



SPRING Course Descriptions 2022 / 5782

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

HUMASH/TANACH

LEVEL: INTRODUCTORY

TOVAH LEAH NACHMANI

Sun., Tues., Thurs. 8:30-11:30

EXODUS: How was Pharaoh's final solution derailed by foreign and feminine heroism? What are some messages of a burning bush not consumed? Why was Moses chosen to lead the Jewish people? What were his greatest fears? For whom were the plagues and what messages did they convey? How are the stories of the Exodus relevant to our post-modern lives?

Through guided text study, and a close reading of the Exodus text in Hebrew, with traditional and modern commentaries, students will discover a variety of answers and even more questions.

HEBREW: Daily Hebrew instruction and home study assignments empower the students to greatly increase their Hebrew vocabulary, improve their reading and writing Hebrew as well as their ability to translate Hebrew texts, songs and prayers.

BOOKS of JONAH, ESTHER, RUTH: In their appropriate seasons -before the holidays of Rosh Hashana, Purim, and Shavuot - students will study highlights from these books, exploring their historic contexts, and focusing on key issues of moral struggle and free choice.

TALMUD

LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE

RAHEL BERKOVITS

Sun., Tues., Thurs. 8:30-11:30

This class is an intensive introduction to the study of Talmud. The course will focus on acquiring basic *Gemara* skills. Students will learn to understand the structure of the Talmudic page and passage, and how to follow the flow of its complex arguments. They will acquire key terms and basic vocabulary that enable the decoding of Talmudic passages. Students will learn how to identify the smaller units of texts quoted in the *Gemara*, and will be able to ascertain if a question or challenge is being brought or a proof text or resolution to a problem is being offered. They will be able to recognize *beritot*, *meimrot* and the voice of the *Stam*. Overall, students will gain a sense of how to think about a page of Talmud and the structure of the *sugya*. Students will also encounter the literary power of the Talmud. Through critical analysis of language and structure students will examine the overarching meta-halakhic concepts and theological and

philosophical messages the Sages are trying to convey in their discussions, many of which are still very relevant today.

TALMUD

LEVEL: INTERM./ADV.

LEAH ROSENTHAL

Sun., Tues., Thurs. 8:30-11:30

This class is an 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. We will strive to gain a more sophisticated understanding of the history of this text, understand some of the processes which created it, and some of the processes of transmitting it through the generations, all of which left their mark on the Talmudic text we read today. 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. After Sukkot, we will be studying selections from Masechet Kiddushin.

TALMUD

LEVEL: ADVANCED

NECHAMA GOLDMAN BARASH

Sun., Tues., Thurs. 8:30-11:30

We will be studying Tractate Ketubot which is fondly called the "Mini Shas" in the yeshiva world because of the broad range of topics it encompasses. The class will focus on helping advanced students gain greater fluency in vocabulary and textual skills, along with increasing students' confidence in both unpacking a daf of Talmud and with understanding classic Rishonim, notably Rashi and Tosafot. An academic approach will also be presented when analyzing the editing process that took place when the Babylonian Talmud was redacted and, in some cases, there will be comparison to the Jerusalem Talmud. Finally, the centrality and significance of gender in the tractate will be part of the ongoing classroom discussion in which the work of contemporary female Talmud scholars will be presented.

Required Books: Tractate Ketubot.

KOLLEL TALMUD AND HALAKHA

LEVEL: KOLLEL

ELISHA ANCSELOVITS and DANIEL REIFMAN

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 Hilkhot 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

MISHNA/TALMUD

LEVEL: INTRODUCTORY

ZVI HIRSCHFIELD

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. 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

LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE

MICHAEL HATTIN

Mon., Wed. 8:30-11:30

Sefer Shemot is the story of Israel becoming a nation. It begins with an account of the enslavement in Egypt and concludes with the narrative of the Tabernacle's construction. Its primary themes of slavery and freedom, exile and redemption, transgression and *teshuva* continue to inspire us today. Our studies will follow the travails of the Israelites in Egypt, the triumph of their exodus, and the trials of faith that await them as they journey forth to receive the Torah at Sinai.

As we consider these foundational, famous and sometimes frustrating stories, we 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. Along the way, we will work on developing the skills and methodologies that will allow us to pursue our studies with greater independence.

Required texts – a 1 volume Tanakh with English translation as well as the first volume of the Torah Chayim edition of Sefer Shemot.

HUMASH

LEVEL: ADV./INTERM.

HOWARD MARKOSE

Mon., Wed. 8:30-11:30

This course is designed to bring to the intermediate student a greater understanding and appreciation for the text that is called Shemot (Exodus). 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 Shemot 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 Shemot Torat Hayim Vol. 1 (Rav Kook Publishers) and a Hebrew/English Tanach (the brand new Koren Tanach, the 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)."

HUMASH

LEVEL: ADVANCED

JUDY KLITSNER

Mon., Wed. 8:30-11:30

This is a skills-based class, designed to empower students to become careful and precise-- and ultimately independent and creative-- readers of the biblical text. The vehicle for our exploration will be the first half of the book of Shemot. In approaching each narrative, we will conduct close readings, utilizing the tools of literary analysis. These readings will then act as building blocks in reaching a deep understanding of the motives and actions of the biblical characters, as well as moral, philosophical and theological messages contained in the book.

An added goal of this class is to promote proficiency in reading biblical commentary, and to recognize the methods and styles of various commentators.

Course requirements:

Regular, punctual attendance twice weekly

Independent preparation and class presentation at the end of each semester

Recommended background reading:

1. Tanakh, as much as possible
2. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, Basic Books, Inc., NY, 1981.
3. J. Weingreen, *A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew*, Second Edition, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1959.

Required Texts, to be purchased:

1. חומש תורת חיים, שמות כרך א, מוסד הרב קוק, ירושלים (Humash Torat Haim, first volume of Shemot)
2. A Tanakh with English translation (Jewish Publication Society recommended)
3. מקראות גדולות, 5 books of Chumash in 1 volume with commentaries, Horev, Jerusalem

11:50-1:00 Sunday/Thursday

**RELATIONSHIP INTIMACY
TOVAH LEAH NACHMANI
Sun., Thurs. 11:50-1:00**

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING**

We all experience glitches of discord and controversy - not only with difficult people in our midst, but also with those we love - with ourselves, our family, friends and lovers. A wide range of classic to modern Jewish texts, in Hebrew alongside translations, combined with innovative reflection exercises and practical paths of application makes this course not just a learning experience, but a journey of transformation.

Required: An inquiring mind and an open heart.

**JEWISH EXPERIENCES IN MODERNITY
DAVID BERNSTEIN
Sun., Thurs. 11:50-1:00**

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING**

HOW DID WE GET HERE? How did Jews become equal citizens, develop denominations, and create a Jewish State? What were the ways in which Jews coped with modernization? How is it that Germany turned on its Jews?

In what ways did Jews react? These are just some of the questions that we will deal with in trying to grapple with the major turning points in modern Jewish history, from the French Revolution through the late 20th century. Each class will usually revolve around a primary historical source.

We will also set aside a small amount of time for "Israel as Laboratory," student reflections on "the good, the bad, and the ugly" aspects of life in Israel.

FIVE MEGILLOT
MICHAEL HATTIN
Sun., Thurs. 11:50-1:00

LEVEL: IN HEBREW
SPRING

This course will consider the Five Megillot of Shir HaShirim, Ruth, Eichah, Kohelet and Esther. Besides being Biblical texts, the Megillot also serve a public liturgical purpose: they are read in *Beit Knesset* as part of the prayer service, each one in its appropriate season.

We will carefully analyze the narratives of these books, approaching them as literary documents as well as considering them from the perspective of the Rabbinic Midrash, the medieval commentaries and modern scholarship. Occasionally, we will diverge to consider a specific topic in greater detail, examining other Biblical texts and materials that shed light on the matter. Our goals are to build skills and confidence, to familiarize ourselves with the commentaries and their methodology, and to appreciate the self-referential and cross-referential qualities of the Tanakh.

Required texts: a good "Mikraot Gedolot" edition of Chamesh Megillot as well as a Hebrew Tanakh. Handouts will be provided. **Instruction will be in Hebrew.**

11:50-1:00 Monday/Wednesday

BIBLICAL HEBREW GRAMMAR
HOWARD MARKOSE
Mon., Wed. 11:50-1:00

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.

CULTIVATING SPIRITUAL RESILIENCE

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL

YISCAH SMITH

Mon, Wed 11:50-1:00

The teachings of R' Kalonymous Kalman Shapira (1889-1943) have brought much needed soul nourishment to Jews around the world for decades, and are currently becoming increasingly popular. As we encounter heightened uncertainty and insecurity, his voice resonates ever more deeply with us.

R' Shapira is often known as the Piaseczner Rebbe, and also the *Aish Kodesh* (Sacred Fire), after the title of his seminal work of Torah lessons he gave over while interned in the Warsaw Ghetto between the years 1939-1942. They were buried beneath the ghetto, and after the war were discovered and brought to light.

The Rebbe was a passionate educator and spiritual innovator. The scion of prominent Chasidic lineages in Poland, the Piaseczner's teachings are devoted to a profoundly holistic approach to the spiritual life and a Jew's *avodat Hashem*, or service of the Divine.

In the work *Aish Kodesh*, the Piaseczner addresses the situation of his fellow Jews with humility, authenticity and faith. Unafraid to encounter human suffering in all of its rawness, the Rebbe offers profound teachings and meditations on spiritually moving through times of profound despair and uncertainty. His radical teachings hold enduring relevance for us today, especially as a source for cultivating spiritual resilience, renewal and inner redemption.

PARSHAT HASHAVUA

LEVEL: EASY HEBREW

ELHANAN MILLER

SPRING

Mondays only 11:50-1:00

The Parshat Hashavua class will be taught in easy Hebrew and cover both the pshat (literal narrative) of the weekly Torah reading, as well as classic commentary and midrash readings of the text. We will discuss the meaning of these foundational stories to our lives today. On Wednesdays when there is no class, students are encouraged to use that time to read over the parsha on their own.

2:30-5:00 Sunday/Tuesday

**Sexuality and Sanctity:
Towards a Jewish Sexual Ethic**
Rahel Berkovits
Sun, Tues 2:30-5:00

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING**

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

**LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE
SPRING**

The Jewish People are not really *The People of the Book*; we are ***The People of Midrash!*** More than any other genre, it is the *Midrash* that has fashioned Jewish collective consciousness and makes us who we are today. This path-breaking course will crack open the creative world of Midrash – the most significant repository of Jewish collective memory, and perhaps the most powerful tool for fashioning identity.

Midrash is often an unsung hero in the Jewish canon; at times it has been dismissed or even maligned. This course will situate Midrash in its rightful place as a champion of Jewish intellectual endeavours, literary efforts, and the evergreen quest for relevance and meaning.

We will explore different works of *Midrash*, the historical and geographical background of *Midrash*, the interplay between *Aggada* and *Halakha*, the relationship of the rabbis towards *Midrash Aggada*, 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 for key terms, such as *Midrash*, *Aggada*, *Aggadata*, *Halakha*, and others.

The aims of the class are 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.

Midrash Project: In addition to the texts studied in class, each student will embark upon a supplementary self-study venture, choosing a specific midrashic work to study throughout the semester. This undertaking will complement the classes, and provide an opportunity to see the trajectory of a volume of Midrash. Towards the end of the semester, each student will have an opportunity to present material from the Midrash Project.

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

What you will need to bring to class:

Notebook and folder for handouts

A Midrash of *your* choice – to be selected by the end of week two of the course

Recommended: easy access to dictionaries

Halakha: Avelut
ZVI HIRSCHFIELD
Sundays

LEVEL: ADVANCED
SPRING

Together we will explore the laws and customs around burial and mourning. We will trace the development and debate about these practices as they appear in the Talmud, Rishonim, Codes, and Responsa literature. We will note differences in Ashkenazic and Sephardic practice, and leave room to discuss how these practices are observed in different Jewish communities today. This class is for advanced studies who can study these sources in Hebrew.

PASKENING RESPONSIBLY
ELISHA ANCELOVITS
Tuesdays 2:30-5:00 PM

LEVEL: KOLLEL

This class draws on Talmudic material (and earlier) through Halakhic material centered around Hoshen Mishpat and Yoreh Deah on judicial and rabbinic decision making. It examines rules and debates over the rules of pesak in order to identify the competing considerations that one must keep in mind in order to reach responsible - wise - decisions.

What you will need to bring to class:

Class sourcebook

2:30-5:00 Monday/Wednesday

HALAKHA
MICHAEL HATTIN
Mon., Wed. 2:30-5:00

LEVEL: INTRO./INTERM.
SPRING

The Laws of Kashrut: How to Set Up and Maintain a Kosher Kitchen

Like the first semester, this course will focus on practical *Halakha* - the "what" and "how" of mitzvah observance. We will utilize some of the classical *Halakhic* texts such as Rambam, the Shulchan Aruch and selected commentaries as we investigate specific areas of Kashrut practice. Along the way, we will gain basic familiarity with Halakhic codes and how to navigate them.

Areas of study will include important aspects of kosher food preparation and consumption such as kosher species and their slaughter, mixtures of meat and milk, mix-ups in the kitchen, *koshering*/immersion of vessels, and many more related topics. We will also consider some of the *Halakhot* of the Jewish holidays as they come up (Purim, Pesach and Shavuot). Handouts will be provided. There is no expectation of commitment to Halakhic observance.

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.

STRANGERS IN STRANGE LANDS:
TALES OF TRAVELING RABBIS
GILA FINE
Mon. Wed. 2:30-5:00

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING

Who is the rabbi whose immigration to Babylon results in cruel humiliation? Why does a great scholar not understand a word when arriving at his new yeshiva? How does a journey into the future destroy the most celebrated leader of his time? And what happens when a Babylonian student outshines an Israeli rabbi?

The Talmud is riddled with travel narratives, stories of rabbis who journey through space – and time – in search of Torah. Leaving their former lives behind, these once-revered leaders set out into the unknown, disoriented in unfamiliar territory, disparaged by unfriendly locals. This course looks at a number of such tales; subjecting each story to close literary analysis, and reading it in light of related intertexts (from Jewish and Western culture), we will explore the trials and tribulations of the traveling rabbis, and the lessons they must learn before they can arrive at their destinations.

TALMUDIC SKILLS

LEVEL: INTERM/ADV.

DANIEL REIFMAN

Mon., Wed. 2:30-5:00

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.

Evening Classes

HASIDUT

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL

LEVI COOPER

Sun., Tues. 5:15-7:00

Hasidism – or *Chassidus* – is a movement that continues to provide inspiration, fascination, and at times bewilderment or even 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 and promises to continue playing a significant role in the Jewish world.

Approximately half the classes will be dedicated to passages found in foundational Hasidic texts. 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 a safe but intimate "spiritual havruta" space during the following class.

A source book will be available for purchase.
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.

TORAH TROPE
ELISA PEARLMAN
Mondays 5:20-6:20

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. During this course students will acquire the tools to chant any part of the Torah, while also looking at how the trope functions as an interpretation to the text. We will look specifically at the texts of Breisheet (The Creation) and the portion read at Rosh Hodesh. No previous experience necessary.

HAFTARAH TROPE
ELISA PEARLMAN
Monday 6:20-7:20

LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL
SPRING

Learn to chant the beautiful melody for the Haftarah. We will be looking specifically at the Haftarah read at Simchat Torah

MINING THE HASIDIC TRADITION - Open to students from Hebrew College or in the Advanced and Kollel levels only (IN HEBREW)

RABBI ART GREEN
Mondays 5:15-6:45 PM (10 WEEKS ONLY)

חפירה בבארות החסידות: קריאת ליקוטי דרשות מתורת החסידות בדורותיה הראשונים, לאור שימוש בהם לשם הבניית אמונה יהודית לימינו. לצד המקורות, נקרא יחד כמה מאמרים של המורה (רובם באנגלית) כדי להבין את גישתו לנושא החסידות. (הקורס יתנהל בעברית)

MINING THE HASIDIC TRADITION: We will read selected texts from early Hasidic sources, with an eye toward their place in constructing a contemporary Jewish theology. Alongside the texts, we will read and discuss several articles by the instructor to better understand his approach to the subject.

Required books to purchase: Degel Mahane Efrayim and Meor Aynayim

NIGHT SEDER (SEDER EREV)
RAHEL BERKOVITS
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 ANCSELOVITS
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 500 NIS for this course.)

In this hands-on seminar, students will learn the script used in writing Sifrei Torah, tefillin, and mezuzot, learn 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.