

Annual Chatham Square Memorial Service

Chatham Square Cemetery | 55 St. James Place
Memorial Day, Monday, May 28 | 10:30 am

This Memorial Day, join us at our Chatham Square Cemetery, the first Jewish cemetery in the United States, to honor members of our congregation who participated in the Revolutionary War. This unique ceremony includes the participation of a color guard, special presentations and memorial prayers, and the decoration of the graves of Revolutionary War veterans with American flags. Veterans are encouraged to attend in uniform!

This year's ceremony is dedicated to the memory of our past Parnas, Dr. Dennis Freilich, Lt. Commander US Navy, whose participation always enhanced the dignity of this very special event.

To register (and sign up for transportation), visit shearithisrael.org/memorial-day-chatham-square.

We are proud of the patriotic contributions of our members who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States and keep an honor roll going back to the American Revolution. We are also proud of our congregants who have participated in the defense of the State of Israel. **Please let us know if you are a veteran of the American Armed Forces or the IDF by emailing zedinger@shearithisrael.org.**

Don't Be Shy, Come Say Hi—At Kiddush!

If you are new to Shearith Israel, welcome to our congregation! Kiddush is when we socialize, and we are eager to meet you and introduce you to our community. Please come up and introduce yourself to the Rabbi, Parnas (President), or any one of us.

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

Meet with Our Parnas
Louis Solomon would be delighted to meet with you. Please schedule a visit by email: parnas@shearithisrael.org.

DEBAR TORAH: I BROKE THE STAVES OF YOUR OXBOW AND LED YOU AHEAD UPRIGHT
— HAZZAN RABBI IRA ROHDE —

In my attempt to understand realia behind the Torah's allusions to Biblical life, I've often found myself confused by Torah's term "עול", which is often misleadingly translated into English as "yoke." In Parashat Behukkothai, trying to understand the added word meaning the "staves of your yoke"—"מִטּוֹת עוֹלֵכֶם"—gave me some additional clarification. You see, the Hebrew term "עול" is most commonly used to mean a "burden," something anything heavy, often carried upon one's back or around one's neck. In the context of animals used for ploughing, it really refers to the "oxbow" part or other harnessing parts which fits over each animal's shoulders and neck. It's the "burden" that each animal carries. In the Bible, much of the time, but not all the time, that "oxbow" harnessing part around one ox would be attached to one end of a short stave, rod, beam or bar, usually of wood, above its neck, which would connect to another oxbow or other harness around a second ox. Together, the two oxen would form a "צמד", a "joined pair" of oxen or other animals. What is confusing about the English translations is that our English word "yoke" comes from a root meaning "joining together" and really refers primarily to that "stave" connecting two animals together. The Hebrew term, however, really indicates the "oxbow-harness" part, which should be translated into English as "burden," as used, for example, in our expression "beasts of burden." In the Bible, we often seem to find single individuals referred to as "burdened" with an oxbow-harness around their necks, people as well as animals. There are references to Jeremiah symbolically wearing an "oxbow" burden. There are threatening references in the Torah to an "oxbow-burden of iron around your neck." While oxbows and their connecting staves were commonly made of wood, often they might be partially or fully made of metal. But it seems that although yoking two animals together was common, poorer farmers must have often used single animals for ploughing and other labors.

Here in our verse the metaphor makes explicit reference to both parts of a classic two-oxen "yoke," the connecting "staves" as well as the oxbow-harness or "burden." But of course even the single-animal type of oxbow does "join," "yoke," or connect that animal to something else: to the plough, and that might also have been by means of a connecting stave. Now, putting this "oxbow-harness" on people was an explicit sign of enslavement: It literally meant treating people like animals, making them bear burdens like animals, even going so far as harnessing them together in work "gangs" (as in "prison gangs" chained together or in the "galleys" of boats) like animals. Our English term "subjugation" literally means to "place under a yoke," coming from "jugo," a cognate of "yoke." I found this description of the "oxbow" part in the Encyclopedia Judaica:

"[It]... was usually made from a circular wooden halter which was placed on the animal's neck, and harnessed to a plow, cart, or other vehicle. Pegs, two on each side, with the neck of the animal between them, were tacked to the halter from underneath. A harness which encircled the neck of the animal from underneath was attached to these pegs. The remaining parts of the harness which were connected to the cart, plow, or other vehicle were connected to the halter of the yoke itself. The ordinary yoke was designed for two animals, but yokes for only one animal were also common."

In contrast with bending us over like beasts under the back-breaking burdens of enslavement in Egypt, God reminds us that He has and will continue to "make us walk upright" in freedom. The Hebrew term "וְאֵלֶיךָ" "I made you walk" and "קִוּי־מִצִּיּוֹת" "upright/forward" also has another meaning in reference to animals: It means to "lead" (לְהוֹלִיךְ) an animal or to "guide" an animal. Rather than "harnessing" us with the burdening oxbow and oppressive yoke, God led us and will continue to lead us ahead, perhaps by a rope, but with our heads erect.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Behar-Behukkothai

May 11-12, 2018

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 531; Haftarah: p. 551
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 630; Haftarah: p. 1178

CANDLE LIGHTING | 7:43 pm
MINHAH & ARBIT | 6:30 pm | Main Sanctuary
FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS *SEASON FINALE* | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik |
"The Shabbat Before the Six-Day War" | 2017-2018 season sponsored by
the Julis family. Friday Night Lights returns this Fall.

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary
SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Main Sanctuary
This week's parasha concludes the book of Leviticus. The congregation stands at the final verse and following the conclusion of the last verse we say:

תְּזַק וְנִתְחַזֵּק - חֻקֵּינוּ וְיִצְמַח לָבָבְכֶם כָּל הַמִּצְוֹת לָהּ

TOT SHABBAT WITH LIZ AND SHANADE | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am
| Fidanque Youth Room
YOUTH GROUPS WITH RACHEL | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Elias Room
JUNIOR CONGREGATION | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 | Little Synagogue
TALK | Presented jointly by Rabbi Meir Soloveichik and Pinhas Tanhum Soloveichik | "The Siyum at the Arch of Titus: A Yom Yerushalayim Reflection"
KIDDUSH LUNCHEON | Levy Auditorium | *Sponsored by Congregation Shearith Israel in honor of Pinhas Tanhum Soloveichik becoming a Bar Mitzva.*

SHABBAT AFTERNOON PIRKEI ABOT SHIUR | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik
| 6:40 pm "Pirkei Abot and Yom Yerushalayim" | Levy Auditorium
MINHAH & ARBIT | 7:40 pm
HABDALAH | 8:43 pm

Weekday Service Times

Mornings:

Sunday (with Yom Yerushalayim Hallel): 8:00 am
Monday-Friday: 7:15 am

Evenings:

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

*Yom Yerushalayim begins on Saturday night, May 12.
Rosh Hodesh Sivan begins on Monday night, May 14.*



Shabuot Public Lecture

Saturday Night, May 19 | 11:00 pm

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

The final installment of the Israel At 70 Series

After the talk, guests are encouraged to enjoy some cheesecake!

Visit shearithisrael.org/shabuot-public-lecture to sponsor this culminating lecture:

Sponsor: \$180 • Contributor: \$36

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: THURSDAY, MAY 31

Don't forget to sign me up!



Shearith Israel Toddler

Summer Camp

June 19-August 16

Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:30-11:30am

1 AND 2 DAY OPTIONS AVAILABLE,

PLUS OUR NEW 50-MINUTE MINI-SESSION OPTION

For ages 16-34 months | Caregiver attendance required

Join our wonderfully fun and educational Toddler Summer Camp, held in the new Fidanque Youth Room, with pool time on our Portico. Led by the marvelous Liz Rios.

To learn more and apply, visit
shearithisrael.org/toddler-summer-camp.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hazak U'barukh to **Joshua Mendes**, who recently lectured about Spanish & Portuguese history in Newton, MA, and at the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston.

Condolences to **Joshua Sauberman**, on the passing of his grandmother, Doris Sauberman.

Condolences to **Aviva Sussman**, on the passing of her sister, Dr. Judith S. B. Guedalia, wife of our former Assistant Minister, Rabbi Harris Guedalia. We wish condolences to the entire family.

Midweek Lecture from Visiting Scholar: Laura Arnold Leibman

THIS Monday, May 14 | 7:00 pm

Dr. Laura Arnold Leibman will be delivering a special historical lecture on the subject of *Sephardic Country Houses*. Professor Leibman will introduce people to the entrancing world of Jewish country houses with elegant examples of the beautiful Jewish country houses built along the Vecht River in Holland.

Book Talk: Aryeh Green, author of the newly released *My Israel Trail: Finding Peace in the Promised Land*

Wednesday, May 23 | 7:00 PM

After his devastating divorce, which rocked his world and confounded his deeply-held optimism, Aryeh Green's goal was to get his life back on track. His hike along The Israel National Trail (*Shvil Yisrael*) enabled the discovery of a number of universal truths for living based on Jewish tradition. Accompanied by photos and videos.

2018 Graduate Scroll of Honor & Graduation Kiddush

Shabbat, June 23 | 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/graduation to ensure that we can properly list and congratulate your graduate(s) in our **2018 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.

EARLY BIRD DEADLINE: THIS THURSDAY, MAY 17

Young Couples and Families Picnic on the Portico

Shabbat, June 9 | Following Morning Services

Who wants to worry about the weather getting in the way of their picnic lunch? Not us! This year's end-of-year picnic will be held at the synagogue, where we can enjoy our protected, park-facing Portico as well as the Elias Room. Fun for the kids and a rabbi's lecture for the adults will keep everyone happy while we all enjoy a picnic-inspired menu.

Members: ~~\$35~~ \$30 adult, ~~\$15~~ \$12 child under 12

Non-Members: ~~\$40~~ \$35 adult, ~~\$18~~ \$15 child under 12

PRICES GO UP NEXT FRIDAY

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

Sponsorship Opportunities:

Sponsor (includes meals for 2 adults and their children) - \$250
Supporter (includes meals for 2 adults and their children) - \$180

SHEARITH ISRAEL IS A PROUD CO-SPONSOR OF

Happier Together:

A CommUnity Conversation with Tal Ben-Shahar
at The Temple Emanu-El Streicker Center

10 East 66th St

Tuesday, June 12 | 7:00 PM

Tal Ben-Shahar will share his unique insights into the importance of happiness and positivity within our communities as well as his experiences living in both America and Israel.

Tal Ben-Shahar teaches positive psychology at Harvard, and has also authored several books, including New York Times Bestseller *Happier*.

To register, visit shearithisrael.org/happier.