



**PARK  
SLOPE  
JEWISH  
CENTER**

May 24 - June 1, 2019 19-27 Iyyar 5779  
Parashat B'har

Friday, May 24   19 Iyyar				Parashat B'har Saturday, May 25   20 Iyyar		
Kabbalat Shabbat with <b>Andrés/Gabriel Spokoiny</b>   6:30PM Candle Lighting   7:56PM				Shacharit   10:00AM <b>Gabriel Spokoiny Bar Mitzvah</b> Advanced Talmud   1:30PM <b>Dina Nadler-Serber Adult Bat Mitzvah</b>   4:00PM - Mincha		
Sunday May 26 21 Iyyar	Monday May 27 22 Iyyar	Tuesday May 28 23 Iyyar	Wednesday May 29 24 Iyyar	Thursday May 30 25 Iyyar	Friday May 31 26 Iyyar	Saturday June 1 27 Iyyar
PAI - Walking Group 9:00AM	 <b>MEMORIAL DAY</b>  Office Closed	Hebrew School 4:00PM	Morning Minyan 7:15AM  Hebrew School 4:00PM  Gesher 6:15PM	Board Meeting 7:15PM	Lev Tahor Game Night 6:30PM  Candle Lighting 8:02PM	<i>Shabbat Behukotai</i>  Shacharit   10:00AM  Jr. Congregation   11:00AM  Tot Shabbat/Mini Minyan 11:15AM  Book Club   1:30PM
<b>Park Slope Jewish Center</b> 1320 Eighth Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11215 (718) 768-1453 Office hours: M-Th 9AM-5PM, F 9AM-2PM www.psjc.org   email: office@psjc.org				Rabbi Carie Carter, Rabbi (rabbicarie@psjc.org) Ellen Brickman, President (president@psjc.org) Elana Ayalon, Director of Administration (office@psjc.org) Aileen Heiman, Director of Youth Education (aileen.heiman@psjc.org) For questions about Accessibility (inclusion@psjc.org)		

**Mazal Tov!**

To **Gabriel, Erica, Andrés** and **Dan** on Gabriel's Bar Mitzvah this Shabbat.  
To **Dina, Avi, Charles, Marvin** and **Henrietta** on Dina's Bat Mitzvah this Shabbat.

**Todah Rabbah**

To **Erica Mirochnik** and **Andrés Spokoiny** for contributing to the Kiddush Fund in honor of Gabriel's Bar Mitzvah this Shabbat!  
To **Dina Nadler-Serber** and **Avi Serber** for contributing Seudah Shlishit in honor of Dina's Bat Mitzvah during Mincha Services this Shabbat!  
To **Mindi Wernick** and **Malkie Grozalsky** for sponsoring plants towards our Flower fund in honor of Mindi's mother, **Ahuva Wernick**, z"l.  
To **Marjorie, Joel** and **Sam Rothenberg** for hosting the Shabbat Shmooze last Shabbat.

**HaMakom Yenachem**

Our condolences go to:  
**Julie Greenspon** and family the death of Julie's father, **Barry Edward Greenspon**, z"l  
**Joy Messer** and family on the death of Joy's father, **Leonard Messer**, z"l.

**Yahrzeits observed 20-26 Iyyar:**

**Betty Kover**, mother of Elihu Kover; **Edith Brafman**, wife of Allen Brafman; **Ester Rothman**, grandmother of Benjamin Rothman; **Giselle Kaufman**, grandmother of Dahlia Kaufman; **Lena Silver**, great aunt of Steve Elworth; **Leo Stopnitsky**, father of Barbara Auslander; **Ludwig Fleischmann**, father of David Fleischmann; **Mendy Berger**, father of Hope Levav; **Milton Wax**, father of Ronnie Wax; **Myra Segal**, stepmother of Pete Segal; **Sue Desheh**, friend of Elizabeth Schnur and Peter Holmes. *May their memories be for a blessing.*



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Friday, May 31

**Lev Tahor: Game Night!** | 6:30PM

Lev Tahor's annual game night! Great fun for all ages. RSVP:

**Book Club - *Waking Lions*** (Leha'ir Areyot)

Saturday, June 1 | 1:30PM

Join us when Fairleigh Dickinson University anthropology professor and longtime PSJC member David Rosen and writer and book critic David Cooper will co-lead a discussion of *Waking Lions* (Leha'ir Areyot) by Ayelet Gundar-Goshen, a novel about Eritrean illegal migrants and the Israelis whose lives intersect with them in Beersheba. BPL has ten print English copies and both English and Hebrew ebook editions. An audiobook version is available from audible.com.

**7th Annual Israel Film Center Festival | June 3 - 12**

This year PSJC is partnering with the Israel Film Center Festival at the JCC on the Upper West Side. Purchase your tickets today enter code **psjc19** for 25% off general admission: <https://jccmanhattan.org/film/israel-film-center-festival/>.

**Rosh Hodesh Sivan Minyan**

Tuesday, June 4 | 7:00AM

**It's Friday - Summer**

Friday, June 7 | 10:00AM

Saturday, June 8

**Kishkush Reading Group** | 8:00 PM

**Shavuot**

Saturday, June 8 | **Shavuot Across Brooklyn Community Tikkun Leil Shavuot @ CBE** | 8:00PM

A night of learning with your fellow Brooklynites at the start of Shavuot.

Nathan Englander Keynote Speaker | 8:00PM

Sunday, June 9 | **Shavuot I**

**Shavuot Services** | 10:00AM (Main Sanctuary)

**Shaarei Mitzvah** (6th & 7th Grade) Art & Text Siyyum | 11:30AM (as part of services)

Celebrate with our B'nai Mitzvah families as they share the glass art they created through a study of Jewish values with Rabbi Carie and PSJC member Aura Shahaf Wolfe.

**Tot Sing-a-long** | 11:00AM (Downstairs)

A Torah themed sing-a-long with Abe!

**Shavuot Family Torah** | 11:00AM (Downstairs)

An interactive exploration of receiving Torah and the Ten Commandments with Aileen. Following the program we will have Torah topping ice cream sundaes!

**Community Kiddush and Potluck Picnic** | 12:45PM

Monday, June 10 | **Shavuot II**

**Shavuot Services** | 10:00AM (Main Sanctuary)

Sunday, June 9

**Have announcements?** Email by Monday 5:00PM (office@psjc.org)



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### Hebrew School Registration is Live!

Registration for 2019-2020 Hebrew School is OPEN!  
Join us for another year of Jewish learning!

[https://www.psjc.org/hebrew\\_school\\_registration](https://www.psjc.org/hebrew_school_registration)

Deadline to avoid \$100 late fee is **Friday, June 30, 2019**

Friday, June 14

**Pop Up Shabbat in the Park!** | 4:30PM

**Kabbalat Shabbat with Judy Ribnick** | 6:30PM

Saturday, June 15

**Simcha Shabbat** | 10:00AM

Join us as we will acknowledge our members who are celebrating their June birthdays & anniversaries.

**Kishkush Acharei Kiddush** | 1:00PM

Are you comfortable speaking Hebrew? Do you want a place to speak with other fluent Hebrew speakers? Join us after services and kiddush where we have a Shulchan Ivrit - a table to sit around, drink coffee and talk with one another in Hebrew. Those who aren't sure if they are "fluent" or not are all welcome! Contact Michal:

Kishkush.at.PSJC@gmail.com for more details.

**Shabbat Shmooze** | 1:30PM

Let's walk together over to the Shabbat Shmooze Potluck Lunch (after the Kiddush following Shabbat morning services). Bring a parve/dairy/veggie pot luck dish to share. The Shabbat Shmooze offers the chance to get to know some of the PSJC community and spend time with those you already know. It is a great way to keep the Shabbat vibe going all afternoon long.

### Shinshinim Farewell Party

Thursday, June 20 | 7:00PM | Union Temple - 17 Eastern Parkway

Join us as we celebrate and appreciate the incredible work of our community's Shinshinim! Kosher dinner will be served. RSVP to [noamw@jafi.org](mailto:noamw@jafi.org)

### Save the Date! PSJC goes to the Cyclones

Sunday, June 23 | 4:00PM - **Deadline Monday, June 5**

Brooklyn Cyclones vs Staten Island Yankees. Tickets are \$18.00 each includes a Kosher Hot Dog and soft drink as well as the fashionable Cyclones cap, and an additional donation to would be appreciated. Buy tickets now! Visit: <http://www.psjc.org/event/bklyn-cyclones.html>

**All congregants and visitors** (of all genders) are requested to wear a head covering in the Sanctuary. Cell phones and photography are not permitted in the synagogue during Shabbat. Please also refrain from applause during services. **PSJC runs on community participation.** If you are interested in: **leading Kabbalat Shabbat/Maariv Services**, email [freddie.brooks@psjc.org](mailto:freddie.brooks@psjc.org); **leading Shabbat Morning Services**, email Elizabeth Schnur at [davening@psjc.org](mailto:davening@psjc.org); **chanting Haftarah**, email Alan Palmer at [haftarah@psjc.org](mailto:haftarah@psjc.org), reading Torah, email Rabbi Sue Oren at [leyning@psjc.org](mailto:leyning@psjc.org). **To request an Aliyah or other honor**, email Rabbi Carter a week in advance ([rabbicarie@psjc.org](mailto:rabbicarie@psjc.org)), or notify the usher if you arrive before the Torah Service begins; we honor requests whenever possible. **To usher services**, email Ira Drucker at [ira.drucker@psjc.org](mailto:ira.drucker@psjc.org). G'mach, Hevra Kadisha welcome new members If you are able to cook, deliver meals, visit, attend shiva minyanim, do shmira or tahara for those who have died, and support our members in good and bad times - please contact G'mach and Hevra Kadisha to add your name to the distribution list: [gmach@psjc.org](mailto:gmach@psjc.org) or [hevradkadisha@psjc.org](mailto:hevradkadisha@psjc.org)

## Parashat B'har

Triennial: Leviticus 25:1-28 | Etz Hayim p.742; Hertz p.535; Plaut p.946  
Haftarah: Jeremiah 32:6-27 | Etz Hayim p. 759; Hertz p. 539; Plaut p.1003

### D'var Torah: Generosity & Its Limits

In Parashat Behar, the Torah presents a strikingly progressive socio-economic vision, where every seven years (*Shmita*) debts are forgiven, and every fifty years (*Yovel*) land ownership reverts back to its original egalitarian distribution. All of this reminds us that God is the one true owner of the earth and its resources, the one true source of blessing and abundance.

But this vision, though progressive, is not communist. The Torah recognizes that a whole host of factors - talent, effort, wisdom, luck - will cause some to succeed and others to fail). We are free to make choices about how and where we invest our labors and to benefit or lose as a result. And we generally get to keep what we get, use it for what we want, and share it with whomever we wish.

The Torah both expects, and permits, resource inequality to emerge (Devarim 15:11), but it contends with this unfortunate reality through a combination of limited required wealth redistribution and encouragement to be generous. We must leave the corners of our field for the poor to harvest (Vayikra 19:9), give a fixed percentage each year of our income (Devarim 14:28-29), and give tzedaka when we are asked (Devarim 15:7-10). But despite all of this, resource inequality will force some to eventually sell their most fundamental possessions - their property, their labor, and eventually their freedom (Vayikra 25:39-42).

The Torah permits us both to become slaves and own them, but it seeks to place limits on the institution and the inevitable exploitation. The initial period of servitude can last no more than six years. Since all debts are forgiven in the seventh year, servitude to pay off debt becomes unnecessary. A person can choose to remain a slave, but even that choice is overridden by the Yovel when the person gets back the property they sold and can rely on it to maintain themselves. Behar makes it a mitzvah to buy someone's release from slavery and places limits on the nature of the work the slave can be compelled to do. In many ways Parashat Behar is the blueprint for all economic justice initiatives, and for that we Jews can be proud. But it must be pointed out that most of the above is reserved for one's fellow Israelites. Disturbingly, the Torah does permit Israelites to maintain perpetual ownership of non-Israelite slaves, transfer them (like any other property) to another owner, and work them in ways that would be forbidden for Israelite slaves.

One might conclude therefore that the Torah is Israelite-supremacist, but I think a more accurate reading is that the Torah acknowledges and works within the limits of what can be expected of individuals or societies. Just as the Torah expects there to be wealth gaps, it also expects there to be empathy gaps.

Study after study shows that we are "wired" to be more generous with those with whom we feel the greatest connection: people who we know personally and people who look like those we know, people who we know have our backs or people who look like they would. Although we are naturally altruistic, our frontal lobe makes us more conservative and deliberate about what we share and with whom. It should be no surprise that the societies with the most extensive social safety nets tend to be those that are most homogeneous.

So the Torah does **not** base its expectations of generosity on our collective humanity. Without feelings of empathy, people do not comply willingly with the command to be generous; they must be compelled to share either by guilt and public shaming or by force. And research also shows that negative stimuli trigger people to be even less generous. Pushing people beyond the limits of their natural empathy can, therefore, lead to a complete disintegration of fundamental social bonds. This may help us understand better why different communities and countries react differently to the call to accept and settle refugees.

But the Torah's answer is not, as some would claim, to therefore just "take care of your own." Although we are only required to be generous toward those for whom we feel empathy, the Torah pushes us to expand the boundaries of our empathy. It wants strangers among us to be given the opportunity and responsibility to comply with the social contract, and it wants us to go out of our way to see the other as individuals and find the ways they are like us. As the Rambam states in the Mishneh Torah, Laws of Indentured Servants, 9:8: "The children of Abraham, our father—and they are Israel, to whom the Holy One, blessed be He, has provided the goodness of Torah and commanded us righteous judgments and statutes—they are compassionate to all."

This weekly commentary on the Torah portion is by **Rabbi Andy Shapiro Katz**, CY Director of North American Engagement "Torah Sparks" series produced by the Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem. A Haftarah commentary by Rabbi Mordechai Silverstein found at <http://www.conservativeyeshiva.org/torahsparks>.