and archaeologists.

**Fields, Harvey J. *A Torah Commentary for Our Times: Genesis* (222.1 FIE)**

***A Torah Commentary for Our Times: Exodus and Leviticus* (222.2 FIE)**

***A Torah Commentary for Our Times: Numbers and Deuteronomy* (222.4 FIE)**

A provocative approach to the weekly sidrah, juxtaposing the insights of ancient, medieval, and modern commentators.

**Hammer, Reuven. *Entering the Torah: Prefaces to the Weekly Torah Portions* (220.1 HAM)**

These prefaces are meant to complement and enrich your study of the portion by pointing out important ideas and raising problems and questions for consideration.

**Lieber, David. *Etz Hayim: Torah and Commentary* (220 LIE)**

Includes essays on key themes by prominent Conservative movement rabbis and scholars with two approaches to interpreting the Torah. The p'shat commentary seeks to explain the basic meaning of the text. The d'rash commentary selects insights from over 2,000 years of Torah study, including passages from the Talmud and Midrash and readings by contemporary rabbis and scholars, including women's voices. See also *Etz Hayim: Study Companion* (220 BLU).

**Loeb, Sorel Goldberg and Barbara Binder Kadden. *Teaching Torah: A Treasury of Insights and Activities* (222.1 LOE)**

Includes a synopsis of each Torah portion, insights from the tradition, strategies for analyzing the text, other resources, and project ideas.

**Peterseil, Gedalia and Rabbi Yaacov, ed. *Tell It from the Torah* (J220 PET)**

Each chapter includes a simple exposition of the weekly Torah reading, Rabbinic "pearls of wisdom," a gematria discussion, an explanation of how the Haftarah portion connects to the Torah portion, and short humorous anecdotes that relate to the reading, as well as questions and concepts to think about (in two volumes).

**Plaut, W. Gunther. *The Torah: A Modern Commentary* (222 PLA)**

Includes original Hebrew text and the Jewish Publication Society's English translation of the Pentateuch and of the Haftarah with commentaries by W. Gunther Plaut and Bernard J. Bamberger.

**Plaut, W. Gunther. *The Haftarah Commentary* (223 PLA)**

A comprehensive translation of the weekly selections complete with meticulously cantillated Hebrew text, commentary and translations, essays, gleanings from modern and ancient sources, notes, glossary, bibliography, and additional selections.

**Prenzlau, Sheryl. *Genesis* (J222.1 PRE)**

***Exodus* (J222.2 PRE)**

***Leviticus* (J222.3 PRE)**

***Numbers & the Book of Ruth* (J222.4 PRE)**

***Deuteronomy* (J222.5 PRE)**

Based on the original Hebrew text, this series presents all the major stories from the Torah and the Book of Ruth in simple, easy-to-read prose.

**Rosman, Steven M. *The Bird of Paradise and Other Sabbath Stories* (298 ROS)**

A collection of Jewish stories based on the weekly portions from the Torah, including original tales and adaptations from the Midrash, the Talmud, and the chasidic masters.

**Takac, Esther. *Genesis - the Book with Seventy Faces: A Guide for the Family* (OVERSIZE 222.1 TAK)**

This beautifully designed guide, filled with watercolors, pen and ink, and crayon drawings, illuminates the twelve *parashot* of the book of Genesis and provides a wonderful resource to learn, study, and interpret from the perspective of the sages, modern scholars, midrash, legends, and kabbalah.

**UNDERSTANDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF YOUR BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

**Artson, Bradley Shavit. *It's A Mitzvah: Step-By-Step to Jewish Living* (201 ART)**

This book identifies hundreds of opportunities to transform daily living into Jewish living, providing background reading to help you prepare for your Mitzvah Project.

**Feinstein, Edward. *Tough Questions Jews Ask: A Young Adult's Guide to Building a Jewish Life* (201 FEI)**

A Conservative rabbi tackles ultimate issues matter-of-factly, setting Jewish commitment within a larger frame of spiritual development.

**Goldin, Barbara Diamond. *Bat Mitzvah: A Jewish Girl's Coming of Age* (J238.34 GOL)**

A history and description of the Bat Mitzvah, the ceremony in which a Jewish girl marks her transition to adulthood.

**Kimmel, Eric A. *Bar Mitzvah: A Jewish Boy's Coming of Age* (J238.34 KIM)**

Provides historical background, explanations of ceremonial objects and rituals, and real-life Bar Mitzvah stories.

**Lewis, Barbara. *The Kid's Guide to Service Projects* (T299)**

Addresses various types of service projects in an array of areas, including hunger, the environment, and after-school safety, with more than 500 project ideas, step-by-step instructions for creating flyers and press releases, practical tips and advice and much more.

**Lewis, Barbara. *A Kid's Guide to Social Action* (J255 LEW)**

A resource guide for children for learning political action skills that can help them make a difference in solving social problems at the community, state, and national levels.

**Lewis, Barbara. *The Teen Guide to Global Action* (T255 LEW)**

A follow-up to *A Kid's Guide to Social Action* includes real-life stories to inspire young readers, plus a rich and varied menu of opportunities for service, fast facts, hands-on activities, user-friendly tools, and up-to-date resources kids can use to put their own volunteer spirit into practice.

**Oppenheimer, Mark. *Thirteen and a Day: The Bar and Bat Mitzvah Across America* (300.10 OPP)**

In this fresh look at American Jews today, the author set out across America to attend the most unique celebrations he could find to reveal how the Bar and Bat Mitzvah has become a distinctively American rite of passage.

**Salkin, Jeffrey K. *For Kids--Putting God on Your Guest List: How to Claim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Bar or Bat Mitzvah* (J238 SAL)**

A guide to preparing for the bar or bat mitzvah, discussing the history and significance of this rite of passage and putting it in perspective with the core spiritual values of Judaism. See also: ***Putting God on the Guest List: How to Reclaim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah* (238.34 SAL).**

**BAR/BAT MITZVAH FICTION**

**Avrech, Robert J. *The Hebrew Kid and the Apache Maiden* (JF AVR)**

In the years following the Civil War, Ariel Isaacson and his family are kicked out of their Arizona town by an anti-Semitic mayor and townspeople. They are forced to embark on a difficult and dangerous journey through the unsettled Arizona territory where they hope to connect with a Jewish community and celebrate Ariel's Bar Mitzvah.

**Bush, Lawrence. *Emma Ansky-Levine and Her Mitzvah Machine* (JF BUS)**

For her twelfth birthday, Emma receives a special Mitzvah Machine, helping her discover her Jewish identity and the true meaning of becoming a Bat Mitzvah.

**Cohen, Barbara. *King of the Seventh Grade* (JF COH)**

Thirteen-year-old Vic hates Hebrew school and is indifferent to his upcoming Bar Mitzvah, until he is suddenly disallowed from participating in either.

**Elsant, Dr. Martin. *Bar Mitzvah Lessons* (JF ELS)**

David's fear over his approaching Bar Mitzvah causes him to alienate five Rabbis who try to help him, but something surprising happens when he is placed in the hands of the eccentric former teacher Reuven Weiss.

**Goldreich, Gloria. *Season of Discovery* (JF GOL)**

A young Jewish girl, in the year of her Bat Mitzvah, gains an understanding of herself and her people's past.

**Kaufman, Stephen. *Does Anyone Here Know the Way to Thirteen?* (JF KAU)**

Despite the trials and tribulations that fill the eight months preceding his dreaded Bar Mitzvah, Myron learns a great deal about what it means to be a Jew.

**Provost, Gary. *Good If It Goes* (JF PRO)**

Twelve-year-old David, juggling the demands of Shrimp League basketball and preparations for his upcoming Bar Mitzvah, strives to please Kelly, his dream-girl classmate, as well as his ailing grandfather and traditional parents.

**Rahlens, Holly-Jane. *Prince William, Maximilian Minsky, and Me* (JF RAH)**

In modern-day Berlin, thirteen-year-old Nelly Sue Edelman gains a greater understanding of herself and those around her as she develops her first crush, considers whether to go through with her Bat Mitzvah, and tries out for the basketball team. (A Sydney Taylor Honor Award Winner)

**Shalant, Phyllis. *Shalom, Geneva Peace* (JF SHA)**

Thirteen-year-old Andi's life is changed when she befriends the glamorous, uninhibited Geneva Peace and her Hebrew school is taken over by a handsome rabbinic intern.

**Wolff, Ferida. *Pink Slippers, Bat Mitzvah Blues* (JF WOL)**

Thirteen-year-old Alyssa tries to balance the conflicting demands of ballet training with finding her place as a Jew in today's world.

## **RESOURCES FOR PARENTS**

**Burghardt, Linda. *The Bar and Bat Mitzvah Book: Joyful Ceremonies and Celebrations for Today's Families* (238.34 BUR)**

Including study tips, party games, personal anecdotes, Judaic resources, and much more, a renowned journalist presents an essential guide to planning a perfect Bar/Bat Mitzvah that lays the groundwork for a family's Jewish future.

**Davis, Judith. *Whose Bar/Bat Mitzvah Is This, Anyway? A Guide for Parents Through a Family Rite of Passage* (238.34 DAV)**

Focusing on the psychological and developmental issues of the bar/bat mitzvah year, Dr. Davis shows how to create magic and meaning for the whole family.

**Estroff, Sharon Duke. *Can I Have a Cell Phone for Hanukkah? The Essential Scoop on Raising Modern Jewish Kids* (238.3)**

This practical handbook for Jewish parents includes the chapter "Having Our Bar/Bat Mitzvah Cake and Eating It Too."

**Gordis, Daniel, Rabbi. *Becoming a Jewish Parent: How to Explore Spirituality and Tradition With Your Children* (238 GOR)**

An invaluable guide for parents who are interested in introducing Judaism into their homes so that their children can grow up loving, understanding, and cherishing their heritage.

**Greenberg, Gail Anthony. *Mitzvah Chic* (238.34 GRE)**

Provides a "new approach to hosting a Bar or Bat Mitzvah that is meaningful, hip, relevant, fun, and drop-dead gorgeous."

**Harpaz, Beth. *13 Is The New 18: And Other Things My Children Taught Me While I Was Having a Nervous Breakdown Being Their Mother* (238.3 HAR)**

A humorous chronicle of her son's thirteenth year details the author's desperate attempts to explain--and cope with--the enigmatic ways of an adolescent boy, from his likes and dislikes to his downward spiral of bad grades, secrecy, and rebellion.

**Leneman, Cantor Helen. *Bar/Bat Mitzvah Basics: A Practical Family Guide to Coming of Age Together* (238.34 LEN)**

A practical guide for parents providing the necessary information to navigate the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process and grow as a family.

**Lewit, Jane. *The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Planbook* (238.34 LEW)**

A complete guide to planning a Bar or Bat Mitzvah covers every phase of this important Jewish ceremony, from planning a party and discussions of etiquette to preparing a child for the ceremony and understanding the synagogue service.

**Milgram, Goldie. *Make Your Own Bar/Bat Mitzvah: A Personal Approach to Creating a Meaningful Rite of Passage* (238.4 MIL)**

Provides an effective, exciting process to help you organize the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience to meet your child's needs, in particular their studies, mentors, service, Torah talk, party, gifts and expressions of appreciation. See also: *Living Jewish Life Cycle: How to Create Meaningful Jewish Rites of Passage at Every Stage of Life* (238 MIL).

**Moskovitz, Patti. *The Complete Bar/Bat Mitzvah Book: Everything You Need to Plan A Meaningful Celebration* (238.34 MOS)**

A practical and friendly guide to help students and parents plan a meaningful celebration both in the service and the reception.

**Reisfeld, Randi. *The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Survival Guide* (238.34 REI)**

Explains the meaning and significance of the bar/bat mitzvah service, discusses how parents can help children prepare for the event, and offers practical advice on planning a celebration.

**Salkin, Jeffrey K. *Putting God on the Guest List: How to Reclaim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah* (238.34 SAL)**

In a joining of explanation, instruction, and inspiration, Rabbi Salkin helps both parent and child feel more comfortable with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and experience it more joyfully. The appendix includes "What Non-Jews Should Know about the Bar and Bat Mitzvah Service," "A List of Places for Your Tzedakah," and "Resources for Jewish Parents." See also: ***For Kids--Putting God on Your Guest List: How to Claim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Bar or Bat Mitzvah* (J238 SAL).**

VIDEOS & DVD'S

***Keeping Up With the Steins* (DVD 2006)**

A 13-year-old boy uses his upcoming Bar Mitzvah to reconcile the strained relationship between his father and grandfather.

***Eugene* (VHS 1995)**

The heartwarming story of Eugene Chernyakhovsky, a boy with cerebral palsy, who overcomes many challenges as he prepares for his Bar Mitzvah.

***The Journey* (VHS 1989)**

A young Russian Jewish boy approaching the age of Bar Mitzvah and an American Jewish engineer meet in Leningrad during World War II and form a friendship that changes both their lives.

***Discovery* (VHS 1988)**

A dramatic interpretation of a boy's questions about becoming a Bar Mitzvah and about his identity as a Jew.

***The Outside Chance of Maximillian Glick* (VHS 1990)**

A young Jewish boy from an overbearing family is forced to study piano and prepare for his Bar Mitzvah in 1950's Canada.

***Sixty Six* (DVD 2008)**

12 year-old Bernie is ignored by his own family. With his upcoming Bar Mitzvah, however, Bernie believes he can finally gain the attention he deserves. He begins to plan the perfect ceremony and reception, where everyone assembled will acknowledge his new status as a man.

## **WEB RESOURCES:**

### **www.jtsa.edu**

Click on "Conservative Judaism" on the top and then "Torah Commentary" on the left to access weekly commentary on Parashat Hashavua. Click on "Archive of the JTS Commentaries" for a listing of all parashot and commentaries.

### **www.jewishfamily.com**

Go to the "Jewish Celebrations" section and click on "Lifecycle Events" for information and articles about planning your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

### **[http://schechter.org.il/iyounei\\_chabate.asp](http://schechter.org.il/iyounei_chabate.asp)**

*Iyunei Shabbat* is published weekly by the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary and the Rabbinical Assembly of Israel in conjunction with the Masorti Movement in Israel and Masorti Olami-World Council of Conservative Synagogues. Click on "Archives" to access all of the parashot and commentaries.

### **www.torah.org**

Click on "Torah Portion" on the left and scroll down to view the index to all archived Torah Portion articles organized by Parsha.

### **<http://www.uscj.org.il/haftarahArchive.php>**

An archive of haftarah commentary from the Shirley and Jacob Fuchsberg Jerusalem Center of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.