

Machon Ma'ayan

THE IDA AND DAVID HILTZIK JUDAIC STUDIES PROGRAM



course
catalog





AT MACHON MAAYAN, the Judaic studies program is a carefully designed system, featuring various components that, when combined, serve to give each student a tailor made experience, maximizing their strengths and allowing them to have a year of transformative personal, spiritual, and religious growth.

The Classes

The variety of classes at Machon Maayan is astounding. Each class slot features 4-6 different options, each taught by passionate educators with creative and exciting teaching styles, geared to a variety of levels, skill sets, and knowledge bases.

With the help of faculty mentors, students choose from numerous course options, customizing their schedules to create a program that is inspiring for them. Some courses are text based, others require chavruta preparation, some are discussion oriented, while yet others include informal out-of-the-box modules. Topics range from Jewish Philosophy to Halacha, Tanach, Israel studies, and Jewish History.

The Individual

We believe in giving our students maximum individual attention. Most of our classes are deliberately designed to be small, thereby giving every student the opportunity to contribute to the classroom dialogue. The intimate and non-judgmental setting encourages our students to raise any issue or question with which they might be grappling. This framework lets our students develop a new, deep relationship with the Torah and with their teachers, as they explore fresh, profound perspectives on issues that they raise. Together, they design a roadmap for a life journey of passionate Torah observance.

Despite the depth and breadth of classes that are offered, students interested in learning topics that are not covered in the classes, are offered chavrutot, chaburas (mini study groups), and personal projects to provide them with a more personalized and individualized learning experience.

Beyond the Formal Classroom

Of course, the Ida and David Hiltzik program takes our Torah study beyond the walls of the classroom. Each week, the students are treated to guest speakers, who broaden their horizons with new Torah ideas and words of inspiration. On

Thursday night, mishmar is an optional learning opportunity, complete with special culinary delights, where the focus is the relevance of the weekly Torah portion. Beyond that, with the approach of each holiday, we schedule Yimei Iyun (focus days) to explore the Hashkafa (philosophy) and Halacha (law) related to that part of the Jewish calendar.

Additionally, our students are fortunate to study next door to the Orot Etzion Midrasha, a one-year program for their Israeli counterparts. Any student interested can pair up with an Israeli chavruta (study partner) and pore over texts of their choice, in Hebrew. So many Machon Maayaners take advantage of this wonderful opportunity, learning Torah in Hebrew, and often finding a new Israeli family.

A quick perusal of the weekly schedule will highlight the Monday and Wednesday afternoon internship program and the Thursday seminar, in which Israel is used as the classroom. These two transformative informal programs complement the formal academic program and round out the full Machon Maayan learning experience.

Project Based Learning

As long time educators, we know that the best way to retain knowledge and to make the Torah one's own, is to invest oneself

in Torah study in a very personal way. To that end, we focus each semester on some project-based learning, giving students the chance to explore new topics, based on their classroom experience, giving each individual the chance to shine and showcase her new skills and knowledge.



Ida and David Hiltzik ז"ל were proud Jews who were leaders and vibrant supporters of their Jewish community. Their love of Torah and commitment to Jewish life continues to serve as a model to their extended family and acts as the inspiration for their legacy — The Machon Maayan Judaic Studies Program.

The best way to retain knowledge and to make the Torah one's own is to invest oneself in Torah study in a very personal way.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
<div>9:15-10:30</div> <div>Torah & Science</div> <div>Spiritual Growth</div> <div>Contemporary Halacha</div> <div>Parshat Hashavua</div> <div>The Amida</div>	<div>9:15-10:00</div> <div>King David</div> <div>The Oral Law</div> <div>Echoes of Eden</div> <div>Tefilla Workshop</div> <div>Body and Soul</div>	<div>9:15-10:30</div> <div>Torah & Science</div> <div>Spiritual Growth</div> <div>Contemporary Halacha</div> <div>Parshat Hashavua</div> <div>The Amida</div>	<div>9:30-10:30</div> <div>King David</div> <div>The Oral Law</div> <div>Echoes of Eden</div> <div>Tefilla Workshop</div> <div>Body and Soul</div>	SEMINAR
	<div>10:05-10:30</div> <div>Group Meeting</div>			
<div>10:35-11:45</div> <div>The Jewish Woman in the Modern World (3 levels)</div> <div>Women in Halacha</div>	<div>10:40-11:45</div> <div>Israel Update</div> <div>Living, Loving, Learning</div> <div>Guided Beit Midrash</div> <div>The Rationale of Mitzvot</div> <div>The Yosef Story</div>	<div>10:35-11:45</div> <div>The Jewish Woman in the Modern World (3 levels)</div> <div>Women in Halacha</div>	<div>10:35-11:50</div> <div>Israel Update</div> <div>Living, Loving, Learning</div> <div>Guided Beit Midrash</div> <div>The Rationale of Mitzvot</div> <div>The Yosef Story</div>	
<div>11:45-1:00</div> <div>Women in the Bible</div> <div>Netivot Shalom</div> <div>Inter- Personal Relationships</div> <div>Minhagim</div> <div>Enneagram Workshop</div>	<div>11:50-12:50</div> <div>Hilchot Shabbat: From Gemara to Halacha</div> <div>Survey of Hilchot Shabbat</div> <div>Philosophy of Shabbat</div> <div>The Shabbat Kitchen</div>	<div>11:45-1:00</div> <div>Women in the Bible</div> <div>Netivot Shalom</div> <div>Inter-Personal Relationships</div> <div>Minhagim</div> <div>Enneagram Workshop</div>	<div>11:50-12:50</div> <div>Hilchot Shabbat: From Gemara to Halacha</div> <div>Survey of Hilchot Shabbat</div> <div>Philosophy of Shabbat</div> <div>The Shabbat Kitchen</div>	
Lunch				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	
<div>1:30-3:30</div> <div>Break /Optional Chavrutot</div>	<div>1:30-5:30</div> <div>Internships</div> <div>Or</div> <div>4:15-5:30</div> <div>Topics in Jewish Philosophy</div> <div>The Moral Maze</div> <div>Themes in Sefer Breishit</div>	<div>2:30-3:30</div> <div>Michtav M'Eliyahu</div> <div>Living Inspired</div> <div>Pninei Halacha</div> <div>Shivat Tzion</div> <div>Sefer Ezra/Nechemia</div> <div>Music Theory</div>	<div>1:30-5:30</div> <div>Internships</div>	SEMINAR	
<div>3:30-4:40</div> <div>Holocaust Studies</div> <div>Chassidut</div> <div>Mashiach, Resurrection & The World to Come</div> <div>Biblical Exegesis</div> <div>Tehillim</div> <div>Music Composition</div>		<div>3:40- 4:40</div> <div>Letters to a Buddhist Jew</div> <div>Kashrut</div> <div>Murmurings in the Desert: Sefer Bamidbar</div> <div>Aggadata</div> <div>Master Brachot</div> <div>The Joy of Being a Jew</div> <div>3:40-5:40:</div> <div>Torah & Art</div>			SEMINAR
<div>4:50-6:00</div> <div>Living with the Times</div> <div>Derech Hashem</div> <div>Pirkei Avot for the Modern Times</div> <div>Modern Jewish History</div> <div>The Ten Plagues</div>		<div>4:45-5:45</div> <div>Rashi/Ramban Debates</div> <div>Permission to Believe/Receive</div> <div>Mishlei</div> <div>The Last Lecture: Sefer Devarim</div> <div>Matan Torah</div>	<div>5:30-6:30</div> <div>Topics in Modern Orthodoxy</div> <div>Love is My Religion</div> <div>Mitzvot Unplugged</div> <div>Sefer Iyov: Perspectives on Suffering</div> <div>Kabbalah vs. Philosophy</div>		SEMINAR
6:30 Dinner					
<div>7:30-8:30</div> <div>Shiur Klali / Guest Speaker</div>	<div>Free Evening</div>	<div>8:00-9:00</div> <div>Keshet / Special Program</div>	<div>7:30-8:30</div> <div>Dignity of Difference</div> <div>Mesilat Yesharim</div> <div>Tanach Survey</div> <div>Know What to Answer</div>		SEMINAR



Tanach

The Garden of Eden

The story of the Garden of Eden is one of the best known stories in the world. However, the fame a story attains creates many pitfalls. Readers familiar with a story tend to gloss over important details, since they are so familiar with the themes and events. This course intends to revisit the story of the Garden of Eden, and in doing so, reveal some startling themes and elements that are sometimes overlooked, yet are fundamental in their relevance to all of humanity.

Themes in Sefer Bereishit

Sibling Rivalry, Jealousy, Murder, Idealism, Responsibility, Relationships, Purpose, Godliness, Fate and Destiny are just some of the themes that will be explored through the stories in Sefer Bereishit. This course will journey back to a time when the Jewish nation was in its formative stage in order to understand: What is the essence of the Jewish people? What is our purpose as a nation and individuals? Through the lens of modern and classical commentaries and using the Biblical text as a springboard, focus and dialogue will be devoted to challenging contemporary issues.

The Yosef Story

Jealousy, Admiration, Maturation, Relationships, Unity, Hope, Schism, Reconciliation, Dreams, Perspectives, Leaders, Followers, Truth, and Lies are topics that will be explored through the text and commentaries as themes and stories from the last four parshiot of Sefer Bereishit will be analyzed.

Some of the questions we will explore: Was Yosef a dreamer or realist? Yosef is referred to as 'Yosef the Righteous'. Is this title justified? There are those that say that experience makes the man, while others say that man creates the experience, Which statement reflects the character of Yosef? Did the brothers actually sell Yosef? Who did Yosef marry? Did Yosef have prophecy or was he just very intuitive? Did Yosef ever reconcile with his brothers? Where did Yosef get the strength to rise above his challenges in Egypt?

The 10 Plagues

Do the messages of the 10 plagues have relevance today? Were there only 10 plagues? Were the plagues educational or punitive? Did G-d really need to execute the 10 plagues in order to take the Jewish People out of Egypt? Are there any patterns within the 10 plagues? In this course, we will delve into each plague through analysis of text, commentaries, and archaeology.

We will uncover the messages that are found within each plague and learn new perspectives on how to be a successful Torah Jew in the modern world.

Matan Torah

Experience the event that shaped the destiny and served as the mission statement of the Jewish People. Emphasis will be placed on in-depth study of texts and commentaries that explain the Divine Revelation at Mount Sinai and its eternal messages and philosophical teachings.

In addition, we will gain a deeper understanding of the second half of Sefer Shemot including topics like the laws of Mishpatim, Mishkan, and the Golden Calf. What was the purpose of the Mishkan? How could the Jewish People go from inspiration and clarity at Har Sinai to worshipping the Golden Calf a mere 40 days later? Did the Jews accept the Torah at Sinai with blind faith?

Philosophical Themes in Sefer Vayikra

Sefer Vayikra is filled with technical details. Comprising the laws of Biblical sacrifices and concepts of purity and impurity, this book seems distant from the modern world we inhabit. Using incisive analysis, we will uncover the hidden side of Sefer Vayikra,

unlocking its secrets and finding our own selves buried within.

Murmurings in the Desert

Sefer Bamidbar is one of the most engaging books of the Torah. What is the theme of the book? How does each story connect with the next? Why were the Jewish people so rebellious? Why did Korach and the spies rebel? Why couldn't Moshe enter the Land of Israel? Did Moshe's actions reflect good leadership? Why didn't the Jewish people want to conquer the Land of Israel? What is the relevancy of these stories to the 21st century? This course will illustrate what really happened in the desert during these forty challenging years. Different commentaries will be used to explore the main themes and the background to some of the greatest stories in order to find new perspectives to many perplexing questions.

Sefer Devarim: The Last Lecture

In recent years I have had the pleasure to read books by wise and reflective teachers who know that their end is near and who seek to share their wisdom with their nearest and dearest (think Tuesdays with Morrie or Randy Pausch's The Last Lecture). However, what many people forget is that the first last lecture took place just over 3,000 years ago when Moshe delivered a



series of talks to Bnei Yisrael before they entered Eretz Yisrael. These talks, which form the basis of Sefer Devarim, are intellectually and emotionally rich, and teach us more what a Jew should believe and how a Jew should behave. We will delve into the wisdom of Sefer Devarim and learn some of the most important lessons of life, Judaism, and ethics that were bequeathed to us by our greatest teacher.

Parshat Hashavua

We will use the parshah as a springboard to explore key issues in hashkafah which relate to how we live our lives and react to

situations we face every day. You will walk out each week prepared for the Shabbat table with a D'var Torah relevant to life today.

Living With the Times

Experience inspiring weekly discussions related to the Parsha/holidays/current events- as we connect the topics to our daily lives. Discussions draw from various Chassidic sources such as Tanya, Likutei Maharar, Rav Kook, Rav Shlomo Carlebach, etc.

Rashi/ Ramban Debates

There is little doubt that the two greatest

Torah commentators throughout Jewish history were Rashi (1040-1105) and Ramban (1194-1270). Yet, even when they interpreted the same pesukim, Rashi and Ramban often reached very different conclusions. We will study a number of instances where Rashi and Ramban disagreed in their understanding of specific Torah passages; while also thinking about why they produced such different interpretations. This course will deepen your understanding of the methodology of Rashi and Ramban.

Netivot Shalom

In this course, we will study the Netivot Shalom, a popular collection of essays on parshat hashavua, written by the contemporary Chassidic master, Rav Shalom Noach Barzovsky z"l, Rebbe of Slonim. Each week we will delve into an essay connected to the parsha where the Slonimer Rebbe takes an idea and provides us with Chassidic wisdom, guidance and insight to fortify us in our own spiritual development.

Essential Commentaries of the Ramban

Exploring Ramban's exegetic style and methodology, we will delve into famous issues such as: Eretz Yisrael, miracles, G-d testing man, the reasons for the mitzvot, karbanot, the Mishkan, the sins of the Avot, and many more.

Biblio – Drama

Biblio-Drama is an incredible technique, whereby students “become” the characters in Tanach and are able to understand Chazal's midrashic interpretations more deeply and personally. We will take certain key stories in Tanach and try to penetrate the p'shat level to find the hidden messages left for us to decode.

Participation is voluntary; this is not just a course for drama oriented students. Even watching can be very illuminating. However, it might just be too difficult holding back from getting involved!

Torah Touring

The Beit Midrash might seem intimidating at first, with so many books such as the Tanach, Mishnah, Gemara, Shulchan Aruch- not to mention the thousands of commentaries- where does one begin? Torah Touring will introduce and help you navigate through classical sefarim and commentaries while learning various topics to assist you in your journey through the Beit Midrash. Rashi, Ramban, Tosafot, Rambam and scores of other great Jewish personalities will come to life as we learn their styles and methodologies and understand their roles in the latticework of rabbinic literature. Most importantly, essential tools will be taught that will help students feel comfortable preparing their own shiurim!

Tanach Survey

Explore and discover the themes of the books of Tanach from Sefer Yehoshua through Divrei Hayamim. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the historical context of every sefer through an in-depth study of two perakim per book. Of course, no survey of Tanach would be complete without learning and incorporating the timeless moral and ethical teachings that relate to modern day living.

Themes in Sefer Yehoshua

The Book of Yehoshua enumerates the great challenges faced by the Jewish people as they enter and settle their promised land, a lengthy process that takes hundreds of years. Exhausted from their forty year journey in the desert, the people must overcome earlier failures, confront hostile coalitions on the battlefield, struggle with the inimical cultural values pervasive in Canaan, and make the difficult transition from a nomadic to a settled way of life. We will discover together how a new nation strives to forge a collective identity in their homeland.

Sefer Shoftim

After the death of Yehoshua, Bnei Yisrael entered a new and tumultuous era; without a king, without a Navi, and sometimes

without a ruler at all. Sefer Shoftim describes a repeating cycle that occurred during the next 355 years. This course is not merely a historical account of 355 years. We will uncover and discover the depth and meaning inherent within the people and events. We will find tremendously significant relevance to our lives. And we will learn the importance of what it means to stay true to the Torah and our leadership.

Shmuel Alef

In Sefer Shmuel, we will engage in close reading and in-depth analysis of the text, with an emphasis on peshat. We will examine the literary devices used by the Tanach in order to express its messages. In tandem, we will also make use of medieval and modern commentaries. We will trace the character development of the major personalities of the sefer (Shmuel, Shaul, David, Yonatan) and follow its major themes, including the search for leadership and the struggle to achieve autonomous, yet spiritual, nationhood.

Shmuel Bet

David has finally become King but not without challenges and controversy. Come and be enlightened by the stories around David's kingship and the narratives that shape the royal dynasty of the Jewish people for eternity. We will utilize classical

commentaries to add depth to our understanding of the themes, development of characters and dilemmas that the key characters faced.

King David

King David is one of the most interesting, perplexing, and misunderstood figures in Tanach. On the one hand, he was one of our greatest warriors, and on the other, he authored the spiritually charged sefer of Psalms. What motivates David to act in ways that captures G-d's love for him, while at the same time, acting in ways that bring about G-d's vengeance? In King David, we will explore the many stories that shed light on this conflicted personality. We will begin with David's relationship with King Saul, continue on to his friendship with Jonathan, explore his duel with Goliath, and conclude with his marriage to Batsheva. In all, almost forty chapters of Tanach are dedicated to King David. The main focus of the course will be to learn profound lessons – both positive and negative – gleaned from the life of this perplexing personality.

Melachim I

Melachim I teaches us about the history of Israel and its monarchs. We will learn about Solomon, the renegade Jeroboam, Ahab and his evil wife Jezebel, and the fiery prophet Elijah. However, beyond these important



personalities, Melachim I also teaches us about the dilemmas and temptations of power, and the tension between fulfilling our duties to G-d, and our own desires.

The Eliyahu Narratives

Who is the man that we associate with drinking from the large cup at the Pesach Seder? In this course we explore the narratives that form the collection of the Eliyahu text. We will explore the history of prophecy as well as the nature of miracles preformed in these narratives. This text study we allow us to gain perspective on the character of the prophet and why he remains central to our life cycle events.

Shivat Tzion

We will study portions from Sefer Ezra which describes the original shivat tzion (the return to Israel) from Babylon, and draw parallels with the modern shivat tzion prior to the establishment of the modern State of Israel. We will learn about the similarities between the decree of Cyrus and the Balfour Declaration and reflect on the spiritual significance of a shivat tzion by secular Jews. By learning about the building of the second Beit Hamikdash after the original shivat tzion, we will also learn lessons about what we can do to bring about the final redemption.

Psalms With a Poetic License

This course will use modern poetic tools in order to dissect the structure, imagery, and figurative language of Sefer Tehilim. Using the methods

of Rober Alter and Benjamin Harshav alongside the tradition of Chazal and other classical Meforshim we will explore the many chapters of Tehillim and use the poetry and morals in order to greaten ourselves and our relationship with others.

Tehillim

What makes Tehillim so unique? Why is Tehillim the 'go to' text for most life cycle events? What was King David trying to convey? We will delve into the deeper meaning of the text with the accompaniment of classic commentaries. The course is designed to encourage creative thinking and for students to share their insights and feelings about the messages of Tehillim.

Sefer Iyov: Perspectives on Suffering

Iyov is known to be one of the most challenging books of Tanach. Known for intricate language and deep philosophical questions, it is much more than a book about 'why bad things happen to good people.' This course will allow the student the opportunity to explore the depth and beauty of this complex book. Learning Sefer Iyov is a way to learn about the bigger picture of life. What is the purpose of this story? Is there meaning to life's challenging events? How do we cope when life doesn't go as planned?

Themes in Megillat Esther

Did Vashti really grow a tail? How long did the famous party of Shushan actually last? Why did Haman want to annihilate the Jewish people? Did Haman's sons actually learn in Bnei Brak? What was Mordechai's relationship to Esther? What was Esther's relationship to Achashverosh? Learn the book of Esther on a profound level and gain an appreciation of the history of the time and an understanding for the individual characters and their contributions to the epic storyline.

Kohelet

Kohelet is a profound book that explores the paradoxes of human existence and explains how to have faith and observe God's mitzvot in truth. In this course, Kohelet will be studied with the aid of classic and modern commentaries and connect some of the timeless wisdom of Kohelet to modern day life.

Megillat Ruth

Megillat Ruth functions as the nexus for many different *Tanakh* themes: kingship, redemption, *chessed*, how to build a harmonious and well-functioning society, ideal leadership, the relationship between names, identity and destiny, blessings, house building, and effective social

interactions. Megillat Ruth documents the manner in which people lead their humdrum lives, without dramatic events and extraordinary miracles. And yet while it records ordinary interactions, it also features the extraordinary behavior of two great individuals who succeed in reversing the negative trajectory of society during the period of the Judges. Ruth and Boaz teach us how two individuals can act in accordance with their own conscience and in contrast to the social alienation and apathy that prevails. In doing so, they bring this lawless and hopeless situation to an end and pave the way toward a society of daily blessings, in which the nation can build a strong and unified house.

Women in the Bible

This course will take an in-depth look at women in the Tanach, through a textual analysis of the form and content of specific Biblical narratives. The unique strengths and personality traits of each woman will be assessed through studying her relationships and interactions with others and attempting to place them within the larger structure of the Tanach. Classical *meforshim* will be used to enhance our understanding of the relevant text, as well as outside sources to develop a greater perspective in studying these women as role models. In addition to concentrating on how to read a story in Tanach, this course will enable

students to see these stories through the lenses of history and psychology as well.

Mishlei

Sefer Mishlei contains the profound insights and stunning proverbs of Shlomo HaMelech. In this class we will explore the wisdom of Mishlei while referring to both classic and modern commentaries, and try and calibrate our thinking in accordance with its wisdom.

Love is My Religion

People often think that Judaism is a religion of law and not of love. They claim that it is more about fearing G-d and feeling guilty, rather than loving G-d and feeling joy. They conclude that it leads us to a life of weakness and submission and robs us of our power and freedom to be our true selves. This course shows how Judaism is quite the opposite. Indeed, it is founded upon love; its teachings encourage us to be strong and its laws empower us to achieve true freedom and experience the joy of being in love. We will explore and revisit stories in Bereishit to provide a springboard for our discussion.

Biblical Exegesis

We will study medieval commentaries, such as Rashi, Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, Radaq,

Rambam and Sforno on select biblical texts. Attention is focused on the presuppositions and methods of medieval biblical exegesis in general, and on the particular concerns of each of the commentators. The goal of this course is to gain familiarity with the commentators and their various styles and to be able to use these commentators to create a shiur on your own.

Directed Beit Midrash: How to Create a Shiur

In this course you will learn the skills for how to research, prepare and give your own shiur. You will learn how to navigate the beit midrash as well as various online sites to prepare a professional source sheet. You will also gain the confidence to give your shiurim to others.

Guided Beit Midrash

Do you love learning inside sources? Do you want to continue developing your skills learning texts? In Guided Beit Midrash we will explore topics across the spectrum of Torah ideas and issues – Tanach, Halacha, Philosophy, and have an opportunity to study a wide range of texts, commentators, and poskim in an effort to broaden our horizons and strengthen our skills.

Echoes of Eden

The stories of Bereishit are familiar to us, but their meaning often seems unclear. Why would Hashem want to deny humanity knowledge of good and evil? Aren't we better off being able to distinguish right from wrong? What are we to make of a talking snake? And why would Hashem find the building of a tower in the Land of Babel so problematic? Why did Noach get drunk after he left the ark? Why was Avraham chosen to be the first Jew? Did Avraham succeed when facing challenges? What is the connection between Noach, Lot, Yishmael, Yitzchak, Ruth, Avraham, Sarah, Charan and the Garden of Eden?

Come on a journey of discovery into the text and commentators, revealing layers of meaning that will show that the individual stories form a larger majestic whole.

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Halacha



Minhagim

Did you ever wonder where our rich and colorful *minhagim* originate? Why do Ashkenazim and Sephardim differ so greatly in practice? Most importantly, what is a *minhag*? This *shiur* will trace the evolution of many different *minhagim* and their reasons – from the *Gemara* (where possible) to the *Rishonim* and *Achronim*. Special attention will be placed on the *minhagim* associated with the *chagim* and the life cycle.

Peninei Halakha

We will study excerpts from Rabbi Eliezer Melamed's 'Peninei Halakha' which is a

very popular and clearly written Hebrew compendium of Jewish Law available both in print, online, as well as a free app. We will learn laws relating to daily rituals and those associated with the forthcoming Jewish holidays, and offer opportunities to ask a broad range of questions on each of the topics we cover.

Moral Maze

Learn how Jewish teachings found in the Talmud can be applied to the complex moral dilemmas that we face in the modern world. We will explore a number of fascinating topics including concerning Medical Ethics, War Ethics,

and Animal Rights issues and discuss how contemporary Rabbis are able to apply ancient texts to modern moral dilemmas.

Contemporary Halacha

Take a behind the scenes look at how *halacha* responds to changes in our understanding of our world. Astrology, cloning, vegetarianism, and smoking are just some of the contemporary issues that our ancient laws can address.

The Philosophy of Shabbat

Jewish living is formed as an external lifestyle expressing an internal vision. The Halacha circumscribes the external lifestyle and consists of seemingly endless details. In this course we will explore the halachot of Shabbat in the context of the internal vision underlying Shabbat. What is Shabbat, and how does it fit into the overall framework of Torah life? How do the halachot of Shabbat express, create and enhance the internal vision of Shabbat? We will analyze these questions and in doing so, broaden our Shabbat celebration, our Jewish life, and our understanding of ourselves.

Survey of Hilchot Shabbat

On Shabbat: Can I add water to a burning *chulent*? Can I heat food on a timer? If all the food is in the fridge but I forgot to

unscrew the light – can I still open the fridge? Is there a specific way to make salad or tea? Can I reheat cold chicken on a hot plate? How do you deal with an embarrassing stain on your jacket or dress? How can I open a package in a permitted manner? We will try and answer the many practical questions that present themselves in the kitchen, dorm, and home.

Hilchot Shabbat: From Gemara to Halacha

An in-depth analysis of the laws of Shabbat, tracing the halacha from the Torah and the Talmud through the Shulchan Aruch and modern Responsa literature. The course will analyze some of the 39 types of prohibitive work. The goal is to understand the definition and application of each Melacha that is studied.

The Shabbat Kitchen

We will focus on the process of halacha which will enable us to understand the guidelines governing preparation of food and other kitchen activities on Shabbat. By understanding the sources, we will begin to enhance our own Shabbat experience and appreciate the fine details of Shabbat.



Beyond the Shabbat Kitchen

Can I tie a double knot in my shoes on Shabbat? What about drawing a picture in the sand? Can I get paid for babysitting I did on Shabbat? Is there a specific way to open food containers? Can I take medications or shower on Shabbat? Can I put anything on a Shabbat timer? Together we will delve into the sources and understand the practical halachot relevant to the Shabbat home.

The Positive Mitzvot of Shabbat

Often, we focus on the Shabbat prohibitions and restrictions. However, there is a very positive dimension of Shabbat that permeates the day. What is it? How can I connect to it? How can I enhance my Shabbat experience through the Mitzvot Aseh (the positive commandments)?

Know What to Answer

Is the Jewish view on intermarriage racist?
Why should I be interested in religion if religion is the cause of war and conflict?
How do I respond to my relative who wants to know why she can't be cremated?
How do we explain mitzvot and customs

that seem very strange and confusing to us? Often in our daily lives, we are faced with these very real issues, and at times, we are unable to answer these and similar questions. In this course we will explore these questions and more and develop our ability to address similar issues.

Hilchot Kashrut

Can you eat vegetables that were cooked in a dairy pan with your hamburger?

What should I do if my oven is not kosher?

Can I use my microwave for milk and meat?

Can I use my sink for kosher and not kosher?

These are just some of the questions we will be dealing with in Laws of Kashrut. We will not only try to find out answers to all of our questions, but we will try to understand the rules that govern these laws in the hope that we can understand the underlying concepts and help us form new perspectives.

Practical Daily Living

What are the laws that guide me when I wake up in the morning? When do I recite Tefillat Haderech? What do I do if I forgot to make a beracha before eating my food? Are some places better for praying than others? When is the ideal time to say the bedtime shema? Jewish law has a perspective and

approach that governs every aspect of our lives from the time we wake up in the morning until we go to bed. Attention will also be given to the basic laws of each approaching holiday.

Master Brachot

What bracha do you make on cholent on Thursday night? If chocolate comes from a tree, why do we make shehakol? If I have a salad with different fruits and vegetables, which bracha do I make first? Do I need to make hamotzi on bread croutons in a salad? These questions and many more will be explored and answered in Master Brachot.

How Do Rabbis Make Decisions

We will learn about the often misunderstood process which leads Rabbis to reach their decisions. We will identify the sources of Jewish law which Rabbis must know; explore the processes of Jewish law that Rabbis must follow, and we will learn about the meta-principles in Jewish law which Rabbis must consider. Moreover, we will address questions such as whether it is permissible to get a second opinion from another Rabbi and whether it is preferable to choose a Rabbi who is more lenient.



The Jewish Woman in the Modern World

In this course we will examine the state of the Jewish woman as she confronts the modern world. We will conduct a halachic and hashkafic analysis of the Jewish women's life cycle and learn to appreciate the Orthodox perspective with modernity.

This course is given on 3 levels.

Jewish Life Cycle

Mazel tov! It's a boy! A Girl! Twins! What are the halachot and minhagim that guide us when a baby is born? What is an Upsheerin? Why is a Bat Mitzvah at age 12? What happens when a couple gets married? Is divorce a mitzvah? How do we mourn an individual's death? This course will explore the Jewish Life Cycle from both a Sefardi and Ashkenazi perspective and will explore the halachot and customs involved at each life event.

Kabbalah and Halacha

In this course we will learn about the history and development of both Halacha and Kabbalah, and will then examine areas where Kabbalah features in normative Jewish practice including the laws of handwashing, prayer, and wedding customs. We will then consider examples where Kabbalah appears to conflict with Halacha such as the preference found in Kabbalah to have 12 rather than 2 challot on Shabbat. We will learn about Shabtai Tzvi and why his apostasy led many Jews to be wary of Kabbalah, and what our attitudes should be toward modern Kabbalah centres.

Interpersonal Relationships

"We text, but we don't talk." While means to communicate have become easier, ability to communicate and express oneself has become more difficult. In this course, we will learn what makes for better friendships and relationships and what hinders those relationships. We will look into bettering ourselves, so that we can improve on getting along with others. How to control anger and jealousy, the effects of Lashon Hara, and how to show greater appreciation for others will be just a small part of the many Bein Adam L'Chaveiro halachot and skills that we will learn.

*While means to
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Jewish Thought



Mashiach, Ressurrection & The World to Come

We will try to bring the future to life. The concept of Mashiach, the vision of life in the future, and the resurrection of the dead are as familiar as they are misunderstood. The goal of this course is to describe the future in the clearest of terms, with the intent of experiencing a taste of the beauty of what is to come. We will base all analyses on early textual sources, while simultaneously illustrating how the 'World to Come' is currently coming alive around us.

Derech Hashem

Derech Hashem, by Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzato, is probably one of the most important works on Jewish philosophy. It expounds upon some of the most basic questions in life. What is the purpose of creation? Do we have a specific mission in this world? If so, how do we figure it out? What are the five levels of the soul? How many levels of soul can I connect to on a daily basis? What can I contribute to the world? What is the purpose of mitzvot? How can I personally connect to the spiritual root of a mitzvah? How does our physical world parallel the spiritual world? How can a finite human being create a relationship with an infinite being? You will discover the tremendous power each Jew can make in his own life and within the community at large.

Letters to a Buddhist Jew

When Rabbi Akiva Tatz received a letter from a Chicago Jew by the name of David Gotlieb asking: "Do I commit myself fully to Judaism and abandon Zen altogether- the Zen that helped me to awaken spiritually for the first time in my adult life?" he replied immediately. And when David asked: "Where can I find vibrancy, the wisdom and the source of spiritual connection which, for me, Judaism has never held?" he kept writing. Over the next two years their correspondence became an exploration of many of Judaism's deepest ideas. Letters to a Buddhist Jew is a record of that correspondence. David's penetrating questions evoke depths of Torah wisdom that are unknown to most modern Jews. This course will focus on selected essays from their discourse.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Jews

"7 Habits of Highly Effective People," by acclaimed author and consultant Stephen Covey, is one of the most influential books of the past two decades. "7 Habits" is built upon the idea that there are root principles intrinsic to human relationships that govern the outcomes of our interactions. By living in alignment with these principles, one can build and maintain deep, satisfying connections with others. The goal of this

course is to analyze these principles in a Jewish context and to learn how to identify the principles within ourselves and achieve self-esteem and relationship success.

Living Loving and Learning

This course will be a journey of exploration that begins with a voyage of self-discovery. We will navigate through the web of interpersonal relationships, dating, and intimacy and discover how we lay the foundations for a successful marriage.

The Amida

Do you find it difficult to daven the same amida every day, three times a day? Are your dreams, aspirations, and thoughts found within the words of our Sages? What if you could see the amida in a more personal, meaningful and relevant manner? Is it possible to say the same words and mean something different each time? Our journey will allow you to analyze each bracha of the amida. You will see the process and development of how each bracha links into the next until you have a complete picture of meaning and purpose. Your davening will never be the same!

Introduction to Kabbalah

We will explore the root principles underlying the system of thought known as the Kabbalah. The goal of the course is to distill the various themes of the Kabbalah to their foundations, achieving at least a beginner level of understanding of the system as a whole. Ultimately, we will show how Kabbalah plays a central (perhaps even the most central) role in our daily lives, and how, when properly harnessed, fills our lives with love, harmony, confidence and closeness.

Pirkei Avot

Many lessons in morals and ethics can be found in the succinct sayings of our Sages. Come acquire the tools for ethical behavior and more positive inter-personal relationships while learning selected Mishnayot from Pirkei Avot.

Famous Jewish Letters

If you have ever received a letter from someone you love, you will know how a personal letter can often contain both wisdom and emotion. While we often study the commentaries of great Jewish teachers, what is less well known is that many Jewish teachers also wrote letters to friends and relatives that contain much wisdom and emotion. For example, while living in Israel,

the Ramban wrote to a letter to his son in which he included valuable advice about maintaining a religious lifestyle. In this course we will read some 'Famous Jewish Letters' by great Jewish teachers and try to identify some timeless lessons that are encrypted in them.

Topics in Jewish Philosophy

Do human beings have free will? Is there a way to reconcile free will with divine determinism? Why do bad things happen? Why were we created? Do we really have a mission? Is there such a concept as blind faith within the Torah framework? Are angels real? These, and other questions, will be dealt with in this eye opening course.

Living Inspired

Rabbi Akiva Tatz shows how an understanding of some of the deeper ideas and patterns of Torah thought can illuminate our everyday experiences. In this course, life in general and its ordeals in particular are brought into focus: relationships, the unexpected, even life's problems and doubts become springboards to inspiration.



Permission to Receive/Believe

There are a number of ways to understand the fundamentals of Judaism – rationally, philosophically, scientifically, or historically. In this course we will use the renowned works of Rabbi Lawrence Kellerman: 'Permission to Believe' and 'Permission to Receive' to examine how we can connect to the concepts of belief in G-d and the divinity of the Torah.

Fundamentals of Jewish Philosophy Book Club

There are 3 things which I love: Great Jewish Questions, great Jewish ideas, and great Jewish books. In this course we will blend all 3 of these by studying answers to some of the greatest Jewish questions from some of the best known Jewish Books. Through the course you will be introduced to some incredible Jewish books, encounter some inspiring Jewish scholars, but more importantly, we'll be having some great Jewish conversations. We will discuss questions such as: Does Hashem reveal Himself to us today? Can I be a good Jew and doubt G-d's existence? How do we know that the Torah we learn today is from Sinai? If Olam Haba (World to Come) is so central to Jewish belief why isn't it mentioned in the Torah? Can Halacha change with modern society? Can a person make decisions based on astrology? We will also take a sampling of your own questions and explore perspectives from various books.

Themes in the Siddur

We will explore different themes in the siddur and learn not only about the words we recite in prayer, but also the concepts found within our prayers. In each session, we will deepen our

understanding of key ideas in Judaism such as love, redemption and peace, as well as more complex relationships such as how we associate with nature and the people around us. This course will transform your prayers, and the way you look at the siddur.

Messilat Yescharim

Can you really be in control of your life? How do you change a negative habit or trait? What is the essence of change? In order to connect with yourself, you need to learn and uncover your strengths, capabilities, weaknesses and deficiencies. Using the classic Mussar sefer Mesilat Yescharim, this course will empower you to discover the true you.

Tefilla workshop

Tefilla is our attempt to reach out to G-d as a matter of heart. As it says in the Shema, we turn toward G-d and seek Him with our heart, soul and might. But, how can we accomplish this without fully understanding what the prayers mean? How can someone else's words be meaningful for me? How can we make the same words that we say everyday come alive with newness? In the tefilla workshop, we will discover the essence of prayer. We will look at the texts of many tefillot and come to a deep understanding of our ancient texts as we make them personal. We will learn how to use tefilla as an essential tool in building our relationship with Hashem.

Spiritual Growth

We will explore a wide range of ideas and dilemmas in basic Jewish thought. Our goal is to enrich our Jewish spiritual lives by making these concepts relevant. Topics include: The true nature of the *yetzer hara*, holiness vs. natural morality, how to elevate the physical world, the sefirot, the process of *teshuva*, and building a relationship with G-d.

Aggadata

Why were we created? What is our purpose in the world? What does G-d want from us? How do we repent? How does G-d reward and punish us? What does it mean to be holy? What will happen when Moshiach comes? The Gemara constantly deals with these issues; however, it speaks in subtle ways, in mystery-filled language, known as aggadata. These teachings are veiled within a protective layer of legends, riddles, parables, and cryptic debates. Together we will unravel the mysterious teachings of Chazal and derive the knowledge and inspiration on how to conduct our lives.

Michtav M'Eliyahu

Is love something that just happens to you, or can you choose to love? Do we have free will on every choice, or are some things too difficult for us to overcome? How can we use mussar not only to be inspired for

the moment, but to actually refine our character in the long term? Is there such a thing as nature, or does Hashem make everything in the world happen directly, as a kind of miracle – and how does this affect the choices we make in our lives? We will learn the popular and inspiring Sefer Mussar, Michtav Me-Eliyahu, by Mussar Master Rav Eliyahu Dessler (1892-1954). Rav Dessler's writings combine Torah, philosophy and psychology to provide a spiritual path of growth for our generation.

Alei Shor: Building a Relationship with G-d

Rav Shlomo Wolbe, zt"l, was one of the greatest mussar giants of our generation. In his sefer Alei Shor, Rav Wolbe masterfully presents a road map for spiritual growth combining engaging Torah sources, psychology, encouragement, and inspiration as he guides the aspiring ben and bat torah to embrace the truths of this world. The class will be taught in a Va'ad Mussar style where students will be encouraged to share and discuss their own spiritual challenges.

Dating G-d: The Chagim

Appreciate the holidays of the Jewish year in a totally new way. Each holiday provides important aspects and components in our relationship with G-d. By the end of the year, we will be able to appreciate every single

"date" and build a beautiful and ongoing relationship with Hashem.

The Inner Meaning of Halacha

Halacha literally means "the way". In this course, we will challenge ourselves with the root question – "the way to where?" We will focus on specific, familiar halachot from everyday life with two goals in mind. Our first goal will be to understand the deeper elements underlying the chosen examples. Our second goal will be to examine how these elements and the performance of halacha transforms us into our true selves.

Radical Responsibility

Former Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks published over 25 books spanning a wide range of topics. This course will explore the major themes found in Lord Sacks' writings through examining one of Lord Sacks' books per week. We will talk about the significance of the Modern State of Israel, Jewish peoplehood today, Jewish attitudes to other religions, modern trends in antisemitism, the true meaning of Tzedakah, Jewish attitudes to multiculturalism and whether science and religion can live in harmony.

Singing to Hashem: Tehillim of Pesukei DeZimra

The daily process of Tefilla has the potential to be deeply meaningful, relevant and fulfilling. The structure of this course is to focus on the songs of King David found within the segment of Pesukei DeZimra. Taken from the book of Tehillim, these songs are a powerful expression of the inner yearnings of the human heart. Using textual analysis, our goal will be to unlock the evocative meaning of these writings, allowing ourselves to be swept up in the deep passion of true tefilla.

Mitzvot: Getting Inside

According to early Jewish sources, there are 613 different Biblical Mitzvot. A cursory examination of this long list seems to indicate a chaotic variety of commandments, some being strange and less known, while others incredibly familiar and fulfilling. The goal of this course is to examine specific mitzvot with the intent of revealing both a unique meaning and theme intrinsic to each mitzvah, as well as a unifying lattice connecting all 613 to each other.

Rationale of Mitzvot

How many commandments are there? How do we know? How can we find the intricacies of our mitzvah observance in the Torah? What are the laws and obligations governing each of the different mitzvot? In this course, we will

explore a select number of mitzvot, beginning with the obligation in the Chumash and traveling through a variety of early rabbinic and other sources. In doing so, we will examine the laws governing the different mitzvot and investigate many implications of our mitzvot in our daily life.

'Ted'Torah

Ideas are the currency of the 21st century and thanks to the world-famous TED conferences, many "regular" people have been able to share their original and researched ideas with the world.

TED Torah is made up of handpicked TED talks with interesting, diverse and relatable topics. The course will be a dynamic, thought-provoking and fun way to discuss practical, every day issues and themes that affect the world at large and then to analyze Judaism's take on them. Covering a different topic each week, this class will cull from secular and Jewish sources alike and will surely offer a new window into Judaism's beauty, depth, and relevance in the 21st century.

Horev

This is your chance to explore Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch's magnum opus, where he tackles major ideas of meaning in mitzvot, relevance of Jewish observance in the modern world, and responds to an array of questions regarding Jewish practice



and belief. Rabbi Hirsch, who wrote his book against the 19th century backdrop of the challenges modernity raised for the observant Jew, reads like it could have been written just yesterday.

Na Nach Nachman...

The life and teachings of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov. Learn about the most popular Chassidic master whose fire and teachings live on today. Course topics will include: Tefillah, self esteem, marriage, Simcha, and Eretz Yisrael. We will also learn from Rebbe Nachman's famous stories and parables.

Torah Multi Media

There are many ways to teach valuable lessons. In today's world, we no longer

just learn from books and teachers. The multi-media tools that are available to us are endless. In this new class we will explore new ways to learn age-old ideas. How to better our relationship with G-d, with each other and ourselves will be the focus of the class. Old time, classic TV shows will be the springboard for life changing discussions. There also will be texts that we will delve into to help us see how Torah is part of every aspect of our lives.

Body & Soul

We will delve into the teachings of the Rambam to gain a greater perspective of ourselves through the Rambam's holistic understanding of the 'mind-body' connection. The course will be a combination of text, discussion, and experiential learning.

The Thought of Rav Soloveitchik

Rabbi Joseph Ber Soloveitchik (1903-1993), known reverentially as "the Rav", was one of the greatest Talmudic scholars of the 20th century. His lectures were attended by thousands of listeners and his writings, which continue to be published posthumously, play a central role in contemporary discussions concerning Jewish thought and Jewish law. In this course, we will discuss a number of Rav Soloveitchik's essays and discover his unique approach to a number of topics including: repentance, community, redemption, prayer & the significance of the modern State of Israel.

The Haggadah of Rav Soloveitchik

The seder night can be a magnificent experience, an exalted evening like no other in the year. On the night of the exodus, the people met G-d, had an encounter with Him, and made his acquaintance for the first time. On Pesach night, man, free, hopeful, and courageous, enhanced by fulfillment, exalted by his independence, surges forward, expands, grows, ready to accomplish all that is related to his freedom. We will find depth and meaning to all the symbols of the seder night which will not only transform our seder, but illuminate the way we see and understand Judaism for the rest of the year.

Torah & Art

This course will introduce students to Torah texts and their deeper meaning.

Emphasis will be placed on students' understanding of the content and their ability to analyze and apply ideas to a theme for art work.

Conceptualization for creative solutions which parallel and relate to the Torah texts is the objective of each project.

Students will develop basic or advanced drawing skills, as well as learn the fundamentals of composition and color.

Topics in Modern Orthodoxy

What does it mean to be a Modern Orthodox Jew? How does one balance being modern and being Orthodox? Do the two contradict or coincide? We will be studying the works of some of the greatest Jewish thinkers of the past two centuries such as Rav Kook, Rav Hirsch, Rav Soloveitchik, Rav Amital, and Rav Lichtenstein. We will learn about how modern orthodoxy came about, the impact it had on both the Jewish world and world as a whole, and the progression of modern orthodoxy today.

Mussar Mission: Is Change a Mission Impossible?

We will begin the course by reviewing the spiritual and religious goals we set for ourselves. In the likely event we did not achieve our goals, we will examine why that is the case. Using a number of texts and teachings from various Mussar luminaries, we will recalibrate our religious and spiritual goals, as we are inspired, with Hashem's help, to make practical changes in our daily lives in order to achieve our goals.

The Thought of Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks was the former Chief Rabbi of the UK. In addition to the numerous roles in guiding the UK Rabbinical community and meeting with Royalty, politicians and community leaders, Lord Sacks published over 25 books. This course will explore the major themes found in Lord Sacks' writings through examining one of Lord Sacks' books per week. We will talk about the significance of the Modern State of Israel, Jewish peoplehood today, Jewish attitudes to other religions, modern trends in antisemitism, the true meaning of Tzedakah, Jewish attitudes to multiculturalism and whether science and religion can live in harmony.

13 Principles of Faith

What do Jews believe? The core and structure of Jewish Belief is as relevant today as it was during the time of the Rambam. In order to respond to a weakening of Jewish belief and practice in his day, and to persuade the Jews not to subscribe to the popular Karaite brand of Judaism, the Rambam authored the "13 Principles of Faith".

Some of the questions the Rambam addressed were: How can we understand G-d? What does the existence of G-d mean for us? What is the Torah? How does G-d communicate with the Jewish people? Why was the uniqueness of Moshe? What is the destiny and mission of the Jewish people?

This course delves into the origins and meanings of each of the 13 principles, in an attempt to integrate and apply them in our daily lives. Students will quickly discover that Adon Olam and Yigdal (based on the 13 Principles) are not just children's songs. They are gifts for life.

Tanya

We live with thoughts and mindsets that hold us back. In Tanya we will discover tools of how to relate to our thoughts and infuse them with positivity and spiritual growth enabling ourselves to function and relate to Hashem with greater awareness and productivity.

The Haggadah

Does the seder night feel more like the night of bondage? Does the thought of consuming Matzah and four cups of wine give you heartburn? Are the Divrei Torah as flat as a piece of Matzah? This course will equip you with original and exciting Divrei Torah that you can share on the Seder night. Various Haggadot will be used, as you become familiar with the text and style of the Haggadah. This course will be textual in nature and it will use the Haggadah as a springboard to discuss other themes that relate to the great Exodus narrative. In addition, various strategies, insights, and practical tools will be shared to help you infuse your seder with contagious excitement.

Why It Matters

Why does religion matter and what do we stand to lose as a society and as an individual if we lose it? Is belief in G-d a personal preference or does this belief effect the way an individual and society functions? We will explore and compare different philosophies of life and discover enlightening perspectives on timeless values.

Jewish Songs Unmasked

Gain a deeper understanding of all the beautiful and meaningful songs that we sing at seudat shlishit and at a kumzitz.

The Enneagram Workshop

We will use the Enneagram system of identifying personality types as a greater way of understanding ourselves and others. We will gain insight into our strengths and our blocks. We will see how this system is a clear outgrowth of the ancient kabbalistic system of the Sefirot. This class will be run as a workshop with the intention of not only discussing theory, but also delving into the practical (sharing and much hands-on work). Committing to this class requires commitment to a group and to serious personal growth.

Pirkei Avot: Getting to Know the Tannaim

This course will study Pirkei Avot in order to delve into the personalities of the Mishnah and the messages they shared with us. We will travel through Pirkei Avot and put a strong emphasis on the biography and history of the rabbis in order to better understand the text and grow from its morals.

Come acquire the tools for ethical behavior and more positive inter-personal relationships while learning selected Mishnayot from Pirkei Avot.

The Joy of Being a Jew

Let's face it: It's simply more exciting to go to a concert or ballgame or a party than it is to daven Shacharis. Or to keep Shabbos. Or

to... You get the point. In this course we will start with some basics of Jewish thought and then progress to deeper ideas of Kabbalah/ Chassidus to help us understand ourselves and our relationship with Hashem. The world will slowly become for us a place that is filled with His holiness and wisdom, 100% suited for intense closeness and attachment to Him. Anticipated topics include: Truth, our deep desires in life, self-esteem, spiritual reality, emotions, prayer, Shabbos, and of course, much more. Experience shows that once a Jew gains a greater appreciation and internalization of deeper ideas in Judaism, her joy from being Jewish increases proportionately. Who knows, you might even walk away from this shiur knowing how to make an 'asher yatzar' with the same Simcha and passion as if you won American Idol!

Torah and Science

We will explore some of the major issues and conflicts between Torah and science. We will begin with the classic "hot" topics such as Age of the Universe, Dinosaurs, Fossils, Creation/ Evolution and move on to conflicts of the modern age: Brain Death, Euthanasia, Stem Cell Research, and Cloning. Other topics will be discussed as well. This is a text based class using classic commentators and incorporates views of leading scientists. The aim of the course is to enable students to feel confident in their knowledge of the issues and to be exposed to various resolutions.



Chovat HaTalmidim [from the Rebbe of the Warsaw Ghetto]

In the unspeakable tortures of the Warsaw Ghetto, a bright light shone: the guidance and holiness of the Piaseczna Rebbe, the spiritual leader and spiritual father to thousands of followers, until he was killed al kiddush Hashem.

Chovat Hatalmidim, the only one of his seforim that the Rebbe merited to publish in his lifetime, is a perfect blend of penetrating psychological insight and deep passion for Avodas Hashem. In it, the Rebbe explores the most effective approaches to achieve greatness in Torah learning and spiritual growth. The reader learns to discover himself, his strengths and weaknesses, and is inspired to reveal the latent potential in his Jewish soul. He develops a constant awareness of Hashem and His abiding love for him, and is motivated to work toward the greatness he was created for.

Habits Anonymous: 12 Steps

The 12-Step Program to Stepping out of our Comfort Zones.

This course will use the famous 12-step program coinciding with Torah sources in order to break bad habits and spiritually break out of our comfort zones. Some of the

steps included will be:

- The power of the Yetzer Hara / Admitting our limit of power over our natural habits.
- Hasgacha Pratit and G-d's infinite power / Belief that a power greater than ourselves could restore us.
- Bechirah Chofshit / Deciding to turn our will and our lives over to the care of G-d.
- Cheshbon Hanefesh / Creating an honest inventory of ourselves.
- Vidui and Charatah / Admitting to G-d and ourselves the full picture of our wrongdoings.

Jewish Mind Power

Learn to tap in to your uniquely Jewish strengths and have a greater understanding and control of your inner world.

Topics include:

- The power of thought and words.
- How to awaken motivation.
- Self- image.
- Using imagery as a tool.
- Freewill.
- Overcoming negative thinking.
- Discovering and creating your unique perspective of life.

We will incorporate classical and modern sources to enhance our discussions.

Kabbalah vs. Philosophy

This course will explore classical deep Jewish concepts and show how both Kabbalah and Jewish Philosophy come to the same conclusion through different means. Many of the concepts discussed in Kabbalah are often only understood through faith. We will discuss these concepts and use texts of Jewish philosophers such as the Rambam, Rav Yehuda Halevi, and Rav Saadia Gaon, in order to rationalize and come to a human understanding of these celestial concepts. We will also bring in ideas of the Maharal, the Baal Shem Tov, and the Ramchal in order to show the blend and practicality of the kabbalistic system.

Some of the concepts that will be studied are: Anthropomorphism and Metaphors, Sefirot and their meaning, the concept of the many worlds, 'Orot, and Keilim', 'Pnimiyut and Chitzoniyut', the different 'Partzufim', Tohu and Tikun, Kelipot and the Sitra Achra.

Learning to Lead Yourself: Judaism & Life Tools

This course will help you understand yourself, increase confidence, build better friendships and improve character traits.

We will utilize Jewish sources and coaching tools. These skills and self- knowledge will help you plan actions and goals for more fulfilling and meaningful lives.

We will utilize Jewish sources and coaching tools. These skills and self- knowledge will help you plan actions and goals for more fulfilling and meaningful lives.



Jewish History & Israel Studies

Philosophy of Zionism

This course will be an intensive study of the modern political phenomena that has brought about a Jewish State in Eretz Yisrael. Who were these secular and religious Jews who brought about a complete change in Jewish affairs after a 2000 year Galut? What is Zionism? What happened in the 19th century to bring Zionism into the hearts and minds of the people? How does Israel today function as a Jewish state while also acting as a vibrant democracy? What happens when these ideals come in to conflict?

This class will introduce the student to the “movers and shakers” who shaped Zionist thinking. It will also expose the student to the issues and challenges of a modern Jewish State that also functions as a democracy. Lastly, the student will learn to be familiar with the history of modern Israel.

The Oral Law

We will follow the development of Oral Law throughout the ages, and meet the famous books and characters that contributed to the growth of Oral Law throughout the generations. We will also address some of the issues that are most pertinent to our observance of Judaism, but too-often overlooked in the hustle and bustle of other topics. Some of the questions that we will focus on are: What happened At Har Sinai? What is Rabbinic Law? When did Rabbinic

Law come about? Why do we need to follow Rabbinic Law so strictly? How do we know the Oral Tradition of today is the same it was? Why do we keep two days of Yom Tov if we know the dates? Which Rabbi is right if they disagree? Are some right and some wrong?

Holocaust Studies

In order to remember something you need to learn about it and since every Jew must bear witness about the Holocaust, every Jew is duty-bound to learn about the Holocaust. In this course we will learn about the vibrant Jewish communities in pre-war Europe, the antisemitism in pre-war Nazi Germany, and the attempt to wipe out the Jewish people through the Final Solution. Though we will spend some time learning about the killing machine of Nazi Germany, we will also hear stories of spiritual heroism during the war, and while this course is about learning from the past, it is also learning for the future.

Israel Today

War, Post – Disengagement, Iron Dome, Brexit, Africa, ISIS, Terror, Right of Return, Refugees, Settlements, Borders, Water, Chamas, Fatah, Likud, Shas, Lapid, Bennet, Security Fence, Religious and Secular Dynamics, *Aliyah* and more... Hold on for a whirlwind ride as we analyze the hottest current issues brewing in the modern State of Israel and around the world.

Dignity of Difference

In this course we will consider Jewish Christian relations over the last 2,000 years and Jewish attitudes to Christianity. We will look at life in Israel during the lifetime of Jesus and reflect on Jesus as a Jew. We will consider the role of Paul in spreading the Christian message and his belief that Christians are now the 'chosen' people. We will examine how Christians have sought to reinterpret Tanach to further their ideals and how scholars such as the Ramban defended Judaism during the disputations of the Middle Ages. In addition to the above, we will discuss the different halachic relations to Christian practices and consider the major shifts in Jewish/Christian relations over the last 50 years.

Dignity of Difference II

In this course we will consider Jewish attitudes to Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, both in terms of how Judaism regards the theology behind these religions, as well as the halachic propriety of the rituals of each of these religions.

Modern Jewish History

The period between the French Revolution (1789-1799) and Establishment of the Modern State of Israel (1948) was perhaps the most tumultuous in all of Jewish history.



In this course, we will learn about the political and religious changes that occurred during this period and how they affected the life, and choices, of the Jew.

JU Israel: An Infinite Ideal — 21st Century Zionism

"I once called Zionism an infinite ideal, and I truly believe that even after we attain our land, the land of Israel, it will not cease to be an ideal. Zionism, as I see it, entails not only an aspiration for a piece of land legally ours, but also for moral and spiritual integrity".

- Benjamin Zeev Herzl, 1904

This course provides an in-depth understanding of the Zionist narrative and how it conflicts with the Palestinian narrative. Topics covered throughout the course include Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees, settlements, border disputes, security concerns and the struggle for peace. By addressing these complex issues head on, students will gain the knowledge to effectively articulate an informed position regarding one of the longest running modern conflicts.

Jewish Heroes: Ancient & Modern

What did Eli Cohen do for the Jewish people? Why was Nechama Leibowitz so influential? What was so heroic about what Mordechai Anielewicz did? So many stories, so many heroes. Learn in depth heroes who helped shape the Jewish people of today. From Samson in Tanach to Yoni Netanyahu at Entebbe. We will see that there are many types of heroes throughout Jewish history. Heroes are not made only on the battlefields, but in classrooms, ghettos, and even concert halls.



Come take a journey through our history, meet some of our most amazing ancestors and their incredible stories.

Conversational Hebrew Through Israeli Film

We will view contemporary Israeli movies and TV shows and use the topics raised as a springboard for conversation in Hebrew.

Torat Eretz Yisrael

Using the Hebrew sefer Pninei Halacha we will explore many topics relating to the Jewish people and our connection to our land. We will search for answers to questions: Is it a mitzvah to live in the land of Israel before mashiach comes? Is there a mitzvah today to serve in the Israeli army? Are we still in exile today even though we live freely in our homeland? What is our claim to the land? What are the mitzvot that only apply only when in Israel? Is there holiness to the state of Israel or only the land of Israel?

Street Ulpan

Walk the streets of Israel and interact with Israelis. Learn the basics of how to speak in Hebrew at restaurants, in shops, on busses and in many other daily social interactions.



The best way to retain knowledge and to make the Torah one's own is to invest oneself in Torah study in a very personal way.

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