

BAR/BAT MITZVAH BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following books will be helpful in preparing for your student's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. They may be purchased or ordered from most local bookstores. Books can be ordered, through our synagogue website at www.beth-shalom.net, from Amazon.com. You may also wish to try The Jewish Bookstore of Greater Washington in Wheaton @ 301-942-2237 (ask for Menachem Youlus), Borders in Columbia @ 410-290-0062, Barnes and Noble in Ellicott City @ 410-203-9001, and others.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Year:

Putting God on the Guest List, Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin (Jewish Lights Publishing, Woodstock, Vermont), [(802) 457-4000].

For KIDS-Putting God on Your Guest List, Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin (Jewish Lights Publishing, Woodstock, Vermont), [(802) 457-4000].

The Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah Handbook: A Spiritual Journey (Behrman House).

A short guide to the basic components of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Helpful for introducing family members to the significance of the occasion.

Mitzvah Chic: A New Approach to Hosting a Bar/Bat Mitzvah that is Meaningful, Hip, Relevant, Fun, and Drop Dead Gorgeous, Gail Anthony Greenberg. (Mitzvah Chic, LLC. P.O. Box 30144, Elkins Park PA 19027), [(866)-467-6244].

The Bar Mitzvah Book: A Written Remembrance, Stewart Tabori & Chang (Stuart, Tabori & Chang, Inc. 740 Broadway, New York, NY 10003

Resources on the Biblical portions (Torah and Haftorah):

Good translations:

The Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures (Jewish Publication Society). A modern English translation of the Bible. (See also *Etz Hayim* below)

The Five Books of Moses, translated by Everett Fox. (Schocken). The best translation available for the Torah which is understandable but closely reflects the literal meaning of the Hebrew. Fox includes some commentary in this work.

Commentary and historical information:

Etz Hayim, ed., Harold Kushner, Chaim Potok, Elliot Dorff and Susan Grossman (Jewish Publication Society). This new Humash includes the JPS translation found in *The Tanakh* as well as contemporary commentary and "how to" sections. This volume will be very helpful in B'nai Mitzvah preparation. This commentary reflects a modern Conservative approach to the Torah. A student guide is also available

Sparks Beneath the Surface: A Spiritual Commentary on the Torah, Lawrence Kushner and Kerry Olitzky (Jason Aronson).

Understanding Genesis and Exploring Exodus, Nahum Sarna.

The Stone Humash (Art Scroll). This includes a good summary of classical commentators, edited from an Orthodox perspective.

Joseph Telushkin has two excellent books, either of which would be of great assistance:

Biblical Literacy (William Morrow), gives short biographies of most of the biblical personalities the student will meet in the Torah and Haftarah.

Jewish Literacy (William Morrow), gives short biographies of main biblical and historical characters and events and other essential information.

The Torah, Gunther Plaut, (UAHC Press) includes an excellent commentary. Be careful because he does not break up the Torah into the parshiot (weekly readings) as we do. This version represents a Reform perspective.

A Torah Commentary for Our Times (in three volumes) (UAHC Press) *Volume I: Genesis, Volume II: Exodus and Leviticus, Volume III: Numbers and Deuteronomy*, by Harvey J. Fields, et. al. These books are the source of the resource sheets the office will provide.

Tell it from the Torah (Pitspopy Press) by Gedalia Peterseil, et.al. Includes little known tidbits as well as humor on the Torah portion.

Bible Basics, edited by Jerome S. Hahn (International Traditions Corp., 1996). User friendly introduction and reference guide to the Bible that includes biblical time lines, geneologies, maps, and summaries of every parsha.

The JPS Bible Commentary Haftarat, by Michael Fisbane. A Conservative and literary approach to the Haftarah.

Etz Hayim (see above) Includes a summary of the Fisbane commentary.

The Haftarah Commentary, by Gunther Plaut. A Reform approach to the Haftarah.

Computer Resources

www.uscj.org/usy/relad/dt/index.html

This is the site for United Synagogue Youth (our Conservative Movement's youth group.)

www.virtual.co.il/depts/torah/parsha.htm

This is the popular web site that also provides live views of the Western Wall. The commentaries here are from the liberal Orthodox Rabbi and Zionist Shlomo Riskin.

www.judaism.com/Twerski/parshaperspect.htm

This includes the commentaries of Rabbi Abraham Twerski, the psychologist and drug counselor and schism of the famous rabbinic Hasidic dynasty, known for his insights into human behavior.

www.ou.org.torah/parsha/

Sponsored by the Orthodox Union, these comments are those of liberal Orthodox rabbi and Jewish rights activist Rabbi Avi Weiss.

www.jewishamerica.com

www.torah.org/learning/parsha/add_name_of_parsha.html

Biblical Atlas:

The Harper Atlas of the Bible, ed. James Pritchard (Harper). Colorful and fascinating explanation of life and times of major biblical periods and personalities, including maps and you-are-there pictures.

The Macmillan Bible Atlas, by Yohanan Ahroni and Michael Avi-Yonah (Macmillan). More succinct than the Harper version, gives brief historical background and maps of travels and conquests.

Customs and Ceremonies:

A Book of Jewish Concepts, Phillip Behrman. An excellent one volume mini-encyclopedia of Jewish customs and concepts.

First Jewish Catalogue, Second Jewish Catalogue, Richard Siegel, Richard and Sharon Strassfeld (Jewish Publication Society). Creative ways to understand and personalize Jewish life cycle events and holidays.

The Book of Our Heritage, Eliyahu Kitov (Feldheim). A classic 3 volume detailed guide to Jewish holidays and traditions including links to special Torah and Haftarah readings.

The Jewish Holidays, Michael Strassfeld (Harper and Row). An excellent modern guide to the significance and relevance of the holidays.

A Tapestry of Jewish Time, by Nina Beth Cardin. A beautifully written introduction to the significance of the Sabbath and the holidays.

The How to Handbook for Jewish Living, Kerry M. Olitzky and Ronald H. Isaacs (KTAV Publishing House) A concise guide to basic Jewish practice.

It's A Mitzvah! Step-By-Step to Jewish Living, Bradley Shavit Artson (Behrman House/Rabbinical Assembly) A more detailed guide to Jewish practice including the significance of some of the mitzvot and modern applications.

Misc. Torah Talk Resources:

A Treasury of Jewish Quotations, Joseph Baron (Crown)

Voices of Wisdom: Jewish Ideals and Ethics for Everyday Living, Francine Klagsbrun (Pantheon)

A Treasury of Jewish Anecdotes, Lawrence Epstein (Jason Aronson)

Family History:

The Name Dictionary, Alfred Kolatch

The Prayer and the Service:

To Pray as a Jew, Hayim Halevy Donin (Basic Books)

Entering Jewish Prayer: A Guide to Personal Devotion and the Worship Service,
by Reuven Hammer (Schocken)

All You Want to Know About Sabbath Services: a Guide for the Perplexed
by Rabbi Samuel Barth and Dick Codor (Behrman House, 1995).
A clever and playful handout explaining the Sabbath service to the uninitiated.

Not for Parents Only:

Finding Our Way: Jewish Texts and the Lives We Lead Today, Barry Holtz (Schocken)

Reading the Book: Making the Bible A Timeless Text, Burton Visotsky
(Anchor Books)

Spiritual Judaism, Restoring Heart and Soul to Jewish Life, by
David S. Ariel, Ph.D.(Hyperion, New York, 1998)

Youth Fiction:

You Are SO Not Invited to My Bat Mitzvah. By Fiona Rosenbloom (Hyperion, 2007)

We Are SO Crashing Your Bar Mitzvah! By Fiona Rosenbloom (Hyperion, 2007)