

Revealing Ruth with Shira Hecht-Koller

Thursday May 29 & Wednesday June 5 at 11:00 am

Shearith Israel is proud to partner with Drisha once again for a pre-Shabuot mini-series. We will study the book of Ruth with an eye toward literary nuance and character development. By comparing the narrative with other biblical narratives as well as Talmudic passages, renowned educator, Shira Hecht-Koller, will explore questions of identity and community and their implications for contemporary life.

For registration details and to request a Shearith Israel member discount code, visit shearithisrael.org/drisha-ruth.

WEEK IN REVIEW

Last week, Shearith Israel hosted **Sheikh Mohammad Al-Issa**, Secretary General of the Muslim World League and former Minister of Justice of Saudi Arabia. Together with Executive Director, Barbara Reiss, Esme Berg, Karen Daar, and Gabe Goldstein, as well as our friends from the American Sephardi Federation, Z. Edinger led a fascinating tour of our synagogue explaining our history, traditions, values, and community. The Sheikh has just spoken at the Responsible Leaders World Summit about respect for all religions and had signed a memorandum with the AJC agreeing to join them on a trip to Auschwitz in 2020.

On Sunday, even the weather couldn't thwart our efforts to **clean up our historic Chatham Square Cemetery**. We had a great turnout by enthusiastic, hard-working congregants and friends and expect to repeat this effort next year.

On Monday, Rabbi Soloveichik sat down with famed historian Andrew Roberts for an in-depth **conversation on Winston Churchill**, the man and the myth.

And last night, on the cusp of Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut, a crowd of hundreds came to learn about **Egyptian Jewish Heritage at Shearith Israel** at one of our Year of Years celebrations. Guests were treated with fascinating stories, two curated exhibits, scholarly talks, a video presentation, prayer and Torah, middle eastern delicacies, and a beautiful commemorative booklet.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

We mourn the loss of our former trustee, **Norman Skydell**.

TWO PATHS TO HOLINESS

— ASHER SHANABROOK —

This week we read *Parashat Kedoshim*, a *parasha* known for its centrality in the Torah. This centrality is both literal, as we have reached the halfway point in the *Humash*, and conceptual. We find the most basic demand of the Torah in the opening words of the *parasha*: “You shall be holy” (Vayikra 19:2).

Further evidence of our *parasha*'s centrality is found in a famous statement of Rabbi Akiva. In Masekhet Nedarim 30b, Rabbi Akiva tells us that a *pasuk* found in this *parasha*, “You shall love your fellow as yourself,” (19:18) is the central rule of the Torah. What is the connection between the two themes, to be holy and love one's fellow?

Even before the command of “You shall be holy,” our *parasha* starts off with Hashem telling Moshe to speak to “the all the community of Israel.” Bartenura writes that the reason that this *parasha* was addressed specifically to “all the community” is because it imperative to have the entire body of the Jewish people present for the teaching of these laws, because upon them the rest of the Torah hangs. The remainder of our *parasha* has a diversity of *halakhot*, ranging from agricultural laws, prohibitions regarding idolatry, to regulations of sexual immorality, reminiscent of last week's *parasha*. Apparently, being holy entails the keeping of all of these complex and ritualistic practices.

Seamlessly sprinkled into the broad array of *halakhot* in the *parasha* are several *pesukim* that deal with how one man treats another. In between a law regarding eating invalidated sacrifices and swearing falsely in G-d's name, we learn to leave the edge of your field and the fallen grapes of your vineyard for the poor and the stranger, and to not treat others falsely (19:8-12). Immediately after being commanded not to follow spirits and to guard the Shabbat, we are instructed to respect the elderly, and to treat the stranger that resides with us as we would treat ourselves (19: 31-34).

One message is clear. There is an intimate connection between fulfilling ritualistic dictates and ethical imperatives. Both are needed to be holy.

Sforno explains on the last *pasuk* of the fourth *aliyah*, “You shall guard all of my laws and all of my rules, and you shall do them, I am the L-rd” (19:37) that by practicing both the inconceivable ritual laws and social legislation, we will understand their value and gain insight.

Practicing the *halakhot* in our *parasha*, and the level of understanding and insight that comes with it, is what it means to be holy. This is why the central *pasuk* of “You shall love your fellow as yourself” was put in our *parasha*. Rabbi Akiva wanted to point out that in *Parashat Kedoshim* we have the model by which we reach the ideal state of holiness. We should all merit to keep the laws *bein Adam l'Makom* and *bein Adam l'Havero*, and have the utmost love for G-d and each other.

Asher Shanabrook is a rabbinical student at Yeshiva University's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, and a participant in our ongoing Open Bet Midrash program.



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CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

Year of Years Celebration

CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Kedoshim

May 10-11, 2019

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 497; Haftarah p. 511
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 598; Haftarah p. 1168

CANDLE LIGHTING | 7:43 pm

EVENING SERVICES | 6:45 pm

MORNING SERVICES | Main Sanctuary | 8:15 am

TOT SHABBAT | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Fidanque Youth Room

YOUTH GROUPS | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Elias Room

JUNIOR CONGREGATION | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue

SERMON | Rabbi Soloveichik

KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium | *Sponsored by Sharon Schechter & Rafe Sasson in honor of Elie reading his first haftarah.*

SHABBAT AFTERNOON SHIUR | Rabbi Soloveichik | 6:35 PM |

“The Death and Life of Rabbi Judah HaNasi” | Levy Auditorium

EVENING SERVICES | 7:35 pm

HABDALA | 8:42 pm

Weekday Service Times

Mornings:

Sunday: 8:00 am | Monday-Friday: 7:15 am

Evenings:

Sunday-Thursday (Minha & Arbit): 6:30 pm

Mother's Day is on Sunday — Happy Mother's Day!

Menahem Begin: Lessons from a Rich Legacy of Leadership *with Rabbi Meir Solovitchik & Senator Joseph Lieberman* Sunday, May 19 | 7:00 pm

Forty years after the signing of the Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt, there is no better time to recognize Menachem Begin's legacy of security, democracy, liberty and inclusivity. Begin, the man, was a brilliant, tough, humble and proud Jew who never compromised when the dignity and survival of Israel and the Jewish people were at stake. Begin, the leader, transformed Israel.

Join Rabbi Dr. Meir Soloveichik and Senator Joseph Lieberman as they analyze Menachem Begin's philosophy, actions, and lessons they hold for us today.

For registration and sponsorships, visit
shearithisrael.org/begin.

Day Trip to Touro with Rabbi Soloveichik July 4 | Departing at 7:00 am *Already 50% pre-sold. Remaining spaces available to sponsors only, beginning this Monday, May 13.*

Join Rabbi Soloveichik for an all-day field trip to Newport, Rhode Island, home of our historic sister synagogue, the Touro Synagogue.

Highlights of this full-day excursion will include:

- preparatory talks on the bus by Rabbi Soloveichik
- walking tour of Jewish Newport, led by Rabbi Soloveichik
- costumed reading of the Declaration of Independence from the balcony of the Old Colony House as they did in 1776
- memorial service (*hashcabah*) at the cemetery, led by Rabbi Soloveichik
- light lunch and dinner, hosted by Congregation Jeshuat Israel
- major historical lecture delivered by Rabbi Soloveichik, at the Touro Synagogue

If you wish to join as a "1776 sponsor." register on Monday, May 13 at shearithisrael.org/touro-trip.

AN IMPORTANT CARING CONNECTION PROGRAM

SMASH THE STIGMA: A Jewish Communal Conversation on Suicide and Depression

Tuesday, May 14 | 7:00 pm

In addition to Rabbi Simkha Weintraub, LCSW, who will address clinical signs and resources, we have two exceptional panelists, **Shanee Markovitz** and **Ruth Roth**, who will candidly share their first-hand encounters with suicide, and how they turned their personal tragedies into activism. Moderated by **Nathan Romano**, the president of NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness.

To register and/or to support our *Caring Connection*, visit shearithisrael.org/awareness.

Host Committee: Dr. Victoria Bengualid, Zoya Raynes, Suzanne Stern
Community Partners: Ansche Chesed, BAbayit, B'nai Jeshurun, Darkhei Noam, Drisha, the Jewish Board, Jewish Center, Manhattan Day School, Ohav Zedek, Ramath Orah, Rodeph Shalom, West Side Institutional Synagogue

Chatham Square Cemetery Memorial Event *Honoring the Patriotic Service rendered by our Members* Sunday, May 19 | 10:30 am Chatham Square Cemetery | 55 St James Place

Please join us for our annual Memorial Service to honor members of our congregation and to decorate the graves of 19 veterans of the American Revolution. This year's ceremony includes special presentations by **Colonel Jonathan de Sola Mendes**, USMC, Retired, and by **Lieutenant Arthur Goldberg**, USN, Retired. This truly special ceremony features the participation of a color guard and field music and is both enjoyable and moving.

Register at shearithisrael.org/chatham-memorial-2019.
Transportation is available but space is limited.



This program is one of our many Year of Years, 365th Anniversary events, showcasing the extraordinary historical roots and uniquely American history of our congregation and community.

Young Couples and Families Year-End "Celebrate Israel" Picnic

Shabbat, June 1 | Following Morning Services

Featured Speaker: Hai Piasetzky

Chaired by Zoya Raynes and Rivka Wiznia

School is ending and the Celebrate Israel Parade is coming! Join our young families the Shabbat before the parade to celebrate Israel with this Israeli-themed luncheon. Our third PTTS Shabbaton will be happening this same Shabbat, so don't pass up this chance to mingle!

For registration and sponsorships, visit
shearithisrael.org/israel-picnic.

PTTS Shabbaton Shabbat, June 1

Don't miss the final PTTS Shabbaton of the school year! While students are welcome and encouraged to attend services every week, you definitely don't want to lose this chance to take center stage in Junior Congregation and showcase how far you've come since the beginning of the year. Followed by the Young Families Year-End Picnic (see above).

We look forward to celebrating all our PTTS students' accomplishments together!

DON'T LET YOUR GRADUATE GO UNNOTICED! 2019 Graduate Scroll of Honor & Graduation Kiddush

Shabbat, June 15 | Following Morning Services

Let's spread the good news and celebrate the success and accomplishments of all our graduates from pre-school to PhDs!

Visit shearithisrael.org/graduation19 by June 13 to ensure that we can properly list and congratulate your graduate(s) in our **2019 Scroll of Honor**. Even if you cannot attend, please send us listing information for your graduates, and consider co-sponsoring our graduation kiddush for \$180 or just \$36.

Public Tours
Our next public tour is
Wednesday, June 12,
at 11:00 AM

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