

A Note About Our Weekly Dibrei Torah

Our Debar Torah this week is written by **Jeff Berger**, the Rabbi of the Sephardi Synagogue of Elstree & Borehamwood in an affiliate of the London S&P. In addition to our Shearith Israel cast of writers, we like to expose you to guest Debar Torah contributors from other Spanish and Portuguese communities around the world. Thank you Rabbi Berger for this week's Debar Torah!

Announcing a Very Special Shabbaton *Learn History. Celebrate History. MAKE History* in Washington DC and Monticello Friday, May 5 - Sunday, May 7

Join this truly once in a lifetime opportunity to make history with Rabbi Soloveichik as we conduct the first ever hashcabah (memorial service) for Rachel Phillips Levy, Shearith Israel forebear, and the only Jew buried on the grounds of Monticello. Spaces are highly limited. For details, terms, and registration go to shearithisrael.org/Monticello.



Teen Girls Shir Hashirim Reading Saturday, April 15 | Fifth Day of Pesah

After musaf, the teen girls of our synagogue, are invited to take part in our unique tradition as they read The Song of Songs for the congregation in the Main Sanctuary after services. Full preparation and training provided. Newcomers welcome! For information, and to participate, please contact Yehudit Robinson at yehuditrobinson@gmail.com.

To sponsor the Kiddush in the girls' honor go to shearithisrael.org/teen-girls-shir-hashirim-2017

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, March 8 at 11:00 am

Memory and its links to Purim Rabbi Jeff Berger, Rabbi of the Sephardi Synagogue of Elstree and Boreham

'Memory is the diary we all carry with us.' — Oscar Wilde
'Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.' — Dr. Seuss

Memory, and particularly our ability to analyse the past, distinguishes human beings from all other living creatures. We are the sum total of our actions and an accumulation of our individual and collective remembering. When ability enables us to not only reflect on the past but to 'process it', anticipating – and if necessary changing the course of – our future, we emulate the Divine.

There are at least 2 connections between Parshat Tetsaveh-Zachor and Purim. The first is the commandment to remember (Zachor) the deeds of Amalek and the other, a bit less obvious, relates to the clothing of the High Priest.

In synagogues around the world, the Shabbat before Purim is Shabbat Zachor where we're commanded to read about the unprovoked attack by the tribe of Amalek on our early ancestors just after their release from Egyptian bondage. Haman, son of the Aggagite (Esther 3:1), was also a descendant of Amalek (I Sam 15:32).

A separate more tenuous Purim connection to Parshat Tetsaveh-Zachor is found in the Talmud's commentary on Megillat Esther (TB Megillah 12a). Referring to the lavish 180-day party hosted by King Ahashverosh where he displayed 'the vast riches of his kingdom and the splendour (tiferet) of his majesty' (Esther 1:4), the rabbis drew a link to Tetsaveh which describes the High Priest's clothing 'for honour and splendour' (l'khavod U'l'tifaret - Exodus 28:2).

This parallel wording implied Ahashverosh wore at his party the captured High Priest's garments, brought back from Israel by Nebuchadnezzar who'd destroyed the 1st Temple in 586 BCE. In these two cases, memory was used negatively. The first, reminding ourselves of Amalek's injury and of our everlasting obligation to annihilate them; and the second, Ahashverosh's cynical reminder to his guests from throughout the Persian Empire, of the lost independence of the Jews who, recently in exile, longed to return to their conquered homeland.

How we cope with unhappy memories is an enormous challenge! The Jewish nation whose history is pockmarked with uncountable tragedies and sadness, know this as well as any people alive today. The first step is to focus on the good rather than the bad.

Thus, G-d's command to remember Amalek can be alternatively described as a call throughout the ages for vigilance, to justly respond against unwarranted attacks. While Ahashverosh's efforts to humiliate his Jewish subjects and prevent them from returning to Judea, proved to be a plan soon overturned.

G-d, whose name is spelled Yud and Hey, Vav and Hey, is the Originator of all creation, existing beyond any sense of time. Thus, within those 4-letters, one finds the Hebrew words for Past, Present & Future. When we live aware of our past and its impact on the present, and when we design our future based on right ideals, we express our G-d-like character.

Purim, a drama where the Divine Presence was hidden while Esther & Mordechai rescued the Jews, is a festival where for one perfect moment we see our vulnerability in G-d's eyes, but remember that history can be changed by acting our part too.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Tetsavveh-Zachor

March 10-11, 2017

Hertz Pentateuch: Tetsavveh p. 339, Zachor p. 856 ; Haftarah p. 995
Kaplan Living Torah: Tetsavveh p. 414, Zachor p. 988 ; Haftarah p. 1274

CANDLE LIGHTING | 5:39 pm

MINHAH | 5:45 pm

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | Following evening services | Rabbi Soloveichik gives a talk on the topic "Mordechai's Tekhelet and the Blanket with Sleeves" | 2016-2017 season sponsored by the Julis Family

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary

SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Rabbi Soloveichik delivers a lecture on the topic "Purim Costumes: A History"

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 (PARASHAT ZACHOR) | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue

KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium | Sponsored by Stuart Shorenstein in memory of his mother, Florence and brother, Louis

NO SEUDAH SHELISHIT AND AFTERNOON CLASS THIS WEEK

MINHAH/ARBIT | 5:40 pm

HABDALAH | 6:32 pm

Weekday Service Times

Mornings: Sunday: 8:00 AM, Monday-Friday: 7:15 AM,
Evenings (Minhah & Arbit): Sunday– Wednesday: 6:30 PM*
*Note time change

PURIM AT SHEARITH ISRAEL

Purim Schedule

Eve of Purim

Saturday Evening, March 11th

Shabbat Minhah5:40 pm

Habdalah6:32 pm

*note updated time from bulletin

Purim/Motzaei Shabbat Arbit7:00 pm

Children's Megillah Program.....7:00 pm

Reading of Megillah.....7:15 pm

Purim Dinner.....For Registered Guests

Late Reading of Megillah9:00 pm

Move Clocks One Hour Ahead Tonight!

Purim Day

Sunday, March 12th

Morning Shahrit.....8:00 am

Morning Megillah Reading & Breakfast8:30 am

Women's Megillah Reading8:30 am

Late Morning Megillah Reading11:00 am

Purim Day Minhah & Arbit Services6:30 pm

End of Purim Day7:21 pm

Purim Dinner

Saturday night, March 11

Following 7:15 pm Megillah reading

For Registered Guests

Immediately following the *Megillah* reading, registered guests are invited to a festive meal in Levy Auditorium. Childcare Provided



CSI Youth Megillat Esther Show

Saturday night, March 11 | Arrive at 7:00 pm

Elias Room

Children are invited for a special interactive Purim show by *Yeladudes with supervision by Liz, Shanade, and Rachel*. It's not too late to sponsor at shearithisrael.org/yeladudes.

Matanot L'Ebyonim

It is one of the core mitzvot of Purim to give charity to the poor, Matanot L'Ebyonim. Your online gift or check made out exactly to "Congregation Shearith Israel Rabbi's Discretionary Fund," (memo: "Matanot L'ebyonim") will be distributed by Rabbi Soloveichik on Purim to those in need. Go to shearithisrael.org/matanot to donate.

Purim Morning Breakfast

Sunday, March 12 | Following 8:00 am services

Immediately following the 8:00 am readings of the Megillah, congregants are welcome to enjoy a festive breakfast. It's not too late to join our sponsors at shearithisrael.org/purim-breakfast.

Women's Megillah Reading

Sunday, March 12 | service begins at 8:00 am

All women are invited to attend this annual tradition. Moms, we'd love for you to join and have arranged for childcare to help out.

OTHER EVENTS & INITIATIVES

Save the Date: Wine and Cheese Event

Wednesday, March 29 (note date change from bulletin)

Say "Cheese!" In the tradition of our past stand-out "educulinary" events, we are delighted to bring you a special wine and cheese pairing party. We will learn about cheese making from an expert kosher cheese maker, "the Cheese Guy." sample wine and cheese pairings carefully curated by Carmet/Yatir wineries, and enjoy relevant shiurim by our own Rabbi Soloveichik. Stay tuned for registration information.

Join Our Team of Knowledgeable

Shearith Israel Tour Guides

Do you love Shearith Israel- it's history, customs, architecture, design, and objects? Consider becoming a volunteer docent and help us educate the many groups of adults and youths who visit us on tours throughout the year. To express interest and learn more about what's involved please email Sarah Gross at sgross@shearithisrael.org.

WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION

For details go to: shearithisrael.org/judaic-education

Sunday

◇ **Saadia Gaon's Book of Beliefs and Opinions** | Sjimon den Hollander | 8:45 am | NO CLASS THIS WEEK

Monday, Wednesday, & Thursday

◇ **Habruta (Paired) Learning** | 5:15 pm - 7:15 pm | Before and after evening services, Rabbi Chaim Yanetz and rabbinical students from YU are available in the Elias Room to study in *habruta* with congregants of all ages.

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 | *Spring semester is sponsored anonymously in memory of Debby Neumark | Thank you to Cindy Trop for sponsoring last week's class in memory of her father, Melech ben Ben Tzion, whose nahala falls on Purim*

◇ **Talmud Class: Tractate Sanhedrin** | Rabbi Soloveichik | 7pm

Wednesday

◇ **Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Shearith Israel: A Monthly Q & A** | Z. Edinger | 7:00 pm | On select Wednesdays | Next class will be on THURSDAY, March 23 at 7pm | Email questions to zedinger@shearithisrael.org.

To sponsor a single class or an entire semester,

go to 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

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

We Mourn the Loss of our Member Honorary Trustee, Eva Haberman. Condolences to her husband Simon and children Susanna Stiefel and trustee, Seth Haberman.

Condolences to Roni Jesselson on the passing of his grandmother, Lee Rausnitz.