

# MIDRESHET TEHILLAH

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Course Catalog 2023-2024



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*MIDRESHET TEHILLAH*

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NEVE YERUSHALAYIM

[www.midreshettehillah.com](http://www.midreshettehillah.com)

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**Please note that this catalog does not include all classes that are offered in any given year, and not all classes listed are given every year.  
Beit Midrash Track and Shana Bet courses are tagged.**

## Aggadot: Chazal's Deeper Vision of Torah

### Rabbi Jeremy Kagan

The Aggadot class will explore midrash and aggadah to reveal the Sages' deeper understanding of man, our world, our relationship with God, and mitzvot. We will study how to analyze aggadah - the kinds of observations and questions that begin to expose the meaning the Sages have packed into their words and then use supplemental texts to develop a coherent reading of the aggadah and its message.



**Course Material:** Since the aggadot we will be studying are scattered throughout the Talmud and Midrash we will use handouts in class. Supplemental sources beyond the central text will be taken from Talmud, Midrash, Maharal, Maharsha, and other acharonim.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** Those requiring credit for the course will be given an aggadah that was not studied in class and will be asked to write a short paper analyzing it.

Acharonim, principally Maharal, will guide our approach. We will cover a wide range of topics including man and his place in the world, the aitz hadaat, the structure of mitzvot, and prayer. The purpose of this class is to get a sense for the depth of the Sages vision and understanding, how they code this into aggadot, and to begin developing the skill of unlocking the meaning of aggadot.

## Bein Adam L'Chavero

### Rabbi Simcha Poupko

Beginning with a *Mishna* from *Pirkei Avot* or a halacha from Rambam's *Hilchot De'ot*, we will examine many of the complex issues that come up in daily human interactions.

We will work to understand what motivates us and the people around us, looking closely at commonly experienced emotions such as arrogance, anger, and fear. Pressing issues such as those involving roommate relationships and respect for parents in challenging situations will be investigated. The subtle involvement of *lashon hara* and *nekama* (revenge) in these situations will be examined and taken to a new level of understanding through honest and mature probing. Issues pertaining to students' future relationships – in marriage, career, and child-raising – will also be addressed.



**Course Materials:** Occasional handouts with sources drawn from *Chumash*, Ramban, Rambam and *Pirkei Avot*. Students do not require advanced Hebrew skills as we will read the sources together in class.

**Scheduling and Credits:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** There will be an in-class midterm and final. Grades will be based on test results, together with attendance and class participation.

Our discussions will also draw perspective from leaders of the *mussar* movement, such as Rabbi Yisrael Salanter and from more contemporary greats, such as Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach and Rabbi Moshe Feinstein. The course will include both theoretical study and practical, interactive discussion during class. The goal of this course is to help you become more aware of the complex emotions and motives that underlie our actions and reactions in basic social situations. This course aims to make you more adept at managing your relationships through honest and at times painful self-awareness rather than through tips and technical strategies. Through real-life situations and interactive discussion, you will acquire the sensitivity and empathy that can assist you in the complex navigation of the relationships in our daily lives.

# Beyond the Veil: Meaning and Relevance of the Mishkan for the Modern Generation

## Rabbi Simi Lerner

Embark on a journey of discovery as we uncover deep-rooted meaning and timeless symbols embedded within the Mishkan, shedding light on their unexpected relevance in the modern world.

Rather than memorizing measurements, we will be revealing key principles in השקפה that emerge from the workings of this oldest of Torah Institutions. Explore how the intricate utensils (כלים), Korbanos and practices in the Mishkan serve as a rich tapestry of metaphors. These reflect profound concepts of קדושה that transcend time and cultural boundaries, resonating with the contemporary thinker.

Evaluation:



### Course Material:

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

### Evaluation:

Using the tools gained in this class, the student will create a project which analyzes a topic in the Torah which is often overlooked or undervalued. By bringing out its symbolic significance, the student will shed light on how this aspect of Judaism holds relevance to her life today.

# Beit Midrash Options: Tehillah Track

## Beginner Beit Midrash: Korach

### Mrs. Nechama Carter

We learn Parshat Korach and while doing so explore many central *hashkafic* and personal topics such as: *emunat Chachamim*, Talmudic *machloket*, reward and punishment and why sometimes it doesn't seem fair, the unique power of women, the basis of personal conflict, how to process and forgive the hurt someone caused you, and more.

**Course Material:**

Students will receive 4 booklets during the course of the year, with the *pesukim* from Chumash and commentaries.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:**

Midterm and final.

This course is designed to improve text skills, starting from a beginner level. We focus on expanding Hebrew vocabulary and understanding Hebrew sentence structure and grammar. To keep it exciting, we use texts that are fascinating in their own right, intended to generate discussions on important Torah and personal topics.

## Intermediate Beit Midrash: Megillot

### Ms. Miriam Brunner

We will focus primarily on *Esther* and *Ruth*, with some time in *Shir HaShirim* and *Kohelet*.

The purpose of this class is to develop intermediate-level text skills of students who arrive at seminary with the ability to read and translate *pasukim* well, including knowledge of basic grammar and sentence structure. The class will focus on gaining the ability to learn basic *meforshim* with particular focus on Rashi - both the technical aspects and how to get to the deeper meanings implicit in the Rashi. To keep things exciting, we will take time to delve into these deeper meanings.

**Course Material:**

The primary text will be Mikraot Gedolot of the Megilla we are studying. There will be some time spent in *chavruta* learning, but there will also be a group level dissection of the text, especially at the beginning of the year as students build up their skills.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:**

At the end of each unit there will be a quiz to evaluate comprehension of both the topic at hand and the ability to read and understand the texts we have been working with.

## Intermediate Beit Midrash: Bamidbar

### Mrs. Aliza Sinclair

The aim of this class is to develop text skills using various episodes in Sefer Bamidbar. These stories might be familiar, but there is much depth to each of them, and this can only be reached through digging deeper into the Mefarshim of the Chumash.



**Course Material:** The students will need to have a Bamidbar Mikraos Gedolos, and they will receive source sheets with additional commentaries and summary material.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** Mid-term and Final.

In this way, the students will gain a greater knowledge of Lashon Hakodesh grammar and vocabulary. They will also be familiarised with a variety of Mefarshim, knowing their way around Mikraos Gedolos but also familiarising themselves with Perushim of the Achronim.

## Advanced Beit Midrash: Tehillim

### Ms. Miriam Brunner

We will be covering several chapters in Tehillim. These chapters are mostly ones that students have been exposed to in the past such as perakim 23, 92, 95, 100, 114, 121. Understanding these chapters will enrich your knowledge and understanding of such topics as Emunah, gratitude to Hashem and Mashiach.

The purpose of this class is to further develop the textual skills of students who arrive at seminary with good skills. Entering students are expected to already have some facility with such *mefarshim* as: Redak, Rashi and Metzudat. Malbim and Midrashim are the more complex texts that we will explore in this course in order to both sharpen technical skills and to appreciate how, through directly engaging the text, students can achieve a deeper and more integrated understanding of the material than when hearing it pre-processed by a teacher.

**Course Material:** The primary text will be *Tehillim Mikraot Gedolot*. Additionally, each Perek will be accompanied by a set of handouts containing sources that compliment what is found in the *mefarshim* or bring alternative approaches. There will be significant time spent in *chavruta* learning, which will be followed by class discussion.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** At the end of each Perek there will be a test to evaluate both comprehension of the topics discussed in connection with the Perek and acquisition of the skills needed to read and understand the Perek and its *mefarshim*.

# Advanced Beit Midrash: Shmuel

## Mrs. Miriam Tannenbaum

We will be covering several units in Sefer Shmuel (I & II). These units focus on the various forms of leadership and influence of Am Yisrael when they are a sovereign body in Eretz Yisrael.

Understanding the difference between power and influence in those times can impact how we approach these topics today. Sefer

Shmuel is a mirror for understanding how to navigate the world around us as well as a potential catalyst for our own impact on our world.

The purpose of this class is to further develop the textual skills of students who arrive at seminary with good skills. Entering students are expected to already have some facility with such *mefarshim* as: Radak, Rashi and Metzudat. The next step is to learn how to work with more complex mefarshim such as Malbim and Abarbanel. Additionally, gaining a deeper appreciation of how to read *Peshat* before exploring the *mefarshim* will enhance students' understanding of the text and the ideas of added by the *mefarshim* on a deeper level. Engagement with the text gives the student an opportunity to 'own' her learning in a manner that cannot be achieved by a 'sage on the stage'-style class. Grappling with the language and concepts facilitates a deeper and more enduring learning.



**Course Material:** The primary text will be *Shmuel Mikaraot Gedolot*. Additionally, each unit will be accompanied by a set of handouts containing sources/questions that complement and guide the student through her journey. There will be significant time spent in *chavruta* learning, which will be followed by class discussion/shiur.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** There will be a midterm and final that will evaluate the students on the comprehension of topics as well as on the skills developed in the course. The exams will be essay-style with open Navi/resources (as the goal of the course is not to memorize the information).



# Open Beit Midrash: Night Seder Chavrutot

**Rabbi Chaim Goldberg, Rabbi Anthony Manning, Mrs. Adele Nemirov, Mrs. Aliza Sinclair & guest speakers**



The Open Beit Midrash (OBM) Night Seder takes place on Wednesday nights for the whole school and also on Tuesday nights for the Beit Midrash Track. From 8:00 pm to 9.30 pm, the students have a range of exciting options to further their free-style learning b'chavruta with a sefer and topic of their choice. Students are given a choice of 7 tracks in different areas of Torah learning and invited to launch into the relevant sefarim, aided and guided by the OBM team. Alternatively, students can study a different sefer and will have the OBM teachers on hand to answer questions.

If you have a chavruta and know what you want to learn, great! If not, we will work with you to find the best track and the right sefer and topic that fits your needs and help you to find the right chavruta.

In addition to the Thrills & Skills class (see below), which focuses on teaching specific Beit Midrash and general learning skills, the OBM is aimed at broadening awareness of different types of text study and topics within Torah and developing new thinking skills.

OBM evenings end with a 'Book Club' where one or two of the students make a short presentation to the school about a sefer that they have discovered and which they want to share with others.

**Course Material:** Students will study from the sefer that is relevant to the track they choose. For students in the Beginner level Beit Midrash, English translation will be available. Others will grapple with and grow from the Hebrew!

**Scheduling and Credits:** Once a week for Tehillah Track and twice a week for Beit Midrash Track.

**Evaluation:** There will be no test or assignment for OBM. Students will see the exponential growth in their skills as the year progresses.

## Chinuch for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### Rabbi Moshe Yehuda Turner

The topic of this series is Chinuch/Education through the Torah prism. We will be using themes from the weekly Parasha as a springboard to discuss topics relevant to raising children and ourselves.

Through the topics discussed and open class debate we will gain an awareness into some of the experiences we have all come across in our younger years. We may find some less and others more relevant to us personally, but in the field of education the more we can bring to our conscience the better. Topic examples – brotherly love, tolerance, tailor made Chinuch, technology in the home, firm or soft, schooling, chinuch for Torah, cultural differences in Jewish education, making decisions etc.

The benefit of seeing how the Torah relates to specific topics and how we can translate that into our 21st Century lives, can be eye-opening and is often essential. The purpose of this series, is not to spend time judging our parents' successes. (We certainly do not want a student to tell her parents "Even R' Turner said you were wrong!"). The purpose is rather to prepare ourselves as parents and educators, through understanding some of the fundamentals as well as ensuring our own constant personal growth.

**Course Material:**

No specific material needed. Handouts will be brought to the class when necessary.

**Scheduling:**

Once a week.

**Evaluation:**

Participation and attendance will be the final grade.

## Chovot Halevavot

### Rabbi Baruch Schechter

Chovot Halevavot, authored by Rabbeinu Bachya ibn Pekuda, is one of the earlier works of mussar and was studied by many Rishonim and Achronim and incorporated into their writings. It remains one of the most fundamental sefarim learnt today and Rav Chaim Soloveichick zt'l would refer to it as the "Shulchan Aruch of Yiddishkeit"!



**Course Materials:** We will be studying the material directly from the text and every student will need a Chovot Halevavot with commentary Lev Tov.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** Will be based on a midterm and a final exam, in addition to class participation and attendance.

In this course we will study selections from the sefer in depth, with a particular focus on how it pertains to our lives today. Aside from getting an overview of the sefer as a whole, we will focus specifically on Sha'ar HaBechinah, Sha'ar Avodat Elokim, Sha'ar HaBitachon and Sha'ar Cheshbon Hanefesh.

## Chumash Like a Boss!

### Mrs. Ayelet Elnecave

This course offers an overview of the five books of Chumash, focusing largely on the narrative sections. The goal is not only to know the basics of who, what, when and where (from the the pasukim and Rashi's perush) but also real world applications of the deeper concepts within the text. Therefore, we will cover not only the basics of the narratives but also some probably surprising aspects of the stories.

The goal is that by the end of the year, students will be able to feel comfortable that they not only know the entire story of the Chumash, but also have a deeper and more profound understanding. Basically, they will know Chumash like a Boss!

**Course Material:**

Chumash

**Scheduling:**

Twice a week.

**Evaluation:**

Mid-term and Final Exam.

## Chumash Mefarshim - Bekiut

### Mrs. Bonnie Odze

Remember all those stories from Chumash you learnt in school? Now let them really come alive with depth and meaning through the eyes of the mefarshim.

A weekly class allowing you to get your teeth into the thoughts and explanations of the mefarshim you've seen sitting on the page of the Mikraos Gedolos but never known what they are there for! Turn all the basic 'stories' inside out with depth and meaning and gain skills to walk out of the classroom and continue to learn, question and find the answers yourself with newfound and developed skills.

This course has no assessment... life will assess your love for Chumash when you take your newly honed skills away with you and continue your learning outside the classroom.

**Course Material:**

Mikraos Gedolos on Chumash

**Scheduling:**

Once a week.

**Evaluation:**

No assessment

# Chumash: Stories of Sin and Redemption

BEIT MIDRASH

## Mrs. Rivka Kahan

We will explore Chumash as the story of man's evolving relationship with Hakadosh Baruch Hu through the lens of narratives of sin and redemption. We will analyze the ways in which these stories are connected to and build upon each other, helping us to understand Chumash as one integrated whole.



**Course Materials:** Our learning will focus on analysis of the works of many different mefarshim. Students are provided with a sourcebook that includes all of the sources we will study.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week (4 hours total).

**Evaluation:** Students will be given a few writing assignments over the course of the year that encourage them to integrate and reflect on the different sources and ideas we have learned together.

Our learning will focus on the ways in which stories of human beings' failures as well as their spiritual triumphs give us insight into human nature and avodat Hashem on individual, national, and personal levels. This shiur incorporates extensive chavruta work, with in-depth analysis of a wide range of mefarshim as well as peshat.

# Classic Works of Mussar and Emunah

## Rabbi Baruch Schechter

This class takes age-old wisdom and applies it to contemporary issues. See the Chovot Halevavot show us how to bring Hashem into our daily lives today. Understand Rambam's views on music and how to prioritize our lives. Learn what Rav Yosef Albo has to say about societal values relative to Torah values. Discover how to experience joy on Yom Kippur with the advice of Rabbeinu Yonah. Find out how to value yourself, appreciate your life, deal with personal struggles, and intensify your emunah and bitachon. This is an interactive and down-to-earth class, dealing with real issues of real people.



### Course Material:

We will use sourcebooks with selections from classic works of mussar and hashkafa, such as Chovot Halevavot, Sefer Halkarim, Shaarei Teshuva, Kuzari, Tomer Devora, Michtav M'Eliyahu, Chazon Ish and others. The sources are organized topically and allow students to "follow along inside" while we are learning the material as well as to review it in a coherent and comprehensive fashion.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

### Evaluation:

Evaluation will be based on essays done outside of class. They will focus on how to internalize concepts covered in class and apply them to daily life.

Through careful analysis of the words of the sages we discover the depth of their insight and its relevance to our present day experience. Our goal is to learn how to restructure our thinking and conduct according to these insights in order to achieve a deeper, more satisfying and meaningful life.

# Complex Stories in Sefer Bereishit

SHANA BET

## Ms. Miriam Brunner

We will be covering several episodes in Sefer Bereishit. These are stories that almost all students have been exposed to in the past from a very young age such as the Chet of Adam and Chava, Noach and the Flood, the Tower of Bavel, Yosef and his brothers, Yosef and Potifar's wife. However, these stories are much more complex than most students anticipate and we will revisit them and look at them again through a more sophisticated lens. Understanding these topics will enrich the students' basic Jewish knowledge and their understanding of the need for Torah Shel Bal Peh. It will also help them to grasp the challenges of those times and put them into perspective with the trials of this day and age.

The purpose of this class is to train students how to think and ask questions about words in the Torah that they do not grasp and show them how to work out the answers, with particular focus on the explaining the "style of the Torah".

**Course Material:**  
The primary text will be the Chumash. There will be significant time spent in class discussion and debating the meaning of the text.

**Scheduling:** Once a week for Shana Bet

**Evaluation:**  
At the end of each topic there will be an essay test to evaluate comprehension of the topics discussed.

# Connecting Through Kohelet

## Mrs. Leah Hasten

Many classes address topics in Jewish philosophy and hashkafa. But, uniquely, this course allows us to dive into a book of Tanach which was written by the wisest of all men, Shlomo Hamelech, and develop age-old and contemporary topics straight from the verses of Megillat Kohelet. We will be using the pesukim, and accompanying mefarshim, as a springboard for deep discussions on relatable subjects such as the balance



**Course Material:** Mikraot Gedolot Chamesh Megillot. Additional sources necessary will be handed out as source sheets

**Scheduling:** Twice a week

**Evaluation:** Midterm and Final Report

between materialism and spirituality, the definition and value of friendship, happiness, free choice and accountability, emuna and why bad things happen to good people, self-esteem, perfectionism, honesty, self-reflection and many other topics of self-growth and development. Learning this Megilla will provide is with clear and practical guidance to maximizing our time in this world and living a fulfilling and meaningful life of inner calm and happiness through Torah and mitzvot.

The goal of the class is to attain connection on three levels: connecting to and developing our own inner self, connecting with sensitivity and respect to those around us, and ultimately connecting and strengthening our relationship with Hashem in a very real and personal way. Students will feel empowered that their journey of "connection" and real, balanced growth has emerged from their careful reading and deep learning of the text of Kohelet.

## Crash Course in Life Coaching

### Mrs. Kayla Levin

Learn to overcome the main challenges in relationships, self-improvement, and mental health with top strategies from the world of Positive Psychology and Life Coaching. Some of the topics we will touch on are how to have healthy boundaries, relationships and expectations, self-regulation techniques, and our beliefs about ourselves.

The course will be hands-on and interactive, with the goal of implementing each technique into our daily lives as we learn them. Students will complete the curriculum with a toolbox of tools and strategies to cope and bring their best selves forward.

(This course is Torah-compatible, not Torah-based.)

**Course Material:**

Students will need a journal and pen.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.**Evaluation:**

Based on attendance, participation, and personal reflection.

## Decoding the Hebrew Alphabet

### Rabbi Yaakov Marcus

The deeper meaning behind the shapes, sounds, and number equivalents (gematria) of the letters. The Hebrew language that the Torah was given in is unlike any other language. Each letter of the alphabet is really a philosophical concept, and therefore, when G-d joins these letters together to create words He is teaching us that the deeper meaning of the word is the sum total of all the concepts of the letters joined together in that order. Therefore, an analysis of each letter is really an analysis of deep philosophical concepts in Judaism.

**Course Material:**

Source sheets are used to see how the concepts we learn about the letters affect the text of the Torah.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.**Evaluation:**

The final grade is determined by a mid-term exam and a final exam, both of which are weighted equally. Attendance is also a factor.

To develop a heightened sensitivity to the textual analysis of the Torah, based on the fundamental meanings of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. To better appreciate why certain words in the Torah vary their spellings to teach subtle changes in information gleaned from the word itself. To apply these concepts to broader Jewish philosophical issues such as, the deeper idea behind the Jewish holidays, reward and punishment, and why bad things happen to good people.

## Deep Dive into the Amida

SHANA BET

### Mrs. Rutie Abraham

In this class, we will learn the underlying themes and depth behind each beracha in the Amida. Starting with the wording of the beracha, and moving onto a textual analysis of classic sources on the topic, we will develop a sophisticated approach to each beracha. The aim of this class is to gain an appreciation for the power of the Amida, and a much deeper understanding of what we say when we pray, what we are asking for and why!



**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Course Materials:** Handouts will be provided.

**Evaluation:** Will be based on a midterm and a final assignment

## Derech Hachaim: Maharal on Personal Growth

BEIT MIDRASH

### Mrs. Michal Levy

We will be focusing on the first perek of Pirkei Avot. Although it may seem familiar, studying it with the new approach of the Maharal's commentary "Derech Hachayim" brings the Mishna to a practical and guided personal growth process step by step.



An opportunity to learn Torah Sheb'al Peh with the guidance of Derech Hachayim's intriguing questions which create a unique way of understanding Mishna. The class on one hand is text based and a build-up of the mefarshim and the Maharal's breadth of knowledge so you can gain the appreciation for the text and on the other hand having Pirkei Avot as a practical mussar sefer helping us create a foundation for our character and build on it with each new idea in the Mishna.

**Course Material:**

The class will be based on the Maharal's commentary on Pirkei Avot. We will be learning many of the Rishonim on the Mishna as well – Rashi, Bartenura, Rabenu Yonah but will pull it all together with the Maharal. Selected section will be given out as source sheet for in class study.

**Scheduling:** Once a week

**Evaluation:**

An in-class assignment per semester

## Developing a Torah Personality

### Mrs. Rutie Abraham

In this class we will explore how the Torah system develops us as individuals. We will start by exploring how to approach moral questions and move on to other hashkafic discussions that confront us as rational, autonomous individuals. The focus of this course is understanding the Torah as a system fashioned to develop human greatness. We will explore a variety of philosophical concepts and challenges, making them relevant to daily decisions.



**Course Material**

Source sheets will be provided.

**Scheduling:** Once a week

**Evaluation:**

There will be an essay question at the end of each semester.

## The End of Days

### Rabbi Baruch Schechter

A course designed to elucidate the words of Tanach, Chazal and the Rishonim regarding the events leading up to era of Mashiach and explain concepts regarding Olam Haba. The goal of the class is to build a longing for Mashiach and concretize our emunah in Olam Haba.



**Course Material**  
Source Sheets

**Scheduling:** Once a week

**Evaluation:**  
An avodah will be assigned to evaluate the students' grasp of the material.

## GPS for the Jewish Soul

### Mrs. Raquel Kirszenbaum

Mechina is a Hebrew term used to describe beginnings, preparations and prerequisites for something greater. A Mechina class is about fundamentals - everything you need to know about Torah but never had the chance to ask. It is modeled on the classes given at Neve to incoming baalei teshuvah, those who lack background in Torah. It is meant to answer the questions they come in with and to give them the foundations they need to enter the world of Torah. But since many of us are missing those fundamentals ourselves or have very confused ideas about them, this class is a unique opportunity to put together your understanding of Torah from the ground up.



**Course Material:**  
This is a discussion class. I will be quoting a lot of Midrashim, Gemaras and later commentaries. But we will be working "outside" of the text.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:**  
Midterm and final. They will either be exams or an essay.

Questions addressed will include: Is there a G-d? What is the purpose of life; what am I doing here? How do I develop a relationship with God? What does it mean to be the "chosen people"? Why was Abraham the person who founded the Jewish people? What are Mitzvot all about, why do we need to do them? What does it mean to accept and live according to Torah? Once we get a basic outline of the big picture, we will turn to some of the basic mitzvot to understand how they fit into a Torah life: Shabbat, Kashrut, and more. Purpose: To get direction in life. To understand what Torah is about and why it defines our lives.



# Growth Through Mussar

## Mrs. Racheli Herszaft

People often say 'You can GROW so much in seminary' but what does that actually mean, and how do we achieve it? How do I choose what to work on? How do I reflect practically on who I am and what my strengths and weaknesses are? How do I use those characteristics to fulfill my personal responsibilities in this world? What practical steps can I take to work on my middot?



**Course Material:** Source sheets provided.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week

**Evaluation:** Students will be graded based on attendance and participation. We will also be completing a series of personal workshops that will help students to evaluate their own growth.

Throughout this course, we will focus on the fundamental underpinning of the 'mussar' process - guided introspection, self-knowledge and practical growth. We will be studying classic sources which address the Torah's philosophy and understanding of character development. These will include TaNach, Gemara and their commentators and mussar-focused sefarim such as *Orchot Tzadikim*. We will also draw from the principles of contemporary psychology to unpack how we can truly come to know who we are as individuals and take small but vital steps to become our best selves.

# The Haftara: PM From the Nevi'im!

## Mrs. Arielle Arieli

Did you ever wonder, what is the meaning of the portion of Navi read after Kriat Hatorah on Shabbat? Did you ever wonder why that specific section of Navi was chosen?



**Course Material:**

You will receive sheets including the weekly Haftarah and additional sources that will help us grasp its deeper messages, such as Rav Hirsch, Malbim, Alschich, and the mefarshim from Mikraot Gedolot.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:**

An open-notes exam is administered at the end of each semester. Grades will depend on this, together with class attendance and participation.

Together, we will expand our understanding of Navi to include some less familiar parts from the weekly Haftarah. We will also learn how the Haftarah relates to the Parsha and how it relates to our lives. The Gemara (Megillah 14a) states: "There were many Nevi'im - double the number that came out of Egypt. But only those that were needed for future generations were written down and those that weren't needed were not written down." We will develop insights into what the Navi wanted to impart to our generation.

# Halacha Modules

## Dayan Shlomo Cohen, Rabbi Avi Klotz & Rabbi Anthony Manning

The Halacha syllabus is modular and topics switch on a regular basis. This gives the students a broad exposure to many subjects, as well as the ability to choose the areas that most interest them. For this purpose, the year is divided into four quarters, with multiple halacha modules during each quarter. Students can switch after each quarter.

### Halacha modules offered include:

- Sefardi/Ashkenazi Minhagim
- Women’s obligation in mitzvot
- Kashrut in the Modern Kitchen
- Business Law and Ethics
- Jewish Medical Ethics
- Food Preparation on Shabbat
- The Halachot of the Chagim
- Hilchot Bein Adam LeChavero
- Hilchot Berachot
- Jewish Life Cycle Halacha
- Science, Technology and Halacha
- Halacha in the Modern Workplace
- Jews, Animals and the Environment
- Israel and Zionism in Halacha and Hashkafa



### Course material:

Halacha will be taught from specially prepared source sheets and booklets

### Scheduling:

Halacha is taught four times a week in the afternoons.

### Evaluation:

There will be a midterm and final test. The format of the test depends on the class and may include essay assignments, topical questions or multiple-choice tests.

# Hilchot Shabbat: Be'lyun

## Rabbi Shlomo Cohen

In addition to the Halacha modules (see above) there is a year-long comprehensive course in Hilchot Shabbat for students who wish to use some of their halacha classes to cover this topic in depth.

The course will cover all areas of Shabbat, paying particular attention to the practical application of the *halacha* to modern day situations, and the logical process by which the Talmud is interpreted and applied to modern day appliances and situations. Different approaches to the *halacha* will be discussed and explained, and both the Ashkenazi and Sephardi rulings will be presented.

To acquire both knowledge of practical *halachot Shabbat* and understanding of the *halachic* process by which it is determined. This will enable students to manage any *Shabbat*-related situation that arises in her home - either knowing what to do or recognizing when a question arises that requires a *halachic* ruling.



### Course material:

We will examine sources from the Talmud through to the writings and rulings of present day *poskim*.

### Scheduling:

Twice a week.

### Evaluation:

There will be a midterm and final multiple-choice test.

## Introduction to Chassidus

### Rabbi Dovid Kossowsky

In this class, our primary focus will be to delve into the innovations and emphases brought forth by the revered Baal Shem Tov and his dedicated followers. Additionally, we will explore the diverse paths that emerged in subsequent generations, as Chassidus expanded and evolved under the guidance of its visionary leaders.



**Course Material:** Handouts will be provided when necessary. Handouts will include various texts from the multiple Chassidic personalities we will be learning about.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** Reflective summaries will be required periodically throughout the year.

The purpose of this course extends beyond comprehending the historical significance of this extraordinary movement and its lasting impact on our practice of Judaism today. It also seeks to empower participants with the ability to recognize and experience the presence of Hashem in their own lives, fostering a deeper and more meaningful connection with our Creator.

## Israeli Society

### Rabbi Simcha Poupko

In the course we will become familiar with the following topics:

- Zionism – its roots, goals, major events, major figures;
- The map of Israel;
- The Middle Eastern neighborhood;
- The Israel-Palestinian conflict;
- Hi-tech innovation in Israel;
- Sectors and sub-sectors in Israel;
- *Aliyah*, Israeli culture and personality;
- Israeli Arab society;
- Basic structure of government;
- The education system;
- The IDF and Israeli society;
- Israel and the non-Jewish world.



**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:**

*Midterm assignment:* Students will collaborate to create a presentation summarizing what they learned so far about Israel.

*Final assignment:* Written exam in which students will choose from several issues that were debated in class on Israeli history/society and present pertinent arguments.

The goal of the course is to give students an insider's view of what is happening in Israel today while understanding its formative events and processes. The historical view of modern Israel will help students strengthen their identity as Jews and their own connection to the Land.

# Jewish Relationships 101

## Mrs. Chana Levitan

This class will give you information and tools to build successful relationships. It will give you skills to achieve your own internal happiness, to choose the right marriage partner, to navigate the complex world of human relationships and create lasting, loving marriages. The 3 main relationships we will focus on in this course are:

- 1) **Your Relationship with Yourself** – Bein Adam LeAtzmo,
- 2) **Friendships** - Bein Adam LeChavero, and
- 3) **Dating and Marriage** – Bein Ish Lelshto.

**Bein Adam LeAtzmo:** Before you can date anyone successfully, you must first date yourself! This means that first we need to know who we are, what we stand for and where we are going in life. This section of the course will focus on knowledge and hands-on tools and exercises necessary to understanding and building ourselves.

**Bein Adam LeChavero:** This section of the course will focus on interpersonal relationships, primarily friendships. Friendships can be one of the most precious and profound parts of our lives, if we know how to manage and build them. In this section of the course, we will learn about healthy boundaries, successful communication, trust...and keys to creating safe, healthy emotional bonds.

**Bein Ish Lelshto:** In the third section of this course, we will do an 8-week dating and marriage workshop, based on my books, *"I Only Want to Get Married Once"* and, *"THAT'S Why I Married You!"* We will also learn about the advantages of a Jewish marriage, which are particularly relevant in the 21st century.

### Course Material:

There will be worksheets given throughout the year and practical, in-class exercises as well. Source sheets will also be given out, with sources primarily from Rav Dessler, Rav Wolbe and Rav Chaim Friedlander.

**Scheduling:** Once a week

**Evaluation:** This course does not include tests or credits.

# Journey to Better Speech

## Rabbi Menachem Salasnik

Secular culture has infiltrated Jewish culture and affects us in a myriad of ways. The particular struggles that a Jewish woman faces in modern times are multifaceted and often lead to much confusion.

In this class we will explore fundamental Jewish ideas underlying many of the mitzvot that pertain to women such as the Jewish definition of success, the value of developing sensitivity, the value of self-control and the Torah's perspective on beauty. In addition, we will learn about some of the important skills and tools needed to create deep and connected relationships both with ourselves and within the marriage relationship.



### Course Material:

Sourcebook

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** This course does not include tests or credits.

# Lifecycles

## Rabbi Dov Lev

“Wouldn’t you want to understand what is going on at your own Chuppah? Ever wonder why so many people are called to participate in a Brit Milah? What exactly am I supposed to do when I visit someone who is sitting Shivah? What are the pitfalls of the Shidduchim process? Why are there different practices for Ashkenazim and Sephardim for so many life events?

This course examines lesser-learned halachot, minhagim and mindsets of Jewish living.



**Course material:**  
Source sheet  
handouts.

**Scheduling:** Two  
classes each week

**Course Evaluation:**  
Midterm and final  
examination.

Topics include:

- Naming children
- Making a kiddush after birth
- Shalom Zachor/Brit Yitzchak
- Brit Milah
- Pidyon HaBen
- Bar Mitzva and Bat Mitzva practices
- Halachic compatibility of marriage partners
- Shidduchim
- Yichud
- Wedding ceremonies
- Sheva Brachot
- Mezuzah workshop
- Hosting guests
- Shalom Bayit
- Divorce
- Chalitzah
- Procreation and infertility
- Pregnancy (including fast days for a pregnant woman)
- Childbirth (including going to the hospital on Shabbat and Yom Tov)
- Baby care and child care
- Chinuch principles
- Attitudes toward aging
- Bikur Cholim
- End of life issues
- Mourning laws and Yahrzeit customs
- Resurrection of the dead in halacha

This course will develop an understanding of practical halachot, minhagim and mindsets of Jewish life – from birth through death - with a strong emphasis on dating, marriage and childrearing.

## Living Emuna

### Mrs. Bonnie Odze

“The fool believes everything”, Shlomo Hamelech writes in Mishlei, “but a thinking person knows the right path.” We are used to looking at ‘faith’ as a strategy for people who cannot think for themselves. Emunah, however, is an innate conviction - a perception of truth that transcends, rather than evades, reason.

This course will explore what Emunah actually means for us today, and how we can make it real in our world. Looking at a variety of classic and contemporary sources, we will delve into the issues with passion and excitement, engage with the learning and enrich our lives.

**Course Material:**

Course materials and source sheets.

**Scheduling:**

Once a week.

**Evaluation:**

Midterm and final assignment.

## Ma'agal Hachayim

### Mrs. Michal Levy

In this class we will go through the major segments and milestones of life to get a deeper understanding of how we are developing at each of these stages, and how Torah frames and guides that development. We will begin with our initial formation: nine months in the womb, followed by birth with its accompanying Brit or Kiddush and name giving. We will then move on to our early development as individuals culminating in our Bar or Bat Mitzvah. We will then discuss our transition into family through marriage, exploring the changes we experience and the different opportunities, obligations, and focus that this brings. We will conclude with end-of-life issues, examining the Torah approach to mourning.

**Course Material:**

Sheets will be given out at each class with sources included. We will go through most of the sources together so Hebrew skill are not a prerequisite for this course.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.**Evaluation:**

A test with essay questions will be given at the end of each semester to evaluate your understanding of the material.

The purpose of this class is to appreciate the significance of the events that mark major transitions in life, to understand what is changing, the unique opportunities this creates, and how we can build on those to more fully develop ourselves. This will also deepen our appreciation and experience of these events when we join in other people's simchas and special occasions.

## Rabbi Anthony Manning

The course will examine some of the key questions addressed by the Rishonim (with particular focus on the Kuzari, Rambam and Ramban) in Jewish Thought and Philosophy. These will include:

- How we know that God exists and whether that can, or should, be proven.
- Whether, and how, we can ever understand the nature of God.
- How God communicates with humans, the nature of prophecy, and its impact on the halachic process.



### Course Material:

The course will be taught from specially prepared source books.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

### Evaluation:

Evaluation is at the end of each semester by two essays written by the students from a choice of topics.

- The illegitimacy of astrology and an understanding of mazal.
- What is the essential nature of a human being and how does that differ from an animal?
- What is a malach and how do we relate to it?
- What is the difference between Jews and non-Jews?
- Why do we keep mitzvot?
- What is the Jewish perspective on studying secular thought?
- What is hashkafa and where does it come from?
- How does God run the world – hashgacha pratit/klallit and the interplay between them.
- What is the Jewish perspective on reward and punishment? How does this feed into our understanding of Olam Haba, Mashiach, Techiyat Hametim and Gilgulim?
- What is the role of Eretz Yisrael in Judaism and mitzvot? What are galut and geula?

The class will develop the ideas behind these topics and impart a critical understanding of the actual information, as well as dispel common misconceptions. Critically, it will also show how many of these topics are an opening to a much deeper hashkafic debate between the Rishonim and their world-views, often with the Rambam and the rationalists on one side and the Kuzari and more mystical thinkers on the other. This in turn can shed light on the origins of different hashkafic communities in today's world and help the students to understand the interplay between them.

This course is given in the Beit Midrash Track. Each class meeting will last an hour and forty minutes with a short break in the middle. Of that, students will have approximately 40 minutes to learn the key sources in chavruta, guided by the teacher personally and also by detailed guidance questions to enable them to get the most from this element of the class. This will be followed by an interactive discussion/lecture based on the sources you prepared.

The chavruta preparation time will be structured to achieve several key goals:

- that students learn to think more deeply about the specific language used in the text and how its nuances can have enormous implication for the conclusions.
- that students learn to develop their OWN understanding of the concepts, which can then be brought into the classroom discussion in a much more interactive way.
- that students taste the excitement and inspiration of gaining new personal understanding through their own thinking and effort.
- that students develop further their skills and confidence in personal learning.

# Machshevet Olam Hamussar

BEIT MIDRASH

## Mrs. Michal Levy

We will gain an overview of the world of mussar while choosing specific excerpts from the different Sifrei Mussar to achieve a deeper understanding of the relevant personalities and their different hashkafot on life and personal growth.



### Course Material:

Sources and excerpts will be handed out before each topic.

**Scheduling:** Once a week

**Evaluation:** A test with essay questions will be given at the end of each semester to evaluate the students' understanding of the material.

Works to be studied span many different time periods in Jewish history, and will include Chovot

Halevavot, Mesilat Yesharim, Michtav Meliyahu and Alei Shur, just to name a few. We will focus on their core understandings and beliefs which are relevant to our life today as we are developing our relationships with ourselves, each other and Hashem. We will look at sources in class together in the context our lecture/discussion, but because this class is only one period long there will not be specific chevruta time associated with it.

# Medical Ethics

## Rabbi Dov Lev

This class explores fascinating topics relating to physical wellbeing, mental health, emergency medical care, non-conventional reproductive methods, doctor-patient relationships, and much more. Some of the issues will include:

- Is it permitted to clone humans?
- How do we determine the halachic end of life?
- Is it ever permitted to perform an abortion?
- Should mental health issues be revealed for shidduchim purposes?
- Is there a Yichud problem with a health care provider or therapist?
- In a mass casualty scenario, who should be rescued first?
- Halachic issues relating to suicide
- Determination of motherhood in cases of surrogacy
- Genetic engineering - Are we permitted to make "designer babies"?
- Is it permitted to sign or execute a DNR (Do Not Resuscitate) request?
- Can we use DNA samples to determine lineage?
- Separating conjoined twins
- What are the halachic obligations of those suffering from OCD, anorexia and other mental health issues?



### Course material:

Handouts when applicable.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

### Course Evaluation:

final exams and class participation



## Meet the Mefarshim

### Rabbi Anthony Manning

We will examine the lives and works of the classic mefarshim, starting from the Mishna and Gemara and running to present day. Individuals to be covered include: the Geonim (early and late), Rif, Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Ba'alei HaTosafot, Ra'avad, Rambam, Rabbeinu Yona, Ramban, Maharam, Rosh, Tur, R. Yosef Karo, Rema, Ariz'l, Bach, Tosefot Yom Tov, Shach, Taz, Magen

Avraham, Chacham Tzvi, R. Yaakov Emden, Ramchal, Ba'al Shem Tov, Vilna Gaon, Chida, Alter Rebbe, R. Chaim Volozhiner, Rav Hirsch, Netziv, Rav Kook, Chafetz Chaim, and Rav Soloveitchik.



**Course Material:** Source book.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** There is no examination for this course. Grade is based on attendance and class participation.

The classes will include a brief biography of the mefaresh being discussed with a view to appreciating the relationship they had to other classic Jewish thinkers – their teachers, students and family. We will examine their principal writings, how they are structured, how to best use them and where to find them in a Torah library. We will also use each individual as a springboard to understand the context of their times; what issues were dominant in the Jewish and non-Jewish world at the time, how those issues impacted on their lives and their writings, and how they broaden our understanding today. As the more recent mefarshim are examined, we will look at the debacle of Shabbtai Tzvi, the Jewish Enlightenment, and the growth of major Jewish movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, including Reform, Chassidut, the Yeshiva World, and Zionism.

## Mesorah – Our Journey, My Journey

### Rabbi Moshe Yehuda Turner

The topic of this series is the tradition and heritage that, over time, developed into what we call 'Mesorah'. This word in and of itself is challenging to define, yet through an overview of Jewish history, we will gain an understanding of one of the most important and beautiful concepts in Torah. Starting from creation of man, on to our forefathers and mothers, the exile in Egypt, the Sinai Experience and then the journey to settlement in Eretz Yisrael, persecution, exile and return up to our present day, we will learn what defines us as a nation. We will gain an understanding of the need for Mesorah and develop a respect for it too.



**Course Material:** Handouts will be brought to the class.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** A short end of semester and end of year test, together with participation and attendance will determine the final grade.

The purpose of this series is to enable us to gain a sense of understanding and then belonging to our Jewish heritage as a whole, and our families as individuals. We will focus on respecting, accepting and loving all of Klal Yisrael, with and perhaps through, their kaleidoscope of styles, customs, dress-codes and practices. The class will be open to discussion and the input of the students will help define our success in reaching our planned goal. The aim of this series is to understand where we come from, be proud of who we are, and learn to love others.

# Michtav M'Elياهو

## Mrs. Bonnie Odze

R Elياهو Dessler z'tl (1892-1953) was one of the most original and profound teachers of Torah in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In his classic sefer *Michtav Me'Elياهو*, translated into English as *Strive for Truth*, he offers countless inspiring and original insights into the ethics and philosophy of Torah Judaism. This course will study several of Rav Dessler's essays on fundamental concepts and issues in hashkafa and machshava in today's challenging times.



**Course Materials:**  
Source booklet.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** The students will make presentations in class based on their study of the sefer.

In this class we will explore, question, analyze and strive for truth in a world where it is sorely lacking!

# Mishlei

## Rabbi Baruch Schechter

In this class we will learn about how to work on middos with specific emphasis placed on those which enable us to have better relationships with people, with Hashem, and with ourselves. In terms of *bein adam l'chavero*, we will talk about patience and tolerance. We will explore how to give to and be there for others while maintaining healthy boundaries. We will learn strategies on how to develop deeper friendships and the power of dignified speech to encourage and assist others to reach their potential. In terms of *bein adam l'Makom* we will explore ways to see Hashem as an ongoing presence in our lives through the good times and the bad. In terms of *bein adam l'atzmo* we will learn the centrality of truth in thought, speech and action to developing a strong and healthy self, with a focus on learning to be "real".



**Course Material:** Sheets will be given out during each class with psukim from Mishlei on the particular topic at hand. The sheets will include summaries of the classic commentaries on Mishlei such as Rabbeinu Yonah, Rashi, the Gr'a, the Ralbag and others. These source sheets will allow students to "follow along inside" as well as assist in reviewing the material in an organized and comprehensive fashion.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** Based on essays done outside of class. They will be focus on how to internalize topics covered in class and apply them to daily living.

The purpose of this class is not just to learn Mishlei; it's to live Mishlei. By applying the age-old wisdom of Shlomo Hamelech to our situation in the modern era with our modern challenges Shlomo HaMelech will teach us how to live life to its fullest: how to be our own unique selves with our G-d given individual talents and our G-d given individual shortcomings.

# Netivot Shalom

## Ms. Miriam Brodersen

We will be studying the writings of the previous Slonimer Rebbe, Rabbi Shalom Noach Berezovsky (1911-2000) on the weekly Parsha. The Slonimer Rebbe's analytical approach is to question why a particular episode was included in the Torah and to show its relevance to our lives.

In this class, we will revisit well-known stories and explore the revolutionary new understandings of the Slonimer so as to deepen and enrich our appreciation of Chumash. A core goal of the course is to show the depth and relevance of the wisdom of Torah in our everyday lives.



**Course Material:** There will be regular handouts with texts from Netivot Shalom and other relevant accompanying sources.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** The final grade is determined by a mid-term exam and a final exam.

# Niflaot HaBriya – The Wow World!

## Rabbi Moshe Yehuda Turner

The topic of this series is the wonderful world we have. Each class will take a deeper look and focus on an element in the physical world we live in, or the human body. The first part of the class will be basic information on the reality that we often take for granted. The second part will be a key lesson that we can use as a tool for practical growth through the topic chosen. Some examples: the human cell – unity but not uniformity; the heart and prayer; the spine and gratitude; hair and emunah, trust in Hashem.



**Course Material:** A booklet of diagrams and topics will be available.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** An end of semester article and an end of year summary test, together with participation and attendance will constitute the final grade.

Being born into this world, we tend to take some of God's most incredible gifts for granted. We spend little time and thought noticing the incredible parts of ourselves and the world around us. The purpose of this series is to open our eyes, to gain a deeper appreciation for the kindness of Hashem in our world and to gain an understanding through the brilliance of our Rabbis into the deeper messages behind the physical world.

## Personalities in Bereishit

### Mrs. Raquel Kirszenbaum

This will examine the main personalities in the book of Bereishit: the characteristic trait that defined each of them, their challenges, mistakes, and accomplishments. We will study the creation of man and woman, their sin as the source of all of man's trials, about Cain and Hevel - these two opposite personalities and how balance was achieved through their third brother Sheit. We will study Noach - his greatness but also what failures prevented him from becoming the father of the Jewish people. Primary focus will be the patriarchs and matriarchs as the creators of the fundamental personality traits of the Jewish people.



**Course Material:** The primary sources will be Chumash Bereishit and its commentaries.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** Midterm and final, which will be either an exam or essay.

“Maase avot siman l'banim” the deeds of our forefathers are signs for their children. Learning in depth about the personalities of Bereishit will allow us to identify and understand our own unique character, the things that most challenge us individually, how best to meet those challenges and build on our strengths to succeed in actualizing our potential. We will derive practical lessons for life, looking in depth at these ancestors as our manual of instruction.

## Power & Influence in Sefer Shmuel

BEIT MIDRASH

### Mrs. Miriam Tannenbaum

We will be covering several units in Sefer Shmuel (I & II). These units focus on the various forms of leadership and influence of Am Yisrael when they are a sovereign body in Eretz Yisrael. Understanding the difference between power and influence in those times can impact how we approach these topics today.



**Course Material:**

The primary text will be *Shmuel Mikaraot Gedolot*. Additionally, each unit will be accompanied by a set of handouts containing sources/questions that complement and guide the student through her journey.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week

**Evaluation:**

There will be a midterm and final that will evaluate the students on the comprehension of topics as well as on the skills developed in the course. The exams will be essay-style with open Navi/resources (as the goal of the course is not to memorize the information).

Sefer Shmuel provides us with a mirror for understanding how to navigate the world around us as well as a potential catalyst for our own impact on our world. This class is offered in the Beit Midrash Track. As such our time will be divided fairly evenly between guided learning of texts in chevruta and lecture/discussions of the material. Along with deepening our understanding of our world and how to affect it, this class will further develop students'

textual skills. We will begin by learning how to clearly read *peshat* after which we will move on to the *mefarshim*.

Entering students are expected to already have some familiarity with learning such *mefarshim* as Radak, Rashi, and Metzudat. Skills in these *mefarshim* will be sharpened, before we move on to more complex *mefarshim* such as Malbim and Abarbanel. Starting from clear *peshat* will enhance students' appreciation of the deeper level that is being added by the *mefarshim*. The lecture/discussion portion will allow students to both expand their understanding of the texts and put that understanding into a larger context. Through the combination of chevruta learning and class discussion students will begin to get a sense for how one moves from learning specific texts to constructing a larger vision of Torah. Grappling with the text and concepts before we meet to discuss them in a class will engage students and give them an opportunity to 'own' their learning in a manner that cannot be achieved by a 'sage on the stage'-style class, a deeper and more enduring form of learning.

## PowerPointing Through Jewish History

### Rabbi Anthony Manning

Jewish history from Avraham to the present. The class is structured as 15 Power Point presentations progressing chronologically and showing through charts, maps, graphs and photos how Jewish history unfolded (in the context of global events) and brought us on a winding but determined path to where we are today. As we approach the modern period the focus will zoom-in with more detail and discussion of the tumultuous events of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**Course Material:**

The course will be taught from specially prepared PowerPoint presentations.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.**Evaluation:**

There is no examination for this course. Grade is based on attendance and class participation.

The class is intended to give students a sense of understanding of and wonderment from how Jewish history has progressed in unlikely and miraculous ways, ultimately leading to the Jews learning Torah in Yerushalayim!! It seeks to give context and structure to their understanding of Jewish history, in a way which is colorful, visual and (hopefully) memorable. The course seeks to deepen the students' appreciation of and inspiration from the hashgacha of the Divine Hand which guides world history. It also tries to impress on them THEIR critical link in the chain of Jewish history and how they can be inspired by the lives of others to make the right choices for the Jewish future.

## Ramban

### Rabbi Avi Klotz

Our whole lives we grow up hearing the "story" of Chumash from the perspective of Rashi and the basic Medrashim. Perhaps the second most fundamental commentary is that of the Ramban. Besides often offering a little known alternative to Rashi's approach, he also lays the foundations of Emunah and Jewish Hashkafah. In fact, Rav Wolbe, in Alei Shur, advises that one of the basic limudim that Jews need to build themselves up is Chumash with Rashi and Ramban.



**Course Materials:**  
Handout

**Scheduling:** Once a week

**Evaluation:** Class participation and attendance.

The class will go through selected Ramban's from the weekly parsha. We will focus on the more fundamental and "famous" pieces, often those that offer new insight into the explanation of Chumash or the foundations of Judaism. Students will be given the text of the Ramban as well as a simple chart which illustrates the flow of the Ramban, with each step delineated. While we will go through the steps of the Ramban, this is primarily a non-textual class, where we will focus more on the themes and approaches of the Ramban.

## Ramchal

### Rabbi Jeremy Kagan

We will examine a few basic concepts that are central to Torah observance and to our understanding of ourselves, our relationship with God, and our purpose. We will begin with **emunah**, trying to understand what it is and what is its basis. This will naturally lead us to ask the question why God is so hidden. This will introduce the topic of **free choice** - what it is and why it is so central to our relationship with God. Once raised, the topic of free choice will lead to a discussion of how as a nation we have used this capacity and how it has affected the world we live in. We will be guided by concepts from the 18th century Italian Rabbi, Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzato, the Ramchal.



**Course Material:**

Sheets will be given out during each class with excerpts primarily from Midrash, Maharal, and Ramchal. We will examine some of these sources in class. But the sheets will also provide you with material to examine on your own.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:**

During the year you will have to write several in-class essays. These will test your understanding of the concepts that were developed in class by requiring you to think through the material on your own and present it.

The purpose of this class is to encounter Torah on a deeper level and through this to appreciate both the intuitive nature of basic Torah concepts and how fully integrated they are with one another. Through the topics chosen you will have an opportunity to become more conscious and thoughtful about your relationship with God. Emphasis will be placed on how the world as we experience it today affects the nature of that relationship and the challenges that we face developing that relationship. The class will push you to think and, hopefully, will give you a taste for how penetrating and satisfying Torah's vision is when brought to this level.

# Rethinking Jewish Thought

## Rabbi Dov Lev

This course explores fundamental ideas within Jewish thought. Topics include:

- Evidence for God's existence
- Responding to challenges to Jewish convictions
- Where was God during the Holocaust and why do bad things happen to good people
- Evidence of the authenticity of Torah
- Role of the Torah SheBaal Peh
- The philosophical underpinnings of prayer
- How *hashgacha pratis* works
- The development of diverse opinions in Judaism and the Torah perspective on dealing with those with different views



### Course Material:

The ideas that form the basis of the course are derived from the classical Jewish thinkers such as Rambam, Chovos HaLevovos, Kuzari, Ramchal, Vilna Gaon, and more recent thinkers like Rav Dessler, Rav Hutner, and Rav Wolbe. Class discussion will be based on reason rather than text, but source material will be provided to students who wish to pursue the ideas in greater depth.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

### Evaluation:

Students will be evaluated based on class performance, as well as a series of essay assignments that test students' research skills and critical thinking while utilizing the tools and knowledge that were developed in class.

This course is structured to give deep insight into fundamental questions about Jewish life. Without any apologetics or assumptions, we will tackle many of the basic and not-so-basic issues in Torah Thought. Through understanding a carefully chosen set of fundamental tenets of Torah clearly students can expect to come out with the thinking and arguments to respond to challenges to Judaism. This clarity will also give a well anchored confidence in students' basic convictions. The course is designed for students who love to ponder, to challenge, and to be challenged.

# Sefer HaChinuch

## Mrs. Bonnie Odze

Why? Why do we do what we do? If you are looking for depth and meaning, reasoning and inspiration in your practice of a broad range of mitzvot this class is for you. Written towards the latter part of the 13th century, Sefer HaChinuch contains a discussion of the 613 mitzvot organized according to the weekly Parasha. The Chinuch emphasizes throughout that a person's inner being is shaped by the actions he performs. Learning about them surely influences us to become better people. Can you think of anything else more important than this to learn!?



### Course Materials:

Source booklet

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** You will assess yourself as your practice and understanding of mitzvot grows and develops!

## Shir HaShirim: Love at First Flight

SHANA BET

### Rabbi Jeremy Kagan

In this class we will analyze Sefer Shir HaShirim through the peirushim of Rashi and the Gra. We will begin by studying why the historical relationship between God and the Jewish people is conveyed through metaphor and why specifically the metaphor of husband and wife. We will focus on understanding the



parallels between this relationship and our relationship with God. The first four pesukim of the Shir will serve as an outline structuring both the sefer as a whole and the relationship. We will connect

these pesukim with the chagim, viewing the calendar cycle as another manifestation of the unfolding relationship between the Jews and God. In this course, we will try to better understand our relationship with God and how to harness our emotions to that relationship.

**Course Material:** We will work with handouts, which will include the pesukim from the Shir that we are focusing on, the commentary of Rashi, relevant selections from the peirush of the Gra and various supplemental texts from midrash and acharonim.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** Those taking the class for credit will be required to write a short essay.

## Shivat Tzion: Then and Now

BEIT MIDRASH

### Mrs. Miriam Tannenbaum

We will be covering several units in Sefer Chaggai and Sefer Zechariah. These units focus on the state of the Jewish people after the destruction of the first Beit HaMikdash and the approach of the contemporary Nevi'im to encourage their return to Eretz Yisrael. Many of the nevuot speak equally to those times as well as to ours, 2000 years later. Understanding both the difficulties and the promise in those days and how they compare to the modern aliyot is an inspiring area of study for our times and a powerful way to appreciate the gift of Eretz Yisrael today!



The purpose of this class is to further develop students' textual skills. Students are expected to already have some facility with *mefarshim* such as Radak, Rashi and Metzudat. Through regular chavruta, their textual skills will be further developed. Next, we will learn how to work with more complex mefarshim such as Malbim and Abarbanel. Additionally, gaining a deeper appreciation of how to read *Peshat*, before exploring the deeper ideas of the *mefarshim*. Engaging with the text will give students an opportunity to 'own' her learning in a manner that cannot be achieved by a 'sage on the stage'-style class. Grappling with the language and concepts facilitates a deeper and more enduring learning.

**Course Material:** The primary text will be *Mikaraot Gedolot* for the relevant sefer. Additionally each unit will be accompanied by a set of handouts containing sources/questions that complement and guide the student through her journey. There will be significant time spent in *chavruta* learning, which will be followed by class discussion/shiur.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week during Second Semester

**Evaluation:** There will be a midterm and final that will evaluate the students on the comprehension of topics and the skills developed in the course. The exams will be essay-style with open Navi/resources (as the goal of the course is not to memorize the information).



# Simcha B'Avoda

## Rabbi Yaakov Altman

Daily life can be challenging, discouraging, and even overwhelming.

This class will give you the tools not only to *handle* life's challenges, but to *turn them into springboards* for your happiness and success. You'll learn many ideas and **practical techniques** to keep your mind and heart in a great place emotionally, so you go through life with the simchah, creativity, and vibrant energy you need to fully actualize your potential and to become the incredible person you're meant to be.

Topics include: Motivation (developing and maintaining it), Tools to Maintain Positive Emotional States, Marriage, Loving Yourself, Happiness, Dealing with Failure and Discouragement, Understanding Yourself and Others, Persistence, Dealing with Difficulties, Self-Confidence/ Self-Worth, Developing and Pursuing your Goals and Dreams, Overcoming Fear, Taking Action, Self-Improvement, and much more. You will also develop a **system** to internalize and remember these concepts, and to integrate them into your life.



### Resources:

Audio recordings and videos will be shared online to review the ideas discussed in class, and more importantly, *to internalize them*. These audios and videos are *only a part* of the tool-set you'll receive to make these concepts a part of your life and who you are.

### Course Material:

Sheets will be given out during each class with excerpts from Chazal, Mishlei, Chumash, Pirkei Avot, etc, as well as many sources of concepts in psychology, self-improvement, and peak-performance.

**Scheduling:** This course meets once a week, but its effects will last a lifetime!

# Soul Identity

## Mrs. Rachel Silber

The course is a detailed understanding of our personality, based on classic Torah sources and also insights into Torah psychology. We learn the influence that our Hebrew name has on our personality, and learn the deeper meaning of the Alef Bait in order to deepen our understanding of our name.

We explore the four elements of the personality as seen in Tanach and taught by Chazal and in Chassidut. By appreciating constructs such as the Earth/Air Personality and the Fire/Water Personality we learn to analyze ourselves and understand why we behave and feel as we do. We need to find our strong points and maximize them, at the same time as beginning to understand our weak points and learning to balance and correct them. We will begin to understand why each of us can get along naturally with some people, and why there is basic energy friction with others.

One main purpose of this course, besides developing our self-awareness, is to understand and accept others in our lives and fulfill the mitzvot of *Ahavat Yisrael* (loving others as we love ourselves) and *Dan Lekaf Zechut* (how to judge fairly and favorably, or not at all). In addition to deeper understandings, we will develop practical tools for how to balance difficult life situations.

The material studied in this course will help you better understand yourself and those around you, including your family and friends, which is valuable on many levels. In separate private meetings, you will have the opportunity gain a thorough understanding of your own seven levels of personality and each element within those levels. You can also start to analyze other people in your life, and their elements, and thereby understand where and why conflict arises and how to resolve and balance your relationships.

**Course Material:**

There will be regular handouts.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.**Evaluation:**

Students will be asked to write two papers during the course of the year based on our class discussions. Grades are determined by these papers, together with class attendance and participation.

## Ta'amei HaMitzvot

### Mrs. Michal Levy

In this class we will discuss the meanings behind the mitzvot and minhagim which we do on a regular basis. The first part of the year we will focus on those connected with Shabbat. We will start with the beginning of the day - Kabbalat Shabbat, candle lighting, and Kiddush, and move all the way through to the end of the day – Seudah Shlishit and Havdalah, with many more in between. The second part of the year we will focus on mitzvot of our day to day life: Brachot, Shema, Amein, Kivud Av v'Aim, etc. As the chagim come around we will choose a specific mitzvah to focus on that will give us a taste for what the chag is all about.



#### Course Material:

Sheets will be given out for each semester. We will study the sources together so advanced Hebrew skills are not required. The sources will come primarily from Sifrei Machshavah (include the more philosophical material), such as Maharal.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

#### Evaluation:

In-class essays will be given at the end of each semester to evaluate your understanding of the material.

To gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of what we are really doing through specific mitzvot and minhagim – what is being accomplished and how we are affecting ourselves and the world around us. This transforms our experience of them from empty movements to meaningful actions, allowing us to bring ourselves to their performance.

## Tanach Personalities

### Mrs. Aliza Sinclair

This course will delve into the lives of the people who are the foundation of the Jewish nation and Jewish history. Who were these men and women? What were their strengths, their struggles, and what practical messages can we learn from them? We will look into multiple אנשי תנ"ך, examine their lineage, their actions, and their character traits.

By analyzing the peshat through classic mefarshim, as well as discovering the deeper layers of the person through Midrash, Aggadah and sifrei mussar, we will discover the greatness of the ultimate Jewish role models.



**Course Material:** Tanach, as well as source sheets which will be handed out in class which include mefarshim on Tanach, Midrash, and Talmud.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** Midterm exam and final essay.

Most importantly, this course will focus on how we can learn from these giants and, on our own level, apply the messages we can gain from them to our own lives - building on our strengths and working on our struggles with the guidance of our ancestors.

## Tefillah – Option 1

### Mrs. Leah Hasten

In this class we will begin by exploring fundamental concepts related to tefilla, such as why we need to daven if Hashem already knows what we need, the purpose of praising Hashem in prayer, how to connect through words we don't understand, and more. We will build our understanding in the context of a general appreciation of the nature of Hashem's existence and why He created the world with man at its center. After developing this larger context we will examine the language of the siddur, going through the words to understand the intent, depth, and breadth of the tefillot. We will discuss the hashkafic topics that are implicit in the tefillot, providing a practical and philosophical approach to prayer. The class will focus primarily on Birkot Hashachar and the Shemone Esrei.

In this Tefilla class we will learn to discover and rediscover our relationship with Hashem through prayer. Though many of us were introduced to tefilla at a young age, most of us continue to struggle to find meaning and connection to a seemingly unrelated jumble of words. The goal of the class is to uncover deep levels of understanding and significance in the text of the daily siddur, using it as a springboard to address fundamental philosophical questions surrounding prayer.

The topics are chosen to provide understanding of *what* we are saying as well as the greater picture of *why* we are saying it. Through this we develop an appreciation of the importance of prayer to our identity as Jews as well as its importance in constantly rejuvenating our relationship with Hashem. The class will assist students to take ownership of their individual relationship with Hashem by providing a framework of understanding that transforms the "tefilla experience" into an intimate personal and positive spiritual experience. Therefore, while the crux of the class will be knowledge based and informational, it will combine experiential learning as well in order to guide the student to genuine growth in the area of personal prayer and connection to God.



#### Course Material:

The siddur is the primary text, but it will be supplemented with sheets bringing a broad array of mefarshai hasiddur.

#### Scheduling:

Twice a week.

#### Evaluation:

At the end of each semester students will be asked to summarize each tefilla/bracha studied, in a form that could be inserted into each student's individual siddur.

Additionally, students will be asked to write an essay aimed at encouraging them to reflect on the personal implications of the material learned. There will be various in-class and follow-up workshop activities to assist in the practical application of the concepts discussed in class.

## Tefillah – Option 2

### Mrs. Nechama Carter

The primary focus of this course will be understanding the translation and meaning of prayers. We will study BirkotHashachar, Shema, and ShemonehEsrei in depth. But before that project makes sense we need to understand how tefillah works - how the avodah of tefillah can transform us and to where it can take us in terms of our closeness to Hashem. So this general study of tefillah will form the first unit of the course. This is meant to be a practical course so our study will require us to address a wide-ranging array of fundamental issues involved in developing our relationship with Hashem through tefillah. These will include: how to want a relationship with Hashem and make avodat Hashem a focus of our lives, how to make that relationship real and vibrant; how gratitude leads to happiness; how we create our reality through speech; how we find true strength, inner knowledge, and peace.



**Course Material:** Siddur

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** At the end of each semester, I will give out a card with the tefillot we have studied. You will be required to annotate each tefillah on the card with one point that we learned in class that resonated with you. You can then, if you choose, daven from the card, focus on an area of growth through each tefillah, and continue to strengthen your connection with Hashem on your own. If the information on your card is drawn from what we learned in class, you get credit.

The main goal of this class is to deepen our relationship with Hashem, specifically through appreciating His gift of tefillah, the transformative power of tefillah, and the content of specific tefillot.

# The 19 Letters of Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch

**Rabbi Moshe Yehuda Turner**

**SHANA BET**

This series will be an in-depth study of Rav Hirsch z'l's book *"The 19 Letters"*. Born in Hamburg, Germany in 1808, Rav Hirsch lived through an extremely trying period in European Jewry's history. The rise of the Enlightenment movement affected the Jews no less than other religions and threatened the existence of traditional Jewish practice. The Enlightenment promoted the philosophy that 'reason' and autonomy should be the primary source of authority and, as a result of this way of thinking, many young intellectual minds began to be swept away from Torat Moshe and adopt alternative lifestyles.



**Course Material:** *"The 19 Letters"* and course book.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** Weekly reading in preparation for the shiur, will be a basic requirement. Participation and a short essay will be used together with attendance to give the final grade.

In this remarkable sefer, Rav Hirsch, using a pen name Naftali, creates a dialogue with an invented character Binyamin. Binyamin, as an intelligent student, asks in the first Letter the basic questions a teen/student at the time would raise. He shares his reservations and frustration with 'old-fashioned' Yiddishkeit and begs answers. In the following 18 letters, Naftali addresses the questions in a respectful yet firm and clear fashion, elaborating on the underlying foundations of Orthodox Jewish beliefs.

The purpose of this series is to enable the thinking mind to discuss some of those challenging areas in modern life that we too may be dealing with. Although based on the written text, the class will leave room for guided open discussion and enable us to gain a deeper, clearer and user friendly understanding of the principles of Judaism.

## Rabbi Anthony Manning

This class is dedicated to build hard text skills in a direct and educational way. It will introduce students in a structured manner to a whole new skill-set in learning which they will then be able to use for life!

Guest speakers with expertise in different areas of learning and teaching will also be brought in to cover their specialist areas.

Topics to be covered will include:



**Course Material:** The course will be taught from specially prepared source sheets.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** There is no examination for this course. Grade is based on attendance and class participation.

- An introduction to key Torah texts, where to find them in the Torah library, and how navigate around the page and to begin to approach learning them;
- Skills in learning Tanach – how to identify key words and themes, to compare and contrast with other episodes, to spot different structures hidden in the text, which can then unlock its meaning;
- Key terms and phrases which come up all the time in learning – how to read them in context and how to avoid mistakes;
- How to unlock the structure of key mefarshim – spotting where the questions end and the answers begin!
- How to get the most out of learning b'chavruta – dos and don'ts to succeed in chavruta learning;
- A short crash course in practical Hebrew grammar to make sure that everyone is able to overcome 'didukaphobia' and have the necessary skills to decode basic terms;
- How to tell the difference between P'shat and Drash;
- How to read Midrashim, decode them and access their true meaning;
- How to trace a halachic discussion forward from its origins in Torah SheBichtav, through Torah Shebe'al Peh, Rishonim, Shulchan Aruch, Acharonim and Poskim. And then how to trace it backwards to the original sources. How to use the 'roadmap' of each sefer to cross reference with other sefarim;
- How to identify, read and explain common 'roshei tevot' and save yourself embarrassing mistakes!
- How to find good divrei Torah – which commentators to look into for which kinds of ideas;
- How to create and deliver your own good quality divrei Torah and avoid the common pitfalls;
- How to understand gematria properly and avoid 'gematria abuse'!
- How to use online resources in learning. Where to find material, how to assess it and how to re-arrange and re-present it;
- How to create useful and attractive source sheets.

**Purpose:** In a classic Torah learning environment, talmidim sit for many years in chavrutot and shiurim, gradually building the learning skills that they need to make sense out of core Torah texts and their mefarshim. Women learning in Seminary do not usually have the luxury of those years to absorb skills osmotically, and during the few months in the Beit Midrash Track, our talmidot need to gain as much as possible. This course is designed to present the them with as many 'hard skills' as possible and guide the students to use them well.

## Topics in Women's Halacha

### Mrs. Rivka Kahan

This shiur is designed both to give students a firm understanding of fundamental areas of halacha as they relate to women, and to provide an opportunity for students to ask and explore questions that are on their minds about women in halacha. We will learn about women's obligation in a range of mitzvot; halacha and hashkafa relating to modesty and intimacy; and issues such as why women can and cannot fulfill certain roles within halacha and the nature of halachic marriage and divorce. This course encourages open questioning and conversation, and explores all issues through serious discussion of halachic sources.



**Course Materials:** We make use of source sheets that include a range of halachic sources.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** Students will be given a few writing assignments over the course of the year that encourage them to integrate and reflect on the different sources and ideas we have learned together.

## Torah & Modernity: Major Hashkafic Debates of Our Times

### Rabbi Anthony Manning

This is an advanced class examining many of the hashkafic debates within the contemporary Orthodox community and seeking to identify the classic sources and core issues which underpin these discussions. The goal of the course is to present different perspectives with relevant sources in order to deepen students' understanding of the underlying issues and awareness and respect for differing viewpoints within Orthodox thought.



**Course Material:**

The course will be taught from a specially prepared source sheets with relevant Hebrew and English sources from Gemara, Midrash, Rishonim, Acharonim and contemporary sefarim.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** Students will be required to write an essay at the end of each Semester, based on the material covered. Grade is based on this examination, attendance and class participation.

Topics covered include:

- Secular Studies and College
- Torah Im Derech Eretz vs. Torah U'Madda
- Kodsh and Chol
- The Balance of Torah Learning and Work
- Art, Aesthetics and Culture
- Jewish and Non-Jewish Music
- Torah and Science
- Creation and the Age of the Universe
- Evolution
- Sexuality and Tzniut
- Zionism and the State of Israel
- Non-Observant Jews and Kiruv
- Da'as Torah and Personal Autonomy
- Women and their public roles in the community
- Torah perspectives on other religions
- Social Justice
- Racism
- LGBTQ+ issues



# Torah & Psychology

## Rabbi Chaim Goldberg

At its core, Torah is meant to provide a blueprint of the ideal way in which to develop ourselves and live a life in service of Hashem. Psychology as well looks to advance a deeper understanding of our human traits, our motivations, and what holds us back from being better versions of ourselves. From more recent movements of mussar and chassidus going all the way back to



**Course Material:** Source sheets will be provided

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** Attendance, participation, and an open-notes exam at the end of each semester.

Tanach itself, Torah sources are filled with psychological approaches and nuggets of wisdom.

Some people argue that psychology is an anti-Torah pursuit of study. This course strives to show that Torah and psychology can actually enhance one another. We'll aim to achieve a deeper appreciation of the Torah's eternal wisdom, learning where the Torah, Chazal, Rishonim & Achronim preempted modern findings of psychology. At the same time, the modern scientific study of psychology can enable us to gain much sharper insights into those generally outlined psychological truths.

# Torah MiSinai

## Rabbi Anthony Manning

Where does Judaism come from? What are the origins of halacha and hashkafa and can everyone be right? Torah MiSinai takes a detailed look at these and many more questions, which go to the root of the Jewish life we lead. It raises and grapples with issues that are rarely dealt with and analyzes the sources in depth.



**Course Material:** Source book with relevant Hebrew and English sources, including those from the Gemara, Midrash, Rishonim and contemporary sefarim.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** Students will be required to write two essays at the end of each Semester, based on the material covered. Grade is based on this examination, attendance and class

We will see literally thousands of classic (but little known) mekorot which give us a broad overview of Jewish history and thought.

In particular we'll look at the halachic process from Moshe to MT! In what way is Torah from G-d, what is the structure of the Oral Law, the authority of Chazal and the nature of machloket? In a modern context, what are psak halacha, chumra, kullah and minhag and does it make a difference what your hashkafa is? We'll also keep a focus on how Torah developed in the context of other world events. What was Torah in the ancient world of paganism and prophecy? How did the Greeks really influence our thinking? How did the Roman exile and Christianity lead to the formation of the Talmud and Midrash. We'll look at the 'rationalist vs. mystical' philosophical debates in the Middle Ages, the origins and impact of kabbalah and the Zohar, messianism and the radical innovation of the Shulchan Aruch in a post-Renaissance world, and the impact of the Enlightenment on Jewish thought. Finally, how does all of this (and a lot more!) come together to produce the modern Jewish world, and where is it all heading?

Understanding the origins of the Judaism we see in the modern world is one of the most central requirements to living a confident and informed Torah life. This course will enable students to gain a deeper understanding of the origin and legitimacy of the Oral Law, to better appreciate the historical development of halacha, and how contemporary poskim arrive at halachic decisions today. Contemporary halachic and hashkafic norms did not simply ‘appear’ but are the result of millennia of tradition, analysis, interpretation and transmission – Mesorah. Achieving a deeper understanding of this is a critical tool in developing emunah and confidence in the importance of living an authentic halachic and hashkafic life. It also energizes our understanding of, and commitment to, halacha and builds awareness of the responsibility to be a link in the chain of Mesorah, and pass on a Judaism that the next generation will be proud to live.

## Torah Thinkers of the Modern Era

### Mrs. Miriam Tannenbaum

This class will look at some of the great Torah thinkers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: R’ Tzadok HaCohen, R’ Avraham Yitzchak Kook, R’ Eliyahu Dessler, R’ Yitzchak Hutner, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and R’ Yosef Dov Soloveitchik. Representing a broad spectrum of Jewry, we will examine their views on Tefillah, Teshuva, and Eretz Yisrael along with their understanding of the place of individual uniqueness in Avodat HaShem.



**Course Material:** Sheets will be given out during each class with excerpts drawn primarily from the works of the particular Torah great that we are studying, along with the source material needed to understand and give context to what they are saying. We will both examine these texts inside and engage in discussion beyond the texts.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** During the year you will have to write several in-class essays. These will test your understanding of the concepts that were developed in class and push you to think through the material on your own.

The purpose of this class is to familiarize ourselves with these Torah greats and their various approaches to living a full Jewish life. Though you may have been exposed to some of their ideas on these topics we hope to understand them much more deeply. We will develop an appreciation for the different schools of thought they represent and the unique contribution each of these remarkable individuals made to Jewish thinking. Though their views on these matters have played a role in the political development of our people, our primary goal in studying their approaches is to enhance the depth of our relationship with G0d, our sense of self, and the meaningfulness of our lives.

## Travels Through Tanach

### Mrs. Pnina Savery

Have you ever wondered what the Tanach actually is and why it is relevant to our lives in the 21st century? Or heard a story being quoted from a book of Tanach and had no idea where it actually comes from?

We will begin with an introduction covering: what Tanach is, why we should learn it and how we can go about learning it. Then we will go on a whistlestop tour, journeying through the Tanach one book at a time.



#### Course Material:

Students should bring a Tanach to class and source sheets will be provided.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** Mid-term and Final.

In this course, we will cover the key context, content and concepts of each book, gaining insights into the modern messages relevant to our lives today. Each book of Tanach has its own focus, theme and prophetic message. By taking this course, you will gain a fundamental overview of all the books which will enhance your understanding of Jewish history and the Tanach as well as how to live in the modern world. In the process we will cover key skills for Tanach study, building methodologies for future independent study.

## Trei Asar

### Rabbi Avi Klotz

*Trei Asar* begins with *Hoshea* who was the first of the *Nevi'im Acharonim*. This term does not merely indicate the chronology of these prophets, but rather defines their prophecy and its purpose. While the earlier prophets had missives that were more intrinsically intertwined with the historical occurrences and the national development of the Jewish people, the later prophets are more focused on the Jewish people themselves and their downward spiral that leads to exile.

The *Gemara* in *Megillah* (14a) tells us that while there were many prophets, the ones recorded were those whose message was needed for generations. This is especially true of *Nevi'im Acharonim* who give more direct and understandable admonishment, and try to reverse the stagnation that eventually led to exile.

We will begin with an in-depth analysis into the nature of prophecy and why it ceases to exist in the current era. Before beginning *Trei Asar* we will summarize the major events and people leading up to the era of *Nevi'im Acharonim*, offering unique and novel perspectives on these personas and their motivations. In *Trei Asar* itself, we will focus on the message that is needed for generations, and analyze contemporary issues through the depth and wisdom of the *Nevi'im Acharonim*. While *posukim* may be read in class, the class is primarily non-textual focusing on the themes and messages of the *Nevi'im*.



**Course Material:** Handout.

**Scheduling:** Once a week.

**Evaluation:** Class participation and attendance.

# Understanding Our Middos

SHANA BET

## Rabbi Michael Inglis

Middos are an integral part of who we are and how we relate to our surroundings. Through them we view our life experiences and interpret current events. In this weekly Shana Bet class, we will extract from the seforim of the Baalei Mussar and Machshava that examine and analyze different midrashim, helping to shed light on the different Middos both personal and general. We will endeavor to gain a deeper understanding, as well as learning to apply each Middah on a practical level.



**Course Material:**  
Handout sheets with sources

**Scheduling:** Weekly

Learning and understanding our Middos is integral to developing our unique personality, our relationship with Hashem, and interacting with everyone around us. Seeing how to apply them on a practical level is life-changing.

# Unexplored Mitzvot

## Rabbi Menachem Salasnik

While we know that there are 613 Mitzvos, and we are aware that some of them no longer apply in our post-Temple world, there are many Mitzvos that we are obligated to keep which are often unknown. They are not taught in high school (or in most seminaries) and nor are they regularly discussed in religious homes.



**Course Material:**  
You will receive a coursebook with relevant sources, some of which will be covered in the classes, with a bit extra for further study for those who want to explore further.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:**  
An open-notes examination will be administered at the end of each semester. Grades will depend on this, together with class attendance and participation.

The purpose of the course is to broaden our knowledge and become familiar with important areas of the Torah that are frequently unexplored. We will explore some of these Mitzvos, starting with the Six Constant Mitzvos and how they are supposed to guide our life. We will investigate which of the many commandments that are linked to idolatry still apply today, and identify some of the laws of ethical business. We will also examine some of the Torah Mitzvos that we keep nowadays, but only in Rabbinic form.

# Yud Gimmel Ikarim

## Mrs. Raquel Kirszenbaum

In this class we will study the 13 Principals (Ikarim) of Faith according to the Rambam. We will explore each ikar individually and also how they fit together as a whole, to understand why each is so fundamental to our relationship with HaShem. We will focus both on the philosophical aspects of each *ikar* and on personally applying it to our lives to achieve a deeper, more integrated Emunah.



**Course Material:** Handouts will be provided with the shortened version of the principal as well as different sources that expand, support, and explain the principal - primarily from *YesodeiHaTorah* of the Rambam. Sources will be printed in both Hebrew and English, but we will work in class directly from the Hebrew to get a more precise understanding.

**Scheduling:** Twice a week.

**Evaluation:** There will be a Midterm and Final in the form of an essay or test.

The purpose of this class is to gain a deeper understanding of what emunah is and through this to appreciate our unique relationship to Hashem, both nationally and personally. This will give us insight into what it means to be a Jew and how we view both this World and the World to Come. This allows us to experience our lives with a genuine awareness of G-d's presence and the significance of His rules.