



PARK SLOPE JEWISH CENTER

November 24-December 2, 2017 | 6-14 Kislev 5778
Parashat Vayetzi

Friday, November 24 6 Kislev				Parashat Vayetzi Saturday, November 25 7 Kislev		
Candle Lighting 4:14PM Kabbalat Shabbat with Steve Gradman 6:30PM				Shacharit 10:00AM Advanced Talmud 1:30PM		
Sunday November 26 8 Kislev	Monday November 27 9 Kislev	Tuesday November 28 10 Kislev	Wednesday November 29 11 Kislev	Thursday November 30 5 Kislev	Friday December 1 6 Kislev	Saturday December 2 7 Kislev
		#GIVING TUESDAY An Exploration of the Talmud through the Jewish Year 1:00PM Hebrew School 4:00PM Board Meeting 7:15PM	Morning Minyan 7:15AM Hebrew School 4:00PM	Café Ivrit - Mid-Level Hebrew 7:00PM	It's Friday Music Class 10:00AM Candle Lighting 4:11PM Lev Tahor welcomes PSJC Rabbinic Intern Leora Kling Perkins 6:30PM	<i>Shabbat Vayishlach</i> Parashat Hashavua 9:30AM Havurat Shabbat 9:30AM Shacharit 10:00AM Family Torah/Shabbat Kulanu 10:30AM Dance Party 7:00PM
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, 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)		

Mazal Tov!

To **Freddie Brooks** for hosting the Shabbat Shmooze last Shabbat.

Yahrzeits observed 7-13 Kislev:

Bessie Risker, grandmother of Karen Barth; **Carole Strumph**, sister of Seth Strumph; **David Moskowitz**, father of Martin Moskowitz; **Esther Tursky**, aunt of Marc Korashan; **Gerry Levine Mendelsohn**, mother of Mindy Levine; **Gitl Spruchman**, grandmother of Jan Orzeck; **Grace Bette Salomon**, mother of Nancy Salomon Miranda; **Helene Huttner**, mother of Jan Lisa Huttner; **Marc Simon**, husband of Merrie Handfinger; **Marlene Schwartz**, wife of David Schwartz and mother of Deborah Schwartz; **Martin A. Radwell**, father of Steven Radwell; **Murray Rosenfeld**, father of Roberta Moskowitz. *May their memories be for a blessing.*

Donate to the Capital Campaign!

We are grateful for every donation and pledge! WE DID IT!!!
 Yasher koach to PSJC and our generous donors.
 Our matching campaign raised nearly \$300,000. Thanks for your help and please, give again. Visit <https://www.psjc.org/capitalcampaign>



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 hevradkadisha@psjc.org.



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Advanced Talmud

Saturday, November 25 | 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.

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

Tuesday, November 28 | 1:00PM | 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.

Board Meeting

Tuesday, November 28 | 7:15PM

PSJC Board meetings are open to members in good standing.

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

Thursday, November 30, December 7 and 21 | 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. The group will discuss different issues in Hebrew and will practice new words and ways to express yourself better in Hebrew. All this in a non-judgmental and safe environment. 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 Noam at NoamW@jafi.org.

PJ Library Class: It's Friday!

Friday, December 1, 8, 15 and 22 | 10:30AM | \$12 per class

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. Visit www.psjc.org/event/its-friday.html for more information.

Lev Tahor welcomes PSJC Rabbinic Intern Leora Kling Perkins

Friday, December 1 | 6:30PM

Add your voice to Lev Tahor, PSJC's monthly all-sung, lay-led Kabbalat Shabbat service. We'll share a dairy/pareve potluck and have a chance to learn with Leora, whose pre-JTS life includes a Jewish organizing fellowship via JOIN for Justice, three years at Greater Boston's Jewish Community Resources Council -- not to mention a couple of summers at Camp Ramah in the Rockies. New voices warmly welcome! Don't be shy...Sign up for the dairy/pareve potluck dinner <http://tinyurl.com/levTahorDec1>.

Parashat Hashavua

Saturday, December 2 | 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.

Save the Date: Dance Party!

Saturday, December 2 | 7:00PM-10:00PM

Get your 80s groove on at PSJC on December 2, for a crowd-pleasing dance-a-palooza with a guest DJ you'll just love. Throwback cocktails on offer; 80s hair optional. Bring friends, family, neighbors and pals for a night of music and good cheer.

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.



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Songs and Nosh with Abe!

Sunday, December 3 | 10:00AM

Start the celebrating early with other parents in the neighborhood! PSJC Tot Shabbat and It's Friday song leader, Abe, will lead a sing-a-long followed by a chance to shmooze over coffee and bagels! Perfect for ages 0-3. RSVPs requested, but not required at https://www.psjc.org/event/sing_and_connect/Chanukkah

Rodfei Tzedek Action Meeting

Sunday, December 3 | 12:00PM

Everything You Wanted to Know about Medicare but Were Afraid to Ask...Medicare 101

Sunday, December 3 | 5:00PM-6:30PM

...because like most government entitlements it is complicated! The Positive Aging Initiative,* by popular request, is sponsoring a workshop that will provide the answers prior to the end of Open Enrollment on Thursday, December 7. All ages welcome! Pre-registration is required. Email Jan Orzeck at jkorzeck@gmail.com. Suggested Donation: \$10 - pay at the door.

Combatants for Peace

Monday, December 4 | 7:00PM

Join us as two Combatants, Nathan Landau and Osama Elewat, (one Israeli and one Palestinian) come to Brooklyn to tell their personal stories of transformation from fighters into Peace activists. Please RSVP here: <https://www.psjc.org/event/combatants-for-peace.html>. Conversation moderated by our own Warren Spielberg.

PSJC Knitters

Monday, December 4 | 7:30PM

For more information contact marjorie.rothenberg@gmail.com.

Shaarei Mitzvah Shabbat Dinner

Friday, December 8 | 6:30PM

Mishneh Torah - Laws of Teshuvah

Saturday, December 9 | 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 for information about this study group.

PJ Chanukkah Havdallah

Saturday, December 9 | 6:30PM-8:00PM

Get in your pj's for bed, but don't got to sleep! Come start the Chanukkah celebrating early with your friends at PSJC! Musical Havdallah, songs, snacks, and Chanukkah crafts for K-5th, but open to everyone. Suggested donatoin \$5 per family. RSVP here: <https://www.psjc.org/event/pj-chanukkah-havdallah.html>.

Kabbalat Shabbat Kulanu & PSJC Chanukkah Celebration

Friday, December 15 | 6:30PM

Join us for a musical Shabbat celebration for all ages! Services begin in the sanctuary with Abe, followed by a communal dinner Everyone is welcome! Main Entrees will be provided, plus some extra special Chanukkah treats! RSVPs are not required, but are helpful to ensure enough food. RSVP here: <https://www.psjc.org/form/kabbalat-shabbat-kulanu.html>

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. **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.



Parashat Vayetzi

Triennial: Genesis 30:14-31:16 | Etz Hayim p.176; Hertz p.111

Haftarah: Hosea 12:13-14:10 | Etz Hayim p.188; Hertz p.118

The love story between Yaakov (Jacob) and Rachel is probably one of the most well-known love stories in the Tanakh, as it includes all of the elements of a good drama: Love at first sight, deceit, rivalry, crises and a tragic ending. Yaakov's encounter with Rachel transforms him into a superhero, who is suddenly capable of lifting a heavy stone off the well single-handedly. After kissing her (something we don't often read about in the Torah), he weeps, adding to the emotional quality that characterizes this relationship.

Like in any dramatic tale, there are many obstacles that encumber their love. Yaakov longs to marry Rachel, only to be deceived by Lavan (Laban), his future father-in-law, and ends up marrying her sister first. Then, after many years of anticipation, when they finally become husband and wife, Rachel discovers she is barren and is forced to give her maidservant to her beloved husband, in the hope of having children vicariously through their union. It seems the intimacy between Yaakov and Rachel is constantly threatened by others, and also by the mishaps of life. As the story unfolds, it is clear that the tension and competition between the two sisters is a central aspect of their relationship with each other, as well as with Yaakov.

But a closer reading of the verses reveals characters far more complex than two star-crossed lovers. For instance, we see that it was Yaakov, not Lavan, who suggested to put off marrying Rachel. Why would he propose such a deal? Did he want to prove his loyalty and desire for Rachel were so strong that he would be willing to work in order to be worthy of her? Or maybe he was hesitant to transition from the emotional rush of falling in love to actually cultivating a stable relationship that faces the challenges of mundane life? And how can we explain Yaakov's failure to recognize his partner on their wedding night? Were his feelings for Rachel so superficial that he could not tell the difference between her and Leah? Or was he just so genuinely convinced that Lavan would never trick him, that he suppressed his own doubts?

According to Babylonian Talmud Tractate Baba Batra 123a, the answer is even more complex. Rachel and Yaakov indeed anticipated his trickery and agreed on signs that would ensure the marriage would go smoothly. But on the wedding night it was Rachel who betrayed Yaakov! "Rachel gave the signs to Leah... as it is written: 'And it came to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah' (Genesis 29:25). This verse is difficult... should one derive that until now she was not Leah? Rather, through the signs that Yaakov gave to Rachel and that she gave to Leah, he did not know it was she until that moment." The signs that were supposed to prevent Lavan's deception become the means for Rachel to deceive Yaakov. Seemingly at the last minute, Rachel decides to put her relationship with her Leah ahead of herself and her relationship with Yaakov.

According to Babylonian Talmud Tractate Brachot 60a, Leah returns the favor years later. After Leah had six boys and was pregnant once again, she said: "Twelve tribes are destined to descend from Yaakov, six came from me and four from the maidservants, that is ten, and if this fetus is male, my sister Rachel will not even be the equivalent of one of the maidservants; immediately the fetus was transformed into a daughter, as it is stated: And she called her name Dina; meaning she named her after her judgment (din)." So Leah gives birth to a girl, Dina, and Rachel to a boy, Yosef (Joseph), who Yaakov immediately elevates above all the others.

So, maybe the love story between Yaakov and Rachel, with all of its obstacles and challenges, internal and external, is not so simple and storybook. Perhaps the take-away from this deceptively complex story is not only how difficult it can be to keep the flame of love burning when faced with everyday life, but also how important loyalty and selflessness are, not only to the people we have fallen in love with, but also to others we care about deeply.

This weekly commentary on the Torah portion is by Shuvi Hoffman, 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/>