

## Singleness of Devotion Maintains Unadulterated Purity & Strength

Our Parasha introduces itself with its famous exhortation that Israel “should be holy because I the LORD thy God am holy.” But then our Parasha continues to give what is one of the most diverse collections of laws. The question arises: What kind of unifying conception or definition of “holiness.” could bind all of these laws together?

In my commentary this year on Parashat Tazria I postulated that the primary meaning for “kadosh” is “pure,” “unsullied,” “uncontaminated,” often in the sexual-marital sense of virginity. Here I might go on to elaborate that what is considered “kadosh” or “sacrosanct” is “purely” and exclusively devoted or dedicated, just like a virgin wife is exclusively dedicated in marriage to her husband. Marriage takes away her original virginity, of course, but as long as she is not violated or “sullied” by any other man, she retains a certain purity and even a sense of freshness and unadulterated virginity. But to retain this, she must be exclusively and uncompromisingly loyal and faithful. The first law of Parashat Kedoshim, requiring fear/reverence for mother and father, belongs under this heading in the sense that fidelity and loyalty to parents is part of faithful loyalty to Israel and to God. Compromises in such loyalty and faithfulness contaminate and compromise the purity of devotion. The second law, included in the very same verse as the law of parental reverence, requires the observance of God’s sacrosanct Sabbaths (with Festivals requiring cessation of labor included in this category). Sabbaths and Festivals are occasions for beloved Israel and her loving God to meet, and such appointments must be kept diligently and faithfully. Violating these occasions by not observing them properly sullies such occasions. The law against other gods and images immediately follows, which more explicitly is about maintaining the purity and faithfulness of devotion to our One Lord. As today’s *haftarah* shows, violating God’s Sabbaths and Festivals is an unfaithfulness akin to idolatry. A wife who will not faithfully keep her appointed rendezvous with her husband is likely to be rendezvousing with other lovers instead.

Obviously, the next law about not eating from a meat sacrifice from the third day after its slaughter has much to do with food purity. Eating of the sacrifice after the third day creates real contamination as well as shows lack of devotion of the person who offered as well as a diversion of the meat offered from its proper use. Meat must be served when it is fresh, in its virgin purity immediately after being killed, to be healthful and best. The corner of one’s field and the gleanings, which are ostensibly gifts/taxes to the poor, are considered sacrifices to God as well. They are taken from the new, virgin crop being harvested. These gifts could all too easily be violated and kept for oneself without anyone noticing. They are incurred on one’s own private property and in one’s own private domain, and easily could be taken advantage of, as a single woman who enters a man’s private domain risks seizure, and even a poor man entering risks harassment. But these gifts instead must inviolately remain devoted to the poor of Israel and thereby to God. Even in the private realm, extremely careful fidelity is required as a demonstration of the purity of our faithfulness to our fellow Israelite and Israel’s God.

Purity of devotion and faithfulness to God and to our fellow countryman is particularly evident in laws concerning theft, lying and, and swearing falsely. In business dealings as well as in dealing with the hired hand it is all too easy to be false, treacherous, and oppressive. But the requirement that we be pure in our loyalty to the covenant with our fellow Israelite and with our God rules out any such unfaithfulness and disloyalty. Of course, all types of sin “contaminate” the purity of our devotion to God and to our fellow Israelite. But the types of sin mentioned here in particular typify occasions where temptations to be disloyal are strong, in domains where we have much power and control. And yet even and especially in such domains, loyalty is critical. After one’s virginity has been given up, original virgin-like purity, freshness, and strength may only be maintained through a faithful singleness of devotion. If the Earth is indeed full of God’s Power, Strength, and Glory, it is because God Himself has been careful to maintain the purity and faithfulness of His unadulterated Love and Devotion to His faithful devotees. We are called upon to imitate His Example.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL  
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

## Shabbat Kedoshim

May 6-7, 2022 | 6 Iyar, 5782

### SCHEDULE

Hertz: p. 497 | Haftarah: p. 511  
Kaplan: p. 598 | Haftarah: p. 1168

**Candle Lighting** | 7:39 pm

**Friday Evening Services** | 7:00 pm

**Zemirot** | 8:15 am

**Shahrit** | 9:00 am

**Youth Shabbat Program** | 10:00 am | Meet up in the Fidanque Youth Room | *Led by Gabi & Raph*

**Kiddush** | following services | *Scotch sponsor: Manuel Vazquez-Senor* | *Thank you to our Kiddush Committee for sponsoring our kiddushim. If you'd like to sponsor, visit [shearithisrael.org/sponsorkiddush](http://shearithisrael.org/sponsorkiddush).*

**Shabbat Afternoon Class** | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | 6:55 pm

**Shabbat Afternoon Services** | 7:40 pm

**Habdala** | 8:39 pm

### Weekday Service Times

#### Morning Services

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

#### Evening Services

Sunday-Thursday (Minha/Arbit): 6:30 pm

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## 2022 ANNUAL SPRING FUNDRAISER

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### Sanctuaries & Cities:

#### *Synagogues of the World and the Stories They Tell*

**NEXT SESSION: This Tuesday, May 10 | Virtual Only**

"Mysticism, Legends, and Lore:

The Altneu Synagogue of the Maharal (Prague)"

For the full schedule, lecture titles, and to sponsor or register, visit  
[shearithisrael.org/springfundraiser2022](http://shearithisrael.org/springfundraiser2022).

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## SHABUOT

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### Rabbi Soloveichik's Shabuot Lecture

**Saturday Night, June 4 | 11:00 pm**

Enjoy this annual public lecture on the themes of the holiday. Come for the Torah; stay for the cheesecake!

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### Honor our Longtime Choirmaster, Leon Hyman

**Day I of Shabuot, Sunday, June 5**

Help us celebrate Leon Hyman's 66 years of dedicated service to Shearith Israel by joining us on the first day of Shabuot. Our choir will sing special selections for the occasion, many composed by Maestro Leon himself, and a kiddush luncheon will be served in his honor.

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### Girls' & Young Women's Annual Ruth Reading

**In person on Shabuot Day II, Monday, June 6**

**Virtual date: Sunday, May 29 | 9:00 am**

Young women and girls of our community, ages 5-20, are invited to take part in this beautiful Shearith Israel tradition. If your daughter is interested in participating in either the in-person or virtual reading (or better yet, both!), contact Mrs. Lisa Rohde for more information and to set up training sessions.

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## SAVE THE DATE

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*Presented by Shearith Israel's Caring Connection*

### 4th Annual Smash the Stigma

#### **A Jewish Communal Conversation on Mental Illness & Suicide**

**IN PERSON, Monday, May 23 | 7:00 pm** | with a livestream option

Held annually during Mental Health Awareness Month and co-sponsored by a consortium of neighborhood synagogues and Jewish institutions, these profoundly important Smash the Stigma events help to raise awareness and facilitate conversation about difficult realities. Registration coming soon!

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## COMING UP

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*Shearith Israel Members & Friends are invited to*  
**A Very Special Touro-NYC Shabbaton**

**Shabbat, May 13-14**

On this special Shabbat, our two connected communities, Newport & NYC, will worship together, learn together, break bread together, and simply enjoy each other's company.

#### Join us for:

- Friday evening: a special **Friday Night Lights** with Rabbi Soloveichik
- Shabbat morning: a **Sanctuaries and Cities keynote lecture** showcasing the Touro Synagogue, followed by a delicious Kiddush Luncheon outdoors

Sponsor the Kiddush luncheon in honor of our Touro guests at  
[shearithisrael.org/sponsor-kiddush](http://shearithisrael.org/sponsor-kiddush).

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*The New Amsterdam History Center and Congregation Shearith Israel  
are pleased to invite you to*

### Music of Many Worlds

#### **Sephardic Vocal Music of 18th-century Amsterdam**

**Sunday, May 22 | 4:00 pm | In person at Shearith Israel**

Join harpsichordist & scholar Jonathan Salamon, plus an ensemble of baroque instrumentalists and singers, as he performs, explains, and brings to life rarely heard eighteenth-century music from Amsterdam's Portuguese (Sephardic) Synagogue.

*Visit [shearithisrael.org/music-many-worlds](http://shearithisrael.org/music-many-worlds) to register.*

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*Shearith Israel & the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan present:*

### **Upheaval: The Journey of Menachem Begin**

*with introductory remarks by Rabbi Soloveichik*

**Wednesday, June 8 | 7:00 pm**

**334 Amsterdam Ave, Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan,**

*In memory of Ambassador Yehuda Avner whose opus, **The Prime Ministers**,  
inspired the production*

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## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Mazal tob to **Elie Sasson**, son of **Sharon & Rafe Sasson**,  
upon becoming a Bar Mitzvah.

*Hazak u'Barukh* to **Moshe Sasson**, upon reading his first *haftarah*.