



The Worthy Royal: He Who Stands Ready to Sacrifice

The most natural human political order for Genesis is monarchy. Political order begins with the most basic unit for which Man is responsible - his family. Therefore, stable leadership most naturally follows this “family” structure pattern by which the human race was generated. Hence even Nimrod is said to have had a “monarchy,” a “reign.” This conception logically leads to the implication that the World is governed by a Monarch, and indeed, we are used to calling God the King of the World. And the legitimate heirs of Abraham, whom God elevated to Royalty, the Children of Israel, would then be the World’s Royal Family. Genesis progresses, by this logic, from the general story of the World’s Creation as Man’s potential Realm to the particular story of the Royal Family whom God appoints to rule over the Realm in His Name.

The juxtaposed context of the different stories appearing together in Parashat Vayera then make sense as episodes in the chronicle of the “succession struggles” of the Abrahamic dynasty, which in turn serves as the prelude to the leadership succession struggles among the “dynasties” of Israel from Moses, through Judges, Kings of Israel, and ultimately down to the Davidic Dynasty, the House of the Messiah, who will come to rule and save the World in God’s Name. I wrote last week that once Abraham is a Royal, it will not do for him to be succeeded by the son of a concubine – an adoptee does not qualify to inherit Abraham’s now-royal mantle. His successor must be the son of the properly designated Queen. Ishmael does split off to launch a dynasty of his own, but he cannot inherit Abraham. These “Royal Family” notions frame the story of the promised miraculous conception of Isaac and sending off Ishmael.

The story of Sodom and Gomorrah and the origin story of Moab and Ammon explain the split-off of two neighboring small but important “breakaway” monarchies which were closest geographically as well as ethnically and linguistically. Moab, in particular, vied for the control and allegiance of much of Israel’s southern Trans-Jordanian areas. The scandals of Sodom’s evil and the incestuous unions out of which these nations were born obviously bespeak the disqualification of these relations of Abraham from consideration as his royal heirs.

Similar royal notions frame the story of the Binding of Isaac. The near-sacrifice of Isaac form part of a “Royal Test.” I note that although we are told in general about child sacrifice among Canaanites and Moabites, the outstanding story of the actual carrying-out of a child-sacrifice in the Bible was the sacrifice of his own son by the King of Moab. In that story (II Kings 3:26) the sacrifice of the king’s firstborn is highlighted, not others’ sons. Although Moab was disqualified for leadership due to the corruption and immorality embedded in their society since its very founding, Moab’s bravado in being ready for the ultimate sacrifice was appreciated as bravura, even as it was derided as murderous, bloodthirsty and death-loving. It symbolized the nation’s spirit of readiness to sacrifice. Apparently, showing a spirit of readiness for ultimate sacrifice was expected most from the top leadership, the king and royalty. Royalty, who have the greatest legacy of power and authority to pass on, must show themselves ever ready to make the ultimate sacrifice of all of it for the good of the kingdom. This is true for the warrior-nobility class in general, but it is even more true for the king and the heir who would succeed him. A proper Royal does not crave death the way Moab was noted to have done; this could lead to needless warmongering. But here God is acting as King and both Abraham and Isaac are in the role of sons being put to the test. Abraham is tested in his readiness to sacrifice and lose his only heir, and Isaac’s trust in his Royal Father is tested as he stands ready to die. Unflinchingly showing themselves ready to make the Ultimate Sacrifice and put their very Dynastic House on the line for the sake of carrying out the Command of their Father and Lord, having faith in their Commander at all costs, King Abraham and his succeeding heir Isaac show themselves fit founders of a proper Royal House.

Shabbat Vayera

November 11-12, 2022 | 18 Marheshvan 5783

SHABBAT SCHEDULE

Hertz: p. 63 | Haftarah: p. 76

Kaplan: p. 78 | Haftarah: p. 1060

Candle Lighting | 4:24 pm

Friday Evening Services | 4:30 pm | Main Sanctuary

Friday Night Lights | following services | *This session sponsored by Jeffrey Smith, upon the 50th anniversary of his ‘almost’ S&P bar mitzvah, which was shifted (with best intentions!) to the nascent Lincoln Square Synagogue only after he learned the parasha in S&P nusach. He’d like to wish a long-overdue and deserved bazak u’barukh to Rev. Cardozo, z”l (and then Avery Neumark) for teaching him | 2022-2023 Season of Friday Night Lights is sponsored by the Julis-Rabinowitz family*

Zemirot | 8:15 am / **Shahrit** | 9:00 am | Main Sanctuary

Youth Program | 10:00 am | Fidanque Youth Room

Kiddush | following services

Shabbat Afternoon Class | 3:30 pm

Evening Services | 4:15 pm | Main Sanctuary

Habdala | 5:09 pm

Weekday Service Times

Mornings:

Sunday: 8:05 am | Monday-Friday: 7:05 am

Evenings:

Sunday-Thursday: **4:30 pm (note earlier time)**

The earlier time means a harder time making a minyan. If you can help out and attend minyan, morning or evening, please contact Z. Edinger.

THIS SUNDAY

Sunday Matinee with Sisterhood is back!

First Film Discussion: THIS Sunday, November 13

Films provided in advance to registrants

Discussion on Zoom with filmmaker & actor Emanuel Cohn on Nov. 13

This season we are presenting our own mini Israeli film festival.

We are offering three Israeli films, one each in November, December, and January, each to be viewed at your leisure. Then we will come together on Zoom to discuss the featured film with our host, **Emanuel Cohn**, a prominent Israeli film lecturer, actor, and screenwriter. The discussion will include peeks behind the scenes and in-depth conversation as we explore the relationship between history, culture, and identity in each film.

Registration and details at shearithisrael.org/events/sisterhood-film-fest.

Each film: \$10.00 | All three: \$18.00

A link will be sent to you to watch the film, a week before the appointed date, together with a second link to join the Sunday discussion on Zoom.

DEADLINE ALERT

Early Bird Pricing Deadline: THIS Monday, November 14

A Community Shabbat Dinner:

Rabbi Soloveichik in conversation with Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Fleur Hassan-Nahoum

Friday, December 2 | Following Evening Services & Friday Night Lights

Rabbi Soloveichik will engage the Deputy Mayor about her own fascinating family history, her political career, the recent elections, the diverse groups that make up the population of Jerusalem, and the future of the sacred city and the State of Israel.

PRICING

Member Adult - **Early Bird \$69** (Regular \$74)

Non-member Adult - **Early Bird \$74** (Regular \$77)

Child - **Early Bird \$32** (Regular \$35)

Sponsorship opportunities available

COMING UP

Chatham Square Cemetery Cleanup Day

Sunday, December 4 | 10:00 am | *Sponsored by the Hebra Hased vaAmet*

Help us remove weeds and other dead plant material, trim bushes and branches, clear the walkway, add gravel and other minor work to clean up this historic cemetery. Come in your work clothes; we supply the rest.

RSVP at shearithisrael.org/events/cemetery-cleanup5783.

THANKSGIVING AT SHEARITH ISRAEL

8th Annual Thanksgiving Pack-A-Thon

Thursday, November 24 | 9:00 am | Paved Paradise

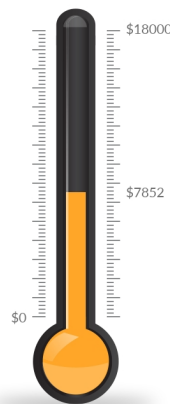
Sign up and donate at shearithisrael.org/packathon2022

The tradition continues!

Following Rabbi Soloveichik's special Thanksgiving address, registered volunteers will pack food to be distributed to hungry New Yorkers. In between parade viewing, our youngest volunteers will have their own craft activity in support of the Pack-A-Thon.

Again this year, thanks to an anonymous donor, all contributions (up to \$10,000) will be matched. Together, we can exceed our goal of \$18,000!

Thank you to our local faith community partners: **The Jewish Center, Church of Latter-day Saints, and West End Collegiate Church.**



Calling All Captains!

We need several organized, can-do volunteers to serve as Captains at this logistically ambitious event! For inquiries or to volunteer, please contact SM Rosenberg at rosenberg@shearithisrael.org.

Thanksgiving Parade Viewing for Youth

Thursday, November 24 | 9:00 am

Our Portico provides one of the best Thanksgiving Parade views in the city. But it's not that big. In order to avoid crowding, parade viewing is for children. In an effort to ensure an orderly, secure, and enjoyable experience for our kids, we ask that you **pre-register** at shearithisrael.org/parade2022.

Registration:

Shearith Israel Member children/caregivers | Free

Non-Member children/caregivers | \$25 in advance (\$36 at the door subject to availability)

*Additionally, **Pack-A-Thon donors** at the \$180 level and above can register up to 2 children/caregivers for free, and donors at \$360 and above can register up to 4.*

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal tob to **Jackie & Andrew Klaber**, and big sister **Eliza**, upon the birth of a baby boy.