

WEEKLY JEWISH EDUCATION

View all our Fall classes at shearithisrael.org/judaic-education
Sign up to be notified of any schedule changes or cancellations at
shearithisrael.org/join-our-email-lists

Our Fall Semester of Jewish Education is now in full swing—
come learn with us any day of the week:

Saadiah Gaon's Book of Beliefs and Opinions

Sjimon Den Hollander

Sundays | 8:45 am

Habruta (Paired) Learning

Rabbi Yanetz & Co.

Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays | 5:15 - 7:15 pm

Minyan, Class, and Breakfast

Tuesdays | 7:45 am

Feasts and Fasts:

The Festivals in Jewish Thought

A Class for Women

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Tuesdays | 9 AM

Talmud Class:

Masekhet Yoma and the Meaning of the Mikdash

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Tuesdays | 7 PM

An Overview of James (Joshua) Seixas' Hebrew Grammar

Hazzan Rabbi Ira Rohde

Thursdays | 7:15 pm

Friday Night Lights:

The Making and Meaning of Shabbat

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Fridays | Following Kabbalat Shabbat

The Misunderstood Masterpiece:

A New Approach to Pirkei Abot

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Saturdays | One hour before Minhah

To sponsor a class or series of classes, visit

shearithisrael.org/sponsoraclass

Our next public tour is
Wednesday,
November 8

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

DEBAR TORAH: LEKH LEKHA

— BY RABBI YOSEF CHAIM YANETZ & JONATHAN LIVI —

“And G-d said to Avram, go from your land, from your birthplace, and from your father's home, to the land that I will show you.” (Genesis 12:1)

The verse is questionable. A man first must leave his home, and only then can he leave his city and finally his country. Why then does G-d first command Avram to leave his country, commanding him to leave his own home only afterwards? What is the meaning of this strange command?

The question becomes more complex when we look at the commentary of Rashi (Genesis 24:7). Rashi says that “father's home” refers to Haran, and “birthplace” refers to Ur Kasdim. What would have been the relevance of asking him to leave both of these locales when he resided in only one (Haran) at the time of the command? Had he not already left Ur Kasdim years prior?

The answer is clear, but has profound implications. It must be that G-d was not merely commanding Avram to leave his physical location, for then the text would make no sense. Rather, He was training Avram to develop a new frame of mind. He was asking him to “go” from the pagan frame of mind he was brought up with to something radically different. G-d was training Avram to become a monotheist at a time when the concept was utterly nonexistent.

Of course, G-d was aware that to change someone's mind to such an extent takes time and patience, and that people are never willing to give up their most cherished beliefs in one fell swoop. He therefore asked Avram to make incremental changes in his ideology. First, he asked him to leave his country—which was the equivalent of asking him to dissent from the general views of society. That is difficult, but not as difficult as departing from the views of one's city. Of course, the most difficult of task is to dissent from the views of one's own home. The views that one develops through childhood are embedded deeply in the psyche, and take time to uproot. Therefore G-d, understanding fully the mind of his own creation, set up a program for Avram's reeducation which did not require him to throw everything away in one moment. “First the country, then the city, and only then, the home...”

As per the comments of Rashi, the two locations he mentions represent the dominant ideas that Avram was to contend with in his journey towards the truth. The cultures of both Haran and Ur Kasdim were utterly pagan, and represented the main ideological exposure that Avram received throughout his life. It was these ideologies that G-d was attempting to slowly remove from Avram's mind, so he could truly develop his monotheistic inclinations.

Our rabbis learn from here that personal change happens slowly. We should not be impatient when trying to improve, for even our forefather Avram took his time discovering the creator. May we all merit to be like our forefather Avram: seekers of truth, makers of change, and masters of self-improvement.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Lekh Lekha

October 27-28, 2017

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

CANDLE LIGHTING | 5:40 pm

MINHAH & ARBIT | 5:45 pm | Main Sanctuary

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “Beethoven's Ninth vs. Shabbat: A Reflection on ‘Ode to Joy’ and Sabbath Song” |
2017-18 season sponsored by the Julis family.

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am

SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am

WOMEN'S SERVICE (FROM NISHMAT) | Little Synagogue | 9:00 am |
In celebration of the bat mitzvah of Honor Greenberg.

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

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

JUNIOR CONGREGATION | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Fidanque

SERMON | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “Chariots of Fire, Hatikvah, and our Haftarah”

KIDDUSH | Elias Room | *Sponsored by Janine and Bruce Greenberg, in honor of Honor's Bat Mitzvah, and Jeffrey, Raquel, and Stephen Smith, in memory of their father, Myron Smith.*

SEUDA SHELISHIT & SHABBAT AFTERNOON SHIUR | Rabbi Soloveichik on the topic of “4000 Years of Jewish Names” | 4:30 pm |
Levy Auditorium | *Fall semester sponsored by Scott Shay, in memory of Chana Razel bat Aaron v'Sarah.*

MINHAH & ARBIT | 5:30 pm

HABDALAH | 6:27 pm

Weekday Service Times

Mornings: Sunday: 8:00 am

Monday - Tuesday: 7:15 am

Evenings (Minhah & Arbit): Sunday - Thursday: 5:45

UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

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. Pre-registration required.

Help us help our neighbors by registering or donating at shearithisrael.org/pack-a-thon-2017



Introducing Shearith Israel's Guide to Friday Night Services

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.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal tob to **Honor Greenberg** on becoming a Bat Mitzvah. Congratulations to her parents, **Janine and Bruce Greenberg**.

Mazal tob to **Ariela Lopez** on becoming a Bat Mitzvah. Congratulations to her parents, **Ronit and Andres Lopez**, and to her grandparents, **Bentsi and Naomi Cohen**.

Mazal tob to **Benjamin Neuwirth** on becoming a Bar Mitzvah. Congratulations to his parents, **Nataly and Stephen Neuwirth**.

Hazakim u'Berukhim to **Zoya Raynes and Robert Friedman** for being named the honorees of the JCRC-NY's Winter Benefit Reception, to take place on December 4 at the Jewish Museum.

For information, contact Grant Silverstein at silversteing@jrcrcny.org.

Hebra Hased Va'Amet Screening of *No. 17 is Anonymous* Sunday, November 19 | 4:00 pm

Join the Hebra for this special screening of this Israeli documentary, set in the aftermath of a suicide bombing that killed 17 on a bus, in which all but one of the victims were identified. The filmmakers document the search to identify the man no one had reported missing.

The film runs 75 minutes, and is in Hebrew with English subtitles.

The screening will be followed by a discussion led by Dr. Rebecca Chaplan (Nathan). Childcare will be available and light refreshments will be served. This event is FREE thanks to the Hebra's sponsorship, though registration is encouraged (and required for childcare). Donations to the Hebra are welcome.

Visit shearithisrael.org/Anonymous17 to sign up.

Always Missing Deadlines? Enroll in CSI's Text Messaging Notification Service

We can remind you by text when RSVP deadlines are approaching. We can also alert you of synagogue schedule changes, weather emergencies, security incidents, or last-minute class cancellations. To subscribe to our service, visit shearithisrael.org/text-message-notifications.

Please be assured, we will only text you for those alerts you have selected and will only use this on an as-needed basis.

SAVE THE DATE: Young Couples and Families Luncheon Shabbat, November 25 | Following Morning Services

Young couples and families are invited to a Thanksgiving Weekend Shabbat Lunch with Rabbi and Layalza Soloveichik & Co. Join us for a family-friendly afternoon of Torah and good company. For registration and sponsorship details, visit shearithisrael.org/thanksgiving-luncheon

Shearith Israel Toddler Program

We've barely felt a nip in the air, but now is the time to think about Spring enrollment. To learn more and apply, go to shearithisrael.org/toddlerprogram.

YES, 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.

To register, visit shearithisrael.org/charleston

**A Major History Lecture Marking the
100th Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration
Thursday, November 9 | 7:00 pm**

"Jew vs. Jew: The Battle Over the Balfour Declaration"
Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Co-Sponsored by the Straus Center for Torah and Western Thought

For sponsorship opportunities, visit
shearithisrael.org/balfour

Are You An NYC Marathon Runner?

We want to root for all of our Shearith Israel marathon runners! If you or a member you know is running in the NYC Marathon this year, contact srosenberg@shearithisrael.org with names.

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. Best of luck to all the marathoners!



FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

**Friday Nights,
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!