

## Jewish Education Alerts

- Rabbi Soloveichik's Tuesday Morning Women's Class returns this week, **January 8**.
- Rabbi Silber's new class on the Book of Judges will begin on **Sunday, February 3**. To learn more and register, visit [shearithisrael.org/silber-judges](http://shearithisrael.org/silber-judges).
- Rabbi Sijmon den Hollander's Sunday Class returns on **January 20**.

## Annual UWS Blood Drive

**Sunday, January 13 | 10:00 am-4:00 pm**

**Lincoln Square Synagogue, 180 Amsterdam Avenue**

Once again, Shearith Israel is joining forces with the Jewish Center, Lincoln Square Synagogue, Ohab Zedek, and West Side Institutional Synagogue to donate blood during the winter months when blood banks need it most.

Sign up to give the gift of life!

JScreen will be onsite for genetic screening for those interested.

To view time slots and register, visit [shearithisrael.org/blood-drive2019](http://shearithisrael.org/blood-drive2019).

## CHOIR SELECTIONS THIS SHABBAT

### Friday Night (12/21)

*V'Shameru* (p. 166) | S. Naumbourg

*Psalm 23* (p. 174) | Leon Kramer

### Shabbat Morning (11/22)

*Misheberakh* (p. 208) | Leon Hyman

*Ubnuho Yomar* (p. 218) | Henry Pereira Mendes

*En Kelohenu* (p. 229) | Samuel de Sola

### Public Tours

Our next public tour is  
**Wednesday,**  
**January 9, at 11:00 AM**

### Parnas Office Hours

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

## DEBAR TORAH: MUD NOT THE FOUNTAIN THAT GAVE DRINK TO THEE

—Z. EDINGER—

Exodus 17:19: *And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron: Take your rod and hold out your arm over the waters of Egypt..."*

Rashi comments: *SAY TO AARON* — *Because the river protected Moses when he was cast into it, therefore it was not smitten by him, neither at the plague of blood nor at that of frogs, but it was smitten by Aaron.*

This interpretation is based on several midrashim which attempt to explain an apparent contradiction with verse 17, where Moses is instructed to tell Pharaoh that he will *strike the water in the Nile with the rod that is in my hand, and it will be turned into blood.* In verse 17 Moses alone was told to strike the water, but two verses later it is Aaron, not Moses, who is instructed to strike the water.

This contradiction is explained by the Midrash (Exodus Rabbah 20.1): *The Lord said to [Moses] "Turn it into blood." Moses replied, "I cannot do so. Does a person who drinks water from a well throw a stone into it?!" The Lord said, "Let Aaron go and turn it to blood." So Aaron went and struck the Nile, and it turned to blood. And why did Moses not strike it? He said: "I was thrown into it, and it did not harm me." Therefore, Aaron struck it.* That is, Aaron strikes the Nile because it would have been improper for Moses to do so. Moses did not want to harm something that had helped him in the past.

The key phrase from the Midrash has an interesting history of its own (D. Sperber, *למה משה לא פגע ביאור*, Parashat Vaera, Bar Ilan University 2000). In addition to the quote above, it appears as an aphorism in several places in Rabbinic literature:

(Baba Kama 92b) *בִּירָא דְּשִׁתִּי מִיֵּנִיהָ לֹא תִשְׁדֵּי בִּיהָ קֵלָא*

(22:4 Bemidbar Rabbah) *בֹּר שִׁשִּׁית מִמֶּנּוּ אֶל תִּזְרוֹק בּוֹ אֶבֶן*

Both meaning: *"A well from which you drank, do not cast a stone into it."*

In origin, this phrase is likely a well-known regional proverb dating from the Ptolemaic period (~250-30 BCE). Similar sayings can be found in Greek (From Plutarch's *Questions*: *"It is impious...to conceal a spring as soon as we have had our fill of it"*) and in late Egyptian (Demotic) wisdom literature (From the *Instruction of Ankhsheshonq*: *"Do not drink water from a well and then throw the pitcher into it."*)

This Rabbinic phrase even made its way into English literature. In 1594 Shakespeare wrote in *The Rape of Lucrece*, *"Mud not the fountain that gave drink to thee"*. In 1670, the phrase was included as a "Hebrew Adage" in Jon Ray's *A Compleat Collection of English Proverbs*: *"Never cast dirt into the fountain of which you sometimes drank."* Ray explains "[t]he meaning is we should not despise that person or thing which formerly has been of use to us." This is a lesson for us all, we ought to be thankful for those things from which we have benefitted and strive not to cause them harm.



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CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

*Year of Years Celebration*

CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL  
**The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue**

## Shabbat Vaera

*January 4-5, 2019*

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 232; Haftarah p. 244  
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 280; Haftarah p. 1096

CANDLE LIGHTING | 4:24 pm

EVENING SERVICES | 4:30 pm

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | Rabbi Soloveichik | "The Shabbat Shofar" | 2018-2019 season sponsored by the Julis family.

MORNING SERVICES | Main Sanctuary | 8:15 am

TOT SHABBAT | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Fidanque Youth Room

YOUTH GROUPS | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Elias Room

JUNIOR CONGREGATION | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue

TALK | Rabbi Soloveichik | "The Greatest Haggadah Story in Jewish History"

KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium | *Sponsored by Joleen & Mitch Julis, in memory of Richard Julis. Scotch and Arak co-sponsored by Dr. Harry Engel, Simon Gerson, and Arthur Tenenholz.*

SHABBAT AFTERNOON SHIUR | Rabbi Soloveichik | 3:30 pm |

"Bet Shamai's New Year" | Levy Auditorium

EVENING SERVICES | 4:15 pm

HABDALA | 5:09 pm

*Rosh Hodesh Shebat begins on Sunday night.*

### Weekday Service Times

#### Mornings:

Sunday: 8:00 am | Monday-Friday: 7:15 am

#### Evenings (Arbit only):

Sunday-Thursday: 6:30 pm

## Shabbat Shira Sing-Along Luncheon

*Featuring our talented musical triumvirate:*

*Hazzan Rabbi Ira Rohde, Associate Hazzan Rev. Philip L.*

*Sherman, and Shamash, Zachary Edinger*

Shabbat, January 19 | Following Morning Services

Have you ever wished you were more familiar with Shearith Israel's unique liturgy and melodies? Do you ever have the urge to sing along with the Shearith Israel choir (or belt it out at your own home)? At this special Shabbat luncheon, join the uplifting voices of our clergy in discussing, learning, and singing classic Shearith Israel tunes in a laid-back, cozy atmosphere. Meals like these are a great opportunity to invite your friends to our community without having to host them yourself!

Register or sponsor at [shearithisrael.org/sing-along-luncheon](http://shearithisrael.org/sing-along-luncheon).

*This event is one of our many Year of Years, 365th Anniversary events, showcasing and transmitting the unique musical traditions of our congregation.*



THE SHEARITH ISRAEL SISTERHOOD PRESENTS

## Wrapunzel

Sunday, February 3 | 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

*Joined by Sharsheret, helping families facing cancer*

Want to give your creative side a twist?

Looking for an elegant solution to a bad hair day?

Tired of shivering, windblown, as temperatures drop? Intrigued by well-priced soft silk scarves and a side order of technique?

Know a cancer patient who might benefit?

Join the Shearith Israel Sisterhood, Wrapunzel, and Sharsheret at this special event, featuring demonstrations, one-on-one tutorials, plus scarves, accessories, and specialty gear for sale.

To register, visit [shearithisrael.org/wrapunzel](http://shearithisrael.org/wrapunzel).

Only \$5 in advance; \$10 at the door.

Light refreshments will be served. Women only, please.

## Remembering Baghdad Continued:

### Two Upcoming Film Screenings

THIS Wednesday, January 9 | 7:00 pm

### Letters From Baghdad

This film tells the story of Gertrude Bell, who left the confines of England to seek freedom and independence in the Arabian desert and became the most powerful woman of her day in the British Empire. The film explores the choices that trailblazing women make, and how decisions made by Bell continue to influence current events in the Middle East and the world today.

Wednesday, February 6 | 7:00 pm

### The Last Jews of Baghdad

Marking the anniversary of the Baghdad Hangings

*With opening remarks from producer Carole Basri*

Today, only 5 Jews remain in Iraq from a population of 160,000. This film asks, "Why did the Iraqi Jews leave?" The answer is found in the discriminatory laws and policies enacted by Iraq's government and leaders against these former members of Iraqi society who still consider themselves "Iraqi Jews."

Register for either or both films at [shearithisrael.org/baghdad-screenings](http://shearithisrael.org/baghdad-screenings).



*This series is part of our many Year of Years, 365th Anniversary events, showcasing the extraordinary diversity and heritage of our congregation.*

## Shearith Israel Toddler Program

Mondays and Wednesdays | 9:30 am-11:30 am

January 2-June 5

For ages 16-34 months | *Parent or caregiver attendance required.*

There is still time to enroll your toddler for the Spring Semester of "the best-kept secret on the Upper West Side"!

To learn more and apply, go to [shearithisrael.org/toddlerprogram](http://shearithisrael.org/toddlerprogram).

## Parent-Child Learning & Pizza

On Upcoming Saturday Nights:

January 12 | 6:45 pm—Led by Rabbi Ira Rohde

February 9 | 7:00 pm—Led by Z. Edinger

For Children Aged 5-12 & Their Parents or Grandparents

A wonderful opportunity for parents (or grandparents) to study Torah with their children together with Shearith Israel's clergy.

Pizza and prizes help make this a fun-filled evening of inter-generational learning.

Register for the January 12 session (only \$5 per person) at [shearithisrael.org/parent-child-learning](http://shearithisrael.org/parent-child-learning).

## PTTS Shabbaton 2.0

Shabbat, January 19

On this special Shabbat, PTTS students take the lead at Jr. Congregation. Feel free to stick around by signing up for our Shabbat Shira Sing-Along Luncheon!

## Calling CSI Teens

We are looking for a few experienced Junior Congregation participants to mentor some of our PTTS students to help them prepare for this special event. This is a rewarding and fun chance to support our PTTS students, and can also be used to fulfill community service hours.

Contact Yona Glass at [yglass@shearithisrael.org](mailto:yglass@shearithisrael.org) if you would like to help a PTTS student master their part.

## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

*We welcome new members, Raquel & Ian Lentnek, and their daughters, Hudson (6) and Dakota (10 months), to our growing Shearith Israel family.*