



RESET, RENEW, REFRESH: SHABBAT, SHMITTAH & US

A PARDES WINTER BREAK ONLINE LEARNING INTENSIVE
FOR STUDENTS AND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

January 3-5, 2022

SESSION TIMES

SESSION I: Opening keynote session on Mon / Beit Midrash sessions on Tues + Wed (1 hr 30 mins)

18:00-19:30 Israel / 16:00-17:30 GMT / 11:00 AM-12:30 PM Eastern / 8:00-9:30 AM Pacific

SESSION II: Contemporary Issues (1 hr 15 mins)

20:00-21:15 Israel / 18:00-19:15 GMT / 1:00-2:15 PM Eastern / 10:00-11:15 AM Pacific

SESSION III:

Electives on Mon + Tues / Closing Session on Wed (1 hr)

21:30-22:30 Israel / 19:30-20:30 GMT / 2:30-3:30 PM Eastern / 11:30 AM-12:30 PM Pacific

OR

Rebootcamp for Jewish Educators (1 hr 45 mins)

21:30-23:15 Israel / 19:30-21:15 GMT / 2:30-4:15 PM Eastern / 11:30 AM-1:15 PM Pacific

For faculty bios, visit www.pardes.org.il/faculty/. All sessions will take place online via Zoom.

Note: With the exception of the “Beit Midrash” sessions in Tanakh (Bible) on Tuesday and Mishnah/Talmud (Rabbinics) on Wednesday, classes are geared towards all Jewish learning levels. Texts will be available in the original and in translation.

MONDAY, JANUARY 3

18:00-19:30 Israel / 16:00-17:30 GMT / 11:00 AM-12:30 PM Eastern / 8:00-9:30 AM Pacific

OPENING SESSION

Gather the People (*Hakhel*): Radical Innovation, Rest & the Role of Communal Torah

Mike Uram, Chief Vision Officer of Pardes North America

Faith Leener, Executive Director of Base

Moderated by Meesh Hammer-Kossoy, Director, Pardes Year Program

20:00-21:15 Israel / 18:00-19:15 GMT / 1:00-2:15 PM Eastern / 10:00-11:15 AM Pacific

Shabbat as the Cornerstone of Jewish Justice

Meesh Hammer-Kossoy

We may think of Shabbat as a mitzvah between humans and the Divine... but God does not! What are the social mechanisms that underlie Shabbat? And how do they reflect a vision of justice and equality for the world?

OR

Halakha, Alternate Realities & Creative Space: Shabbat, Shmittah & Us

Alex Israel

Shabbat and Shmittah rituals generate a "virtual reality," a crafted lived existence. They thrust us into an experiential-communal-spiritual-legal environment which creates a unique energy, bringing alive a different reality or mode of living.

- How do the Shabbat laws succeed in doing this?
- What would Shmittah do in this regard were it fully observed?
- In what ways have the conditions and rituals of our Covid-era experience altered our realities? What lessons can we take away?

Together we will explore texts from the biblical book of Nehemia, Maimonides, Sefer Hachinuch, Rabbi Sacks, Jonathan Haidt and more...

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Shabbat on the Margins: The Narrative Origins of Shabbat in Community (1 hour)

[Ziva Hassenfeld](#), *Pardes North America faculty*

Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Assistant Professor of Jewish Education, Brandeis University

We find in the brief story of *Ish Mekoshesh Etzim* (Numbers 15), the man who gathered wood, a disturbing and seemingly punitive account of Shabbat. A man violates the rules of Shabbat and is violently killed because of it. However, centuries of midrash and commentary have turned this story over and over again to reveal much deeper, more resonant and redemptive meaning. Through engaging in reception history this class will reread and reclaim the story of *Ish Mekoshesh Etzim* to explore its positive message around Shabbat, community, the power of distinguishing "in" from "out" and the spiritual insights that can come from occupying the edges.

OR

21:30-23:15 Israel / 19:30-21:15 GMT / 2:30-4:15 PM Eastern / 11:30 AM-1:15 PM Pacific

Rebootcamp for Jewish Educators (1 hour 45 mins)

Pardes Center for Jewish Educators + Pardes North America Master Teachers

The three-part Rebootcamp will integrate an exploration of the Winter Break Learning Intensive's themes of Shabbat and the need to 'reset' with the teaching of some concrete tools for designing one's own Torah shiur! Through both explicit modeling of conducting a shiur and providing a framework and techniques for teaching a shiur (also known as "staging" and "backstaging"), participants will feel more confident to step into the role of a teacher of Jewish text. The Rebootcamp track is geared towards those who teach adults text as well as those who are interested in adult education.

Part 1/3 (Monday): The Narrative Arc of a Shiur

Shani Gross, Director of Programs, Pardes North America

TUESDAY, JANUARY 4

18:00-19:30 Israel / 16:00-17:30 GMT / 11:00 AM-12:30 PM Eastern / 8:00-9:30 AM Pacific

BEIT MIDRASH - TANAKH (BIBLE)

The Shabbats We Create

INTRO LEVEL

Tovah Leah Nachmani

Shabbat, like every love relationship, has its ups and downs. Not every aspect of the relationship goes the way we hope and plan. Every Shabbat is a new event, and a new "creation." The Shabbats we create unfold and evolve, like our relationships, ever beckoning for renewed intimacy and life-giving passion. Our successes may inspire us to do more, and our failures can move us to shift and change.

Through the lens of Torah texts we will collectively and individually imagine: what would it mean to treat the Shabbats we create like a relationship of love?

OR

A Biblical Release: Shmittah as an Act of Letting Go

INTERMEDIATE / ADVANCED LEVEL

Howard Markose

The essential meaning of the word *shmittah* is "letting go." In the Jewish Bible, this "letting go" refers to two aspects of Israelite society: allowing the land that is agriculturally critical to the community to lie fallow for one year and the cancellation of debts that may have been incurred by members of the Israelite society over the previous six years. This session will allow us to examine these two biblical statutes in the context of a nation anticipating the entry into the Promised Land, realizing the importance of establishing a functioning community in Israel. How does "letting go" resonate with us today, as we build and re-build our own Jewish communities?

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Cultivating Tranquility of the Heart - *Neicha D'Leebah*

Yiscah Smith

Based on a teaching from the Ishbitzer Rebbe, in Parshat Behar, the mitzvot of *Shmittah*, *Yovel* and prohibition of *Reebeet* (interest), all serve as gateways and channels for attaining tranquility of the heart. Each of these mitzvot provides opportunities to nurture faith and trust in the Divine to provide for our needs. Don't we all yearn for inner calmness, tranquility and well-being?

OR

Shmittah in Antiquity: Adherence and its Challenges

Daniel Reifman

For all the many challenges that the shmittah year presents in modern Israeli society, these pale in comparison to the difficulties faced by Jews in antiquity who sought to adhere to the laws of shmittah. Yet texts from the Second Temple and Rabbinic periods indicate that many Jews took shemittah observance quite seriously despite the sacrifices it entailed. We will consider the particular significance of shmittah during and immediately following the Second Temple periods, as well as the means by which they addressed its practical challenges.

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Resetting Religious Identity or What Does it Mean to be a Jew?

Stories from Tractate Shabbat (1 hour)

Nechama Goldman Barash

There is a series of stories taking place on the eve of Shabbat involving the famous Talmudic sages Hillel and Shammai in which different non-Jews come to talk to each of them about reasons to convert. Shammai pushes them away and Hillel beckons them forward. Their contrasting approaches reflect starkly different educational attitudes towards religious identity, belonging to community, celebration of Shabbat and the process necessary to reset one's identity, both from without and more broadly, from within.

OR

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Part 2/3 (Tuesday): The Question-Driven Shiur

Aviva Lauer, Director, Pardes Center for Jewish Educators

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5

18:00-19:30 Israel / 16:00-17:30 GMT / 11:00 AM-12:30 PM Eastern / 8:00-9:30 AM Pacific

BEIT MIDRASH - MISHNAH / TALMUD (RABBINICS)

Shabbat and the Building of Society: A Text Study in Mishnah Shabbat

INTRO LEVEL

Rahel Berkovits

The Rabbis of the Mishnah were the first to delineate a clear list of specific activities that, in their view, Jews should refrain from performing on Shabbat. Why did they choose those specific activities and what can they teach us about human beings' role in this world? How does people's behavior during Shabbat mirror what the Divine did during creation? What messages about rest, relaxation and Shabbat can we glean from a close textual and literary read of the central mishnayot in Tractate Shabbat?

OR

Prozbul: Responsible Halakhic Innovation or Gaming the System?

INTERMEDIATE / ADVANCED LEVEL

Zvi Hirschfeld

The Prozbul mechanism was created by the Rabbis of the late second Temple period in order to address the practical challenges of loan-giving in light of the Biblically-mandated erasure of debt every seventh year. Together we will explore the mechanics of how the *prozbul* enables lenders to receive payment even after a Sabbatical year; in addition, we will examine this innovation as a prime example of how the Sages understand their role as both protectors of the Halakhic system and innovators responsible for responding to social and economic change. We will also compare Prozbul to other examples of innovation and resistance to innovation.

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In the Shadow of Melacha: Shabbat and the Gift of Self-Control

Michael Hattin

We will investigate the critical idea of *melacha* as it is expressed in Biblical text and Rabbinic literature in order to understand how the essential idea of Shabbat can inform our very definition of what it is to be human. Living in an age of environmental degradation and beset by the ravages of climate change, we may discover that we need Shabbat now more than ever.

OR

Beyond the Market Economy: Shabbat, Shmittah & Consumption

Meesh Hammer-Kossoy

Many environmentalists see the modern cult of consumption as the core cause of our environmental crisis. Early environmentalists identified the Judeo-Christian culture as the source of original sin. Shmittah and Shabbat introduce a powerful counter narrative.

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CLOSING SESSION

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Part 3/3 (Wednesday): Pulling Your Shiur Together

Rachel Friedrichs, Assistant Director, Pardes Center for Jewish Educators