“A MASTERPIECE OF MODERN RELIGIOUS LITERATURE” - THE NEW YORK TIMES

Ruby Namdar, author of The Ruined House in conversation with Shira Hecht-Koller of Drisha
Wednesday, March 6 | 7:00 pm
Free and open to the public
Join Ruby Namdar and Shira Hecht-Koller of Drisha for a lively discussion of The Ruined House, Namdar’s award-winning debut novel that draws heavily on Talmudic themes and structures, juxtaposing them with modern, secular Jewish intellectual life.
Learn about the author’s unique perspective on the Talmud, and how it has influenced him, his writing, and the book’s protagonist.

The event is free, but registration is encouraged—and signing up enters you to win a signed copy! Register at shearithisrael.org/rubynamdar.

Ruby Namdar was born and raised in Jerusalem to a family of Iranian-Jewish heritage. His novel The Ruined House won the Sapir Prize, Israel’s most prestigious literary award. He currently lives in NYC and teaches Jewish literature, focusing on Biblical and Talmudic narrative.

CHOIR SELECTIONS THIS SHABBAT
Support for this week’s choir has been provided by Felicja Warshawsky.

Friday Night
VShemera (p. 160) | Leon Hyman
Psalm 23 (p. 174) | Rev. H. P. Mendes
Yigdal #9 (p. 177) | Traditional

Shabbat Morning
Yehi Hasdeka (p. 215) | Leon Hyman
Umhuho Yomar (p. 218) | Rev. H. P. Mendes
Adon Olam (p. 232) | David Aaron de Sola

DAILY SERVICE: A MOST IMPORTANT COMMANDMENT
Z. EDDINGER
Toward the end of Chapter 29 in this week’s Parashah read about the regular daily service in the Tabernacle:
Now this is what you shall offer upon the altar: two lambs each day, always. You shall offer the first lamb in the morning, and the second lamb at twilight.

Surprisingly, this seemingly mundane verse is aced in great significance in a Midrashic tradition found in Rabbah Yalkut on Habbakuk’s. We find:

Ben Zoma says: We find that the entirety of the Torah is contained in the verse “Hear O Israel the Lord our God the Lord is One” (Deut 6:4).
Ben Neman says: We find that the entirety of the Torah is contained in the verse “Love thy neighbor as thyself” (Lev. 19:18).
Shimon ben Pasi says: We find that the entirety of the Torah is contained in the verse “You shall offer the first lamb in the morning, and you shall offer the second lamb at twilight” (Ex. 29:39).

Several well known midrashim address the question: what is the most important verse in the Torah? They cite in Bemidbar Rabba: “Torah is a loving neighbor”.

“Are there the generations of Aaron” (Gen. 5:1) is the great principle of the Torah; Rabbi Abina said: This is the great principle of the Torah: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18).

Several other similar sources exist. One midrashic compilation (Sefir Pittern Torah) contains the following: The Sages have said: All the commandments in the Torah are contained in two verses: the first verse “You shall love the Lord your God” (Deut 6:4) and the second, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18).

We can readily understand the central importance of verses like “Hear O Israel the Lord is One” and “Love thy Neighbor” these are tenets of our faith. But why does ben Pasi elevate to this level a verse about sacrificing two lambs every day?

The key to understanding our midrash is that it is likely a polemic against the Christian belief that after Jesus’ crucifixion sacrifices were no longer necessary. Two passages from the New Testament will illustrate this in the Gospels we find Jesus denouncing the Temple about our question, what is the most important commandment in the Torah? (Mark 12:28-34).

And one of the scribes came up and asked him “What commandment is the most important of all?” Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” And the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that He is one, and there is no other besides Him, and to love Him with all the heart and soul and might and strength and to love your neighbor as oneself is much more than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we find that early in their divergence from Judaism Christians viewed the death of Jesus as a sacrifice that allowed them from needing to bring sacrifices (Hebrew 10:11-14).

And the priests stand daily after at their service, offering again and again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. But when this one (Jesus) offered a single sacrifice for sin for all time, he set them at the right hand of God.

Ben Pasi’s assertion that the most important verse in the Torah instructs us to bring a twice daily sacrifice is a vehement rejection of the idea that the sacrificial order had been superseded. For almost 2000 years now we have not been able to bring the daily sacrifice. But in all those years we have never stopped praying for its restoration. Ben Pasi’s dictum reminds us that regular daily service is important. Consistent and regular worship is as important as all the ethical tenets of our religion.

We may no longer be able to bring sacrifices in the Temple, but we can attend daily worship in the synagogue. The morning and afternoon prayers were instituted by the Rabbis to mirror the daily sacrifices. In fact every day we ask God; May the day Thy will, that the proper of our lips be acceptable to Thee as we offered the Korban Tamid at its proper time. Our daily services meet in the small synagogue every morning and every evening. Your attendance in synagogue is important, perhaps even the most important mitzvot of all. Hope to see you there!!

CANDLE LIGHTING | 5:13 pm
EVENING SERVICES | 5:15 pm

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS WILL RETURN NEXT WEEK

MORNING SERVICES | Main Sanctuary | 8:15 am
TOT SHABBAT | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am
Fidanceau Youth Room
YOUTH GROUPS | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am
Elias Room
JUNIOR CONGREGATION | 10:30 am
Little Synagogue

SPECIAL PRESENTATION | Leon Hyman will speak to us about his experience being Choirmaster of Shearith Israel for the past 64 years. The choir will also perform one of Leon Hyman’s own compositions, annotated with special insights and commentary by Mr. Hyman.

KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium | Sponsored by Marco di Laurenti in honor of Leon Hyman’s birthday. Thank you also to our anonymous Kiddush Fund contributor.

SHABBAT AFTERNOON SHIUR WILL RETURN NEXT WEEK
EVENING SERVICES | 5:05 pm
HADDBAL | 6:02 pm

Our offices will be closed on Monday for Presidents Day.

Weekday Service Times
Mornings:
Sunday & Monday: 8:00 am | Tuesday-Friday: 7:15 am
Evenings:
Sunday (Minha & Arvit): 5:15 pm
Monday-Thursday (Arvit only): 6:30 pm

Central Park West at 70th Street, New York City • www.shearithisrael.org
**Minyan Schedule Alert:** Sunday Evening Services
Sunday evening services in February will include both Minha and Arich.
Please note the following new Sunday evening service times:
February 17 evening services at 5:15 pm
February 24 evening services at 5:15 pm
Regular weekday evening services (Monday-Thursday) will remain at 6:30 pm for Arich only.

**Purim at Shearith Israel**

Send Mishloah Manot to a Member
**Ordering Deadline: March 1 at 11:00 PM**
Take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to send special Purim greetings and to reach out to our Shearith Israel community. This project will support the Sisterhood’s many projects. More information has been sent out via email—if you haven’t seen it, check your spam folder!
For questions, please contact Mrs. Lisa Rohde at lirohde-csi@yahoo.com or Mrs. Carla Schein at scheinc6@gmail.com.

Participate in Our Annual Women’s Megillah Reading
2 rehearsals: Sunday, February 24 | 7:00 pm
Sunday, March 10 | 7:00 pm
This year, our Annual Women’s Megillah Reading falls on Thursday morning, March 21. Services start at 7:15 am and Megillah is scheduled for 8:00 am.
Any woman or girl who has passed their 12th birthday is eligible to participate! Assignments can be as short as 3 verses, and audio is available on the synagogue website to study on the go, so don’t be afraid to give it a try.
Anyone who wants to participate should contact Mrs. Lisa Rohde at lirohde-csi@yahoo.com as soon as possible for an assignment.

**SOLD OUT**—Knitting for Teens
THIS Saturday Night, February 16 | 7:00 pm
The final session of this Sisterhood initiative, led by experienced knitter Karen Daar, will take place in a private home.

**UPCOMING LECTURES**

**Major History Lecture**
Rabbi Meir Soloveichik
Monday, February 25 | 7:00 pm | Levy Auditorium
Details to follow.

**Special Guest Speaker**
Rabbi Raif Melhado
Rabbi of Kahal Joseph Congregation of Los Angeles
THIS Wednesday, February 20 | 7:00 pm | Elias Room
“Rabbi Shem Tob Gagnune and the Preservation of Western Sephardic Liturgy”

**UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS**

**Mitzvot Workshops with Shamash, Z. Edinger**
For Children Aged 5-12
Select Sunday Mornings at 10:00 am
Sunday, March 3 | Sunday, April 14
These Mitzvot Workshops are a wonderful opportunity for our elementary school age youth - both boys and girls - to learn to sing the melodies of selected prayers from the Shabbat and holiday services as well as learn about the parts of the Torah service, and receive training in the hands-on parts of the service.
Sign up for March 3 (it’s FREE!) at shearithisrael.org/mitzvot-workshop.

**Brunch & Learn with Rabbi Soloveichik**
For Elementary School Aged Children & Their Parents
Sundays, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm
**Final Session of the School Year: March 10**
On several Sundays over the course of the year, children and their parents start the day together with morning services after which they will proceed to a topical ‘Brunch and Learn’ with Rabbi Soloveichik.
Register at shearithisrael.org/brunch-learn.

**Presidents Week Schedule Alerts**
- Our offices will be closed on Monday for Presidents Day.
- Rabbi Silber’s Sunday class will not meet this week.
- Rabbi Soloveichik’s Tuesday Morning Women’s Class will not meet this week.
- Toddler Program will not be held on Monday.
- PTTS Hebrew School will not be held on Thursday.

**Judaica Appraisal Day**
Sunday, March 10 | 2:00 pm-5:00 pm
Presented by
The Sisterhood of the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue with contributions from the Shearith Israel League
Jonathan Greenstein, a noted antique Judaica authentication expert, will enlighten us about the field of antique Judaica. Some of Shearith Israel’s treasured objects will also be highlighted. Mr. Greenstein will then evaluate and discuss pieces brought by the attendees at this event (our own kind of “Antiques Road Show”).
So bring your menorahs, kiddush cups, spice boxes, etrog cases, megillot or any other Judaica articles of interest you may want to share. Limit two items per person. Mr. Greenstein will talk about as many items as possible in the time allotted. Given the history and diversity of our congregation, this should be a fascinating event!
$18.00 pre-registered or $25.00 at the door
$100 Sponsor (includes 2 tickets and a listing)
To register, visit shearithisrael.org/judaica.

**Community Announcements**

**Mazal Tov** to Col. Jonathan de Sola Mendes, the Live the Mission honoree at the 8th Annual Sephardic Academy of Manhattan masquerade gala. The gala will be held at Mois Safra Center on Monday, April 8. To attend or sponsor, visit sephardicacademy.org/gala.

**Mazal Tov** to Dr. Lu Steinberg, the Distinguished Alumna of the Year at the Ferkauf Graduate School’s 2019 Alumni Dinner. The dinner will be held at Lincoln Square Synagogue on Thursday, March 28. To attend or sponsor, visit tinyurl.com/lu-alumna.