Debar Torah CONT. different tendencies, that most personalities don’t fit
the same mold, and, more importantly, that all family constellations and dy-
namics don’t fit the same mold. And love relationships within the family also
don’t follow the same mold. And yet the family itself is very important to the
astrologer, for that indeed constitutes the person’s very sign under which he was
born and his own stellar constellation and his fate is tied to it, for better or for
worse. So I found that the astrologers I talked to were more motivated to keep
families of many types intact and working, even when they may have been less
than ideal from the perspective of the psychological health of individual
partners. We are all fated, naturally as well as supernaturally, for trials, tribulations,
and hardships beyond our control. And then there is our own ugly sin, for
the consequences of which we bear responsibility. But we must not lose hope, nor
should we stop following our own constellation: The paths of the Heavens are
many, and ultimately known to no one but God. Marriage and family constella-
tions, in particular, can be the source of much bitterness and travail, but they
also ensure survival on earth and bring deliverance, through their hidden
partner, God: “So it was not you who sent me here, but God.”

Tenth of Tebet (Asarah BeTebet) Fast 5776
Tuesday, December 22, 2015
Dawn [Fast Begins] - 5:48 am
Fast Day Morning Services [Shahrit] - 7:15 am
Minhah [men wear tefillin] & Arbit - 3:45 pm
Sunset - 4:32 pm
End of Fast - 4:52 pm

Make your 2015 tax deductible donation
By now you should have received our year-end letter requesting
that you close out your open balances and make your additional contributions that we so deeply rely on. We urge you to send in your payments and gifts as soon as possible and in advance of December 31 so we can credit your gifts to your 2015 tax-
deductible giving. Go to shearithisrael.org/content/general-
donations to donate.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS
Mazal Tov to Shana and Louis Alexandre Berg on the birth of a
son, Mazal Tov to the grandparents, Esme and Roger Berg

Mazal Tov to Gabriela Yohananoff on becoming a Bat Mitzvah. Gabriela is the daughter of Daniela Weiss and Avi Yohananoff

Condolences to Danielle Lahmani on the passing of her sister, Evelyne Sahar.

The “Family Constellation.” In Praise of Joseph, the Astrologer
Rabbi Ira Rohde, Hazzan

“Now, do not be distressed or reproach yourselves because you sold me; it was to save the
life that God sent me ahead of you. It is now ten years that there has been famine in the land,
and there will still be five years to come in which there shall be no yield from tilling. But God has
sent me ahead of you to ensure your survival on earth and to save your lives in an extraordinary
deliverance. So, it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to
Pharaoh, lord of all his household, and ruler over the whole land of Egypt” (Gen. 45:5-8),

God does “work in strange ways.” That does seem to be the lesson which Joseph draws from the
story of what has happened and will continue to happen to him and his family. Joseph’s mention of the seven years of famine in the middle of his address to his brothers not to reproach themselves with guilt over their sale of him reminds us once again that
Joseph is kind of prophet/astrologer, a diviner of the paths and fates of people and events.
And in this fate, the family constellation plays a huge role. Astrologers, like their later
successors the psychoanalysts, emphasize the importance of basic family structures in
understanding the course one’s own and one’s family’s life will take. It is not surprising, then,
that we first learn in the Bible of the importance of birthdates in the story of Joseph and
the Pharaoh. The outmost importance of birth order, birth mother, basic family
dynamics, including especially as it manifests in dysfunction, are all emphasized in our
Bible story. Indeed, compared to what we know of the rest of the occupations of Joseph,
Jacob, and his brothers, the story of their family dynamics and intrigues is really out of
proportion. Of course, this kind of intrigue makes for good interest in a story (much
more than telling us how or where they plowed their fields or grazed their goats), and it
features largely in other political/historical narrative, as well. But it sure makes a great
psychoanalytical case study!

But there is one major difference in the way many psychoanalysts and psychologists under-
stand the effect of the family “constellation.” Many psychologists claim to “know,”
“study,” “analyze” the effect of these family constellations “scientifically,” and take it
upon themselves to judge what is a good or bad configuration, what its effects, good or bad,
will be, and assign a psychological form of guilt (which they often fail to
acknowledge as guilt) accordingly. There are exceptions, such as psychoanalysts who ad-
im the old Freudian and Jungian connection of their theory with mythology, and
psychologists who want their clients to understand the importance of their family past, but
want them to eventually be able to do so nonjudgmentally. However, many “mental
health” practitioners, like the medical doctors upon whom they have modeled their pro-
cession, end up narrowly categorizing family behavior as “healthy,” and “unhealthy.” The
Bible itself and the religious tradition condemn a lot of ways that go on in families as
“sinful,” but sin is often redeemable.

Astrologers have a reputation for a fatalistic determinism of multiple impersonal super
natural forces, which would seem to be at odds with a concept of human free will or God’s caring
Providence and Reward. But by and large, the sheer number of influences they can take
into account often leads to a multiplicity of ways the general “tendencies” they discern
could work out.

Over the years I’ve had contact with a number of counseling professionals, both psycho-
analytical as well as “alternative,” including coaches of various kinds, some with back-
grounds in astrology. 7 am stuck by the variation in types of personality types which the
astrologer was ready to recognize, without the need to categorize them as “healthy” or
“unhealthy.” Moreover, the astrologer was able to recognize that there are many CONT.

CANDLE LIGHTING | 4:12 pm
MINHAH | 4:15 pm
FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | following evening services | Rabbi Hidary gives a talk on "The Religious Humanism of Hakhm Yisrael Moshe
Hazzan" Sponsored by the Julis Family
ZEMIRIOT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary
SHAHARI (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Following services Rabbi Hidary will
deliver a seminar on “Three Steps to Sanctity”
TOT SHABBAT | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Levy Auditorium
YOUTH GROUPS | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Elias Room
JR. CONGREGATION | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue
KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium
TOPICS IN JEWISH PHILOSOPHY | Esther Hidary | 3:30 pm | For high
school students | Held at the Hidary home, 1 W 85th St Apt. 6A
SEUDAH SHELISHIT AND PIRKEI ABOt SHIUR | Rabbi Hidary on the topic
of the “Cutting Edge of Jewish Studies: Highlights from the AJS 2015 Conference” | 3:30 pm | The fall semester is sponsored by Lewis Lipsey
MINHAH/ARBIT | 4:05 pm
KETER SHEM TOB | Rabbi Hidary | Main Sanctuary
HADBALAH | 4:57 pm

Weekday Service Times
Mornings: Sun. 8:00 AM, Mon-Thur., 7:15 AM, Fri. Dec. 25, 8:00 AM
Evenings: Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs.: 6:30 PM (Arbit only)
Tuesday: 3:45 PM (Minhah and Arbit—Men wear Tefillin)
**Upcoming Events And Initiatives**

Tu B’Shevat Seder  
Sunday Night, January 24 | 7:00 pm  
Adults and teens, join Rabbi Meir Soloveichik for an evening of toasting, eating and learning Torah. Special singing contribution by Rabbi Ira Rohde. Meanwhile, our younger members will enjoy their own holiday repast and activities led by Yona Glass and a special appearance by our in-house fruit juggler, Rabbi Soloveichik. Register here: shearithisrael.org/tu-b’shevat-seder

Women’s Service  
Saturday, January 30 | 9:00 am  
By and for women, these services are an opportunity for women to lead prayer, read from the Torah and perform the mitzvat associated with our services. We welcome the opportunity to celebrate momentous occasions - such as a girl becoming bat mitzvah or a bride before her wedding - in the context of our service. To participate contact lirohde-csi@yahoo.com.

Save the Date: Young Families Shabbat Luncheon  
Saturday, February 6 | Following Morning Services  
We’ve got a great group of young couples and families who enjoy getting together and inviting their friends to experience the best of Shearith Israel. Stay tuned for registration details for our next Young Families Shabbat Luncheon.

Winter Coat Drive  
Through this Sunday, December 20  
Warm coats for men, women and children are needed. Place in the box outside Levy Auditorium.  
*Sponsored by the Shearith Israel League  
In cooperation with New York Cares.*

**Enroll in CSI’s Text Messaging Notification Service**

Many of our members and friends enjoy attending our special programs and events such as community meals, public lectures, etc. However, we know how busy you are and how easy it is to overlook an email or registration deadline; we want to help make it easier for you. We have set up a special text message service that can remind you when RSVP deadlines are approaching. We can also alert you of synagogue schedule changes, weather emergencies, security incidents or last minute class cancellations. To subscribe to our service, check our weekly emails for specific instructions. Please be assured, we will only text you for those alerts you have selected and will only use this on an as-needed basis.

**Sign up for the Shearith Israel Toddler Program**

Spring Semester Begins January 4  
Mondays & Wednesdays 9:30-11:30am  
For ages 16-34 months  
Caregiver attendance required  
Led by our veteran early childhood specialist, Liz Rios, toddlers learn colors and shapes, create arts and crafts, sing songs, explore Jewish holidays, music and enjoy special visits by Rabbi Ira Rohde. Spaces are limited. 1 or 2 day options. Register now at shearithisrael.org/toddlerprogram.

**Celebrate Pesah with Shearith Israel in New York or in Israel**

Once again, Shearith Israel members will have the opportunity to celebrate Pesah at the Inbal Hotel in Jerusalem. Rabbi Soloveichik will lead our unique Rambam Haggadah (Seder), deliver shiurim, and lead us on special tiyulim. We look forward to getting together with our many Shearith Israel members and alumni who make Israel their home. Registration and pricing details to follow.

**Weekday Judaic Education**

For schedule and class details go to: shearithisrael.org/content/judaic-education-and-major-lectures

*Sunday*  
◊ The Book of Kings | Rabbi Hidary | 8:40 am  
◊ Saadia Gaon’s Book of Beliefs and Opinions | Sjimon den Hollander | 9:30 am

*Monday*  
◊ Second Temple Jewish History | Rabbi Hidary | 7:00 pm  
◊ Bet Midrash | Rabbi Hidary, Phil Getz, Dr. Josh Eisen, Rabbi Ira Rohde, Meira Wokenfeld | 8:00 pm  
*Fall semester sponsored by Josh Eisen. Fall semester ends Dec 21. Spring Semester begins Feb 8.*

*Tuesday*  
◊ Rambam’s Mishnneh Torah | Rabbi Hidary | 7:45 am  
◊ Feasts and Fasts: The Festivals in Jewish Thought A Class for Women | Rabbi Soloveichik | 9:00 am  
*CLASS RESUMES IN JANUARY*  
◊ Talmud Class: Tractate Rosh Hashana and the Philosophy of Jewish Time | Rabbi Soloveichik | 8:00 pm  
*CLASS RESUMES IN JANUARY*

Please consider sponsoring a class. Go to: shearithisrael.org/sponsoraclass

Parnas Office Hours  
Louis Solomon would be delighted to meet with you. Please schedule a visit at parnas@shearithisrael.org.

Our next public tour is:  
Tuesday, January 12 at 11:00 am