



**PARK  
SLOPE  
JEWISH  
CENTER**

December 14-22, 2018 | 6-14 Tevet 5779  
Parashat Vayigash

Friday, December 14   6 Tevet				Parashat Vayigash Saturday, December 15   7 Tevet		
Candle Lighting   4:11PM Kabbalat Shabbat Kulanu   6:30PM Shaarei Mitzvah 6 Friday Night Dinner   7:00PM				<b>Simcha Shabbat</b> Havurat Shabbat   9:30AM Shacharit Services   10:00AM Jr. Congregation   11:00AM Tot Shabbat/Mini-Minyan   11:15AM Kishkush Acharei   1:00PM Shabbat Shmooze   1:30PM		
Sunday December 16 8 Tevet	Monday December 17 9 Tevet	Tuesday December 18 10 Tevet	Wednesday December 19 11 Tevet	Thursday December 20 12 Tevet	Friday December 21 13 Tevet	Saturday December 22 14 Tevet
Rosh Hodesh Minyan 8:00AM  7th Grade Shaarei Mitzvah Trip 9:00AM  Hebrew School 9:30AM  Intro to Judaism 7:00PM		Hebrew School 4:00PM  PAI - Aging Issues Group 6:30PM  Board Meeting 7:15PM  Shir Chadash Choir Rehearsal 7:30PM	Morning Minyan 7:15AM  Hebrew School 4:00PM	Biblical Hebrew 7:30PM	PAI Walking Group 9:30AM  It's Friday Music Class 10:00AM  Candle Lighting 4:13PM  Kabbalat Shabbat with <b>Cornelia Dalton</b> 6:30PM  ATID Dinner 7:30PM	<i>Parashat Vayechi</i>  <b>No Hebrew School Winter Break</b>  Parashat Hashavua 9:30AM  Shacharit   10:00AM  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, 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)		

### Today Rabbah

To last year's **B'nai Mitzvah families** and the members of the **Rosh Chodesh Reunion** for sponsoring the Kiddush this Shabbat. A special thank you to the wonderful **Rabbi Sue Oren** for tutoring this B'nai Mitzvah group at the Torah; to **Michal Birnbaum** who generously made audio recordings of the Parshas for the kids; and to **Alan Palmer**, both for his dedication to the youth at PSJC, and for helping with the Haftarah reading today.

### HaMakom Yenachem

Our condolences go to:

**Pam Kaplan** and family on the death of her father, **Asa Kaplan**, z"l.

### Yahrzeits observed 7-13 Tevet:

**Alan Milford Aron**, father of Alexandra Aron; **Alex Spruchman**, grandfather of Jan Orzeck; **Claire Kardeman**, mother of Marilyn Kardeman and grandmother of Lianna Su Liping Kardeman; **David Kligler**, father of Ben Kligler; **David Weixel**, observed by the PSJC community; **Dennis Briefel**, brother of Gary Briefel; **Dorothy Schwartz**, mother of Suzanne Carter and grandmother of Rabbi Carie Carter; **Esther Sammartano**, observed by the PSJC community; **Fred Eisenstadt**, brother of Eric Eisenstadt; **Frederic Leo Kerr**, father of Grace Kerr; **Joseph Pollack**, father of Diane Burhenne; **Mark Levine Oliver**, friend of Jan Orzeck; **Maurice Siniawer**, cousin of Gavrielle Levine and Myron Levine. *May their memories be for a blessing.*

### Hanukkah Security Enhancement Fund

PSJC's Trustees have created a security enhancement fund and made a collective commitment to donate an initial **\$5,000** to that fund. As we bask in the lingering glow of Hanukkah, please consider a donation to match the Board's generous donation to our Security Enhancement Fund.

Thank you to all who have already donated and we hope that every member of the community will contribute to our collective security at whatever level is possible.

Donate or read Ellen Brickman's letter: <https://www.psjc.org/form/hanukkahsecurityfund>



Saturday, December 15

**Simcha Shabbat** | 10:00AM

Join us as we will acknowledge our members who are celebrating their December 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

Hosted by David and Shoshana Cooper

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.

Tuesday, December 18

**PAI Aging Issues Group - Topic: Grief and Loss** | 6:30PM-8:00PM

The holiday season can be especially hard for those who are grieving significant losses. Take time to take care of yourself by joining a discussion (with others who are experiencing similar challenges) of what to expect and how to cope. This discussion group meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at PSJC, \$5 fee\* A different topic is covered each month. The group is led by Jan Orzeck and Richard Glassman, both PAI members and licensed clinical social workers. Join us!

**Board Meeting** | 7:15PM

PSJC Board meetings are open to members in good standing.

Friday, December 21

**PAI Walking Group** | 9:30AM

Join us every Friday at the entrance to Prospect Park at 15th Street and Prospect Park West. Please register so we can let you know if a walk must be canceled: <https://www.psjc.org/event/positive-aging-initiative-walking-group.html>

**It's Friday Music Class** | 10:00AM

Come sing and play with Abe every week for a fun-filled music class that combines your favorite Shabbat and children's songs, with a story, movement and more. Taught by a professional music instructor, our open-space, informal class allows children ages 0 - 3 and their grownups to explore music and Shabbat! Each class ends with a snack and open-play so that caregivers can connect with each other. We look forward to having you join us! \$15/drop-in class\* or \$120 for a 10-class series (paid in advance) RSVP: [https://www.psjc.org/sing\\_play\\_connect](https://www.psjc.org/sing_play_connect)

**Young Professionals - ATID\* Potluck Shabbat Dinner** | 7:30PM

Join young professionals for a vegetarian potluck dinner with PSJC's ATID\*! We'll provide a few entrees and some wine. Come for services at 6:30PM; join us for dinner starting at 7:30PM. Come by PSJC to say hello and get to know someone new! We'd love to meet you. For more information, please contact Cornelia Dalton ([cornelia.dalton@gmail.com](mailto:cornelia.dalton@gmail.com)), \*ATID is the PSJC group for 20s and 30s



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### **MLK Day of Service 2019: 10th Year Anniversary Celebration/Transition**

Sunday, January 20 | 11:00AM-2:00PM

This year, PSJC's annual MLK Day of Service marks its first decade – and launches its second. We've made thousands of shelf-stable soup meals, PB&J sandwiches, and snack kits; filled our shul's freezer for congregants in need; gathered gently-used books, clothing, toiletries and more. Please plan to join this multi-generational project – and if you can help us set up, clean up, or shlep after the event, be in touch: Helen Zelon (hzelon@gmail.com).

Saturday, December 22

**Parashat Hashavua** | 9:30AM

Get a brief taste of the week's Torah portion with Cornelia Dalton, PSJC Rabbinic Intern. It's a great lead into the Shabbat morning services.

**Advanced Talmud** | 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.

### **Separate but Equal? Not Exactly. Learn more with YAFFED's Naftuli Moster at Lev Tahor**

Friday January 7 | 6:30PM

Join Lev Tahor, PSJC's community-led, all sung Kabbalat Shabbat service, for a spirited conversation about the secular and the sacred in K-12 education. Naftuli Moster, Executive Director of YAFFED/Young Advocates for a Fair Education, will talk about his experiences in higher-ed and the ongoing controversy about the secular (and legal) obligations of religious schools, including yeshivot. Sign up <https://tinyurl.com/ycmzybfc> for the dairy/pareve pot luck dinner that follows services.

### **Looking at the Torah**

Sunday, January 27 | 4:00PM

The Torah is an object of monumental significance to the Jewish people, but it is rarely examined as a physical object. Join Rabbi Carie Carter and Art Conservator Reba Snyder as they discuss the meaning and making of a Torah. Each of our experts will present their understanding of the Torah as a human-made object. Participants will work with some of the materials of a Torah, including writing with a quill pen on parchment. The class is limited to 30, please RSVP today: <https://www.psjc.org/event/looking-at-the-torah.html> and a materials fee (\$10 for members) will be charged.

Download The PSJC App Today After Shabbat! 😊



When logged in members can see...

**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

**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.

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



## Parashat Vayigash

Triennial: Genesis 46:28-47:27 | Etz Hayim p.282; Hertz p.174

Haftarah: Ezekiel 37:15-28 | Etz Hayim p.290; Hertz p.178

### D'var Torah: Yaakov Redeemed

I've found that at different points in my life, I've had different attitudes towards the Biblical characters. For most of my life, I haven't liked Yaakov. He's always struck me as somewhat narcissistic, lost inside his head in various schemes, and therefore causing suffering for himself and others. He's disappointed me: Is this the ideal to which we are supposed to aspire? But this year my attitude has changed. I don't feel judgmental about Yaakov. I identify with him. Take for example Yaakov's response to the mind-blowing divine encounter he had when leaving home on his way to Haran. Yaakov beholds the vision of the ladder, rising from the earth into the sky, with Y-H-V-H revealed at its top, and angels to the right and left. In the vision, he is promised to inherit the land and establish a great people. In response, Yaakov bargains with God in a way that would make you cringe if you saw him played like that in a movie. He skips over the land and the nation and basically says (Bereshit 28:20), "Ok Y-H-V-H, *if* you give me safe travel to Haran and back, as well as food and clothing, *then* You can be my God."

Yaakov was surrounded with divine glory but could not see past his immediate needs. He was like we are at those times when we walk beneath the unimaginable beauty of the sky but don't look up because we are obsessed with our feet. The same Yaakov who could feel that "God is here and I did not know! How awesome is this place!" (Bereshit 28:17) could also fall right back into small-mindedness. That's why I identify with Yaakov. I feel surrounded by what Rav Kook calls revealed divinity (*ha-elohut ha-mitgalah b'olam*) which he also calls "all light, all truth, all beauty, and all goodness". Everywhere I see those things – light, truth, beauty, goodness – so like Yaakov I cannot deny that God is here. And yet so much of the time I find myself staring at my feet instead of looking at that remarkable ladder. Why is it so easy to ignore the burning bushes all around and instead focus on our immediate needs?! Is that really the best use of itself that *my mind* can come up with?! If so, it seems to need some kind of re-calibration. Again we are confronted with Rambam's interpretation (The Guide 1:2) of the curse of exile from Gan Eden: To cleave to the tree of obsessive thoughts about fears and desires (*etz hada'at tov ve ra*). If this is what Yaakov is struggling with, then his struggle is mine. Since we need the things that Yaakov asked for like safe travel, food and clothes, the struggle is not to ignore those things. It is to see beyond them to the revealed divinity all around.

According to the Zohar (IR III 138a), in our parashah this week, Yaakov was transformed. When it says, "and Yaakov's soul came alive" (Bereshit 45:27) it means he achieved a higher state of consciousness. The Zohar teaches that Yaakov had become so focused on his personal drama that he could no longer perceive God. But at that moment he awoke to God's presence all around him. Sometimes it takes a great shock like Yaakov's to wake up. But the Zohar also teaches (ZH Bereshit 14b) that waking up can be as simple as looking at the sky. There is a bigger picture. Revealed divinity – light, truth, beauty, goodness – is all around. When his soul came alive, Yaakov knew again "God is here! How awesome is this place!" May it be God's *Ratson* – Will – that all our souls become awakened like *Yaakov Avinu* - Yaakov our Father.

This weekly commentary on the Torah portion is by **Dr. Shaiya Rothberg**, *Conservative Yeshiva Faculty* "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.