

This week is the consecration Shabbat for the 19th Street Synagogue (1860). We commemorate the consecrations of our synagogues with a semi-festive service. The Ark is open during much of the service and the Torah scrolls are dressed in festive colors. The beautiful poem, *Todot El* (p. 342), is sung before *Nishmat*, and special blessings and memorial prayers are recited before the reading of the Torah.

Community Wide Selihot featuring Hazzan Rabbi Ira Rohde and other Hazzanim of the Sephardic community
THIS MOTZAEI SHABBAT, September 16 | 12:30 am
Held at the Safra Synagogue, 11 East 63rd Street

ROSH HASHANAH SERVICES SCHEDULE

EREB ROSH HASHANAH, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

EARLY MORNING SELIHOT | 6:30 am
REGULAR SHAHRIT SERVICE | 7:15 am

Erub Tabshilin reminder: When the New Year begins on Wednesday evening, an Erub, bread and food prepared for the following Sabbath, is set aside on Wednesday before sunset.

CANDLE LIGHTING | 6:38 pm
MINHAH | 6:30 pm

ROSH HASHANAH DAY 1 – THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

MORNING SERVICES IN MAIN SANCTUARY | 7:45 am
MORNING SERVICES IN PARALLEL SERIVCE | Levy Auditorium | 9:00 am
EVENING SERVICES | 6:30 pm

ROSH HASHANAH DAY 2 – FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

MORNING SERVICES | 7:45 am
EVENING SERVICES | 6:30 pm

Shearith Israel Toddler Program

Spaces are still available in our program. To learn more and apply go to shearithisrael.org/toddlerprogram.

Register for PTTS
School Begins Sunday, October 22, 2016
Our Hebrew School, the Polonies Talmud Torah School, provides children and teens, ages 3-16, with a substantive Jewish education in a positive and engaging environment. To register, go to shearithisrael.org/hebrewschool.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome new members **Edward and Ruth Lukashok** to the Shearith Israel family.

DEBAR TORAH: SONG OF THE TIGER MOM(*WITH APOLOGIES TO AMY CHUA'S BATTLE HYMN OF THE TIGER MOTHER)*

BY RABBI IRA ROHDE

וְרַבְּצָה בּוֹ כָּל-הָאֱלֹה הַכְּתוּבָה בְּסֵפֶר הַזֶּה

“All the scourge written in this book shall pounce rampant upon him...” (Deut 29:19)

In describing the calamity which will overtake “one whose heart turns away from the Lord our God to go worship the gods of those nations...who, upon hearing the words of this curse, may in his heart think himself protected, saying ‘for me it will be safe, for in the brazenness of my heart I shall go,’” the Torah uses the picturesque verb **רַבְּצָה**. While the term can sometimes mean crouching to lie down, in this context it connotes a lion crouching, ready to pounce, or in the midst of the pounce itself, limbs rampant, spread apart, as it takes its prey down. I was unfamiliar with the term “rampant” (although I had known the related term “rampage”) until Professor H. I. Sober, our karate instructor at YU, used it to describe the symbolism of one of our positions, which represented the rampant lion (or tiger, as our karate organization was named “Tora Dojo,” the “Tiger Way Place” in Japanese, punning on “Torah”). The basic definition is of an animal standing on its hind legs, freeing the front limbs for attack, but most ritualistic depictions have a lion standing on only one leg, or in the air, with one or more other legs freed for attack, so that each limb is extended in a different direction for a different purpose, each one poised to tear into its victim, wreaking retribution.

That fleshes out yet one more of the images in these parashiyot of the calamities which will afflict the Children of Israel as a result of their not hearkening to God to serve Him and do His Will loyally and faithfully. One could ask why the scourges are so severe, but the answer given here, it seems, is the same line our parents give their children when they complain about being disciplined: “It’s not punishment – it’s a consequence.” A good parent doesn’t “punish,” but rather spells out terms and consequences, giving doses of encouragement as well as much admonishment, and then leaves it up to the child. If Israel will do that which is pleasing in the sight of God, then God will favor them and do what pleases Israel. But if Israel’s actions will not please God, the consequence will be that God will not reciprocate with favor. Do God’s bidding, and we will be blessed; don’t do God’s bidding – and we will face the consequences.

However, if we are simply being offered a choice between good consequences versus bad consequences, why are the blessings which so much shorter than the negative consequences, which go on and on? One answer is that learning to follow a discipline is always going to be an extremely difficult process, constantly threatening to fail. True, our Parasha also says: “This Commandment which I enjoin upon you...is not far from you...but rather the thing is very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to do it (Deut. 30:11-13).” So it might seem that doing God’s will would be fairly natural and easy. If so, one would think, then, that positive encouragement should be at least a bit more equal to the admonishment. But the lopsided preponderance of censure over positive encouragement and persuasion shows the Torah’s awareness of the reality: Discipline requires a tremendous struggle for man to learn. Realistically, it requires constant admonishment and eternal vigilance. We need constant reminders to be loyal to God, which is what many of the Torah’s commandments are about. And even despite all this admonition, all these reminders, the Torah is saying, we will need one more teacher, namely: failure itself; indeed, calamitous failure. Now, consequences also have consequences, compounding each other and leading to other consequences. This compounding of consequences, too, is a good reason to compound the warning. And calamitous consequences compounding each other can lead to catastrophe beyond all proportion, beyond bound, each disaster and calamity multiplying and magnifying the effects of the previous ones exponentially. Ultimately, though, many lessons can and will be learned from calamity.

I imagine God and Moses here addressing the fighters going into the land, telling them: (*continued inside*)



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Nitsabim-Vayeilekh

September 15-16, 2017

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 878; Haftarah p. 883
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 1010; Haftarah p. 1242

CANDLE LIGHTING | 6:46 pm
MINHAH | 6:45 pm | Main Sanctuary

MORNING SERVICES | Main Sanctuary

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am

SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am

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

JUNIOR CONGREGATION | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue

SERMON | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | "Jonah, Melville, and the Perfect Crime"

EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILL | Following Services | Please review the emergency evacuation maps that were handed out and are also stored in the drawers beneath the pews.

Congregants with limited mobility may remain in their seats. Our Youth Group leaders will escort the children to the meetup points. Parents will pick them up outside before going back in for kiddush.

KIDDUSH | Elias Room | *Thank you to our kiddush contributors, Jennifer Ash & Seth Haberman, in honor of Akiva's bar mitzvah anniversary. Thank you also to last week's kiddush contributors, Francine Alfandary & Laurent Nahon, in memory of Laurent's father on the occasion of his sheloshim.*

SEUDA SHELISHIT & SHABBAT AFTERNOON SHIUR | Rabbi Soloveichik on the topic of “An Artistic Image of Rosh Hashanah in Amsterdam: A Case Study of A Minhag's Evolution” | 5:40 pm | Levy Auditorium

MINHAH/ARBIT | 6:40 pm
HABDALAH | 7:38 pm

Weekday Service Times

Mornings: Sunday: 8:00 am

Monday - Tuesday: 7:15 am

Evenings (Minha & Arbit): Sunday - Tuesday: 6:30 pm

Note: Selihot will follow evening services.

SEE INSIDE FOR ROSH HASHANAH SERVICE TIMES.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

High Holiday Seating—For Members and Guests

The deadline to reserve seats in the Main Sanctuary has passed. Members should have received their tickets by email (or mail). Seats may still be purchased for the Parallel Service for \$180 at shearithisrael.org/seating_reservations_5777. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact sgross@shearithisrael.org.

Shabbat Teshubah Derasha

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Shabbat, September 23 | Following Morning Services

*The Soul and the Scroll:
The Sefer Torah of Kal Nidre*

To co-sponsor the kiddush afterward, visit
shearithisrael.org/shabbat-teshubah-derasha2017.

Volunteer for DOROT's Rosh Hashanah Package Delivery THIS SUNDAY, September 17 | 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

Share the joy and warmth of the holiday with an elder in a meaningful way by delivering a package of traditional holiday foods and visiting for about an hour.

For registration details, visit dorotusa.org/rosh.

Women's Service

Parashat Lekh-Lekha, Saturday, October 28 | Little Synagogue
We are looking for leaders for our Women's Service for October 28, Parashat Lekh Lekha. If interested in a part, please contact Mrs. Lisa Rohde at lirohde-csi@yahoo.com.

Register now for our Annual Simhat Torah Dinner and Ice Cream Extravaganza

Thursday Night, October 12 | For Registered Guests

Join us for our annual delicious dairy dinner following hakafo! To register or co-sponsor, visit shearithisrael.org/dinner-and-ice-cream. Our annual ice cream party for youth (and youthful) will follow. As usual, volunteer teen scoopers are needed. Contact srosenberg@shearithisrael.org to help out. Dress for the mess!
Sponsored again by the Haberman and Lustig families.

Help Hurricane Harvey Victims: Donate to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

As the holidays draw nearer, we receive more requests for financial assistance from members of our community. Please consider donating to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund to help ensure a beautiful holiday experience for all members of our community. Additionally, in light of the devastation of Hurricane Harvey, a significant portion of this season's donations will go to a **dedicated relief fund to help Houston's Jewish community**. To donate, please visit shearithisrael.org/discretionaryfund.

Our October monthly tour is **cancelled due to the holidays**.

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

DEBAR TORAH: (continued from outside)

1) Drill, drill, drill! They must constantly drill and practice. Without constant drill, disciplining themselves as individuals, as well as disciplining themselves as a collective entity which can coordinate as a unit, they will accomplish nothing. I often quote, "And now, write down this song and teach it to the Children of Israel, put it in their mouths (31:19)," to show the Torah's appreciation of the value of musical rehearsal, performance, and drill, as a model for teaching discipline, both individual and collective, tuning the individual to be in proper harmony with society.

2) Constant badgering and admonishment are good things. Although the Torah ends with the VeZor HaBerakha poem of blessing, it is primarily Haazinu, the song of rebuke and warning, which the Torah bids us to rehearse and remember. The Torah appreciates the value of a good tongue-lashing in alerting us to constant vigilance.

3) Thirdly, we can learn from the School of Hard Knocks—from our sins, mistakes, and calamities—if we are open to the lessons these experiences teach, painful as they may be. Beginning fighters have to be told: "You will get hurt. But you can learn how to roll with the punches and profit from your mistakes." Experience can teach us to change our ways, and pain can be a potent motivator and teacher. Having suffered the consequences of our lack of discipline can help us to have a firmer resolve to follow the discipline and admonition the next time.

The preponderance of rules and discipline, badgering, threatening of consequences, and warning that we will inevitably fail but that we can learn from our mistakes has traditionally made us Jews, like our fellow Asian cultures, proponents of a Tiger-Mom style of teaching. Things have changed, and American Diaspora life has had its impact. Applying this specifically Jewish discipline when there are so many disciplines which we must apply in our Western world remains an open question. And we haven't spoken much of a push to achieve, which finds its place elsewhere in our tradition. Overall, though, I don't think I'm mistaken when I hear the roar of the Tiger-Mom in our tradition's rule-bound, hounding, hard-nosed approach to life.

Sign Up Now for Meals in the Succah

Shearith Israel members and their guests are welcome to enjoy self-catered meals in the beautifully intimate Elias Room succah. Registration and a cover charge of \$12 per seat (including children) are required for each meal. We supply beverages, tablecloths and disposables and you bring the food (strictly kosher, of course).

Space in the succah is highly limited and registration is not a guarantee of seating. We will accommodate members and immediate family on a first-come-first-serve basis. Non-member guests will be accommodated closer to the date depending on availability.

To register, visit shearithisrael.org/meals-succah-5778.

Sisterhood Succah Decorating

Monday, October 2 | 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Tuesday, October 3 | Three shifts:

8:00 am - 12:00 pm; 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm; 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm

It's that time of year again, when we are preparing to decorate our beautiful Elias Room Succah! Please join us, teens and adults, women and men, to help decorate for the Succot Festival.

To participate, contact Mrs. Lisa Rohde (lirohde-csi@yahoo.com) or Aimee Margolis (art1show@verizon.net).

REGISTER NOW!

Another Very Special Shearith Israel Shabbaton With Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Next Stop: Charleston, South Carolina!

Friday, November 3 - Sunday, November 5

Spending Shabbat immersed in American Jewish history under the guidance of Rabbi Soloveichik and in the company of other intellectually curious and spirited friends is an amazing opportunity—just ask anyone who participated in our fantastic Monticello trip!

Next stop? Historic Charleston, SC, where we will spend Shabbat services and meals at Brith Sholom Beth Israel Synagogue.

Highlights will include:

- Three illuminating shabbat lectures by Rabbi Soloveichik
- A visit to Charleston's oldest Synagogue, Beth Elohim
- Rabbi Soloveichik's guided tour through the historic Coming Street Jewish Cemetery
- Rabbi Soloveichik's one-of-a-kind tour of Fort Sumter
- Time to explore the historic Charleston Marketplace
- Delicious, fully catered meals

What was it like for Americans to take up arms against one another, and what happened to Jewish families divided between the North and South? Questions like these, and so many more, will be engaged over an unforgettable weekend spent reliving history.

To register, visit shearithisrael.org/charleston

Donate to the UJA's Coat Drive During the "10 Days of Awesome"

Wednesday, September 20 - Sunday, October 1st

Bin will be located outside Levy Auditorium

Shearith Israel will be serving as a drop-off site for this city-wide coat drive between Rosh Hashanah and Kippur. Don't wait for the bitter cold months to arrive before thinking of those who may need warm coats for the winter! Start gathering your spare coats and spread the warmth.