

## DEBAR TORAH by RABBI ROHDE

### Regularity Brings Continuity & Makes Israel and God Feel At Home

Parashat Tetsavveh in 29:38-46 is the first place a daily sacrificial ritual, morning and late afternoon, is mentioned, with its two lambs, (one in the morn and one later), two tenths of an ephah of flour (one-tenth in the morn and one-tenth later) two quarter-hins of oil and two quarter-hins of wine (again, one quarter of each for morn and one-quarter for later). Here a rationale for the regular ritual is added: in order that God should dwell among the Children of Israel. Further on in 30:7-8 the twice-daily incense offering is also prescribed.

Someone who visits other people or places stays with that person or place occasionally. A dwelling is a place you stay in regularly and continually, not occasionally. Hence the need for regularity, otherwise God's Presence would be a mere visitation, not a regularity.

Dr. Morris Shammah recently asked me to write a Debar Torah about the importance of coming to minyan. Well, what I can say is that we learn from these descriptions that a regular ritual was very important to Israel and God in making God's relationship with Israel a continual one. Similarly, I can say that I feel that regularity in ritual practice, particularly in the minyan prayer ritual, is extremely important to Jewish continuity.

My argument might not be what some people expect. One of the things which I see as most important about the daily minyan prayer service is the structure it is supposed to give to the life of men in particular. There are, of course, other morning rituals which can structure men's lives and the community and give them discipline, but there is certainly an emphasis upon structuring life here, as I have said many times. But there is also something else I see as extremely important, and that is the regular practice the daily prayer service gives its attendees in simply reading classical Hebrew and a number of the language's important documents. I have realized for quite some time that Hebrew reading, in the Diaspora especially, is actually quite poor. I know so many Day School graduates who actually read Hebrew quite poorly. Unless there is really regular practice in reading, knowledge of the language atrophies. The only Diaspora Jews who continue to read Hebrew well are those who are very regular attendees at synagogue services. To be frank, it can be difficult to defend the length of many daily morning services. But one important reason for not curtailing them is that the practice, the familiarity, and the fluency in the many different Jewish idioms of religious expression which regular attendance is supposed to inculcate is difficult to attain in any other way. The daily minyan is the Diaspora Jew's Ulpan, or his Language Immersion class.

Were the service shortened, the idea of Hebrew as a language used by the Jewish People would become a farce, as it often has become among the non-Orthodox. Even among the Orthodox real knowledge of Hebrew verges on the farcical. I know that few in the congregation can actually follow me and that if put on the spot, most cannot recite the texts of the prayers with much accuracy. One reason I insist in reciting prayers out-loud is that I feel that among most, the excuse that they are reading prayers "silently" is a sham, a cover for illiteracy. As a teacher, my experience is that dyslexias of various levels are far more common than anyone wants to admit. And illiteracy in the classical Hebrew language I find extremely worrisome, even for Israelis, and all the more so for the Diaspora. I've seen many essays recently which deal with how the split between Christianity and ancient Judaism occurred, and Christianity seems to have been fostered by a Greek-speaking Western Roman-Empire Jewish Diaspora which knew little Hebrew or the related Aramaic, which was written in the same alphabet. When Jews cannot read Hebrew and they do not have extensive and regular practice in the quintessential Jewish idioms of prayer and penitence, then dangerous divisions and splits can be in the offing. But when there is regularity, fluency and continuity is enhanced, as well as ease. For God and Israel to truly be "at home" with each other takes regular practice.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL  
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

### Shabbat Zakhor

March 3-4, 2023 | 11 Adar 5783

#### SHABBAT SCHEDULE

Hertz: p. 339 | Haftarah: p. 995 | Zakhor: p. 856  
Kaplan: p. 414 | Haftarah: p. 1274 | Zakhor: p. 1988

**Candle Lighting** | 5:31 pm

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

**Friday Night Lights** | following services | Rabbi Soloveichik | *2022-2023 season sponsored by the Julis-Rabinowitz family*

**Young Professionals Shabbat Dinner** | *for registered guests* | following Friday Night Lights | Elias Room

**Zemirot** | 8:15 am

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

**Youth Program** | 10:00 am | Fidanque Youth Room | *Youth reading of Parashat Zakhor by Isaac Haberman*

**Kiddush** | following services | Levy Auditorium

**Shabbat Afternoon Class** | 4:45 pm | Rabbi Soloveichik | *Session sponsored by Denise Ast, in memory of Shoshannah Sarah b. Avraham*

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

**Habdala** | 6:23 pm

**Shabbat Zakhor/Mi Khamokha**, is the Sabbath preceding Purim. Judah HaLevy's poem, "Mi Khamokha" is read Saturday at 9:00 am. Deut. 25:17-19, beginning "Zakhor 'Remember [Amalek],'" is added to the regular Parashah reading. Haman was presumed a descendant of the tribe of Amalek, the first "annihilators" of Israel.

#### Weekday Service Times

##### Mornings:

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

##### Evenings:

Sunday, Tuesday-Thursday: 5:45 pm

**See inside for full Purim schedule.**

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

## COMING UP

---

### *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**

In this series of seven lectures, Rabbi Soloveichik will examine seven of the most iconic images in the history of Israel, telling the story behind each photo, and the event or person it captured. Each presentation will be offered over Zoom and will be a visual experience, pairing the image with many others, revealing largely unknown aspects in Israeli history. This, in turn, will allow us to better appreciate what it means to mark Israel's 75th year, and to look expectantly toward its future.

This special series serves as our Congregation's annual Spring Fundraiser and provides essential support to our Congregation. **All sponsors will be recognized in a beautiful content-rich commemorative booklet that will be mailed out after the series.**

#### **Sponsorship Opportunities**

*Available at [shearithisrael.org/events/SpringFundraiser2023](http://shearithisrael.org/events/SpringFundraiser2023)*

---

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Midnight, March 9

#### **CSI Youth Shabbat Family Luncheon**

**Shabbat, March 18 | Following Services and Kiddush**

*featuring family-friendly lunch from Holy Schnitzel*

Kids! Get ready for an epic game of Gaga with Gabi!

Parents, just relax and enjoy each other's company.

Don't forget to invite your local friends to share in the beauty of Shearith Israel and the warmth of our community.

*Register or sponsor at [shearithisrael.org/events/yf-march-lunch](http://shearithisrael.org/events/yf-march-lunch).*

---

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

*Led by Rabbi Soloveichik*

**Sunday Afternoon, March 26**

*All spaces for this exclusive tour have been filled. Register at the link below 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](http://shearithisrael.org/met-tour23)*

## PURIM SCHEDULE

---

#### **Fast of Esther | Monday, March 6**

Dawn (Fast Begins)..... 5:13 am

Morning Service (Shahrit)..... 7:05 am

Minha (men wear tefillin) & Arbit..... 5:30 pm

Reading of Megillah..... 6:05 pm

*Children's Purim Magic Show will be held in the Fidanque Youth Room  
during Megillah Reading*

End of Fast..... 6:14 pm

Late Reading of Megillah..... 8:30 pm

#### **Purim Day | Tuesday, March 7**

Shahrit Service..... 7:30 am

Morning Reading of Megillah..... 8:00 am

Women's Megillah Reading..... 8:00 am

Purim Breakfast..... following Megillah

Late Morning Reading of Megillah..... 11:00 am

Minha & Arbit ..... 5:45 pm

#### **Purim Shushan | Wednesday, March 8**

Morning (Shahrit) Service..... 7:05 am

Evening (Minha & Arbit) Services..... 5:45 pm

---

## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

---

Mazal tob to **Daveedy Soloveichik, Rabbi & Lyaliza Soloveichik**, and the entire Soloveichik family, upon Daveedy becoming a Bar Mitzvah.

---

Shearith Israel joins the *Organization for the Resolution of Agunot (ORA)* in dedicating this Shabbat to increase awareness of the suffering of agunot in our own community and throughout the world. To learn more about ORA's work visit [www.getora.org](http://www.getora.org) or pick up a booklet at Kiddush this Shabbat.