

JUDAISM 101 SYLLABUS | 5779-5780 (2019-2020)

Instructors: Rabbi David Locketz, Rabbi Jill Crimmings, and Cantor Richard Schwartz

Judaism 101 is an introduction to the basics of Judaism and its history, customs, traditions, and philosophy. This course provides a broad overview and is for those interested in, or new to, Judaism, or anyone seeking to renew or enhance their Jewish knowledge. For some, it is a partial fulfillment of the requirements of our conversion program and adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah program. This course provides an opportunity to explore many of the questions we have about Judaism, the Jewish people, and the Jewish way of life.

Over the course of the year, we will begin an earnest exploration of Judaism. Since any study of Judaism is more than an academic venture, our curriculum includes a number of other experiences and learning opportunities. More details for each of these are included on our website and in our Adult Engagement Catalog.

- Rabbi Norman Cohen, Scholar in Residence Weekend (Nov 8-10)
- Torah Study (attend a minimum of three Thursday noon or Saturday 9 am classes)
- Community Yom HaShoah Commemoration (details to come)
- Attend Shabbat Services at least monthly (services are each Friday night at 6 pm, with food at 5:30 pm, and Saturday morning at 10 am)
- Individual consultations with clergy (minimum of two sessions unless studying for conversion, which requires monthly meetings with clergy. To schedule your consultations with one of our clergy, [email our office.](#))

Additionally, it is strongly suggested that students attend other Bet Shalom and community-sponsored events throughout the year. You will find these events on our [website](#), in the Adult Engagement Catalog, and in HaEtone, our weekly email that you will begin to receive after [registering for Judaism 101](#).

Each Judaism 101 session will cover a particular topic. These subjects, along with pertinent questions and vocabulary, can be found within this syllabus to use as a guide during your readings. The major source of information and data will be in the readings and class presentations. Some of the reading materials may be available at Bet Shalom ([check with our office](#)), with copies for purchase at most of your favorite book sellers.

Your assignment each month is to focus on the particular issues in the readings that you wish to discuss in greater depth in class. Thus, students are not only receiving instruction but will also help direct our discussions and explorations based on their interests. Conversion students should journal questions gleaned from class sessions, readings, and Jewish experiences to guide private discussions when meeting monthly with the clergy.

CLASS SCHEDULE (10-11:30 a.m., unless designated otherwise)

2019:

September 22 - Who Is a Jew?
October 27 - Jewish History
November 24 - Jewish Literature
December - **no class**

2020:

January 26 - Prayer
February 23 - Holidays
March 22 - Jewish Life Cycle
April 26 - Holocaust
May 19 - **5:30-7 p.m.** - Gender in Judaism
June 16: **5:30-7 p.m.** - Israel
July 14, **5:30-7 p.m.** - American Judaism
August 25, **5:30-7 p.m.** - Ask the Rabbi, Ask the Cantor

REQUIRED TEXTS

You are welcome to do the readings from any edition of these books. The specific page numbers are not important as long as you are reading the correct topic.

<i>Settings of Silver</i>	Stephen M. Wylen
<i>Living a Jewish Life</i>	Anita Diamant & Howard Cooper
<i>Finding God</i>	Rifat Sonsino & Daniel B. Syme
<i>As a Driven Leaf</i>	Milton Steinberg

2019-2020 HOLIDAY SERVICES

*Please see the website for High Holiday programming schedule and information.
All are welcome.*

Saturday, September 21	Selichot Service
Sunday, September 29	Erev Rosh Hashanah
Monday, September 30	Rosh Hashanah
Tuesday, October 8	Kol Nidre (Erev Yom Kippur)
Wednesday, October 9	Yom Kippur/Yizkor
Sunday, October 13	Erev Sukkot Service
Sunday, October 20	Consecration / Simchat Torah Service
Monday, October 21	Simchat Torah/Yizkor
Sunday, November 24	Interfaith Thanksgiving Service
Friday, December 27	Chanukah Celebration
Monday, March 9	Purim Megillah Reading
Wednesday, April 8	1st Seder for Passover
Thursday, April 16	Passover Yizkor
Thursday, April 9	Bet Shalom Congregational Passover Seder
Thursday, May 28	Erev Shavuot, Confirmation Service
Friday, May 29	Shavuot/Yizkor

Shabbat Service Schedule:

Fridays: 6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat Service

Saturdays: 10:00 a.m., Shabbat Morning Service

COURSE OUTLINE

WHO IS A JEW?

September 22, 2019

READING ASSIGNMENT:

Wyllen – Chapters 1-4 (pp. 3-61)

Diamant / Cooper – pp. 3-78, 95-166

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS:

1. Are the Jews a religion, a race, an ethnicity, a nationality, and/or a people?
2. What are the major similarities and differences of Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative, and Orthodox Judaism?
3. Is our covenant relationship to God central to understanding Judaism?
4. What do Jews have to believe in order to be Jewish? Is it practice or philosophy that defines a Jew?
5. What is the most authentic form of Judaism?
6. Who / What is a Jew?

terms:

<i>Brit</i>	<i>Kehilah</i>	Orthodox	Conservative
<i>Klal Yisrael</i>	Reconstructionist	Chosen People	<i>Mensch</i>
Reform	<i>Gemilut Chasadim</i>	<i>Mezuzah</i>	<i>Tikkun Olam</i>
<i>Kashrut Mitzvah/Mitzvot</i>	<i>Tzedakah</i>		

JEWISH HISTORY

October

27, 2019

READING ASSIGNMENT:

Wyllen – Chapters 12-20 (pp. 155-296)

Steinberg – entire book

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS:

1. What did the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) and matriarchs (Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah) bring to the Biblical era and to contemporary Judaism?
2. What revolutionary change occurred with the end of the Temple and the beginning of Pharisaic Judaism?
3. How did the external persecution and the internal way of life help to preserve the Jewish people?
4. Who were some of the leading Jews in the Medieval Period?
5. How did emancipation affect the Jewish people?
6. With which character in *As a Driven Leaf* do you most identify and why?

terms:

Babylonian Exile	<i>Kabbalah</i>	Sanhedrin	<i>Bet Din</i>
Maimonides	<i>Shammai</i>	<i>Diaspora</i>	Pharises
Hasmoneans	Saducees	Temple	Hillel
<i>Shtetl</i>	<i>Hasidim</i>	Pogrom	Talmudic Age

JEWISH LITERATURE

November 24, 2019

READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Wylen – Chapters 2 & 14 (pp. 12-29, 185-194 [review])

Diamant/ Cooper – pp. 79-94

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS:

1. Did God reveal the Bible, or does the Bible reveal God?
2. How can one be modern and scientific and still “believe” in the Bible?
3. What is Torah?
4. What makes the Torah sacred?
5. What is the difference between truth and fact?
6. Was the Talmud a “reform” of Biblical Judaism?
7. How do the layers of Jewish literature interact with and build upon one another, connecting Jews from around the world?

terms:

Bible	Oral Law	Talmud	<i>Halakhah</i>	Torah
<i>Mishnah</i>	<i>Shulchan Arukh</i>	Written Law	<i>Pirkei Avot</i>	<i>Tanakh</i>
<i>Midrash</i>	<i>Responsa</i>			

PRAYER

January 26, 2020

READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Wylen – Chapters 3, 5-6 (pp. 30-42, 65-89 [review])

Sonsino/ Syme – entire book

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS:

1. Can a person be Jewish and not believe in God?
2. How do you define God?
3. Why is/isn't a minyan important for prayer?
4. How did the Jewish prayer book develop? What makes a prayer fixed and what enables a prayer to be changed?
5. How is the synagogue an extension of the home?

6. Personal vs. commanded prayer. Home vs. synagogue.
7. Universal prayer and particularistic prayer.

Terms:

<i>Aleinu</i>	<i>Kavannah</i>	<i>Shema/V'ahavta</i>	<i>Amidah Kevah</i>
<i>Siddur</i>	<i>Aron HaKodesh</i>	<i>Kippah (yarmulke)</i>	<i>Synagogue</i>
<i>Barchu</i>	<i>Machzor</i>	<i>Tallit</i>	<i>Bimah</i>
<i>Monotheism</i>	<i>Tefillah</i>	<i>Brachah</i>	<i>Ner Tamid</i>
<i>Yahrzeit</i>	<i>Kaddish</i>	<i>Shehecheyanu</i>	

HOLIDAYS

February 23, 2020

READING ASSIGNMENT:

Wylen – Chapters 8-11 (pp. 102-152)
 Diamant/ Cooper – pp. 167-239

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS:

1. How and why are the Jewish holidays connected to agriculture?
2. How do we relate to the holidays today?
3. What do you think is the most important holiday?
4. Which three holidays did rabbinic Judaism consider major and are they still?
5. When, if ever, is it legitimate to create new holidays? What kind of holiday would you create? Why?
6. How do you think Chanukah should be celebrated?

terms:

<i>Afikomen</i>	<i>Oneg</i>	<i>Sukkah</i>	<i>Challah</i>
<i>Passover</i>	<i>Sukkot</i>	<i>Chametz</i>	<i>Purim</i>
<i>Tisha B'Av</i>	<i>Chanukah</i>	<i>Rosh Hashanah</i>	<i>Tu B'Shevat</i>
<i>Chanukah (menorah)</i>	<i>Rosh Hashanah</i>	<i>Yamim Noraim</i>	<i>Haggadah</i>
<i>Selichot</i>	<i>Yom HaAtzmaut</i>	<i>Havdallah</i>	<i>Shavuot</i>
<i>Yom HaShoah</i>	<i>Kol Nidrei</i>	<i>Shofar</i>	<i>Yom Kippur</i>
<i>Matzah</i>	<i>Simchat Torah</i>		

JEWISH LIFECYCLE

March 22, 2020

READING ASSIGNMENT:

Wylen – Chapter 5 (pp. 65-79 [review])
 Diamant/Cooper – pp. 240-301

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS:

1. Why is a Hebrew name so important in Judaism? What does it represent?
2. How does one enter the Covenant?
3. When and why did Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah originate?
4. Why does Confirmation continue to be part of liberal Judaism?
5. What are the components of a Jewish wedding?
6. What psychological wisdom is inherent in the Jewish attitude toward death and mourning?
7. What, if any, new life cycle ritual could be created to fit today's Judaism?

terms:

<i>Bar Mitzvah</i>	<i>Consecration</i>	<i>Mazel Tov</i>	<i>Bat Mitzvah</i>
<i>Get</i>	<i>Mohel</i>	<i>Brit Milah</i>	<i>Ketubah</i>
<i>Shiva</i>	<i>Brit HaBat</i>	<i>Kiddushin</i>	<i>Shloshim</i>
<i>Chuppah</i>			

THE HOLOCAUST

April 26, 2020

READING ASSIGNMENT: WYLEN – Chapter 21 (pp. 297-314)

Assorted pamphlets to be distributed in class

Movie “Genocide” will be shown in class

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS:

1. What circumstances allowed the Holocaust to occur?
2. What groups were persecuted by the Nazis?
3. Why did the Nazis target the Jews for total annihilation?
4. How did the Jews respond?
5. What is a “righteous gentile”?
6. How can one have faith in God after the Holocaust?
7. What role does the Holocaust play in Judaism today?

terms:

<i>Antisemitism</i>	<i>Righteous Gentiles</i>	<i>Hitler</i>	<i>Shoah</i>
<i>Kristallnacht</i>	<i>Warsaw Ghetto</i>	<i>Magen David</i>	<i>Yad Vashem</i>

GENDER IN JUDAISM

May 19, 2020

READING ASSIGNMENT:

Pamphlets to be distributed in class

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS:

1. How have gender norms and roles evolved in Jewish society from the biblical period until now?
2. How do the different movements, particularly the Reform movement, understand issues related to gender identity and sexual orientation?
3. What issues do we face today in creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all people?
4. What does education look like?
5. What liturgical and ritual issues do we face? How can we balance a desire to maintain a sense of tradition with ancient text while asserting our values of equality?

terms:

<i>Avot</i>	<i>Imahot</i>	<i>Isha</i>	<i>halacha</i>	<i>GLBTQ</i>
<i>gender and sex</i>	<i>shelo asani isha</i>	<i>Esheit Chail</i>	<i>God</i>	<i>Lord</i>
<i>Avinu Malkeinu</i>	<i>mikveh</i>	<i>Kippah</i>	<i>Tallit</i>	<i>Rav</i>
<i>Raba</i>	<i>Gender Neutral vs. Gender Sensitive vs. Gender Accurate</i>			

SUMMER 2020 CLASSES

ISRAEL

June 16, 2020

READING ASSIGNMENT:

Wyllen – Chapter 22 (pp. 315-333)

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS:

1. Why Israel is/isn't considered the center of world Jewry?
2. What does it mean to be a Zionist?
3. What are the different names for the land of Israel?
4. Who were some early Zionists and what role did they play in shaping modern Israel?
5. Why are Reform, Reconstructionist, and Conservative Jews regarded differently than Orthodox Jews in Israel?
6. Where do the majority of Jews live today? How can a Jew live just as authentically in the Diaspora as in the Promised Land?

Terms:

<i>Diaspora</i>	<i>Political Zionism</i>	<i>Aliyah</i>	<i>HaAretz</i>
<i>Religious Zionism</i>	<i>Balfour Declaration</i>	<i>Haganah</i>	<i>Zionism</i>
<i>Ben Yehuda</i>	<i>Herzl</i>	<i>Zionist</i>	<i>Cultural Zionism</i>
<i>Kibbutz</i>			

AMERICAN JUDAISM

July 14, 2020

READING ASSIGNMENT:

Wyllen - Chapters 23-24 (pp. 334-361)

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Jews go to America?
2. Do you consider most Jews in America as “American Jews” or “Jewish Americans”?
3. Why is separation of church and state so important?
4. What impact did America first have on Judaism?
5. How has assimilation affected Judaism?
6. Why is the synagogue even more significant now than in the time of our ancestors?

Terms:

Assimilation

Isaac Mayer Wise

Lower East Side

Hebrew Union College

Landmanschaften

Melting Pot

Yiddishkeit

ASK THE RABBI, ASK THE CANTOR

August 25, 2020

REGISTRATION: [CLICK HERE](#) to register online OR call 952-933-8525