



### ***Text Intensive. Mishna and Talmud***

*8:45-11:15 Daily*

#### ***The Power of Words: Prayers and Blessings***

Reuven Grodner

Mishnah is the wellspring of Talmudic Law. This class will focus on the law and philosophy of our Daily Prayers and Blessings as explicated by Mishnah, Tractate Berachot.

Topics to be covered are: Daily recitation of "Shema", the Amidah, Grace after Meals (Birkat Hamazon) and Blessings over foods and drink.

#### ***The Student Becomes the Teacher - The Talmud's understanding of Education*** *Introductory Talmud*

Yaffa Epstein

The Babylonian Talmud is all about the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. But, what exactly is knowledge according to the Rabbis? What content makes the cut? And perhaps more importantly, who makes the rules about learning? Come examine 5 intensive pages of Tractate Eruvin, where we will see these questions - and many more - explored and debated.

#### ***You Light Up My Life! Selections from the Second Chapter of Masechet Shabbat*** *Intermediate Talmud*

Leah Rosenthal

The imagery of Shabbat candles is strongly associated in our minds with the Shabbat experience. What are the origins of this custom with its powerful emotional associations? As we study the various issues raised in the Talmudic discussions of this mitzva, we will find ourselves involved in some unexpected Talmudic conversations. Special bonus – the mishnayot we will study are part of many Shabbat liturgies.

#### ***Rebuke, Distancing, and Excommunication: Responding to threats against Rabbinic authority and Honor***

*Advanced Talmud*

Zvi Hirschfield

We will be learning the 3rd chapter of Moed Katan and commentaries where we will focus on the laws pertaining to bans and excommunication. When were these

punishments used, who had the power to use them, and what were the effects? In connection, we will also learn about various mourning practices that are covered in the chapter as an appropriate entrance to the three weeks before the ninth of Av.

### ***Mid Morning Electives***

*11:45 am -1:15 pm, Sun, Mon, Tue, Thurs*

#### ***Women and Halakha: Past Traditions and Future Development***

Rahel Berkovits

In this course, we will explore and discuss women's role in ritual practice, both personal and communal, through the study of classical and contemporary Jewish legal texts. Questions of custom vs. law, societal and historical influences, and future development and change will be addressed. We will examine the topics of women's obligation in and exemption from certain *mitzvot*, *kiddush* on Shabbat, *zimmun*, *tefillin*, *tzizit*, and issues surrounding prayer in the synagogue, such as reading from the Torah and counting in the *minyan*. The course will focus on textual analysis and interpretation. All sources are provided in both Hebrew and English and the course is open to all levels and genders.

#### ***Abraham. The Man, the Myth, the Legend*** (Adv. Bible)

Mike Feuer

There are few biblical personalities who carry the weight of Avraham. This class will explore the primary narratives of his life along with their articulation in rabbinic literature. Our goal will be to unearth the actions, character traits and essential nature that make Avraham a model of spiritual leadership down to our day.

#### ***Journey through the Wilderness*** (Bible)

Reuven Grodner

The Books of Exodus (*Shemot*) and Numbers (*Bamidbar*) narrate the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness as they journey from Egypt to Canaan. This is a turbulent trek as they thirst for food and water, are confronted by war, and have to cope with the fears and insecurities that accompany a fledgling nation in transit. These epic stories will be viewed through the eyes of classical commentaries. In addition, the class will engage in discovering the contemporary

lessons of the events that took place during the 40 year journey in the wilderness.

### ***The God Who Acts in our World. Miracles, Messiah, the Afterlife***

Zvi Hirschfield

We all wonder about what Jewish sources have to say about the nature of our souls, what happens after we die, and how G-d operates in the world. Together we will study Rabbinic and medieval sources that offer different approaches about how God interacts with the world and us, focusing on a range of views that may surprise you.

### ***Food! Glorious Food!***

Howard Markose

The Torah presents food to its readers on various platters. Sometimes the food is served in explicit terms with elaborate descriptions, while at other times the dishes are ambiguous and have very little taste. In this course we will feast on the many references to food in the Torah in hopes of gaining a greater understanding of and appreciation for food in the Torah.

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## ***Afternoon Classes***

2:30-5pm

### ***Sunday-Wednesday classes (5 meetings)***

#### ***Strangers in Strange Lands: Tales of Traveling Rabbis***

Gila Fine

What happens when a great scholar travels to a new yeshiva, where he does not understand a word? How does a journey into the future destroy the most celebrated miracle-worker of his time? And who was the rabbi whose immigration to Babylon ended in cruel humiliation?

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 narratives; subjecting each story to close literary analysis, and reading it in light of related intertexts (from the Jewish and Western canon), we will explore the trials and tribulations of the traveling rabbis, and the lessons they must learn before they can arrive at their destination.

#### ***Philosophies of Jewish Prayer: The Quest for Meaning***

Elliott Malamet

This course will analyze the philosophies of prayer articulated by seminal Jewish thinkers including Maimonides; Rebbe Nachman; Rav Kook; Y. Leibowitz; R. Soloveitchik; R. Heschel; and Professor Tamar Ross. We will explore the theology of prayer--can we influence God? Is God immanent or transcendent? Does God respond to prayer? - as well as examine questions about gendered prayer language, and whether prayer can inspire spirituality. Ultimately, we will try to understand the role of prayer in the overall picture of Jewish meaning.

#### ***Faith & Modernity: R. Soloveitchik's "Lonely Man of Faith"***

Jeffrey Saks

Is mankind meant to master its surrounding or submit passively to God? What is the place of Jewish faith in the modern world? How does modernity pose a challenge to religious life? What is the viability of forming community today? These questions stand at the center of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik's classic essay "The Lonely Man of Faith," and we will explore them as we make a careful reading of the work and exploration of the sources on which R. Soloveitchik drew in composing one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most significant treatments of religious philosophy and Jewish faith.

#### ***Encountering the Divine Within – writings of the Piaseczna Rebbe***

Yiscah Smith

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) In this class we will explore the teachings of R. Kalonymus Kalmish Shapira, the Piaseczna Rebbe, the Rebbe of the Warsaw Ghetto. 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 & expressions of the Jewish experience into one whole healthy being.

### **Monday-Thursday classes (6 meetings)**

#### ***The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly. Good and Evil in Jewish Thought***

Robert Bogen

"The Lord God saw all that he had made and it was really good!" (Gen. 1: 31). From God's perspective the world is a good place. Later on in the Torah we are promised peace and plenty for those who show commitment to God and the Law. Yet, from our seat in the arena, what plays out on the stage of life can often appear cruel, malicious or just indifferent to the best of human endeavors. What is the source of this negativity? Can we overcome the challenges that are thrown at us in life or are we merely objects caught up in a web of fate we cannot change? In this class we will examine different approaches to the above questions as reflected in 3,000 years of Jewish literature. In each class we will focus on a different viewpoint starting with The Book of Books and progressing chronologically to Midrash, Rambam, Spinoza, Rav Soloveitchik and post-holocaust reflections on the ultimate of human evil.

#### ***Shabbat Boot Camp. Theory and Practice***

Mike Feuer

Shabbat introduces the idea of holiness into the text of the Torah, and into our daily lives as well. In this class we will explore some of the legal aspects of the seventh day and touch the depths of meaning available in its experience. Our goal is to acquire knowledge and wisdom which can make the practice of Shabbat meaningful and enriching.

#### ***Revelation and Law. A study of Exodus ch.18-24***

Alex Israel

This Chumash (Bible) course will study Exodus 18-24, which depict the lead-up, the experience, content and aftermath of the Revelation at Sinai. Study will center around the Biblical text, midrashim and classic commentaries (in Hebrew or English). The course will follow this pattern:

1. Jethro. Why is he the background to Revelation? (ch.18)

2. The experience of Revelation. Cloud, Fire, the Sound of the Shofar. What does the choreography of the Sinai Revelation teach us? (ch.19)
3. The Ten Commandments. Why these Ten? (ch.20)
4. After Revelation. What laws are appended to the famous Ten Commandments. What type of Torah is given by the laws of "Mishpatim"? (ch.21-23)
5. The Sinai covenant and Divine Revelation (ch.24)

#### ***Relationship Intimacy: Self, Siblings, Parents, Friends & Lovers***

Tovah Leah Nachmani

This seminar style course combines Jewish text study in chevruta, experiential exercises and class discussion to actively address the hottest topics and challenges in our most important life long relationships.

Every class will enlighten and empower us to enhance the intimacy in our relationships - with ourselves, with our parents, with siblings and other difficult people, with friends and with lovers.

#### ***Introduction to Chasidut: Lives, Works and Meditative Techniques of Six Spiritual Masters***

Daniel Silverstein

Who were the great Chasidic Masters, and what can we learn from them that will enhance our lives today? In this course we will focus on six spiritual giants, examine their context and biography, study some classic sections from their teachings and try out some of the practical meditative techniques that they taught.

### Faculty Biographies

**Rabbi Rahel Berkovits** teaches Mishnah, Talmud and Halakha at Pardes. She has spent many years studying Talmud and Jewish texts in both traditional and academic frameworks at Midreshet Lindenbaum, the Shalom Hartman Institute, and Hebrew University in both the Talmud and Jewish Education departments.

In 2015, Rahel completed her studies at Beit Midrash Har'el and received ordination from Rabbi Herzl Hefter and Rabbi Daniel Sperber.

She lectures widely in both Israel and abroad on topics concerning women and Jewish law, and has published entries in the CD Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia. Rahel is the editor in chief and halakhic editor of Ta Shma JOFA's Halakhic Source Guide Series. She recently published the book *A Daughter's Recitation of Mourner's Kaddish*.

Rabbi Berkovits is a founding member of Congregation Shirah Hadasha, a progressive halakhic minyan, which is enriched by both male and female participation in synagogue ritual.

Rahel hails from Boston and has lived in Jerusalem for the past twenty years with her family.

**Robert Bogen** is passionate about Jewish education and the impact teachers can have on society. The main challenge that has been driving him for the last 30 years is how to make Jewish texts more accessible and meaningful to people of different cultural and religious backgrounds. Following Aliya from England in 1993 he taught in Midreshet Harova and Young Judea's year course. For the past 18 years he has focused on forwarding pluralistic Jewish education in the Israeli school system, being a central figure in the formative stages of the Keshet High school in Jerusalem and in Mazkeret Batya, and the Head of Jewish Studies at the Yachad High school in Modi'in. When not teaching he enjoys cooking with yeast and collecting Insects.

**Rabba Yaffa Epstein** serves as the Director of Education, North America for the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies. She received Rabbinic Ordination from Yeshivat Maharat and holds a Law Degree from Bar-Ilan University. She has studied at the Pardes Kollel, the Advanced Talmud Institute at Matan and the Talmud Department of Hebrew University. Yaffa has been a teacher of Talmud, Jewish law, and Liturgy at Pardes for over a decade, and has served as the Director of the Beit Midrash at the Dorot Fellowship in Israel. She has taught Talmud and Jewish Law at Yeshivat Maharat, The Drisha Institute, The Wexner Heritage New Members Institute, Kayam Farm Kollel and Young Judea. Yaffa has lectured at Limmud Events around the world, has written curriculum for the Global Day of Jewish Learning and has created innovative educational programming for Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life.

**Rabbi Mike Feuer** is a Pardes faculty member. He has learned Torah in a number of Jerusalem area institutions, including Yeshivat HaMivtar, the Mir Yeshiva and Sulam Yaakov Bet Midrash. He received his semikhah from Sulam Yaakov, where he now spends all his time when not engaged with his wonderful wife and five children. His vision of Torah aspires to rigorous analysis and a passionate love of poetry and approaches learning as a process of mutual self-development. His particular loves in Torah are the Early Prophets, the Maharal and the Bet Yosef.

**Gila Fine** is the editor-in-chief of Maggid Books (Koren Publishers Jerusalem). She teaches Talmudic narrative, and has lectured at the Hebrew University, Tel-Aviv University, and the Shalom Hartman Institute as well as in Jewish communities worldwide. Gila is the former editor of the quarterly journal *Azure: Ideas for the Jewish Nation*, and the ghost-writer behind several well-known books.

**Rabbi Reuven Grodner** received his MA and was ordained at Yeshiva University's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, where he studied under Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik. He served for over 18 years as a

pulpit rabbi. Rabbi Grodner is the author of several books including *Shabbat: A Day of Delight*, *The Spirit of Mishnaic Law: Tractate Brachot* and *Ahl Ha'tefillah*, *Lectures on Prayer* by Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik (Hebrew). In addition to teaching at Pardes, he is the director of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Beit Midrash program.

**Rabbi Zvi Hirschfield** teaches Talmud, Halakha and Jewish Thought at Pardes. In addition, Zvi is a faculty member of the Pardes Center for Jewish Educators and has been training and mentoring Jewish Educators for over ten years in Tefilah in educational settings, critical issues in modern Jewish thought, and Israel education. Zvi holds a B.A. in History from Columbia University and did graduate work at Harvard University in Medieval and Modern Jewish Thought. He studied at Yeshivat Har Etzion in Israel and has rabbinic ordination from the Chief Rabbinate of Israel. He was the director of Judaica at the JCC of Cleveland and an instructor at the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies for many years. He also serves as a curriculum writer and is involved in staff training for the Nesiya Institute. His wife, Dina, is a faculty member of the Hebrew University School of Public Health, and they have four children.

**Rabbi Alex Israel** has taught at Pardes for the past seven years and is Director of the Summer program, as well as Pardes's Community Education Program and the Elmad online learning platform. Alex grew up in London and holds degrees from LSE, the Institute of Education London, and Bar-Ilan University. Alex studied at Yeshivat Har Etzion and was awarded semikhah from the Israeli Rabbinate. Alex volunteers for Tzohar – a rabbinic group that works to bridge gaps between religious and secular communities in Israel. He lives with his wife and four children in Gush Etzion. His first book is: *I Kings – Torn in Two*. (Maggid, 2013). Read his Torah at [www.alexisrael.org](http://www.alexisrael.org).

**Dr. Elliott Malamet** received his doctorate in English Literature from the University of Toronto, and he taught English Literature and Jewish

Studies for twenty-five years at Canadian universities. He was also the Department Head of Jewish Thought at The Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto. Dr. Malamet co-founded Torah in Motion in 2001 in Toronto. He and his family made aliyah in the summer of 2013 and currently live in Jerusalem. Dr. Malamet now teaches Jewish Philosophy at Yeshivat Machanaim in Efrat and is consulted internationally about Jewish education. His book, “Are you a Good Person? - The Ethics of Teenagers and the Future of Morality”, is currently being reviewed for publication.

**Rabbi Howard Markose** teaches Bible and Biblical Hebrew at Pardes. He was born and raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Howard received his rabbinical ordination in 1984 from the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Howard lived in Toronto for ten years from 1984-1994 at which time he served as assistant rabbi at Adath Israel Congregation and rabbi at Shaar Shalom Synagogue. He and his family made Aliyah in 1994 and after seven years as rabbi of Kehilat Moreshet Avraham in Jerusalem, he became the Director of Education for the Young Judaea Year Course. He received his PhD in Bible at Bar Ilan University in January 2016. Howard conducts specialized Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremonies for families from North America who are visiting Israel. He lives in Jerusalem and is married and has four children.

**Tovah Leah Nachmani** teaches Bible, Liturgy and Prayer and Relationships at Pardes. She holds a B.A. in Near Eastern Language and Literature and Religious Studies from Indiana University and a Teaching Certificate in Tanach and Jewish Thought from the Michlelet Herzog Seminary in Gush Etzion and recently has qualified as a certified Reflexologist. She has written and guided experiential learning programs for mothers and their daughters of Bat Mitzva age at the Women's Beit Midrash in Efrat, where she previously taught Prayer and Jewish Thought. Tovah Leah was a Jewish educator and program director for many years, together with her husband Gabi, for Livnot U'Lehibanot (“To Build and Be Built”) in Tzfat and Jerusalem. They co-authored the widely-used song

book “Zemiroth from Livnot.” She also served as Assistant Educational Director for Ayeka – an international organization training Jewish lay and professional leaders to facilitate spiritual education seminars for Jews of all backgrounds and affiliations. She believes in learning which connects the mind to the heart.

**Leah Rosenthal** holds a BA in Talmud and Jewish Philosophy and an MA in Jewish Education, both from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. She has been teaching Talmud at Pardes for over twenty years. She combines her teaching at Pardes with teaching at the nearby Pelech High School for Girls and raising, with her husband, their five children.

**Rabbi Jeffrey Saks** is the founding Director of ATID—The Academy for Torah Initiatives and Directions in Jewish Education, in Jerusalem, and its WebYeshiva.org program. An associate editor of the journal *Tradition*, Rabbi Saks authored *Spiritualizing Halakhic Education* (Mandel Foundation) and edited *Wisdom From All My Teachers: Challenges and Initiatives in Contemporary Torah Education* (Urim) and *To Mourn a Child* (Ktav).

Rabbi Saks is a faculty member of Pardes' Summer, and Community Education Programs. He is the Series Editor of the S.Y. Agnon Library from the Toby Press and Director of Research at the Agnon House in Jerusalem, has taught at the Yeshiva University High School for Girls and Yeshivat HaMivtar in Efrat. He is a graduate of Yeshiva University (BA, MA, Semikha) and participated in the Jerusalem Fellows program for senior Jewish educators at the Mandel Institute

**Rabbi Daniel Raphael Silverstein.** Born and raised in London, Daniel studied Literature and Social & Political Sciences at Cambridge University (BA), and International Relations at Warwick (MA). He also spent three years in Israel, learning at Yeshivot Ein Tzurim, Shvilei HaTorah and Ma'ale Gilboa. Before studying for the rabbinate at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School, Daniel co-founded Lines of Faith, a Muslim-Jewish hip

hop and poetry collective that performs and facilitates dialogue for diverse audiences all over the world. Daniel is an accredited meditation teacher and especially loves to teach Chasidic meditative techniques. He recently made aliyah with his family from Palo Alto, where he served as Director of Jewish Life and Learning for Stanford Hillel.

**Yiscah Smith** is a Jewish educator, spiritual activist and published author who addresses the spiritual dimension of Torah and authentic living. Yiscah employs her own story of the joys and struggles with her own spirituality, gender identity and commitment to authentic living. As one who transitioned from a Chabad man to an observant woman, she presents topics in an accessible and vivid style, from both a personal and a text-based perspective. Yiscah recently published her memoir, *Forty Years in the Wilderness: My Journey to Authentic Living*. She lives in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Nachlaot