



Friday, April 20   5 Iyar				Parashat Tazriya-Metzora Saturday, April 21   6 Iyar		
Kabbalat Shabbat with <b>Judy Ribnick</b>   6:30PM Candle Lighting   7:23PM				Havurat Shabbat   9:30AM Shacharit   10:00AM <b>Simcha Shabbat</b> Kishkush Acharei Kiddush   1:00PM Shabbat Shmooze   1:30PM		
Sunday April 22 7 Iyar	Monday April 23 8 Iyar	Tuesday April 24 9 Iyar	Wednesday April 25 10 Iyar	Thursday April 26 11 Iyar	Friday April 27 12 Iyar	Saturday April 28 13 Iyar
Yom Yisrael 10:00AM Hannah Senesh Community Day School	An Exploration of the Talmud through the Jewish Year 12:00PM	Hebrew School 4:00PM	Morning Minyan 7:15AM  Hebrew School 4:00PM  Gesher 6:15PM  Board Meeting 7:15PM	Café Ivrit 7:15PM	Kabbalat Shabbat Kulanu & Learning with Leora 6:30PM  Candle Lighting 7:30PM	<i>Shabbat Acharei Mot-Kedoshim</i>  Parashat Hashavua 9:30AM  Shacharit   10:00AM <b>Hebrew School Shabbat</b>  Tot Shabbat/Mini Minyan 11:15AM  Shaarei Mitzvah 7 Program   1:00PM  Advanced Talmud 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, PSJC's 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)		

**HaMakom Yenachem**

Our condolences go to:

**Carrie Sadovnik** and family on the death of her stepfather, **Leo Gorenstein**, z"l.

**Sally Brown** and family on the death of her mother, **Thelma Brown**, z"l.

**Bunny Buxbaum** and her daughter, **Audrey Buxbaum** and family on the death of their sister & aunt, **Sharlene Harris**, z"l.

**Michelle Krochmal** and family on the death of her father, **Frederick Krochmal**, z"l.

**Susan Karwoska** and family on the death of her father, **Robert Karwoski**, z"l.

**Yahrzeits observed 6-12 Iyar:**

**Ahuva Wernick**, mother of Mindi Wernick; **Bernice Kessler**, mother of Marla Kessler; **Bruno Korn**, family friend of Judy Ribnick and Diane Burhenne; **Charlotte Zelon**, mother of Helen Zelon; **Claire Miller**, grandmother of Reva Grossberg; **Cyril Gurley**, father of Roxella Baron; **Daniel Goldreyer**, grandfather of Gregg Barash; **Esther Weiss**, mother of Necha Sirota; **Fred Hart**, grandfather of Steven Mazie; **Hyman Katz**, father of Jay P Katz; **Jacob Kalish**, grandfather of Karen Louise Heau; **Leonard Hollander**, observed by the PSJC community; **Sally Stopnitsky**, mother of Barbara Auslander; **Tryna Gordon**, mother of Karen Barth; **William Schwartz**, father of Suzanne Carter and grandfather of Rabbi Carie Carter. *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 hevrakadisha@psjc.org.



April 20-28, 2018 | 5-13 Iyar 5778  
Parashat Tazriya-Metzora

### **Simcha Shabbat**

Saturday, April 21 | 10:00AM

Join us as we will acknowledge our members who are celebrating their April birthdays & anniversaries. There will be a special blessing during the Torah service and we will all enjoy a lovely Simcha Shabbat Kiddush (cake included)! Please update your PSJC account and add your birthdays and anniversaries so we may send you a personal invitation in the future.

### **Kishkush Acharei Kiddush**

Saturday, April 21 | 1:00PM

Join other fluent Hebrew speakers after services where we will have a Shulchan Ivrit - a table to sit around, drink coffee and talk with one another in Hebrew. Contact [Kishkush.at.PSJC@gmail.com](mailto:Kishkush.at.PSJC@gmail.com) for more details.

### **Shabbat Shmooze**

Saturday, April 21 | 1:30PM

Our community is invited to a vegetarian pot-luck lunch following service and Kiddush. This is a child-friendly home. The kishkush Hebrew conversation can continue at the Shmooze. Please join us!

### **Yom Yisrael**

Sunday, April 22 | 10:00AM-1:30PM | Hannah Senesh Community Day School - 342 Smith Street

A festival for the whole family tour Israel, see live performances, enjoy great food and help us celebrate Israel as a community. Contact [rabbicarie@psjc.org](mailto:rabbicarie@psjc.org) to volunteer.

### **Board Meeting**

Tuesday, April 25 | 7:15PM

Board meetings are open to members in good standing.

### **Café Ivrit - Mid-Level Hebrew with our Community Shaliach Noam Willner**

Thursday, April 26, May 10 and 31 | 7:00PM

Would you like to practice speaking Hebrew over coffee together with other Brownstone Brooklyn friends? If so, Café Ivrit is the right place for you. Perfect for someone who can communicate in Hebrew, but is not yet fluent. To determine if this is the class for you, or to RSVP, please contact [NoamW@jafi.org](mailto:NoamW@jafi.org).

### **Parashat Hashavua**

Saturday, April 28 | 9:30AM

Get a brief taste of the week's Torah portion with our Rabbinic Intern, Leora Kling Perkins. It's a great lead in to the Shabbat morning services.

### **Advanced Talmud**

Saturday, April 28 | 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](mailto:aronrhalb@gmail.com).

### **Hadag Nahash in Concert**

Wednesday, May 2 | 8:00PM | East Midwood Jewish Center - 1625 Ocean Avenue

We are very excited to start the tickets selling for the concert of Hadag Nahash. Purchase tickets:

<http://teev.simpletix.com/Show/34482/BrooklynCelebratesIsraelHad/>. Your cost is \$36 instead of \$56, using PSJC members' promo code.

**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).

**Got announcements?** Email by Monday 5:00PM ([office@psjc.org](mailto:office@psjc.org))



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### **Lev Tahor: Cake-Baking and Other Political Acts with Supreme Court reporter and PSJC Member Steven Mazie**

Friday, May 4 | 6:30PM

When is a cake more than dessert? When it's the foundation for a Supreme Court challenge, that's when. Join Lev Tahor, PSJC's all-sung, community-led Kabbalat Shabbat for an evening of song, good cheer and great conversation, led by PSJC's own Steven Mazie. Plan to join the pareve/dairy pot-luck and bring your opinions to share!! (RSVP: <https://tinyurl.com/LevTahor-May4-2018>)

### **Mishneh Torah - Laws of Teshuvah**

Saturday, May 5 | 1:20PM

When it was written in the 12th Century, Maimonides' Mishneh Torah changed the landscape of Rabbinic literature, and has since served as one of the great authoritative codes of Jewish Law. This is a monthly study session with Rabbi Carter, please email [rabbicarie@psjc.org](mailto:rabbicarie@psjc.org) for information about this study group.

### **Jewish Parenting With Doubt**

Saturday, May 5 | 4:00PM

Do you feel less than sure about the existence of God? Do you ever wonder how to teach your children about Judaism when you yourself either have doubts or "don't believe"? If so, join this conversation, facilitated by Rabbi Carter and let's explore this together. Contact Rabbi Carter: [rabbicarie@psjc.org](mailto:rabbicarie@psjc.org) with any questions.

### **Rodfei Tzedek Action**

Sunday, May 6 | 12:00PM

### **Eric Hollander Memorial Lecture**

Sunday, May 6 | 2:00PM

*Our Fractured Jewish Community in the Age of Trump* with Professor Ross Brann. (Professor of Near East Studies, Cornell University). Visit [www.iljb.org](http://www.iljb.org) for more info.

### **A Step in Addressing Hunger and Poverty in Brooklyn**

Sunday, May 6 | 4:00PM-5:30PM

Join UJA Brooklyn and Park Slope Jewish Center for a service project on Sunday, May 6. Volunteers will work together to package **32,000 dry meals** to be donated to Bed-Stuy Campaign Against Hunger. Open to the community, family friendly, and all are welcome. RSVP is required, please visit <https://www.timeforgood.org/agency/uja/opportunity/pack-meals-for-families-in-need-brooklyn-4981>.

### **PSJC Knitters**

Monday, May 7 | 7:30PM

For more information contact [marjorie.rothenberg@gmail.com](mailto:marjorie.rothenberg@gmail.com).

### **Kabbalat Shabbat with Judy Ribnick**

Friday, May 11 | 6:30PM

Goodbye Potluck Dinner and Learning with Rabbinic Intern, Leora.

### **Rosh Chodesh Sivan Minyan**

Tuesday, May 15 | 7:00AM

**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). **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).

## Parashat Tazriya-Metzora

Triennial: Leviticus 13:40-14:32 | Etz Hayim p.657; Hertz p.464

Haftarah: 2 Kings 7:3-20 | Etz Hayim p.675; Hertz p.477

### D'var Torah: Partners in Creation

A day does not go by where we don't hear reports out of this European capital or that about legislation to outlaw infant circumcision. This act (*milah*), which is a sign of our covenant (*brit*) with God, has a long history in our tradition, going all the way back to Avraham: "And when his son Yitzchak was eight days old, Avraham circumcised him, as God had commanded." (Bereishit 21:4) Circumcision, however, does not come up as a commandment for all Jews until Parashat Tazria: "And on the eighth day, the flesh of the foreskin should be circumcised." (VaYikra 12:3) In this particular passage, the Torah offers us a commandment but does not seek to justify or explain it. The challenges from the outside world to this act are not a new phenomenon, and not a few Jews were influenced by the arguments condemning it. In part because of these challenges, and in order to justify the commandment for themselves, the sages took upon themselves the task of explaining circumcision's significance. Midrash Tanhuma relates a very interesting conversation between a certain wicked Roman ruler, named Turnus Rufus, and Rabbi Akiva which sought to explain why Jews practice circumcision:

Taunting Rabbi Akiva, Turnus Rufus asked: 'Whose deeds are nicer, God's or those of human beings?' Rabbi Akiva responded: 'Those of people are nicer.' Turnus Rufus replied: 'But how can that be, can a human being create the world?' Rabbi Akiva said: 'Don't make a comparison with things that people are incapable of doing. Ask about something people can also do.' Immediately, Turnus Rufus asked about *brit milah* – circumcision. Rabbi Akiva said: 'I knew you were going to ask me about that and that's why I responded to you that human deeds are greater than those of God. Let me give you an example.' Rabbi Akiva brought some stalks of wheat and some cookies and asked rhetorically: 'Which of these are the works of God and which were made by people?' And then he asked: 'Which are nicer, namely which would you rather eat?' Turnus Rufus then asked: 'So if God wanted *brit milah* so much, why aren't boys born circumcised?' Rabbi Akiva replied: 'I could just as easily have asked you why people are born with the umbilical cord still attached, but I will answer your question anyway. God gave us *brit milah* to teach us that the commandments are given to us to perfect ourselves.' - Based on Tanhuma Tazria 5

In this story, Turnus Rufus picks a fight with Rabbi Akiva. He asks a seemingly innocent question, but his true target is *brit milah*. He argues that God's creation is perfect, and circumcision an unnatural act of defacement. Rabbi Akiva counters that many of God's most important natural gifts require human interaction to achieve their highest form. Many delicious foods are only edible when worked over, treated, and/or cooked. Cotton and wool require significant processing before they become the cloth from which beautiful clothing is made. All humans may be born attached to an umbilical cord, but we don't treat cutting it as disfigurement of the newborn, nor do we outlaw cutting a child's hair or fingernails, or even piercing their ears (which also causes momentary pain). We are given our bodies, just like everything else in the natural world, but we are also given instruction, Torah, that tell us how to care for and elevate ourselves and the world.

His argument may not have been enough to convince the Romans to start performing circumcisions, but that was not its goal. By pitting the virtuous Rabbi Akiva against a known enemy of the Jews, the story was obviously intended for internal Jewish consumption - a way of reconciling our ancient practice with the mores of the time in order to shore up Jewish commitment to the mitzvah. But in so doing, Midrash Tanhuma added a layer of meaning to *brit milah* that serves as a paradigm for all of Judaism. The world is a work in progress, and we are God's partners. Only through our activity, guided by Torah, can we and the world be refined, beautified, and perfected.

This weekly commentary on the Torah portion is by **Rabbi Mordechai Silverstein**, *Conservative Yeshiva Faculty* from the "Torah Sparks" series produced by the Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem. A Haftarah commentary by Rabbi Mordechai Silverstein found at <http://www.conservativeyeshiva.org/torahsparks/>

**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.