



Friday, January 12 25 Tevet				Parashat Vaera Saturday, January 13 26 Tevet		
Candle Lighting 4:32PM Kabbalat Shabbat with Elizabeth Schnur 6:30PM				Shacharit 10:00AM Tot Shabbat/Mini Minyan 11:15AM Book Club 1:30PM		
Sunday January 14 27 Tevet	Monday January 15 28 Tevet	Tuesday January 16 29 Tevet	Wednesday January 17 1 Shevat	Thursday January 18 2 Shevat	Friday January 19 3 Shevat	Saturday January 20 4 Shevat
MLK Day of Service 11:00AM	Office Closed	Hebrew School 4:00PM	Rosh Chodesh Shevat Minyan 7:00AM Hebrew School 4:00PM Gesher 6:15PM		It's Friday Music Class 10:00AM Candle Lighting 4:40PM Kabbalat Shabbat with Anna Chapman 6:30PM	<i>Shabbat Bo</i> Havurat Shabbat 9:30AM Shacharit 10:00AM Family Torah/Shabbat Kulanu 11:15AM Tot Shabbat 11:15AM Shabbat Shmooze 1:30PM
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, 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:

Miriam Fleischmann and family on the death of her mother, **Florence B. Sinow**, z"l.

Lenore Arons and family on the death of her brother, **Bernard Arons**, z"l.

Robert Saffer and his family on the death of his mother, **Pearl Saffer**, z"l.

Alexandra Aron and her family on the death of Alexandra's father, **Alan Milford Aron**, z"l.

Gary and Ellen Briefel on the death of Gary's brother, **Dennis Briefel**, z"l.

Steve Elworth and his family on the death of Steve's mother, **Elaine Elworth**, z"l.

Yahrzeits observed 26 Tevet-3 Shevat:

Belle Weiner, mother of Barbara Wollman; **David Koltenuk**, great-uncle of Alan Palmer; **Erica Glidden**, friend of Eve Blatt; **Joseph Eisenstadt**, father of Eric Eisenstadt; **Leon Solomon Blaufarb**, father of Jonathan Blaufarb; **Liliana Briefel**, mother of Gary Briefel; **Martha Wolkoff**, wife of Steve Wolkoff and aunt of Andrew Ceresney; **Morris Lazarus Steinberg**, father of Sandra Linenschmidt; **Ron Dixon**, observed by the PSJC Community; **Sam Kayman**, friend of Rabbi Jeffrey Marker and godfather of Rena Freedman-Marker; **Sara Mlotek Rosenfeld**, mother of Fay Rosenfeld; **Walter Haase**, father of David Haase; **Willie Marker**, grandfather of Rabbi Jeffrey Marker. *May their memories be for a blessing.*



January 12-20, 2018 | 25 Tevet-4 Shevat 5778
Parashat Vaera

Book Discussion - *Two She-Bears*

Saturday, January 13 | 1:30PM

PSJCers join clinical psychologist, and psychology professor Warren Spielberg and David Cooper will co-lead a discussion about *Two She-Bears* by Meir Shalev. This multigenerational historical novel, set in a rural Israeli village, explores the psychological aspects of violence and masculinity and whether the two are interconnected. BPL has 17 print copies.

MLK Day of Service

Sunday, January 14 | 11:00AM-2:00PM

PSJC's Annual MLK Day of Service is gearing up for another year of soup kits, snack kits, knitting, cooking (on and off-site), shul-beautification and more. Perfect for PSJCers of all ages, we promise plenty of activities to benefit the community and organizations beyond PSJC, like the Brooklyn Family Justice Center, Brooklyn Legal Aid, God's Love We Deliver, HIAS, Methodist Hospital and soup kitchens CHIPS and MASBIA. MLK planners also warmly welcome extra hands in the weeks before the event -- we need your help to make MLK Day great! Contact Helen Zelon, hzelon@gmail.com for details -- and thanks in advance for working hard for a better world.

Rosh Chodesh Shevat Minyan

Wednesday, January 17 | 7:00AM

PJ Library Class: It's Friday!

Friday, January 19 and 26 | 10:00AM | \$12 per class (\$10 per members)

It's Friday! is a series of classes for children 3 and under and their caregivers. Join PSJC Tot Shabbat Leader, Abe, for hands-on exploration of Shabbat and holidays. For more information, www.psjc.org/event/its-friday.html

Shabbat Shmooze

Saturday, January 20 | 1:30PM

Shabbat Shmooze is a fun get-together after services, in the home of a PSJC member. Everyone is asked to bring a dairy or pareve potluck dish to share. For those participating in the Kishkush Acharei Kiddush first, we look forward to continuing the conversation at the Shabbat Shmooze afterwards. As usual, the Shabbat Shmooze is open to the PSJC community. Please join us!

2020 Bnai Mitzvah Date Selection Meeting

Sunday, January 21 | 11:00AM

Are you expecting to celebrate your child's Bnai Mitzvah @PSJC in 2020? If so, please join us in the PSJC Sanctuary to learn about Bnai Mitzvah at PSJC and the Shaarei Mitzvah program and to begin the process of selecting Bnai Mitzvah dates for 2020. Please RSVP: <https://www.psjc.org/event/2020-bnai-mitzvah-date-selection-meeting.html>. We look forward to seeing you and taking the first step in your journey to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah!

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 Annual Meeting and Election of Board of Trustees

Sunday, January 21 | 4:00PM

We hope you will join us for Park Slope Jewish Center's Annual Meeting in the PSJC sanctuary. The meeting will consist of updates from synagogue leadership, Etz Chaim updates, thank yous to the outgoing Board of Trustees, a vote for the new Board of Trustees, minor synagogue business, Q&A.

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.



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The Rabbi Who Killed His Purim Guest: An Exploration of the Talmud through the Jewish Year

Monday, January 22 | 12:00PM | PSJC Library

Join Rabbinic Intern, Leora Kling Perkins, as we follow the Jewish year by reading selections of the Talmud related to Jewish holidays. As we study, we'll learn more about who the rabbis were, and what they were doing when they created the Talmud. This class will be taught primarily using English translations, and is aimed at beginning to advanced learners.

PSJC Hebrew School Shabbat Dinner

Friday, January 26 | 6:30PM

The Hebrew School Shabbat dinner is one of the highlights of the year, as we join together as a community to welcome Shabbat together. We will begin with a song-filled Kabbalat Shabbat service together in the sanctuary and then move downstairs for a catered dinner! Following dinner we will join together for a sing-a-long and games, and the ever popular babka table for dessert! We invite you to bring Shabbat friendly games your family enjoys. Families are also welcome to bring wine for dinner. \$18/adult, \$12/child (Children under 5 are free) Maximum amount charged per family is \$60. Please register by noon on Tuesday, January 16, RSVP here: <https://www.psjc.org/event/hebrew-school-dinner-after-kabbalat-shabbat-kulanu.html>

Parashat Hashavua

Saturday, January 27 | 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, January 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 aronrhalf@gmail.com.

Hebrew Cooking with the Shinshinim!

Sunday, January 28 | 4:00PM-6:00PM

Join our Shinshinim (18 year old Israelis here for a year of service)! Learn to prepare delicious Israeli dishes using Hebrew! Whether you are fluent or don't know Alef from Bet, this will be a great opportunity to pick up some Kitchen-Hebrew and have a great time cooking. This experience is **open to all**, but it is **geared toward elementary and middle school aged children and their families**. And it ends with dinner together, eating "the fruits" of our labor. We will also meet on March 18. A donation of \$5/family/session is requested - just to cover materials. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Rabbi Carter at rabbicarie@psjc.org.

Board Meeting

Wednesday, January 31 | 7:15PM

PSJC Board meetings are open to members in good standing.

PSJC Tzedakah Fair

Sunday, February 4 | 10:00AM-2:00PM

Start saving your quarters today for our Tzedakah Fair, put on by our 6th grade Shaarei Mitzvah students at the beginning of their bnai mitzvah journey. This means it is a great time to start getting into the habit (or continuing it!) of putting a little change in a tzedakah box each week. Then your student will have a bag of coins to bring to the fair to donate to over a dozen organizations!



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.

Parashat Vaera

Triennial: Exodus 7:8-8:15 | Etz Hayim p.357; Hertz p.236

Haftarah: Ezekiel 28:25-29:21 | Etz Hayim p.1219; Hertz p.944

This week's parasha tells the story of the first seven plagues unleashed upon Egypt by God (with the help of Moses and Aaron): water turning into blood, frogs, lice, flies, death of livestock, boils, and hail. If you've ever been to a Pesach seder, you will likely be able to recite them without much thought. I recommend doing so with wine.

It might seem strange, but the Torah refers to the plagues brought down on Egypt as "wonders" and "miraculous signs". To the Egyptians, they were assuredly more like disasters. For the Israelites, the plagues were signs that their God – our God, the One God – was more powerful than Pharaoh. To Pharaoh, they were tricks, nothing more than that which his court magicians could perform. Wonders. Disasters. Signs. Tricks. It all depends on one's perspective.

The goal of these "wonders" was to prove God's control over the natural order. But while we tend to see miracles as violations of the natural order, perhaps there is nothing more miraculous than the natural order itself. What we see as the mundane truth of the sun rising, or of the wind blowing across the surface of the water, is in fact a miracle, sign, and wonder. But we must choose to see it that way - to shift our perspective and see how God's influence is always present in our lives, not just at special moments. The Torah calls us to peer below the surface to see what miracles God is working on our behalf - miracles that we might not even recognize as such. I recently spent some time with my family in the United States. It was an unplanned trip. My maternal grandfather, who has always been like a father to me, is in poor health. He was diagnosed earlier this year with dementia and Parkinson's Disease. His decline has been much more rapid than any of us expected. After a recent fall, he was hospitalized and spent the last three weeks in a rehabilitation center. By the time this is published, he will have been discharged to hospice care.

For me, the miracle of this situation - the active presence of the divine - is hard to see. But it has given me pause to reflect on the many reasons I love my grandfather. The times he took me to McDonald's after picking me up from after-school care. Even though he had absolutely no interest in it, he'd listen to me talk for hours about the toy that came with my Happy Meal and whatever comic book or TV series it was from. These memories, now so tinged with melancholy, are powerful in their simplicity. They are memories of moments, but also of a constant presence.

Each year at Pesach, we are commanded to remember the Exodus from Egypt as if we were there, too.

Retelling the story makes it real for us. I become one of the hundreds of thousands following Moses to the sea. On the other side is opportunity and freedom. On the other side is a different story from the one we've been telling.

But when we reach the other side, we don't forget the past. We keep telling the story as a reminder of how far we have come, as a reminder not to take anything for granted. Because it is taking things for granted, and not miraculous, that makes us feel that God has forgotten us or is otherwise absent. Taking things for granted returns us to Egypt.

As in the parasha, God's miracles can bring both pain and joy. But perhaps, with a shift of perspective we can see both pain and joy as miracles. We suffer, yet still find the strength to smile. We grieve, we heal, and we remember. And just like the rain that comes in its due time that is a miracle. We just have to dig a little deeper to find it.

This weekly commentary on the Torah portion is by **Yonah Johnson**, *Conservative Yeshiva Student & Lishma Fellow* 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.