

**A Shabbat Hagadol Derasha by Rabbi Soloveichik**  
**The Most Misunderstood Morsel:**  
**A New Approach to Haroset**  
**Saturday, April 16, 2016**  
**Following Morning Services**



**Teen Girls Shir Hashirim Reading**  
**Saturday, April 30 | Eighth Day of Pesah**

After Musaf on the Eighth day of Pesah, the teen girls of the synagogue will read The Song of Songs in the Main Sanctuary for the congregation following morning services in New York and in Israel. Please contact Yehudit at [yehuditrobinson@gmail.com](mailto:yehuditrobinson@gmail.com), if you are available to participate.

**Looking for a Communal Seder?**

As we will not be hosting our communal haggadot (seders) this year, if you are looking to find a seder, please go to [ujafederation.org/Passover/find-a-seder](http://ujafederation.org/Passover/find-a-seder)

**COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Welcome to  
Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis and  
his wife, Valerie and son, Noam  
and Professor Alexander Lubotzky of Hebrew University and  
former member of Knesset  
who are joining us this Shabbat

*Welcome New Members* to the Shearith Israel Family:  
Anna and Dov Zigler

**Yoetzet Halakha Update:** Ilana Gadish has resumed her Yoetzet duties after maternity leave. To contact her, call (646) 598-1080 or email [nycyoetzet@gmail.com](mailto:nycyoetzet@gmail.com)

**Creation and Kashrut**  
**Rabbi Dr. Richard Hidary**

“The entire purpose [of creation] consists in bringing into existence the way you see it everything whose existence is possible.”  
- Maimonides, Guide of the Perplexed, III.25

Aristeas, an official in the Ptolemaic government in Egypt in the 3rd cent. BCE, was sent to the high priest Eleazar in Jerusalem on a mission to hire seventy-two sages to translate the Torah into Greek. Upon meeting the high priest, Aristeas first asked him a question that we still wonder about today: “Since there is but one creation, why are some animals regarded as unclean for eating, and others unclean even to the touch?” (Letter of Aristeas, 129) If indeed, as the Psalmist says, “Mine is every animal of the forest” (50:11) then why should Leviticus 11 list some of His creations as impure and abominable? Eleazar explains to Aristeas that the abominable status of non-kosher animals is based on their behavior. Kosher animals and birds are herbivorous, living up to the ideal diet laid out for them in Genesis 1:29-30, where all humans and animals were commanded to eat only fruits and vegetables. Animals that have split hooves lack claws necessary to catch prey, and chewing cud is only necessary for eating grass that is more difficult to digest than meat. However, this criterion does not apply to fish who are not herbivorous, even those with fins and scales.

The anthropologist Mary Douglas offers a new approach in her book, Leviticus as Literature. She notes that the label שְׂרָצִים “abominable” applies not to impure land animals but rather only to שְׂרָצִים “swarming things.” While many commentators (including Eleazar the high priest) consider these creepy crawlies to be abominable because humans find them disgusting and menacing, Douglas points to their fruitful abundance to be precisely what makes them wonderful. After all, God commands the waters to “bring forth swarms of living creatures” (Genesis 1:20) and God further gives them a blessing to increase and fill the waters in the seas.

Therefore, the reason why we may not eat non-kosher fish and seafood is not because they are disgusting but rather precisely in order to protect them. The Torah says only that they should be considered “abominable to you,” not that they are in any way scorned by their Creator. Surveying dietary laws of other cultures, Douglas points out that animals are often forbidden as food precisely because they are held in high esteem. Since these swarming creatures are fulfilling their very purpose in creation, we are forbidden to interfere in their continual productivity. As an accommodation to the human need to consume some sea food, the Torah does permit some fish to the Israelites: those with protective scales and fins for effective means of locomotion. We can consume some of these protected fish without worrying about blunting their fertility, but we must keep away from fish that lack such protection.

The Torah’s dietary restrictions pave a middle road towards a healthy and respectful coexistence between us and the animal kingdom. We are not Jains who go out of their way not to harm even the smallest insect, nor are we free to exploit and plunder nature as we desire. Humans are created “a little less than angels” (Ps 8:6) and therefore masters over all other species. Yes, we are permitted to use and consume other living beings, but we are also responsible to care for the natural world and recognize their rightful place as part of the diversity of God’s manifold Creation.



**CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL**  
**The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue**

**Shabbat Shemini-Parah**  
*April 1-2, 2016*

Hertz Pentateuch: Torah Reading: p. 443, 652 ; Haftarah: 999  
Kaplan Living Torah: Torah Reading: p. 536, 756 ; Haftarah: p. 1278

**CANDLE LIGHTING | 7:03 pm**

**MINHAH | 6:45 pm**

**ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary**

**SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Rabbi Soloveichik will deliver a sermon at the conclusion of services on the topic “The Prince’s Kippah: A Reflection on Majesty and Humility”**

**TOT SHABBAT | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Elias Room**

**YOUTH GROUPS | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Fidanque Office**

**JR. CONGREGATION WITH TORAH READING | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am**

**Little Synagogue**

**KIDDUSH | Portico**

**LUNCHEON WITH CHIEF RABBI MIRVIS | For Registered Guests**  
**Levy Auditorium**

**TOPICS IN JEWISH PHILOSOPHY | Rabbi Hidary | 5:55 pm | For high school students | Held at the Hidary home, 1 W 85th St Apt. 6A**

**SEUDAH SHELISHIT AND PRE-PESAH AFTERNOON SHIUR | Rabbi Soloveichik on the topic “The History of Matzah: 4000 Years in Less Than an Hour” | 5:55 pm | *Spring semester sponsored by Lewis Lipsey***

**MINHAH/ARBIT | 6:55 pm**

**KETER SHEM TOB | Rabbi Hidary | Main Sanctuary**

**HABDALAH | 7:58 pm**

**Weekday Service Times**

Morning: Sunday: 8:00 AM; Mon-Fri.: 7:15 AM  
Evenings: Sunday – Thursday: 6:30 PM (Minhah & Arbit)

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

**The Ultimate 21st Century Rabbi: A Leader Who is  
There for All Four Sons  
Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis  
Sunday, April 3 | 10:00 am**

Attend the Rabbi Allen Mirvis Annual Lecture co-sponsored by Shearith Israel and the Straus Center for Torah and Western Thought. Free and open to the public. RSVP requested at [strauscenter@yu.edu](mailto:strauscenter@yu.edu).

**Kurt Weill: The Idealist Composer Who Created  
Illuminating Music Out of a Dark Time  
*A Shearith Israel League lecture*  
by composer Joelle Wallach  
Wednesday Evening, April 6, 2016 at 8 PM**  
Admission free. Light refreshments served.

**Everything You Never Knew About  
Beth Olam Cemetery  
Part 1 of a 3 Part Experiential Cemetery Series  
Wednesday, April 13 | 7:00 pm**  
Join us and our Beth Olam Partners, Bnai Jeshurun and Shaaray Tefila, for an informative and moving event. Marena Wisniewski will describe what she learned and uncovered during her time as our Beth Olam Cemetery intern. You will learn about the history of this unique partnership between three prominent synagogues who share an interesting history, Shearith Israel, Bnai Jeshurun and Shaaray Tefila. She will also show us some of the architectural and historical gems and will describe efforts on our behalf to lay the groundwork for some much needed restoration work. The event will be punctuated with a remembrance of those members of our three communities who died this past year.

**Baseball Game with Rabbi Hidary  
Sunday, April 17 | 1:05 pm | Yankee Stadium**  
*This event is generously subsidized by John Lewin*  
Take me out to the ball game! Take me out to the crowd! Join Rabbi Hidary at the Yankees vs. Seattle Mariners game at Yankee Stadium. This event's sure to be a home run! All ages are welcome. Great seats in section 217. \$65 members/\$80 non-members. Register at [shearithisrael.org/baseball](http://shearithisrael.org/baseball)

## PREPARE FOR PESAH 5776

**Donate for Maot Hittim**  
In the opening paragraph of the Haggadah, we read: "All who are hungry, let them come and eat." As part of experiencing freedom ourselves, we must also ensure that our fellow Jews have the means to celebrate freedom too. *Maot Hittim* is a special Passover fund, originally intended to provide the poor with matzah. Donate online at [shearithisrael.org/maothittim](http://shearithisrael.org/maothittim) or send a check made out to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund (indicate "maot hittim" in the memo field) to help those in need in a discreet, dignified way.

**Sale of Hametz**  
If you would like to appoint Rabbi Richard Hidary as agent to sell your Hametz before Pesah, please fill out the online form at [shearithisrael.org/hametz](http://shearithisrael.org/hametz) before Thursday, April 21 at 5:00 pm. Please contact Rabbi Hidary at [rhidary@shearithisrael.org](mailto:rhidary@shearithisrael.org) if you have specific questions

**Pre-Pesah Shabbat Dinner  
Friday Night | April 15, 2016**  
Following evening services ease your Pesah preparations and join us for a lovely buffet dinner. Preferred pricing for members. Register at [shearithisrael.org/pre-pesah-shabbat-dinner](http://shearithisrael.org/pre-pesah-shabbat-dinner).

## WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION

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

### Sunday

- ◇ **The Book of Kings** | Rabbi Hidary | 8:40 am | NO CLASS THIS WEEK
- ◇ **Saadia Gaon's Book of Beliefs and Opinions** | S'jimon den Hollander | 9:30 am | AT 8:40 AM THIS WEEK

### Monday

- ◇ **Second Temple Jewish History** | Rabbi Hidary | 7:00 pm
- ◇ **Bet Midrash** | Rabbi Hidary, Phil Getz, Dr. Josh Eisen, Rabbi Ira Rohde, Meira Wokenfeld | 8:00 pm

### 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 pm | *Spring semester sponsored by Gregory Bell.*

**Don't let us go dry.**  
Be a scotch or arak sponsor. To sponsor or contribute go to [shearithisrael.org/scotch-and-arak-sponsorships](http://shearithisrael.org/scotch-and-arak-sponsorships)

Please consider sponsoring a class. Go to:  
[shearithisrael.org/sponsoraaclass](http://shearithisrael.org/sponsoraaclass)

**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, April 13 at 11:00 am