

The Growing Pains of a Dynasty

The story of Jacob and his family quickly turns from his storybook meeting of Rachel to a tale of palace intrigue and conflict. Jacob indeed finds a proper princess to wed, but courtly etiquette makes for innumerable complications along the way. Yet Jacob's agreement to marry both wives and the consequent rivalries lead him to firmly establish a large and prolific royal House, a House which is unlikely to fail due to the abundance of male heirs and descendants of the royal Line. It is not clear why Jacob does not come from Isaac with more wealth, but he seems to come to Laban as a relatively poor refugee. Through his tough circumstances and the conflict which he faces, however, and by dint of his efforts, Jacob comes to realize prolific reward.

The Torah does not "whitewash" the intrigue Jacob faced. Laban's daughters are proper princesses, and Laban's claim that he cannot marry off the younger Rachel before the older Leah sounds like typical etiquette of a nobility. The rivalries between the sisters in the bearing of heirs also sounds like royal intrigue, as does the inclusion of maidservants as surrogates. The conflict with Laban prefigures Israel's conflicts with Aram in II Kings which are yet to come. Notably, the final settlement with Laban is near the border of Gilead where such conflicts were fought, and provides an etiology for the Israelite place-name "Gilead," explaining it as "Mound of Witness." Laban's recognition and acceptance of the location of this "Mound" and his agreement never to maliciously pass it in this story shows a recognition of the boundary as a firm border, and implies that later incursions of Aramean/Syrian kings are illegitimate.

Laban's trickery with the goats and sheep is hard to understand: It seems that Laban had promised Jacob the speckled and spotted among the goats as well as the dark-coated among the sheep. But then Laban deliberately took all of the current animals of that description and placed them with Laban's own sons at a distance from Jacob, leaving Jacob exclusively tending solidly light-colored goats and sheep. So Jacob counters this subterfuge by miraculously breeding spotted and striped goats and sheep from the light-colored ones left in his care, which Jacob then removes to start his own herds. Jacob also is careful to breed the strongest and the most prolific sheep. Eventually Jacob is very successful at cultivating his own identifiable and healthy/prolific herd, by thus having to counter Laban's subterfuge.

Dynastic/family intrigue and subterfuge is painful and indeed difficult to counter. Family boundaries must be painfully drawn and enforcement often brings multiple disputes. But if we persevere and continue to proliferate and grow in the face of the obstacles and setbacks, a bright future awaits, a future dynastic line which will not easily die out or be cut off.



Shabbat Vayetse

December 2-3, 2022 | 9 Kislev 5783

SHABBAT SCHEDULE

Hertz: p. 106 | Haftarah: p. 135

Kaplan: p. 130 | Haftarah: p. 1430

Candle Lighting | 4:11 pm

Friday Evening Services | 4:15 pm | Main Sanctuary

Friday Night Lights | following services | Main Sanctuary

Community Dinner | for registered guests | following Friday Night Lights | Levy Auditorium | *with Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Fleur Hassan-Naboum*

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

Youth Program | 10:00 am | Fidanque Youth Room

Following Services: **Premiere of Rabbi Soloveichik's Pre-Hanukkah Series**

The Menorah Through The Ages

Sigmund Freud & Percy Shelley at the Arch of Titus

Kiddush | following the lecture | *Kiddush supporter: Laury Frieber, in memory of her father, Arthur A. Frieber, Alter Avraham b. Chaim*

Shabbat Afternoon Class | 3:30 pm | *Class supporter: Tikva Ostrega, in memory of her father, Ezra Meir Shohet b. Tefaha*

Evening Services | 4:05 pm | Main Sanctuary

Habdala | 4:56 pm

Weekday Service Times

Mornings:

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

Evenings:

Sunday-Thursday: 4:15 pm

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 SHABBAT

SPECIAL SHABBAT MORNING LECTURE:

Sigmund Freud & Percy Shelley at the Arch of Titus
The Premiere of Rabbi Soloveichik's 4-Part Pre-Hanukkah Series
"The Menorah Through The Ages"

THIS Shabbat, December 3 | Following Morning Services

Upcoming Dates: Shabbat Morning, Dec. 10, Shabbat Afternoon, Dec. 17,
& Shabbat Morning, Dec. 24

To sponsor a session or the entire series, visit
shearithisrael.org/hanukkah-series5783.

THIS SUNDAY

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.

COMING UP

Sisterhood Sunday Matinee Film Festival

Next Film Discussion: Sunday, December 11

Films provided in advance to registrants

Discussion on Zoom with filmmaker & actor Emanuel Cohn on Dec. 11

Join us for the next two films in this series in 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 | Full Series: \$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.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Condolences to the Jahiel family on the passing of Deborah Jahiel.

Condolences to the Strumza and Krespi families on the passing of Ida Strumza.

HANUKKAH WITH SHEARITH ISRAEL

CSI's Young Professionals present

Hanukkah Rehearsal Mixer

Thursday, December 15 | 7:00 pm

For young professionals and couples in their 20s and 30s

Join us for an early Hanukkah celebration! Shearith Israel's Young Professionals will be hosting a pre-Hanukkah mixer. Enjoy pizza, waffles, and drinks as we get in the holiday mood for the days of **נִפְלֵא** (wonder).

Register at tinyurl.com/yp-hanukkah.

CSI Youth Hanukkah Glowfest

Sunday, December 25 | 4:00 pm

Enjoy waffles, snacks, prizes, Kahoot Trivia, family candlelighting, Rabbi Rohde & his accordion, and much more! Bring your friends and have them experience Shearith Israel's hospitality and unique waffles tradition for themselves.

In Partnership with UJA

Shine A Light on Antisemitism in Times Square

Monday, December 19 | 5:00 - 6:30 pm

Times Square - enter at Broadway and 47th Street

Register at shearithisrael.org/events/shine-a-light

Antisemitism is intensifying. Our efforts to fight it must be even stronger. Nearly one out of every four Jews in the U.S. experiences antisemitism. It's become normalized across our culture — on social media, in pop culture and politics, and on the streets.

This Hanukkah, UJA is joining **Shine A Light** to dispel the darkness and to say: enough is enough. In the heart of New York City, we'll publicly display our Jewish identity as we light the menorah together and raise awareness about antisemitism.

Hanukkah Concert With *Yonina*

Tuesday, December 20 | 7:00 pm | Park East Synagogue

In partnership with the UJA-Federation

Refer to our emails for the registration link

Yonina is an Israeli-American couple who started sharing music through weekly home videos on social media. Their music has now reached millions of viewers around the world, and now they're coming to our neighborhood to enhance our Hanukkah celebration! Shearith Israel is a proud official Community Partner.