

Pesah Haggadot (Seders)

Co-sponsored by JICNY

Friday, April 3 and Saturday, April 4 | 8:15 pm

Join us as we celebrate Pesah with a community Haggadah (Spanish-Portuguese Seder) on each of the first two nights of Pesah. Each spirited and interactive Haggadah is accompanied by explanations of our traditions and melodies.

Deadline: March 29. For more information and to register, go to shearithisrael.org/haggadot

Teen Girls' Shir Hashirim Reading

Shabbat, the Eighth day of Pesah, Saturday, April 11

The young women in our synagogue, will read the Song of Songs for the congregation in the Main Sanctuary after services. For more information or to sign up to read, contact Yehudit Robinson at yehuditrobinson@gmail.com

Donate to Maot Hittim

Make a donation to Maot Hittim to help those in need in a discreet, dignified way. Your contribution will be sent to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund for distribution overseen by Rabbi Meir Soloveichik. Go to shearithisrael.org/maothittim to donate

Hazakim u'berukhim to Rabbi Hidary and Dr. Morris Shamah for their participation in the HODS (Halakhic Organ Donors Society) Race this past Sunday.

Thank you

to Jordana Levi for donating new prayer books in memory of her father, Dr. Bezalel Levi

New Members:

We welcome James and Janegail (Orringer) Kahn to the Shearith Israel Family.

We Mourn the Loss of our Member:

Herbert Rudnick. We express condolences to his children Judith Rudnick and David Rudnick.

Meet with our Parnas

Our Parnas would be delighted to meet with you. Please schedule a visit at parnas@shearithisrael.org.

Pleasing Incense

Rabbi Ira Rohde, Hazzan

Among the many topics and episodes covered in Parashat Ki Tissa, there is mention at the end of Chapter 30 (verses 22-38) of two different uses for precious aromatics: Some was to be soaked in olive oil to make the specially-perfumed oil used for all sorts of anointing, consecration, sanctification, and dedication of both people and objects in the Tabernacle. The other use was for grinding and compounding into a form of incense which was burnt as a regular offering on its own small golden incense altar in the inner sanctum of the "Tent of Meeting." The two uses are grouped together because of the similar precious commodities they required. Indeed, from the very beginning of the section concerning the construction of the Tabernacle, the narration begins by telling us about the need to gather the precious raw material commodities required. And dried aromatic spices, which were major mercantile commodities traded along Eastern trade routes over long distances, were classed with the precious metals, fine fabrics, and wood which were needed.

We are told that the exact formula or recipe with the proper proportions and procedures for compounding these aromatic mixtures was fixed, and was never to be copied, imitated, or used for any other purpose. Spices were and are, after all, the world's first drugs, and they had to be compounded and dispensed exactly as prescribed, by trained apothecaries, pharmacists, and medicine men. Perhaps this mixture, in addition to its fragrance, might have either been slightly noxious or else gave a slight high (perhaps that's yet one more of the reasons the mixture had to be tempered carefully)!

But giving off just the right fragrance was important in terms of aesthetics, as well, an aesthetic which, perhaps even more in the realm of scent than in the realm of design and décor, had to be perfectly balanced. Perfume, scent, creates a subtle, non-physical, "spiritual" (certainly in the sense that spirit or breath or wind is, like scent, based in the wafting of the air) type of attraction. Again and again, it is connected with creating a beautiful "pleasing atmosphere," which will win God's favor and grace. Sometimes the incense seems like a type of propitiation, a way of currying favor with God or appeasing Him (there is one story the Torah tells of Aaron's stopping a plague by burning incense).

But of course, our God is not one whom we could bribe, certainly not through vain beauty. He desires a goodness consisting of righteousness and justice, not mere beauty and attractiveness. And yet beauty and attractiveness still have a role to play. In Judaism, too, as in Plato, the Good and the Beautiful are very much linked.

God may not need us to attract His Desire, but we do. In some of my classes, I've been pointing out the traditional Jewish equivalences to our English usage of "please, thank you, and you're welcome." It is said that one who does not bless God before eating is, seemingly, guilty of theft. Here we are seeking to arouse the goodwill of God symbolically by means of attractive scents. Our English "please" is short for "if you please," or "if it pleases you." It is important that we try to the best of our abilities to see to it that whatever we receive, from God especially, but also from our fellow man, is given willingly, and that a bonding relationship of goodwill is cultivated. For this we need attractiveness and a pleasing demeanor. The "sweet savor" of the incense, like our later replacement of it with our exclamations of "may it be Thy Will," forever represents our remembering to say "Please."



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Ki Tissa

March 6-7, 2015

CANDLE LIGHTING | 5:34 pm

MINHAH | 5:45 pm

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | following services | Rabbi Soloveichik gives a talk on: "The Wisdom of Abigail Adams" *2014-2015 season sponsored by the Julis family*

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary

SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Rabbi Soloveichik delivers a lecture entitled: "The Search for Spock: A Shiur about Love, Logic and Leonard Nimoy"

LEARNERS' SERVICE | Rabbi Morris | 9:45 am | Little Synagogue | followed by Kiddush Luncheon in the Elias Room | *Sponsored by Rudy Stern*

TOT SHABBAT | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Levy Auditorium

YOUTH GROUPS | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Children's library

JR. CONGREGATION Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Levy Auditorium

Next Assigned Jr. Congregation is March 28

KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium | *Sponsored by Mary Ellen and James Rudolph in memory of M. Louis and Helen Elias Rudolph and in the memory of Leon and Dina Sebag*

PARASHAT HASHABUAH: THE PARTS THEY SKIP IN HIGH SCHOOL | Rabbi Hidary | 4:30 pm | For high school students | Held at the Hidarys' home, 1 W 85th St Apartment 6A

SEUDAH SHELISHIT & PIRKEI ABOT SHIUR

Rabbi Soloveichik | 4:30 pm

Spring Semester Sponsored by Lewis Lipsey

MINHAH/ARBIT | 5:30 pm

KETER SHEM TOB | Rabbi Hidary | Main Sanctuary

HABDALAH | 6:26 pm

Daylight Saving Reminder: Don't forget to move your clocks forward this Saturday night. Evening services are now at 6:30 pm.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

Heretics and History: The Retrial of Spinoza
The grand finale to a 3-part-series with Rabbi Soloveichik
This Sunday, March 8 | 4:30 pm

Join us in our majestic sanctuary for a 21st century re-trial of Spinoza featuring a cast of esteemed rabbis, scholars and jurists, as well as an appearance by Spinoza himself.
Go to shearithisrael.org/spinoza to register.

Major Sponsorship Provided by:

The Julis Family

Benefactors:

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Shearith Israel Book Club

8:00pm | Wednesdays March 11, April 15, and May 13

Location in a private home | Esther Hidary

Join the Shearith Israel book club! RSVP to ehidary@gmail.com and start reading! The first book is “The Betrayers” by David Bezmozgis.

Young Couples and Families Luncheon
In partnership with JICNY
Saturday, March 14, 12:00PM

Following services, our young couples and families are invited to Shabbat lunch hosted by Rabbi Soloveichik and Rabbi Hidary and their families in the Elias Room. Babysitting provided. To register: shearithisrael.org/young-couples-and-families-luncheon

Indian cooking class with Fiona Amiel

*Co-sponsored with the Shearith Israel league,
JICNY and JDC Entwine*

Wednesday, March 18 | 7:00 pm | Levy Auditorium

Love Indian food? Join Shearith Israel member, Fiona Amiel for an interactive cooking demo while learning about the Jewish communities in India. take advantage of this great opportunity to learn and taste authentic Jewish Indian food and to take home amazing recipes. Cost \$10. To register, go to shearithisrael.org/Indian-Cooking.

Torah Tour of the American Museum of Natural History
with Rabbi Meir Soloveichik
Sunday, March 22 | 12:30 pm

What are the kosher signs for animals and birds? Why are these signs chosen by the Torah? Which animals and birds can be used for the sacrificial service? What is the halakhic difference between horns and antlers? Which animal's horns can be utilized for a shofar? These and many more questions will be addressed in a halakhic tour for families through the exhibits of the American Museum of Natural History, led by aspiring biblical naturalist, Rabbi Meir Soloveichik. The museum has a suggested donation entrance price but you can pay as you wish. Please arrive prepared to pay.

Passover Package Deliveries with DOROT
Sunday, March 22 | 10:30 am

Prepare for Pesah with a good deed by bringing matzah, gefilte fish, horseradish and other goodies to the homebound elderly. Our group will gather at the Louis D. Brandeis High School at 145 West 84th Street (between Columbus & Amsterdam avenues) for an orientation at 10:30am with DOROT. At the end of the orientation, will be divided up into pairs and assigned local seniors to visit. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Rabbi Hidary at rhidary@shearithisrael.org

Matzah Baking Extravaganza

Sponsored by Shearith Israel Youth and PTTS

Thursday, March 26, 5:00-6:00 pm

There's no better way to get excited about Passover than by baking some matzah! Join us on Tuesday, March 26 at 5pm, as Rabbi Yisroel Fried of Chabad of the West Side conducts a hands-on educational Matzah baking workshop. Each child will have the opportunity to make his or her own matzah from scratch and partake in every step of the process. In addition, each child will receive hand baked Passover matzahs made in Israel.
RSVP to Alana Shultz at ashultz@shearithisrael.org.

Our next public tour is:
This Tuesday, March 10 at 11:00 am

WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION

View all our spring classes at shearithisrael.org/education

Sunday

- ◇ **Psalms and Spirituality** | Rabbi Hidary | 8:40 am
- ◇ **Saadia Gaon's Emunot ve'Deot on Revelation and Commandments** | Sjimon den Hollander | 9:30 am

Monday

- ◇ **Maimonides' Guide for the Perplexed on Prophecy** | Rabbi Hidary | 7:00 pm
- ◇ **YL Monday Night Learning *** | 7:00 pm
- ◇ **Hebruta Program*** | 7:15 pm
- ◇ **Living Jewish** | Rabbi Morris | 7:30 pm
- ◇ **Bet Midrash** | 8:00 pm

Spring semester sponsored by Josh Eisen and Bruce Roberts and Joy Saleh Roberts

- ◇ **Rambam Rules for Young Professionals** | Rabbi Morris | 8:30 pm

**In partnership with JICNY*

Tuesday

- ◇ **Shulhan Arukh** | Rabbi Hidary | 7:45 am
- ◇ **Jewish Time: The Festivals in Halakha and Jewish Thought- A Class for Women** | Rabbi Soloveichik | 9:00 am
- ◇ **History of the Sephardim, the Spanish & Portuguese Jews** | Rabbi Morris | 6:45 - 7:30 pm
- ◇ **Talmud Class: Tractate Berakhot and the Philosophy of Jewish Prayer** | Rabbi Soloveichik | 8:00 pm

Wednesday

- ◇ **Parashat Hashabua** | Esther Hidary | 10:00 am

Learn to Read Hebrew

Level 1: Sundays 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Level 2/3: Thursdays 6:45 - 7:45 pm

To sign up: shearithisrael.org/hebrewclasses

Tai Chi with Lewis Paleias | Thursdays at 11:00 am