

**Kabbalat Shabbat Service  
Friday, May 27 6:30pm**

*Please join us*  
27 North Harbor Drive, Sag Harbor

*also*  
Shabbat Morning, May 28<sup>th</sup>  
Old Whalers 9:30am



**Friday, May 20, 2011 Candle Lighting 7:47 pm (Sag Harbor)**

**Sunday May 22 Lag b'Omer**

This week's Torah reading: **Bechukotai**

Annual: Leviticus 26:3 – 27:34 (Etz Hayim, p. 747)

Triennial: Leviticus 26:3 – 27:15 (Etz Hayim, p. 747)

Haftarah: Jeremiah 16:19 – 17:14 (Etz Hayim, p. 763)

**Musings on Bechukotai –**

Bechukotai contains a renewal of the Covenant with Israel with its conditions: a Blessing if the Israelites walk in the way of the Lord and a curse, if they do not follow the decrees and commandments. The blessing of Israel appears short (v 4-11) in comparison to the Tochacha (v 14-45) or warning; but this is illusive for the blessing includes peaceful habitation, plentitude harvest, political independence and superiority over enemies and national development with sufficient base for future population growth with the assurance of God's presence in the midst. God warns that if Israel despises the statues and breaks the commandments, thereby breaking the covenant made at Sinai, the negative consequences. The positive and negative are paired in polarity, reflecting the dual nature of mankind and his personal determination of his own destiny beginning with his decision in the Garden of Eden.

[http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/intro\\_parasha\\_for\\_the\\_stranger/116109](http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/intro_parasha_for_the_stranger/116109)



"If you follow My laws and faithfully observe My commandments, I will grant your rains in their seasons, so that the earth shall yield its produce and the trees of the field their fruit.." Lv 26:3-4

"I will establish My abode in your midst, and I will not spurn you. I will be ever present in your midst, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people." Lv 26:11-12

"If you break My laws and spurn My rules, so that you do not observe all My commandments and break My covenant, I will in turn do this to you..." Lv 26:15

The Tochacha is read twice a year: once during the forty-nine days of counting the Omer leading to Shavuot which commemorates the giving of the Torah and in the month of Elul before the High Holy Days, calling us to repentance, to reconsider our paths. We are accountable for our actions in the garden that we plant. God calls, "Where are you? What is this that you have done?" From the earliest of times, God warns, "But if you do not do right, sin crouches at the door; its urge is towards you, yet you can be the master." (Gen 4:7)

The Tochacha of Bechuchotai warns against:

"keri/casualness". (26:27) "If despite this you will not heed Me, and you behave toward Me with casualness... " Rashi explains "casualness" to mean that your performance of the mitzvos will be haphazard and inconsistent. Rather than treating the mitzvos with reverence and esteem, you treat them as a matter of convenience (or inconvenience). "I too," says Hashem, "will treat you casually."

[http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/intro\\_parasha\\_for\\_the\\_stranger/116109](http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/intro_parasha_for_the_stranger/116109)

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### **Who is called to the Torah for the reading of the Tochacha?**

In the past, deciding whom to call to the Torah for the reading of the tochachah was a serious point of contention. Many people, among them great scholars, felt that being called to the Torah for this portion was a bad omen that would result in tragedy and misfortune. There are a number of early sources who express this fear.

Over the years, the situation deteriorated to the extent that a congregant would have to be paid to accept the aliyah, and if no one would agree to be "hired", the Torah reading of the week [and of Parashat Ki Tavo] was omitted altogether. In other communities, shul decorum was shattered while congregants fought and argued as to who, in their opinion, should be punished by being called up for this portion [In one community the gabbai, a tailor, "punished" a competing tailor with this "honour". The gabbai did not live out the year (told by Harav Y. Kamenetsky)].

In other communities, the gabbai publicly announced from the bimah that whoever wished to do so should volunteer for the aliyah (Divrei Yisrael 1:61 testifies that this was the prevailing custom in Hungary), while in other communities this part of the reading was read by the Torah reader without anybody being called up. Most poskim were critical of and dissatisfied with all of these options.

Consequently, it has become customary in many shuls for the Torah reader himself to be called upon to read the tochachah. [Generally, when the reader himself receives an aliyah, there is no need to call him by his name, since he is standing at the bimah regardless. For unexplained reasons, this is not the custom in many places. Indeed, even if the reader is a Kohen, the aliyot must be rearranged so that the tochachah is included in the aliyah of the Kohen. Even when Bechukotai is read together with Behar, it should be arranged that the aliyah for the tochachah will be the last aliyah (acharon), so that the Torah reader who is a Kohen will be called for the aliyah of the tochachah. Although the general rule is that whenever two parashiyot are connected, it is proper to connect them at the fourth aliyah], we do not follow the rule in this case. If, mistakenly, the gabbai called a person other than the reader to the aliyah of the tochachah, that person may not refuse the aliyah. Even if he knows that the gabbai had malicious intentions when calling him up, he still may not refuse the aliyah once he has been called up. If, however, he knows in advance that he will be called, he may walk out of the shul before being called up. It is prohibited to "interrupt" during the reading of the tochachah, i.e., the portion cannot be broken into two or more segments to accommodate more aliyos. If, however, a mistake was found in the Sefer Torah during the reading of the tochachah, a new sefer should be brought out and the

reading continued. In the opinion of several poskim, this is not considered to be an "interruption" because the same person who was called to the Torah remains there. There are dissenting opinions who hold that the reader should continue reading until the end of the tochachah. The custom is to read the tochachah in a lowered tone of voice. Care must be taken, however, not to read it too quietly, lest it not be heard by the congregation.

[http://www.wemblesynagogue.org/5768-33\\_Bechukotai.pdf](http://www.wemblesynagogue.org/5768-33_Bechukotai.pdf)

[Ed. Note: Sources were removed from text for easier reading. Please consult original article for sources. ]

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## **Sunday< May 22 Lag B'omer (33rd day of the Omer)**

### **Between the Fires: Lag B'Omer, Flood Day and Rainbow Day**

The 17th of Iyyar, which is the 32nd day of the Omer (May 20 in 2011), is the day of the Flood, when the rains began according to the Noah story. It is followed by Lag B'omer, the 33d day, when we traditionally light bonfires, and it leads us forward to Rainbow Day, the 42nd day of the Omer (May 30 in 2011), which is the day according to the Noah story when they left the ark and received the rainbow covenant.

As we move from Flood Day through fire we look forward to a different kind of illumination, the rainbow, which balances water and fire to create such a powerful expression of beauty and diversity. You can read more about Rainbow Day [here](#). Below are three versions of prayers for the earth which could be recited for Lag B'omer or Flood Day.

May it be Your will, our God and God of our ancestors, that just as you turned your bow towards the heavens, promising to never again destroy the earth for humanity's sake, that we too turn our arrows away from the earth.

May you sustain the word which you promised us by the hands of Malachi your seer: "And the fruit of the earth will not be destroyed because of you, said YHVH of hosts."

May we turn over our hearts and strengthen our will, so that we care for the earth and all life, for all life now depends on our goodness and rests in our hands. Help us learn to use our fires to bring blessing to all life, that we add might and majesty to the Tree of Life. Let us use our light to see more clearly that the earth and all who live as part of it are not for burning. Let us use our light to see more clearly the rainbow in the many-hued faces of all life. May you bring upon all living creatures blessings of goodness, as it says, "Let them drink blessings forever, let them celebrate in joy Your presence."

May the Tree of Life be returned now to its original strength, and may the strength of the Righteous One's bow return, that we may see the rainbow, joyful and beautified with its colors; and from there may the flow of compassion and mercy flow over us, for forgiveness and for fixing our sins and errors. And may all the sparks and species scattered by our hands, or by the hands of our ancestors, be returned and included in the majestic might of the Tree of Life. Make the flow of desire and blessing and shefa flow over the earth to make all life grow and bloom, from the beginning of the year until the end of the year, for good and for blessing, for good life and for peace. "Then the Sun of Righteousness will shine forth and heal with her wings" and "the trees of the forest will sing out" and "the tree of the field will make fruit, day by day" that we may celebrate the *bikurim*, the first of all the fruits, on Shavuot, with praise and thanks.

To read this article in its entirety, go to: [http://www.neohasid.org/stoptheflood/flood\\_day/](http://www.neohasid.org/stoptheflood/flood_day/)



## Happenings

**June 12 12:30- 4 pm: A Day to Remember – Annual Survivor Family Celebration**  
at the Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center of Nassau County  
100 Crescent Beach Rd. Glen Cove (516) 571-8040

**June 12 12:00- 4 pm: Where the Jews Are ... First Annual Picnic**  
**sponsored by the East End Jewish Council**  
Orient Beach State Park / Picnic Pavilion  
Route 25, Orient Point  
Bring lunch .. Beverages and dessert will be provided

**June 26 4-6 pm: Minna's Bromberg's Voice and Spirituality Workshop**  
at Temple Adas Israel, Sag Harbor

"Your song is your unique contribution to the weave of creation. By its integrative nature (connecting body, heart, mind, and soul), singing allows us to embody the wholeness we wish to find in the world. Deeper connection with your self, with others, and with the Divine are as close to you as your own breath. This workshop will use tools of singing and songwriting informed by yoga, meditation, and Torah to help you find your most authentic voice, your truest song. It is appropriate for people of all faiths or no faith at all and no previous singing or writing experience is necessary."



## Yom Huledet Sameach

Penny Dannenberg  
My mother, Lillian Menzer, on her 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday

## Donations

Merrill and Steve Barnett in honor of Lillian Menzer's birthday  
Jan Uhrbach in honor of Lillian Menzer on this special birthday

## End Quote

In every forest, on every farm, in every orchard on earth it's what's under the ground that creates what's above the ground. That's why placing your attention on the fruits that you have already grown is futile. You cannot change the fruits that are already hanging on the tree. You can, however, change tomorrow's fruits. But to do so, you will have to dig below the ground and strengthen the roots. T. Harv Eker

Shabbat Shalom.  
Stacy