



**Pardes** | פָּרְדֵּס  
Institute of Jewish Studies

## Course Descriptions Fall 2024

**9:00-12:00 Sunday/Tuesday/Thursday**

### **CHUMASH/TANACH**

**LEVEL: INTRODUCTORY**

**TOVAH LEAH NACHMANI**

**Sun., Tues., Thurs. 9:00-12:00**

**Fall & Spring**

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.

GENESIS: Students will learn how to engage in a close and careful reading of the most exciting and foundational stories in the book of Genesis / Beresheit - in Hebrew - and to mine the depths of the text for nuance and meaning. We will seek the wisdom of classic and modern Jewish commentaries together with the tools of literary analysis in Hebrew, to give students a stronger footing and a deeper desire to continue to uncover the layers of understanding which are not apparent in translations of the text.

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: LOWER INTERM.**

**RAHEL BERKOVITS**

**Sun., Tues., Thurs. 9:00-12:00**

**Fall & Spring**

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: UPPER INTERM.**

**LEAH ROSENTHAL**

**Sun., Tues., Thurs. 9:00-12:00**

**Fall & Spring**

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.

**TALMUD**

**LEVEL: ADVANCED**

**ZVI HIRSCHFIELD**

**Sun., Tues., Thurs. 9:00-12:00**

**Fall & Spring**

Masechet Bava Kama

We will be studying the opening chapters of Tractate Bava Kama, which deals with monetary damage and the responsibility for compensation. 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.

Required Books: Tractate Bava Kama

**TALMUD AND HALAKHA**

**LEVEL: KOLLEL**

**ELISHA ANCELOVITS and DANIEL REIFMAN**

<p><b>TALMUD–MASEKHET BAVA METZIA</b>  <b>Sunday and Thursday 09:00-12:00</b>  <b>(Daniel Reifman)</b></p>	<p><b>HILKHOT EVEN HA-EZER</b>  <b>Tuesday, 09:00-12:00</b>  <b>(Elisha Ancselovits)</b></p>
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**Fall & Spring**

**TALMUD–MASEKHET BAVA METZIA**

The Talmud portion of this course will study portions of Masekhet Bava Metzia. In addition to examining the key halakhic concepts, we will focus on skills needed to prepare a sugya on one's own, including analysis of how different commentators resolve difficulties in the gemara text and understand the relationship between parallel sugyot.

#### HILKHOT EVEN HA-EZER

The laws of personal status, contractual obligations in relationships, and sexuality are some of the most important laws (alongside civil and tort law) but also the most sensitive. In this class, therefore, we will study these topics via the method of reading sources for past authors' insights (see the afternoon class description). Instead of becoming lost in or manipulating concepts and textual words, we will study the tensions in these areas of the human condition, which the authors of Jewish law sources from Tanakh through the Second-Temple period to the twentieth century sought to balance across time and cultures. In short, we will learn to (1) unpack the contradictory human concerns that halakhot address, (2) internalize all sides of a debate on a given topic, and (3) integrate all the debated positions across all these different topics and areas of life – rather than view any topic as an independent question, let alone reject the insights of one position simply because it is in disagreement with another position.

**9:00-12:00 Monday/Wednesday**

**MISHNA/TALMUD**  
**NECHAMA GOLDMAN BARASH**  
**Mon., Wed. 9:00- 12:00**

**LEVEL: INTRODUCTORY**  
**FALL & SPRING**

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. We will be learning texts from tractate Berachot on different aspects of prayer from the foundational Shema to the Shemonah Esreh (eighteen benedictions) and the practice of blessing before and after eating as well as on the good, the bad and the ugly things that happen to us in life. Along the way we will also learn about the lives of Sages and about different social categories in society.

The course aims to train the student to comprehend and question the text independently, through critical analysis of language and structure. 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.

**HUMASH**  
**MICHAEL HATTIN**  
**Mon., Wed. 9:00- 12:00**  
**Fall & Spring**

**LEVEL: LOWER INTERM.**

Sefer Breisheet (Genesis)

The book of Genesis is about beginnings: the dawn of the world, the emergence of the first human beings and the origins of the people of Israel as told through the story of their progenitors. However, beginnings are often challenging, and the book of Genesis is full of challenges. This means that the narratives of Sefer Breisheet are relevant for us as well!

In this course, we will study foundational, famous and sometimes frustrating stories as we follow the arc stretching from the creation of the cosmos in chapter 1 through the drama of the Akeda (“binding of Isaac”) at Mount Moriah in chapter 22. Our studies will be guided by careful literary 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 one-volume Tanakh with English translation as well as the first volume of the Torah Chayim edition of Sefer Breisheet.

**HUMASH/Breisheet**

**LEVEL: UPPER INTERM.**

**HOWARD MARKOSE**  
**Mon., Wed. 9:00- 12:00**

**FALL & SPRING**

This course is designed to bring to the 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 a limited level of fluency. They will learn to translate using English translation as well as basic tools 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).

**HUMASH (Bereishit, Part 2)**  
**JUDY KLITSNER**  
**Mon., Wed. 9:00- 12:00**

**LEVEL: ADVANCED**  
**FALL ONLY**

This is a skills-based class, designed to empower students to become strong, independent, and creative readers of the biblical text. We will work to acquire a wide array of tools of literary analysis, which we will apply toward uncovering layers of meaning in the text. In each passage studied, we will adopt a "trees-forest-trees" approach:

First, we will pose the large issues and questions raised by the text

Next, we will apply tools of literary analysis to better understand the passage's details and nuances

We will then step back, examining how our close readings have shed light on the passage's big questions

In this class, special emphasis will be placed on character analysis and on intertextual readings. An added goal of this class is to promote proficiency in reading biblical commentary, and to recognize the methods, language and styles of various commentators.

Note: This is a one-semester course.

The first portion of the semester (Elul) will focus on the narrative of Rebecca. Our post- Sukkot learning will center on the Joseph narrative.

Course requirements:

Regular, punctual attendance twice weekly

Independent preparation and class presentation at the end of the 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, בראשית כרך ב, מוסד הרב קוק, ירושלים (Humash, Torat Hayyim, second volume of Bereishit)
2. A Tanakh with English translation (Jewish Publication Society recommended)
3. 5 books of Chumash in 1 volume with commentaries, Horev, Jerusalem

**1:15-2:30 pm Sunday & 12:15-1:30 Thursday**

**SIDDUR/TEFILLA****AMIRIT ROSEN****Sun. 1:15-2:30 and Thurs. 12:15-1:30****LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL****FALL ONLY**The Siddur: Structure, Meaning and Practice

The Siddur, the Jewish prayer book, might be described as "the book of Jewish life". It contains the set order of the prayer service, starting from the moment we wake up, continuing with daily prayers, Sabbath prayers, prayers for festivals and other important prayers Jews have chosen to have handy in their prayer book. The Siddur reflects layers of historical and cultural development together with linguistic and ideological changes that have been consolidated into the Jewish prayer book, over almost 2000 years.

The prayers within the Siddur express a sense of identity and history, a longing for God's presence, expressions of both historical suffering together with yearnings for a better future. The Siddur also provides an educational and emotional framework leading the person praying through stations and sources that enhance the individual's dialogue with oneself, with God and with the world surrounding them.

This course will introduce the central prayers that make up the daily morning prayer – Tefilat Shacharit, as it appears in the Siddur. We will follow the course of the prayers as we understand their structure, their historical context and their meaning. Along the way, we will also discuss the basic framing of the service, the role of the prayer leader and the "choreography" of the service.

The course will include opportunities for personal and group expression, enabling mental, emotional and spiritual exploration of the prayers and of the inner world of the students. As the Siddur is a creative expression of the Jewish people over time, this course sees the students as a continuation of this creativity. The input of those present infuses the spiritual and historical texts with the Divine meaning of our current realities.

**HAFTAROT****MICHAEL HATTIN****Sun. 1:15-2:30 and Thurs. 12:15-1:30****FALL ONLY****LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**

The *Haftara* is a section from the Prophets (the second section of the Hebrew bible) that is liturgically read on Shabbat and holidays after the Torah reading. Often, but not always, there is a thematic connection between the Haftara and the Torah reading. In this course, we will study the weekly Haftara, taking the opportunity to consider the larger biblical context from which it is drawn and familiarizing ourselves along the way with many of the books of the Prophets. These will include Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and some of the minor prophets.

Our studies will be guided by careful reading of the primary text, consideration of other relevant Biblical material, reflection on ancient and modern commentary and attention to personal meaning for ourselves. Required text: a Hebrew Tanakh with English translation. Other source materials will be provided.

**NEGOTIATING THE NORMATIVE:****BODIES, GENDER AND IDENTITY IN HALAKHA****LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**

**RAHEL BERKOVITS**

**FALL ONLY**

**Sun. 1:15-2:30 and Thurs. 12:15-1:30**

In this class we will examine the issues of gender and deviating from the normative through the lens of halakha. How much control and autonomy are those assigned female at birth given over their bodies when it comes to birth control and abortion? Are women independent agents in their religious/mitzvah lives and can their bodies don *tefillin*? How do feminism and gay marriage challenge the normative halakhic notions of *kiddushin*/Jewish marriage- and is there room for alternate ceremonies? Is there space in halakha for gender experiences (intersex, transgender, gender queer) that do not conform to the normative binary? In this text-based class, we will examine, seriously analyze and openly discuss rabbinic texts from the Torah and Talmud through to the modern responsa on these important issues. All texts will be in both Hebrew and English. The classroom will aim to be a safe space for students of diverse backgrounds, identities, orientations, and practices.

**EJE SEMINAR: CYCLES: ANNUAL AND LIFE**

**LEVEL: PEEP ONLY**

**ILANA G. B.**

**Sun. Mon. Wed. 1:15-2:30 Thurs 12:15-1:30**

The goal of this course is to expand and deepen students' skills to facilitate Jewish learning experiences. Participants will discover the language of the field of experiential education, learn to create impactful educational experiences and develop a transformative learning environment, recognize the importance of differentiation for the diversity of learners and participants, and prepare to integrate Jewish texts into educational practice. Learners practice preparing and creating educational experiences for the Pardes community, and opportunities to reflect on their own experience will be provided.

**1:15-2:30 pm Monday/Wednesday**



**SOCIAL JUSTICE**  
**NECHAMA GOLDMAN BARASH**  
**Mon., Wed. 1:15 - 2:30**

**LEVEL: NECHAMA**  
**FALL ONLY**

Text and Reality in Jewish Social Justice: Solidarity and Universalism  
Great is Torah that it leads to action (Kiddushin 40b). We'll explore classic Jewish Justice texts and the way they might serve as guideposts for action in a modern context. Thus, the class stretches the walls of the bet midrash by combining two components: close reading of core texts and hearing a range of Israeli voices through guest lectures and trips.

"All of Israel is responsible for one another". Questions of solidarity, universalism, humanism and particularism are more sensitive than ever before. The fact that 20% of the Israeli population is non-Jewish and that Israel is embroiled in national conflict with and maintains some degree of military control over nearly 4.75 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza strip poses unique challenges to a Jewish and democratic state as well as Jewish textual tradition. At the same time, globalism and the unprecedentedly intimate bonds of the global Jewish population with non-Jews has tested traditional Jewish solidarity and heightened calls for universalism. The semester will be dedicated to exploring the complexity of our Jewish tradition as well as hearing a variety of voices, primarily but certainly not exclusively Jewish, within the State of Israel and to a much more limited extent in the Occupied Territories and globally.

**HILKHOT SHABBAT**  
**MICHAEL HATTIN**  
**Mon., Wed. 1:15-2:30**

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**  
**FALL ONLY**

The Laws of Shabbat:

Observances, Rituals and Customs Shabbat is one of the cornerstones of Jewish identity; it has been an

integral part of the Jewish experience for thousands of years. After a thorough exploration of the foundational meaning of Shabbat, we will embark upon the study of practical Halakha - the "what" and "how" of Shabbat observance. We will utilize some of the classical Halakhic texts such as Rambam and the Shulchan Aruch, as well as selected modern commentaries, to investigate specific areas of practice. Along the way, we will gain basic familiarity with Halakhic codes and learn how to navigate them.

Areas of study will include important aspects of Shabbat practice such as candle lighting, Kiddush/Havdala, "Melacha" and its definition as well as the laws of cooking. Along the way, we will also consider Halakhot of the Jewish holidays as they come up (Rosh HaShana, Yom Kippur, Succot and Chanuka). Handouts will be provided. There is no expectation of commitment to Halakhic observance. Source materials will be provided.

**SPIRITUAL REDEMPTION:**  
**RAV KOOK'S ILLUMINATING SPARKS**

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**

**YISCAH SMITH**  
**Mon., Wed. 1:15-2:30**

**FALL ONLY**

Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak HaCohen Kook, popularly referred to as HaRav, was the first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of British Mandatory Palestine. The Rav earned a towering reputation as a scholar, thinker, legal authority, kabbalist and poet. As well, he earned the reputation of being an instrumental figure in the shaping of modern Zionist ideology.

Many today see him as a modern-day prophet and a visionary, whose spiritual and redemptive teachings speak to the individual, the people of Israel and all of humanity. Rav Kook teaches that “When we forget the individual soul, when we stop paying attention to

the inner life of a person, everything becomes confusing and unclear” (Shmoneh Kavtzim 8:213).

Through Rav Kook’s insights, we shall gather “illuminating sparks” that will guide us as we move along the path to discover aspects of our true essence — the image of the Divine in Whom we have been created — our soul. The Divine Presence, awaiting to be encountered, inspires us to experience personal spiritual redemption.

**3:00-5:30 Sunday**

**MUSSAR: GROWING HUMAN TOGETHER**  
**MEESH HAMMER-KOSSOY**  
**Sun. 3:00-5:30**  
**FALL ONLY**

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**

We all believe that being a pious Jew means leveraging Jewish wisdom to be a better human. But actually doing the work to make that a reality is a project. Inspired by and learning from the 19<sup>th</sup> century mussar movement, as well as the most famous and critical medieval and modern (and some Hassidic) texts that characterize the movement, we will try to study and practice mussar. Each class will combine deep study of a classic text and thinking about practical application. There is no escaping spiritual homework over the course of the week, because our goal is personal transformation as well as study.

**TALMUDIC PHILOSOPHY**  
**RAFAEL POLISUK**  
**Sun. 3:00-5:30**  
**FALL ONLY**

**OPEN TO ALL LEVELS**

What is the philosophy of the Rabbis, the Tanaim and Amoraim? What is the theology of the Mishna, the Talmuds and the Midrashim? In this course, we will explore the theological and philosophical world of these early rabbinic sources, their amazing depth, beauty and contradictions, and ask how they might help build and reinvigorate our philosophies as modern Jews.

**BIBLICAL HEBREW GRAMMAR**  
**HOWARD MARKOSE**  
**Sun. 3:00-5:30**

**LEVEL: INTERM.**  
**FALL ONLY**

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.

**HILKHOT KIDDUSHIN**  
**RAHEL BERKOVITS**  
**Sun. 3:00-5:30**

**LEVEL: HIGH INTERM./ADV.**  
**FALL ONLY**

This class is an in-depth examination of the halakhic literature surrounding the traditional wedding ceremony (*kiddushin/erusin*, *hupah/nissuim*, *sheva berakhot*, *ketubah*). We will study the classical laws central to the concepts of marriage and will briefly touch on divorce/*gittin* when relevant. The source material will be from the Talmud, *Rishonim*, and Rabbinic legal codes in their original language (without translation). We will try to understand how the canon of Rabbinic literature conceptualized and thought about marriage and weddings and where those views intersect with and challenge modern notions of partnership and relationship. Towards the end of the course we will discuss and examine modern innovations or alternatives to the wedding ceremony.

**3:00-5:30 Tuesday**

**TRADITIONAL JEWISH THOUGHT**  
**ZVI HIRSCHFIELD**  
**Tues. 3:00-5:30**

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**  
**FALL ONLY**

We will explore central Jewish thinkers from the Medieval and early modern period who shaped the central pathways of traditional Jewish thought in our day. These will include R. Yehuda HaLevi, Maimonides, R. Moshe Cordovero, R. Moshe Chayim Luzzato, R. Shneur Zalman of Lyadi, and Rebbe Nachman of Breslav.

**MIDRASH**  
**AVIVA LAUER**  
**Tues. 3:00-5:30**

**LEVEL: INTERM.**  
**FALL ONLY**

What exactly is that thing called Midrash?

In the Jewish world, “Midrash” is one of those words that is both very familiar and very elusive. And indeed, Midrash as a genre of literature is, all at the same time, mysterious and direct, complex and fun, infuriating and engaging, exasperating and tantalizing. It is a genre that has, at times, been dismissed and maligned - because “who would ever believe any of this stuff?” But as the ‘fan fiction,’ the jazz, AND the magical realism of Judaism, Midrash has a huge amount to offer us today. In this course we will explore different works of aggadic Midrash, examine the historical and geographical background of Midrash, take a deep dive into why and how the rabbis developed this genre, and together, try to crack the codes/solve the puzzles/open the messages the rabbis set out for us some 1500 years ago.

**UNPACKING THE SAGES**  
**ELISHA ANCSELOVITS**  
**Tues. 3:00-5:30**

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**  
**FALL**

“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 texts, and especially religious legal texts, from the Bible through the Talmud to today by understanding what common-sense advice the original author tried to communicate rather than by being blinded by the text's words and concepts. In that way, we learn to discover how to notice 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.

**3:00-5:30 Monday/Wednesday**

**BEKIUT NEVIIM****LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL****MICHAEL HATTIN****FALL ONLY****Mon., Wed. 3:00-5:30**

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 this material – including historical settings, 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 a significant narrative section of the Nevi'im, focusing on the books of Joshua, Judges and the first book of Samuel.

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. We will study the story of entering and settling the land as told in the books of Joshua and Judges, before tracing the emergence of the monarchy through the complicated lives of Samuel, Saul and David. Along the way, we will cover many centuries of Biblical history and encounter significant characters and events in the story of the Jewish people! We will meet two times a week and instruction will be in English. Required text: a Hebrew Tanakh with translation. Other source materials will be provided.

**TALMUDIC HEROINES****LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL****GILA FINE****FALL ONLY****Mon., Wed. 3:00-5:30**

The female characters of the Talmud often come across as anti-feminine stereotypes, disparaging descriptions of bad women: the shrew, the femme fatale, the prima donna, and the whore. Yet a careful reading of their stories reveals that there's a lot more to them than initially meets the eye; that the women are far more complex than they first appear; and that the rabbis had rather surprising – so as not to say proto-feminist – views of marriage, childbirth, female power, and sex. In working to unmask the heroines of the Talmud, there's a great deal we can learn – about how to read the characters of a text and, ultimately, how to treat the characters in our lives. This course serves as an introduction to *Aggada* (Talmudic stories) and requires no prior knowledge.

**TALMUDIC SKILLS****LEVEL: INTERM/ADV.****DANIEL REIFMAN**

**Mon., Wed. 3:00-5:30**  
**Fall & Spring**

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.

**SEFER VAYIKRA**  
**ADVANCED-HEBREW**  
**RAFAEL POLISUK**  
**Wed. 3:00-5:30**

**LEVEL:**

**FALL ONLY**

Sefer Vayikra, Hebrew

The book of Leviticus might not be on the favorite lists of Jews nowadays, but for generations, it was considered the basis of Jewish education. In this course, we will explore the world of Sefer Vayikra, its rich symbolism, the philosophy encoded in its complex laws and its relevance to Modern Jewish life. The class will be taught in easy Hebrew and is intended for advanced students able to read scripture and classic commentary in the original.

Students are to bring to class a Hebrew/English Tanach (New JPS or The New Koren Bible are the preferred editions, but others are certainly acceptable).

**Evening Classes**

**HASIDUT**  
**YISCAH SMITH**  
**Sun., 5:45-7:30 PM**  
**Fall only**

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**

Hasidism – or *Hasidut* – is a movement that continues to provide radical and refreshing ideas, spiritual inspiration and a sense of fascination mixed with wonder.

In this course we will walk the spiritual path of Hasidut, through the lens of one of the original Hasidic masters, Rabbi Menachem Nachum Twersky of Chernobyl (1730 – 1787). He was a disciple of the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid of Mezritch and published one of the first works of Hasidic thought. He is considered to be one of the pioneers of the Hasidic movement.

He is commonly referred to as the *Me'or Einayim*, the title of his seminal masterpiece and the volume we will be exploring. The *Me'or Einayim* comprises Hasidic insights on the weekly Torah portion. We will become familiar with his key ideas as they flavor and inform his weekly Torah commentary. This volume will contribute towards 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.

The beginning of each class will be dedicated to introducing and singing Hasidic songs —*niggunim*— which will then lead into a short contemplative practice in quietude. As this will set the mood, we will then begin to dive into and explore the text, followed by havruta time for review. We shall then regroup and conclude each class with sharing of insights.

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 5:40-6:40**

**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 the Torah, whilst also looking at how the trope functions as an interpretation to the text. We will look specifically at the text of Bereishit (The Creation) and the portion read at Rosh Hodesh. No previous experience necessary.

**MEGILLAT ESTHER (FALL)**

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**



**ELISA PEARLMAN**  
**Mondays 6:45-7:45**

Learn to chant this special trope in preparation for our annual readings at Purim.

**NIGHT SEDER (SEDER EREV)**  
**RAHEL BERKOVITS**  
**Mondays 6:15-8:15 PM**  
**Fall & Spring**

**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 PTF. 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.

**TORAH YOGA (FALL)**  
**DIANE BLOOMFIELD**  
**Tues 5:45-7:00**

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**

The chassidic Rebbe Sfat Emet teaches: "The words of Torah are engraved in the body of a person...But they are hidden, and we need to find the light of Torah in all creation." (Sfat Emet Chukat תרל"א).

Integrating a 10 minute text study into the practice of yoga, we will explore the words of Torah engraved in our body, mind, heart and soul.

No yoga experience necessary to participate.

There is an extra charge for this class.

**PASKENING RESPONSIBILITY**  
**ELISHA ANCELOVITS**  
**Tuesday: 5:45 - 7:45 pm**  
**Fall**

**LEVEL: ADVANCED**

Halakha is currently viewed as either an obstruse technical discourse or as a collection of concepts from which one selectively chooses to argue one's ideological conclusions. But for most of its history, whenever Judaism has simply been the Jews' way of being human, Halakha and its pesak (application) has simply been nuanced

guidance about life. And that was a major reason that people requested and offered pesak – for the sake of advice on navigating life.

In this class, we learn how to regain that. Instead of becoming lost in or manipulating concepts and textual words, we learn how to hear the *practical insights* that the *varied authors* across time and cultures sought to communicate in rabbinic vocabulary. By reading examples from across the generations/layers of Jewish law, so that we may become familiar with Halakhic literature, we use each session to increasingly learn both how to hear past nuances better and how to think with more nuance. This guides us toward the question of what current Halakhic applications might look like in our varied Jewish subcultures.

**ULPAN LA-INYAN**  
**Mon. 12:15-1:00**  
**Wed 5:45-7:15**

**LEVEL: INTRODUCTORY**  
**FALL**

Introductory Hebrew (levels 1.5 and 2). There will be an extra charge for this class.

**SCRIBAL ARTS**  
**DOV LAIMON**

**LEVEL: OPEN TO ALL**

**Mondays 6:45-8:15 pm (There is an extra charge for this course.)**  
**Fall & Spring**

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.

**TRAINING PROGRAM FOR RITUAL SLAUGHTERERS**  
**SHLOMO ZACHAROW**

**Thursday 4:00 - 5:30 pm**  
**Fall & Spring**

Training Program for Ritual Slaughterers

If you would like to be certified as a שוחט, ritual slaughterer, round out your Judaic education or just want to delve into the depths of a surreptitious and often misunderstood profession, this course is for you!

We will learn and discuss the requisite halakhot (laws), the practical aspects of preparing knives, handling of the animals and shechting as well as checking for treifot (signs of being not kosher) and kashering the meat.

There will be periodic outings for actual shehitah. Students will have to prepare material in advance for classes and examinations.

In Year 1 of the program, we learn the laws of slaughtering ofot (fowl) and in Year 2 we study treifot and slaughtering behamot (cattle). One can learn Year 1 only or both years. If studying both years, one can

commence in either year of the program. One may tune in on zoom, but the practicum must occur in person, either in Israel or in periodic seminars conducted abroad.