



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL  
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

## Shabbat Toledoth December 2-3, 2016

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 93; Haftarah p. 102  
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 116; : Haftarah p. 1070

CANDLE LIGHTING | 4:11 pm  
MINHAH | 4:15 pm | Main Sanctuary  
FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | Following evening services | Rabbi  
Hidary gives a talk on the topic “A Nonpartisan Halakhic Reaction to the Election in the Sabbath Liturgy” | *Session sponsored by Karen and Jack Daar | 2016-2017 season 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 Lintel that Lasted: The Earliest Bet Midrash and the Visionary Who Studied There”  
TOT SHABBAT WITH LIZ AND SHANADE | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Levy Auditorium  
YOUTH GROUPS WITH RACHEL | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Elias Room  
JR. CONGREGATION WITH TORAH READING | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue  
KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium

SEUDAH SHELISHIT AND PIRKEI ABOT AFTERNOON SHIUR | Rabbi Hidary on the topic “What Was Rambam’s Favorite Dessert?: Reconstructing Maimonides’ Personal Life from the Cairo Geniza” | 3:30 pm | Levy Auditorium | *Fall semester sponsored by Lewis Lipsey*

MINHAH/ARBIT | 4:05 PM  
HABDALAH | 4:55 pm

Weekday Service Times  
Mornings: Sunday: 8:00 AM, Monday-Friday: 7:15 AM,  
Evenings (Arbit Only): Monday - Thursday: 6:30PM

### A Note About Our Weekly Dibrei Torah

Our Debar Torah this week is written by Rabbi Joseph Dweck, the senior Rabbi of the S&P community of the UK. Over the course of this year, in addition to our Shearith Israel cast of writers, we will expose you to guest Debar Torah contributors from other Spanish and Portuguese communities around the world.  
Thank you Rabbi Dweck for this week’s excellent Debar Torah!

### Ramaz Choir Hanukkah Concert

#### Friday, December 16 | Following Evening Services

As a festive postscript to this week’s Friday Night Lights, the Ramaz Chamber returns to Shearith Israel to perform a short concert in preparation for Hanukkah.

### COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Mazal tob to Andrea and Rev. Phil Sherman on the marriage of their son Elan Sherman to Rena Resnick.*

*We mourn the loss of our longtime esteemed member, Irma Robles Cardozo, Co-president of the Sisterhood and wife of our late Hazzan, Rev. Abraham Lopes Cardozo (z’l). Condolences to her children, Deborah Cardozo Smith and Judith Cardozo Tenenbaum.*

### Shearith Israel Cufflinks

Did you see the fabulous sterling silver cufflinks we presented to our gala honorees? You too can look like a CSI hero for only \$180 a pair. Treat yourself, a friend or loved one with a Hanukkah gift. Order by December 8 at [shearithisrael.org/cufflinks](http://shearithisrael.org/cufflinks)



### Parnas Office Hours

Louis Solomon would be delighted to meet with you.  
Please schedule a visit at [parnas@shearithisrael.org](mailto:parnas@shearithisrael.org).

Our next public tour is:  
**Wednesday, December 14 at 11:00 am**

### Conflict Resolution

#### Rabbi Joseph Dweck, Senior Rabbi

#### of the S&P community Sephardi Community of the United Kingdom

In Parashat Toledot we read of the birth of our forefather Yaakov and his twin brother Esav. Theirs is a complex relationship filled with strife and difficulty. The strife runs deep and actually begins in utero:  
*The children almost crushed one another inside her... (25:22)*

It seems though, that the external struggles between the brothers may originate from internal and personal ones within each of them. Both Yaakov and Esav wrestle with internal discord, and the lessons we learn from them are monumental. In Toledot the struggles of the first-born twin, Esav are showcased. He finds that being the eldest son and bearing the privileges and responsibilities that come with it is a heavy and intrusive burden. He was of the opinion that the imminence of mortality made any real value of his birthright moot and hardly worth the cost of keeping it.

*‘Here I am on my way to dying, so what good to me is a first-born right?’ (25:32)*

Esav famously resolves to sell his first-born rights to his twin brother for nothing more than a visually appetising lunch. From Esav’s perspective, the good meal was here to be enjoyed now, while the ultimate benefit of the birthright might not be realised for years, or even generations, to come. Yet, we see the internal struggle begin to emerge when, *after* having finished his lunch, he gets up to leave and further belittles the right he has just sold. The pain and sadness he feels in the aftermath of a poor choice prompts him to cheapen what he has given up as a way of mitigating the pain.

There is no doubt that the sale of the birthright was a conflicted decision for Esav. He is torn between the need to bear the burden of the birthright and the desire for a carefree life in a world that offers a plethora of pleasures. It so plagues him, that upon hearing that his father has blessed Yaakov, and thus, confirmed the delivery of the birthright into his hands, he wails from the depths of his soul over the loss.

*When Esav heard...he called out with a very great and bitter cry... (27:34)*

At this point he resorts to what many of us do and, in a bout of denial, paradoxically insists that there is still a solution while knowing at the same time that the possibility is no longer available.

*Esav said to his father: ‘Have you only one blessing father? Bless me also, father!’*

*And Esav lifted his voice up and wept. (27:38)*

The internal strife we find in Esav is familiar to us all. At one point or another in life we find that we are pulled between actualising the long-term responsibilities and potentials that lie within us and giving in to our immediate desires and local opportunities. For Esav, a hearty lunch and a weak moment were enough to cause him to sell the element of his identity that, deep down, mattered to him perhaps more than he was consciously aware.

We all contend with some form of Esav’s difficulties. At times we fail and at times we prevail, but what makes the failures pernicious and ultimately damaging is when, after failing, we attempt to rationalise it, as Esav did, and succumb to mediocrity. Rather than succumb, we would do better to commit to the struggle itself. Through this, although gruelling at times, we emerge strong, and slowly yet steadily come into our best selves.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Revealing the Enduring Ethics of Aggadah:  
Levinas' Talmudic Readings  
2-Part Winter Wednesdays Learning Series  
Rabbi Richard Hidary

Wednesdays, December 7 and December 14 | 7:00 pm  
Emmanuel Levinas was a French philosopher of ethics and existentialism. In addition to his major contribution to general philosophy, Levinas was also a Jewish community leader and teacher. For many years, he delivered an annual lecture at the Colloquia of Jewish Intellectuals analyzing a Talmudic passage philosophically. These readings remain some of the most innovative, interesting, and inspiring Talmudic interpretations that succeed in unpacking some of the depths of Talmudic thought and its relevance to modern society. In these two lectures, we will attempt to re-enact those lectures, follow Levinas' steps through a textual analysis, and assess how well they stand the tests of time, scholarship, and enduring value.  
Free and open to the public.

Young Couples and Families “Shang-Chai”  
Shabbat Luncheon

Saturday, December 24 | Following Morning Services  
In honor of the Jewish tradition to eat Chinese food on the Eve of December 25th, young couples and families are invited to join the Soloveichik family for a fun and uplifting Chinese themed Shabbat luncheon.  
Go to [shearithisrael.org/shang-chai](http://shearithisrael.org/shang-chai) to register.

Sign up for the Spring Semester of  
Caregiver and Me Toddler Program  
Mondays & Wednesdays 9:30-11:30am  
For ages 16 - 34 months | Begins January 4, 2017  
Led by our veteran early childhood specialist, Liz Rios, toddlers learn colors and shapes, create arts and crafts, sing songs, explore Jewish holidays, music and enjoy special visits by Rabbi Ira Rohde. Spaces are limited. 1 or 2 day options. Preferred pricing for members. Register now at [shearithisrael.org/toddlerprogram](http://shearithisrael.org/toddlerprogram).

Exclusive Tour of “The First Jewish Americans:  
Freedom and Culture In The New World” Exhibit  
Rabbi Meir Soloveichik  
The New-York Historical Society  
170 Central Park West (At 77th street)  
Sunday, December 18 | 10:00 am  
(one hour before the museum opens to the public)



Building upon the overwhelming enthusiasm of our recent exclusive tour at the Morgan Library and Museum, our congregants have more reason than ever to take interest in this extraordinary exhibit. This exhibit is directly connected to the history of our community and congregation and showcases several important objects from our collection as well as extensive loans from the private collection of our member, Leonard Milberg. And who better to guide us through this exhibit, vividly bringing the history to life, but our own resident historian, Rabbi Soloveichik. As spaces are highly limited, registration is now open to members ONLY. Register at [shearithisrael.org/The-First-Jewish-Americans](http://shearithisrael.org/The-First-Jewish-Americans)

A Shearith Israel and Jewish Center  
Ski and Snowboard Trip  
An Intergenerational "Achdut in Action" Program  
Sunday, December 25, 7:00 am - 8:00 pm  
Celebrate the first day of Hanukkah on the slopes of Hunter Mountain. Shearith Israel and the Jewish Center are joining forces for a fun day of skiing and snowboarding. This intergenerational activity is geared towards teens, singles, couples, and families (children age 7 and up), first-timers and black diamond skiers and snowboarders. This trip is all-inclusive (lift tickets, optional rentals, transportation), but it is BYOL (bring your own lunch). Register at [shearithisrael.org/ski](http://shearithisrael.org/ski).

WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION

For details go to: [shearithisrael.org/judaic-education](http://shearithisrael.org/judaic-education)

- Sunday
- ◊ Saadiah Gaon's Book of Beliefs and Opinions | Sjimon den Hollander | 8:45 am
- Monday
- ◊ Monday Night Learning: A Series on Early America and the Jews | Rabbi Soloveichik | 7:00 pm
- Tuesday
- ◊ Katzap Class and Breakfast | Following Morning Services
  - ◊ Feasts and Fasts: The Festivals in Jewish Thought- A Class for Women | Rabbi Soloveichik | 9:00 am | Sponsored by Martine Schenker in memory of her father Henry Krenik
  - ◊ Talmud Class: Tractate Sanhedrin | Rabbi Soloveichik | 7:00 pm | Sponsored by Jane Shiff in memory of her father, Nathan Renic (Nissan Shalom bar Pinchas Zelig and Shprintze
- Wednesday
- ◊ NEW: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Shearith Israel: A Monthly Q & A | Z. Edinger | 7:00 pm | On select Wednesdays | Begins December 21 | Email questions to [zedinger@shearithisrael.org](mailto:zedinger@shearithisrael.org).

To sponsor a single class or an entire semester, go to [shearithisrael.org/sponsoraclass](http://shearithisrael.org/sponsoraclass)

To find out when your favorite class is held, canceled or for special topics go to [shearithisrael.org/join-our-mailing-lists](http://shearithisrael.org/join-our-mailing-lists) to select which emails you'd like to receive.

Winter Coat Drive  
Now through December 28  
Sponsored by the Shearith Israel League and Caring Connection

Donate gently used coats for men, women, and children, to keep those in need warm this winter season. Simply drop them off in the box located near the fountain outside Levy Auditorium. We are aiming to collect 50 coats that will be transferred to NY Cares for distribution.

Hard time remembering RSVP deadlines?  
We can remind you by text. Enroll at:  
[shearithisrael.org/text-message-notifications](http://shearithisrael.org/text-message-notifications)