

OTHER INITIATIVES

Shearith Israel Kippot

Did you see the new Shearith Israel Kippot that premiered at our Gala this past week? Wondering where you can get one? Shearith Israel Kippot are available for purchase on our website at shearithisrael.org/store for \$10 each! Be sure to grab this great deal while it lasts!

Register now for PTTS Hebrew School

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

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal Tob to Harry Pomerantz on becoming a Bar Mitzvah. Congratulations to his parents Yvette and Steven and to his grandparents Emil and Carol Pomerantz and Yvonne Cohen.

Mazal Tob to Carol and Mel Newman upon the bat mitzvah of their granddaughter, Ita Newman-Getzler, daughter of Amanda Newman and Joshua Getzler.

New Members: Welcome Guennadi and Anna Samborik to the Shearith Israel Family.

Thank you to everyone, our hard working staff and volunteers, the talented vendors, the many generous attendees and supporters, and of course, our fabulous honorees, Charlotte Triefus and Lloyd Zuckerberg and Rabbi Shalom Morris, who made our gala a wonderful success. A special shout out to Jill Lamstein and her team from Above and Beyond Caterers. You were amazing from soup to nuts.

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

Debar Torah - Parashat Lekh-Lekha Z. Edinger, Shamash

One of the troubling stories in this week's portion is that of Abraham's deception regarding his relationship to Sarah (Gen. 12: 10-20.)

Abraham and Sarah go to Egypt in order to escape famine in the Land of Israel. Abraham is fearful that his wife's beauty will attract men willing to kill him in order to have Sarah for themselves. So, he asks Sarah to say that she is his sister instead of his wife. Once in Egypt, Sarah's beauty is praised and she is brought to Pharaoh. Pharaoh gives Abraham great wealth on account of taking his sister. God then afflicts Pharaoh until he realizes or is told that Sarah is not simply Abraham's sister but in fact his wife. Pharaoh then returns Sarah and expels Abraham and his household from Egypt.

The story is troubling for many reasons – Abraham appears willing to give his wife over to another man, he either lies (or obscures the truth) about his relationship to Sarah, and on top of all this, he seems to profit from these morally questionable decisions. It is a difficult story to understand. Abravanel in his introductory questions on this chapter asks: What elevated man would choose life with such terrible dishonor, seeking to benefit himself by having his wife commit adultery with others? It would have been more behooving had he chosen death, rather than do such a disgraceful thing. Nahmanides on verse 10, says quite explicitly that Abraham erred.

ודע כי אברהם אבינו חטא חטא גדול בשגגה שהביא אשתו הצדקה כמכשול עון מפני פחדו פן יהרגוהו, והיה לו לבטוח בשם שיציל אותו ואת אשתו ואת כל אשר לו, כי יש באלוקים כח לעזור ולהציל.

Know that our patriarch Abraham unwittingly sinned greatly, for he put his righteous wife in the position of being a stumbling block leading to wrongdoing because of his fear that he would be killed. He ought to have trusted the Lord to save him and his wife and all that belonged to him, for G-d has the power to help and deliver.

Many have disagreed with Nahmanides and tried to explain Abraham's behavior more favorably.

Already in the Second Temple Period, the Genesis Apocryphon (one of the first of the Dead Sea Scrolls to be found) in re-imagining the story has Abraham and Sarah develop their deceptive plan together as a result of a prophetic dream. Abraham didn't lie for the sake of personal gain, but rather because God revealed to him how to avoid harm.

Radak simply says that when in danger people must resort to whatever means are available to save themselves.

ראוי לכל צדיק שלא יסמוך במקום סכנה על הנס וישמור עצמו בכל תחבולה אשר יוכל

For Radak, there is no moral ambiguity here, Abraham was forced to use this deception in order to live. The lesson of the story – arguing directly with Nahmanides – is that man cannot rely on miracles to save us – we must do what we can for ourselves.

Abravanel's explanation of the story posits that things did not go as Abraham had originally planned. He theorizes that Abraham thought that telling the Egyptians that Sarah was his sister would begin a lengthy period of bargaining by potential suitors. Each making offers to Abraham for Sarah's hand in marriage. While this negotiating was taking place, Abraham would be able to acquire needed provisions and return to Israel with Sarah without incident. What Abraham did not expect, however, was for Pharaoh himself to take Sarah without any negotiation.

Only then, once Sarah had been taken to the house of Pharaoh did God step in to save them. Seen through the explanation of Abravanel and others, Abraham's deception was a clever plan which simply didn't work out.

Genesis is replete with stories that challenge us to think about their meaning and moral implications. Sometimes, we wish the Torah simply told us the moral or lesson to be learned. But precisely because these lessons are ambiguous and open to interpretation permits us to ponder them over and over again, always seeking new meaning. And, just like our forefathers, we too will face complicated moral dilemmas in life that we must navigate as best we can.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Lekh-Lekha

October 23-24, 2015

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 45; Haftarah p. 60
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 52; Haftarah p. 1058

CANDLE LIGHTING | 5:46 pm

MINHAH | 5:45 pm

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | following evening services |
Rabbi Soloveichik gives a talk on “The Shabbat Awakening”

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary

SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Rabbi Soloveichik delivers a sermon on the topic “The Two Most Important Words in the History of the World”

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

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 next Shabbat, October 31

KIDDUSH | Elias Room | *Sponsored by Yvette and Steven Pomerantz in honor of Harry's Bar Mitzvah*

TOPICS IN JEWISH PHILOSOPHY | Rabbi Hidary
4:30 pm | For high school students | Held at the Hidary home at 1 W 85th St Apartment 6A

SEUDAH SHELISHIT AND PIRKEI ABOT SHIUR | Rabbi Soloveichik on the topic “What Does This Rembrandt Teach Us About Pirkei Abot?”

4:30pm | *The fall semester is sponsored by Lewis Lipsey*

MINHAH/ARBIT | 5:30 pm

KETER SHEM TOB | Rabbi Hidary | Main Sanctuary

HABDALAH | 6:33 pm

UPCOMING EVENTS

American Friends of Magen David Adom Briefing

This Thursday, October 29 | 6:15 pm

Skirball Center at Temple Emanuel | 1 East 65th St.

We are co-sponsoring a briefing on the situation in Israel and Magen David Adom's emergency response. Updates by Ido Ahoroni, Consul General of Israel and Guy Caspi, Chief Casualty Incident Instructor and Director of Exercises and Operational Trainings for MDA in Israel. Moderated by Meredith Berkman, a journalist and co-founder of Moms for Israel. Free and open to the public.

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 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.

Good luck to Sam Neumark who will be running. If you know of other members who are running, let us know so we can root for all of our Shearith Israel marathoners!

Women's Service

Saturday, November 7 | Parashat Haye Sarah

By and for women, these services are an opportunity for women to lead prayer, read from the Torah and perform the mitzvot associated with our services. New and experienced participants are encouraged to come. To learn more and to participate email lirohde-csi@yahoo.com.

"Wildman" Steve Brill Central Park Outing

Sunday, November 15 | 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Although we got rained out on Succot, we've rescheduled! Join Wildman, Rabbi Hidary and Co. as children and adults are led through a unique foraging expedition and edible tour through a new route in Central Park. We will forage for delicious mushrooms, roots, nuts, and fruits that grow in our backyard! Don't miss out! Register at shearithisrael.org/wildman. Deadline November 12.

Singles Shabbat Dinner

Friday Night, November 20 | Following Evening Services

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

"A Community's Response to Crisis: Israel Under Assault"

Saturday, November 21 | Following Morning Services

Join us for a dynamic dialog between Rabbi Soloveichik and Eric Goldstein, CEO of UJA Federation.

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 neighborhood and beyond. 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, Laury Frieber, Beth Goldman, Henry Lipschutz, Joy Saleh Roberts and Jodie Steinway

WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION

For schedule and class details 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

Fall semester sponsored by Josh Eisen.

This week sponsored by Joy Saleh and Bruce Roberts

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

Please consider sponsoring a class. Go to:
shearithisrael.org/sponsoraaclass

Parnas Office Hours

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