

You Shall Surely Return It

Among the 53 commandments enumerated in this week's parasha is *Hashavat Aveida* - the obligation to return a lost object to its owner. *If you encounter your enemy's ox or donkey wandering, you shall surely return it to him* (23:4). Why does the Torah specify returning an item to one's enemy? Rabbi Yosef of Orleans (*Bekhor Shor*) explains precisely because it is difficult to do so. We must overcome our natural inclination and bias in order to do what is right, even to our enemies. In Deuteronomy (22:1-3) where this law is given in more detail it concludes "*and so you shall [return] every lost thing...you must not keep it hidden*" (לֹא תִכְתֹּב לְךָ חֵטְא).

This week, we are happy to announce the return to use in our synagogue of a very significant colonial era ritual object. During an inventory of our ritual silver conducted by Sothebys in 2019, a fragment of a twisted silver Torah pointer (*Yad*) was discovered bearing the mark "MM." This mark belonged to Myer Myers, a highly esteemed silversmith of the colonial era and a prominent member of our congregation. Myers, renowned for his exquisite domestic silver, is particularly celebrated for crafting five Torah finials (*Rimonim*) and a circumcision shield for ritual use in early America. Despite being only a broken half of a *Yad*, the unearthing of this previously unknown ritual object is noteworthy. Its discovery elicited great excitement among all present.

When I looked at this broken *Yad*, I realized that the design was similar to a *Yad* being used in the Little Synagogue. Upon examination, it became clear that the back of the *yad* were using at daily services was a match for the broken piece we had just found.

Almost incredibly, this matching piece might never have been recognized if it weren't for an act of *Hashavat Aveida*. The *Yad* we had been using in the Little Synagogue was dedicated by David & Tamar de Sola Pool in honor of Henry & Roalie Hendricks. Dr. Pool had apparently taken two broken pieces and combined them to make a composite pointer for use in the Little Synagogue. There it was used every Monday & Thursday for decades until it disappeared, presumed to have been lost or stolen during restoration work being done about 2004.

In 2012, a distinguished rabbi from the Upper West Side reached out to Rabbi Marc Angel, disclosing that an anonymous individual had requested to show a silver pointer to Shearith Israel. The dedication on the pointer had been scratched off, but the name "Pool" remained discernible. Rabbi Angel recognized this pointer as the missing *Yad*. Because of this the anonymous donor returned the *Yad* to our congregation, allowing it to be reinstated for use. It was solely due to this act that years later it could be identified as a component of an older, much more significant pointer crafted by Myer Myers.

Through the generosity of Mr. Roy Zuckerberg, the Myers' *Yad* was expertly restored to its original form. When reading the Torah today, we will be using this pointer for the very first time in many generations. The full story of the discovery and restoration of this important object will be told more formally in the future, but today let us take note that a small but courageous act of *Hashavat Aveida* has allowed our congregation to reclaim an important piece of our history. May this act encourage us to always strive to do what is right.



Shabbat Mishpatim-Rosh Hodesh

February 9-10, 2024 | 1 Adar I, 5784

SCHEDULE

Kaplan: p. 356 | Haftarah: p. 1270

Hertz: p. 306 | Haftarah: p. 992

Candle Lighting | 5:05 pm

Evening Services | 5:15 pm

Friday Night Lights will return next week.

Zemirot | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary

Shahrit | 9:00 am | Main Sanctuary

Morning Talk | At Morning Services | Baruch-Lev Kelman

Tot Shabbat | 10:00 am | Fidanque Youth Room

Youth Groups | 10:00 am | Elias Room

Jr. Congregation | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue

Kiddush | following services

Shabbat Afternoon Class | 4:15 pm | Baruch-Lev Kelman | Main Sanctuary

Teen Class will return next week.

Evening Services | 5:00 pm

Habdala | 5:54 pm

Parent-Child Learning | 7:15 pm | Dr. Peshah Kletenik, Head of School,

MDS | Elias Room

Weekday Service Times

Sunday Morning: 8:05 am

Monday-Friday Mornings: 7:05 am

Sunday-Thursday Evenings (Arbit Only): 6:30 pm

COMING UP

For details & registration, visit shearithisrael.org

An Evening with Millet Ben Haim, October 7 Survivor

THIS Monday, February 12 | 7:00 pm (following 6:30 pm services)

Millet is coming under the auspices of "Survived To Tell,"

a project of the AID (America-Israel Democracy) Coalition

Attendance is free but donations to Survived to Tell/AID are encouraged

Young Professionals Shabbat Dinner with the ZOA

featuring Shearith Israel members Dov Zigler and Elijah Kochin

in conversation with ZOA member Akiba Covitz

Friday night, February 23 | Ages 21-35

Shabbat Adar Dinner

From Singapore to Savile Row to Bespoke in Brooklyn:

A Hasidic London-Trained Tailor In Conversation With

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Friday Evening, March 8 | Following Evening Services & Friday Night Lights

Bring them Home Now

"Marching and Running for Their Lives"

Sundays, 11:00 am | Central Park West & 90th Street

(Organized by Hostages and Missing Families Forum, New York)

Every Sunday, meet at CPW and 90th, and then run or walk the bridle path. Participants are encouraged to bring Israeli flags and wear *BringThemHome* T-shirts.

CSI WOMEN & GIRLS – READERS WELCOME!

Women's Megillah Reading

Megillah Reading on Purim morning, Sunday, March 24 | 8:30 am

Rehearsals: Sundays, Feb 25 & Mar 10 | 7 pm

Women and girls over the age of 12 are welcome to contact Mrs Lisa Rohde at

lrohde-csi@yahoo.com to participate.

Teen Girls & Young Women's Shir HaShirim Reading

Shabbat, Hol HaMoed Pesah, April 27

The young women (post-Bat Mitzvah through 20s) of our congregation recite the Song of Songs on Pesah. Preparation and training provided. Newcomers welcome! For information and to participate, please contact lrohde-csi@yahoo.com.

2024 YEAR OF HOPE

Rabbi Soloveichik's *Year of Hope* Lecture Series

"Judaica and Us: The Story of the Jewish People in Ten Objects"

Lecture #4: Next Shabbat, February 17 | At Morning Services

Time Travel and Us:

The Most Incredible Calendars in Jewish History

Capital Campaign

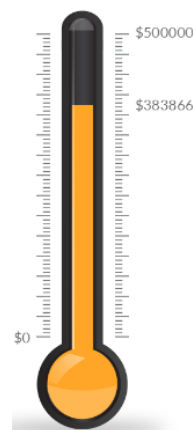
Replacing our Sanctuary Carpet & Other Vital Repairs

Our Sanctuary is a prayer space of profound beauty, dignity, and serenity that has stood the test of time. While to the casual eye, the majesty of the space endures, there's an undeniable truth beneath our feet—our carpet is torn and tattered, bearing witness to the countless footsteps of generations within these walls.

Among other infrastructure repairs, it's time to replace the carpet, in both the men's and women's sections, so that our sacred space reflects the reverence it deserves.

Help us reach \$500,000 by March 31.

Donate at shearithisrael.org/giving/year-of-hope.



THIS SATURDAY NIGHT

Grandparents, parents, and kids are invited to bond at

Parent-Child Learning

with Dr. Pasha Kletenik, Head of School, MDS

THIS Motzei Shabbat, February 10 | 7:15 pm (corrected time)

Make sure to register at shearithisrael.org/pcl-5784.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal tob to **Laura & Eliezer Frye**, upon the birth of a baby boy, **Asher Simcha**, and to the grandparents, our segan **Karen & Jack Daar**.