

WEEKDAY JEWISH EDUCATION

View all our Fall classes at shearithisrael.org/judaic-education

Our Fall Semester of Jewish Education is now in full swing, including Rabbi Soloveichik's three popular classes:

Feasts and Fasts:

The Festivals in Jewish Thought

A Class for Women

Tuesdays | 9 AM

Talmud Class:

**Masekhet Yoma and
the Meaning of the Mikdash**

Tuesdays | 7 PM

Friday Night Lights:

The Making and Meaning of Shabbat

Fridays | Following Kabbalat Shabbat

For more information about our current and ongoing classes, including **Habruta (Paired) Learning** with Rabbi Yanetz, **Saadia Gaon's Book of Belief's and Opinions** with Sijmon den Hollander, and **An Overview of Hebrew Grammar** with Hazzan Rabbi Ira Rohde, visit shearithisrael.org/judaic-education.

To sponsor a class or series of classes, visit shearithisrael.org/sponsoraaclass



YOUTH AT SHEARITH ISRAEL

You Can Still Register for PTTS

First session: THIS Sunday, October 22, 2016

Our Hebrew School, the Polonies Talmud Torah School, provides children and teens, ages 3-16, with a substantive Jewish education in a positive and engaging environment. To register, go to shearithisrael.org/hebrewschool.

Shearith Israel Toddler Program

Spaces are still available for our Fall semester, and now is the time to think about Spring enrollment. To learn more and apply, go to shearithisrael.org/toddlerprogram.

Our next public tour is
**Wednesday,
November 9**

Parnas Office Hours
Louis Solomon would be delighted to meet with you. Please schedule a visit at parnas@shearithisrael.org.

DEBAR TORAH: Make a *Shohar* for the Ark:

Archaeology Illuminates an Unusual Biblical Word — BY Z. EDINGER

צָהָר תַּעֲשֶׂה לַתֵּבָה וְאֶל-אֶמֶת תַּכְלֶנָּה מִלְמַעְלָה, וּפָתַח הַתֵּבָה בְּצִדָּהּ תִּשִּׂים, וְשָׁלִשִׁים תַּעֲשֶׂה.

Make a “*Shohar*” for the ark and finish it within a cubit from above. Put the door to the ark in its side; make it with second and third decks below (Genesis 6:16).

The word *Shohar* (*tzohar*) is a *Hapax Legomenon*—appearing just once in the entire bible. Several different meanings have been proposed.

The ancient *Targumim* translate the word variously. The Septuagint has the word “ἐπισυνάγει,” meaning to *gather together*. This is hard to understand in context, but could indicate a textual variant having the word צָבַר (*heap up, bind*) instead of צָהָר. Targum Onkelos translates it as “נִהָר” a “light.” While Targum Jonathan renders it a “*sparkling gem*.” The *midrash* in *Beresheet Rabbah* offers two explanations: (1) *Shohar* means window. (2) *Shohar* is a luminous gemstone. The Vulgate follows the first opinion of the *midrash*, translating *Shohar* as *fenestram* (window). In the Talmud, however, Rabbi Yohanan prefers the second opinion meaning precious stones. In both cases the explanation is related to lighting the interior decks of the Ark, and is usually understood as being related to the word צָהָרִים (*tsaboraim*) which means mid-day, when the sun is at its highest point.

Some commentators, such as R’ David Kimchi (RaDaK) and Chizkuni reject the translation of *window*, instead connecting the word צָהָר to the word יִצְהָר (*yizhar*) which means newly pressed oil. According to them, *Shohar* refers not to a window but to an oil lamp which Noah installed inside the Ark.

The second opinion in the *midrash* is that *Shohar* means a luminous gemstone. In the words of Targum Jonathan, this sounds like something supernatural—“*Go thou unto Pishon, and take from thence a precious stone, and fix it in the ark to illuminate you.*” In fact, there are many kinds of natural stones that are fluorescent or aventurescent and which give off or reflect light. Interestingly, there was an old nautical practice to build “deck prisms” into the top deck in order to illuminate the lower deck below. These deck prisms were multifaceted glass lenses built into the deck. The sunlight entering the prism from above would be refracted in many directions and diffuse throughout the lower deck below. The explanation that the *Shohar* could be a precious or cut stone should not simply be dismissed as supernatural—such prisms have in fact been used to illuminate ships.

Whether *Shohar* is translated as window, oil lamp, or precious stone, all these early explanations are related to light. The prevailing explanation among modern scholars, however, is that *Shohar* means “*roof*”, and that Noah was instructed to construct a sloped roof above the ark to make sure that rainwater would run off. The similarity of the word *Shohar* to the Arabic word *zabrun*, meaning “back,” was already pointed out by Albertus Schultens in the 18th century. This was later quoted by Solomon D. Luzzatto (ShaDaL), who offers “roof” as a possible meaning for the word *Shohar*.

This theory became more and more prevalent after the discovery of the El Amarna tablets in 1887 and the deciphering of Ugaritic in 1929 which gave scholars a new corpus of ancient Western Semitic texts to compare with biblical Hebrew. Both in El Amarna and in Ugaritic we find the Western Semitic word *shuru* (Ugaritic: *Shr* or *Sr*) with the meaning “on top of.” From these discoveries, modern scholars now believe that the biblical *Shohar* is closely related to these other semitic words, and that all of them stem from the Akkadian word *seruma*, meaning *back* or *top*. Accordingly, to modern scholars, our verse is probably best translated: **Make a sloped roof for the ark and finish it to (a point) one cubit higher (than the level of the walls).**



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Noah-Rosh Hodesh

October 20-21, 2017

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 26; Haftarah p. 944

Rosh Hodesh reading: p. 695

Kaplan Living Torah: p. 26; Haftarah p. 1266

Rosh Hodesh reading: p. 814

CANDLE LIGHTING | 5:50 pm

MINHAH & ARBIT | 6:00 pm | Main Sanctuary

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS 5778 PREMIERE | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “Ibn Ezra on the Moon: The Extraordinary Author of a Beloved Sabbath Song” | 2017-18 season sponsored by the Julis family. This week’s lecture also sponsored by the Bengio and Misrahi families.

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am

SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am

TOT SHABBAT WITH SHANADE AND CHRISTOPHER | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Levy Auditorium

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

JUNIOR CONGREGATION WITH A TORAH READING | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue

LECTURE | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “The Jewish Hero of Dunkirk: An Amazing and Unknown Episode of World War II”

KIDDUSH | Elias Room

SEUDA SHELISHIT & SHABBAT AFTERNOON SHIUR | Rabbi Soloveichik on the topic of “Shem, Japheth, Athens, and Jerusalem” | 4:40 pm | Levy Auditorium | Fall semester sponsored by Scott Shay, in memory of Chana Razel bat Aaron v’Sarah. This week’s class also sponsored anonymously in memory of Dennis Freilich.

MINHAH & ARBIT | 5:40 pm

HABDALAH | 6:37 pm

Weekday Service Times

Mornings: Sunday: 8:00 am

Monday - Tuesday: 7:15 am

Evenings (Minhah & Arbit): Sunday - Friday: 5:45 pm

UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

COMING THIS WEEK! DON'T MISS IT!

*New York Times & Los Angeles Times CRITICS PICK!
Israel's #1 Film of the Year!*

Special Screening of "The Women's Balcony"

with introductory remarks by our member, Tikva Ostrega

This Wednesday, October 25 | 7:00 pm

An accident at a bar mitzvah celebration leads to a rift between the men and women in a devout Sephardic community in Jerusalem in this rousing, good-hearted comedy. Awash with Jerusalem's distinctive glow, *The Women's Balcony* is a warm, poignant portrait of a modern community struggling to balance protocol with practical, progressive values—at once rebellious and respectful in spirit.

Purchase your tickets online by Wednesday at 4 pm for **\$5 members/\$8 non-members**. \$10 at the door. Visit shearithisrael.org/content/special-screening-womens-balcony-0.

Women's Service

Parashat Lekh-Lekha, Saturday, October 28

We are looking for leaders for our next Women's Service. If interested in a part, please contact Mrs. Lisa Rohde at lrohde-csi@yahoo.com.

EVENT CHAIRS AND VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Third Annual Thanksgiving Pack-A-Thon

Thursday, November 23, 9:30 am | Levy Auditorium

Building on the success of the past two Pack-a-thons, this year we will be expanding our circle of UWS faith community partners to include our founding partner, the West End Collegiate Church, the Jewish Center, and, this year, the Church of Latter-day Saints. On Thanksgiving morning, after Rabbi Soloveichik's special Thanksgiving address, registered volunteers will pack meals to be distributed to hungry New Yorkers. **We are seeking volunteers to take a leadership role in this ambitious project.**

If you'd like to join the event committee and help ensure the success of this important activity, please contact srosenberg@shearithisrael.org.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal tob to **Arnie Goldfarb** on the birth of a great-granddaughter, to his granddaughter, Dafna, in Petah Tikva.

Introducing Shearith Israel's Guide to Friday Night Services

We are thrilled with the number of new members and guests who have been joining us for services, classes, special lectures, and events over the past few years. Surely one of the highlights of our service is our Friday night Kabbalat Shabbat, capped by Rabbi Soloveichik's *Friday Night Lights* talks.



So many of you have told us how beautiful and inspiring these services are. But some of you have also told us that you wish you had a deeper understanding of our service, liturgy, music, and customs. Our clergy, leadership, and veteran members are eager for you to learn and settle in as well.

In follow up to our recently released *Guide for the Perplexed: A Newcomer's Primer to Congregation Shearith Israel*, we have just released: *Friday Night Services: A Guide to Congregation Shearith Israel's Unique Customs*. Pick up a copy at the synagogue and check it out online anytime.

We are offering sponsorship opportunities to support this endeavor, and would be delighted to include your name in the (upcoming) second edition of this beautiful publication. To sponsor, go to shearithisrael.org/friday-night-services-guide.

Hazakim U'Barukhim to our 5778 Hatanim

We'd like to wish *hazakim u'barukhim* to **Simon Salama-Caro** and **Robert Kapito**, who have fulfilled their roles admirably during this holiday season and will surely continue to do so throughout the year. *Mazal Tob*, also, to their wives, **Gillian** and **Ellen**, and their entire families.

Simon Salama-Caro, our Hatan Torah, is a respected art dealer, originally from Morocco, with deep Spanish and Portuguese roots. He and his wife Gillian joined Shearith Israel eight years ago after moving from London.

Robert Kapito, our Hatan Bereshit, and his wife Ellen joined the congregation four years ago, and have become deeply committed members. Rob is originally from Monticello, NY, and is currently the president of BlackRock, a global investment firm.

We are currently planning a special celebration of our Hatanim, to take place a little later in the season. Stay tuned.

YOU CAN STILL JOIN!

**Another Very Special Shearith Israel Shabbaton in
Historic Charleston, South Carolina
With Rabbi Meir Soloveichik**

Friday, November 3 - Sunday, November 5

What was it like for Americans to take up arms against one another, and what happened to Jewish families divided between the North and South? Questions like these, and so many more, will be engaged over an unforgettable weekend spent reliving history.

Highlights will include:

- Three illuminating shabbat lectures by Rabbi Soloveichik
- A visit to Charleston's colonial Synagogue, Beth Elohim
- Guided tour through the historic Coming Street Jewish Cemetery
- Rabbi Soloveichik's one-of-a-kind tour of Fort Sumter
- Time to explore the historic Charleston Marketplace
- Delicious, fully catered meals

To register, visit shearithisrael.org/charleston

SAVE THE DATE: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9 | 7:00 PM

A Special History Lecture Marking the

100th Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration

"Jew vs. Jew: The Battle Over the Balfour Declaration"

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Stay tuned for details and sponsorship opportunities.

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

The New York City Marathon is on November 5th. 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 *tallitot* with the Minyan organizers for pickup on 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. Email srosenberg@shearithisrael.org their names so we can root for all of our Shearith Israel marathoners!