



MORE CHOICES

F A L L 5 7 8 1 / 2 0 2 0 - 2 1



CONTENTS

HOW TO REGISTER	2
-----------------------	---

TANACH:

• Section I: Chumash	4
• Section II: Parshat Ha-Shavu'a	7
• Section III: Sefarim in Nach	9
• Section IV: Topics in Tanach	12

HALACHAH:

• Section I: Classic Topics in Halachah	15
• Section II: Contemporary Halachah	21

MIDRASH & TALMUD	25
------------------------	----

EMUNAH:

• Section I: Modern Jewish Thought	27
• Section II: Classical Jewish Thought	36
• Section III: Personal Growth	41

HISTORY AND SOCIETY	53
---------------------------	----

BEIT MIDRASH: CHAVRUTOT & CHABUROT	56
--	----

SHANA BET LEADERSHIP PROGRAM	59
------------------------------------	----

OUR RAKEZET PROGRAM	60
---------------------------	----

MEET OUR ADMINISTRATION & FACULTY	61
---	----

"MVP": MORIAH VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM	67
--	----

CONTACT OUR ADMISSIONS STAFF:

Mrs. Bracha Krohn

Menahel

bkrohn@midreshetmoriah.org



R. Yitchak Lerner

Senior Faculty

ylerner@midreshetmoriah.org



R. Eitan Mayer

Menahel

emayer@midreshetmoriah.org



HOW TO REGISTER

Registration Timeline:

- **Thu Sep 3:** we email you a username and password. You log in to make sure they work.
- **Thu Sep 3:** we distribute our registration FAQ
- **Fri Night Sep 4:** our madrichot distribute this semester's amazing course catalog... which you are currently reading!
- **Sun Sep 6:** madrichot distribute the schedule so you can see days & times & plan your schedule.
- **Sun Sep 6, 4:30-5:20pm:** Registration! select your courses & weekly "Rakezet" meeting
- **Sun Sep 6, 7:30pm:** classes begin!

Steps in the Process:

On Sep 3, our registration system emailed you a username and password. If you've changed your email address from what you used for your seminary application, please immediately email Ariella at midreshetoffice@gmail.com to notify her, since **the email address we have for you** is where we'll be sending your username and password. Many of you were using a school email for college applications and may now be using a different email, so please let us know ASAP. If on Thu Sep 3 you didn't receive an email with a username and password, please first check your spam folder; if it's not there, please email Ariella at midreshetoffice@gmail.com and she will have one sent to you.

Once you receive the email containing your username and password, please **immediately test** that your login works by going to www.midmorechoices.com/students and logging in. Please report any difficulties immediately to Ariella at midreshetoffice@gmail.com. We're asking you to test your login info right away so that by the time registration officially opens (Sep 6), we will have solved any problems so you can register. (Bookmark that website on your phone, since you'll use it to make all changes to your schedule.) While you're there, please update your personal info.

On Friday Night Sep 4, we'll distribute this course catalog for Fall 5780! Your first step in registering is to browse through this **amazing** catalog, reading the course descriptions, noting everything that looks interesting, and being wowed by all of the incredible learning being offered this semester, including many new courses. We don't say "More Choices" for nothing!

A Little Friendly Advice:

- Carefully read the course descriptions in the catalog; **don't just go by the course names!** This will save you from signing up for the wrong courses just because the names sounded interesting. Also, many girls take more than one tefilah shiur or more than one parshah shiur, since each one is so different... as the course descriptions will show you.
- Your schedule reflects your unique goals and needs. Make sure to choose what's right for you. Registering along with friends will not produce the right schedule for you and will get in the way of your branching out and making new friends... Don't be the girl who wakes up in December and realizes she's different from her friends and needs her own unique schedule!
- After going through the catalog, on Sunday morning you'll receive the schedule to see what day and time each course meets, and you'll start to make your schedule! Remember to check on the schedule whether your courses meet once or twice a week.
- If you're having trouble deciding between conflicting courses, just choose one of them for now and make a note to yourself to try the other course too. Once you've tried both, you'll decide which course is best for you. You'll have all the way until Tue Oct 13 to make switches as often as you like until you get it perfect.
- Make sure to sign up for the number of "CnC" periods ("Chavrutot & Chaburot," see the section in this catalog all about it) that makes sense for you – enough time to do prep work for your shiurim, **review what you're learning** in your courses, do a few "chaburot" with teachers, and your own independent projects, like parshah. And **make a plan** for what to do in each of your CnC periods so you don't just space out... The maximum number of CnC's without special permission is 8.
- "Late CnC" at 9:30pm is for the "shtark" and the night owls. If you're a girl who's going to step off the plane ready to "shteig," this is where you'll connect with other girls who feel the same!

- Look carefully at your balance of תנ"ך, הלכה, and אמונה to see if it's what you want.
- At first, you may want to take more than the minimum of 37 hours, so you can try out more courses; then, once you've decided which courses to keep, you can drop down to fewer hours and schedule some breaks so you don't burn out.
- Think of your initial schedule as just your "rough draft" of what to try out first. Naturally, you don't know the teachers yet, and your goals for the year are still developing. So on Sun Sep 6, when learning begins, come with an open mind, ready to **make switches**. Sometimes girls are just afraid of changing their schedule, even when they realize it's not what they want. Make sure that doesn't happen to you! You have until Tue Oct 13 to switch around freely.
- We'll review your registration, and if we really think you're missing out on something, we may recommend you try it out. If you try a course we recommend and you don't like it, it's simple – you just log in and switch.
- All in all, make sure to put together a schedule which will enable you to achieve the most you can this year. Think frequently about whether to change your schedule as your goals and learning level change.
- This is *the* year to work on your tefilah and your basic knowledge of what's in the Torah. It's not an official "requirement," but our advice is that **everyone should take at least one tefilah course** which helps you understand what you're saying and connect with it, **and at least one parshah course** so that you gain greater familiarity with the Torah (and have a Devar Torah for when you go places for Shabbat and they ask you for one!).

Requirements:

- Required hours:
 - 1st hour of every day (10am Sun, 9am M-Th)
 - Nights 7:30 – 9:20 (Monday nights free!)
- You need a total of 37 hours...
 - ...8 hrs of which need to be afternoon hours
 - ...and something each afternoon.
 - Tip: In the first weeks, when you're trying out courses, you may actually want to sign up for more than 37 hours, just so you can try out all the courses you're considering. Then you'll know which to keep and which to drop.

- Required courses:
 - Hilchot Shabbat (R. Lerner, R. Rafi, R. Eitan)
 - Shiur Klali, Monday @ 3pm

Registration Day:

Once registration begins on Sun Sep 6 at 4:30pm, you have about an hour to log in and select your courses. Registration closes at 5:20pm Eastern Time. (Students who are not financially clear will not be able to register – please contact Ruthie now at office@midreshetmoriah.org to clear up any remaining financial issues.) Log in, click "Register for Courses," and select your courses!

When you finish choosing your courses, go back to the "Main Page" and click "Reserve Rakezet Slot." On that tab, you will see the "Rakezet meeting slots" which are open for you. This is the time you'll meet one-on-one every week with your Rakezet (Faculty Mentor) to learn or schmooze. Each Rakezet will be making available a number of these time slots, and the earlier you register, the more choice of slots you'll have. Slots which are already taken by other students will be invisible to you; slots which are still open but which conflict with your schedule will appear in grey so that you can decide whether to go back and change your schedule in order to accommodate a Rakezet slot you prefer. Working your Rakezet meeting into your schedule may mean making some changes to your schedule – yet another reason to consider your schedule just a "rough draft."

From when you arrive until Tue Oct 13, **you can change your schedule freely as often as you like** by just logging in each night and making changes. Until then, you'll be trying out shiurim all day. So your registration is actually just a "rough draft" to work on for the first few weeks until you get it the way you want it. No stress if your Rakezet, Bracha, or Rav Eitan suggests trying out a shiur you hadn't planned on – try it, and if it's not for you, just log in and switch.

- Class of 5781 is gonna rock!
- Learning begins Sunday Sep 6 at 7:30pm!

THIS YEAR IS GOING TO BE...

A - M - A - Z - I - N - G!

CAN'T WAIT!

תנ"ך

TANACH SECTION I: CHUMASH

TIP: The way we do Chumash at Midreshet Moriah is *completely* different from what you've done before. Try it out!

From Adam to Avraham

RAV EITAN MAYER

We've all learned Bereishit before, but you've never learned it this way! We're taught that there is both



peshat and *derash* – but nearly everything we learned in school is *derash*! An entire “hidden” Torah remains to be discovered in *peshat*...

- Why does the Torah tell two versions of the creation story – and how can they conflict?!
- Why does the Torah tell the whole story of

the Tower of Babel and the punishment suffered by those who built it, but never tells us what they did wrong! There's more to the story in *peshat*...

- Since Adam sinned and No'ach failed as well, why not create Avraham as the first man to begin with, and have the “chosen one” from the very beginning?
- The Torah tells us clearly that No'ach was chosen for his righteousness. So why was Avraham chosen, and why doesn't the Torah tell us?
- If Yishmael was so obviously evil, how could Avraham be so blind as to want him to be his successor? There's more to the story in *peshat*...

In this textual shiur, designed for the student who loves mind-blowing surprises and thinking, we will meet the hidden Torah of *peshat*. Join us for an exploration which will forever change how you look at the Torah and make clear that “*peshat*” means anything but “the simple meaning”!

Yosef and His Brothers (Adv.)

LEORA BEDNARSH

Ever sold a sibling into slavery, or at least seriously considered it? Didn't think so... but really, what could possibly explain how real people could sell their brother in real life?

From kindergarten, we are raised on the stories of the *Avot* and *Imahot* and taught to look at them as near-perfect role models. Our picture is heavily colored by the *Midrash*, which often



depicts the *Avot* as flawless and their enemies as completely evil. But the Torah itself – what we call “*peshat*” – tells a different story! Once he rose to power in Egypt, why didn't Yosef ever write home to inform his beloved, mourning father that he was alive? How could Yehuda, a leader among Ya'akov's sons, marry a Canaanite woman, following in the footsteps of Esav and turning his back on his family? What did poor Ya'akov Avinu ever do to deserve so much suffering – the death of his most beloved wife and the disappearance of his favorite son? How did Yosef really know the meaning of Pharaoh's dreams, and how did Pharaoh know Yosef was right? Did Yosef ever truly forgive his brothers, and did Yaakov ever hear the whole story? Join us as we explore these questions and more from an innovative *peshat* perspective, understanding the family dynamics which foreshadow a struggle for leadership in Am Yisrael stretching for centuries.

Sefer Shemot: From Slavery to Sinai

MALKA HUBSCHER

We all know Bnei Yisrael were slaves for generations, but why did they “need” to be enslaved to begin



with? Of all the people who could have saved the nation, why does Hashem specifically choose someone who was raised in Paroh’s house – and does this make Moshe a better or worse leader? Did Bnei Yisrael actually see Hashem at Har Sinai, and if so, how could they worship an idol so soon

afterward? Sefer Shemot tells the fascinating story of Am Yisrael’s roller-coaster journey from גלות to גאולה, the transformation of a nation of slaves into a nation of God. With the aid of both classical and modern mefarshim, we will explore these and many more issues, developing both our textual and analytical skills.

Life of Moshe Rabbeinu

RAV EITAN MAYER / SHANA BET

Do you love Moshe Rabbeinu? We all *know* Moshe Rabbeinu, we all respect him, we all appreciate him,



but do we *love* him to the degree that every year, when we read on Simchat Torah of his death, we have tears in our eyes? In this course, we will accompany Moshe Rabbeinu scene-by-scene, from his watery cradle to Pharaoh’s castle, from slavery to Sinai, from the

Mishkan to the Egel, through all of his triumphs and every frustrating rebellion – and we will learn to love our greatest teacher like never before. We will begin with Moshe Rabbeinu’s unusual personality: He seems to be constantly interfering with other people and getting himself into trouble, first with the two fighting Jews, and later with the shepherds harassing Yitro’s daughters. Why can’t he just mind his own business? Why are these stories so crucial that they are the only stories told about Moshe until age 80? Hashem argues with Moshe at great length to force

him to go back to Egypt and save his people. But why does Hashem need Moshe anyway, since the real power behind the plagues is Hashem? What makes Moshe Rabbeinu the right leader to take the nation out of slavery and to deliver the Torah? We will analyze many sections in which Moshe Rabbeinu appears in the Torah, taking a fresh “*peshat*” perspective in order to deeply understand the background and personality of the greatest leader in Jewish history. What emerges – as always happens when we learn *peshat* instead of *derash* – is a Moshe Rabbeinu who reveals dimensions entirely hidden to us before.

Matan Torah Today

MICHAL PORATH-ZIBMAN / SHANA BET

One of the most extraordinary events that ever happened to the Jewish people was the experience of *Matan Torah* and receiving the *Aseret Ha-Dibberot*.

The Torah provides great detail about the events leading up to the actual revelation. In addition to the commandments themselves, how can the lessons of that back story apply to us today? How do we



understand the first of the Ten Commandments, “I am Hashem, your God” – is it a command, or just an introduction to the commands? How can God command us not to be jealous? While it’s certainly important not to “bear false witness,” why is it such a significant part of our core value system that it should make the ultimate “top ten” list of mitzvot? Through the eyes of classic *parshanim*, Chasidic Rebbes, and other commentators, we will delve into a textual journey that will enrich our own life experiences and *avodat Hashem*.



Leadership in Sefer BeMidbar

TALI PFEIFFER

When we think of Bnei Yisrael's desert generation, we often think about a generation of complainers.



But if that's all these is to say, why would Hashem write a whole book about them? How did the very same people who witnessed the greatest open miracles in history – from the plagues to the splitting sea, to seeing God Himself at Sinai, to collecting

their daily meals straight from the sky – become so bitter and so faithless? How was the leadership of that generation different than that of any other time period? We will learn what made that generation and its characters so special and how we can grow from all of their challenges.

The Mystery of Sefer Devarim

RAV EITAN MAYER / ADV.

If you ask most educated people what *Sefer Devarim* is all about, they'll tell you that it reviews what happened in the first four *chumashim*. (Some people might also know this is why *Devarim* is also known as "Deuteronomy" or "Mishneh Torah," both of which mean review). But even a casual look inside the *sefer* shows that this view is wrong. *Devarim* does not do what we would expect a review to do. It does not begin at the beginning. It does not retell what happened in the same order it took place originally, instead skipping around erratically. It adds details (including many new *mitzvot*) which are missing from the original stories, leaves out crucial details (and whole stories) which are in the originals, and far more problematically, its stories often *conflict* with the original versions and its explanations of events often seem alien to the original context. But if *Sefer Devarim* is not a review, then what is it? How do we explain its lack of chronology and its many conflicts with the first four *chumashim*? Why would we need a review anyway, since we can always just turn back to the original stories? Each *chumash* has its own themes, its particular personality, its own special concerns and perspectives. Join us to uncover the mystery of *Sefer Devarim*.



TIP: Your schedule reflects your unique goals and needs. Make sure to choose what's right for you.

TANACH SECTION II: PARSHAT HA-SHAVU'A

TIP: every single
parshah course is
completely different.
Many girls take two!

Midrash of the Week

RAV ZVI RON

How did No'ach manage to feed all of those animals on the Ark? Who was his wife, the mysterious Mrs. No'ach? Did the Flood really cover the entire world? Why was Eisav so hairy? Why do Chazal think that blessings only work on hidden things? What is the secret reason for sneezing? How did Moshe find the secret spot where Yosef was buried in Egypt? Every week, we will learn classic and not yet classic midrashim related to the parshah. The source material for all Torah commentaries and divrei Torah is right here! We will study the midrashim together and extract the insights and lessons encoded within. All of your midrash questions answered and lessons learned!

Parshah

MALKA HUBSCHER

"So, you're in seminary, learning all week long – what's this week's parshah?" "Did you learn anything interesting on the parshah?" "Can you share a Devar Torah with us?" These are questions seminary students are often asked by friends, family, and often, their Shabbat hosts as well. Why wait until then to delve into the beauty and depth of the parshah? This course will give you the chance to improve your knowledge, skills and understanding of the parshah, focusing on characters and themes. Each meeting will leave you with deeper understanding of the texts and life lessons and something great to say on Shabbat!



Parshah Insights

RAV JASON KNAPEL

We are the people of the "Book," but so many of us have never really gone through the "Book." Now is our chance! In this course, we will prepare the parshah together, reading, thinking and questioning so that we can understand what the Torah is telling us. Along the way, we will develop skills in creating Divrei Torah, which will come in handy for Shabbat during the year and beyond.



Inspiration in the Parshah

RAV ELIE WAGNER

We will discover the most inspiring, instructive, informative and uplifting elements the weekly parshah has to offer. No texts or source sheets required, just an open mind and an open heart!



Peshat in the Parshah

RAV EITAN MAYER

Ready for something really eye-opening? Join us for a very different point of view on the parshah than



what you've heard so far. Why was Adam's one and only test connected specifically to fruit? Why was Avraham's first test connected to leaving his land? Why does the Torah tell us scandalous stories like Yehuda's taking Tamar for a prostitute? What really happened

between Dina and Shechem? Why did Hashem need to take Moshe by surprise, jumping out at him from behind a burning bush like some kind of prank? What is the real (but secret!) function of the Aron in the Mishkan? If the nations of Cana'an were so strong, how did Moshe fail to anticipate that the spies would return with such a frightening (and honest!) report? Each week, we will creatively develop a theme from a "*peshat*" perspective and take it to unexpected places. Leave your preconceptions at the door and prepare to expand your perspective on characters you thought you knew!



TANACH SECTION III: SEFARIM IN NACH

Survey of Nevi'im Achronim

(Yeshayahu, Yirmiyahu, Yechezkel, and Trei Asar)

RAV ASHI TARAGIN / SHANA BET

Most of us are pretty familiar with “*Nevi'im Rishonim*,” books like *Sefer Yehoshua* and *Sefer Shmuel*, which continue the story line once the Torah ends. But that's all about our *past*. Where in Tanach can we read about our *future*? “*Nevi'im Achronim*” – so much inspiration, so many secrets, our entire future is to be found there! What does



Yeshayahu tell us will happen before Mashiach comes? What are Tanach's instructions to actually bring Mashiach? What do we know about the third *Beit Ha-Mikdash* – will we have *kohanim* and sacrifices? Does Yechezkel really predict World War III? Ever wonder why the *menorah* is the symbol of Israel? Why will we one day celebrate Tishah Be-Av as a great holiday? What can we learn from the twelve short prophecies of “*Trei Asar*”? Together, we will delve into these less-known stories, with the help of our commentators. You will gain the skills to learn Tanach on your own so that you can continue next year!

TIP: If you're having trouble deciding between conflicting courses, just choose one of them for now and make a note to yourself to try the other course too.

Sefer Tehilim

MICHAL PORAT ZIBMAN

Sefer Tehilim is the *sefer* that is the most closely integrated into our daily lives, since much of what we say when *davening* is actually from *Tehilim*. David Ha-Melech's poetic masterpiece enables us to express ourselves to God at our lowest moments, at our greatest moments, at moments of gratitude and at moments of intense seeking. Join us on this journey to learn select chapters of this timeless classic that will enhance not only our routine *tefilot*, but also

those spontaneous moments where we feel a desire (or a desire for a desire) to call out to God and to connect with Him.



Tehilim in Tefilah (Adv)

RAV EITAN

If the whole *פסוקי דזמרה* is basically just praise, why does it need to be so long – do we really need 5 “*hallelukot*” that all say basically the same thing? What's actually so special about “*אשרי*” that it's the



centerpiece of *פסוקי דזמרה*? What does “*מזמור שיר ליום השבת*” actually have to do with *Shabbat*, since it doesn't talk about resting or creation? What are we trying to say in *קבלת שבת*, since barely anything there even mentions *Shabbat*? Is *שיר המעלות* really the best choice for whenever

something is worrying us? We will analyze and uncover the real story behind *פסוקי דזמרה*, *Kabbalat Shabbat* and more and understand why we say them when we do.

Chamesh Megilot

MALKA HUBSCHER

What is a *megilah*? How is it different from other books in Tanach? What are the connections between *Rut* and *Esther*? Why does Shlomo Ha-Melech sound so depressed in *Kohelet*? How do we understand what the passionate love songs of *Shir Ha-Shirim* are doing in Tanach? How are *Eichah*'s descriptions of the destroyed, desolate Jerusalem still relevant today? We will address what is unique about each of the five *Megilot*, studying the text and historical context of each *Megilah* and the themes unique to each, and uncovering new insights into these well-known *sefarim*.



Unmasking Esther

TALI PFEIFFER

We all learned the story of Megilat Esther in preschool and have loved dressing up as its characters ever since. But now that you've graduated kindergarten, it's time to take a more adult look at this fascinating sefer. Did Vashti really have hideous acne... and a tail?! Was Achashverosh just a drunkard who let the people around him manipulate him, or is he a man with a plan? Since the Megilah never says anything about



Haman's having an idol hanging from his neck (that's the Midrash), why did Mordechai refuse to bow to Haman, knowing that Haman's increasing power with the king made this such a risky move? Since Achashverosh could get wine whenever he

wanted, how did Esther's inviting him to a(nother) drinking party turn everything around for the entire Jewish people? In this course, we will take a fresh look at the Purim story and realize how much we can learn from its characters, not just in the month of Adar!

Sefer Ezra

RAV ZVI RON

Do these sound familiar: a high intermarriage rate; massive ignorance of Torah and Hebrew; widespread Shabbat desecration; and antagonistic neighbors in Eretz Yisrael? Sound eerily like Jewish life today? Learn about the challenges faced by Bnei Yisrael as they returned from decades of exile in Babylonia and attempted to restart Jewish life in Israel. We will see how Ezra and Nechemyah led the Jewish people in a new era and dealt with problems that we still face today.



TIP: From when you arrive and for several weeks, you can change your schedule freely as often as you like by just logging in and making changes.

Kohelet: Why Are We Here?

RAV ASHI TARAGIN

In 500 years from now, not only will no one remember you and me, but in fact, the odds are that



it will make no difference at all that we ever lived. Nothing we do during our lifetime will remain for long, and we, along with pretty much everyone else, will fade into oblivion and be utterly forgotten. If so, what's the point of our having lived? Join us to explore *Kohelet*, the

sefer in Tanach which asks all the hard questions and pulls no punches in its search for the meaning of our lives.

Sefer Iyyov and the Meaning of Life

MICHAL PORATH-ZIBMAN

Sefer Iyyov begins with sudden terrible tragedies which strike Iyyov, who loses almost everything for



the sake of what seems to be a bet between God and Satan! Through textual and philosophical analysis of selected conversations that make up the bookends of *Sefer Iyyov*, we will seek clarity on some of the burning questions of human and Jewish

existence, such as why bad things happen to good people and why there is evil in the world.

Sefer Daniel

RAV ZVI RON

The most mysterious, strange, and esoteric book of Tanach... it's *Sefer Daniel*! Join us to enter the fiery furnace and the den of lions to defend your beliefs! Struggle with Daniel over how to make it in a country where everyone considers him super-talented, but he can't even eat the food! Puzzle with him over the mysterious "writing on the wall" no one can figure out (kind of reminds us of Yosef, hmmm?). Experience with Daniel what it feels like to have an angel take command of your body in order to share with you a message from God. Peek with us into the dreams of Nevuchadnetzar and others – bizarre imaginary beasts, prophecies about the end of the world, fun Aramaic words – all this and more, taught by the Master of the Mysterious, the Sultan of Strange, the Wizard of Weird... Rav Ron!!!

Sefer Mishlei

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM

Mishlei is unique among the 24 books of Tanach in that the majority of its *pesukim*, rather than being individual pieces of a larger story or halachic section, are actually self-contained observations on life or pieces of advice all on



their own. This means that the *sefer* is jam-packed with meaning, with every single *pasuk* its own new world of ideas and reflections. It also means *Mishlei* can be a challenging *sefer*, since every *pasuk* stands on its own and requires analysis. Perhaps this should come as no surprise in *Mishlei*, since it was written by Shlomo Ha-Melech, the smartest person ever. Join us to increase your "wisdom quotient" and improve your character, exploring the messages that Shlomo is hinting to us across the centuries.

The Wisdom of *Mishlei*

BRACHA KROHN

A special hour focusing on the wisdom in *Sefer Mishlei*, topic by topic. Each week, we will learn *pesukim* relating to a theme and discuss that issue's relevance in our lives, looking at classic and contemporary sources. Shlomo ha-Melech's insight will blow you away!



TANACH SECTION IV: TOPICS IN TANACH

Tefilah in Tanach and Today

TALI PFEIFFER

Some of our Avot and Imahot were childless for so many years – but if Hashem knew all along that they wanted children so badly, why did they need to ask, and in our own lives, why do we? Avraham begged Hashem to give Sodom another chance, but how do we have the right to ask Hashem to change His mind, and why would He do so just because we ask? Moshe



davened desperately (515 times, according to the Midrash!) for Hashem to let him enter Eretz Yisrael, yet Hashem declined. Why are tefilot not always answered? In our own lives, we often start davening and find that questions flood our minds. Fortunately, we are not the first ones to

grapple with them. Join us as we address these questions by journeying through Tanach, learning from those who prayed before us, drawing lessons from stories and characters that will enhance our own tefilah and relationship with Hashem.

Dysfunctional Families in Tanach

NEIMA NOVETSKY

We often look to Tanach for role models for how we should live our lives. When it comes to relationships,



however, Tanach often seems to have many more examples of what we should not imitate than what we should – polygamy, fratricide (brothers killing each other), incest, rape, intermarriage – it's all there. How are we to understand all these

dysfunctional relationships? Why does the *navi* Hoshe'a marry a prostitute? How can Yiftach offer his daughter as a sacrifice? What's up with Shimshon's falling for Philistine women, or with angels marrying humans? How does the protective

older sister Miriam become a jealous, gossiping sibling? Each week, this course will explore a different relationship and try to unravel what is going on and what we are supposed to learn from the story.

Philosophical Issues in Tanach (Adv.)

NEIMA NOVETSKY

"God hardened Pharaoh's heart" – so do we always have free will, or does Hashem sometimes force us in one direction, as He seems to have done to Pharaoh? If He already knows what we're going to choose, then isn't our choice already predetermined? "*Anochi Hashem...*" – we are expected to believe in Hashem, but what if I have questions? What do we do with stories like David and Batsheva, or Yaakov taking the *berachah* from Esav, which show our leaders making morally problematic choices? How about *mitzvot* that don't fit with my own personal understanding of right and wrong? Other topics include Tanach's perspectives on: Why bad things happen to good people; the nature of *yemot ha-mashiach*; prophecy; and much more. As we look at a selection of "troubling texts" from Tanach, each will lead us into a larger discussion of related theological or philosophical issues that many of us find difficult to grapple with. The course will also have a *beit midrash* component, allowing students to study with one another and argue out the text and accompanying issues on their own!

TIP: "Late CnC" at 9:30pm is for the "shtark" and the night owls.

What Midrashim Really Mean

BRACHA KROHN

Some *midrashim* really make us wonder: Was Rivkah really three when she married Yitzchak? If not, what lesson were Chazal hinting by saying she was? Why should it matter to us that 3,500 years ago, some stones argued about which one should be Yaakov's pillow? Since the Torah tells us exactly what the "*man*" actually tasted like, how can the *Midrash* say

it tasted like whatever you wanted? Are Chazal in the *Midrash* teaching us historical facts in these stories,



or do they have something deeper in mind? Come learn about the different types of *midrashim*; what goals Chazal had in mind when composing them; and how to unlock the deeper meaning behind these well-known legends. In this course, you will

explore the difference between interpretation and homiletics as you develop skills for understanding and appreciating the *midrashim* you learn each week when studying *parshah*.

“Supporting Actors” in Tanach

MALKA HUBSCHER

We often feel we understand the “famous” characters in Tanach, people like Avraham and Sarah,



Yehoshua or King David. But what about the lesser-known heroes and villains, those who play “supporting” roles in stories throughout Tanach – who was “Bat Shu’a,” the Cana’inite woman who became Yehuda’s first wife, and what did he see in her to make him cross every line in the family

book and marry a Cana’inite? What about Bilhah, whom Ya’akov married just as a “surrogate mother” so that Rachel could have children through her – what was Bilhah’s actual relationship with Ya’akov really like? How about Avishag, who was brought into David’s life in his old age to literally keep him warm – how did they relate to one another? These supporting actors are not only interesting, they are often the key to understanding an entire biblical story. In this course, we will delve into stories in Tanach, focusing on the development and personalities of the “supporting actors” and discovering who they really were.

Women Role Models in Tanach

MICHAEL PORAT-ZIBMAN

Does the story of the creation of man and woman, and their first encounter in Gan Eden, present a relationship of equality, or of superiority of man over woman, or vice versa? At face value, Yitzchak and Rivka seem to have a troubling lack of communication and honesty, mostly because of Rivka’s actions. So why does she have the status as one of the Imahot? We know that Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Moshe, and many other men prayed in the Torah, and yet Chazal chose to learn



the halachot of Shemoneh Esrei from Chana. Why – and what does this mean about our own tefilah? Miriam plays a central role as daughter and sister during a difficult time of slavery, and later leads the women in song and dance in praise of Hashem. Yet she stumbles in lashon ha-ra, the most basic of sins. How can we better understand what happened there? Since time immemorial, everyone seems to have an opinion about what Jewish women should be doing and how they should be doing it. Understanding and connecting to our role as women in Hashem’s world, as well as understanding our world as Avdei Hashem, is crucial to growing and to enhancing our confidence. We will explore various stories in Tanach that involve women to gain a deeper sense of who we are.

Life of Moshe Rabbeinu

RAV EITAN MAYER / SHANA BET

Do you love Moshe Rabbeinu? We all *know* Moshe Rabbeinu, we all respect him, we all appreciate him, but do we love him to the degree that every year, when we read on Simchat Torah of his death, we have tears in our eyes? In this course, we will accompany Moshe Rabbeinu scene-by-scene, from his watery cradle to Pharaoh’s castle, from slavery to Sinai, from the Mishkan to the Egel,



through all of his triumphs and every frustrating rebellion – and we will learn to love our greatest teacher like never before. We will begin with Moshe Rabbeinu’s unusual personality: He seems to be constantly interfering with other people and getting himself into trouble, first with the two fighting Jews, and later with the shepherds harassing Yitro’s daughters. Why can’t he just mind his own business, and why are these stories so crucial that they are the only stories told about Moshe until age 80? Hashem argues with Moshe at great length to force him to go back to Egypt and save his people. But why does Hashem need Moshe anyway, since the real power behind the plagues is Hashem? What makes Moshe Rabbeinu the right leader to take the nation out of slavery and to deliver the Torah? We will analyze many sections in which Moshe Rabbeinu appears in the Torah, taking a fresh “*peshat*” perspective in order to deeply understand the background and personality of the greatest leader in Jewish history. What emerges – as always happens when we learn *peshat* instead of *derash* – is a Moshe Rabbeinu who reveals dimensions entirely hidden to us before.

Puzzling Personalities in Tanach

RAV EITAN MAYER

David Ha-Melech first appears to us as the brash, bright-eyed young man who fearlessly faces down Goliath, offended for the honor of Hashem and Am Yisrael. How can this be the same person who, once king, impulsively commits adultery with his married neighbor, Bat-Sheva, and then, to cover his tracks, sends her husband to his death? And you’re telling me the same person wrote Tehilim, which made it into Tanach and from which we draw so many of our tefilot? Is David one of the good guys – or the bad? Miriam first appears to us at the Nile’s edge, watching worriedly over baby Moshe and using her smarts to arrange for him to spend his first years at home with his family. A pretty devoted sister, right? Can this be the same sister who later goes behind that same brother’s back and, unprovoked, accuses him – the most humble person in the world – of being arrogant? What happened to all that sisterly devotion? Join us to take a close look at complex figures in Tanach whose personalities and actions often puzzle and perplex us, including Shlomo Ha-Melech, Esther, Eliyahu, and the entire generation of Jews who left Egypt. We will come away with a deeper understanding of human nature and of ourselves.

Extreme Midot in Tanach

TALI PFEIFFER

Avraham is a chesed superstar – doing backflips to save the (undeserving) people of Sodom, turning his home upside-down in his enthusiasm to welcome guests, running selflessly into battle to save his kidnapped nephew, always giving to others and making sacrifices. But in our own lives, is it possible to go too far with chesed? The undisguised favoritism of Yosef’s father and the raging jealousy of Yosef’s brothers leads them nearly to murder and then actually to selling their brother as a slave. But can favoritism or jealousy ever be justified? The Torah calls Moshe the most humble person in the world. How can we maintain our sense of self-worth while also reaching for humility? Although anger is universally condemned by our tradition, there are times when even Hashem gets angry. So is it ever okay for us to get angry? As we work on our character, we try to achieve balance. As we look through Tanach, we encounter extreme midot that can help us think about finding that balance. Together, we will explore various midot, their roots in Tanach, and practical ways to ensure that we find balance in our own lives.



Tanach’s “Greatest Hits”

MALKA HUBSCHER / SHANA BET

Have you ever been in a *shiur* where the teacher refers to a “very important and well known *nevu’ah*,” and you had no idea what they were talking about? Do you wish you understood some of the famous *Haftarot*? In this course, we will learn together a selection of the most famous, often-quoted *nevu’ot* throughout Tanach. We will study the text on the level of *peshat* as well as exploring how the messages of these prophecies remain relevant even in today’s world.



הלכה

HALACHAH SECTION I: CLASSIC TOPICS IN HALACHAH

Practical Berachot and Kashrut

RABBI YITZCHAK LERNER

This will be a crash course in Berachot (first part of the semester) and Kashrut (second part of the semester):



- **Berachot:** If I start eating in my dorm room and then go take a walk but continue munching, do I need a new *berachah*? If I take little sips from my water bottle all day, do I just make one *berachah* in the morning and I'm good-to-go all day? (And do I just make one *borei nefashot* at night after my last sip?) Surprised to hear that *ha-motzi* doesn't actually cover everything during the meal, and curious to know what's not included? Tuna salad for lunch – which *berachah*? Crackers with cheese and tomatoes for a snack – what do I say? It's pizza time – *mezonot* or *ha-motzi*? These questions and many more come up every day of our halachic lives. We will explore the sources and get to bottom-line practical *halachah*.

- **Kashrut:** We will cover practical topics in Kashrut to enable you to run your own kosher kitchen: How to properly bake something “milk” in a “meat” oven; checking food for insects; how to deal with a microwave whose status is problematic; blood spots in eggs; how and when to separate “*challah*”; how long to wait between meat & milk; and many other topics. We will also relate to cleaning & *kashering* for Pesach; *tevilat keilim*; how to *kasher* utensils (we'll actually *kasher* things together to see how it's done); what “*glatt kosher*” and “*mehadrin*” really mean; *halachot* related to food cooked by a non-Jew; how to find kosher food when traveling far from a Jewish community or on a cruise; and more.

Interpersonal Halachah

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM

You've decided to daven at the Kotel every week. Amazing! The only problem is that every time you go there, you end up giving away a small fortune in *tzedakah* money. Are you obligated to give every single person that asks for money? If so, how much must you give them? Can you lie and say you don't have any money? Is there ever a time that you are allowed to lie? Can I ever tell a friend that a mutual friend of ours has a lying problem? When can I tell someone something about someone, and when is it *lashon hara*? In this course, we will cover many of the *halachot* that come up in our daily interactions with other people.



Introduction to Gemara

RAV JASON KNAPEL

Have you ever wanted to open up a *Gemara* to find out what it's all about, but thought it would be too hard or out of your comfort zone? In this course, we will become familiar with the text of the *Gemara*, as we also learn how



to think like the *Gemara*, the backbone of all of *Torah She-be-al Peh*. We will be touching on topics that affect our daily Jewish lives.

Advanced Gemara

LEORA BEDNARSH

Seeking the greatest intellectual challenge in the world of Torah? Want to truly understand how halachic thinking works and get inside the minds of the people who built our whole system? If so, this course may be for you. Join us as we enter the minds of Chazal, following their sophisticated logic as they develop *halachah* and establish its rules. As we improve our textual skills with *chavruta*, we will also learn how to ask the right key questions when approaching a new topic; how to make meaningful analytical distinctions; and how to brainstorm creative solutions to challenging problems.



The Jewish Life Cycle

RAV JASON KNAPEL

Ever wonder why people put all their jewelry around the baby at a *pidyon ha-ben*? Do you say “*Baruch She-petarani*” at a Bat Mitzvah? Wonder why a *kallah* walks around the *chatan* seven times? In this course, we will explore the reasons, *halachot* and *minhagim* of all the major life-cycle events so that when they happen to you, you will know what and why we Jews do what we do!

Women in Jewish Law

LEORA BEDNARSH

What is the real deal with co-ed activities, such as co-ed schools, camps and youth groups? What does it mean to be “*shomer*”? What does “*yichud*” entail? Do women have an entirely different relationship to mitzvot than men, or are they just exempt from a small handful of *mitzvot*? Why would some people look at a woman as radical because she wants to learn Torah? Why should I go to shul if I don't need a *minyan* and don't count towards the *minyan*? Why

do people look at women funny if they bring a *lulav* to shul – and should they? We will explore these and other questions through primary sources and engaging class discussion, with an eye towards achieving a comfortable balance of being a strong and learned Jewish woman.



Reason for the Season

RAV ELI WAGNER / SHANA BET

We're taught to eat symbolic foods on *Rosh Ha-Shanah* – honey so that we'll have a sweet year,



pomegranate seeds so that we'll have plentiful *mitzvot* this year... beets, fish heads, the list goes on and on. But isn't it just superstition to think that eating certain foods will somehow change our future? Besides actual repentance, the *Yom Kippur* season also seems to bring

amazing “repentance shortcuts” which achieve forgiveness with much less work – “*tashlich*” leaves our sins at the bottom of a lake, “*kapparot*” transfers our sins to a chicken of our choosing... do these methods work, and if so, how and why? What does authentic atonement look like on *Yom Kippur*, and why should it work if we go back to our routines the next day? Is there any connection between the *mitzvot* of *lulav* and *sukkah*, or do they just happen to share the same holiday? On *Chanukah*, we celebrate our victory over the “Hellenized” Jews, who believed in mixing together Torah and the contributions of other cultures – but isn't that pretty much who we are too? What's with the drinking controversy that surrounds *Purim*? The holidays are

much more than family reunions. There is a reason why we celebrate, when we celebrate and how we celebrate. This course will clarify our *halachot* and *minhagim* and their hashkafic implications.

Meaning in the Mitzvot

BRACHA KROHN / SHANA BET

We always talk about 613 *mitzvot*, but did you know that only 194 of them can be performed nowadays? Let's get busy studying them so you can be sure you



know what you need. We will study the *Sefer Ha-Mitzvot* of the "Chafetz Chaim," which lists and succinctly explains each *mitzvah*. Each week, we will explore a few selected *mitzvot* – *Birkat Ha-Mazon*, *Kibbud Av Ve-Em*, *Teshuvah*, and *Hashavat Aveidah*, to name a few, finding each *mitzvah* in the Torah, exploring reasons for the *mitzvah*, and doing a bottom-line halachic overview. This course will be fast-paced and full of interesting, inspiring and practical learning to give you a relationship with *mitzvot* like you've never experienced before!



Hilchot Shabbat

RAV YITZCHAK LERNER / TWO SECTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM

How do I navigate the kitchen on Shabbat – preparing salad, making tea, and warming up food – without running into trouble? What happens if I'm tying my shoes and I accidentally make a knot? If I forgot to unscrew the fridge light, am I facing a hungry Shabbat, or is there an alternative? How do I open packages in a permitted manner? When can I ask a non-Jew to do *melachah* for me – and do I need

to hint? How do I light candles in a hotel or dorm? What is considered proper dress for Shabbat? And what about cosmetics? Discussion and clear bottom-line halachic conclusions on a very wide range of Shabbat topics.

Hilchot Shabbat

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM

Over the course of a Shabbat, many questions arise that we might not even know are questions. For example, many people (like me) enjoy putting *challah* into their soup Friday night. Is that allowed, or will the hot soup cook the *challah*? What about those people (me again) who don't love tomatoes – can I take them out of a salad? How about building a tent from couch cushions (one of my favorite things to do with my kids) – would that be allowed? What should you do if a fly is in your house and you want to get rid of it – are you allowed to kill it? What if it's a mosquito, or a bee? In this course, you will learn the answer to these questions and cover many, many other topics. We will cover topics starting from preparing before Shabbat all the way to making *havdalah* after Shabbat, and everything in between.



Hilchot Shabbat (Adv)

RAV EITAN MAYER

In this textual course on *Hilchot Shabbat*, we will sharpen our skills and learn the principles behind the *halachah* so we'll know what to do in similar cases. We'll cover the most applicable and practical topics:



muktzeh, cooking and warming, *borer* (sorting & separating), *kiddush*, asking non-Jews to perform *melachah*, and more, based on student preferences. We'll learn each topic in depth rather than covering as many topics as possible, coming away from each topic with better skills and clear bottom-line halachic conclusions.

Women in Jewish Law

BRACHA KROHN

What does Judaism have to say about relationships between the sexes? Does Judaism believe in platonic friendships? Is "being *shomer*" a real *halachah*, and does anyone really observe it? What is "*yichud*," and



when do we have to worry about it? Are elevators and deserted parks considered *yichud*? Why do some married women wear kerchiefs practically to their eyebrows, while others show much more hair? Can a woman make *kiddush* for everyone at the whole Shabbat table?

Which *tefilot* is a woman obligated to *daven*? Can women be rabbis? Can they "*lain*" the Torah? Are men really not allowed to hear women sing, no matter what song or tune it is? When and why do we need a *mechitzah*? Can women say *kaddish* in front of men? Why do some women enthusiastically learn *Gemara*, while others shy away? In this one-semester course, we will see the sources behind these interesting, important and very relevant *halachot*. You will finally know why you do what you do (and what you have to do) and what everyone is talking about. Lively discussions and debates await us as we answer these questions and more.

Mitzvot of the Mo'adim (Adv)

RAV JASON KNAPEL

What is the real meaning behind the sound of the *Shofar*? Why do we sometimes say the whole *Hallel*, and other times just half? What is the hidden meaning behind the lighting of the *Menorah*? Is it a *mitzvah* to get drunk on *Purim*? In today's day and age, why do we still "lean" at the *Seder* to show freedom? Through deep analysis of the traditional sources, we will not only understand the *halachah*, but also the philosophical background of the *chagim*

and how the very details of the *halachah* help connect us with the spirit of the day. We will try to cover the events in sync with the calendar, but because we are taking an in-depth view, we will not always work according to "schedule." The course will include



Gemarat, *Rishonim*, and *Achronim*.

Sephardic Halachah and Minhag

RAV AMIR DADON

Join us to explore your Sephardic / Edot Mizrach heritage! (Or join us if you're Ashkenazi and curious!) As you encounter both everyday topics like *tefilah*, Shabbat and *berachot*, and also as you arrive at each of the *Chagim* of the year, you may be wondering what the Sephardic tradition offers both in halachic guidance and in terms of all the rich customs and practices. Join us for our Sephardi party!

Minhagim

RAV ZVI RON

Learn about customs you're familiar with and others that you never heard of, and why we do them: The secret reason we dip apple in honey; do we need fish to be in the water for *Tashlich*, and why; when did people begin playing *dreidel* on *Chanukkah*; why people began waiting to give boys haircuts; who invented *hamentashen* and why; why do we light bonfires on *Lag Ba-Omer*; what was the original *karpas* and why did it change; the differences between Sephardic and Ashkenazic customs; and much more!



Har Sinai in Hashkafah and Halachah

RAV ELI WAGNER

Ever wonder what really happened at Har Sinai – besides being pretty terrifying, what was it like to experience God appearing right before us? How do we know the whole thing really took place? If we were all there, as tradition tells us, why don't we remember anything? How could an entire nation of laypeople, few of them trained as prophets, many of them just children, spontaneously become prophets? If the whole thing was so impressive, how could our ancestors turn back to idol worship just



forty days later? Turning to the content of what was said at Sinai, why were these ten commandments chosen out of all 613? (Would you have chosen “Do not covet your neighbor’s house”?) What does it mean to believe in God (“I am God...”)? Is abortion categorized as murder (“Do not kill...”)? Can adultery ever be justified (“Do not commit adultery...”)? What is the Torah’s view on illegally downloading music and movies – is it stealing (“Do not steal...”)? Can God command us to feel certain emotions (“Do not envy...”)? In this course, we will explore the significance and relevance of the Sinai experience and the importance of the Ten Commandments as a unit and individually, both hashkafically and halachically.

Laws and Meaning of Tefilah

RABBI YITZCHAK LERNER

I really want *tefilah* to be part of my daily routine, but to be honest, I really don't know the meaning of what I'm saying and the rules which should guide me. Do women need to pray anything formal, or may they make do with just a few *berachot* each day? Do I need to say *Minchah*? When is the latest time I can still say *Shacharit* and *Minchah*? If I missed a *tefilah*, can I make it up? Do I answer "*amen*" or "*kedushah*"



if I'm in the middle of another *tefilah*? Should I catch up during Torah reading, or listen to the reading? Is there any difference whether I pray at home or with a *minyan*? If I'm late or fall behind, what can I skip in order to catch up? Is it better to say less but with more *kavanah*, or say everything I can? Can I take a jog before *tefilah*, or study for a test, or take the train, or have breakfast? The year in Israel is prime time to take your *tefilah* to the next level so that you can continue a strong connection with Hashem in college and beyond. Can there be any kind of real relationship without good communication? In addition to knowing what we're saying and learning how to focus, there is also a lot to know about the what, the when, the how, and the why of *tefilah*, and even if we've been "*davening*" for years, we still may not know. Join us to examine these questions and more, starting with *Modeh Ani* all the way to *Aleinu*.

Tefilah: Meaning and Halachah

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM / SHANA BET

You just woke up, you're starving, and you have a million things to do. But what activities are permitted before *tefilah* in the morning? Can you go for a jog? Does it matter if you can't concentrate without your morning coffee? At shul, you're in the middle of *davening* and someone asks you a question – can you answer? You finished your *Shemoneh Esrei* and you realize that you forgot "*Mashiv Ha-Ru'ach*" – what now? You've



taken on *davening Minchah*, but you accidentally forgot today – is there anything to do? In this course, we'll cover the topics needed to answer these questions and many more, in addition to exploring the content of the *tefilot* themselves.

Watch Your Mouth :-)

Shemirat Ha-Lashon

RENA COREN / SHANA BET

What is it about *lashon ha-ra* that we find so tempting and so difficult to control? Why should it please and entertain us so much to share negative information about others? What is it about *lashon ha-ra* that is so destructive that the Torah forbids it in such a sweeping and severe manner – what could be so wrong with repeating something which actually is true? What is the difference between *lashon ha-ra*, *rechilut* and *motzi shem ra*? What strategies can we adopt as individuals, families, and

communities in order to improve the way we use our power of speech? If *lashon ha-ra* is truly so corrosive, under what conditions is it permitted or even proper to share it – how about for *shidduchim* or roommate purposes? What do I do when someone starts talking *lashon ha-ra* to me? Is it permitted to share *lashon ha-ra* about non-Jews, and even if it is technically permitted, is it ethically proper? May I speak *lashon ha-ra* about myself, and if not, why not – doesn't my reputation belong to me? We will use *Sefer Shemirat Ha-Lashon* and *Sefer Chafetz Chaim* to learn the *hashkafah* and *halachah* of *shemirat ha-lashon*, along with practical tips to make this *mitzvah* part of our everyday lives, in all situations that we find ourselves.



HALACHAH SECTION II: CONTEMPORARY HALACHAH

You Be the Judge

RAV MOSHE DAVIS

Imagine you're an American judge sitting over a difficult case of divorce, and at the same time you're also an Orthodox Jew. As a judge following US law, how would your ruling about custody of the children



differ from what the Torah says? Someone embezzles \$500,000 from his company, but it turns out he did it to pay for life-saving cancer treatment for his daughter – what would secular law say about “virtuous theft,” and what does the Torah say? A church-going drug dealer confesses crimes to his priest, while a

dedicated member of the “Daf Yomi” shiur admits to his rabbi that his drinking is out of control and that he often drives drunk – what do US law and halachah say about clergy confidentiality? Can you be a law-abiding American / Canadian / UK citizen and also an observant Jew? What do you do when law is at odds with Jewish law? Each class, we will begin a new case, discuss how we would rule, read the actual decision of the court, and learn the issue in Jewish law. We will come away knowing more about law and halachah and with a more nuanced balance between the different sides of our own identity.

Halachah on Campus & at Work

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM

What should I do if my college roommate isn't Jewish, but it's Shabbat and she just turned the light on in our room? What if she *is* Jewish? Can I join my co-workers if they are going out to a non-kosher restaurant? Can I eat anything? Can I buy non-kosher food for a non-Jewish colleague (or my boss!)? Can I submit my friend's research paper as my own (halachically)? What if my friend did that – should I say something? When am I allowed to be alone at work with a male co-worker (if ever)? What are the red lines, if any, about socializing with non-Jewish co-workers? This course will deal with practical issues



that will arise in college and beyond and prepare you for many eventualities.

Did They Do the Right Thing? (Adv) Analyzing Halachah in Historical Situations

RAV ELI WAGNER

Ever been to Masada and learned about the mass suicide? What about the false messiah, Shabtai Zvi,

who convinced thousands of Jews that he was the “real thing”? (For that matter, when the “real thing” does arrive, how *will* we be sure?) If you fall in love with an Ethiopian, can you marry him – where did he come from? What is his history and halachic status? Have you ever learned



about a fascinating episode in history and thought, “What would I do in that situation?” or “What would the Torah want me to do?” Often, when learning about either history or *halachah*, we focus solely on

one and neglect the other. Each week in this course, we will choose a significant event in our history and analyze a halachic challenge it presents (including episodes nominated by participants in the course). The skills gained and lessons learned through our analysis of each topic will allow us to put ourselves in the shoes of Jews through the ages and view history and *halachah* in a new light.

Jewish Medical Ethics: ‘Beginning of Life’ Issues

RAV URI COHEN

Join us to investigate the fascinating, dramatic world of medical ethics, where life-and-death questions



and cutting-edge technology meet our eternal system of *halachah*. Under what circumstances is contraception allowed? Is it permitted to take advantage of modern techniques to choose your baby’s sex (or eye color, height, or intelligence)? When

one woman provides the egg but another woman carries the fetus to delivery, who is the real mother? This semester, we will explore beginning-of-life and many other medical topics as we learn how halachic decisions are made in today’s world.

Medicine and Halachah

RAV ASHI TARAGIN



Hashem has granted each of us an amazing, sophisticated body, and today, thanks to modern medicine, we can take care of it better than ever. But what happens when the options granted to us by medicine and *halachah* don’t match up? When does life begin in the womb, and

how does that affect whether and when abortions may be performed? Stem cell research and genetic manipulation are in the headlines every day – does

the Torah allow us to tinker with the code for life? If one woman provides an egg but another carries the fetus to term, who is the halachic mother? Does *halachah* ever allow euthanasia, or must we prolong even a life filled with suffering? Tattoos are normally taboo, but what if a tattoo is used as part of reconstructive surgery? Are there Torah guidelines for animal experimentation? Can a doctor treat her own parents? Together, we will learn the medical and halachic perspectives on each topic to enable us to live a healthy, spiritual, happy long life.

Co-Ed Halachah

RAV YITZCHAK LERNER

What is the *halachah* – why are some schools single-sex and others coed? And why do some have English and math together, but not Torah? I’ve heard all about

“Shomer Negi’a,” but is this a real thing, or is it just for super-Jews? I need to see the sources! Is it OK to be friends with boys? How about dating when it’s not for marriage? Mixed swimming seems to be a no-no, but can I just sit by the beach or pool and tan, as long as I stay out of the water? When I’m dating, and my BF and I want some alone time, how do we do that while still keeping the laws of “yichud”? How do I avoid yichud problems when a male colleague and I are the only ones in the office? If these are some of your questions and you want to look at the sources and discuss these issues, then this class is for you.



“Bottom-Line Halachah”

RAV LERNER

What do I look for when buying a מזוזה? What exactly is everyone saying under the chuppah? Who can marry a כהן? What do I do first when I wake up in the morning? What happens at a Brit, and what am I supposed to say at each point? What are the different parts of a funeral, and what is my role there and in a house of mourning? We will look at halachic topics with a focus on the “bottom line.” Rather than looking at many different sources, we will move quickly through topics to get to practical, bottom-line halachic know-how. [Extra sources will be available for independent study for interested students.]

Corona and Halachah

RAV ASHI TARAGIN

During these troubled times, we have been faced with questions and dilemmas that we have never faced before: Must doctors risk their lives to save others? How do we decide who to ventilate when we have only one ventilator? Should a woman go to a mikveh if this might endanger her? How to keep the mitzvah of כיבוד אב ואם when one must remain distant from parents? Should one go to a שבעה for someone who has just passed away? Can a man shave his beard to keep a mask on tight? What could Hashem want us to learn from this pandemic? Should one try to daven in a minyan via Zoom?

Halachic World

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM

Is there anything wrong with going to a magic show? What do I do (if anything) if I have a bad dream? Can I go into a church? How about a mosque? Can someone with a tattoo be buried in a Jewish cemetery? What should I do if I am traveling and I want to eat bread, but I don't have water? What if there is a sink, but I don't have a cup? Can a woman shoot a gun? Can a man look in a mirror? Can I gamble? If I wanted to go skydiving (sounds amazing), would there be anything wrong with that? What about skiing? What can I do before davening in



the morning? Can I go for a jog? What about checking my email and messages? If you are interested in learning more about these topics and other similar topics, this course is for you. We will cover a different topic every class by looking at the primary sources and then looking at some of the contemporary sources.

Hot Topics in Halachah

RAV ASHI TARAGIN

We are lucky to live in a hi-tech age that has given us the Internet, cell phones, medical advances that



would seem like pure magic to people from the time of Tanach... not to mention the State of Israel. But how does halachah handle questions that couldn't possibly have been discussed by the Torah 3,300 years ago, or even 1,500 years ago in the Gemara? Examples of the questions we'll

explore together: Digital ownership – it's easy to download music, books, and movies from the Internet without paying. But is it OK? Privacy – what are the red lines when it comes to reading and forwarding people's emails, chats, posts, and pix? State of Israel – how do we handle the kidnapping of our soldiers and a demand to free terrorists in exchange? Do we try to convert non-Jewish Israelis (like the many from Russia), or leave them as non-Jews? Can and should women be soldiers? Shabbat – Can you go to the Kotel on Shabbat, or any other place where there are surveillance cameras? In addition to getting answers to today's most fascinating halachic questions, you will also learn how to use resources to research your own questions.

"Good Talk"

BRACHA KROHN

Do you sometimes regret saying something? (Who doesn't!) Do you sometimes wish you *had* said something, and wonder why you didn't? Have you ever wondered why someone else's words hurt you or matter so much to you? ("Sticks and stones might break my bones but names will never hurt me" – just not true, right?) In this course, we will discuss the power of speech and the way our words affect others and even ourselves. Going way beyond just "lashon ha-ra," we will learn about many different mitzvot



that relate to speech and examine stories in Tanach where speech changed the course of history. If you want to feel inspired and motivated to use your words more kindly and responsibly, and feel stronger and less affected by others' destructive words, this course is for you! The learning we do each week will be relevant immediately and give you something to think about and work on until we see each other again.

Ask the Rabbi: "עשה לך רב"

RAV JASON KNAPEL

Join in each week for a freewheeling, every-question-goes extravaganza! Each week, we'll meet to discuss your questions on anything and everything. We'll devote part of each class to answering your pre-submitted-via-WhatsApp questions (enabling Rav Jason to research them); part to discussing questions from people all around the world; and part to handling the questions that come to you during the class itself. This is the time to clear up all those questions you've always wanted to ask...

Ask the Rabbi

RAV YY WENGLIN

Join in each week for a freewheeling, every-question-goes extravaganza! Each week, we'll meet to discuss your questions on anything and everything. We'll devote part of each shiur to answering your pre-submitted questions; part to discussing questions from people all around the world; and part to handling the questions that come to you during the shiur itself. This is the time to clear up all those questions you've always wanted to ask...



מדרש ותלמוד

Introduction to Gemara

RAV JASON KNAPEL

Have you ever wanted to open up a *Gemara* to find out what it's all about, but thought it would be too hard or out of your comfort zone? In this course, we will become familiar with the text of the *Gemara*, as we also learn how to think like the *Gemara*, the backbone of all of *Torah She-be-al Peh*. We will be touching on topics that affect our daily Jewish lives.



approaching a new topic; how to make meaningful analytical distinctions; and how to brainstorm creative solutions to challenging problems.

What Midrashim *Really* Mean

BRACHA KROHN

Some *midrashim* really make us wonder: Was Rivkah really three when she married Yitzchak? If not, what lesson were Chazal hinting by saying she was? Why should it matter to us that 3,500 years ago, some



Advanced Gemara

LEORA BEDNARSH

Seeking the greatest intellectual challenge in the world of Torah? Want to truly understand how halachic thinking works and get inside the minds of the people who built our whole system? If so, this course may be for you. Join us as we enter the minds



of Chazal, following their sophisticated logic as they develop *halachah* and establish its rules. As we improve our textual skills with *chavruta*, we will also learn how to ask the right key questions when

stones argued about which one should be Yaakov's pillow? Since the Torah tells us exactly what the "*man*" actually tasted like, how can the *Midrash* say it tasted like whatever you wanted? Are Chazal in the *Midrash* teaching us historical facts in these stories, or do they have something deeper in mind? Come learn about the different types of *midrashim*; what goals Chazal had in mind when composing them; and how to unlock the deeper meaning behind these well-known legends. In this course, you will explore the difference between interpretation and homiletics as you develop skills for understanding

and appreciating the *midrashim* you learn each week when studying *parshah*.

Midrash of the Week

RAV ZVI RON

How did No'ach manage to feed all of those animals on the Ark? Who was his wife, the mysterious Mrs. No'ach? Did the Flood really cover the entire world? Why was Eisav so hairy? Why do Chazal think that blessings only work on hidden things? What is the secret reason for sneezing? How did Moshe find the secret spot where Yosef was buried in Egypt? Every week, we will learn classic and not yet classic midrashim related to the parshah. The source material for all Torah commentaries and divrei Torah is right here! We will study the midrashim together and extract the insights and lessons encoded within. All of your midrash questions answered and lessons learned!

Talmudic Tales

NEIMA NOVETSKY

The *Gemara* is filled with really provocative (and some truly strange) stories about Torah and the *chachamim*, Hashem's world and His ways. Why would Hashem bring rain just because "Choni Ha-Me'agel" refuses to leave his famous circle? If God Himself declares that one rabbi is correct, how can the other rabbis still insist he's wrong? Was the *Beit HaMikdash* really destroyed just because some random guy named "Bar Kamtza" wasn't invited to a party? How can Moshe Rabbeinu visit Rabbi Akiva's classroom and not understand a word? In this course, we will study some of the most famous and intriguing of these stories. Each week, we will look at a different text, raising questions and exploring its lessons.



Pirkei Avot

MALKA HUBSCHER

The moral lessons, profound psychological insights, and philosophical teachings of the *Tanna'im*, the rabbis who composed the *Mishnah* almost 2,000 years ago, remain immediately relevant and deeply meaningful today. We will use them as a guide to inspire us to reach new heights in both our *avodat Hashem* and *midot ben adam la-chavero*.



Pirkei Avot

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM

Pirkei Avot is where the sages of the *Mishnah* from 2,000 years ago – giants like Hillel and Shammai, Rabbi Akiva and Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai – communicate directly and personally with each one of us, guiding us in our efforts to try to become the best people we can be. *Pirkei Avot* allows these usually halachic figures to express themselves on more personal topics, such as *midot* and the methods that we need to perfect them. Because each brief *mishnah* offers a different area of focus, there is no shortage of topics to cover, and as an added bonus, we will go straight from the start to the end, giving us the opportunity to complete an entire *sefer*.



אמונה

EMUNAH SECTION I: MODERN JEWISH THOUGHT

Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael U-Medinat Yisrael

RAV ARI SHVAT

What is the ideal lifestyle – learning Torah all day or working for a living? How do we know whether the



modern State of Israel is really the start of the *ge'ulah*? How can religious Jews support a secular Jewish State? In-depth pros and cons of aliyah – is it for you? *Datiyyim, Chilonim, Charedim*: Where are they each coming from? Is there a solution?

Tzahal (the IDF): victories, dilemmas & halachic issues (like drafting girls into the Israeli army). Are we a religion or a nation? What's the relationship between nationalism, individualism and globalism? If Israel is ours just because we have history here, weren't there other people here before us, and other people here once we left to exile? In addition to classic & contemporary sources, we will also analyze the sources cited by Chareidi anti-Zionists. Through lectures, discussions, and songs, we will examine our historical time period and take our relationship with *Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael* and *Medinat Yisrael* to the next level.

Thought of Rav Kook (Adv.)

RAV ARI SHVAT

What is whole point of life? How do we achieve *emunah* in Hashem? Since Hashem controls everything, and since all of us have limits of many

kinds, what does free will really mean? How can evil people succeed if Hashem is watching and in control?

Is the State of Israel significant only for Jewish pride and as a refuge for us, or does it have a messianic dimension? Is *teshuvah* basically negative, a depressing look at our mistakes and an attempt to do better, or is there a positive approach to *teshuvah*?

How do we balance intellect against emotion in our relationship with Hashem and Torah? Is there room for the theory of evolution in the Torah? Rav Kook is considered one of the most original thinkers of the 20th century and continues to inspire even today. His optimistic, inspiring, holistic approach deals with just about every question we face today, and has given meaning and direction to an entire generation in Israel.



The Making of a Gadol

RAV HANOCH TELLER

We use the terms “Gadol” and “Gedolim” all the time to describe people who are “great,” but what kinds of greatness do we actually have in mind? Are we talking about really smart people? Super daveners? What specifically makes someone a “Gadol”? What is the difference between “just” a very good Jew and a Gadol? Since there is no Gedolim “election process,” no school which grants a “Gadol”



degree, and in fact no job where you can be hired as a “Gadol,” who decides who is considered a “Gadol”? Since human greatness comes in many flavors and sizes, it makes sense that great Jews are diverse as well – so what different kinds of Gedolim do we have? Can women be Gedolim (Gedolot)? Join us to understand what greatness is, and how each of us can stretch toward it, by meeting examples of real Gedolim through stories and discussion.

Backstage with the Gedolim

RAV ASHI TARAGIN

Often, we think of Chazal as people who taught us what to do: halachah. But Chazal also shared their life



stories and life experience. How did our sages treat their parents? How did they cope with suffering in their own lives? What did they see in their dreams? What business dilemmas did they face? Learn about the Shabbat cow, Rabbi Akiva’s chicken, and many more as we delve

into the stories Chazal passed down to be remembered for all time.

Questions in Emunah

RAV ARI SHVAT

What is the goal of life? Why did God create the world? How does *tefilah* work – if Hashem gives me



whatever is in my best interest, why should He “change His mind?” Can we be sure that Zionism is not just another “false messiah”? What is the difference between “the world to come,” and “the revival of the dead,”

and “*yemot ha-mashiach*,” and where do heaven, hell and reincarnation come in? What about those *mitzvot* that seem a little “outdated”? How do we know that there is a God? Anything which might prevent us from wholeheartedly identifying with the *mitzvot* and serving Hashem should be brought to

the fore and dealt with in the most straightforward fashion. Join us for an open discussion in which all questions are welcome.

Sho’ah ve-Emunah

RAV JASON KNAPEL

In this course, we will explore one of our greatest tragedies through the lenses of history, *halachah* and *hashkafah*. Topics that

will be discussed are: The uniqueness of the *Sho’ah*; the life that was – understanding what was lost; the history and theology of antisemitism; the rise of the Nazi party; the reaction of the world; what did we know and when did we know it; what is a



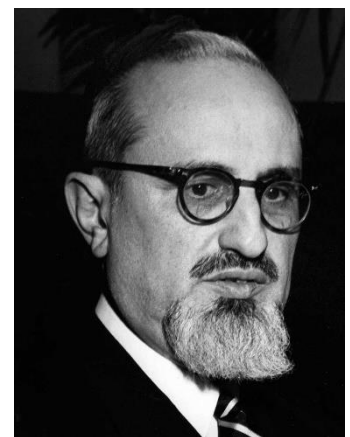
ghetto and were all ghettos the same; the transports and camps; rescue and resistance; leadership and youth during the war years; theology of the *Sho’ah*; the end of the war – when did it really end for the Jews, and how does it continue to echo even today.

Thought of Rav Soloveitchik

RAV JASON KNAPEL

What is a human being, and what is our task as humans in our lifetime – from God’s perspective, what is our purpose?

Since God doesn’t need our praise and already knows what we need, what is the purpose of *tefilah*? Family is obviously crucial for all people, but what unique perspectives does the Torah add? How does a Jew continue to connect with the God



who sat by and allowed the Holocaust to happen? How should a Jew making her life in *chutz la-aretz* look at the State of Israel and at Zionism? These are just some of the issues we will encounter as we explore the thought of one of the greatest Torah giants of the last generation – the one person who, more than anyone else, influenced the growth of Modern Orthodoxy in America.

“By His Light”: The Thought of Rav Aharon Lichtenstein

LEORA BEDNARSH / SHANA BET

Is there real legitimacy to Modern Orthodoxy, or is the real way to be an “*eved Hashem*” only the



chareidi / “Black Hat” way? Does being *frum* require separating yourself from the non-Jewish and non-*frum* world – its music and entertainment, its leisure and its books and magazines, its art and its culture? Wouldn’t it be smarter and safer to just keep our distance in order to

avoid bad influences? Is there always a right and wrong way to serve Hashem, or are there multiple options from which we can choose? In Israel, is it the Torah’s ideal that all the religious people should just learn Torah and leave defending the country to the non-religious? We will address these questions and others through the writings of Rav Aharon Lichtenstein, founder and Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Har Etzion (“Gush”), the greatest student of Rav Soloveitchik, and one of the great *gedolim* of the Israeli “Dati Leumi” community.

Netivot Shalom

RAV JASON KNAPEL

Thousands of young people come to Israel every year seeking to connect: to connect to *Eretz Yisrael*, to *Am*



Yisrael, to *Medinat Yisrael*, or to Torah or to new friends... the list goes on. But the year in Israel is a time to look not only outside, but also deep within, a year to truly study and discover yourself, searching the

depth of your personality and thinking clearly about your connection to Hashem and Judaism. We will use the truly inspirational Netivot Shalom, written by the Rebbe of Slonim, to illuminate our path toward these goals.

Sho’ah ve-Emunah

MICHAEL PORATH-ZIBMAN

Undeniably the most painful event of modern Jewish history, the *Sho’ah* continues to frighten, inspire, and



perplex us. We will study the key events surrounding the before, during and after, as we also try to delve into the world of the religious Jew during those times. In addition to understanding what was done to the Jews as victims, we will also explore how they reacted, including some extraordinary questions that ordinary people asked, such as how they could keep kosher while starving in the ghetto, or keep Shabbat in Auschwitz, or whether one may redeem a loved one if another Jew will be taken in their place. We will also ask the questions the Jewish world has asked since the Holocaust: Where was God? Do we look at the Holocaust as a punishment for the Jewish people, and if so, for what sin(s); or was it unrelated to anything that *Am Yisrael* had done, and if so, how do we understand how Hashem stood by and allowed it to happen?

Michtav Me-Eliyahu

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM

If Judaism says that love isn’t just about attraction,

what is it about, and how does one go about achieving true love? Does everyone have the same amount of free will, and do we



ourselves have the same amount at all points of our lives? What is true happiness? How much time and

effort do I need to invest in my career, and how much should I just rely on Hashem? Some people claim that we see miracles every day – but where are they, and how should this affect my life? Rav Eliyahu Dessler was born in Europe right before the turn of the 20th century and became one of the youngest students ever to be accepted to the famous Yeshiva of Kelm. He left an immense impact everywhere he went, including England and, at the end of his life, Eretz Yisrael. Join us as we look at Rav Dessler’s approach to many different issues, exploring how he built upon earlier sources and how other Gedolim approached these topics.

Philosophical Issues in Modern Society

RAV JASON KNAPEL

In this course, we will deal with the major (philosophical) challenges you will encounter when



you leave your “Jewish Comfort Zone.” We will deal with issues such as doubt in Hashem – what to do when it happens; Biblical Criticism – was the Torah really written by Moshe; evolution – can science be wrong? Denominations – will the real Judaism please

stand up...? The goal of this course is not to answer all the questions that will arise through the next few years of your life, but to discuss the issues in a non-threatening way and develop approaches to dealing with hard-hitting questions.

TIP: If you’re having trouble deciding between conflicting courses, just choose one of them for now and make a note to yourself to remind you to try the other course too. Once you’ve tried both, you’ll have an easier time deciding which course is best for you.

21st-Century Judaism

RAV AHARON WEXLER

This provocative course will engage the major issues facing the Jewish people today. Serious students will develop tools to take an active role in the conversations going on in the Jewish community about “hot-button” issues facing the chosen people in the 21st century: The role of women in Judaism today; the differences between Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox; coping with university campus life; archaeology and Tanach; and more.



Rav Soloveitchik on the Jewish Family

MALKA HUBSCHER

Want to improve your relationships with your siblings, parents or grandparents? Maybe already thinking about how to have a great marriage and how to be a good mother? The time to become the



person you would like to be... is now. The Jewish family has always been the backbone of our nation; family relationships define, shape and influence us throughout our entire lives. They can be very loving, positive and enriching, and at the same time complex and stressful. In this course, using Rav Soloveitchik’s “Family Redeemed” and other selections from his writing, we will learn from this world-class *gadol*, modern philosopher, and deeply sensitive, sympathetic, and wise observer of human and Jewish nature how to improve the dynamics within our own families.

Zionism & the Jewish State

RAV AHARON WEXLER

Join us for an intensive study of the political history that brought about a Jewish State in *Eretz Yisrael*. Who were these secular and religious men and women who, with the help of God, brought about a complete change in Jewish affairs after a 2000-year *galut*? What happened in the 19th century to bring Zionism into the hearts and minds of the people?

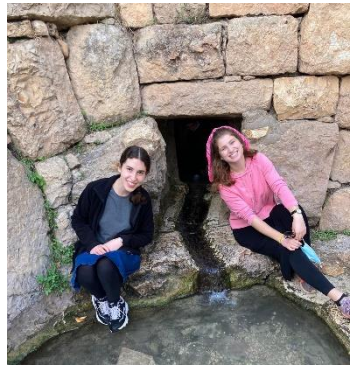


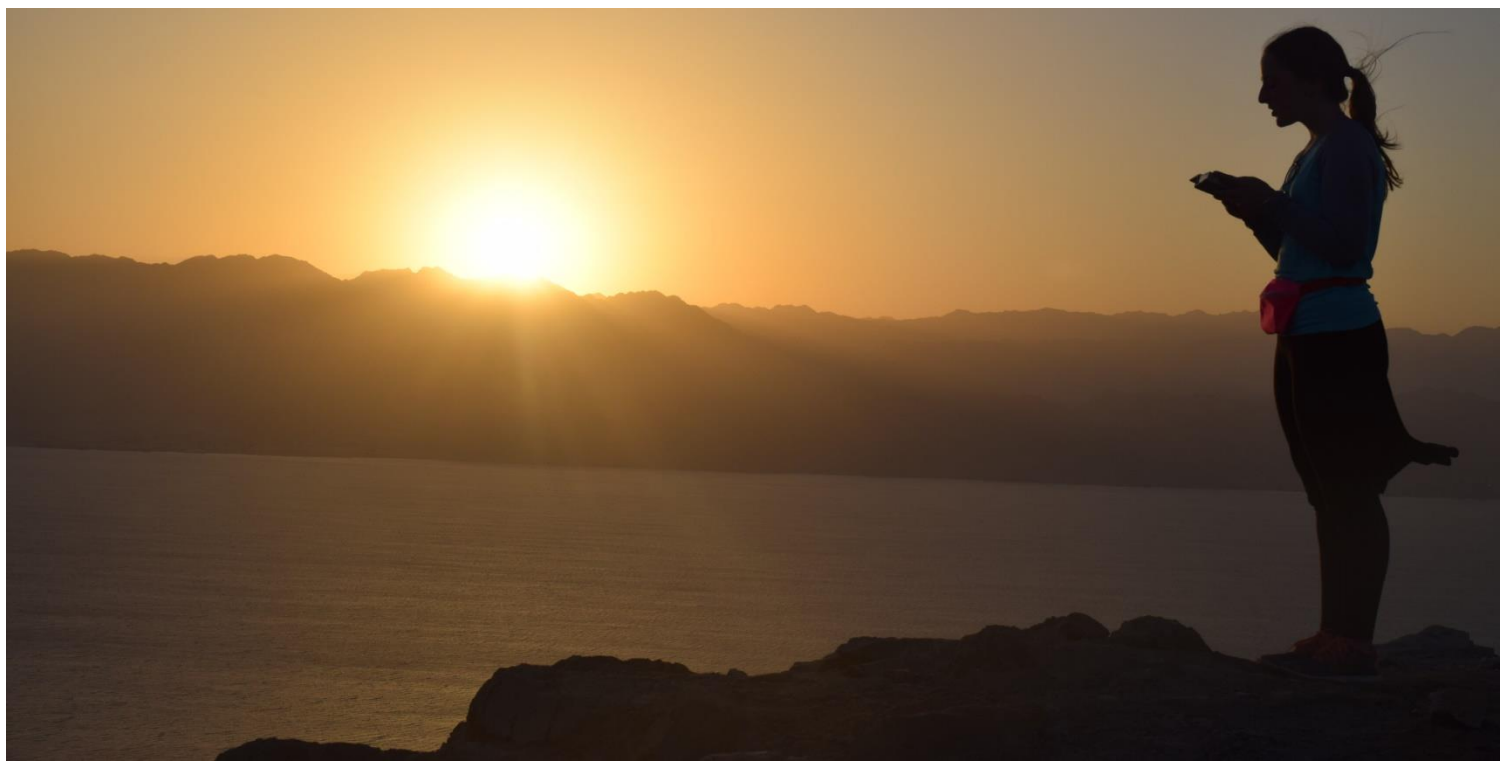
TIP: You may want to sign up for more than 37 hours just so you can try out more shiurim.











midreshetmoriah
Golan Heights, Israel



midreshetmoriah We had an AWESOME day jeeping around in the Golan Heights! We started off slow and learned the history of the land, and then we sped up and it got crazy!! We even went into the water!!! The tour guides were amazing! Great way to start off Shabbos Kodesh!!!▲
🚗 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

1w



EMUNAH SECTION II: CLASSICAL JEWISH THOUGHT

Har Sinai in Hashkafah and Halachah

RAV ELI WAGNER

Ever wonder what really happened at Har Sinai –



besides being pretty terrifying, what was it like to experience God appearing right before us? How do we know the whole thing really took place? If we were all there, as tradition tells us, why don't we remember anything? How could an entire nation of laypeople, few of them trained as prophets, many of

them just children, spontaneously become prophets? If the whole thing was so impressive, how could our ancestors turn back to idol worship just forty days later? Turning to the content of what was said at Sinai, why were these ten commandments chosen out of all 613? (Would you have chosen "Do not covet your neighbor's house"?) What does it mean to believe in God ("I am God...")? Is abortion categorized as murder ("Do not kill...")? Can adultery ever be justified ("Do not commit adultery...")? What is the Torah's view on illegally downloading music and movies – is it stealing ("Do not steal...")? Can God command us to feel certain emotions ("Do not envy...")? In this course, we will explore the significance and relevance of the Sinai experience and the importance of the Ten Commandments as a unit and individually, both hashkafically and halachically.

The 13 Core Beliefs of Judaism

RAV ASHI TARAGIN

How do you know you picked the right religion? Why should we believe in Hashem without direct personal proof? Why don't we have prophecy today? What will happen at *techiyyat ha-metim* and at the times of *Mashiach*? What is *Gan Eden*, and is the afterlife the reason we do all we do? How does being Jewish affect our view of the world – for example, how do we understand the role of all the other nations, and

what role should physical life play in our quest for holiness? Did you realize that "Adon Olam" and "Yigdal" are actually summaries of our most basic beliefs, in song form? What is problematic for us with Reform Judaism – can't we just "live and let live" and love all Jews and Judaisms the same? Why don't we believe in Jesus? Together, we will explore our core beliefs and compare Judaism to other religions, such as Buddhism, Islam, Christianity and Greek mythology, deepening our understanding and connection to our identity. Strengthening these beliefs will enhance our *kavanah* in *tefilah* and *mitzvot* and our *emunah* in day-to-day life.



Pirkei Avot

MALKA HUBSCHER

The moral lessons, profound psychological insights, and philosophical teachings of the *Tanna'im*, the rabbis who composed the *Mishnah* almost 2,000 years ago, remain immediately relevant and deeply meaningful today. We will use them as a guide to inspire us to

reach new heights in both our *avodat Hashem* and *midot ben adam la-chavero*.



TIP: Carefully read the course descriptions; don't just go by the course names!

Ultimate Questions

RAV EITAN MAYER

This provocative course is for students interested in struggling with some of the basic questions of life: Is everything in your life from God, as people so often say (“There’s no such thing as coincidence”)? If



Hashem’s doing it all for you, where is there room for your free will – does He choose your career, your shoes, your friends, your favorite ice cream? Does He sometimes just watch without getting involved? How can we tell when it’s God’s hand and when it’s just life happening? What’s the ultimate purpose of your life – is it like a big maze, with *Olam Ha-Ba* at the end as a prize, or is there some other goal? Does God have feelings like we do – anger, sadness, happiness, love – or is He above it all? Can it be that He really cares about all those tiny little halachic details? What will happen at the “End of Days” – will people live forever on Earth after *techiyyat ha-metim*, or go on to *Olam Ha-Ba*? And what is *Olam Ha-Ba* anyway? Does *bitachon* (“trust in Hashem”) mean you have to believe everything will always turn out OK? We will explore fascinating topics in medieval and contemporary thought which have always made people wonder.

Pirkei Avot

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM

Pirkei Avot is where the sages of the *Mishnah* from 2,000 years ago – giants like Hillel and Shammai, Rabbi Akiva and Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai – communicate directly and personally with each one of us, guiding us in our efforts to try to become the best people we can be. *Pirkei Avot* allows these usually halachic figures to express themselves on

more personal topics, such as *midot* and the methods that we need to perfect them. Because each brief *mishnah* offers a different area of focus, there is no shortage of topics to cover, and as an added bonus, we will go straight from the start to the end, giving us the opportunity to complete an entire *sefer*.



Classic Hits of Jewish Philosophy (Adv.)

RAV ELI WAGNER

Join us to explore the following topics and more, through a careful reading of sources: Do we have free will? How do we know? Why do bad things happen to good people? And more: the afterlife, resurrection and the messiah, Divine providence, prayer, ethics and *halachah*. We will look at sources ranging back to the Talmud and medieval philosophers and ranging down to thinkers living in our own times.



Derech Hashem: Answers from the Kabbalah

RAV ZVI RON

Kabbalah is a lot more than just “mysticism” – it’s a whole way of looking at life, which has its own unique answers for all of Judaism’s most important questions. We will study the kabbalistic thought of Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato (Ramchal) in his work, *Derech Hashem*. We



will cover all the main issues of Jewish philosophy: How *tefilah* works; the meaning and effects of the *mitzvot*; the unique nature of Torah; the definition of “*mazal*”; the question of free will; the sin of *Adam Ha-Rishon*; the nature of *nevu’ah*; the afterlife; *mashiach*; magic; reincarnation; and more, to comprise a comprehensive approach to Judaism. We will also study the approaches of those Jewish thinkers who disagreed with Ramchal.

Philosophical Issues in Tanach (Adv)

NEIMA NOVETSKY

“God hardened Pharaoh’s heart” – so do we always have free will, or does Hashem sometimes force us in



one direction, as He seems to have done to Pharaoh? If He already knows what we’re going to choose, then isn’t our choice already predetermined?

“*Anochi Hashem...*” – we are expected to believe in Hashem, but what if I have

questions? What do we do with stories like David and Batsheva, or Yaakov taking the *berachah* from Esav, which show our leaders making morally problematic choices? How about *mitzvot* that don’t fit with my own personal understanding of right and wrong? Other topics include Tanach’s perspectives on: Why bad things happen to good people; the nature of *yemot ha-mashiach*; prophecy; and much more. As we look at a selection of “troubling texts” from Tanach, each will lead us into a larger discussion of related theological or philosophical issues that many of us find difficult to grapple with. The course will also have a *beit midrash* component, allowing students to study with one another and argue out the text and accompanying issues on their own!

Sefer Iyyov and the Meaning of Life

MICHAL PORATH-ZIBMAN

Sefer Iyyov begins with sudden terrible tragedies which strike Iyyov, who loses almost everything for the sake of what seems to be a bet between God and Satan! Through textual and philosophical analysis of selected conversations that make up the bookends of *Sefer Iyyov*, we will seek clarity on some of the



burning questions of human and Jewish existence, such as why bad things happen to good people and why there is evil in the world.

Secrets of the Kabbalah

RAV ASHI TARAGIN

What is a neshamah? What happens to our soul after we die? What is Gan Eden? Is there such a thing as Gehenom? Do we believe in reincarnation? What effect does kaddish have for souls that have passed? Do we have any contact with souls that have left this world? What are the questions that all of us will be asked in heaven? Do demons exist, and how can we protect ourselves from them? Who or what are angels? How could the Maharal create a “golem”? We will discuss secrets of Torah from Kabbalah, the Zohar and beyond. Join us for a taste of the hidden Torah.

Kohelet: Why Are We Here?

RAV ASHI TARAGIN

In 500 years from now, not only will no one remember you and me, but in fact, the odds are that it will make no difference at all that we ever lived. Nothing we do during our lifetime will remain for long, and we, along with pretty much everyone else, will fade into oblivion and be utterly forgotten. If so, what’s the point of our having lived? Join us to explore *Kohelet*, the sefer in Tanach which asks all the hard questions



and pulls no punches in its search for the meaning of our lives.

What Midrashim Really Mean

BRACHA KROHN



Some *midrashim* really make us wonder: Was Rivkah really three when she married Yitzchak? If not, what lesson were Chazal hinting by saying she was? Why should it matter to us that 3,500 years ago, some stones argued about which one should be Yaakov's pillow? Since the Torah tells us exactly what the "man" actually tasted like, how can the *Midrash* say it tasted like whatever you wanted? Are Chazal in the *Midrash* teaching us historical facts in these stories, or do they have something deeper in mind? Come learn about the different types of *midrashim*; what goals Chazal had in mind when composing them; and how to unlock the deeper meaning behind these well-known legends. In this course, you will explore the difference between interpretation and homiletics as you develop skills for understanding and appreciating the *midrashim* you learn each week when studying *parshah*.

Talmudic Tales

NEIMA NOVETSKY

The *Gemara* is filled with really provocative (and some truly strange) stories about Torah and the



chachamim, Hashem's world and His ways. Why would Hashem bring rain just because "Choni Ha-Me'agel" refuses to leave his famous circle? If God Himself declares that one rabbi is correct, how can the other rabbis still insist he's wrong? Was the *Beit*

HaMikdash really destroyed just because some random guy named "Bar Kamtza" wasn't invited to a party? How can Moshe Rabbeinu visit Rabbi Akiva's classroom and not understand a word? In this course, we will study some of the most famous and

intriguing of these stories. Each week, we will look at a different text, raising questions and exploring its lessons.

Topics in Jewish Philosophy

R. ASSAF BEDNARSH / SHANA BET

Joint Shana Bet Shiur at
Gruss Campus

Sponsored by Yeshiva
University.



Join us to explore fascinating topics and see what the greats of all generations actually said about them: Free will; the suffering of the righteous; what is the afterlife; resurrection and mashiach; Divine intervention in our lives; how prayer "works"; halachah and ethics. We will also explore topics in our tradition like how there can be multiple legitimate opinions; the rabbis' power to create new laws and change old ones; and what is a "*chumrah*" and when does it make sense to adopt one.

The Wisdom of Mishlei

BRACHA KROHN

A special hour focusing on the wisdom in *Sefer Mishlei*, topic by topic.

Each week, we will learn *pesukim* relating to a theme and discuss that issue's relevance in our lives, looking at



classic and contemporary sources. Shlomo ha-Melech's insight will blow you away!

Sefer Mishlei

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM

Mishlei is unique among the 24 books of Tanach in that the majority of its *pesukim*, rather than being individual pieces of a larger story or halachic section, are actually self-contained observations on life or pieces of advice all on their own. This means that the sefer is jam-packed with meaning, with every single *pasuk* its own new world of ideas and reflections. It also means *Mishlei* can be a challenging *sefer*, since



every *pasuk* stands on its own and requires analysis. Perhaps this should come as no surprise in *Mishlei*, since it was written by Shlomo Ha-Melech, the smartest person ever. Join us to increase your “wisdom quotient” and improve your character, exploring the

messages that Shlomo is hinting to us across the centuries.

Reason for the Season

RAV ELI WAGNER / SHANA BET

We’re taught to eat symbolic foods on *Rosh Ha-Shanah* – honey so that we’ll have a sweet year, pomegranate seeds so that we’ll have plentiful



mitzvot this year... beets, fish heads, the list goes on and on. But isn’t it just superstition to think that eating certain foods will somehow change our future? Besides actual repentance, the *Yom Kippur* season also seems to bring amazing “repentance shortcuts” which

achieve forgiveness with much less work – “*tashlich*” leaves our sins at the bottom of a lake, “*kapparot*” transfers our sins to a chicken of our choosing... do these methods work, and if so, how and why? What does authentic atonement look like on *Yom Kippur*, and why should it work if we go back to our routines the next day? Is there any connection between the *mitzvot* of *lulav* and *sukkah*, or do they just happen to share the same holiday? On *Chanukah*, we celebrate our victory over the “Hellenized” Jews, who believed in mixing together Torah and the contributions of other cultures – but isn’t that pretty much who we are too? What’s with the drinking controversy that surrounds *Purim*? The holidays are much more than family reunions. There is a reason why we celebrate, when we celebrate and how we celebrate. This course will clarify our *halachot* and *minhagim* and their hashkafic implications.

Meaning in the Mitzvot

BRACHA KROHN

We always talk about 613 *mitzvot*, but did you know that only 194 of them can be performed nowadays? Let’s get busy studying them so you can be sure you know what you need. We will study the *Sefer Ha-Mitzvot* of the “Chafetz Chaim,”



which lists and succinctly explains each *mitzvah*. Each week, we will explore a few selected *mitzvot* – *Birkat Ha-Mazon*, *Kibbud Av Ve-Em*, *Teshuvah*, and *Hashavat Aveidah*, to name a few, finding each *mitzvah* in the Torah, exploring reasons for the *mitzvah*, and doing a bottom-line halachic overview. This course will be fast-paced and full of interesting, inspiring and practical learning to give you a relationship with *mitzvot* like you’ve never experienced before!



EMUNAH SECTION III: PERSONAL GROWTH

Living the Empowered Life

BRACHA KROHN

Do you want to feel more empowered in your own life? Do you feel anxious, unsure, or overwhelmed at moments of transition or decision? Would you like to feel more positive, confident and effective in your day-to-day choices? Is it hard for you to put yourself first even when you know you should? Then this course is for you! We will learn the thoughts and



tools needed to strengthen our confidence and self-esteem when life gets overwhelming, to put ourselves first when necessary, and to quiet the feelings of worry and anxiety that slow us down or hold us back. Learn the areas in our lives where we can bring change! You will learn about the value the Torah places on our need to make choices in life, be proactive and chart our own destinies. We will focus on the ways we can develop ourselves spiritually, emotionally and intellectually. Join us to learn about being independent in your Torah learning, forgiving yourself and others, navigating through challenges that overwhelm you, choosing role models and mentors, finding and making meaningful friendships with people who bring out the best in you, and creating inspiration for yourself so you don't have to wait around for it! You will be happily surprised by the new-found independence, strength and confidence that you will begin to experience as we explore these topics and more. This is your ticket to a more successful YOU in all areas of your life... and to a more successful year, taking full advantage of all the opportunities that seminary offers.

TIP: You may want to sign up for more than 37 hours just so you can try out more shiurim.

Building Great Relationships

DR. AVIVA GOLDSTEIN

How can I maximize my role as a daughter or step-daughter? What does friendship mean to me? What kind of spouse do I want to be, and what do I need to find in my own spouse? How do I imagine myself as a mother? What can I learn about my relationship with siblings, or from my only-child status? How can I nurture emotional intimacy in a way that is empowering? What do I do once I recognize dysfunction in my relationships? What is the connection between my own self-awareness and self-confidence on one hand, and the health of the relationships in my life on the other hand? This course will be a journey through personal experiences, analysis of contemporary social research and immersion in relevant Jewish texts that can inform the social decisions in our lives. Reflecting on our own relationships and learning from sources, we will explore the universal undercurrents of human relationships and learn how to enhance our relationships and their impact on our lives. We will analyze communication and compatibility and recognize patterns in our own social experiences, and through a broad collection of Jewish texts and psychology resources, we will seek a deep self-awareness and healthy, enriching relationships.



Growth Instruction Manual

RABBI YITZCHAK LERNER

The seminary year is focused on learning and growth – in our relationship with Hashem, with other people, and in our own selfhood. Often,

however, it doesn't seem self-explanatory how that growth is supposed to happen. Some examples:

- My friend seems to make such a connection when she prays. Why am I not feeling it, and how can I connect like she does?
- A year of growth is great, but it also makes me more conscious than ever of all of my imperfections and inadequacies. How do I figure out where I need to grow without coming away feeling depressed and low?
- I feel like I'm a nice person, but I get the sense that somehow, I project NOT being super nice. How can I come across to others the same way I feel inside?
- *Halachah* seems so demanding. Does God really care about all of these details?
- My sister/cousin/friend was a superstar in seminary and came back "amazing." How can I make that happen for me?
- I really want to grow, but I don't want everyone (friends / family) thinking I'm "so *frum*." How do I stay balanced? How do I explain myself to them? And how do I keep this growth going?

If these are some of your questions, this course may help you. Every week, we will study a fresh text from a contemporary rabbi addressing these issues. We will include pieces from Michtav Me-Eliyahu, Netivot Shalom, Rav Pinkus, Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz, and many more, to inspire us each week and guide us through this transformational year.

Your Purpose in Life

RAV MOSHE DAVIS

Why was I created, and why am I alive? Should I spend my days relaxing on the beach and enjoying God's natural creation? Or perhaps I should get up every day at the crack of dawn to pray, repent and fast? (Sounds less fun!). Since Torah and mitzvot apply equally to all Jews, do we all have the same mission in life, or can/should we customize? How does knowing our purpose impact things like whom



we befriend, whom we date and marry, what community and schools we choose, the careers at which we spend our decades? Throughout the ages, philosophers and religious thinkers have grappled with the question of why God created mankind and have arrived at vastly different conclusions. We will explore three fundamentally different approaches, represented by the worldviews of three greats of Jewish history: Rambam, Ramchal and Netziv.



Jewish Childhood and Parenthood

BRACHA KROHN

You are now at the age where you are reflecting on how you were raised and what values you received from home. You might be thinking about how your parenting will be similar to, but also different from, your own parents' ways. As you move into adulthood, your relationship with your parents will change, which is both exciting and scary. If any of this is on your mind, this course will be for you! We will learn about the issues of being children to our parents, and parents to our children, through topics such as:

- How do we define *kibud av ve-em*? How can we make sure to feel and express all the gratitude we feel (or should feel) for our parents? As children, how do we relate respectfully and lovingly to parents whose values differ from ours? Are there halachic requirements for parents about how to treat their children?
- In a multi-tasking world, how do we avoid being that parent who's always distracted? As children, how do we communicate what kind of attention we need from parents?
- As children, we hate when parents hover and micro-manage; as parents, we want our children to achieve independence from us and confidently face challenges on their own. How do we avoid



the “helicopter parenting” that has become so widespread, which trains children to depend on parents and to experience anxiety when they face challenges alone? As children, how do we respectfully “declare our independence” when parents continue to do for us what we need to be ourselves?

- As children approach adulthood, parents naturally share more information with them. Some parents even think of their children as best friends, confide in them and depend on them for emotional support. But being a parent is different than being a friend, and sharing too much puts undue pressure on our children. How do we find the balance?
- How do we develop in our children gratitude, honesty, self-confidence, optimism, patience, empathy, humility, loyalty, persistence, resilience, tolerance, and many other qualities? How do we teach them to focus on the right things in life?

In each class, we will use Torah sources as well as contemporary psychology to help us clarify who we are as someone’s child, and who we will be as someone’s parent.

Positive Psychology & Judaism: The Science and Torah of Happiness

DR. AVIVA GOLDSTEIN

Positive psychology is a relatively new field dedicated to understanding the scientific and psychological



dynamics of well-being, happiness and life satisfaction. Scientists and psychologists have spent the last two decades making fascinating discoveries about the human brain and human emotions, with striking similarity to the writings of

Judaism throughout millennia. This course will discuss the definition of happiness, the implications of gratitude and empathy, and the impact of mindfulness. We will question if optimism and resilience can be learned (spoiler alert: they can!) and how individuals can grow in self-awareness. We will explore individual character development through the prisms of both Torah and psychology in order to more fully understand happiness and well-being in our daily lives.

Practical Midot Workshop

RABBI HANOCH TELLER

Judaism teaches that good character – being a “*mensch*” – is not merely a virtue; it is the goal of life.

If you’re not more compassionate and considerate at twenty than you were at seventeen, then it is not merely a drawback, but a failure. “The purpose of life is to strive to break bad habits and improve oneself. Otherwise, what is life for?” (Gaon of Vilna). The way to become



good is to do good things, not by thinking good thoughts, and the more good we do, the more it becomes part of our nature. In this course, we will learn how to inculcate this “good nature” into our lives with vivid stories and pertinent examples. How does one behave as a “good” guest? What habits of sensitivity and consideration does our tradition compel us to observe when using a cell phone? What are the halachic guidelines and advice concerning visiting the sick? May one cut a line? How do we break the “me-first” reflex? This course will try to provide you with a significant edge in the struggle to be an “honorable *mensch*” and acquire success in life morally, professionally and socially.

Mesilat Yesharim

RAV ZVI RON

Many people want to improve themselves, but where do we start? Once we get beyond just feeling that we’d like to be better, what path do we follow? Is there an order, a series of steps which build on each other, and which we can follow toward real religious growth which will last? Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato’s answer is Mesilat Yesharim, a *sefer*



which maps out a specific path toward *kedushah*, including detailed recommendations, a step-by-step plan, and even warnings about the obstacles along the way which can block our progress. We will study

this classic *sefer* in depth and discuss how these ideas can be applied in our lives.

Extreme Midot in Tanach

TALI PFEIFFER

Avraham is a chesed superstar – doing backflips to save the (undeserving) people of Sodom, turning his home upside-down in his enthusiasm to welcome guests, running selflessly into battle to save his



kidnapped nephew, always giving to others and making sacrifices. But in our own lives, is it possible to go too far with chesed? The undisguised favoritism of Yosef's father and the raging jealousy of Yosef's brothers leads them nearly to murder and then actually to

selling their brother as a slave. But can favoritism or jealousy ever be justified? The Torah calls Moshe the most humble person in the world. How can we maintain our sense of self-worth while also reaching for humility? Although anger is universally condemned by our tradition, there are times when even Hashem gets angry. So is it ever okay for us to get angry? As we work on our character, we try to achieve balance. As we look through Tanach, we encounter extreme midot that can help us think about finding that balance. Together, we will explore various midot, their roots in Tanach, and practical ways to ensure that we find balance in our own lives.

Midot Workshop

RENA COREN



In this course, we will learn practical, hands-on tools so that we can become healthier and holier people. Some of the topics that will be covered include: *Ayyin Tovah*: learning to look for the good in ourselves and others, including developing a higher tolerance for

differences between ourselves and others and the ability to learn from people who aren't perfect (who is, right?); *Simchah*: learning how to maintain an optimistic, positive outlook on life despite the inevitable ups and downs; *Kavod*: learning how to respect ourselves and others despite the fact that we

all have flaws; *Savlanut*: learning how to be patient and forgiving of ourselves and others; developing the ability to notice the needs and problems of those around us and the sensitivity to reach out to them; and many other crucial *midot*.

Olam Ha-Midot

RAV YITZCHAK LERNER

Would you like to become a more truthful person? Achieve a more sincere level of motivation in everything you do? Do you wish you could be less jealous, leave anger behind, and more easily find fulfillment, calm, and happiness? Do you want to be more kind? *Sefer "Olam Ha-Midot,"* by Rav Moshe Kestenbaum (author of smash musar hit "*Olam Ha-Avodah*") will help you get there. This *sefer* is all about refining your midot. Join us to challenge yourself to take things to the next level.



Alei Shur

MICHAL PORATH-ZIBMAN

We will study the inspiring teachings of one of the greatest giants of our generation, Rav Shlomo Wolbe. Rav Wolbe was renowned for being able to encourage and inspire Bnei and Bnot Torah to grow spiritually by first recognizing the reality of living in a material world and then providing them with advice and a roadmap on the journey of elevating themselves. The ultimate goal is to enable us as "*avdei Hashem*" to become more introspective about our service of Hashem.



Find Your Personal Hashkafah

RAV JASON KNAPEL / SHANA BET

"Ideas, Personalities, Books and *Hashkafot*
Every Shana Better Needs To Know"



There are so many people and *sefarim* that have shaped the way Jews have thought and lived throughout our history – Rav Kook, Ben Gurion, Natan Scharansky, the Chatam Sofer, the Minchat Chinuch, the Torah Temimah, the Mishnah Berurah.... Here is your chance to

be exposed to the vastness of our *mesorah* – religious and non, right wing and left. In addition to meeting great people, we will be exploring diverse *hashkafot*, ideas and views within our tradition, all geared toward helping you, the "Shana Better," arrive at your own *hashkafah* and world view as you transition from Sem into "Real Life."

The Joy of Being a Jew ("JOBAJ")

RABBI YY WENGLIN / TWO SECTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM

Let's face it: It's simply more exciting to go to a concert or a ballgame or a party than it is to *daven*



Shacharit. Or to take *challah*. Or to keep *Shabbos*. Or to... You get the point. In this course, we will start with some basics of Jewish *hashkafah* and then progress to deeper ideas of *Kabbalah/Chassidus* to help us understand

ourselves and our relationship with Hashem. We will gradually learn to look at the world as a place filled with His holiness and wisdom, one-hundred percent suited for intense closeness and attachment to Him. Anticipated topics include truth, our deep desires in life, self-esteem, spiritual reality, emotions, *davening*, *Shabbos*, and much more. Once a Jew more fully appreciates and internalizes deeper ideas in Judaism, her joy from being Jewish increases proportionately. Who knows, you might even walk away from this course knowing how to make an "*asher yatzar*" with the same *simchah* and passion as if you had won America Idol!

Michtav Me-Eliyahu

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM

If Judaism says that love isn't just about attraction, what is it about, and how does one go about achieving true love? Does everyone have the same amount of free will, and do we ourselves have the same amount at all points of our lives? What is true happiness? How much time and effort do I need to invest in my career, and how much should I just rely



on Hashem? Some people claim that we see miracles every day – but where are they, and how should this affect my life? Rav Eliyahu Dessler was born in Europe right before the turn of the 20th century and became one of the youngest students ever to be accepted to the famous Yeshiva of Kelm. He left an immense impact everywhere he went, including England and, at the end of his life, Eretz Yisrael. Join us as we look at Rav Dessler's approach to many different issues, exploring how he built upon earlier sources and how other Gedolim approached these topics.

"Good Talk"

BRACHA KROHN

Do you sometimes regret saying something? (Who doesn't!) Do you sometimes wish you *had* said something, and wonder why you didn't? Have you ever wondered why someone else's words hurt you or matter so much to you? ("Sticks and stones might break my bones but names will never hurt me" – just not true, right?) In this course, we will discuss the power of speech and the way our words affect others and even ourselves. Going way beyond just "*lashon ha-ra*," we will learn about many different mitzvot that relate to speech and examine stories in Tanach where speech changed the course of history. If you want to feel inspired and motivated to use your words more kindly and responsibly, and feel stronger



and less affected by others' destructive words, this course is for you! The learning we do each week will be relevant immediately and give you something to think about and work on until we see each other again.

Netivot Shalom

RAV YITZCHAK LERNER / SHANA BET

How does one work practically on *emunah* in Hashem and *Yirat Shamayim*? What is *simchas ha-*



chaim and how does one achieve it? What steps can I take to improve my *tefilah*? Using "Netivot Shalom", by Rabbi Shalom Noach Brozovsky, the Slonimer Rebbe, we will gain insight into the weekly *parshah* and *chagim* and take personal lessons from

his work. We will explore ideas ranging from belief in God to self-improvement.

What Is a Jew?

RABBI YAAKOV YISROEL WENGLIN

Did you ever wonder what life is really about, what your purpose is, or what you're supposed to be doing



with your life? Have you seen one of those videos or documentaries that go "behind-the-scenes" of really cool stuff or that show "the way things work"? This text-based course will go "behind the scenes" of physical reality to

reveal the way things work in spiritual reality, thereby answering the two questions above and many more. We will draw from two holy *sefarim* – Nefesh HaChaim and Tanya – to offer you greater clarity on the structure of reality as Hashem created it and the structure of your soul as Hashem created you. We will follow these texts to learn that you are in this world in a relationship with Hashem, and that you can deepen and strengthen that relationship by tapping into the spiritual power of your *neshamah*.

You may also find out that the Jews really do "control" the world at the highest levels... just in a way that you may not have expected. Rather than "Who Is a Jew?" (Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, etc.), we will focus on the question of "What Is a Jew?"

Shirah Chadashah

MICHAL PORAT-ZIBMAN

Have you ever sat through a beautiful kumtitz, tisch, or se'udah shelishit and been inspired by the beautiful singing? Found yourself swaying back and forth with your eyes closed... and then realized that you aren't exactly sure what those words mean... and you're not even sure what the words even are? Some of the most meaningful experiences we have throughout the year in Israel and later on come from singing Jewish songs together. Join us as we explore a different song each week, learn to understand what the words mean and delve into the greater context of where these words appear. Through midrashic, chasidic, Chazal, and contemporary sources, we will arrive at a better appreciation of the songs we sing and a greater understanding of song as its own unique approach in avodat Hashem.

Inspirational Concepts in Tefilah

RAV ELI WAGNER

How are we meant to prepare for each *tefilah*, and what do these guidelines teach us about what *tefilah* is meant to be on a deeper level? What level of *kavanah* (focus) during *tefilah* is crucial, and what happens if our attention wandered? Since *tefilah* is so clearly triggered by



time, why isn't it considered "*zeman geramah*" and therefore something from which women are exempt? The *Gemara* teaches us that the three daily prayers parallel both the three daily Temple offerings, as well as the three daily prayers instituted by the *Avot*; but why are both of these models

needed, and what do they each reveal about the deep nature of our communication with God? Join us to examine the deep and inspirational concepts behind our *tefilot* which direct not only *what* we say, but also *how* and *when*.

Tefilah in Tanach and Today

TALI PFEIFFER

Some of our Avot and Imahot were childless for so many years – but if Hashem knew all along that they wanted children so badly, why did they need to ask, and in our own lives, why do we? Avraham begged



Hashem to give Sodom another chance, but how do we have the right to ask Hashem to change His mind, and why would He do so just because we ask? Moshe davened desperately (515 times, according to the Midrash!) for Hashem

to let him enter Eretz Yisrael, yet Hashem declined. Why are *tefilot* not always answered? In our own lives, we often start davening and find that questions flood our minds. Fortunately, we are not the first ones to grapple with them. Join us as we address these questions by journeying through Tanach, learning from those who prayed before us, drawing lessons from stories and characters that will enhance our own *tefilah* and relationship with Hashem.

Meaning in Tefilah

MALKA HUBSCHER

Been *davening* for years, but never really sure of yourself? Sort of know what to say when, but not always? Or maybe you know what to do technically, but you're looking to enhance your *tefilot* by learning the theme of each *tefilah*. We will study the structure of the daily *tefilot*, the *halachot* of *tefilah*, and methods to enhance *kavanah*.



Tefilah GPS (Adv.)

RAV EITAN MAYER

When we pray, even if we know what the words mean (which, let's be honest, we often don't), we don't always know where we're *going* with each *tefilah* (isn't this paragraph just more praise?) and what makes it unique. For example, everyone always says "*Ashrei*" is so special, but actually, it sounds a lot like everything else we say – so what's the big deal? What are we trying to say with each "*hallelukah*" that



makes it different than the one before and the one after? The *berachot* before and after *Shema* (*Yotzer Or*, *Ahavah Rabbah*, and *Ve-Yatziv*) are full of praise, but they seem to have nothing to do with each other, and nothing to do with *Shema*! Where are we going with all of this? What are we trying to say? How do we connect and feel what we're saying on a deep and personal level? Naturally, if we lack a sense of where we are and where we're headed, we often feel disconnected and bored, which then chips away at our motivation to pray in the first place. We need a "Tefilah GPS"! In this textual course, we will carefully learn select *tefilot*, exploring their meaning, structure, and specific themes, so that we truly know what we're saying and can fill our words with meaning and connection. We will look at daily *tefilah* and *tefilot* we say on special occasions.

TIP: every *tefilah* course is different – so different that many girls take two! This is the year to work on your *tefilah*!

Connecting in Tefilah

MICHAEL PORATH ZIBMAN

We will engage in a deep study of the themes of the various *berachot* of the nineteen that we say daily. By focusing on a different *berachah* every week, we will seek not only a better understanding of the meaning of the *berachot* themselves, but also to enhance our *kavanah* during this *tefilah*. In addition

to *Shemoneh Esrei*, just as *tefilah* has been part of the Jewish life experience since time immemorial, so too, people have written about the *tefilah* experience



since then. Scholars and sages, from the early biblical commentators throughout Jewish history, Chasidic masters, and contemporary rabbis and community leaders, both men and women, have put their thoughts down for their

generation and generations to come. We will examine some of these great works on *tefilah* and various specific *tefilot* in our *Siddur*, gaining ideas and insights each week that will enhance the way we serve Hashem.

Tehilim in Tefilah (Adv)

RAV EITAN

If the whole פסוקי דזמרה is basically just praise, why does it need to be so long – do we really need 5 “hallelukot” that all say basically the same thing? What’s actually so special about “אשרי” that it’s the



centerpiece of פסוקי דזמרה? What does “מזמור שיר ליום השבת” actually have to do with *Shabbat*, since it doesn’t talk about resting or creation? What are we trying to say in קבלת שבת, since barely anything there even mentions *Shabbat*? Is שיר המעלות really the best choice for whenever

something is worrying us? We will analyze and uncover the real story behind פסוקי דזמרה, Kabbalat *Shabbat* and more and understand why we say them when we do.

Sefer Tehilim

MICHAEL PORAT ZIBMAN

Sefer Tehilim is the *sefer* that is the most closely integrated into our daily lives, since much of what we say when *davening* is actually from *Tehilim*. David Ha-Melech’s poetic masterpiece enables us to express ourselves to God at our lowest moments, at our



greatest moments, at moments of gratitude and at moments of intense seeking. Join us on this journey to learn select chapters of this timeless classic that will enhance not only our routine *tefilot*, but also those spontaneous moments where we feel a desire (or a desire for a desire) to call out to God and to connect with Him.

Laws and Meaning of Tefilah

RABBI YITZCHAK LERNER

I really want *tefilah* to be part of my daily routine, but to be honest, I really don’t know the meaning of what I’m saying and the rules which should guide me. Do women need to pray anything formal, or may they make do with just a few *berachot* each day? Do I need to say *Minchah*? When is the latest time I can still say *Shacharit* and *Minchah*? If I missed a *tefilah*, can I make it up? Do I answer “amen” or “kedushah” if I’m in the middle of another *tefilah*? Should I catch up during Torah reading, or listen to the reading? Is there any difference whether I pray at home or with a *minyan*? If I’m late or fall behind, what can I skip in order to catch up? Is it better to say less but with more *kavanah*, or say everything I can? Can I take a jog before *tefilah*, or study for a test, or take the train, or have breakfast? The year in Israel is prime time to take your *tefilah* to the next level so that you



can continue a strong connection with Hashem in college and beyond. Can there be any kind of real relationship without good communication? In addition to knowing what we’re saying and learning how to focus, there is also a lot to know about the what, the when, the how, and the why of *tefilah*, and

even if we've been "*davening*" for years, we still may not know. Join us to examine these questions and more, starting with *Modeh Ani* all the way to *Aleinu*.

Tefilah: Meaning and Halachah

RAV RAFI ROSENBLUM / SHANA BET



You just woke up, you're starving, and you have a million things to do. But what activities are permitted before *tefilah* in the morning? Can you go for a jog? Does it matter if you can't concentrate without your morning coffee? At shul, you're in the middle of

davening and someone asks you a question – can you answer? You finished your *Shemoneh Esrei* and you realize that you forgot "*Mashiv Ha-Ru'ach*" – what now? You've taken on *davening Minchah*, but you accidentally forgot today – is there anything to do? In this course, we'll cover the topics needed to answer these questions and many more, in addition to exploring the content of the *tefilot* themselves.

Knocking on Heaven's Door

RABBI YAAKOV YISROEL WENGLIN

Three steps back, three steps forward. Bow... Bow... Potch. Potch... Yawn, yawn, yawn. Bow... Bow...



Three steps back. Again. Three steps back. Three steps forward. Bow... Bow... Potch. Potch... Yaaaaawwwwn. "— Wait, where am I? Oh, right..." Bow... Bow... Three steps back. Again... Every day. For the rest of your life. If

this captures your prayer experience, then this course may be for you. We will look to change the game completely by learning about *davening* from the basic to the deep, drawing from select Chasidic and Kabbalah-based sources. In addition to regular *shiurim*, the course will sometimes be more of a workshop, using tools of group discussion, writing, role-playing, and meditation exercises to help you experientially internalize the information we learn. In

the process of changing the *davening* experience, the course aims to also change the way you experience *yourself*, both in terms of your self-identification and your *midot* (character traits). But a bit of a warning: This course is for mature audiences only. The ideal student for this course is one who is focused and growth-oriented, willing to contemplate new ideas, to participate in the exercises and discussions, and in general, to increase her connection to Judaism and Hashem. If you take this course, after all is said and done, you might actually not be in such a hurry to take those last three steps back!

Orchot Tzadikim

BRACHA KROHN / MEETS SUN + TUE

Each week, we will learn from "Orchot Tzadikim" ("Pathways of the Righteous") about a *midah* that we encounter in

ourselves and others. We will learn about the roots of the *midah*, its positives and negatives, and how to actively and consciously improve our thoughts and behaviors relating to happiness, jealousy, generosity, humility,



laziness, and more. The experience of working on ourselves makes us happier people with better, healthier and deeper relationships with Hashem, friends and family. At this exciting point in your life, as you mature into an independent adult headed for new relationships with roommates, bosses and spouses, you will learn some of what it takes to be successful in all of these areas.

Pirkei Avot

MALKA HUBSCHER

The moral lessons, values, profound psychological insights, and philosophical teachings of the *Tanna'im*, the rabbis who composed the *Mishnah* almost 2,000 years ago, remain immediately relevant and deeply meaningful today. We will use them as a guide to inspire us to reach



new heights in both our *avodat Hashem* and *midot ben adam la-chavero*.

Hashkafah 101

RENA COREN

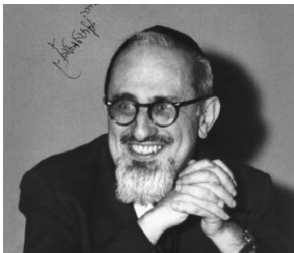
Culled from a wide range of sources, this course is designed to open your mind and heart to have a healthy Jewish perspective on topics relevant to our everyday lives, such as: What is the special *ko'ach* that every Jewish woman has? What are the fundamental tools to building healthy relationships? Since I was born into a certain environment and raised in a certain way, what does God expect of me? And much more!



Rav Soloveitchik on the Jewish Family

MALKA HUBSCHER

Want to improve your relationships with your siblings, parents or grandparents? Maybe already thinking about how to have a great marriage and how to be a good mother? The time to become the person you would like to be... is now. The Jewish family has always been the backbone of our nation; family relationships define, shape and influence us throughout our entire lives. They can be very loving, positive and enriching, and at the same time complex and stressful. In this course, using Rav Soloveitchik's "Family Redeemed" and other selections from his writing, we will learn from this world-class *gadol*, modern philosopher, and deeply sensitive, sympathetic, and wise observer of human and Jewish nature how to improve the dynamics within our own families.



Matan Torah Today

MICHAL PORATH-ZIBMAN / SHANA BET

One of the most extraordinary events that ever happened to the Jewish people was the experience of *Matan Torah* and receiving the *Aseret Ha-Dibberot*. The Torah provides great detail about the events leading up to the actual revelation. In addition to the commandments themselves, how can the lessons of that back story apply to us today? How do we understand the first of the Ten Commandments, "I am Hashem, your God" – is it a command, or just an introduction to the commands? How can God command us not to be jealous? While it's certainly important not to "bear false witness," why is it such a significant part of our core value system that it should make the ultimate "top ten" list of mitzvot? Through the eyes of classic *parshanim*, Chasidic Rebbes, and other commentators, we will delve into a textual journey that will enrich our own life experiences and *avodat Hashem*.



"Intense" Mesilat Yesharim (Adv)

RAV EITAN MAYER

Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzato's "Path of the Righteous" is the first "*musar*" *sefer* I ever learned, and it changed my life. More than anything else, this is a book that helps you to step back from your life and *think*. While many people who haven't learned "*musar*" think it means "rebuke" or "telling someone they've done the wrong thing," "*musar*" is really just the kind of learning which is meant to impact us personally rather than just intellectually. *Mesilat Yesharim* begins by asking us what each of us personally is here for in this world, which is a startling question and a real wake-up call. The *sefer* continues by demonstrating the importance of taking time each



day to think about “how we did” that day, what we’re proud of and where we have work to do. It then presents a “path” (hence the title) which guides us as we seek to spend our time well here in this world. Join us for a highly practical, highly personal, highly intense journey towards stepping back from your life, reflecting, considering, focusing, and deciding on your path this year and for life as servants of Hashem.

Kohelet: Why Are We Here?

RAV ASHI TARAGIN

In 500 years from now, not only will no one remember you and me, but in fact, the odds are that it will make no difference at all that we ever lived. Nothing we do during our lifetime will remain for long, and we, along with pretty much everyone else, will fade into oblivion and be utterly forgotten. If so, what’s the point of our having lived? Join us to explore *Kohelet*, the sefer in Tanach which asks all the hard questions and pulls no punches in its search for the meaning of our lives.

Shemirat Ha-Lashon

RENA COREN / SHANA BET

What is it about *lashon ha-ra* that we find so tempting and so difficult to control? Why should it



please and entertain us so much to share negative information about others? What is it about *lashon ha-ra* that is so destructive that the Torah forbids it in such a sweeping and severe manner – what could be so wrong with repeating something which actually is true? What is the difference

between *lashon ha-ra*, *rechilus* and *motzi shem ra*? What strategies can we adopt as individuals, families, and communities in order to improve the way we use our power of speech? If *lashon ha-ra* is truly so corrosive, under what conditions is it permitted or even proper to share it – how about for *shidduchim* or roommate purposes? What do I do when someone starts talking *lashon ha-ra* to me? Is it permitted to share *lashon ha-ra* about non-Jews, and even if it is technically permitted, is it ethically proper? May I speak *lashon ha-ra* about myself, and if not, why not – doesn’t my reputation belong to

me? We will use *Sefer Shemirat Ha-Lashon* and *Sefer Chafetz Chaim* to learn the *hashkafah* and *halachah* of *shemirat ha-lashon*, along with practical tips to make this *mitzvah* part of our everyday lives, in all situations that we find ourselves.

“Hashem Wants the Heart” The Torah of Chasidut

RABBI YAAKOV YISROEL
WENGLIN / SHANA BET

We all know that ideally, we want to do everything in life with a full heart. Yeah, go ahead and say it: “With all of our heart and soul!” We want to be “into it” when we do things in life, whether we’re talking about marriage or children or career or personal growth or acts of kindness or even just chilling out. And, of course, we want to be fired up for Torah and *mitzvot*. And it all starts (and ends) with your heart. In this course, we will learn some classic Torah from the world of Chasidut to help us give Hashem what He wants from us – our hearts.



Shiur Klali

“TAG-TEAM”: BRACHA, RAV EITAN, AND RAV JASON

The entire student body comes together for a weekly “shmooze” hosted by our administrators. We’ll begin with the week’s brief but important announcements and update you about upcoming events in our calendar, including *tiyyulim* and *shabbatonim*. Then, working as a tag-team, we’ll address timely matters in the year in Israel as they come up. For example: How can you make a strong beginning in your



seminary year? How can you identify your goals for the year and then translate them into a concrete personal to-do list? How do you handle challenging interpersonal situations, like tension with a roommate or an old friend who's nervous about your new friends? How do you decide what to take on in the year in Israel without thinking overly much about how this is going to work outside seminary? And then how do you successfully take your growth back into the world outside? How do you communicate your seminary experience to parents, siblings, and friends who aren't here to see what you see and feel what you do? How can you take all that you're learning and make sure you remember it after seminary? How can you best prepare for challenges like vacations, the summer, college, and a busy life full of distractions? "Shiur Klali" will help provide you with a sense of direction for the year and reflections that will take you beyond.



History and Society

The Making of a Gadol

RAV HANOCH TELLER

We use the terms “Gadol” and “Gedolim” all the time to describe people who are “great,” but what kinds



of greatness do we actually have in mind? Are we talking about really smart people? Super daveners? What specifically makes someone a “Gadol”? What is the difference between “just” a very good Jew and a Gadol? Since there is no Gedolim “election process,” no school which grants a “Gadol”

degree, and in fact no job where you can be hired as a “Gadol,” who decides who is considered a “Gadol”? Since human greatness comes in many flavors and sizes, it makes sense that great Jews are diverse as well – so what different kinds of Gedolim do we have? Can women be Gedolim (Gedolot?)? Join us to understand what greatness is, and how each of us can stretch toward it, by meeting examples of real Gedolim through stories and discussion.

Did They Do the Right Thing? (Adv) Analyzing Halachah in Historical Situations

RAV ELI WAGNER

Ever been to Masada and learned about the mass suicide? What about the false messiah, Shabtai Zvi, who convinced thousands of Jews that he was the “real thing”? (For that matter, when the “real thing” does arrive, how *will* we be sure?) If you fall in love with an Ethiopian, can you marry him – where did he come from? What is his history and halachic status? Have you ever learned about a fascinating episode in history and thought, “What would I do in that situation?” or “What would the Torah want me to do?” Often, when learning about either history or *halachah*, we focus solely on one and neglect the other. Each week in this course, we will choose a significant event in our history and analyze a halachic

challenge it presents (including episodes nominated by participants in the course). The skills gained and lessons learned through our analysis of each topic will allow us to put ourselves in the shoes of Jews through the ages and view history and *halachah* in a new light.



Zionism & the Jewish State

RAV AHARON WEXLER

Join us for an intensive study of the political history that brought about a Jewish State in *Eretz Yisrael*. Who were these secular and religious men and women who, with the help of God, brought about a complete change in Jewish affairs after a 2000-year *galut*? What



happened in the 19th century to bring Zionism into the hearts and minds of the people?

Supporting Israel on Campus

SHARON WAGNER-ZAUDER

Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in negativity toward Israel on college campuses. Using the latest multimedia educational resources, including film and video, this course will feature interactive workshops and guest speakers and use current events as the backdrop for class discussion. Topics include:

- The Occupation Allegation
- Refugees
- The Palestinian Narrative
- The Jewish Right to the Land of Israel
- Developing your Personal Narrative
- The Physical Dimension
- The Moral Dimension
- The Apartheid Allegation
- Jerusalem
- Israel Inside – the Israel you don't hear about
- And more...



Backstage with the Gedolim

RAV ASHI TARAGIN

Often, we think of Chazal as people who taught us what to do: halachah. But Chazal also shared their life stories and life experience. How did our sages treat their parents? How did they cope with suffering in their own lives? What did they see in their dreams? What business dilemmas did they face? Learn about the Shabbat cow, Rabbi Akiva's chicken, and many more as we delve into the stories Chazal passed down to be remembered for all time.



Sho'ah ve-Emunah Program

IN MEMORY OF RABBI AVRAHAM AND MIRIAM JUNGREIS
& REBBETZIN ESTHER JUNGREIS

Sho'ah ve-Emunah

MICHAL PORATH-ZIBMAN

Undeniably the most painful event of modern Jewish history, the *Sho'ah* continues to frighten, inspire, and perplex us. We will study the key events surrounding the before, during and after, as we also try to delve into the world of the religious Jew during those times. In addition to understanding what was done to the Jews as victims, we will also explore how they reacted, including some extraordinary questions that ordinary people asked, such as how they could keep kosher while starving in the ghetto, or keep Shabbat in Auschwitz, or whether one may redeem a loved one if another Jew will be taken in their place. We will also ask the questions the Jewish world has asked since the Holocaust: Where was God? Do we look at the Holocaust as a punishment for the Jewish people, and if so, for what sin(s); or was it unrelated to anything that *Am Yisrael* had done, and if so, how do we understand how Hashem stood by and allowed it to happen?



Sho'ah ve-Emunah

RAV JASON KNAPEL

In this course, we will explore one of our greatest tragedies through the lenses of history, *halachah* and *hashkafah*. Topics that will be discussed are: The uniqueness of the *Sho'ah*; the life that was – understanding what was lost; the history and theology of antisemitism; the rise of the Nazi party; the reaction of the world; what did we know and when did we know it; what is a ghetto and were all ghettos the same; the transports and camps; rescue and resistance; leadership and youth during the war years; theology of the *Sho'ah*; the end of the war – when did it really end for the Jews, and how does it continue to echo even today.



CnC

CHAVRUTOT & CHABUROT

In almost every hour in our schedule, you'll see an option called "Chavrutot and Chaburot" or "CnC." (We also call it a "Beit Midrash period.") Why should you sign up? When you sign up for a period of "Chavrutot & Chaburot" (maximum 8 per week without special permission), you are joining a tradition pioneered by students through centuries of Jewish history and continued today in every yeshiva all around the world.



Our Beit Midrash is the heart of Midreshet Moriah. It's the place where you'll find your very own "makom," a permanent place for the year where you can keep your personal *sefarim* and do your learning. It will help you feel a sense of belonging, connection and ownership and facilitate your learning and your tefilah.

The keys to success in CnC are a) putting your phone in the basket so it doesn't distract you and b) choosing a project so that you don't waste time every week trying to decide what to do (or just space out...). The teachers staffing the *Beit Midrash* will have lots of suggestions for what you could learn, whether it's Tanach, *halachah*, Jewish thought, working on your Hebrew, or anything else.

TIP: make a plan for what to do in each of your CnC periods so you don't just space out...



You have the following options:

Review Time:

Looking at your schedule for the week, you may find that you have twenty courses or more! It's great to have the chance to learn so much, but if you also want to remember anything, the **ONLY** way is to review. But when? Easy: CnC periods. Schedule in the number of CnC's you'll need to: a) go over what you learned, b) make sure you understand it, c) clarify your notes, d) make lists of questions to go back to ask your teachers. Welcome to adult learning 😊, where the good news is that there are no tests, but the bad news is that all the responsibility to review and solidify what you've learned falls on you! Don't fall into the trap of spending every moment learning something new. As the *Gemara* teaches us, "Learning without reviewing is like planting and never harvesting!"

Prep time:

Teachers in your various courses throughout the week may assign preparation for you to complete before the next shiur. Other teachers may casually

throw out challenges or suggestions for those who want more depth. When do you do it? CnC! You'll have teachers around in the *Beis* so you can get help if you have questions.

Personal Projects:

Need time to review the *parshah* (and write a *Devar Torah*) or learn more about a topic which interests you? Interested in doing *Nach Yomi* or Bracha's "*Beki'ut Parshah*" sheets? Want to learn *be-chavruta* with another girl or with a *madrichah* or teacher? CnC is the time to do it! More than any other kind of learning you'll do at seminary, working on your own or with a *chavruta* in the *Beit Midrash*, armed with a dictionary and making progress through a *sefer* you thought was beyond you, is the way you'll gain skills which will last you a lifetime and help you in all the learning you do. Challenge yourself!



"Chaburah":

Led by a teacher, a "*chaburah*" is a "group *chavruta*" which meets in the *Beit Midrash* around a table to learn a *sefer* together. A *chaburah* provides a great opportunity to form a real connection with your teachers because it's a small group and creates a more personal atmosphere. It also means that if you really wanted to learn a certain *sefer* this year and then found it wasn't on our schedule of courses, you can arrange with a teacher to give a *chaburah* on the topic – and now your *sefer* is on the schedule!



SPECIAL CNC'S

"All Together Now"

Tuesday & Wednesday nights at 8:30, we're all together in the "Beis" to create a huge "*Kol Torah*" and enjoy the energy of a dynamic *Beit Midrash*! The place will be packed with teachers giving exciting *chaburot*!

Your Special Chavruta from Midreshet Darkaynu

MICHAL PORATH ZIBMAN

Midreshet Darkaynu is a seminary for young women with 'light' special needs. On Sunday evenings at 7:30pm, you will have an opportunity to do a different form of *chesed* and get to know them through a relationship of learning Torah together. Each week, we will learn various topics together (including *midot*, *lashon hara*, *chesed*) in either *chavruta* or *chaburah* style. No previous experience in special needs required – the only skills you need are patience, sensitivity, and a big heart 😊. Join us and become an exciting part of their (and your) *Beit Midrash* experience!

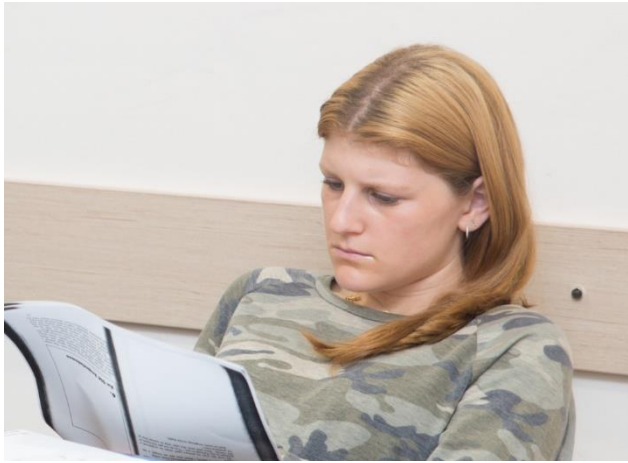
"Nach Yomi" Program

COORDINATOR: TBA

Our "Nach Yomi" program enables you to gain familiarity with all of *Nach*, as you go through it one *perek* a day. Many students continue beyond their year in Israel and do a *siyyum* on all of *Nach*! See Rav Eitan for details on when the program will begin.

Late-Night Beis

Regular "Night Seder" ends at 9:20, but the Rambam teaches us that night-time learning is the highest-quality learning there is and that someone who



wants to grow in learning should never waste a night! So... on Sun, Tue, and Wed nights, we're staffing the *Beis* until 10:20 with faculty who will be offering you *chaburot* and more. Looking for the crowd who's most "into" learning? Come join us in the Late-Night *Beis*! (Yes, Late-Night *Beis* counts as an "hour" in your total number of hours!)

"Mishmar":

Thursday nights at 9:30 PM, come to the *Beis* for the very last shiur of the week – an inspiring, informal shiur stocked with cholent, kugel, plenty of nosh and delivered by a rotation of teachers and guest speakers. This is purely *lishmah* – you can't sign up for it, you don't get credit for it, but you do get lots of great food and there's no better way to end your learning week!



"Weekly Parshah Quiz"

BRACHA KROHN / LISHMAH & PRIZES! ☺

Study the who, what, when, where, why and how of every parshah during your *Beis* time or with a friend, and then do a weekly quiz to earn prizes! Each student who succeeds in making a *siyyum* of a sefer in *Chumash* will be given a gift certificate to Pomeranz Book Store. Join the excitement as students independently learn through the Torah

parshah by *parshah* "bekiut-style," taking a simple weekly quiz every Sunday on 1-3 פרשיות to mark your progress (the schedule is posted). (Note: this isn't a course you "sign up" for.)

SAMPLE CHABUROT

"Kol Dodi Dofek" Chaburah

Join us for Rav Soloveitchik's perspective on the historic opportunities presented to the Jewish people by the founding of the State of Israel.

"Eish Kodesh" Chaburah

Join us to learn the Torah of Rav Klonimus Kalman of Piacezna, known as the *Eish Kodesh*, one of the great *gedolim* who wrote his Torah from inside the Warsaw Ghetto during the Holocaust.

Kohelet

Join us to explore the meaning of life with the wisest man who ever lived – Shlomo Ha-Melech. In *Kohelet*, we'll follow along as Shlomo asks the emunah questions we often wonder about but don't always know how to handle.

Rambam Chaburah

The best way to get a quick "handle" on many Torah concepts is to go through the Rambam, who organizes everything beautifully for us. All day, you'll find yourself connecting things you learn in your other courses with what we learn here!

Em Ha-Banim Semeichah

Rabbi Yissachar Teichtal, a Satmar *chasid* who lived in Hungary during the Holocaust, realized the error of his anti-Zionist *hashkafah* and the disaster it had brought upon *Am Yisrael*. He devoted his last years to writing this *sefer*, in which he passionately argues from a hashkafic and halachic perspective for the necessity of building a Jewish homeland in Israel. We will be studying selected readings from his *sefer*.

"Hegiyonei Halachah"

Join us to explore the themes behind the *halachah* on topics such as the *Chagim* and *Shabbat*.

Igeret Ha-Ramban

Join us to take a close look at one of the most important letters ever written – a letter from the Ramban to his son, instructing him how to learn Torah and how to be the best Jew he can be.



SHANA BET LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

RAV JASON KNAPEL, SHANA BET DIRECTOR

Students who return for a second year at Midreshet Moriah represent the future leaders of our community. This program will give you additional exposure to issues of social, national, and religious importance to the Jewish people. This exposure will broaden your horizons, enhance your abilities to take initiative and exhibit leadership, and encourage and empower you to take active roles on your college campuses, communities, and hopefully in the future in *Eretz Yisrael*.



The “Rakezet” at Midreshet Moriah: *Your Personal Faculty Mentor...*

The year in Israel is a time of intense personal reflection, and it's important to have someone you can always turn to who knows you and has time for you. At Midreshet Moriah, your “Rakezet” will be your personal faculty mentor, meeting with you one-on-one every week throughout the entire year. You get to use this time however you prefer: learning with your Rakezet any topic you choose; reflecting on a personal topic of concern to you; and much more. You'll spend Shabbat at your Rakezet's home too!



Administration & Faculty

Administration



Rabbi Meyer Berglas, Founder and Dean. Rabbi Berglas's warm smile, gentle manner, and deep wisdom have made him a beloved mentor to decades of students, and his shiurim play a central role in shaping the character and values of our students. Every year, a few students are privileged to learn with Rabbi Berglas be-chavruta as part of Midreshet's unique commitment to the growth of each individual student. Rabbi Berglas, a student of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, received Semikhah and an MHL from RIETS and an MA at Columbia University. Rabbi Berglas lives in Neve Alizah, the community he founded with his wife, Vicky.



Mrs. Vicky Berglas, Director. Vicky's warmth and empathy make her a much sought-after confidant and chavruta, and the sounds of laughter with the joy of learning always accompany her "chevrah" in the Bet Midrash. Vicky's course in "Sho'ah and Faith" is one of our students' favorites, combining the study of the Holocaust with religious and halachic writings from that time. When Vicky leads our students on the annual Heritage tour of Poland, they are treated to her unique perspective, which combines encyclopedic historical knowledge with a deep connection to the great personalities of our past and the conviction that the Holocaust can inspire us toward meaning and accomplishment in our personal own lives. Vicky also serves as a guide at Yad Vashem. She earned a BA in Psychology and Judaic Studies at Yeshiva University and an MA in Jewish History at Haifa University. Vicky lives in Neve Alizah, the community she founded with her husband, Rabbi Meyer Berglas.



Rabbi Eitan Mayer, Menahel. "Rav Eitan" is known both for his wry sense of humor and his shiurim in Tanach and Machshavah, which emphasize creative thinking and personal grappling with Torah and its implications for our lives. Rav Eitan is always available for personal advice, halakhic questions, and discussions on

emunah. Rav Eitan learned at Yeshivat Sha'alvim, received Semikhah at RIETS as a Wexner Graduate Fellow, and continued his learning in the Beren Kollel Elyon. He earned a BA in English Literature and an MA in Jewish Education at Yeshiva University, and is completing an MA in Jewish Philosophy and an EdD in Jewish Education at Yeshiva University. Rav Eitan taught at the Graduate Program for Women at Yeshiva University and served as Assistant Rabbi at The Jewish Center on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Rav Eitan lives in Neve Daniel with his family.



Mrs. Bracha Krohn, Menahel. Bracha teaches Tanach, Midrash, and Rabbinic Thought. Bracha, as her students call her, has an enthusiasm for learning which permeates the classroom. Her dynamic teaching style encourages participation and fosters a strong desire to learn, and her openness and genuineness create an environment for thoughtful, honest questioning. She has a special way of identifying with students and showing them her authentic care and concern. Bracha learned at Michlalah, was Jewish Studies valedictorian and earned a BA at Stern College in Jewish Studies and English Literature, and studies Bible at Yeshiva University's Bernard Revel Graduate School. She taught for seven years at the Fuchs Mizrachi School and the Women's Beit Midrash in Cleveland, before making aliyah in 2008. Bracha currently serves on the educational staff of Camp Stone, where she returns each summer with her family. She lives in Efrat with her husband and three children.



Mrs. Dena Terebello, Eim Bayit. Dena's signature warmth and genuine nature help her serve as a "mother away from home" to the girls. Her outgoing and caring personality helps her connect with every type of girl and makes her easily approachable. She focuses on making every girl feel at home. Dena has extensive experience working with young women for over 15 years, and is also a life coach. She lives in Yerushalayim with her husband and four kids, within walking distance of school, and her home is open to all of the girls.

Faculty



Mrs. Leora Bednarsh loves to teach Gemara and Halakhah, and the enthusiasm and warmth she brings to Torah are infectious. In her shiurim, she not only teaches our students Torah and love of Torah, she also gives them the

research skills to learn more and the presentation skills to give their own shiurim. Leora earned a BA in Psychology & Linguistics at Princeton University, completed the Scholars' Circle program at Drisha Institute, and is certified as a Yo'etzet Halakhah of the Keren Ariel Program at Nishmat. She taught at Yeshiva of Flatbush High School and serves as a Yo'etzet Halakhah on Nishmat's Halakhah Hotline. She lives in Alon Shvut with her family.



Dr. Aviva Goldstein is an educational consultant and family counselor whose research, counseling and teaching focus on the intersection of positive psychology, family cohesion, and Judaism. She teaches positive psychology to both college students and educators, weaving together what research and Judaism teach about happiness and a life well-lived. Fascinated by the science of resilience, empathy and gratitude, she particularly enjoys teaching gap-year students at a critical moment in their lives. In her private practice, she works with individuals and families and specializes in parenting, adolescence and child development. Aviva holds a doctorate in education from Yeshiva University. She made aliyah from Riverdale, New York, and lives in Jerusalem with her family.



Rabbi Uri Cohen ("Rav Uri") teaches halakhah and Jewish Thought. Rav Uri's vast knowledge, infectious curiosity and love of learning, broad grasp of contemporary Jewish and popular culture, and warm smile and sense of humor all endear him

to our students and make his shiurim not-to-be-missed. Rav Uri learned at Yeshivat Sha'alvim and Yeshivat Hamivtar and received Semikhah from RIETS and the Joseph Straus Seminary at Yeshivat Hamivtar. He earned a BA in Jewish Studies, an MA in Medieval Jewish History, and an MS in Jewish Education from Yeshiva University. Rav Uri has served as a teacher and Rabbi at Princeton University. He lives in Ramat Beit Shemesh with his wife, Dr. Yocheved Cohen.



Mrs. Malka Hubscher teaches Tanach. Malka, as our students call her, is known for her great sense of humor, her ability to make any and all learning exciting, her down-to-earth wisdom and good advice, and the intensity and focus of her shiurim. Malka learned at Michlalah and earned a BA in Jewish Studies and an MA in Bible at Yeshiva University. She lives in Efrat with her family.



Mrs. Rena Coren teaches Machshavah. Rena, as our students call her, approaches all of her students with love, warmth, smile, and intuitive understanding. Her humor, spirituality, optimism, and deep belief that each student is

gifted with great potential all make her the ideal address for students looking for guidance, inspiration, help with a problem, or just someone to listen. Rena earned a BA at Michlalah and has completed studies toward an MA as well. She lives in Jerusalem with her family.



Mrs. Sepha Kirshblum teaches Tanach and Jewish Thought. Sepha, as our students call her, has a genuine love for both her students and Torah, especially Tanach. She tries to create a balance of creativity, fun, humor and kavod Ha-Torah in the classroom to help her students love learning as much as she does. Before making aliyah, Sepha taught Tanach at the Ramaz Upper School, where she was also Senior Grade Advisor, Israel Advisor, and involved in extracurricular programming. Sepha received her BA from Stern College with a Major in Judaic Studies and a Minor in Psychology. She received a dual Masters in both special and regular Education from Hunter College. Sepha lives in Jerusalem.



Rav Jason Knapel (“Rav Jason”) is beloved as a mechanech for both his fascinating and inspiring shiurim as well as his easy approachability and warmth as a mentor to our students. He served as Director of Informal Education, Director of Judaic Studies and Assistant Principal at Hillel Yeshiva High School in Deal, New Jersey for many years. Subsequent to his aliyah, he was Mashgiach Ruchani at Yeshivat Shvilei HaTorah and teaches at Sha’alvim for Women. Rav Jason was ordained at RIETS and received his BA from Yeshiva College and an MS from the Bernard Revel Graduate School. He lives in Beit Shemesh with his family.



Rabbi Yitzchak Lerner teaches Halakhah and Jewish Thought. Rav Lerner is known for his high-energy teaching style, his fiery passion for Torah and mitzvot, his personal warmth as a mentor, and his outstanding shiurim in Hilkhos Shabbat and Musar. Whether in shiur or in personal conversations, Rav Lerner’s transformative impact on his students remains with them for years to come. Rav Lerner learned at Yeshivat Midrash Shmuel and received Semikhah from Rav Zalman Nechemyah Goldberg. He earned a BA in Political Science at Concordia University. Rav Lerner lives in Betar with his family.



Mrs. Neima Novetsky teaches Tanach. Neima creates a unique environment in her shiurim – setting a high standard of learning, she also embraces her students with personal caring, shares her own enthusiasm for learning, and in every shiur, gives over some of her own love for Torah. Neima’s unique approach not only excites and inspires with insights into the topic being learned, but also leaves her students with a sense of method, “learning how to learn,” so that they can go on to learn further on their own. Neima holds a BA in Religion and a Certificate in Language and Culture from Princeton University and an MA in Bible from the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Yeshiva University. Before making aliyah, she founded and directed the Advanced Tanakh Beit Midrash Program at Manhattan’s Lincoln Square Synagogue. She lives in Yerushalayim with her family.



Mrs. Michal Porat-Zibman teaches Jewish Thought. Michal, as our students call her, is a teacher of great charisma and passion, inspiring her students with her exciting shiurim in Musar and Machshavah, learning individually with them in chaburot (small groups) and chavrutot in the Bet Midrash, and devoting countless hours to personal conversations and one-on-one shmoozes. Michal’s famous sichot at Thursday night Mishmar, accompanied by piles of nosh, are the perfect inspirational ending to the week of learning. Michal also guides groups at Yad Vashem and leads groups touring Poland on the Heritage program. She has served as Educational Director at Camp Moshava and has worked at Moshava’s Mach Hach Ba-Aretz and Camp HASC. Michal earned a BA at Bar Ilan University in Jewish History and lives in Neve Daniel with her family.



Mrs. Batsheva Reinitz is a Rakezet. Since Batsheva spent her own Shana Alef and Shana Bet at Midreshet Moriah years ago, she can relate to what girls are experiencing in a unique way. Batsheva is easy to talk to, putting girls at ease immediately and making it comfortable for them to speak honestly about their questions, friendships, courses, and their experience in Israel. Batsheva supports, encourages and strengthens girls through the learning and growth they enjoy throughout the year, bringing out their best and ensuring their success. Batsheva has been involved in informal education for nearly fifteen years, working on Bnei Akiva’s Mach Hach Baaretz and as Director and Program Coordinator of NCSY’s GIVE summer program. She also served as Eim Bayit for NCSY’s Michlelet and GIVE summer programs and as Director of Student life at Midreshet Yeud. Batsheva holds a degree from Machon Lander Jerusalem. She and her husband Zevi live in Ramot, Jerusalem with their children.



Rabbi Dr. Zvi Ron teaches Jewish Thought and Halakhah. While the first thing our students usually notice about Rav Ron is how amazingly laid-back and fun his shiurim are, the next thing they notice is the astounding breadth of his knowledge and his rare gift to make everything he says sound fascinating! His shiur on the thought of Ramchal, “Derech Hashem,” is among the most beloved. Rav Ron has published numerous articles in both Hebrew

and English in The Jewish Bible Quarterly, Hakirah, Tradition, Sinai, haMaayan and The Journal of Jewish Music and Liturgy and has published a book, Katan ve-Gadol. Rav Ron learned in Yeshivat Sha'alvim's Hesder Program and Kollel, received Semikhah from the Israeli Rabbanut, and earned a BA in Psychology at SUNY and a PhD in Jewish Theology at Spertus University. He served as Rabbi in Richmond, Virginia, from 1994 to 2004. He lives in Neve Daniel with his family.



Rabbi Rafi Rosenblum teaches halachah and Jewish Thought. Rav Rafi earned a BA and semichah at Yeshiva University, where he also spent four years as a member of the Wexner Kollel Elyon. Rav Rafi has taught at Rambam Mesivta in Lawrence and the Stella K. Abraham High School for Girls in Hewlett, and many seminaries and yeshivot in Israel. Rav Rafi made aliyah in 2010 and lives in Ramat Beit Shemesh with his wife and four adorable kids who love it when students join them for Shabbos.



Mrs. Aliza Schwartz is a Rakezet and teaches Jewish Thought and Tanach. Herself an alumna of Midreshet's Shana Aleph and Shana Bet programs, Aliza has a "been there myself" sense of how to relate to our students. She spends a lot of time in our Beit Midrash, offering chaburot (group chavrutot), learning one-on-one, and helping girls find something to learn on their own. Aliza's warmth, passion, genuineness and sincerity help her connect to the girls, and being one of the younger staff, she is a powerful role model for her students. Aliza holds a BA from Stern College in Tanach and Jewish Law. She and her husband live in Jerusalem.



Rav Ari Shvat teaches Jewish Thought and is the founding Rosh Midrashah and senior lecturer at Orot Israel College in Elkana. Rav Ari's shiurim, infused with the inspirational and spiritual Torah of Rav Kook, are beloved by our students. Raised in Riverdale, NY, he did Hesder at Ohr Etzion and Kiryat Arba, where he received semichah. Rav Ari is a popular international lecturer and has published many ideological and halachic articles, including the first scholarly book on the Israeli flag and the mitzvah to speak Hebrew. He

holds a B.A. in Tanach from Michlelet Herzog and an M.A. in Jewish History and Talmud from Touro College. He enjoys utilizing his music as an educational medium and has produced three albums of original compositions, including a tune for Al HaMichya taught in the dati schools in Israel. Rav Ari has run various programs internationally for Bnei Akiva, as well as teaching at Midreshet HaRova, Midreshet Lindenbaum, Sha'alvim for Women and the Israeli Air Force. In addition, he is in charge of the archives of Rav Kook at Beit HaRav and is featured on the Yeshivat Beit El website. Rav Ari lives in Kochav HaShachar with his family.



Rav Asher Taragin teaches Halachah and Tanach. "Rav Ashi," as our students call him, is unique in his educational breadth and life experience. He is currently studying Medicine at Hebrew University, Law at Bar Ilan University, and co-directs the Israeli Army's "Netiv" program that prepares soldiers for conversion to Judaism. After reaching the rank of Commander in the Nachal Brigade, Rav Taragin received semichah from Rav Zalman Nechemya Goldberg and completed a Teachers Degree, B. Ed. in Tanach and Gemara, and a Tour Guide's Course at Herzog College. Rav Taragin learned at Yeshivat Har Etzion, where he was a close talmid of Rav Aharon Lichtenstein and a member of the Kollel Gevo'ah, and at Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh, where he became close with Rav Mendel Blochman. Rav Taragin is also a trained Sofer, Shochet, Mohel, and scuba diver. Rav Ashi lives in Lod with his wife and son.



Rav Hanoch Teller is a world-renowned storyteller and lecturer, known to many through his inspirational speaking in communities around the world and his many books on a wide range of topics and Jewish values. He has also produced two award-winning films. Rav Teller is able to bring gedolim to life for his students by recounting not only their Torah, but also their personal greatness in their midot and private everyday behavior. His unique course is a primer for life as to how to lead a courteous life of moral sensitivity. Rav Teller earned his undergraduate degree at Yeshiva University and continues to learn in the Mirrer Yeshiva.



Rabbi Eli Wagner teaches Halachah. Rabbi Wagner learned at Yeshivat Sha'alvim, Yeshivat Derech Ha-Talmud, and in Rav Michael Rosenweig's shiur as a member of the YU Masmidim Honors Program. He earned a BA in psychology at

Touro College and is studying towards an MA in Industrial Organizational Psychology at Touro University while he continues his learning at YU's Gruss Kollel. Rabbi Wagner has also taught at Yeshivat Sha'alvim, Sha'alvim for Women, and Yeshivat Torat Shraga. He and his family live in Yerushalayim.



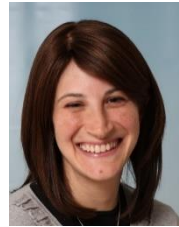
Rabbi "Y.Y." Wenglin teaches Chasidut and Jewish Thought. Rav Wenglin's ultra-high-energy delivery, deep familiarity with Western culture, creativity and self-effacing humor enable him to share

and inspire with provocative, life-changing concepts in emunah, midot, and connecting to God. Rav Wenglin earned a BA in History and Literature at Harvard University and a JD at the UCLA School of Law, where he was a member of the Law Review -- and a lead performer in the law school musical -- all three years. After law school, Rabbi Wenglin joined the Manhattan law firm of Paul, Weiss as a corporate associate in mergers and acquisitions. But then he put all that on hold in order to learn more about his Jewish roots. He moved to Jerusalem, where he started taking introductory classes at Aish HaTorah, and the rest is history... Rabbi Wenglin teaches at yeshivot and seminaries and serves as a guest speaker for kiruv programs on campuses and communities all over. He and his family live in Ramat Beit Shemesh.



Rav Aharon Wexler is beloved by our students for his passion for Israel and the Jewish people and for his exciting, thought-provoking shiurim. He made aliyah from New York after high school and studied in

Yeshivat HaKotel. After Yeshiva and his service in the IDF, Rav Aharon earned a BA in Archeology and then went back to Yeshivat HaKotel for Rabbinic Ordination. Rav Aharon went on to receive an MA in Jewish History, and is now a Doctoral Candidate studying Jewish Philosophy. He is also a licensed tour guide, and when not teaching or touring, makes his home in Efrat with his family.



Mrs. Rina Zinkin is a Rakezet. Rina, as our students call her, is gifted with the kind of gentle personality and warmth which make it easy for students to talk to her and seek her advice. Her deep spirituality, empathy, patience, humility, and

rare midot tovot make her a personality our students strive to emulate. Rina learned at Midreshet Lindenbaum and Michlalah, earned a BA in Judaic Studies and Speech Communication Disorders at Yeshiva University, and an MA at Brooklyn College in Speech Language Pathology. Rina lives in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Ramat Eshkol with her husband and children.

TIP: "Late Beis" at 9:30pm is for the "shtark" and the night owls. If you're a girl who's going to step off the plane ready to "shteig," this is where you'll connect with other girls who feel the same!



WHAT PARENTS ARE SAYING

"Thanks for giving my daughter an absolutely amazing wonderful experience that she will never forget!!! We thank you for your care and expertise and love. We know that she will remember this beautiful experience forever!"

"Her enthusiasm, yiddishishkeit, smile, love for TORAH, and the land of Israel and much more emanates as she shares so much of her fond memories. As a parent, one always worries and prays that their children's experiences so far away will be filled with independence, growth, Torah, values, friendships and much more. It was for her!"

"To say that this was a great year for her would be an understatement; it was a seminal, life impacting one."

"We really can't believe she will be finishing up at Midreshet Moriah in a few days. I don't think we knew how it would go beyond our expectations - she was so happy like I have never seen her be."

"The knowledge that she has gained will stand her in good stead in all of her future endeavors. The experiences which included all of the many trips that she participated in, has benefitted her tremendously. On her return home, we have found her well rounded, well versed and it appears that she has been given the tools that will be invaluable for the future."

"I have been totally thrilled with everything."

WHAT OUR STUDENTS ARE SAYING

"I am so thankful that I came to Midreshet Moriah this year."

"Your warmth and guidance has helped me to grow in ways I never thought I would. My progress over the year amazes me...I've loved every moment!"

"I always liked my Judaic classes in high school, but now I can actually say that I love learning. And I am proud of that. I am so thankful to you that you have helped me form a foundation of Torah learning and ahavat Hashem."

"You really taught me how to love learning Torah!"

"I have learned a new way to look at Torah: it's not only to teach me about my history and role models, it's to teach me about myself and my own relationship with Hashem."

"I will never be able to thank you enough for all you have shown and taught me. Thank you for making me feel special and important."

"When I think of the last year and a half, I think about how amazing the school was for me. I've loved every single second about being in Israel and in Midreshet..."

"I will forever have hakarat hatov to my teachers in Midreshet who taught me what it means to love and live Torah".

"Thank you for believing in me, in turn allowing ME to believe in ME!"



“MVP”: The Moriah Volunteering Program

EXAMPLES OF THE KINDS OF VOLUNTEERING OUR PROGRAM HAS OFFERED...

SPECIAL NEEDS:

- Darkaynu: Learn in our Beit Midrash with students from Darkaynu
- Shalva: volunteer at Shalva school
- Yachad: Buddy program or vocational center
- Meshi: center for children with disabilities

FOOD PACKAGING:

- Chasdei Naomi
- Yad Ezra V'Shulamit
- Pantry Packers

GENERAL:

- Kiruv Chavruta with Midreshet Rachel (Ba'alot Teshuvah)
- Adopt-a-Bubby: visit an elderly English-speaking lady
- "Gan": help out in a childcare center
- Childcare: help out a mother with her children
- Tutoring English to Israeli students at Emunah
- The Lone Soldier Center: bake / cook at the center
- Friendship Circle: hang out with a child with special needs
- Zichron Menachem: help out at the home of a cancer patient
- Machlis Family: helping this amazing family prepare the Shabbat meals they open up each week to hundreds of guests
- EACH YEAR'S ORGANIZATIONS VARY, STAY TUNED FOR THIS YEAR'S!

...Or free time – the choice is yours!

