

**Jews for George: An Exploration of Judaism in the Age of the American Revolution**

*Co-sponsored by YU's Center for the Jewish Future and YU's Zahava and Moshael Straus Center for Torah and Western Thought*

**Wednesdays April 29, May 6, May 13, and May 20  
11:00 am - 12:30 pm**

This four-part course, led by Rabbi Meir Soloveichik, will utilize original source documents from the archives of the Congregation to explore Judaism during the American Revolution. Fee \$125 by April 15, after \$180. To register, go to [yu.edu/jhistory](http://yu.edu/jhistory).

**Halakhic Dinner led by Rabbi Soloveichik  
Tuesday, May 5 | 7:00 pm**

Did you know that giraffes are kosher? How about locusts? They are! We'll learn about some far out kosher foods, and we'll eat some too. Goat, venison, bison and squab are just a few of the expected featured ingredients. This unique dining experience is being offered at a significant subsidy and we are seeking sponsors to help make this available to as many members as possible. Deadline April 30. To Register, go to: [shearithisrael.org/halakhic-dinner](http://shearithisrael.org/halakhic-dinner)

**Mazal Tob** to William Herlands upon his engagement to Natalia Emanuel. Congratulations to parents Rachel and Jonathan and to the entire extended Neumark, Herlands and Emanuel families.

**Hazakah U'berukha** to Hanna Vorchheimer who was awarded 3rd prize for Best Documentary Film for her imovie "Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat: Making Peace Takes Courage" at the 2015 National History Day New York Regional Competition.

**Thank you** Lewis Paleias, our beloved Tai Chi teacher, for his seven years of helping to strengthen, balance, and de-stress our congregation. His incredible knowledge matched with his sweet smile and Jewish jokes added to our overall wellness. He is moving to Florida. We wish him continued happiness and health.

**Welcome to Our New Members:**

Nicole Robles  
Mildred Green Shinnar

Our next public tour is:  
**Tuesday, April 14 at 11:00 am**

**Meet with our Parnas**

Our Parnas would be delighted to meet with you.  
Please schedule a visit at [parnas@shearithisrael.org](mailto:parnas@shearithisrael.org).

**Salty, Not Sweet**

Rabbi Richard Hidary

Leviticus 2:11 legislates an enigmatic law: "No leaven or honey may be offered by fire to God." Sefer Hinukh writes: "The reasons for this commandments are extremely hidden – even to find a small hint." Nevertheless, many have ventured various theories for this prohibition.

Rambam conjectures that ancient idolaters used leaven and honey on their sacrifices but not salt; therefore, the Torah polemically commands the opposite to distance ourselves from paganism. However, modern archaeology does not support Rambam's assessment of pagan sacrifice. In any case, one needs to explain why the Torah rejects some aspects of pagan sacrifice but not others.

Sefer Hinukh explains that by not offering leavened bread, which takes a long time to rise, we will learn to be zealous and prompt in our service of God. Prohibiting honey teaches us not to pursue empty calories and quick-fix materialism but rather healthy sustenance and long-term fulfillment.

Ibn Ezra precedes the anthropologist Mary Douglas in insightfully connecting the use of leaven and honey in the process of bread making. Ancient bakers did not use processed yeast but rather kept fermented sourdough in a cool place. When they were ready to bake they would mix this leaven into their dough together with something sugary, like date honey, to activate fermentation. This process leads to swift growth in the dough as the yeast teems exponentially. However, fermentation is also a process of slow decay that eventually destroys its host food. Moreover, unlike fermentation of wine that preserves the grape juice for many years before turning to vinegar, bread spoils after just a few days.

Combining aspects of each of the theories above, we can juxtapose the prohibition against leaven with the requirement to add salt mentioned just two verses later: "You shall season your every offering of meal with salt; You shall not omit from your meal offering the salt of your covenant with God; with your offerings you must offer salt" (Leviticus 2:13). Salt acts as a preservative. Cured meat can last for years without refrigeration, as the ancients knew. The significance of adding salt to the sacrifice is made explicit in this verse by calling it מֶלַח בְּרִית אֱלֹהִים - the salt of your covenant with God. The phrase מֶלַח בְּרִית - a covenant of salt is found throughout the Bible (Numbers 18:19; Ezra 4:14; and 2 Chronicles 13:5) to mean a long-lasting and unchanging covenant even when not describing a food. When we offer a sacrifice to show our own devotion to God and the covenant of the Torah, we must add salt to signify the permanence of that commitment.

Unlike salt that preserves, leaven causes decay. Leavened bread looks impressive in the short term but very soon deteriorates and spoils. Coming close to God through a ritual act should not be a pro forma display like a big loaf full of hot air. Rather, it should be simple, modest, sincere, and long-lasting, like an unleavened matza that can stay fresh indefinitely.

Connecting this insight from the Parasha with the Maftir of Parashat HaHodesh, we can understand the requirement to eat matza with the Passover sacrifice and the prohibition against leaven simply as another instance of the general rule that applies to all sacrifices. However, on Passover, we remove the leaven from our residences and from our diets completely for the entire holiday thereby transforming our homes into sacred Temple-like spaces and recognizing ourselves as a nation of priests. This intense experience should keep us away from fleeting leaven-like materialism and instill within us the matza-like permanence of the Torah's teachings. As we recall the bitter slavery of Egypt and our salty tears under oppression, we thank God for turning those sour memories into sweet salvation.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

**The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue  
Shabbat Vayikra-Rosh Hodesh-  
HaHodesh**

*March 20-21, 2015*

**CANDLE LIGHTING** | 6:50 pm

**MINHAH** | 6:45 pm

**FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS** | following services | Rabbi Soloveichik gives a talk on: "Cinderella vs. the Haggadah"  
*2014-2015 season sponsored by the Julis family*

**ZEMIROT** | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary

**SHAHARIT (NISHMAT)** | 9:00 am | Rabbi Soloveichik delivers a sermon entitled: "Passover on the Train"

**WOMENS' SERVICE** | 9:15 am | Little Synagogue | Bat Mitzvah of Ashley Ferguson

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

Featuring Rabbi Morris at 11:00 AM

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

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

**KIDDUSH LUNCHEON** | Elias Room | *Sponsored by Daniel and Matide Ferguson in honor of their daughter Ashley's Bat Mitzvah*

**PARASHAT HASHABUAH: THE PARTS THEY SKIP IN HIGH SCHOOL** | Rabbi Hidary | 5:45 pm | For high school students | Held at the Hidarys' home, 1 W 85th St Apartment 6A

**SEUDAH SHELISHIT & PESAH SHIUR**

Rabbi Soloveichik | 5:45 pm

*Spring Semester Sponsored by Lewis Lipsey*

**MINHAH/ARBIT** | 6:35 pm

**KETER SHEM TOB** | Rabbi Hidary | Main Sanctuary

**HABDALAH** | 7:43 pm

Shabbat Hahodesh derives its name from the special reading of the Torah, Exodus 12:1-20. This is the "portion about the month" referring to the special consecration of Nisan, the month of Passover. In 5775, Shabbat Hahodesh coincides with Rosh Hodesh itself, the "new moon," the first day of Nisan.

# PESAH AT SHEARITH ISRAEL

## Sale of Hametz

Appoint Rabbi Richard Hidary as your agent. Please fill out the online form before Thursday, April 2 at 5:00 pm at [shearithisrael.org/hametz](http://shearithisrael.org/hametz). Please contact Rabbi Hidary at [rhidary@shearithisrael.org](mailto:rhidary@shearithisrael.org) if you have specific questions.

## Donate for Maot Hittim

Make a donation for 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](http://shearithisrael.org/maothittim) to donate.

## Passover Package Deliveries with DOROT

**Sunday, March 22 | 10:30 am**

This is your last chance to sign up to deliver Pesah packages for homebound elderly! For more information and to RSVP, email [rhidary@shearithisrael.org](mailto:rhidary@shearithisrael.org)

## Matzah Baking Extravaganza

*Sponsored by Shearith Israel Youth and PTTS*

**Thursday, March 26, 5:00-6:00 pm | Elias Room**

Rabbi Yisroel Fried of Chabad of the West Side conducts a hands-on educational Matzah baking workshop. Each child makes his or her own matzah from scratch and partakes in every step of the process. In addition, each child receives hand baked matzahs made in Israel. RSVP to Alana Shultz at [ashultz@shearithisrael.org](mailto:ashultz@shearithisrael.org).

## Pre-Pesah Shabbat Dinner

**Friday, March 27 | Following evening services and our Friday Night Lights Season Finale**

Ease your Pesah preparations and join us for a lovely buffet dinner. Preferred pricing for members. Deadline Tuesday, March 24. Register at [shearithisrael.org/pre-pesah-shabbat-dinner](http://shearithisrael.org/pre-pesah-shabbat-dinner)

**Shabbat Hagadol Derasha: Is Bitter Better? A Culinary and Theological Approach to Maror**

**By Rabbi Meir Soloveichik**

**Saturday, March 28 | Following Morning Services**

To sponsor or contribute to a kiddush luncheon to follow, email [ashultz@shearithisrael.org](mailto:ashultz@shearithisrael.org).

## Girls' Shir Hashirim Reading

**Shabbat, Eighth Day of Pesah, Saturday, April 11**

The young women of our congregation read the Song of Songs for the congregation in the Main Sanctuary after services. To co-sponsor this kiddush, contact [ashultz@shearithisrael.org](mailto:ashultz@shearithisrael.org).

## 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 led by Rabbi Shalom Morris and Hazzan Rabbi Ira Rohde. 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](http://shearithisrael.org/haggadot).

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

### Torah Tour of the American Museum of Natural History with Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

**Sunday, March 22 | 12:30 pm**

Join us for 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. RSVP at [shearithisrael.org/torah-tour-natural-history](http://shearithisrael.org/torah-tour-natural-history).

### "Hidden Heritage: The Secret Jews of Portugal"

*A Heritage Trip in Collaboration with Ohr Torah Stone*

**June 22 - 29, 2015**

Rabbi Morris, together with Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, retrace the footsteps of Portugal's Jews on a 500-year journey of persecution, hiding and return. Rabbi Morris will infuse the trip with the connections between our community and Portugal, as well as S&P traditions and melodies. Early bird pricing has been extended for Shearith Israel members until **Wednesday, March 25**. To view the itinerary and to sign up, go to [ots.org.il/hidden-heritage-trip/](http://ots.org.il/hidden-heritage-trip/)

### 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](mailto:ehidary@gmail.com) and start reading! The second book is "East of Eden" by John Steinbeck.

## WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION

View all our spring classes at [shearithisrael.org/education](http://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

**Sign up for the next semester of Hebrew classes!**

**Starts the week of April 26**

7 sessions for just \$100!

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

*Level 2: Wednesdays 6:45 - 7:45 pm*

*Level 3: Thursdays 6:45 - 7:45 pm*

To sign up: [shearithisrael.org/hebrewclasses](http://shearithisrael.org/hebrewclasses)