



Friday, July 12 9 Tammuz				Parashat Chukkat Saturday, July 13 10 Tammuz		
Kabbalat Shabbat with Mindi Wernick 7:00PM Communal Candle Lighting 7:00PM Lights for Liberty - NYC 7:00PM Foley Square 5:30PM - meet @ PSJC to go as a group Candle Lighting 8:10PM				Shacharit 10:00AM Kishkush Acharei Kiddush 1:00PM		
Sunday July 14 11 Tammuz	Monday July 15 12 Tammuz	Tuesday July 16 13 Tammuz	Wednesday July 17 14 Tammuz	Thursday July 18 15 Tammuz	Friday July 19 16 Tammuz	Saturday July 20 17 Tammuz
			Morning Minyan 7:15AM Hebrew Reading for Adult beginners 7:00PM		Kabbalat Shabbat with Elizabeth Schnur 7:00PM Candle Lighting 8:05PM	<i>Shabbat Balak</i> Shacharit 10:00AM Difduf/Kishkush Reading Group 1:00PM
Park Slope Jewish Center 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) Aileen Heiman, Director of Youth Education (aileen.heiman@psjc.org) For questions about Accessibility (inclusion@psjc.org)		

HaMakom Yenachem

Our condolences go to:

Adine Schuman Pusey and her family on the death of Adine's father, **Joseph Schuman**, z"l.

Yahrzeits observed 10-16 Tammuz:

Abraham Heffler, grandfather of Barry Blumenfeld; **Dora Schuman**, grandmother of Adine Schuman Pusey; **Eileen Baron**, sister of Jeffrey Baron; **Ellen Fried**, wife of Marshall Sohne; **Fannye Roberts Smith**, mother of Ann Smith; **Ira Lebowitz**, friend of Alan Palmer; **Jerome Rolnick**, father of Josh Rolnick; **Lawrence Lieberman**, father of Geoff Lieberman; **Libby Rosenfeld**, mother of Roberta Moskowitz; **Mary Hoffert**, grandmother of Pamela Kaplan; **Max Elfont**, grandfather of Adine Schuman Pusey; **Miriam Kuperhand**, mother of David Kuperhand; **Pauline Pollack**, grandmother of David Pollack; **Rabbi Howard Kummer**, father of Daniel Kummer; **Sarah Zelko**, mother of Gary Zelko; **William Bayard Miller**, father of Richard Bayard Miller.

May their memories be for a blessing.

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 or hevra kadisha@psjc.org

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.

Hebrew Free Burial Society is in need of tallitot to use for peoples' burial. If you have old tallitot you would like to donate, please consider bringing them to PSJC. We will collect them in the kiddush room this summer and send them to HFBS before Rosh Hashanah.

Our Annual Honey Sale

Once again, PSJC will be participating with ORT so you can send Honey to your friends and family in time for Rosh HaShanah.

This is a lovely gift and a PSJC fundraiser.

Order now www.psjc.org/honey.

Get your orders in before Monday, August 5 so you can get free shipping



Kishkush Acharei Kiddush

Saturday, July 13 | 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.

Hebrew Reading for Adult beginners @ Park Slope Jewish Center

Wednesdays | 7:00PM-8:30PM | July 17, 24, 31; Aug 7, 14, 21, 28

Instructor: Rabbi Sue Oren | Fee: \$275 (includes course materials)

For adults interested in learning to read Hebrew (or refreshing their rusty skills!) Learn to read the Hebrew "alefbet" (aka alphabet) on Wednesdays this summer! This course provides a systematic approach to recognizing and sounding out the Hebrew writing system. In class and at home, you'll reinforce this learning through practical exercises and introduction to basic vocabulary from Jewish prayer. For registration and questions, contact Rabbi Oren: slopehebrew@earthlink.net or 917.539.1334. Co-sponsors: East Midwood Jewish Center, Flatbush Jewish Center, Kolot Chayeinu/Voices of Our Lives, Park Slope Jewish Center, Union Temple

Saturday, July 20 | 1:00PM

Difduf/Kishkush Reading Group

Read and discuss short stories in Hebrew. Contact Michal: Kishkush.at.PSJC@gmail.com for more details.

Shabbat Shmooze | 1:30PM

Shabbat Shmooze is a get-together at PSJC courtyard during the summer months. We will shmooze after the Kiddush. Bring a parve potluck dish to share. If anyone would like to host a Shabbat Shmooze in the coming year, please email shabbatshmooze@psjc.org, with the date they would like to host a Shabbat Shmooze (3rd Shabbat of the month).

Advanced Talmud

Saturday, July 27 | 1:30PM

This class is an on-going self-study group appropriate for people who are proficient in Hebrew and have some prior experience in Gemara study. New students are welcome! Email aronrhalb@gmail.com.

Summer Shabbat Services

Our Friday night service times move to 7:00PM for July and August.

And Shabbat Services move to our air-conditioned downstairs for services in July and August.

PSJC runs on community participation. If you are interested in: **leading Kabbalat Shabbat/Maariv Services**, email freddie.brooks@psjc.org; **leading Shabbat Morning Services**, email Elizabeth Schnur at davening@psjc.org; **chanting Haftarah**, email Alan Palmer at haftarah@psjc.org; **reading Torah**, email Rabbi Sue Oren at leyning@psjc.org. **To request an Aliyah or other honor**, email Rabbi Carter a week in advance (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.



July 12-20, 2019 | 9 - 17 Tammuz 5779
Parashat Chukkat

Annual Membership Renewal 2019-2020

That means we have already begun planning for 5780! We hope you will join us for another great year at PSJC! We would love to get to 100% participation. No amount is too big or too small.

Renew your membership today! It's easy and can all be done online.

Visit www.psjc.org and log in to your account.

Please contact Peter by email treasurer@psjc.org if you have to arrange payments or limited income.

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

Kishkush Acharei Kiddush

Saturday, August 3 | 1:00PM - Final for the Summer

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.

Erev Tisha B'Av Services

Saturday, August 10 | 8:45PM

Help us observe this sad day in the Jewish calendar with the recitation of the haunting text of Eicha, The Book of Lamentations.

Host an Israeli Shinshin

IsraelBKLYN is looking for host families for Israeli Shinshinim this year (especially beginning in the Fall). A "shinshin" is an 18-year-old Israeli emissary to communities abroad with the goal of educating people of all ages about Israel and Israeli culture. Shinshinim work with children at Jewish camps, schools and synagogues. Over the last five years, Shinshinim have added a lot to our PSJC community. If you are interested in hosting a shinshin, please contact Rabbi Carter: rabbicarie@psjc.org.

Help is needed to cook, share dinner or stay overnight with a dozen or so guests who are experiencing homelessness. PSJC is partners with the CAMBA Respite Bed Program. During the summer the program is at Old First Reformed Church in Park Slope and St. George's Episcopal in Bed Sty. It's a hard time to get volunteers. Can you help at any time this summer? It's a nice thing to do with friends or family. Kids of any age can help serve dinner. Post B'nai Mitzvah kids can stay overnight with an adult.

The guests are screened and part of a program helping them move forward towards permanent housing. Overnighters sleep in a separate air conditioned room. Food could be dropped off or picked up. Please spread the word to your networks. Feel free to give me a call with any questions - Yehudit Moch 347-728-8247.

<https://m.signupgenius.com/#!/showSignUp/8050e4aa5af2caafe3-camba>

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

Parashat Chukkat

Triennial: Numbers 21:11-22:1 | Etz Hayim p.890; Hertz p.660

Haftarah: Judges 11:1-33 | Etz Hayim p.909; Hertz p.664

D'var Torah: A Great *Parah* Dox

Death is everywhere in Parashat Hukkat. There are great military victories (Arad, Sihon, King of the Amorites, and Og, King of Bashan), the passing of great and beloved leaders (Miriam and Aharon), and a great plague. So it should be no surprise that the parashah opens with the laws of the *Parah Adumah* (Red Heifer) - the sole remedy for those who have "*tumat met*" - ritual impurity from contact with a dead body.

The *Parah Adumah* is one of the Torah's great oddities. It must be entirely red (no other sacrifices specify color), female (sin offerings are male animals), and cannot have done any work (a unique requirement). It is sacrificed outside the camp and not on the altar. Its entire being - hide, flesh, blood, and dung - is turned to ash as part of the sacrifice. Its ashes are then mixed with various red-colored substances (cedar wood and hyssop) that are usually burnt as part of the *ketoret ha-samim*. And this ash mixture, when combined with water, is sprinkled on any vessels, structures, or people who have this ritual impurity to purify it.

And *Parah Adumah's* oddness becomes more pronounced the more one thinks about it. Tending to a dead body to maintain its purity makes one ritually impure, but this impurity can only be removed by contact with the dead body of an animal! And most perplexing, the priests involved in the entire process of producing, transporting, and storing the purifying ashes are themselves rendered impure!

But much like Job, our questions are met with a stern silence. *Parah Adumah* is introduced by the words "*Zot Hukkat HaTorah*" - THIS is the ordinance of the Law that the Lord has commanded. A *hok* ordinance is a Torah law whose goodness is not self-evident, and whose authority is entirely dependent on law-giver. Thus Rashi explains that both Satan and the nations of the world would mock Israel because of the seeming heathen magic or ridiculousness of the *Parah Adumah*, asking: "What is this command and what reason is there for it?" But because it is a "*hok*" neither we nor they have a right to question it, criticize it, or even ponder it too deeply. But something does not have to be explainable to convey a message. Instead of asking "What does it mean in and of itself?" we can ask "What does it say to us?" And *Parah Adumah*, and this parashah in general speaks volumes about the paradoxical nature of our existence. It says to us that defilement and purity, illness and cure, are intertwined - a message echoed elsewhere in our parashah (Bemidbar 21:5-9) when the Israelites complain again about their hunger and God sends venomous serpents to bite them. When Moshe prays for God to heal them, he is instructed to make a serpent and put it on a pole. Whoever then looked at the *Nahash Hanehoshet* - the Copper Serpent - was healed. Things that heal us can hurt us, and things that hurt us can heal us. This is just as true in medicine as it is in social policy.

It says to us that leadership, or simply doing good in the world, can be bad for you. Miriam, Aharon, and soon Moshe die in the wilderness, having led the people to a place they themselves cannot enter. When God is angry with the people, they get God to forgive them, but when they lose their temper, as they did with the Waters of Meribah, they are not forgiven. We need power to do good, but that power can easily corrupt us, and battle against its influence damages us in other ways.

But to me, it says most clearly that life itself is the greatest paradox. We have souls that long for purity and eternal divine connection, but our souls animate imperfect and easily defiled earth-bound bodies that are driven by hunger and a desire for sensory pleasure. If all souls are destined to return to heaven, why are they subjected to such a challenging existence on earth? Why struggle, when our struggles are ultimately doomed to failure? The potential for despair is ever-present, and yet we persist. There may not be a rational reason to do good, to lead, and ultimately to live, but we do anyway. Our lives are the real *hok* - inscrutable mysteries handed down from above. And here too the best question is not "What does my life mean, in and of itself?" but "What will my life say to me, to others, and to those who will come after us?"

May our lives speak volumes.

This weekly commentary on the Torah portion is by **Rabbi Andy Shapiro Katz**, Conservative Yeshiva Director of *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>.