

## DEBAR TORAH by RABBI ROHDE

### Building the Ideal Structure, the Home: Setting Out Upon the Golden Path

What do the laws of structuring the Tabernacle according to God's precise plans have to do with the moral and civil law codes which precede it, other than that both were shown to Moses at Sinai? And why should they have been given consecutively at Sinai in the first place? Borrowing a page out of our Parnas Lou Solomon's weekly remarks, I found the answer in the classic movie song "Follow the Yellow Brick Road" and the story line from the classic movie "The Wizard of Oz." Much of our more-recent popular culture rejects and pillories (as Elton John does) the concept of a "proper path" to follow in life, a golden well-trodden and well-paved path referred to in Hebrew as the "שביל הזהב" which will lead us surely and certainly to our life's aims and goals at the end of the rainbow with the security of and safety of being "at home" in the world. But the original story of the Wizard of Oz does indeed allude to such a golden yellow well-paved path which will lead us surely and safely to our life's goals and back home again in certainty and safety, provided that we do not veer from it nor be perturbed by adversity and fear from persevering upon it.

What does this have to do with the building and architecture of the Tabernacle? Well, as I have commented in the past, the building of an ideal home for God comes to teach us how to structure the ideal home and life for ourselves and our own families. The building of its structure must be architecturally well-planned so that it can withstand the ravages of the elements. It should be constructed of the best materials and arranged with an aesthetic eye for balance, symmetry and beauty. Its service should follow a fixed schedule, so that lights are kindled on-time and meals served regularly. The Tabernacle is all about giving an ideal structure to life, and about the most fundamental ideal structure of all which one should establish: to build a home. Building a home might seem trite and mundane, but it really should be thought of as something sublime and ideal, the Torah says. Architecturally structure our life properly, according to the ideal forms shown to Moses upon Mt. Sinai, and we will reach our goals and make it back "home" again in safety and security. We must not be enticed or drawn off the path nor be perturbed by disturbances in our way: Rather, just follow the golden path laid out for us in the Torah and all will be well. The Children of Israel had much to perturb them in the Desert, but as long as the pursued the well-laid path lit by the Pillar of Fire in Moses' Law they had nothing to fear.

There is much to divert us from following the Yellow Brick Road and giving a formal and sound structure to our lives. We may be led astray by attractions elsewhere. We may not trust the path forward; we may nostalgically look to turn back to Egypt. Fears of lack of water and food, as well as fear of adversaries ahead may grind our progress to a halt. Of late the celebrity Canadian psychologist Dr. Jordan Peterson has been speaking of the dissuading especially of modern-day young men but also of women in today's culture from pursuing long-term relationships, entering marriage, and establishing a home in which to raise children. Up until recently, I never fully understood the story of The Wizard of Oz as the parable it is of the qualms we all have about our own unfitness to embark upon this path to what should be our goals at the end of the rainbow. The Cowardly Lion protests that he is too fearful to embark on the journey and lacks courage. The Tin Woodsman lacks drive and ambition, claiming that he doesn't have the heart to pursue a goal or a love. The Scarecrow protests that his knowledge is still insufficient or uncertain and he doesn't know enough to succeed, that he lacks the brains. But ultimately all we must do is to plod ahead upon the well-laid structures of the Yellow Brick Road, not being perturbed by what we think we lack in fitness and not being lured astray from the golden path paved for us. And as we trod that road we will find that we had had all along the courage, the drive and capacity to love, as well as the wits and brains to make it. As long as we are open to playing our part in helping Dorothy and our society, we can and will succeed, by just sticking to that Golden Path. The laws of the Ten Commandments and the statutes which follow are themselves scary and may seem impossible to completely fulfill. They set the ethical bar extremely high for us: Where will we get the money, we wonder, to always pay our workers on-time? But if a man structures his life with the goal of making an Ideal Home, following in that Golden Brick Path laid out by God and his people, he will discover that all along he had the knowhow, the courage, and the drive to make his way and build himself a home in the Promised Land.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL  
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

## Shabbat Terumah

February 24-25, 2023 | 4 Adar 5783

### SHABBAT SCHEDULE

Hertz: p. 325 | Haftarah: p. 336

Kaplan: p. 380 | Haftarah: p. 1120

**Candle Lighting** | 5:23 pm

**Friday Evening Services** | 5:30 pm | Main Sanctuary

**Friday Night Lights will return next week.**

**Zemirot** | 8:15 am

**Shahrit** | 9:00 am | Main Sanctuary

**Youth Program** | 10:00 am | Fidanque Youth Room

**Kiddush** | following services | Levy Auditorium

**Shabbat Afternoon Class will return next week.**

**Evening Services** | 5:10 pm | Main Sanctuary

**Habdala** | 6:05 pm

**Parent-Child Learning** | 7:00 pm | Led by Dr. Peshah Kletenik | Elias Room

### Weekday Service Times

**Mornings:**

Sunday: 8:05 am

Monday-Friday: 7:05 am

**Evenings:**

Sunday-Thursday: **5:35 pm**

*If you can help out and attend minyan, morning or evening, please contact Z. Edinger.*

Congregation Shearith Israel | 2 West 70th Street | 212-873-0300 | [www.shearithisrael.org](http://www.shearithisrael.org)

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## COMING UP

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SPACES FILLING UP FAST!

### **Exclusive Pre-Pesah Tour at the Metropolitan Museum of Art**

*Led by Rabbi Soloveichik*

**Sunday Afternoon, March 26**

Rabbi Soloveichik will lead a one-of-a-kind tour for a limited number of Shearith Israel sponsors as a special pre-Pesah treat. The Met collection of ancient Egyptian art consists of approximately 26,000 objects of artistic, historical, and cultural importance, dating from the Paleolithic to the Roman period (ca. 300,000 B.C.–A.D. 4th century). More than half of the collection is derived from the Museum's thirty-five years of archaeological work in Egypt, initiated in 1906 in response to increasing Western interest in the culture of ancient Egypt.

*Registration is open to sponsors only (\$180 per person) at  
[shearithisrael.org/met-tour23](http://shearithisrael.org/met-tour23)*

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## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Mazal tob to **Daveedy Soloveichik, Rabbi & Layalza Soloveichik**, and the entire Soloveichik family, upon Daveedy becoming a Bar Mitzvah in Israel this Shabbat.

Mazal tob to **Rabbi Marc & Gilda Angel**, upon the occasion of their granddaughters, Aviva & Dahlia, becoming B'not Mitzvah. Mazal tob to their parents Rabbi Hayyim & Maxine Angel.

We mourn the loss of our member, **Susan Hazan**, and offer condolences to her family.

**Security Alert:** You may have heard that some antisemitic hate groups are calling for a "National Day of Hate" this Shabbat. They are calling for their followers to distribute hateful stickers, fliers and produce graffiti (and video their actions for social media). Do know that we have conferred with our professional security consultants, and our staff and paid guards will be on extra high alert, and we have also been in touch with our local precinct to request enhanced presence this Shabbat.

We urge you to be vigilant and cautious wherever you may be, and wish you a Shabbat Shalom.

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## THIS SATURDAY NIGHT

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### **Motzei Shabbat Parent-Child Learning**

**THIS Saturday Night, February 25 | 7:00 pm**

**Led by Dr. Pasha Kletenik, Head of School, MDS**

**"Learning From the Heroes of the Purim Story"**

Featuring make-your-own ice cream sundaes and Insomnia Cookies!

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## COMING UP

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### **Young Professionals Shabbat Dinner**

*with Rabbi Soloveichik*

"Lessons from the Ketubah of Haym Solomon,

A Jewish New Yorker & Financier of the American Revolution"

**Friday Night, March 3 | Services at 5:30 pm | Dinner at 7:00 pm**

*Register at [shearithisrael.org/yp-march-dinner](http://shearithisrael.org/yp-march-dinner).*

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## PURIM AT SHEARITH ISRAEL

**Monday night, March 6-Tuesday, March 7**

**Purim Night Services, followed by Megillah: 5:55 pm**

**For CSI Youth: Myron the Magnificent's Purim Magic Show: 5:45 pm**

**Late Reading of Megillah: 8:00 pm**

**Purim Morning Reading of the Megillah: 8:00 am**

**Women's Megillah Reading in Small Sanctuary: 8:00 am**

**Annual Purim Breakfast: following Megillah reading**

*For CSI Youth:*

### **Myron the Magnificent's Purim Magic Show**

**During Megillah Reading | Doors open 5:45 pm | Show starts at 6:00 pm**

*Registration encouraged, sponsorship opportunities available at  
[shearithisrael.org/purim-magic](http://shearithisrael.org/purim-magic).*

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## Matanot L'Ebyonim

*Donate at [shearithisrael.org/matanot-lebyonim](http://shearithisrael.org/matanot-lebyonim).*