Go, Team! The Cheer of the Sea
Rabbi Ira Rohde, Hazzan

I grew up in what used to be considered classic "football country" way Upstate. It seemed as though that town's entire civic life, and especially the education of its young, revolved around the high school football team, plus a few other sports, the cheerleaders, the band, the orchestra, choirs, and the parental and civic "booster" associations which backed them up. My mother, an educator, used to explain that the school administration staff in all the districts around were all coaches! Those days, that culture is, mostly, gone. Of course, the towns of Middle America are much poorer these days. But that's not the only reason school principals today aren't all men who were former coaches.

I was reminded of my nostalgia for that spirit, though, recently on a visit to my son's state university, on a scale beyond my imagination. The life of the entire city of Gainesville, Florida, so it would seem, revolves around the University of Florida's sports teams, the Gators. Alligator mascots are displayed everywhere, and I couldn't resist the urge to get myself a Gator Dad tee, Gator sweatshirt, and Kindle. "It's Great to be a Gator" yarmulke from the campus Chabad. Of course, having had Egyptian crocodiles on my mind during these last weeks' Parashiot about the plagues of Egypt (and particularly the discussion about animals in the story were, or might have been, crocodiles, snakes, or frogs), I thought about how crocodilians, and team spirit, relate to this Parashat... We call it "The Song of the Sea," but it's really the "Sea Cheer." The whole thing is about showing team spirit for God and His newly-emerged People Israel. It is a Thanksgiving for Rescue and Salvation, but it is also a Cheer of Victory for the Nile, the Sea, and their nefarious Sea Creatures, particularly the Croc, were, leaving aside being worshipped, the true "Mascots" of the "Swamp" of Egypt. So the turning back of the sea waters was a symbolic defeat of the Egyptian Mascot. The lines of the Song are full of stock-phrases and epithets used as a cheerful encouragement to the Fleeing Israelites and their God, who has emerged victorious. It was important that the cheer be taken up by the entire corps of the people in order to whip-up team spirit for the battles ahead, but it was also appropriate that Miriam and the ladies should form their own dancing cheerleaders' section, to the accompaniment of rhythmic instruments. Al- though there is no glorification of human heroes, there is glorification of the strength of the Divine Hero, a glorification of the power of Our Side, Our Team.

It's often necessary to submerge and sacrifice lot of individualism to get an entity to root for the same team. My own perspective is that of a musician and band member, but the same can be said of the sports team or a military troop. A team depends upon especially close coordination of action, action which allows it to act as if it were a single unit, a single voice, a unison, marching to the beat of the same drummer, in a single rhythm. Of course, there are other times when individualism can and should be expressed, and it's welcome. And the need for unison or harmony doesn't mean that individuals aren't necessary: On the contrary, each individual's maximum effort is necessary to contribute the team. So the challenge is to motivate each individual to give his or her best and strongest efforts to the team in the most harmonious, rhythmic way, in a way which allows the team to function best in tempo and in unison.

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Security Enhancements

Thanks to a substantial grant awarded to us by the US Dept. of Homeland Security, we have made many improvements to our security procedures and equipment. You may notice new blue emergency levers and strobe lights throughout our facility. These are intended to be highly visible. In the event that the lights are activated, congregants are asked to stay put and listen for instructions by CSI personnel.

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COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal Tob to Gail Propp on the birth of twin grandchildren, Effie Aurora and Ezekiel (Zeke) Propp to Anna and Gedaliah Riesenberg.

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Celebrate Pesach with Shearith Israel in

New York or in Israel

Once again, Shearith Israel members will have the opportunity to celebrate Pesach at the Inbal Hotel in Jerusalem. Rabbi Soloveichik will lead our unique Rambam Haggadah (Seder), deliver shirium, 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. To register or make inquiries, contact Ariel Tours directly at arieltours.com/csi.

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CONEGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Beshallah-Shirah
January 22-23, 2016

Hertz Pentateuch: Torah Reading: p. 265; Haftarah: p. 283
Kaplan Living Torah: Torah Reading: p. 320; Haftarah: p. 1108

CANDLE LIGHTING | 4:45 pm
MINAH | 4:45 pm
FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | following evening services | Rabbi Soloveichik gives a talk on "The Greatest Thing Since Un-sliced Bread: A Brief History of Hamorzi" | 2015-2016 Season Sponsored by the Jusi Family

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary
SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Rabbi Soloveichik will deliver a talk on "Methuselah: The Incredible Tale of Israel's Oldest Tree" | TOT SHABBAT | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Levy Auditorium
YOUTH GROUPS | Ages 5-12 | 1:00 pm | Elias Room
JR. CONGREGATION | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue
KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium | Sponsored by the Haberman family in honor of Simon and Eva's 61st wedding anniversary

TOPICS IN JEWISH PHILOSOPHY | Rabbi Hidary | 3:35 pm | For high school students | Held at the Hidary home, 1 W 86th St Apt. 6A | NO CLASS THIS WEEK

SEUDDAH SHELISHIT and SPECIAL SHABBAT AFTERNOON SHIUR | Rabbi Soloveichik on the topic "Snow: A Halakhic Analysis" | 3:35 pm | The Spring semester is sponsored by Lewis Lipsy

MINAH/ARBIT | 4:35 pm
HABDalah | 5:30 pm

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Weekday Service Times

Mornings: Sun. 8:00 AM, Monday-Thursday. 7:15 AM
Evenings: Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs.: 6:30 PM (Arbit only)

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(continued from back panel)
**Upcoming Events And Initiatives**

Severe Weather Alert: The forecast indicates snow for this weekend. We are hopeful that it will be moderate and are expecting both PTTS Hebrew School and our Tu B’Shevat Seder on Sunday to take place as planned.

In the event of cancellations due to weather, we will contact all Seder registrants and Hebrew School families by email. This is also a great time to take advantage of our text message notification service to also receive alerts via texting. Follow instructions provided on our emails to enroll.

Tu B’Shevat Seder
This Sunday Night, January 24 | 7:00 pm
For registered Guests
Join Rabbi Meir Soloveichik for an evening of toasting, eating and learning Torah. Special singing contribution by Rabbi Ira Rohde. Meanwhile, our younger members, under age 12, will enjoy their own holiday repast and activities led by Yona Glass and a special appearance by our in-house fruit juggler, Rabbi Soloveichik. Thank you to our sponsors:
Wine Sponsor The Haberman Family
Seder Sponsor Josh Eisen
Youth Supporter Dr. and Mrs. Norman Javitt

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 rituals 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.

Young Couples and Families Shabbat Luncheon Fiesta
Saturday, February 6 Following Morning Services
Young Couples and Families are invited to join Rabbi Soloveichik for this fun Mexican-themed Shabbat luncheon. 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. Childcare will be provided. To register, go to shearithisrael.org/young-couples-and-families-luncheon by February 2.

Communities of Character: A Conversation with David Brooks
Monday, March 7 | 7:00 pm
Temple Emanu-El’s Skirball Center: 1 E. 65th St.
Shearith Israel, UJA-Federation of New York, and synagogues across Manhattan are pleased to present this community-wide conversation with New York Times op-ed columnist David Brooks about character, moral joy, and what it means to care for one another. Join us for reflections from David Brooks as well as a dialogue facilitated by UJA-Federation CEO, Eric Goldstein. $18 per person (Your gift represents a charitable contribution to UJA-Federation of New York.) To register, visit www.ujafedny.org/david-brooks.

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

Sunday
◊ The Book of Kings | Rabbi Hiday | 8:40 am
  No class this week. Spring Semester begins on Feb 7.
◊ Saadia Gaon’s Book of Beliefs and Opinions | Sjimon den Hollander | 9:30 am

Monday
Second Temple Jewish History | Rabbi Hiday | 7:00 pm
  No class this week. Resumes on Feb 8.
◊ Bet Midrash | Rabbi Hiday, Phil Getz, Dr. Josh Eisen, Rabbi Ira Rohde, Meira Wokenfeld | 8:00 pm
  No class this week. Resumes on Feb 8.

Tuesday
◊ Rambam’s Mishne Torah | Rabbi Hiday | 7:45 am
  No class this week. Spring semester begins Feb 2.
◊ Feasts and Fasts: The Festivals in Jewish Thought - A Class for Women | Rabbi Soloveichik | 9:00 am
◊ Talmud Class: Tractate Rosh Hashana and the Philosophy of Jewish Time | Rabbi Soloveichik | 8:00 pm
  Spring semester sponsored by Gregory Bell

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, February 9 at 11:00 am

SAVE THE DATE: HerringFest!
Rabbi Meir Soloveichik
Tuesday, March 8 | 7:00 pm
HerringFest! will take place during Adar, the joyous month associated by our sages with the constellation of “dagim,” or fish. Participants will be able to sample a dazzling variety of ways in which the herring can be enjoyed. Featuring a short shiur by Rabbi Soloveichik, HerringFest! is sure to be an unforgettable culinary experience of Shearith Israel’s Dutch and Jewish heritage. Stay tuned for details.