



**PARK
SLOPE
JEWISH
CENTER**

December 22-30, 2017 4-12 Tevet 5778
Parashat Vayigash

Friday, December 22 4 Tevet				Parashat Vayigash Saturday, December 23 5 Tevet		
Candle Lighting 4:14PM Kabbalat Shabbat with Alan Palmer 6:30PM				Shacharit 10:00AM Advanced Talmud 1:30PM		
Sunday December 24 6 Tevet	Monday December 25 7 Tevet	Tuesday December 26 8 Tevet	Wednesday December 27 9 Tevet	Thursday December 28 10 Tevet	Friday December 29 11 Tevet	Saturday December 30 12 Tevet
	Office Closed		Morning Minyan 7:15AM		Candle Lighting 4:19PM Kabbalat Shabbat with Freddie Brooks 6:30PM	<i>Shabbat Vayechi</i> Shacharit 10:00AM
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)		

Todah Rabbah

To **Dale Rosenberg** and **Rabbi Amy Loewenthal** for contributing to the Kiddush Fund this Shabbat.
To **Louise Heit-Radwell** and **Steven Radwell** for hosting the Shabbat Shmooze last Shabbat.

HaMakom Yenachem

Our condolences go to:

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

Orly Dabush Nitzan and her family on the death of Orly's father, **Shalom Dabush**, z"l.

Debby Gillman and her family on the death of Debbie's father, **Rabbi Neil Gillman**, z"l.

Yahrzeits observed 5-11 Tevet:

Alex Spruchman, grandfather of Jan Orzeck; **Barbara Stein**, mother of Stephen Stein; **Clara Apfelberg**, observed by the PSJC Community; **David Kligler**, father of Ben Kligler; **David Weixel**, observed by the PSJC Community; **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 Kerr**, father of Grace Kerr; **Hilda Baron Liff**, aunt of Stuart Baron; **Ida Grosser Kalish**, grandmother of Karen Louise Heau; **Juanita Miller**, mother of Richard Miller; **Lois Sharon Degenhardt**, daughter of Iris Sheber; **Mark Levine Oliver**, friend of Jan Orzeck; **Natalie Ulrich**, mother of Charles Ulrich; **Neil Blatt**, brother of Ralph Blatt. *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.

Got announcements? Email by Monday 5:00PM (office@PSJC.org)



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Advanced Talmud

Saturday, December 23 | 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.

PJ Library Class: It's Friday!

Friday, January 5, 12, 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

Author Talk following Lev Tahor: Pamela Laskin will discuss her novel *Ronit and Jamil*

Lev Tahor Services followed by Potluck Dinner and Talk

Friday, January 5 | 6:30 PM

Come out and sing during services. Following a dairy/pareve potluck dinner, we will listen to Pam lead a discussion of *Ronit and Jamil*. If you have questions, please lev.tahor@psjc.org. You can sign up for the dinner, <https://tinyurl.com/LevTahor-Jan-5-18>

Mishneh Torah - Laws of Teshuvah

Saturday, January 6 | 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.

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, a multigenerational historical novel set on a rural Israeli village of private farms that explores the psychological aspects of violence and masculinity and whether the two are interconnected. BPL has 17 print copies.

Save the Date -- and Get Involved: 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

Kishkush Acharei Kiddush

Saturday, January 20 | 1:00PM

Are you comfortable speaking Hebrew? Do you want a place to speak with other fluent Hebrew speakers? Join us the third Shabbat of the month after services and kiddush where we will 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 more than welcome to join as well! Perfect for fluent Hebrew Speakers. Contact Kishkush.at.PSJC@gmail.com for more details.



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Shabbat Shmooze

Saturday, January 20 | 1:30PM

Shabbat Shmooze is a get-together in the home of a PSJC member. Bring a dairy or pareve potluck dish to share. For those participating in the Kishkush Acharei Kiddush first, we look forward to you continuing the conversation at the Shabbat Shmooze afterwards. As usual, the Shabbat Shmooze is a veggie/dairy pot-luck lunch open to the PSJC community.

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!

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.

PSJC Hebrew School Shabbat Dinner

Friday, January 26 | 6:30PM

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. **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 Vayigash

Triennial: Genesis 45:28-46:27 | Etz Hayim p. 279; Hertz p. 172

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

The popularity of socialism, the collective ownership of the state's resources, is on the rise. In 2016, Bernie Sanders, an avowed socialist, won more votes from young people in the primaries than Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump combined. In a world in which a smaller and smaller percentage of people increasingly own a larger and larger percentage of the world's wealth and resources, it is not surprising that young people who perceive their chances of financial stability to be diminishing would look to another system to address their increasing sense that capitalism is not working. It is easy to conflate socialism with communism, a system which in many modern countries inevitably deteriorated into totalitarianism and mass devastation, and dismiss it. But before we do so, we should look at two texts in the Torah: the story of Joseph's collectivization of Egypt's land found in the Book of Genesis, and the laws of land ownership and slavery found in the Book of Leviticus.

Joseph is gifted with the ability to read dreams and see the future. With divine aid he interprets Pharaoh's dream and foresees the famine that would soon follow the seven years of plenty. In Genesis 41:48, Joseph takes possession of all surplus grain and stores it, and in 41:56 begins to ration it out. As the famine worsens, however, things take a more sinister turn. Genesis 47:13-24 explains how Joseph leverages the food stores to take possession of everything, as the people trade all their money, livestock, and eventually land for food. The people are moved to cities, and they work Pharaoh's land as serfs, receiving the seeds from Pharaoh to grow food for themselves, with Pharaoh taking a fifth of everything. In other words, all capital has been concentrated in the hands of the state, and the state makes all resource allocation decisions.

But we would do well to remember that had Joseph not foreseen the seven years of famine, the Egyptians would have starved. The Egyptians themselves recognize this, and express gratitude even as they acknowledge their predicament. In Canaan they did not take such preparations and they paid the price. But Genesis is a world without Torah, and in such a world, Joseph's good intentions greatly magnify Pharaoh's power. Joseph initiated his policies to save people's lives, not to turn them into slaves, but by the end of the seven years of famine, Pharaoh is a totalitarian ruler who can do as he pleases.

A world with Torah, however, answers to a higher cause of goodness. According to Leviticus 25, nobody but God owns the land - not the people, and not their flesh and blood ruler. Only the ultimate ruler, God, has permanent title to the land and thus even when land is "sold" it cannot be sold in perpetuity (Leviticus 25:23). And while in Egypt Pharaoh's ownership of the land leads quickly to slavery, in Leviticus, God's ownership of the land leads to the prohibition of slavery. Human beings cannot enslave one another, because they cannot own one another (25:42). In a world with Torah, temporary inequalities do not become a permanent caste system. Created in the image of God, each and every human being has an equal right to God-owned resources. One can, I believe, make a Torah-based argument against socialism and communism on pragmatic grounds. After all, Joseph's collectivization of property led to slavery. The Torah may reject absolute notions of private property, but when humankind tries to implement such a system, it deteriorates into all property belonging to the Pharaoh(s) strong enough to grab it and hold on to it.

But the idea that all human beings are born into this world equally, and that the oil in the Middle East, the fish in the Pacific, the abundant good land in North America and other such natural resources, belong to us all, is deeply ingrained in the Torah's vision of the world. The return of young people to the socialist vision of the world is a protest against the type of capitalism that threatens to turn the world into Egypt. Even if those with this vision cannot successfully translate God's rule into the rule of flesh and blood, there is much to admire in their attempt.

This weekly commentary on the Torah portion is by **Dr. Joshua Kulp**, *Conservative Yeshiva Faculty & Rosh Yeshiva* 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.