

## DEBAR TORAH by RABBI ROHDE

### Stuff My Face With This Red Stuff

The Torah quotes Esau as using a peculiar term in asking Jacob for food “הלעיטני”, a term usually used for “fattening-up” or “stuffing” domestic livestock. The whole story seems quite tainted, of course from a moral perspective: Jacob underhandedly takes advantage of Esau’s famished state in that moment and uses the opportunity to lay claim to the title of first-born and secure their father’s inheritance for himself. In the Talmud, the same verb in its imperative form is famous for having been used in the expression “הלעיטהו לרשע וימות” “stuff the wicked one’s face with it and let him die.” This expression for me is reminiscent of the similar idiom we have in English: “Stuff him with it ‘till he chokes,” meaning that when someone’s requests are excessive, one may be justified in giving back an excessive amount of something, to the point where they can’t take it anymore.

Reacting in such a way is always morally questionable, and in contradistinction to the way one normally ought to act. A man should normally be concerned about his fellow and aim to keep him from harm, even when he acts foolishly or wickedly. This doesn’t necessarily mean that one simply puts up with excessive demands and gives in to them, although that may often be the proper response. Especially in the workplace or service establishment, aiming to serve others as best one can should be the primary response, and that often means one should accept a degree of excessive demands. Hiring oneself out as a worker, after all, involves accepting a degree of temporary enslavement. “Turning the other cheek” is recommended, after all, in the Book of Lamentations, for the exiles who have now become slaves. But even for the freeman, the proper response to the evildoer isn’t to “get back” at him: Rather, one should calmly rebuke him for his behavior. One should simply be direct and straight with him, telling him the behavior is excessive and wrongful. As the Torah says: “Don’t hate one’s brother in one’s heart, rather rebuke one’s fellow, and don’t bear sin on his account.” In these ways one seeks to keep one’s fellow and oneself from further sin.

But there are times, places and circumstances. when such an approach is justifiably abandoned, or one needn’t go to great lengths to avert further evil befalling the wicked-doer. Let’s say one has a hot radiator or steam-pipe near one’s window: One needn’t put a sign on it saying: “Warning, Robbers, Steam-pipe may be hot!” Certain types of evil-doing, such as robbery, cross a certain threshold. What might be that threshold?

Perhaps that threshold is that the crime or demand is not rational, but stems from an excessive and utterly unrestrainable passion. The covetousness which drives the criminal to rob and violate societal norms is often a crime of passion. Esau is seized by a passionate hunger, one which could not have been reasoned with. His expression to Jacob was in the form of the basest demand of the most animal-like appetite: “I’m hungry: Pour some of this red stuff down my throat!” He might have already been in the process of grabbing the ladle and the pot from Jacob’s hand. Against such a forceful and impassioned approach, utterly unrestrainable, Jacob was justified. The evildoing of Esau, driven by his basest appetites, was utterly unrestrainable and made him an unsuitable heir to the traditions of his forefather Abraham and Isaac. The best that could be done was to stuff him with more of exactly what he asked for. Maybe, after choking a little, he just might learn his lesson.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL  
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

## Shabbat Toledoth

November 29-30, 2024 | 29 Marheshvan, 5785

### SCHEDULE

Hertz: p. 93 | Haftarah: p. 948 / Kaplan: p. 116 | Haftarah: p. 1262

**Candle Lighting** | 4:12 pm

**Evening Services** | 4:15 pm | Levy Auditorium

**Friday Night Lights** | Rabbi Soloveichik | after services | *5785 Season sponsored by the Julis Romo Rabinowitz family*

**Zemirot** | 8:15 am | Levy Auditorium

**Shahrit** | 9:00 am | Levy Auditorium

**Tot Shabbat** | 10:00 am | Fidanque Youth Room

**Youth Groups & Junior Congregation** | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue

**Kiddush** | following services | Elias Room | *Kiddush supporter: Francine Alfandary & Laurent Nahon, on the occasion of the first nahala of Laurent's mother, Colette Nahon, and in appreciation of everyone who attended many minyanim this past year | Slivovitz sponsor: Laury Frieber, in memory of her father, Arthur A. Frieber | Anonymous Arak sponsor in honor of Rev. Z. Edinger*

**Shabbat Afternoon Class** | 3:30 pm | Rabbi Soloveichik | *Session sponsored by Dr. Rachel Weg & Dr. Oskar Weg in honor of the edifying scholarship of Rabbi Meir Soloveichik*

**Teen Shiur** | 3:30 pm | Baruch-Lev Kelman

**Evening Services** | 4:05 pm

**Habdala** | 4:56 pm

*Rosh Hodesh Kislev begins on Saturday night.*

### Weekday Service Times

#### Mornings

Sun | 8:05 am / Mon-Friday | 7:05 am

#### Evenings

**Sunday (Minha & Arbit)** | 4:15 pm / Monday-Thursday (Arbit Only) | 6:30 pm

## COMING UP

*If registration required, sign up at [shearithisrael.org](http://shearithisrael.org)*

---

### **Medical Innovation in the Aftermath of October 7th: Update from The Soroka Medical Center with Dr. Uri Greenbaum** Thursday, December 12 | 7:00 pm (following 6:30 pm Evening Services)

*Free registration required | With a wine and cheese reception*

Soroka Medical Center, one of Israel's premier medical care and research facilities, is located in Southern Israel, and was a first responder hospital most directly affected by October 7th. Dr. Greenbaum will discuss the war and Soroka's response, his experiences treating cancer patients during wartime, as well as speak about new innovation in his work in the field of hematology.

---

### **Rabbi Soloveichik in conversation with James Snyder, Director of the Jewish Museum** *Exclusive Exhibition of the Tel Dan Stele at The Jewish Museum*

Thursday, December 19 | 7:00 pm | The Jewish Museum

*Free registration required | With a wine and cheese reception*

See and hear about the Tel Dan Stele, a 9th century BCE stone monument fragment, containing the earliest mention of the royal House of David outside of the Bible.

---

### **Sisterhood Jewelry-Making Workshop**

Sunday, December 15 | 4:00 pm | \$25 per person | DEADLINE: Dec. 7

Ofra Lerner of Ofra Jewels will help us make beautiful jewelry with real pearls, semi-precious stones, crystals, and charms. Parents and children, create a Hanukkah gift for yourself or a loved one!

---

### **Stitch & Fix**

Next Session: Wednesday, December 4 | 1-3:30 pm | Elias Room

*RSVP to Rose at [rgedinger@gmail.com](mailto:rgedinger@gmail.com)*

---

### **Scholar-In-Residence: Raizi Chechik**

Shabbat Vayesheb, December 20-21

Special guest scholar and rising star Raizi Chechik will be with us for this Shabbat and will address the congregation on Shabbat morning in addition to delivering an inspiring *Friday Night Lights* talk.

## Year of Hope Carpet Installation Update

---

**Work in the Main Sanctuary began this week.**

We expect this phase of the work to be complete by the end of the year.

**Note:** Starting on Thanksgiving, and for every Shabbat through the end of the year, Services will be held in the **Levy Auditorium**, and Kiddush will be held in the **Elias Room**. There is no access to the Main Sanctuary.

We are profoundly grateful to the great many of you that supported this important *Year of Hope* campaign. When we come together as a community, we get things done!

---

## COMING UP

*If registration required, sign up at [shearithisrael.org](http://shearithisrael.org)*

---

### **(Virtual) Sunday Matinee with Sisterhood**

*All proceeds will be donated to help families of Israeli soldiers*

**Single film: \$10.00 | All films: \$21.00**

**Film Discussions: Sundays | 4:00 pm | on Zoom**

**December 22 | Time of Favor (2000)**

**January 26 | Walk on Water (2004)**

*A link is sent to registrants to watch the film a week before the appointed date, together with a second link to join the Sunday discussion on Zoom.*

---

### **Parent-Child Learning**

**On Select Saturday Nights | 1 hour after Habdala**

**Next session: December 14, with Rabbi Soloveichik | 6:00 pm**

January 4 | 6:15 pm | Rabbi Ira Rohde

February 8 | 7:00 pm | Dr. Pasha Kletenek, Head of School, MDS

March 8 | 7:30 pm | Ellin Cooper, Yoetzet Halakha

---

## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

---

Mazal tob to our friends **Rabbi Danny & Tamara Stein** of the Base UWS, upon the birth of a baby girl.

Condolences to **Sjimon den Hollander (Suzanne Stern)**, upon the passing of his mother, Gerarda den Hollander-Slager.