The Road to Kingship
Sundays | 10:00 am | Rabbi David Silber
Beginning THIS Sunday, October 27
Tuition is $200, but FREE for Shearith Israel members
An exploration of the Samson story, the last 5 chapters of the Book of Judges, and Megillat Ruth as texts that prepare us for the institution of kingship. To register or request your member discount, visit shearithisrael.org/silver-kingship.

Candle Lightning | 5:45 pm
Evening Services (Minha & Arvit) | 5:45 pm | Main Sanctuary
7:30 pm Season Premiere: Friday Night Lights

Zemirot | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary
Shahrit | 9:15 am
T’of Shabbat | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Fidanceh Year Room
Youth Groups | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Eliahs Room
Jr. Congregation | Ages 5-12 | 10:10 am | Little Synagogue
No Kiddush This Week

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue
Shabbat Bereshit
#ShowUpForShabbat
October 25-26, 2019

DEBORAH TORAH
—HAZZAN RABBI IRA ROHDE—
When God began to create the heavens and the earth—the earth being uninformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep and a wind from God sweeping over the water—God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, a first day.

(Gen. 1:5-8, The Torah, JPS Transl.)

Our traditions refer to God as Creator of Heaven and Earth” (Gen. 14:19), and “He who stretched forth the Heavens and founded the Earth” (Isaiah 51:13, Zachariah 12:1).

That Creation and Foundation would seem to have been a complete, total creation of nothing. Yet when we read the wording of Genesis, the picture is far from clear, and indeed it’s quite confusing. Terms which mean “void” or “abyss” are used, and yet there seems to be some kind of uninformed “land” and the “deep” is filled with water. The philosophical and scientific traditions, both among non-Jews as well as among Jews, struggled with similar questions. Plato in the Timaeus says the earth was created by a “demiurge,”—a craftsman or artisan. Aristotle, on the other hand, can’t conceive of creating something completely out of nothing, and says that there must be something like the “wood” out of which the artisan crafts which “underlies” Creation. This he calls “tyle,” a term coming from “wood,” or “hypooleimeno,” meaning “substance” or “underlying.” Later Jewish, Christian, and Muslim philosophers continue the discussion, and many of their answers, such as that of Maimonides, seem less guiding out of perplexity than leading the reader back into it.

One recent interpreter of Maimonides, however, makes a very good point. For Maimonides, even if there were some “substance” prior to Creation, because that “substance” would have been completely devoid of form, it couldn’t have really have been thought of as “existing,” in the sense we know it at all. Now, the terms “dark,” “deep,” and “wood” would seem to have a more defined sense in Genesis. But because of their complete fluidity and unidentifiability of form, as well as the deep darkness which doesn’t allow them to be seen, it would seem to me that that is the same point Genesis is making. It is only when Light Shines, revealing Form out of Chaos, that the World begins truly to exist in any comprehensible sense. Later in Genesis when God makes Man, He actually does “craft” him out of preexisting “Earth,” whence comes his name “Adam” (“Earthling”). But again it is the “formation,” this time in the very Imago of God, which is primary. And in our modern physics, although we might continue searching for ever-receding substrates, our matter-energy continuum effectively means that even when matter-energy takes on mathematically-characteristic order and form can that matter-energy be said to come into existence. Creation Out of Nothing is therefore Creation Out of Nothing.

The Greek and Latin terms for “substance” are identified with the grammatical terms for “subject,” as well. The Greek subject “underlies the action of the verb. But Hebrew is a much more “verb-based” language. The subject itself doesn’t have much of an identity; it is formed largely through the action of verbs. The World is what God’s Words and Actions make the World Become. And we, too, craft ourselves through our actions. We are the product of the way we mold ourselves. Whom we are is the Creation of what our words and deeds make us become. May this thought inspire us to do and act our best in the cycle of the year ahead.

Weekly Service Times
Mornings: 8:00 AM | Monday-Friday: 7:15 AM
Evenings: Sunday-Thursday: 5:45 PM

Central Park West at 70th Street, New York City • www.shearithisrael.org
Celebrate Rabbi Marc Angel’s 50th Anniversary in the Rabbinate

Our Rabbi Emeritus, Rabbi Marc Angel, is celebrating 50 years in the rabbinate and will mark the occasion with a seminar, “Reflections on 50 Years of Rabbinic Service.” After the seminar, congregants are welcome to wish Rabbi Angel mazel tov at the kiddush to follow. To sponsor this kiddush in Rabbi Angel’s honor, visit shearithisrael.org/rabbinate50.

Register for PTTS Hebrew School

Thursdays with special programming on select Sundays

For over 200 years, Shearith Israel’s Hebrew School has given children the strong educational foundation and skills necessary to access Jewish texts, understand their heritage, learn the Western Sephardic tradition, and lead a vibrant Jewish life. Learn more and register at shearithisrael.org/hebrewschool.

CHOIR SELECTIONS THIS SHABBAT

Friday Night

V’Shamru “82” (p. 166) | Samuel Naumbourg
Psalm 23 (p. 174) | Rev. H.P. Mendes
Tenu Shebaha (Festival Prayerbook) | Words & music by Rev. Jacques Judah Lyons
Shabbat Morning

Misheberakh (p. 208) | Salomone Rossi
Yehi Ha’delta (p. 215) | Leon Hymen
Ubnuho Yomar (p. 218) | Rev. H.P. Mendes
Adon Olam (p. 232) | David Aaron de Sola

PORTUGUESE CITIZENSHIP WITH RITA MAYER JARDIM

Thursday, November 7 | Following 6:30 pm Evening Services

WhileSpain has ended its Law of Return for Sephardic Jews, Portugal continues to grant European citizenship to those wishing to reclaim their ancestors’ citizenship. Close to 10,000 people have already been approved with around 40,000 pending.

Rita Mayer Jardim, a Lisbon-based lawyer specializing in this path to Portuguese citizenship, will return to our Congregation to update us on this law.

Questions abound, and you can learn the answers during an informal chat where a successful case will be discussed. This event is free, but registration is encouraged at shearithisrael.org/portuguese-citizenship.

Note that this session is meant for informational purposes only, not as an endorsement of any business.

Composting of Lulabim and Other Succot Greens

Due THIS Monday morning, October 28, by noon

Bin outside Levy Auditorium

After Succot, rather than throwing out your lulabim, take advantage of this eco-friendly opportunity and leave your lulabim with us! The NYC Dept of Sanitation (DNSNY) will collect our Succot organics for composting.

Leave your lulabim, etrogim, and any other Succot plant material in the box near the water fountain outside Levy Auditorium and we’ll do the rest.

Touro Shabbaton Updates—Keep An Eye on Your Inboxes!

Registrants for our Veterans Day Weekend Shabbaton at the Touro Synagogue will be receiving updated and logistical information via email, so keep an eye out! If you would like to join the waitlist for this sold-out Shabbaton, contact Sarah Gross at sgross@shearithisrael.org.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome and thank you to Matthias Dettinger, Head of Culture and Education at the Swiss Consulate in NY, and his family, who are joining us this Shabbat in honor of ShowUpForShabbat. This Shabbat is the second annual #ShowUpForShabbat, a national initiative started by the AJC on the Shabbat following the attack at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. Last year, countless Jews and people of all faiths and backgrounds filled synagogues across America and around the world in what was described as the largest expression of support for the Jewish community ever.

JEWISH EDUCATION 5780

⇒ Friday Night Lights | Rabbi Soloveichik
Returning THIS Friday Night, October 25 | Following Evening Services
⇒ The Guide to the Duties of the Heart | Rabbi Simon den Hollander
Returning THIS Sunday, October 27 | 8:45 am
⇒ The Road to Kingship | Rabbi David Silber
Beginning THIS Sunday, October 27 | 10:00 am | see side panel for details
⇒ Tuesday Morning Women’s Class | Rabbi Soloveichik
Returning Tuesday, October 30 | 9:00 am
⇒ Bet Midrash | led by Steven Gotlib
Monday-Thursday | An hour before evening services

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

COMING UP AT A GLANCE

⇒ Rita Jardim Presentation on Portuguese Citizenship
Thursday, November 7 | Following 6:30 pm Evening Services | See center panel for details
⇒ Shabbaton to Touro
Veterans Day Weekend. November 8-10
⇒ Mitzvot Workshop with Z. Edinger
Sunday, November 17 | 10:30 am | for elementary school aged children
⇒ Rabbi Marc Angel Celebrates 50 Years in the Rabbinate
Shabbaton Morning, December 7 | See side panel for details
⇒ Brunch & Learn with Rabbi Soloveichik
Sunday, December 8 | 10:30 am | for elementary school aged children

Don’t Let Us Go Dry

Be a scotch or arak sponsor. To sponsor or contribute go to shearithisrael.org/scotch-and-arak-sponsorships.

Public Tours
Our next public tour is Wednesday, November 13, at 11:00 AM

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