

Friday, September 6 6 Elul				Parashat Shoftim Saturday, September 7 7 Elul		
Kabbalat Shabbat with David Rosen 6:30PM Candle Lighting 7:02PM				Shacharit 10:00AM Yael Lechtzin Bat Mitzvah Tot Shabbat 11:15AM Book Club 1:30PM		
Sunday September 8 8 Elul	Monday September 9 9 Elul	Tuesday September 10 10 Elul	Wednesday September 11 11 Elul	Thursday September 12 12 Elul	Friday September 13 13 Elul	Saturday September 14 14 Elul
HS Parent Cocktail Party / Kids Pizza Night 4:30PM		Hebrew School Committee Meeting 7:00PM	Morning Minyan 7:15AM Elul Reflections 7:00PM		Last day to order your Lulav & Etrog Stoop Shabbat 11:00AM Kabbalat Shabbat with Judy Ribnick 6:30PM Candle Lighting 6:51PM Potluck dinner-Melodies of Yamim Noraim 7:30PM	<i>Parashat Ki Tetze</i> Shacharit 10:00AM Mini Minyan 11:15AM Tot Shabbat 11:15AM
Park Slope Jewish Center 1320 Eighth Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11215 (718) 768-1453 Office hours: M-Th 9:00AM-5:00PM, F 9:00AM-2:00PM www.psjc.org email: office@psjc.org				Rabbi Carie Carter, Rabbi (rabbicarie@psjc.org) Ellen Brickman, President (president@psjc.org) Piper Panzeri, Synagogue Administrator (piper@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:

James Dockery, Jr. and family on the death of James father, **James Dockery Sr.**

Gregory Brown, and family on the death of Gregory's nephew, **Gregory Haskins.**

Stewart Pravda and family on the death of Stewart's father, **Morris Pravda, z"l.**

Lulav & Etrog Sale

Each set is already assembled together in a holder with the Lulav, Hadassim and Arovot as one. Along with each set you will receive a basic guide as a complimentary gift to express our appreciation to you. It will contain a list of all the Brachot (blessings) and Halakha (laws) of the four species.

Order yours now: www.psjc.org/lulav-and-etrog-sale.html
Last day to order Friday, September 13



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

Hebrew Free Burial Society is in need of tallitot to use for 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.

Yahrzeits observed 7-13 Elul:

Beatrice Daffner, great aunt of Stuart Baron; **Betty Straus**, mother of Ellen Straus; **Beulah Brodie**, grandmother of Jenna Mandel-Ricci; **Burt Ribnick**, father of Judy Ribnick; **David Daffner**, great uncle of Stuart Baron; **Deborah Sher**, sister of Mike Shapiro; **Dorothea Sasson**, mother of Nathaniel Sasson; **Esther Rothberger**, mother of Harriet Baron; **Ethel Levine Moch**, mother of Yehudit Moch; **Herbert Orzeck**, father of Jan Orzeck; **John Speaks Jr.**, father of John Speaks; **Margaret Holmes Potts**, sister of Tori Rosen; **Max Phillips**, grandfather of Regina Sandler-Phillips; **Miryam Kessler**, grandmother of Scott Groom; **Stella Simon Moch**, grandmother of Yehudit Moch. *May their memories be for a blessing.*

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.



Book Club - *The Prague Cemetery*

Saturday, September 7 | 1:30PM

Join us as we explore modern anti-Semitism's underlying ideology via the fictional memoir of the fictional author of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as conveyed in the novel *The Prague Cemetery* by Umberto Eco (translated from the Italian by Richard Dixon). BPL has six print. Used hardcover copies are available on Amazon for \$5 (including shipping). An audiobook version is available from Audible.

HaZamir: The International Jewish Teen Choir

Sunday, September 8 | 2:00PM | Congregation Beth Elohim (274 Garfield Place)

Performances include a gala concert at Lincoln Center's David Geffen Hall and the Annual Gathering of Remembrance - A Living Memorial to the Holocaust at Temple Emanu-El. The first rehearsal and open house (for singers and parents) for HaZamir Brooklyn. For more information, please speak with PSJC Members Shayna Klainberg (Teen Leader), Joshua Klainberg (Parent Coordinator) or Freddie Brooks (Zamir Choral Foundation Board Member). You can also email Eric Spiegel (Conductor) at: hazamirbk@gmail.com

Hebrew School Parent Happy Hour

Sunday, September 8 | 4:30PM-6:30PM

If you're like us, you're equal parts looking forward to shipping the kids back off to school and activities and dreading all the scheduling gymnastics involved. It's exhausting-we get it. That's why we'd like to buy you a drink. We're throwing a happy hour at PSJC just for you. It's an opportunity for all the Hebrew School parents to mingle and get to know each other without kids in tow. Come meet a few fellow parents, make some connections and most importantly, kick back and relax with some liquid therapy. RSVP: <https://www.psjc.org/event/hs-parent-happyhour>.

Elul Learning: Elul As A Spiritual Springboard For The High Holy Days

Wednesday, September 11 | 7:00PM

Elul as a spiritual springboard for the High Holy Days repentance • raised awareness • renewal with Rabbi Sue Oren Rosh HaShanah is "late" this year... so let's embrace September as an opportunity to prepare for 5780 together!! If Judaism were about perfection, our High Holy Day prayers would focus on purity and discipline in the new year, so we would be exempt from repentance next year. Instead, we join with Jews around the world each year to search our souls, take our place among this flawed people (and species), and look forward with hope. Join this three-session course to consider traditional, liturgical & contemporary texts to ready ourselves for the High Holy Day experience, and lay the groundwork for new mistakes to learn from this time next year. Members: FREE and Non-Members \$20 You must RSVP: <https://tinyurl.com/elul-learning>.

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



September 7-14, 2019 | 7-14 Elul 5779
Parashat Shoftim

Kabbalat Shabbat Potluck dinner and High Holy Days song with Judy Ribnick
Friday, September 13 | 6:30PM

For the Sins

Sunday, September 15 | 1:00PM

With the guidance of Rabbi Carie Carter and Professor of Medieval Literature at Seaton Hall University, Dr. Angela Weisl, we will explore the traditional listings of sins of the season (Ashamnu and Al Chet) and then use our creative skills to write a new Al Chet (potentially to share with the community) to speak to us as individuals, as a community, as a people, a nation, and a world.

PAI Book Club - *The Other Americans*, by Laila Lalami
Wednesday, September 18 | 7:30PM

Shabbat Shmooze

Saturday, September 21 | 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 indicate which date(s) you prefer: **November 16, December 21** (Chanukah starts December 22 at sundown), **January 18, 2020, February 15, March 21, April 18** (Pesach ends April 16), **May 16, June 20, July 18** or **August 15** please email shabbatshmooze@psjc.org, with your preferred date (they occur on the 3rd Shabbat of the month). Members hosting homes needs to be walking distance from PSJC.

Selichot Across Brooklyn

Saturday, September 21 | 9:30PM

FREE ADMISSION - This annual community collaboration is co-sponsored by Altshul, Brooklyn Jews, Congregation Beth Elohim, East Midwood Jewish Center, Flatbush Jewish Center, Kane Street Synagogue, Kolot Chayeinu, Mishkan Minyan, Park Slope Jewish Center, Shir HaMaalot, and Union Temple of Brooklyn.

Annual Community BBQ

Sunday, September 22 | 4:00PM

Hot Dogs. Hamburgers. Veggie Burgers. Camaraderie. Reconnect with old friends and meet new ones. Kosher food prepared on-site. **PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS NOW** <https://www.psjc.org/form/psjc-annual-community-bbq-2019.html>
Early bird prices in effect until midnight on Thursday, September 18.
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! Adults, teens, tweens too! Please sign up by clicking <https://tinyurl.com/voIBBQ19>. It's a great way to meet new people.

PARK SLOPE JEWISH CENTER
COMMUNITY
BBQ

Sunday, September 22

4 P.M. UNTIL 7 P.M.

★ Food and Friends ★
KOSHER FOOD
PREPARED ON SITE
Join PSJC members for a fun
gathering in our garden!

\$12 MEMBERS/\$5 FOR CHILDREN
\$15 AT THE DOOR

RSVP by 9/20 ★ www.psjc.org ★ 718-768-1453

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

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

Tickets are available for pick up at the office if you renewed your membership after **Friday, August 16.**

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

Parashat Shoftim

Triennial: Deuteronomy 19:14-21:9 | Etz Hayim p.1099; Hertz p.829; Plaut p.1468

Haftarah: Isaiah 51:12-52:12 | Etz Hayim p.1107; Hertz p.835; Plaut p.1607

D'var Torah: Justice & Politics

A hallmark of historical Judaism is the centrality of justice for religion. Isaiah went so far as to say, in the name of God, that God *cannot endure* the doing of injustice alongside the performance of religious ceremonies (Isaiah 1:13). When we nonetheless concoct that cocktail, teaches the prophet, the inevitable result is destruction and exile. It's hard to imagine a more absolute statement of the preeminent importance of justice for the Jewish conception of religion.

Strikingly, in just one verse in our portion, Devarim 16:19, the Torah captures what is perhaps the very essence of justice. Justice means *no discrimination* (the first half of the verse) and *no ulterior motives* (the second half). The verse's explanation of the prohibition of bribery reveals another crucial element: Bribery is forbidden because it blinds the eyes of the judge to the truth. That is to say, justice requires an honest attempt to discover *the truth* about *the facts*.

Rabbinic tradition understands our verse as a code of behavior for judges. Another interpretation was offered by Rabbi Chaim Hirschenson in his monumental halachic work Malki Bakodesh (1:11). First, he argues that "judges and officers" in the context of the Bible involve all the branches of government (not just what we would today call the judicial branch but also the legislative and executive branches). Furthermore, he argues that since Devarim 16:18 commands that we appoint judges and officers, clearly the addressee of the verse is not the judges and officers themselves, but the people who appoint them. In a democracy, concludes the Rabbi Hirschenson, you and I are those people and therefore these verses apply to us when we participate in democratic elections.

When I survey the global political scene with this d'oraita (Biblical) halachic obligation in mind, I'm struck how relevant Devarim 16:19 has remained in our day. In fact, it seems like a whole crop of politicians, across many countries and from both the "left" and "right" seem to compete over who can most absolutely repudiate the essence of justice as conceived in our verse. They openly delegitimize any attempt to objectively investigate the facts of any matter in which they have an interest. They flaunt their ability to abuse public authority for personal gain as a sign that they are powerful enough to be worthy of leadership. And they openly stoke the hatreds and fears of their audiences, against Jews or Arabs or whomever, to gather support for themselves and their discriminatory agenda.

Rabbi Hirschenson seeks to impress upon us that how we vote is of ultimate Jewish religious significance. His teaching reflects not only the ancient prophets but also a more contemporary theme. Figures as diverse as Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, Rav Kook, Martin Buber and Rabbi Heschel, argued that modernity has seen the rise of a politics *walled off* from the obligations of justice (exemplified, I believe, by the politicians described above). And they taught that our mission as the People Israel is to tear that wall down.

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch expresses this theme in his explanation of the Abrahamic blessing to humanity (Bereshit 2:12): "The honesty, humanity and love which one still demands from individuals is regarded as folly in the relation of nation to nation, have no meaning in diplomacy and politics. Deception and murder which in individuals lead to prison and gallows, if exercised on a grand scale in the 'interests of the state' are crowned with laurel and medals. The Abrahamic nation is to know nothing of these national institutions, is to have no national politics and no political economy."

Rabbi Hirsch, as is his way, takes his vision to the extreme. I'm not sure that I can imagine a real society with no politics whatsoever. But I can imagine leaders who seek to embody the principles of justice laid down Devarim 16:19 rather than to brazenly flout them. And it seems clear, based on the Torah itself and the teachings of both ancient prophets and recent sages, that core to our religious mission is the struggle to guarantee that our "judges and officers" are worthy of leadership not only in their own eyes but in the eyes of God.

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>.