

October 1, 2025

Dear Shearith Israel family,

Our Year of Allegiance. With Kippur beginning tonight, it is our abiding hope that all of us will do *Well Over the Fast*, a phrase that our son Joseph chuckles at my use of but which Gillian Salama-Caro uses all the time, as do many of her fellow Brits and former Brits. There are no more beautiful and stirring services at our Synagogue than our Kippur services. I hope we will see many of you there.

Also, Judy Cardozo advises that there is now a collection of studio recordings “from 1956 of Hazzan Abraham Lopes Cardozo accompanying himself on the piano. ... These files were re-discovered at the new National Library of Israel. More from this treasure trove will be released in the coming months, available on all platforms (Spotify, iTunes, YouTube...).” Thank you, Judy, for [the link on Spotify](#).

Ner News Celebrating our 250th. I will wait till next week for some new *ner* news. I wanted to mention this again here to give me an excuse to reuse the fabulous new logo put together by the office:



Touro Treasures. And here, thank you to gem-of-a-friend and one of Cong. Ahavath Israel leaders Dr. Jim Herstoff for this great photo of the ark at Touro Synagogue. The ark is newly adorned with two breastplates that Reverend Edinger sent up from Shearith Israel for Touro Synagogue’s use.



Pilfered Plaques. Another item from the brief news department: Here is a photo of the temporary plaques affixed to the outside of our Synagogue building and placed at the corner of 70th Street and Central Park West. Sadly, the bronze plaques that we had there for decades were pilfered. Gabe Goldstein tells me that there isn't really even a market for the bronze. We forgive whoever took them, but in case you are the "borrower" and happen to be an avid reader of this email, could you please return them now? They are costly to replace, but replace them we will.



Our Fall Fundraiser and Hatanim Luncheon. We are justly proud of the fact that you will not hear a Kol Nidre appeal nor any other fund-raising appeal during Kippur. Nor will you see any cards to indicate donation amounts, whether at your seats or in piles at the entrance to our Sanctuary. We do not do that – ever.

That doesn't mean we don't genuinely even seriously need your financial help to close the deficit between dues and keeping the place running. Oh we do. These weeks are one of the only two times during the year that we formally come to you (the other times I throw myself at your feet to help close one gap or another – those are *informal*). The fact is that we (nor any other Synagogue I've ever heard of), notwithstanding our extraordinary costs such as historic cemeteries, archives, and a choir, could never set dues so high that they would cover our costs. We do not do that – ever; it is more important that we remain a welcoming place for people of all economic strata.

For this **Year of Allegiance Fall Fundraiser**, we need not only the normal amounts we try to raise this time of year; we also need another six figures to pay for the chair lift that is now working and essential to allow those in wheelchairs or who are otherwise less mobile to get to the ground floor of our Sanctuary from our 70th Street entrance with dignity. If you are interested in knowing more about our expenses and what we spend our money on, I would be delighted to talk to you about it. For now, please [click here](#), and pledge as much as your circumstances permit.

Name That Parasha Tune. We are collecting songs for the remaining parshiot in the Torah: **Parshiot Ki Tetze, Ki Tavo, Nitzavim, Vayelekh, Ha'azinu** (this week's parasha), and **V'zot HaBeracha**.

Alan Zwiebel on **Parashat Nitzavim** likes

- [Stand By Me](#), here sung by Ben E. King

And if we are going back to **Parashat Nitzavim**, as we are allowed to do, thank you to Jay Harwitt for:

- [To Life](#), from *Fiddler on the Roof*

For **Parashat Ha'azinu**, Andrew Druck likes:

- [Sing a Song](#), as sung by The Carpenters; and
- [Your Song](#), as sung by Elton John

We have only a couple *parshiot* left. Time to get in your last and best suggestions!

Zevachim: Doubling Down on Intention. The global Daf Yomi learning cycle is this week studying pages 14-20 of Tractate Zevachim. I would like to share three thoughts:

First, last week we discussed the fundamental role of intention in the pursuit of repentance. This week continues that topic. In the Mishna on page 13a, our Sages want to make it very clear that a proper intention is needed, not just at the outset of the process of seeking repentance for sin; the proper intent is required all the way through. There are four distinct stages of a sacrifice, we are taught: not just the *ritual slaughter*; but after that the blood of the sacrifice needs to be *received* in a proper receptacle; and after that *conveyed* to the Altar; and after that *thrown or sprinkled* in the prescribed way on the prescribed area of the Altar. Stages 2,3, and 4 are called in the Mishna: קִבֵּל וְהִלֵּךְ וְזָרַק. And the Mishna insists that the proper intention is required at *each* of the four stages. One could hardly think of a more timely topic, as we head into Kippur and are trying to think about repentance for how we have acted towards others. General mushiness doesn't cut it.

Second, as we approach the end of the First Chapter of Tractate Zevachim and move to the Second, which begins on page 15b, we branch out from the four stages of sacrifice to another fundamental concept in the Talmud: the concept of *piggul* (which indeed is discussed on pages 14a-14b). Think of *piggul* as imposing the requirement of intention on the *time* and *place* of the sacrifice and then moving further not just to require the proper intention but to require the actually proper time and place to be observed. We have discussed *piggul* briefly before ([see my email of 4/24/25](#)). And it is of real importance to the performance of sacrifices and other duties in the Temple Service. Someone more learned than I is needed to explain why – and luckily, just this week, Claude Nadaf reacted to my comments last week concerning intention by raising precisely the issue of *piggul*. Says Claude:

In [Sefer Varyikra], Ch 19, there are many ethical laws. In the middle of the chapter, we find legislation against piggul, or the bringing of a sacrifice ... with the intention of eating it outside of the proper location in the Temple or its allotted time frame. The punishment for piggul is severe: 'And he who eats of it shall bear his guilt, for he has profaned what is sacred to the Lord: that person shall bear cut off from his kin' (19:8). In addition, the sacrifice is invalid and must be replaced with another.

Third, in a more comic vein, I'm sure you've heard of the quip – popular in discussions of probability and randomness – that if you have enough monkeys banging on the keys of typewriters, and if you give them enough time, then sooner or later they will compose a Shakespearean sonnet. It has a name, I think – something like the Infinite Monkey Theorem (no, really) – and you will find discussions about it in the last 100 years or so. Well, in this week's Daf Yomi text, page 14a, an example is used to illustrate that the person doing the sacrifice needs actually to take the blood with his fingers from the receptacle

and move with it towards the Altar. And wouldn't you know it: To illustrate the need for intentionality and actual performance of the act, the gemarra literally says that if a **monkey** comes and takes the blood and gives it to the priest, it doesn't count, and the priest needs to do that act over again:

א הוֹאִיל וּבָתִּיב "וְלָקַח" – וְאִי אֶתִּי קִיּוֹף רָמִי לְהוֹ אִידִיָּה בְּעֵי לְמִיִּשְׁקָל זִימָנָא אֶתְרִיתִי – כְּמָאן דְּבָתִּיב "וְטָבַל" דָּמִי

*it is considered as [taking] and therefore if a **monkey** comes and places blood on the hand of the priest the priest must take blood from the vessel again to perform the mitzva.*

Craycray!

Vacation Photos. Roger Mesznik sends in this gorgeous photograph from their trip to Yellowstone National Park last month, with an added bonus of his own quotation from a verse from Psalm 96:12:

-יָעַר יַעֲלֶז שִׁדִּי, וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ; אֲזַ יִרְנְנוּ, כָּל-עֵצִי.

Let the field exult; and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy.



Publication Notice. Next week, we hope to send out our email at 11 am on **Friday, October 10, after the first days of Succot.**

In this, our **Year of Allegiance**, let us couple our collective **commitment** with a prayer to The Almighty, **Hatzlich'ana, help us succeed.** And **Well Over the Fast!**

Louis Solomon, Parnas