

A Note About Our Weekly Dibrei Torah
Our Debar Torah this week is written by **Rabbi Harris Guedalia**. 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 Guedalia for this week's excellent Debar Torah!

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hazakim U'berukhim to **Marc & Beth Bengualid** upon being Guests of Honor at the American Friends of Reuth dinner on Thursday, December 8, at the St. Regis Hotel. Reuth is one of Israel's most outstanding social service and healthcare facilities.

We mourn the loss of our member and Honorary Trustee Jack Rudin. Condolences to his wife, Susan Rudin.


Great Opportunity—
Pay Next Year's Membership Dues at This Year's Rates!
Members, pre-pay your 2017-2018 dues at current rates. If we receive your payment by check postmarked before December 31, 2016 or by credit card before that date, you will be exempt from any dues increases that may be implemented in the upcoming year. Please note, this offer is only for members paying full rates whose accounts are current. To pay, go to shearithisrael.shulcloud.com/payment.php and log in and make a donation.

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

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

Vayetze
Rabbi Harris Guedalia* (with Hershel Sennet)
Our forefather Jacob first married Leah and then, seven years later, he married Rachel. Rabbi Obadya Yosef notes that the seven year gap was needed to ensure that each wedding was pleasurable. Jacob and Leah desired their happy day. Jacob and Rachel deserved their happy day too. But were Jacob's courtships happy? Were his *huppot* joyous?
Jacob's seeking a wife begins with tears. Chapter 29, verse 11 tells how when seeing Rachel for the first time, Jacob raised his voice and wept. Rashi explains that he was sad because he had come with empty hands. Jacob had no money, no dowry. In verse 13 when Jacob meets Laban, we read that Laban ran to meet him and hugged and kisses him. Rashi explains Laban thought Jacob must have money hidden on his person. Jacob had to explain to Laban that he was forced to run away from his brother and therefore had no money. Seemingly both Jacob and Laban were sad. Where then is the joy?
In chapter 28, Isaac instructs Jacob to go to Laban for a wife. In verses 3-4 Isaac tells Jacob that God will bless him and that in him will the promise of the land of Israel be kept. There is no mention of money being sent with Jacob as a dowry. It seems Isaac is setting Jacob up for failure.
Perhaps the happiness begins with the great gift Jacob brought to his future wives, his character. He had a sense of purpose. Jacob knew his destiny was to receive the blessings of Abraham. He was skilled and could overcome the challenges before him. This sense of confidence was what he brought to his brides, a divine promise and a personal *skill set*. Jacob was indeed a happy man.
Jacob's weddings were joyous, not because of any expensive celebration, but because of his sense of confidence, his sense of purpose and his abilities. This is something we all share with him. We have purpose and abilities, and the promise of Abraham. This ability to maintain our Judaism in a conflicted world gives us confidence – don't worry, be happy.

Rabbi Harris Guedalia is the founder and director of the Gimmel Foundation, an educational and social service organization serving Southern Israel, centered in Kiryat Malachi. He is the son of the late Judah & Selma Guedalia (and the uncle of our shamash, Zachariah Edinger.) From 1963-1968 he served as Shearith Israel's Assistant Minister.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Vayetse

December 9-10, 2016

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 106; Haftarah p. 135
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 130; : Haftarah: see insert on p.1430

CANDLE LIGHTING | 4:10 pm
MINHAH | 4:15 pm | Main Sanctuary
FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | Following evening services | Rabbi Soloveichik gives a talk on the topic “Korea, Shabbat, and the United Nations” | 2016-2017 season sponsored by the Julis Family

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary
SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Rabbi Soloveichik delivers a sermon on the topic “Rembrandt and Rabbi Menasseh Study Vayetse Together”
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 | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue
KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium

SEUDAH SHELISHIT AND PIRKEI ABOT AFTERNOON SHIUR | Rabbi Soloveichik on the topic “Yale, Yeshiva, and Urim Ve-Tumim: A Hanukkah Shiur” | 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

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

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

Ramaz Choir Hanukkah Concert
Friday, December 16 | Following Evening Services
As a festive postscript to Friday Night Lights, the Ramaz Chamber returns to Shearith Israel to perform a short concert in preparation for Hanukkah.

Exclusive Tour of “The First Jewish Americans:
Freedom and Culture In The New World” Exhibit
Rabbi Meir Soloveichik
The New-York Historical Society
Sunday, December 18 | 10:00 am
SOLD OUT!

NEW DATE - PTTS Hanukkah Fest
Sunday, December 18 | 11:00 am –12:00 pm
PTTS students will enjoy Hanukkah festivities, songs and of course, delicious waffles. If you are not a PTTS student but would like to take part in Hanukkah Fest, please email Yona Glass at yglass@shearithisrael.org.

The Annual West Side Mikvah Fundraiser
Monday, December 19
Dessert reception at 7:30 pm, Program begins at 8:00 pm
at the home of Tracy Gerber | 441 West End Ave, #9A
Sponsored by the rabbi's wives of the UWS
Join guest speaker, Elisheva Liss, licensed marriage and family therapist, on the topic "Let's Talk: Considering a Paradigm Shift in Our Conversations About Intimacy" at this annual fundraiser. Even if you cannot attend, your donation will go to the operation of the mikvah.
Register and donate at westsidemikvahfundraiser.com.

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 to register.

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. If we do not have sufficient sign up by THIS Sunday, December 11th, we may have to cancel the trip.

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 water fountain outside Levy Auditorium. We are aiming to collect 50 coats that will be transferred to NY Cares for distribution.

WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION

For details go to: 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 | On select Mondays
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 | *This week sponsored by Tikva Ostrega in memory of her father Ezra Meir Shohet on the occasion of his nahala*
◇ Talmud Class: Tractate Sanhedrin | Rabbi Soloveichik | 7:00 pm | *This week sponsored by Chalom Silber to merit a refuah shelaymah for his friend, Ariel Yehuda ben Yehudit*
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.

To sponsor a single class or an entire semester, go to shearithisrael.org/sponsoraaclass

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

Don't let us go dry.
Be a scotch or arak sponsor. To sponsor or contribute go to shearithisrael.org/scotch-and-arak-sponsorships

Hollywood Themed Shabbat Dinner
for Teens and their Families
with Rabbi Soloveichik
Friday night, January 20
Following Friday Night Lights
Teens and their families are invited to a special Shabbat Dinner with Rabbi Soloveichik and his family.
Register at shearithisrael.org/teens-Hollywood.