Mazal Tov! Within the next few months you will become b.mitzvah; we are looking forward to celebrating this special moment in your life with you.

In addition to leading the service and chanting from the Torah, you will have the opportunity to teach the congregation a lesson based on your interpretation of the Torah portion. This is called a D’var Torah, literally a “word of Torah.” The overall idea is for you to take a text that is 2500 years old and make it personally meaningful and relevant. Don’t worry, I will help you explore the verses and make connections, especially if the Torah portion is particularly difficult.

You and I will meet face to face at least four times, usually once a week for a month. I do my best to schedule our meetings back to back with your meetings with Cantor Kohlbrenner.

**Before our first meeting, I ask that you read the following so that we can dive right into the portion.**

1. **The English translation of your verses of Torah. (Depending on the verses, it may be helpful to read additional English verses before and after to better understand the full story.) You can find the English verses in your Torah booklet.**
2. **The selection from the “JPS B’nai Mitzvah Torah Commentary.” This is another source that may help generate some ideas.**

During our first meeting we will explore the portion and the additional reading material. Hopefully by the end of that meeting you will go home with a general idea of the lesson you’d like to teach.

Once the d’var Torah is complete (after four sessions) you should begin to practice reading it out loud so that you can be more familiar and comfortable with it. You will also practice reading your d’var Torah during your rehearsals with Cantor Kohlbrenner.

You may also want to use these additional helpful web resources:

www.myjewishlearning.com (look under Texts🡪Weekly Torah Commentaries);

www.ReformJudaism.org (look under Learning-🡪Torah)

**Finally, an Important Note for Parents:** I encourage you to study the portion and the supplemental materials with your child. This will familiarize you with the portion, help you better understand what s/he is learning, and enable you to have meaningful conversations about Torah and life with your child.

Please discuss what s/he is learning, help clarify questions (as best as possible) and encourage your child. You may even suggest some ideas about how to make it relevant to their lives. However, please let your child prepare the early drafts of the d’var Torah on their own and review first with Rabbi Briskin. You can help fine tune the *d’var Torah* closer to its completion.

Thank you for your assistance, understanding, and partnership.

I look forward to sharing in this sacred journey with you.

*L’shalom,*

Rabbi Charles K. Briskin