Hanukkah Special Guest Lecture Monday, December 7 | 7:00 pm

Join us for a guest lecture by Professor Steve Fine during Rabbi Hidary's Second Temple History class as he presents a special Hanukkah lecture on the topic of "Coloring the Arch of Titus Menorah: Recent Discoveries in Rome. Steven Fine is the Dean Pinkhos Churgin Professor of Jewish History at Yeshiva University and Director of the Arch of Titus Project. His "The Menorah: From the Bible to the Apocalypse" will be published by Harvard University Press in 2016.

Jewry Duty

We have been pleased by the response of the "Jewry Duty" initiative, which began last year in an effort to bolster minyan attendance and will continue for a second year. Your attendance at mid-week minyan is especially helpful to mourners, encouraging to other minyan attendees, and, of course, spiritually valuable for each and every one of us. We have recently sent out a mailing to all eligible participants and you will receive your "summons" shortly before you are scheduled to attend. To read more about Jewry Duty and to look up your assigned date, go to: shearithisrael.org/content/jewryduty

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal Tob to Muk and Vivien Eisenmann on the birth of a granddaughter in Florida to their children Marc and Astrid.

Mazal Tob to Debbie and David Sable on the birth of a granddaughter, Goldy Elissa. She is the daughter of Elianna and Yoel Kaye.

We Mourn the Loss of our Member: Ms. Valy Enriquez. Condolences to her family.

JACOB AND ESAU'S "L'HAYIM": RASHBAM AND THE BUSINESS OF LENTIL STEW Z. Edinger (based on R. Kleinman)

Gen. 25:29-34: Once, when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, famished. And Esau said to Jacob, "Give me some of that red stuff to swallow, for I am famished"—which is why he was named Edom [adom = red]. Jacob said, "First, sell me your birthright." And Esau said, "I am at the point of death, so of what use is my birthright to me?" But Jacob said, "Swear to me this day." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. Jacob then gave Esau bread and lentil stew; he ate and drank, and he rose and went away. Thus did Esau spurn the birthright.

The plain meaning of the text is that Esau sold his birthright for a meal of lentil stew. The commentary of Rashbam (France 12th century) however strays from text's plain meaning and empha-

sizes that the birthright was sold for money, the meal was merely a memorial of the transaction: מכרה כיום - כלומר: לאלתר, מיד מכור לי חלק בכורתך הראוי לך בממון אבי בממון שאתן לך, ואח״כ אתן לך המאכל לעדות

"First, sell me...": Meaning immediately!- Sell me your share of the birthright which you are entitled to from our father's estate with the money that I will give you. After that I will give you to eat as proof of the sale and as confirmation.

<u>וימכר את בכורתו</u>- בדמים, ואחר כן ויעקב נתן לעשו וגו' כמנהג בני אדם לקיום דבר

..."and sold his his birthright". In exchange for money. After this Jacob gave Esau dish of lentils he had cooked, as is customary among people sealing a bargain.

Rashbam is usually known for his faithfulness to the plain meaning of the text. His non-literal interpretation here (that the birthright was sold for money and not the lentil stew) requires explana-

Rashbam was followed by several other French and German commentators of the medieval period (such as Joseph Kimhi and Hizkuni among others.) In one such commentary (the Pe'aneah Raza -

יפאסומ a Joseph Ramin and Thekdin antong others.) The other start in the start in

The Leinkauf was a medieval German custom that referred to the drinking of wine to seal an engagement contract. (Interestingly, this is also the origin of the Ashkenazic "LeHayim" held even today upon a couple's engagement.) Rabbi Joseph Bekhor Shor (France, 12th c.) was explicit in his rejection of the Rashbam's explana-

ויש מפרשים כי בכסף קנה יעקב את הבכורה וזה האוכל היה סעודת המכירה שקורין בבריי"א, והוא בראות [=שקר] בעיני Some interpreters say Jacob bought the birthright for money and that the food was the feast for the sale, known as **Beuverie**, but in my eyes this is a fiction.

In this rejection of Rashbam we now have the French word for the feast that was envisioned by him. Beuverie is a medieval French for a drinking feast held among friends.

Although we now understand that Rashbam's commentary interprets the sale of the birthright as would have been common for business transactions in medieval France, we still do not understand why he chose to explain our verses in this way, far from the plain meaning of the text. An answer lies in understanding how the story of the sale of the birthright was being interpreted in Medieval

In the Sefer Yosef ha-Mekaneh (R' Joseph b. Nathan Official, France 13th c.) the following story is given:

A Dominican monk found Rabbi Joseph on the road to Paris, and said to him: Your forefather

A Dominican mone found kaooi Joseph on the roda to Farts, and said to him: Tour Jorejainer Jacob was a thief, and there is no usurer like him; for in exchange for a single bowl of food worth half [a coin] he bought the birthright, worth a thousand zekukim.

He answered him... that Jacob said: "Sell me your birthright this day...this day, meaning for what it is worth today...and I will pay you (in accordance with) the interest it carries." "So he sold his birthright to Jacob" [Gen. 25:33) calculated monetarily. "And Jacob gave Esau bread..." [Gen. 25:34]. It does not say he sold his birthright to Jacob for bread and lentil stew, rather "Jacob gave to Esau," gave him gratis, in addition to the money of the transaction, in token of the sale, as is still the practice of merchants today.

Now we can understand Rashbam's commentary to our verses. Medieval Christian interpretations viewed the sale of the birthright as usurious - this was often used as a polemic to prove the greedy and devious nature of Jews. For Rashbam, such an interpretation was dangerous and had to be refuted, even if he had to stray from the plain meaning of the verses to do so.



Shabbat Toledoth

November 13-14, 2015

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 93; Haftarah p. 948 Kaplan Living Torah: p. 116; Haftarah p. 1070

CANDLE LIGHTING | 4:22 pm MINHAH | 4:30 pm FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | following evening services | Rabbi Soloveichik gives a talk on "How Herring Changed the World" Sponsored by the Julis Family

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Rabbi Hidary delivers a sermon on the topic "The Last Allepian Jew: Escape Home and Return Homeland"

TOT SHABBAT | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Levy Auditorium YOUTH GROUPS | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Elias Room JR. CONGREGATION | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue The next Assigned Jr. Congregation will be November 21 KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium

TOPICS IN JEWISH PHILOSOPHY | Rabbi Hidary 3:30 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 "Rembrandt and Rav Kook at the National Gallery: A Hanukkah Reflection" | 3:30 pm | The fall semester is sponsored by Lewis Lipsey

MINHAH/ARBIT | 4:15 pm KETER SHEM TOB | Rabbi Hidary | Main Sanctuary HABDALAH | 5:07 pm

Weekday Service Times

Mornings: Sundays 8:00 AM, Mon-Thur. 7:15 AM; Evenings: Sunday - Thursday: 6:30 PM (Arbit only)

UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

"Wildman" Steve Brill Central Park Outing This Sunday, November 15 | 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm Meet at 1 W 85th St Apartment Lobby

Fun for all ages! At only \$10 for members and \$12 for non-members, you won't want to miss this. Wildman will lead children and adults 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! Register at shearithisrael.org/wildman.

> A Community's Response to Crisis: Israel Under Assault Saturday, November 21 Following Morning Services

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

An Intimate Luncheon with Eric Goldstein: Reflections from a Modern Orthodox CEO

Following the public presentation, registered sponsors are invited to the Elias room for an intimate discussion with Eric Goldstein and elegant lunch. Sponsorship levels: \$180/\$270/\$360/\$1000. To sign up, go to shearithisrael.org/eric-goldstein by November 17.

Shearith Israel Kippah

Did you see the new Shearith Israel Kippah that recently premiered at our Gala? Wondering where you can get one? Shearith Israel Kippot are available for purchase on our website at shearithisrael.org/store for \$10 each! Show off your great sense of style and allegiance to CSI and grab this great deal while it lasts!

Thanksgiving Pack-a-thon Over-subscribed!

We are thrilled with the enthusiastic response to our pack-a-thon. Volunteer registration is now closed. But you can still help in this important project by making a tax deductible donation at shearithisrael.org/pack-a-thon.

Your gift goes directly to the Food Bank of New York City and will be credited to our project.

Thank you to our partners at the West End Collegiate Church and our terrific event committee:

> Karen Daar Laury Frieber Beth Goldman Joy Saleh Roberts Marlene Sperling Jodie Steinway Adina Wagman

Thanks to you, fewer New Yorkers will go hungry this season.

British Invasion Shabbat Dinner Featuring Zaki Cooper and our resident Anglophile, Rabbi Meir Soloveichik Friday Night, December 4

Following evening services and Friday Night Lights

Drawing on first-hand experience of working at Buckingham Palace, and using objects from his time working there, Zaki Cooper will provide his insider's insights into the real life of the royals and shed light on this magical institution. Who knows more about the British, Zaki Cooper or Rabbi Soloveichik? Find out at our British invasion Shabbat Dinner! British Menu will be served. Register at shearithisrael.org/british-invasion.

WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION

For schedule and class details go to: shearithisrael.org/content/judaic-education-and-majorlectures

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
- 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 the Roberts family in memory of Maurice A. Saleh and by Anonymous.

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

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

Parnas Office Hours

Louis Solomon would be delighted to meet with you. Please schedule a visit at

> Our next public tour is: Tuesday, December 8 at 11:00 am