

The Spontaneous Inspection & Blessing of Moses and God

42 The Israelites had done all the work just as the LORD had commanded Moses. 43 And Moses saw all the work, and behold, they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, so had they done it; and Moses blessed them (Ex. 39:42-43).

My attention was drawn to this unusual and apparently spontaneous, uncommanded “blessing of Moses” in Verse 43, which I had not remarked upon before. Indeed, even the “looking over” of the work of the Tabernacle does not seem to have been explicitly commanded to Moses. Some translate the beginning of Verse 43 as “and Moses inspected the work,” and that indeed what it effectively was, although there was no explicit command for Moses to inspect the work. However, Moses was responsible for making sure that the plans he was commanded were carried out in all their elaborate detail. Moses perhaps could have just trusted Bezalel and others, but here we see Moses taking things a step further than perhaps he was strictly required, by personally inspecting and looking over the work himself. And perhaps Bezalel and Israel are to be lauded as well for bringing all of the work before Moses for review. Moses responds by bestowing his own spontaneous blessing upon the people. The word “them” here clearly refers to the people who are being blessed, not the Mishkan or the “work,” which would have been referred to by a singular feminine pronoun, rather than the word “them” which is plural and masculine.

It seems Moses of his own accord took upon himself personal responsibility for seeing to it that every detail of the Tabernacle was carried out according to the plans he was shown by God. And when he saw how precisely in accord the execution was with the plans, Moses took it upon himself to bestow blessing upon Israel. Of course, Moses was indeed a prophet, a function of whose was to bestow blessings in God’s name, by the Prophetic Holy Spirit (Ruah HaKodesh) of God which moved him. Doubtless the Israelites brought their work before Moses to inspect in order to seek God’s stamp of approval, which the Prophet Moses is understood as bestowing. So God is concurring in this inspection as well as this blessing. You could say that God’s blessing spontaneously flowed upon Moses seeing the greatness of the workmanship. But the impetus for this particular taking responsibility and this blessing seems to have come from Moses himself.

We can learn from Moses’ ready taking upon himself of responsibility that commands were carried out precisely, as well as the Israelites’ eagerness for Moses’ stamp of approval. But we can also learn from Moses’ grateful appreciation of the People’s executing of this complicated task so perfectly and so willingly. Such are the qualities of a true leader and commander, in inspiring a precise willingness to follow orders, and indeed seeing to it that orders are executed with flair, pride, and skill in execution and workmanship. And at the same time, Moses’ greatness as a leader was also expressed in his appreciation for those under his command, realizing that their excellence in following orders was not done merely out of a sense of duty but out of great devotion and pride in their execution, and Moses’ not taking this devotion for granted. When proper classic form is strictly followed with devotion and flair, and that devotion and flair are properly appreciated and praised, then blessing will spontaneously flow. The Tabernacle, the willingness of its donors, its artistic crafting, the willingness to follow precise commands, and finally the bestowing of God’s blessing and Presence upon its work and upon the Israel who undertook it so devotedly became a shining example of how to see to the fulfillment of the Torah’s commands.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Vayakhel-Pekude-HaHodesh March 17-18, 2023 | 25 Adar 5783

SHABBAT SCHEDULE

Hertz: p. 373 | Haftarah: p. 1002 | HaHodesh: p. 253
Kaplan: p. 464 | Haftarah: p. 1284 | HaHodesh: p. 308

Candle Lighting | 6:47 pm

Friday Evening Services | 6:45 pm | Main Sanctuary

SEASON FINALE: Friday Night Lights | following services | Rabbi Soloveichik |
Session sponsored by Barbara & Guy Reiss, in memory of Barbara's father, Moshe b. Gedalia Tepler | 2022-2023 season 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 | Levy Auditorium

Young Families Luncheon | following kiddush | *for registered guests* | Elias Room

Special Shabbat Afternoon Lecture | 6:00 pm | Rabbi Soloveichik

Evening Services | 6:45 pm | Main Sanctuary

Habdala | 7:40 pm

Rosh Hodesh Nisan begins on Wednesday night.

Shabbat HaHodesh derives its name from the special reading of the Torah, Exodus 12:1-20.

This is the “portion about the month” referring to the special consecration of Nisan, the month of Passover.

Weekday Service Times

Mornings:

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

Evenings:

Sunday-Thursday: **6:30 pm**

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

2023 SPRING FUNDRAISER

WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS:

**Seven Iconic Images in the History of Israel,
and the Stories Behind Them**

An Important 7-Part Virtual Series by Rabbi Meir Soloveichik
Beginning Monday, April 17

This special series serves as our Congregation's annual Spring Fundraiser and provides essential support to our Congregation.

Sign-up levels from \$250 to \$18,000

Special Offer for Series Underwriters (\$3,600 and up): Don't worry about missing a livestream; a recording of the lectures will be made available to you.

All sponsors will be recognized in a beautiful content-rich commemorative booklet that will be mailed out after the series.

Sign up at shearithisrael.org/giving/SpringFundraiser2023

COMING UP

Readers Wanted!

Women & Girls' Shir HaShirim Reading

On Zoom | In partnership with the women of Mikveh Israel
Sunday, Hol HaMoed Pesah, April 9 | 12:00 noon

Women and girls who would like to participate should contact Mrs. Lisa Robde at lirohde-csi@yahoo.com as soon as possible.

Make Matza & Haroset the Sephardi Way!

Sunday, March 26 | 12:00 pm | Outdoor Pavilion
Led by Rabbi Aryel Tucker and Gabi Chutter

Register at shearithisrael.org/matza-haroset.

SOLD OUT – Join the Waitlist

Exclusive Pre-Pesah Tours at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Led by Rabbi Soloveichik

Sunday Afternoon, March 26

Register to have your name added to our waitlist. If we are unable to accommodate you, we will offer you a refund. Join the waitlist at shearithisrael.org/met-tour23.

THIS WEEK

The Sisterhood of Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue presents:

Hands-On Flower Arranging Class with Rose Edinger

THIS Tues, March 21 | 7:30 pm | On Zoom, from the comfort of your home

Register at shearithisrael.org/events/flowers.

AN IMPORTANT BOOK LAUNCH

The Posen Library of Jewish Culture & Civilization:

The Early Modern Period, 1500-1750, Volume 5

THIS Thurs, March 23 | Main Sanctuary | 7:00 pm, after 6:30 pm Services

Featuring a panel discussion with distinguished Jewish historians, and a short performance by the Shearith Israel Choir
Followed by a reception in the Levy Auditorium

Join panelists Professors **Deborah Dash Moore**, **Elisheva Carlebach**, **Francesca Bregoli**, and **Mayer Juni**, with opening remarks by **Rabbi Soloveichik**, to celebrate the publication of *The Early Modern Period, 1500-1750, Volume 5* of The Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization edited by Yosef Kaplan.

Register at shearithisrael.org/events/posen.

PESAH PREVIEW

Shabbat HaGadol Derasha

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Shabbat, April 1 | Following Morning Services

Join our sponsors at shearithisrael.org/shabbat-hagadol.

Pesah Picnics on Paved Paradise

April 12 & 13 | Last Days Pesah | After Morning Services | Outdoor Pavilion

Register for just \$5 per person at shearithisrael.org/events/pesah-picnics.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal tob to **Asher Bourkoff**, upon becoming a Bar Mitzvah. Congratulations as well to his parents, **Elana & Aryeh Bourkoff**, and his grandparents, **Vivienne Roumani-Denn & Morton Denn**.

Mazal tob to **Meralee & Sidney Schlusberg**, upon the birth of a grandson, born to their children, **Leora and Asher Schlusberg**.