

Shearith Israel Annual Gala
Wednesday, October 21
The gala is this Wednesday!!

There is still time to pay tribute to our longtime synagogue members and PPTS family,
Lloyd Zuckerberg and Charlotte Triefus and
Rabbi Shalom Morris.
Register at shearithisrael.org/gala to reserve your spot and
be included in the tribute folio addendum by
this Monday, October 19 at noon.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal Tob to Toby Zuckerberg on becoming a Bar Mitzvah. Congratulations to his parents Lloyd Zuckerberg and Charlotte Triefus and to his grandfather Roy Zuckerberg.

Condolences to Bella Brenner on the passing of her mother, Lola Borg.

(Debar Torah continued)

Noah, however, and Abraham and his descendents, a new category of tzaddiqim, heroic in their justice and righteousness, arise to save the day. First comes Noah the Nautical genius who Navigates the raft of state to keep it afloat among the shifting waves and return it to terra firma. The Providential emergence of the righteous tzaddiq in his generation, the Biblical superman (as opposed to the Nietzschean), who uses his might in the cause and service of right, is the guarantor of the durability of the cosmos. The cosmos stands, like a building, upon powerful pillars, whose role it is to uphold architectonic law, the framework or structure upon which the building rests. If the pillars don't function as supports to that structure of natural/moral law, the structure collapses, the cosmos returns to chaos, and they perish with it. But if he stands firm and strong in his supporting role according to the governing laws, the righteous superhero becomes a founding pillar who, like the Greek Atlas, upholds the world. To be sure, there can be too much emphasis upon architectonic order. Law and structure can artificially over-regulate, making men slaves to a dominating order. Such was the generation of the Tower of Babel. This too can topple the overambitious structure. But in that case there is not a return to the quite same kind of chaos. Noah the Nautician may not look as solid and steady as landed heroes. But that great Navyman who steered the ship of society and kept it afloat through shifting waters can still beacon to our boats as we try to navigate back to solid ground through the stormy seas of today.

Might Must Uphold Right
(a.k.a. "The Righteous One Re-Found the World")
Rabbi Ira Rohde

What brought on the Flood? The Torah text and our commentators seem to indicate that the Deluge was God's reaction to an "earth filled with violence" and "all flesh corrupted its way upon the earth." The connection is with the last Parasha and its complaint of human decadence, which is puzzlingly connected to a seemingly-mythological story about the "children of god" interbreeding with human women, giving birth to a race of heroes or giants who attain renown. The suggestion that the "regret" that God has over creating mankind has to do with this "miscegenation" seems fantastic and inscrutable, as does the tale of the Deluge itself.

On the other hand, the Targum and the first rabbinic commentary quoted by Rashi, reacting against this fantastic explanation, seem to go to the other extreme, making the supposedly heinous crime which brings on the great Flood the mundane crime of "gezelah," "robbery." That Midrashic explanation of the great crime of that generation seems deliberately over-rationalized, allegorized, as it were, into a moral homily, so much so that it leaves us at a loss to explain how this fantastic punishment, never heard of before or after, fits the crime.

But let's analyze this further: Gezelah or robbery is carefully distinguished in the texts of the Bible, Talmud, and legal codes from genebah, the more common term for "stealing." Both involve illicitly taking something that doesn't belong to you. But "stealing" involves "stealth," some type of concealing what the "burglar," or "thief," is doing. They are punished differently in the Bible, and the legal discussions and drawing of distinctions can get complex. A thief still shows some obeisance to legal authority, challenging it only in secret, not openly. A "robber" is more brazen, openly challenging the rights of others and the authority of law which protects those rights. A robber makes immediate recourse to the use of force and so is more "violent." A society "filled" with the brazen, open use of force to seize whatever the powerful want is a society which shows no respect for the "right." It is a world in which lawlessness and disorder is so extreme that power becomes the effective arbiter in the world. Whoever is stronger wins: might makes right."

Of course, power and force may have a certain place in a system of justice or politics. Thrasymachus in Plato's Republic seems to argue that the naturally powerful have a natural entitlement to leadership. And ancient ethics was not separable from justice and politics, so there as well, power has a place. But our Torah would seem to indicate that power obligates the strong to exercise their power wisely and justly, in the interests of keeping proper order and justice. Might must be on the side of right, justify the right, support and back it up. That may take not just a mighty man, not just a leader, but rather indeed a superman, a great and virtuous man or hero, a true magistrate. Some paleo-archeologists think the Bible's giants were descendents of the Neanderthals. It seems that Neanderthal males were fertile with homo sapiens females, and not vice versa, specifically as the Torah describes the ancestors of the giants. However, whenever humans exercise power "Neanderthal-style," i.e., at the end of a club, without regard to justice, law, and righteousness, the very fabric of the world order is breached. When the high and mighty giants of society use their divinely-given power to further only their own selfish interests, subverting the law and order upon which the cosmos was founded, the world returns to chaos. The very ground for law and order wash away from beneath society's feet.

(Continued on inside panel)



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Noah
October 16-17, 2015

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 26; Haftarah p. 41
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 26; Haftarah p. 1054

CANDLE LIGHTING | 5:56 pm
MINHAH | 6:00 pm

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary
SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Rabbi Soloveichik delivers a sermon on the topic "The Philosophical Child: The Story of Young Abram"
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 | Little Synagogue The next Assigned Jr. Congregation will be October 31
KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium | *Sponsored by Charlotte Triefus and Lloyd Zuckerberg in honor of Toby's Bar Mitzvah*

TOPICS IN JEWISH PHILOSOPHY | Rabbi Hidary
4:45 pm | For high school students | Held at the Hidary home at 1 W 85th St Apartment 6A

SEUDAH SHELISHIT AND AFTERNOON SHIUR | Rabbi Soloveichik on the topic "The Eastern Wall: What Jerusalem's Ancient Gates Teach Us About Israel Today"
4:45 pm | *The fall semester is sponsored by Lewis Lipsey*

MINHAH/ARBIT | 5:45 pm
KETTER SHEM TOB | Rabbi Hidary | Main Sanctuary
HABDALAH | 6:44 pm

UPCOMING EVENTS

The NYC Marathon is Coming... Right to our Front Door!

The New York City Marathon is on November 1st. Best of luck to all Shearith Israel members who will be racing! As in past years, Shearith Israel is teaming up with JRunners to make ourselves available to those runners praying with the International Minyan for NYC Marathoners. Minyan-goers may check their tefillin, siddurim and tallesim with the Minyan organizers for pickup our portico which is close to the finish line.

For more information, contact Saul Rosenblum at saulrmc@gmail.com or Peter Berkowsky at peterberkowsky@gmail.com.

If you know of any members who are running, let us know. Respond to this email so we can root for all of our Shearith Israel marathoners!

2015 Al Warshawsky Memorial Lecture

Thursday, October 22 | 8:00 pm

*Co-sponsored by The Shearith Israel League and
The American Sephardi Federation*

Professor Stefan Reif will speak on the topic “Genizah Insights into the Jewish Homeland of a Thousand Years Ago.” Light refreshments will be served.

Friday Night Lights Returns!

Parashat Lekh-Lekha | Next Friday, October 23

Following Evening Services

As Shabbat begins earlier and the nights grow longer stay around for a bit after Friday evening services for an inspiring shiur delivered by Rabbi Soloveichik. There’s no better way to transition from the workweek to Shabbat!

Singles Shabbat Dinner

Friday Night, November 20 | Following Evening Services

Save the Date for our Singles Shabbat Dinner hosted by Rabbi Hidary. If you would like to be involved in planning the dinner, email rhidary@shearithisrael.org. Stay tuned for registration information.

OTHER INITIATIVES

November is CSI Alleviating Hunger Month

This November we are launching a hesed initiative. in partnership with the Food Bank of New York, to alleviate hunger in our city. As Lou Solomon announced at our Hatanim Luncheon, we will be raising funds culminating in a major food packaging event that will be held at the synagogue on Thanksgiving morning. The challenges are great as are our goals. Please stay tuned for details and meanwhile, let us know if you'd like to join the event committee or otherwise support this important effort, email breiss@shearithisrael.org.

Event Committee (in formation):

Karen Daar, Beth Goldman, Henry Lipschutz, Joy Saleh Roberts and Jodie Steinway

Our New Yoetzet Halakha: Ilana Gadish

If you have any questions regarding Taharat Hamishpakha (Jewish Family Law), please contact our new Yoetzet Halakha, Ilana Gadish, at (646) 598 -1080 or nycyoetzet@gmail.com.

Register now for PTT'S Hebrew School

Starts this Sunday, October 18

Polonies Talmud Torah School, provides children and teens, ages 3-16, with a substantive Jewish education in a positive and engaging environment. Register at shearithisrael.org/hebrewschool

Contribute to the PTT'S Hebrew School Scholarship Fund

We offer many scholarships to ensure that all qualified applicants can receive a Jewish education. Please consider sponsoring a student for an academic year or semester or contributing to our Hebrew school scholarship fund with a tax deductible contribution of any amount. Go to shearithisrael.org/hebrew-school-scholarship-fund

WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION

Come join us for a new semester of classes with your favorite Rabbis and educators. To see the schedule, go to shearithisrael.org/content/judaic-education-and-major-lectures

Sunday

- ◇ **The Book of Kings** | Rabbi Hidary | 8:40 am
- ◇ **Saadia Gaon’s Book of Beliefs and Opinions** | Sjimon den Hollander | 9:30 am

Monday

- ◇ **Second Temple Jewish History** | Rabbi Hidary | 7:00 pm
- ◇ **Bet Midrash** | Rabbi Hidary, Phil Getz, Dr. Josh Eisen, Rabbi Ira Rohde, Meira Wokenfeld | 8:00 pm

Tuesday

- ◇ **Rambam’s Mishneh Torah** | Rabbi Hidary | 7:45 am
- ◇ **Feasts and Fasts: The Festivals in Jewish Thought- A Class for Women** | Rabbi Soloveichik | 9:00 am
- ◇ **Talmud Class: Tractate Rosh Hashana and the Philosophy of Jewish Time** | Rabbi Soloveichik | 8:00 pm

Parnas Office Hours

Louis Solomon would be delighted to meet with you.

Please schedule a visit at parnas@shearithisrael.org.

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