Open Bet Midrash
Weeknights | One hour before evening services
Our Shearith Israel Bet Midrash Program has officially begun its 2019-2020 season! Each weeknight will have two
semikha students available to help satisfy your religious
curiosity. If you are interested in setting up a habratura on any
subject of your choice, please reach out to Steven Gobit at
stigot@gmail.com.

CHOIR SELECTIONS THIS SHABBAT
Friday Night
V’Shamere #1 (p. 166) | Samuel Naumburg
Psalm 23 (p. 174) | Rev. H.P. Mendes
Yigdal (p. 177) | Traditional London, “Old Melody”

Shabbat Morning
Misheberakh (p. 208) | Salamone Rossi
Yehi Hasekha (p. 215) | Leon Kramer
Unhuvo Yomar (p. 218) | Leon Hyman
Adon Olam (p. 232) | Samuel de Sola

Stitch & Fix
Presented by the Sisterhood
Bi-Monthly on Sundays & Tuesdays | 10 am-12 pm
See schedule below | Elias Room

Stitch and Fix, the revived Sewing Circle, meets on a regular basis. Drop in, select an item from our synagogue vestments that needs mending, then stitch and fix. Some items you can even take home and fix at your convenience. For questions, contact Rose Edinger at rgedinger@gmail.com.

DEBORAH TORAHAH
—STEVEN GOTTLIB, BET MIDRASH COORDINATOR—
The Akedah portrays a stark conflict between moral intuition and the direct, unquestionable word of God. What should we readers choose to sacrifice as we finish reading the Akedah? Our sense of human morality, or our devotion to God?
Soren Kierkegaard argued that a human’s duty is to nullify his or her will before God even when that means suspending one’s ethical assumptions. Whatever God wants done must be done without question. When God tells you to jump, you can’t even ask how high. When God tells you to slaughter your son, you start sharpening the knife.
Kierkegaard’s view is in direct contradiction to that of Immanuel Kant. According to Kant, the only thing we know for certain that is it utterly immoral to kill our children. No one can know with the same degree of confidence that God is communicating to them. It was therefore incumbent on Abraham to question the voice he heard commanding the Akedah. Why? The academy made no move whatsoever until proof of it being God’s voice could be ascertained—and no sufficient proof would be possible.
R. Aharan Lichtenstein and R. Shimon Gershon Rosenberg (Shagar) each wrote responses from within Jewish tradition to both Kierkegaard and Kant.
According to R. Lichtenstein, a person cannot and should not suspend their own ethical judgment when faced with the word of God. They must rather work on themselves until they and God want the same thing. “One must nullify his own will and accept God’s will as the driving force in his life. Ultimately, one should strive to reach the level where he can translate God’s will into his own.”
This approach allows for Kierkegaard’s acceptance of God’s command as the be’al-end-end-all, while simultaneously allowing for a degree of Kant’s moral push-back. With this view, a person may search for the reason that they are faced with this apparent contradiction between God’s word and their moral intuition. They can wrestle with the command that they have been given and come to their own conclusions about the reason for it. But at the end of the day, a command is still a command. Upon reaching resolution, that command must be carried out as the will of God, and as their own will as well.
Rav Shagar by contrast gives doubt a legitimate and essential role in religious decision-making. He develops his position via a midrash in which the Satan tells Abraham that it was really he, not God, who commanded the sacrifice of Isaac. God will accuse Abraham of being a murderer the next day if he goes through with this crazy act. Abraham responds that he will go through with what he perceives as the will of God, even though he knows that he can’t truly know he is correct. Rav Shagar argues that one can achieve true religious devotion only by experiencing and overcoming doubt. A devotion that ignores doubt entirely can be very dangerous in an age where we no longer have direct prophecy. How are we to know that the path we are on is truly the right one and we are not misguided? Furthermore, how do we know that what we are doing is truly the word of Hashem?
Rabbi Hayyim Angel answers this question by pointing out that Judaism is about serving God, not about serving ourselves. Since God is a wholly
moral being, His commands must also be moral. The Akedah narrative demonstrates to us that we should love God enough to do whatever it is that he demands of us, but also that God does not want us performing immoral actions in His name. Reading the Akedah with this in mind makes clear that neither moral intuition nor trust in God should ever be sacrificed.

Congregation Shearith Israel Year of Years Celebration
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue
Shabbat Vayera
November 15-16, 2019

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 63; Haftarah p. 76
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 78; Haftarah p. 1060

CANDLE LIGHTING | 4:27 pm
EVENING SERVICES (MINHA & ARBIT) | 4:30 pm | Main Sanctuary
FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “Shimon Bar Yochoi & The Twilight Zone” | 2019-2020 season sponsored by the Juli Family.

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary
SHABRIT | 9:15 am
TOT SHABBAT | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Fidankan Youth Room
YOUTH GROUPS | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Elias Room
JR. CONGREGATION | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue

KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium | Sponsored Iry & Marvin Schildkraut in honor of Eli Schildkraut reading the Torah on the anniversary of his bar Mitzvah.

SHABBAT AFTERNOON CLASS | 3:30 pm | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “The Matza of Sodom and Gomorrah”
EVENING SERVICES (MINHA & ARBIT) | 4:10 pm
HARDALA | 5:05 pm

Weekday Service Times
Mornings: Sunday: 8:00 AM | Monday-Thursday: 7:15 AM
Evenings (Arbit Only): Sunday-Thursday: 6:30 PM

Central Park West at 70th Street, New York City • www.shearithisrael.org
PTTS Shabbaton & Family Beatbox Luncheon
With special guest, champion beatboxer Mark Martin
Shabbat, December 14
Our PTTS Hebrew School students are encouraged to take center stage at Junior Congregation on this special shabbat, and then warmly welcomed to join the exciting programming we have planned: Mark Martin, Winner of the 2016 American Beatbox Championships, the 2016 International BeatRhyyme Battle, and founder of “We Speak Music,” will be joining us for our family luncheon after services.
Following Jr. Congregation, Mark will host a beatbox workshop for the teenagers and children, and he’ll also give a talk at the luncheon on the use of beatboxing as a tool for speech therapy.
To register or sponsor, go to shearithisrael.org/beatbox.

Celebrate Rabbi Marc Angel’s 50th Anniversary in the Rabbinate
Shabbat, December 7
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 join our list of sponsors for this kiddush in Rabbi Angel’s honor, visit shearithisrael.org/rabbinate50.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS
We are proud to recognize the involvement of our congregational leaders, trustee David Dangoor, and Layaliza & Rabbi Meir Soloveichik in the upcoming UN Watch Gala Dinner, to be held on December 5 at the Plaza Hotel, featuring Keynote Speaker Ambassador Nikki Haley. UN Watch fights anti-Israeli prejudice at the UN, and defends the true principles of human rights.
To attend or support the dinner, visit unwatch.org/nygala.

Annual Thanksgiving Pack-A-Thon
Thursday, November 28 | 9:30 am
This year, together with Chaham, we will be packing robust packages of chicken, meat, and more that will be distributed to hundreds of struggling Jewish families.
We are delighted to once again be partnering with our local faith community partners in this inter-faith project — The Jewish Center, The West End Collegiate Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and Drisha — and we welcome this year’s new partner, the Sephardic Academy of Manhattan.
Come join us on your own or with your whole family on Thanksgiving Day, to give back to those in need, and help us reach our $18,000 goal! which is still only a fraction of the total cost of this project.
Participation starts at $18 per person, but larger donations are encouraged, and once again, thanks to an anonymous grant, all donations will be TRIPLED (up to $10,000), and after that, we received a 2-to-1 matching grant for an additional $1000 — so donate today!
To volunteer at the Pack-A-Thon and/or support this event, visit shearithisrael.org/packathon2019.

Thanksgiving Parade Viewing for Youth
November 28 | 9:30 am
Our Portico provides one of the best Thanksgiving Parade views in the city. In an effort to ensure an orderly, secure, and enjoyable experience for the kids, we ask that you pre-register.
Please note that the parade viewing is for children, and adults are asked to give priority to the children. Please limit registration to 4 children and 2 adults.
Parade Viewing Registration is FREE for:
- CSI Members
- Current PTTS Students
- Current Toddler Program Students
- Pack-A-Thon donors at the $180 level and above
For all others and guests of the above, registration is $18 per person in advance and $25 at the door.
To register your child for the parade viewing, visit shearithisrael.org/parade2019.

JEWISH EDUCATION 5780

⇒ Friday Night Lights | Rabbi Soloveichik
Friday Nights | Following Evening Services
⇒ The Guide to the Duties of the Heart | Rabbi Simdon Hollander
Sunday Mornings | 8:45 am
⇒ The Road to Kingship | Rabbi David Silber
Sunday Mornings | 10:00 am
⇒ Tuesday Morning Women’s Class | Rabbi Soloveichik
Tuesdays | 9:00 am | Sign up for weekly reminders at shearithisrael.org/join-our-email-lists
⇒ Bet Midrash | led by Steven Gotlib
Monday-Thursday | One hour before evening services

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

COMING UP AT A GLANCE

⇒ Mitzvot Workshop with Z. Edinger
THIS Sunday, November 17 | 10:00 am | for elementary school aged children
⇒ Thanksgiving Pack-A-Thon
Thursday Morning, November 28 | 9:30 am | See center panel for details
⇒ Stitch & Fix
Sunday, November 24 & Tuesday, November 26 | 10:00 am | See side panel for details
⇒ Rabbi Marc Angel Celebrates 50 Years in the Rabbinate
Shabbat Morning, December 7 | See side panel for details
⇒ Brunch & Learn with Rabbi Soloveichik
Sunday, December 8 | 10:30 am | for elementary school aged children

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.