



**Course Descriptions 2018-2019 / 5779
SPRING 2019**

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8:30-11:30 Sunday/Tuesday/Thursday

TEXT & TODAY PARSHA PLUS
MICHAEL HATTIN
Sun. Tues ,Thurs. 8:30- 11:30

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING

Each week a meta-theme from the Torah portion of the week will be considered. We will draw upon the wide gamut of Jewish commentary – biblical, rabbinic, medieval and modern – as we explore the issue and its relevance to our lives.

Sample topics include: slavery and freedom, miracles and reason, freewill and coercion, laws and rituals, sacred space and sacred time, incorporeality and incarnation, holy and profane, sacrifice and self, pure and impure, spontaneity and routine, particularism and universalism.

HUMASH /TANACH
TOVAH LEAH NACHMANI
Sun., Tues., Thurs. 8:30-11:30

LEVEL: INTRODUCTORY

In the early stories of Genesis: the Garden of Eden, Cain and Abel, the Flood, and the Tower of Babel, critical choices of personal and societal development breed disaster as well as self discovery.

Conflicts of egotism and compliance; competition and collaboration; corruption and sensitivity to ethical detail emerge as ancient Biblical themes with modern reverberations.

In the subsequent narratives of Genesis – Abraham and Sara struggle with the particular and the universal aspects of early Jewish existence, which continue to inspire our own relationships with our nation and with the nations with whom we comprise the world.

Students will:

1. Significantly increase their Hebrew vocabulary and grammar skills, facilitating understanding of an original Biblical text
2. Acquire skills to examine the gaps and difficulties in a Biblical text: tools of traditional interpretation and modern literary tools.
3. Understand the Biblical text in a broader context of ancient historical times.
4. Discover personal relevance in dilemmas woven deep in the text, through written reflections and discussions.

TALMUD
RAHEL BERKOVITS
Sun., Tues., Thurs. 8:30-11:30

LEVEL: INTRO +

In this course students will be introduced to the world of the Ta'anaitic Sages through an in-depth study of their most famous and important text – the Mishnah, which became the basis for all Jewish Law. In this class students will develop skills and analytical tools to decipher the conceptual categories and legal reasoning of the Mishna. The course aims to train the student to comprehend and question the text independently, through critical analysis of language and structure. During the year we will focus on the Tractate of *Berakhot*, which deals with the recitation of the *Shema*, Prayer, and blessings. In-depth attention will be paid to the specifics of the law as well as the overarching meta-legal concepts and theological and philosophical messages the Sages are trying to convey in their discussions. In the second half of the year we will begin learning the *Gemara* on one of the chapters of Mishnah which we have studied.

TALMUD
LEAH ROSENTHAL
Sun., Tues., Thurs. 8:30-11:30

LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE

Introduction to the intricacies of the Talmudic discourse. Careful attention is paid to the Talmud's language, terminology and structure as we follow the discussions of the Talmud. The ultimate goal of this course is to bring students as close to independence as possible in their ability to study a page of Gemara. We will be studying Masechet Kiddushin.

TALMUD
ZVI HIRSCHFIELD
Sun., Tues., Thurs. 8:30-11:30

LEVEL: ADVANCED

We will be learning the sixth chapter of *Tractate Ketubot*. We will carefully examine the development of Jewish law, and continue past the Talmudic discussion into the teachings of the Rishonim on the sugyot. Course requirements include at least one year of intensive Talmud study, and the ability to make one's way through a sugya with a havruta.

Required books: *Tractate Ketubot*

TALMUD AND HALAKHA
ELISHA ANCSELOVITS and DANIEL REIFMAN

LEVEL: KOLLEL

TALMUD - MASEKHET SHABBAT Sunday and Thursday 08:30- 11:30 (Daniel Reifman)	HILKHOT SHABBAT Tuesday, 8:30- 13:00 (Elisha Ancselovits)
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The Talmud portion of this course is designed to complement the Hilkhhot Shabbat class, covering many of the relevant sugyot in Masekhet Shabbat. In addition to examining the key Halakhic concepts, we will focus on skills needed to prepare a sugya on one's own, including close analysis of the ways that different Rishonim resolve difficulties in the Gemara text and conceive of the relationship between parallel sugyot.

8:30-11:30 Monday/Wednesday

TEXT & TODAY **LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**
THE TEXTS AND WORLDVIEWS OF THE TALMUDIC SAGES **SPRING**
ZVI HIRSCHFIELD
Mon., Wed. 8:30- 11:30

Together we will explore a full range of Rabbinic sources such as Mishna, Midrash Halakha, Midrash aggada, and Gemarrah. In addition to appreciating the structure, style, and content of these sources, we will discuss how the Talmudic Rabbis understood and debated their mission of translating the Written Torah into a living tradition. All texts will have English translation and will be appropriate for novices as well as seasoned learners.

MISHNA/TALMUD **LEVEL: INTRODUCTORY**
MEESH HAMMER-KOSSOY
Mon., Wed. 8:30- 11:30

In this course students will be introduced to the world of the Ta'anaitic Sages through an in-depth study of their most famous and important text – the Mishna, which became the basis for all Jewish Law. During the first semester, we will focus on the Tractate of Berakhot, which treats laws of prayer, recitation of the Shema, and blessing for food and special occasions. Through this masterful text, students will meet basic Jewish concepts especially pertaining to our relationship with the Divine as well as develop skills and analytical tools to translate and decipher the conceptual categories and legal reasoning of the Mishna. The course aims to train the student to comprehend and question the text independently, through critical analysis of language and structure.

Required book: Mishnah Bahira Berakhot

HUMASH
MEIR SCHWEIGER
Mon., Wed. 8:30- 11:30

LEVEL: INTRO +

The goal of this course is to give students the ability to analyze a section of *humash* with an introduction to the classic medieval commentaries. For this class, students are expected to have a very basic knowledge of Hebrew and some formal training in the study of biblical texts. The focus of the class will be two-fold:

1) To develop the student's skills in reading a biblical text. Special emphasis will be placed on familiarizing students with biblical grammar, nuances of biblical Hebrew, literary patterns of paragraphs and chapters, sensitivity to "key" words and cross-referencing. Students will be expected to work extensively with a dictionary and concordance. We will examine the classic medieval commentaries in a "graduated" manner: the focus of the class will shift from biblical text to commentaries during the course of the year.

2) To deal with the concepts and issues that are raised by whatever text we study. Although students will be encouraged to examine the deeper meaning of text and how it impacts their lives, this pursuit will be the outgrowth of a very careful reading of the text rather than a replacement of it.

Texts - We will study Chapters 1-24 of the book of *Bereshit* (Genesis), which a special focus on: 1) the creation stories, Adam and Eve, Noah and the flood, Tower of Babel, and the spiritual journey of Abraham and Sarah.

All students will be expected to purchase and bring to class the following books:

- 1) *Bereshit - Torat Chayim edition*, volume 1
- 2) Hebrew-English *Tanakh* - JPS or Keter
- 3) Hebrew-English dictionary (preferably Alkalay or Morfix)

HUMASH
MICHAEL HATTIN
Mon., Wed. 8:30-11:30

LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE
SPRING

The story of Yosef and his family, constituting the final third of Sefer Breisheet, is the book's most highly developed narrative. Our studies of the material will be guided by careful analysis of the primary text, consideration of other relevant Biblical material, reflection on ancient and modern commentary and attention to personal meaning for ourselves. We will look at the narrative carefully, as we authentically struggle with some passages and find inspiration from others. Along the way, we will continue to develop the skills and methodology that will allow us to continue our studies independently.

Course requirements:

Regular, punctual attendance twice weekly.

Independent preparation for a short class presentation at the end of the semester.

Required Texts, to be purchased:

1. חומש תורת חיים, בראשית כרך ב, מוסד הרב קוק, ירושלים (Humash Torat Haim, **second** volume of Bereisheet).
2. A Tanakh.

HUMASH: BREISHEET/GENESIS
HOWARD MARKOSE
Mon., Wed. 8:30-11:30

LEVEL: ADVANCED

This course is designed to bring to the advanced student a greater understanding and appreciation for the text that is called Breisheet (Genesis). Students will gain insight into the nature of the book and its many characters, taking into consideration the book's literary, historical, archeological and linguistic nuances, using various means and sources. Medieval commentaries will be studied along with modern *parshanim*, and relevant ancient Near Eastern literature will also be introduced. Students should be capable of reading the text with some level of fluency, and be able to translate in a manner which reflects a basic understanding of Biblical Hebrew Grammar. No previous background in Breisheet is required, although it can certainly work to the student's advantage to already have studied this book of the Tanach.

Students are to bring to class both Breisheet Torat Hayim (Rav Kook Publishers) and a Hebrew/English Tanach (New JPS or The Jerusalem Bible are the preferred editions, but others are certainly acceptable). Students will learn how to navigate the BDB (Brown, Driver and Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament) and the Concordance to the Tanach (either Mandelkern or the preferred Even Shoshan).

11:45-1:00 Sunday/Thursday

BEKIUT NEVI'IM RISHONIM
MICHAEL HATTIN
Sun., Thurs. 11:45-1:00

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
FALL/SPRING

Navigating the Bible

The books of the Prophets or “Nevi'im” that comprise the second (and largest) section of the Tanakh are *terra incognita* to many of us. Aside from some celebrated passages, much of the material that constitutes the prophetic works – including their historical setting, primary themes, and literary techniques – is, to quote Isaiah, “like the words of a sealed book”.

In this course, we will remedy that situation by embarking upon a broad and comprehensive survey of the first, narrative section of the Nevi'im, namely the books of Joshua/Yehoshua, Judges/Shoftim, Samuel/Shemuel and Kings/Melachim. This will necessarily entail a fair amount of weekly reading by course participants, whether in Hebrew or in translation. In class, we will construct a geographical and historical framework, explore important themes and motifs, and trace the textual continuity that underlies the Hebrew Bible as a whole. **Along the way, we will cover a thousand years of Biblical history as we encounter every significant character and event in the story of the people of Israel!** We will meet two times a week and instruction will be in English. Required text: a Hebrew Tanakh with translation.

ENCOUNTERING THE DIVINE WITHIN
YISCAH SMITH
Sun., Thurs., 11:45-1:00 pm

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING

Rabbi Akiva would say, “How beloved it is that the human being was created in the image of G-d; how even more beloved it is that one knows that one was created in the Image.” Pirkei Avot 3, 14

This class will explore the teachings of R. Kalonymus Kalmish Shapira, the Piaseczna Rebbe, the Aish Kodesh. We shall examine texts that describe Jewish living and tradition as the cultivation of a spiritual practice. His inspiring and progressive ideas discuss the spiritual nature of our body, mind and heart, how we awaken to the Divine presence within us, and how we can integrate these components and expressions of the Jewish experience into one whole healthy being.

TALMUDIC PERSONALITIES (TANNAIM)
LEAH ROSENTHAL
Sun., Thurs. 11:45-1:00

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING

The class will read classic rabbinic texts focusing on different Mishnaic or Talmudic personalities. As we read, we will attempt to gain insight into the literary character and ideological representation of each great figure. The goal of the class is to create a multi-dimensional context which will inform our reading of rabbinic texts.

PARSHA IN HEBREW
MEIR SCHWEIGER
Sun., Thurs. 11:45-1:00

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL

The purpose of this class is to give students and in-depth understanding of the Parsha, together with an opportunity to hear and speak Hebrew. We will examine major themes in the Parsha, with an emphasis on the classic medieval commentaries, and make every effort to have all discussion be in Hebrew, translating words as needed. Students are expected to read through the Parsha before class and to bring a Torat Chaim/ Mikraot Gedolot with them to each session.

11:45-1:00 Monday/Wednesday

SIDDUR- Theory and Practice
MICHAEL HATTIN - Fall
MEIR SCHWEIGER - Spring
Mon., Wed. 11:45-1:00

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL

The siddur is arguably the Jewish people's greatest literary creation. In it are contained not only familiar prayers but an implicit description of our people's history, culture and linguistic development over the course of more than three millennia. The siddur is of course also the repository of our people's unquenchable yearnings for a better world.

This course will introduce the content of the *Shacharit* or the morning service – the longest of the daily prayers. We will follow the course of *Shacharit* through its discrete elements, their overall structure, their historical context and their deeper meaning. Along the way, we will also discuss the basic framing of the service – synagogue layout, the role of the prayer leader and the "choreography" of the service. All denominations are welcome.

Required texts: Koren Siddur with English translation according to the liturgy of Ashkenaz.

BIBLICAL HEBREW GRAMMAR
HOWARD MARKOSE
Mon., Wed. 11:45-1:00

LEVEL:
INTRO. - SPRING

The Tanakh is a text that has been analyzed and interpreted many ways throughout its existence. This course will enable the student to read and comprehend the text through the understanding of the Hebrew grammar that is found therein. Focusing on certain Biblical selections, primarily in the Book of Breisheet (Genesis), students will learn how the various verb forms are used to express specific meaning. They will learn to read the text with proper pronunciation and accent, and explore how the Trope (the cantillation marks which provide accent, punctuation and melody) serve as an aid to the reading and studying of Tanakh. The fall course will be an intermediate level course. Students will be required to possess a rudimentary knowledge of Hebrew grammar for this semester's course. The spring course will be taught at an introductory level.

CONTEMPORARY ISRAEL
JAMIE SALTER
Mon., Wed. 11:45-1:00

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING

On the one hand, the State of Israel is the culmination of a dream, or more precisely, many different dreams. On the other hand, the reality of Jewish sovereignty in its own land has led to some difficult realities. This course will examine historical, sociological, economic, religious, and political changes and challenges that have created the present Israeli reality. We will look at different topics in-depth using a variety of sources and methodologies in a sensitive attempt to understand this complicated country a little better. Each class will also include a brief "Israel as Lab" segment, in which students will be encouraged to share aspects of their own contemporary Israel experiences – the good, the bad, the beautiful, and the ugly.

Included in the different topics that we will cover this semester are:

- The Declaration of Independence and its relevance today
- Nationalism, Religion, and Identification in a Jewish State
- 'Church' (or synagogue) and State
- The Political System in Israel
- The 'People's Army' - those who serve and those who don't
- A tribal society? Ashkenazim, Sephardim, and many more...
- Non-Jews in a Jewish State - the 'minorities' of Israel
- The Modern Peace Process (from 'Oslo') and its Impact on Israeli Society

2:30-5:00 Sunday/Tuesday

HALAKHA
MEIR SCHWEIGER
Sun., Tues. 2:30-5:00

LEVEL: INTRO/INTERM.
SPRING

This course will focus on practical Halakha. We will study a number of areas: holidays, kashrut, blessings and prayers, and some life cycle events. All study will be done from Halakhic texts, so that an additional goal will be to familiarize the students with the most important Halakhic texts, from Mishna and Talmud to Maimonides and the Shulkhan Arukh. We will see some modern Halakhic works as well, including responsa, with an eye to getting a feel for Halakhic process. This class pre-supposes minimal exposure to both Halakhic practice and texts, and there is no expectation of any level of Halakhic observance. We will be working from a source booklet, which everyone will be expected to purchase.

SEXUALITY AND SANCTITY
RAHEL BERKOVITS
Sun., Tues. 2:30-5:00

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING

Sexuality and Sanctity: Towards a Jewish Sexual Ethic

What does Judaism have to say about issues surrounding sexuality? What values and challenges can the rabbinic texts impart for us living with the modern sexual norms of the twenty-first century? In this class we will examine, analyze and openly discuss rabbinic texts from the Torah and Talmud through to the modern responsa and different Jewish denominational responses on topics connected to sexual conduct such as marital sex, pleasure and positions, consent, the laws of *niddah*, Gay sex, premarital/Non-marital sex, masturbation and birth control. We will also examine the topics of transgender and intersex individuals in rabbinic literature (even though those topics are not related to issues of sex- they nonetheless interest students.) The classroom will be a safe space for students of diverse backgrounds, orientations, and practices. All sources are provided in both Hebrew and English and the course is open to all levels and genders.

MIDRASH
LEVI COOPER
Sun., Tues. 2:30-5:00

LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE
SPRING

This exciting course will open the world of *Midrash*. We will explore different genres of *Midrash*, the historical and geographical background of *Midrash*, the interplay between *Aggadah* and *Halakha*, the relationship of the rabbis towards *Midrash Aggadah*, how the sages presented philosophical ideas, the continuum between *Peshat* and *Derash*, and more.

In the course of our study, we will develop working definitions of key terms, such as *Midrash*, *Aggada*, *Aggadata*, *Halakha* etc.

The aim of the class is to understand the literary genre, to facilitate engagement with different midrashic and aggadic texts, to develop an appreciation of the genre and its goals, and to empower students to be able to begin to study Midrash independently.

Texts will all be in Hebrew (with a smattering of Aramaic and a dash of Greek).

In addition to the texts studied in class, each student will choose a Midrash to study throughout the semester.

What you will need to bring to class:

Notebook and folder for handouts

A Midrash of your choice

Recommended: Hebrew/English dictionary

2:30-5:00 Monday/Wednesday

SEMINAR IN MODERN JEWISH THOUGHT
ZVI HIRSCHFIELD
Mon, Wed. 2:30-5:00

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING

This course will explore how leading Jewish thinkers address the great challenges of modernity to Judaism and Jewish identity. Issues to be explored will include: Rabbinic authority, nationalism, feminism, ethics, and the goal of being a Jew. Students will be asked to formulate their own views and present them to each other in seminar style.

RAV KOOK: SONG OF THE SOUL
MIKE FEUER
Mon., Wed. 2:30-5:00

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING

Rav Kook is called one of the spiritual giants of the 20th century. In this class we will explore his approach to Divine service and his thoughts on fundamental questions which arise from learning Torah in a post-modern world. Our focus will be on unpacking these texts in their intellectual and cultural context, but we will also engage them as examples of a life lived in intimacy with the Divine.

JUDAISM AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION
DANIEL ROTH
Mon., Wed. 2:30-5:00

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING

The Track seeks to challenge and inspire participants into being knowledgeable and active *rodfei shalom* (Jewish pursuers of peace) between individuals, families, communities and nations. We will attempt to do this through the study of classic Jewish rabbinic texts, conflict resolution theories, newspapers articles, group discussions, guest speakers and field trips. Track topics include "The Identity and Methods of the Rodef Shalom;" "Forgiveness and Its Limits;" "Narrative Mediation and Reconciling Israelite-Amalekite Narratives;" "Ethical Dilemmas of War and Peace in Judaism and Israel." In addition to participating in the bi-weekly second semester classes, participants will be required to attend occasional guest speaker lectures (Tuesdays, 11:45-1), a class trip, at least two "peace and conflict" activities outside of class time and to occasionally share and post comments on processing questions.

The Track is open to students of all levels and backgrounds and is one of the programs of the Pardes Center for Judaism and Conflict Resolution.

Evening Classes

HASIDUT
LEVI COOPER
Sundays 5:15-7:15 PM

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL

Hasidut – or *Chassidus* – is a movement that continues to provide inspiration, fascination, and at times revulsion.

In this course we will walk the spiritual path of Hasidut, meeting central personalities, becoming familiar with key ideas, and developing an appreciation for the historical and social evolution of a movement that has given so much to Judaism.

Approximately half the classes will be dedicated to passages found in a foundational Hasidic text. In the other classes we will learn about the history, thought, and development of the movement. Hasidic songs – *niggunim* – will also be introduced, discussed, explored, and sung. Sections of the course will be dedicated to contemporary Hasidic phenomena. Each week, participants will be assigned tasks – “spiritual homework” – connected to the passages discussed. The spiritual homework will be completed outside class and then discussed in *havruta* at the beginning of the next class.

Text: *Maor VaShamesh* (to be purchased or downloaded; Warsaw 1877 in “Rashi” script can be downloaded from hebrewbooks.org).

Sources will be read in Hebrew from the original text and translated.

Hebrew is not a prerequisite; flexibility, openness, commitment to the class space, aims, atmosphere, and vibe are requirements.

TALMUD SKILLS INTENSIVE
DANIEL REIFMAN
Mon., Wed. 5:15-7:15 pm

LEVEL: INTERM./ADV.

This course is designed for students who want to develop textual proficiency in Talmud and basic rishonim. We will concentrate on techniques for parsing the Talmud text and constructing the logical flow of the *sugya*, with the goal of allowing students to read an average *sugya* independently by the end of the course. Additionally, we will discuss the way different *rishonim* comment on and seek to resolve problems in the Talmud text. Students should have strong Hebrew language skills and some prior experience studying Talmud.

TORAH TROPE
ELISA PEARLMAN
Mondays 5:10-6:10

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL

The word *ta'am* means "flavor" and the *ta'amei hamikrah* ("trope marks") not only show us how to chant each word in the Tanakh, but also add "flavor", i.e. enhance the text, too. During this course students will acquire the tools to chant any part of Torah, while also looking at how the trope functions as an interpretation to the text. We will look specifically at the texts of Bereishit (The Creation) and the portion read at Rosh Hodesh. No previous experience necessary.

HAFTARAH TROPE
ELISA PEARLMAN
Mon. 6:15-7:15

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING

During this course, students will acquire the tools to chant any Haftarah, while also looking at how the trope functions as an interpretation to the text. We will be looking specifically at the Haftarah read at Simchat Torah.

NIGHT SEDER (SEDER EREV)
Monday 7:30-9:30 PM

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL

Seder Erev provides a unique opportunity for students to use the resources of the *Beit Midrash* at their own pace, outside the regular hours, in a relaxed atmosphere. Students can take advantage of this once-a-week opportunity to investigate a particular area of interest, strive over the year to complete a *sefer*, or review material studied during the regular program. This is a sterling opportunity to fulfill the Divine precept of Talmud Torah during the quiet hours.

Seder Erev will also provide an opportunity for first year students to study with more advanced students including Fellows and PEP. This is also a chance for people on different levels with common interests to study together. Pardes faculty will be on hand to provide guidance and to answer questions.

UNPACKING THE SAGES
ELISHA ANCELOVITS
TUESDAYS: 5:15-7:15 pm

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL

“You may polish up common sense, you may contradict [it] in detail, and you may surprise it. But ultimately your whole task is to satisfy it.” Alfred North Whitehead

In this course, we learn to read a traditional text, and especially religious legal texts, from the Bible through the Talmud and today by understanding what the author tried to communicate rather than reading words as self-defining. In that way, we learn to discover past people's insights on real life. We use such study, in turn, to learn how to make our own ethical/policy decisions based on inductive and intuitive insights -- rather than by pigeonholing issues into principles or values.

R. Elisha Ancselovits (Yadin Yadin), PhD

SCRIBAL ARTS
DOV LAIMON

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL

Wednesdays 5:15-6:45 pm (There is an extra charge for this course.)

In this hands-on seminar, students will learn the script used in writing Sifrei Torah, tefillin, and mezuzot, how to make a quill and write on parchment. The course will provide an introduction to determining when a letter is kosher, and how tefillin and mezuzot must be written, as well as an investigation of the deep meaning of the alef-bet in classical texts.