

May 10, 2018

***Parashat Behar - Bechukkotai***

Jordyn

Eliana

***Eliana Leah bat Batya v'Lev***

Calvino

***Eliyahu ben Zecharia v'Esther***

Benjamin

***Eitan Bachor ben Lvav v'Moshe Chaim***

**SUMMARY**

**Calvino:** This week the double *parashah* we read is - בְּהָרָה - בְּחֻקֹּתַי. We are reading from *Parashat בְּהָרָה*--*Sefer Vayikra*, the Book of Leviticus, Chapter 25, verses 1-3. Moshe teaches laws that relate to the land of Israel. One is *sh'meetah*, the law of the 7th year. Just like the seventh day of the week is Shabbat for us, every seventh year **the land** gets a whole year of Shabbat rest and temporarily returns to its wild state.

**Eliana:** For six years, the people may plant and harvest but in the seventh year there is no planting or harvesting. In the seventh year, all private fields and vineyards become public for the year and any person or animal can eat from anyone's land. Everyone returns to the way of gatherers, rather than farmers. When there was still slavery, slaves were set free every 7 years.

**Calvino:** Every 50 years is the Jubilee year - called *Yovel* in Hebrew. The people count 7 times 7 years - a total of 49 years - and then mark the beginning of the 50th year with a blast of the shofar on *Yom Kippur*. The Torah's words about this year are inscribed on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia: "Proclaim Liberty Throughout All the Land Unto All the Inhabitants Thereof."

**Eliana:** In the *Yovel* year, people who had to sell their family land in the past could return to their land. This is because all the earth really belongs to G-d. People are just passing through.

<<Show Jordyn's art>>

## QUESTIONS

1) **Calvino:** This week in *parashiyot Behar* and *Behukotai* it is almost like G!d is giving us a list of chores to do when we get to the Land of Israel. Some of the *mitzvot*, or responsibilities, have to do with making sure that people who become poor don't stay poor, and some of them have to do with making sure that there is time to rest--for people and for the land of Israel. Why do you think G!d gives us *mitzvot*, or jobs, to do?

<< Ben picks 3>>

**Eliana:** Maybe G!d is teaching us how to be helpful. There are a lot of *mitzvot* that--when we do them--we help ourselves and we help others.

**Calvino:** When you do something that you know you are supposed to do or that you know helps someone, it just feels good. I think G!d is teaching us how to feel good.

2) **Ben:** When G!d gives us a *mitzvah* or a job, is this anything like a parent giving us a job? How? << Eliana picks 3>>

**Calvino:** I think God giving us *mitzvot* is a little like parents giving us jobs. If we do what we are asked to do--by G!d or by parents we will receive positive rewards.

**Ben:**--I think G!d and parents both give us jobs to do because they are both busy and they need the help.

**Eliana:**--The Israelites wandering in the desert need to learn how to be free people. That's a lot of responsibility. I think that just like parents give us jobs to teach us responsibility and independence G!d does the same thing for the Israelites.

3) **Eliana**: In this week's *parasha* we also read that G!d tells Moshe to tell the Israelites that if they follow G!d's rules, then G!d will make sure that the rain comes in the right amounts and at the right times. What do you think this is saying about G!d's responsibility to people?

<< Calvino picks 3>>

**Eliana**: If G!d is going to make decisions about rain based on our actions, then it means that G!d is responsible to help us understand the difference between good behavior and bad behavior.

**Ben**: I think this is also teaching us that G!d is responsible for paying attention to our behavior and deciding whether we are acting the way we should.