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Midreshet AMIT Learning Guide 5781/2020-2021

First Trimester Elul / Fall Zman 5780-5781

This guide is organized by Areas of Study and not by days of the week. The Areas of Study are: Tanach, Gemara & Chazal, Halacha, Jewish Philosophy, Mussar & Self Help, and Jewish History.

Find the classes you want, and match them to the weekly schedule by class block. For example, a class numbered "Block 5" meets first thing Monday and Thursday morning. A class numbered "Block 24" meets on the last class of Night Seder. You cannot take two classes in the same block.

Make good and interesting choices that will make you good and interesting Jews.

Areas of Study

TANACH

FAQs

What is TaNaCh?

Tanach is an acronym for Torah, (the five books) Nevi'im (the prophets, like Yehoshua) and Ketuvim (holy writings, like Tehilim). All the books in Tanach are holy, but they range in holy-intensity from the Torah which is Hashem's direct word to Ketuvim which were written with ruach hakodesh.

Is TaNaCh relevant?

"Why learn Tanach?" you ask. How can such old books be relevant today? Well, let's start by asking ourselves this question: If God sent you a text, would you read it? Tanach **is** the very word of Hashem to us. Therefore, understanding Hashem's message to us the most relevant thing in the whole world!

I learned it already in High School. Shouldn't I take something new?

Tanach is like your favorite book or T.V. series, every time you read it/watch it you find new meaning, especially when you learn with a new teacher in a new environment.

Class listings for Tanach (Cross listings in parentheses)

[Block 1] Inspirational Women in Tanach

In this course, we will study various female characters and archetypes in Tanach. Through text analysis and discussion, we will discover many unique aspects of the female personalities, both those who are familiar to us and some who are more obscure. We will apply what we learn to our own behavior and the way we view our role in the world around us.

[Block 1] Living with The Times

The Parsha is more than just another subject. Parshat Hashavua is the common language that connects Jews of every different type. In this class, we will learn ideas from the weekly Parasha based on the teachings of our sages. This is a fun and inspirational class that will connect the weekly Torah portion to our lives!

[Block 2] Divinity, Psychology, Politics and Chaos in Nach [Tanach]

Nach is filled with stories of tumult, chaos, and conflict. Yet, of course, it is the word of Hashem to us and provides a path of spiritual existence. How do we reconcile the two? In this course, we will pursue a broad understanding of these exciting stories and attempt to place them firmly in a framework of Godliness where they belong.

The objective of this course is to create literate young women who are familiar with their Tanach, as well as to provide a spiritual framework in which to understand the characters in Tanach whose attributes seem unrecognizable in today's measures and expectations. (Who was the last great *gadol* who also killed someone...?)

Topics covered: Introduction to Kings and Prophets, Yona, Yeravam, Shaul, Eliyahu and Achav, David

[Block 5] Best Supporting Actors

In every story or narrative, there are the main characters and the secondary characters. The secondary characters or the supporting actors are not only interesting, but they are also often the key to understanding an entire biblical story. In this class, we will delve into the stories in Tanach, focusing on the development and personalities of the “supporting actors” and discovering who they really were.

Rishonim (Rambam, Ramban, Smag...) considered as part of the 613 mitzvot and we will try to learn more about a selection of those mitzvot (what to do, when to do them, who needs to do them...)

[Block 6] The Search for Identity in Sefer Shemot

In this course, we will be rediscovering Sefer Shemot. We will see how in these seemingly familiar stories there is much to uncover. In studying the events of the slavery and redemption from Egypt, we will also explore the larger thematic and philosophical questions, such as: How is it that the Jewish nation developed in exile, surrounded by harsh and dire circumstances? Why would someone who grew up in an Egyptian palace be chosen to be the leader? What was life like for the average Jewish slave and the Egyptian citizen? How did antisemitism first develop in Egypt, and how can it help us in understanding today's headlines? We will also compare our own search for identity and acceptance with that of Moshe's self discovery. This is a text-based class, in which we will delve into the stories, ask questions, develop analytical and textual skills, and use our own life experiences to connect with the texts.

[Blocks 7,8] The Twelve Tribes

The Chosen people, in our fullest sense, are made of twelve tribes. While only a few remain today, each tribe was imbued with unique characteristics and distinct attributes. This course will explore the singular contribution of each tribe and help us understand the mosaic that is the Jewish people.

[Block 9] Iyov: Perspectives on Suffering

(Philosophy)

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

[Block 15] Exploring Sefer Tehillim

Sefer Tehillim is a timeless work full of spiritual guidance and essential wisdom. In this class will study and analyze selected chapters, discover their meaning and message and their relevance to our lives. We will cover the psalms which are well known (including those that appear in our daily *tefillot*) as well as those less known which contain treasures waiting to be discovered. The insights of Tehillim will help us comprehend the ways of Hashem and develop our own potential as a Jew.

[Block 15] A Parsha Thought

The Parsha is more than just another subject. Parshat Hashavua is the common language that connects Jews of every different type. Knowledge of the Parsha and its issues is a basic foundation upon which all learning is based. This class will take one pasuk or issue from the Parsha and develop its message into a relatable insight.

[Block 16] Rashi vs. Ramban Introduction to Parshanut

We have all heard the expression “there are 70 faces to the Torah.” The beauty of the Torah is the possibility of multiple perspectives it allows. In fact, almost everything we learn is based on the premise that people see things in different ways. Two of the most famous Parshanim

(commentators) on the Torah were Rashi and Ramban. Join this class and see how two opposite perspectives can be formed out of the same words, and see the beauty in both.

[Block 17] Sefer HaChinuch

The Torah is Hashem's communication to mankind. Through the 613 mitzvos, we are invited into a world of spirituality and purpose. But what do all of those mitzvot mean? So many are hard to understand! The Sefer Hachinuch is an classic sefer written to serve as a guide to understanding mitzvot. Each one of the 613 is explained—halachot, deeper meanings and explanation clearly laid out. Studying the Sefer Hachinuch will provide you with a clear understanding of our basic foundation of faith—the mitzvot.

GEMARA & CHAZAL

FAQs

What is Chazal?

Chazal isn't a what—it's a who. Chazal is an acronym for the Hebrew "Hachameinu Zikhronam Liv'rakha", "Our Sages, may their memory be blessed". The term refers to all Jewish sages of the Mishna and Talmud eras --spanning from the times of the final 300 years of the Second Temple of Jerusalem until the 6th century CE. Whenever you hear someone say "Chazal say...", they are referring to a statement in the Medrash, Mishna or Gemara. (Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi—Chazal. Rabi Yochanan—Chazal. The Rambam—not Chazal. Rav Kook—not Chazal.)

What is Gemara all about?

Talmud, or Gemara, is the ultimate source of everything Jewish. The Judaism that you practice is based on the Gemara. Virtually everything you will learn in almost any class is rooted in the Gemara.

Why Should I take Gemara? Is it relevant to me?

Well, if you want to understand where things come from in Judaism, you are going want to learn Gemara! You won't be able to finish it in one trimester, or even in a year, but getting a big gulp of Gemara will bring you closer to our Jewish world.

What is the Gemara's style?

The Gemara is written in a unique style--it reads like a fast moving conversation, moving between people and topics at a breakneck speed. The challenge of this style is what makes learning Gemara so rewarding!

Is all Gemara about Halacha?

No. There are two main areas of interest in the Gemara. The classic area of study is indeed Halacha, but there are large portions of Gemara devoted to Aggada, which includes stories, lessons, and insights into the world of Jewish thought. At Midreshet AMIT, we offer different classes covering both Halacha and Aggada.

What types of topics are offered in a Gemara & Chazal class?

Well, obviously, there is Gemara. In Gemara, you might find classes that cover lots of ground or go slowly but in-depth. There are also Chazal classes that explore Aggada, Pirkei Avot and Midrashim.

Class listings for Gemara & Chazal (Cross listings in parentheses)

[Block 1] Avot & Banot

"If I am only for myself, who am I?" "Say little and do much!" You are probably familiar with Pirkei Avot. It is one of the best known and most cited of Jewish texts. This beloved mesechet serves as one of the central pillars of Jewish values and thought. In this course, we will learn and discuss the treasure trove of Jewish wisdom and life lessons which is found in Pirkei Avot.

[Blocks 3, 4] The Mysterious Tales of the Talmud

Choni drew himself in a circle and refused to leave until Hashem listened to him, Raban Gamliel was driven from power in a Beit Medrash uprising. The Gemara is filled with fanciful tales and mysterious stories. In this class, we will be diving into the depths of these stories. Using the Gemara and other Torah teachings, we will learn to understand the deeper meanings behind these stories, and along the way, understand their relevance to our daily lives

[Block 6] Gemara: The Deep Stuff (Iyun)

The Gemara is the central work of all of Torah Sheba'alPeh, and in it contains the key to Jewish Law and beyond. This class will explore the Gemara in depth. Emphasis will be placed on critical analysis of Gemara and Early Rabbinic Scholars, with the goal of understanding the foundation of Halachah. In-depth Gemara study (*Gemara be-iyun*) is the hallmark of serious Gemara study.

[Block 12] Witches, Wenches and Wise Women: Women in the eyes of Chazal

In this course we will explore how women were viewed by the Rabbis in the time of the Talmud. We will study the topics of Women and Talmud Torah with a spotlight on Bruria, Women and Mitzvot with a spotlight on Yalta, Women and Magic-Witches in the Talmud, Women and Leadership, Creation of Women and the story of Lilith, Women and Kfira with a spotlight on conversations with the Matrona (a very interesting woman you'll want to hear about.) This course will be texted based using various gemaras and articles but will also include movie clips.

[Block 22] The Gemara Challenge

The focus of this class is to finish an entire mesechet of Gemara together. Heavily text based and requires motivation and focus, although no prior experience to Gemara is necessary

HALACHA

FAQs

What is Halacha?

Halacha is the framework of Jewish law that guides our life. It is based on the Torah and, on the halachic parts of the gemara and has continued its development throughout time up until today!

Why should I take Halacha?

If you want to understand what we do as Jews, how Jewish law has developed and how halacha continues to be relevant to our every experience you should take Halacha.

Is Halacha old fashioned?

Halacha is hands on and practical and incredibly relevant to your life. Remember, Jews have been keeping halacha for thousands of years. It is what binds us together and what binds all generations together, so give it a pass if it can sound old--it is old! The exciting part is trying to find the meaning behind the halachot while living an authentically Jewish life.

[Course #] Class listings for Halacha (Cross listings in parentheses)

[Block 1, Block 12] Hilchot Shabbat

From the perspective that "תלמוד מביא לידי מעשה" ("study fosters observance"), Hilchot Shabbat is an essential aspect of any curriculum. Such a central aspect of Jewish life demands not only a knowledge of what to do, but an understanding of why we do it. We will study some of the most commonly encountered areas of Hilchot Shabbat with emphasis on their practical application. As a double period class, we will have plenty of time for chavruta, skill building, and individual growth as part a central aspect of our class.

Course Objectives:

The goal of this course is for students to be knowledgeable of the 39 Melachot from biblical sources through modern day tshuvot. Students should be able to design common scenarios that arise on Shabbat and be able to research the answers.

Major Topics To Be Covered:

Positive Mitzvot of Shabbat, such as kiddush, hadlakatneirot, onegshabbat, Bishul Muktzah, Borer, Kotevetc Most of the 39 Melachot will be covered

[Block 2, Block 6] Women in Jewish Law

As Jewish women, it is essential for us to study and gain insight into the mitzvot that we observe. In this course, we will develop a deep conceptual understanding of a woman's performance of mitzvot. We will trace the unique set of laws applying to the Jewish woman from Tanach through contemporary poskim. The challenges and opportunities facing the Jewish woman in today's society will be discussed, debated and analyzed throughout the year.

Objectives for this course are to provide the student with a broad knowledge of the mitzvot that relate to women, and to understand their values and inner logic.

Topics we will include:

Introduction: The differences between men and women in the eyes of Jewish Law.

Talmud Torah, How does the law differ for men and women, What are women obligated in as teachers/ students, Tefillin, BirkatHamazon, Tzniut, Hashkafa -why do we have so many rules in this area?

Halacha - what are some of the halachot about clothing, kolisha, behavior etc.?

ShomerNegia- What is the basis for this area of Halacha? What exactly is and is not allowed?
Laws of Yichud, Marriage/ Divorce, Relationships, Hair covering, the Aguna problem

This is a text-based class, in which we will delve into primary sources, ask questions, develop analytical and textual skills, and use our own life experiences to connect with the texts.

[Blocks 3 and 4] Kashrut on Campus (and at Home, too.)

Keeping kosher is one of the pillars of Jewish observance, and understanding the principles of Kashrut and knowing how to apply them is paramount to living a full Jewish life. The college dormitory presents particular challenges in this regard. This course will provide an overview of the principles of kashrut, with special emphasis on issues that are likely to arise and emphasis the practical laws and issues pertaining to the maintenance of a kosher home

Topic will cover the basics of the laws of milk and meat, keeping a kosher kitchen, and common applications

[Blocks 3 and 4] Lashon Hara (in the Age of Social Media)

When the Chafetz Chaim wrote his classic masterpiece on Shmirat HaLashon, cell phones, Facebook, and Snapchat weren't even a figment of his imagination. Fast forward 150 years- how do the timeless laws of lashon hara apply in the modern world? How does communicating with millions of people with one click change the nature of speech? This class will reexamine the Chofetz Chaim's classic writings in the age of social media

[Block 6] Shutim: Questions in a Modern World

This course will focus on שאלות ותשובות (known as שו"ת) and the integral role they have played for the last 1000 plus years. We will see how the *Gemara*, the *rishonim*, the שולחן ערוך, and the *achronim* are used to answer questions that arise in all areas of our ever changing world.

Course Objectives:

To expand the student's halachic knowledge, to give them an appreciation for the way in which halacha develops, and to show the wide scope of halachic concerns.

Major Topics To Be Covered:

Magic, Dreams, Entering a church, Tattoos, Gambling, Issues relating to Eretz Yisrael, Lifnei Iver, Electricity, many more

This is a text-based class, in which we will delve into primary sources, ask questions, develop analytical and textual skills, and use our own life experiences to connect with the texts.

[Block 9] Hilchot Tefila

Did you ever wonder about what preparations have to be done before you daven? What happens when you forget to say Yaalei Veyavo or Hamelech Hakadosh? What should you do if you come to shul in the middle of Kedusha? Is Minyan only for men? Do I have to understand what the words mean for davening to count? Should I daven in English if I don't know what the words mean? These questions and more will be covered in this course; This course will enable you to be confident in your personal tefillah and when attending shul.

[Blocks 13, 14] A Day in the Life (Laws of Everyday Life)

The life of a Jew is filled with ritual from the time we wake up until we go to sleep. This halachah (Jewish Law) class will trace the cycle of the day using classic halachic sources as well as contemporary responsa with the goal of understanding and bringing meaning to our day

The objectives of this course are to provide a scope of knowledge of the many halachot that fill our day, to bring an awareness of the halachic system that is the life of a Jew, and to familiarize the student with the books and people who make up our Masorah (tradition). Topics to be covered include: Modeh Ani, Netilat Yadayim, Brachot and Birchot Hashachar, Tefila, Birkat Hamazon, Talmud Torah, Secular Culture and the Observant Jew, Tefilat Haderech, Tevilat Keilim, Eating and Hashgachot, Bishul Achum, etc. Forgiveness, Cheshbon Hanefesh, Kriyat Shema Al Hamita

Jewish Philosophy

FAQs

Before I ask about Jewish philosophy, what is philosophy at all?

Philosophy is a way of thinking about the world, the universe, and society. It works by asking very basic questions about the nature of human thought, the nature of the universe, and the connections between them. In other words, it takes information about the universe and wraps it up into a relatable package.

What makes Jewish philosophy particularly Jewish?

Jewish philosophy does what general philosophy does, but for Jewish ideas. It provides a way of thinking about the issues that Jewish issues that concern you.

Why should I take Jewish philosophy?

Jewish life is more than rules and regulations. Jews have always asked questions and searched for answers. If you have ever wondered if Hashem exists, when moshiach is coming, or why bad things happen to good people, how can we best connect to hashem? What is teshuva? then these classes are for you.

Why should I care about other people's philosophy? Why can't I form my own Jewish philosophy?

By all means you can! However, like any art or discipline, it needs to be grounded in the classics. Studying the great ideas of the past will enable you to be a great thinker in the future. Who knows? Maybe AMIT 2219 will offer a course in you!

[Course #] Class listings for Jewish Philosophy (Cross listings in parentheses)

[Block 2] Tanya (The Secret of Chabad)

(Must Read Sefarim Series)

Following on from discovering Hashem in our lives through the Chovos Halevavos, Tanya, a Chassidic writing from Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi is a way of helping understand who we are. We will learn about our soul, what is a Mitzvah, what is Holiness, what do the concept of Tzadik and Rasha mean. What is true happiness and how it can be attained. It is an extremely deep but meaningful book which is a tool for life in this extremely challenging world.

[Block 5] Hashem Where are You, and What are You Doing?

(Classic Issues in Jewish Philosophy Series)

Hashem is mysterious and hidden. Jews have always tried to seek Him and understand His ways. This class will discuss the issues relating to our understanding of God in the world and our place in that world. Topics include: Is everything in our world good? Are there coincidences? Our exploration will focus on classic and contemporary sources.

[Block 5] Science Meets Torah

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

[Block 5] Spiritual Writings of Rav Kook

Unfortunately, for most of the English-speaking world, Rav Kook (1865-1935) has become one of those cliché thinkers that many people talk about, but very few have actually learnt and become inspired from the inside out. This course is an in-depth study of Rav Kook's writings, who spearheaded religious Zionism. We will study his spiritual philosophy of individuality, teshuva (spiritual growth), Torah, Zionism, atheism vs. faith, vegetarianism, and geulah (universal redemption).

[Blocks 7 and 8] Uncovering the Spiritual Meaning of Shabbat (Soul of Shabbat)

For many, Shabbat is a day of restrictions. Yet according to Jewish philosophy and Kabbalah, all the laws of Shabbat are spiritual tools that help a person experience the power of God, family, inner peace and the ability to focus on the present moment. It is not a day of restrictions, but a day of celebration. In this course, we will study many Jewish sources that explain the meaning behind the laws and customs of Shabbat. This course will focus less on analyzing the laws, and more on uncovering the meaning of the laws. Examples of the laws and customs that we will study include: challah, kiddush, candles, three meals, muktzah, pikuach nefesh, Shabbat clothes, Shabbat prayers vs. weekday prayers, havdala, refraining from using electricity/phone.

[Block 10] Introduction to Kabbalah

Kabbalah is the mystical branch of Torah study. Shrouded in mystery, Kabbalah presents a new dimension to Torah and the world. This introductory course will explore the basic principles of Kabbalistic thought.

[Block 10] Issues in Modern Orthodoxy

In this class we will attempt to anticipate some of the challenges that will occur when the student is no longer in their supportive Jewish environment. We will be discussing issues such as: What to do when we start to doubt? How to react and interact with other religions and with other denominations of Judaism? Is evolution anti – Torah? What is Biblical criticism, and the like.

[Block 12] Holy Waze (Orchos Tzadikim)

"Working on one's middos (character traits) starts with understanding what middos really are. Through learning the Sefer, Orchos Tzadikim, we will go through different middos and learn how we can actually develop ourselves in a genuine and practical way. We will spend time both understanding the many unique middos that make us who we are as well learning practical tools to better ourselves in the process".

Mussar & Self Help

FAQs

What is the difference between Mussar & Self Help and Jewish Philosophy?

While Jewish Philosophy deals with creating a framework around theoretical issues, Mussar devotes itself to the practical goal of self-improvement. For example, a Jewish philosophy class might deal with a chassidic outlook on life, while a Mussar class will help you with anger management.

Why should I take Mussar & Self Help classes?

Part of what makes your year in Israel so special is the opportunity to spend time thinking about who you are and working towards who you want to be. This is exactly where Mussar & Self Help come in.

What does a Mussar & Self Help class look like?

There is a big range in what classes may look like. Some might be focused on a classic Mussar text, like Mesilat Yesharim, and some might be experiential and discussion based. The common denominator is that they are goal oriented--to make you a better you.

[Block #] Class listings for Mussar and Self Help / Discovery

[Block 3] How Awesome am I?

"If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, who am I? If not now, when?" Pirkei Avot, 1:14. Whether you are middle of developing your basic "I" – your true inner self - or moving beyond that and sharing yourself with others, each of us has a natural holiness. At our core is a sacred, transcendent self—and it glows like an eternal light! Why then can we feel at times so unholy, so mundane, so dark? This is a dynamic, fun, safe space, where we will work together and support each other as we work to become the best versions of ourselves through writing, discussion and meditation.

[Blocks 7 and 8] Mesilat Yesharim

(Must Read Sefarim Series)

Mesilat Yesharim is truly a must learn sefarim for any shtark sem student. The MesilatYesharim was written by Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzato in the eighteenth century and has become the most renowned of all mussar sefarim. It describes a step by step approach towards development of one's character traits and growth in service of G-d. For anyone who is truly interested in improving as a human being and becoming a true oved Hashem: this course is highly recommended.

[Blocks 15, 16, 17] The Inner Artistic You

We will use art to explore themes touched upon in the different Torah classes taught at AMIT. Mediums will range from water colors and acrylics to pastel colors. Encouraging individual creativity through art will help foster a deeper sense of connection and personal expression. A variety of techniques that suit the needs of the individual Torah art projects will be presented to the students in class in order to help each student actualize her unique artistic vision. Completed projects will adorn the school offering a glimpse into the topics covered in Amit Torah classes.

[Block 10] Middot Workshop

Our goal in this course is to improve our relationship with Hashem, ourselves, and those around us by exploring different aspects of spirituality and character development. We will use texts and media to analyze the importance of certain character traits. We will also address the challenges of and strategies towards self-improvement. Ultimately, we'll discover how certain middot can facilitate happiness, success and meaning in life.

[Blocks 13, 14] Navigating the Siddur

Tefillah could be a tremendous opportunity and tool to strengthen our relationship with ourselves and Hashem. However, some of us find it hard to navigating the Siddur itself. This class will focus on the Siddur, helping us understand what is what, and where is where in so that we can connect to and enhance our experience of Tefila.

**[Blocks 13, 14] Michtav M'Eliyahu
(Must Read Sefarim Series)**

Rav Eliyahu Dessler was one of the greatest Jewish thinkers of the twentieth century. R' Dessler was born in the late 1800s in Lithuania where he learned under some of the leaders of European Jewry. R' Dessler went on to spread his teachings to England before finally settling in Israel and teaching there until the end of his life. This course looks closely at Rav Dessler's magnum opus, Michtav M'Eliyahu. We will base the course on Michtav M'Eliyahu but we will examine how other Jewish thinkers dealt with the issues raised in the book.

[Block 21] The Pursuit of Happiness, Meaning, and Faith

In the 1980s the secular world started trying to study what makes people happy. The Baal Shem Tov and his followers knew these secrets and taught us them 250 years ago. This class will discuss the different methods and approaches on how to reach happiness, meaning, and faith in our daily lives. We will delve into the teachings and stories of the Baal Shem Tov, as well as secular psychology texts and studies, exploring the nature of this pursuit which is desired by all.

[Block 21] Life Hacks

Ever wanted to do life...better? Life Hacks will take a deeper look into life lessons from the wisest of our teachers, and bring those teachings down into our day to day. Using games, discussions, stories and more, this class will get you thinking and sharing and reflecting and hopefully dreaming big. Course objectives include: Develop an awareness and love of seeking wisdom and incorporating it into our daily living Discover ways and systems to help prioritize the important from the not Learn effective tools for building and maintaining relationships

[Block 21] Mindfulness

It's what it sounds like...

In a generation of many distractions and constant stimulation, we must become educated in directing our minds and hearts in understand the practice of Jewish mindfulness. This class will serve as that roadmap to living life with greater awareness, purpose, and ability to more fully in the present.

[Block 22] Rebbe Nachman's Soul

Rebbe Nachman left behind a legacy of love, devotion, and endless positivity in a world which is often devoid of such things. In this Shiur we will go through the text and draw from the wellsprings of light and spirituality that are found in the book Sichot Haran, Rebbe Nachman's lectures.

[Block 22] Quest for Authenticity

"If I am I because I am I and you are you because you are you, then I am I and you are you. But if I am I because you are you and you are you because I am I then I am not I and you are not you."

—The Kotzker Rebbe

Jewish History

FAQs

Why is Jewish History relevant today?

Let's start with this: The Judaism we live today wasn't made up yesterday. Our Jewish life is an accumulation of thousands of years. So to understand what we are requires that we understand where we came from.

Why should I spend one (or more) of my year-in-Israel classes on history?

Actually, this is the best time to take a history class! For the first time in your life, you are devoting your whole day learning about Judaism. Now is the best time to gain the perspective that only a history class can offer.

[Block 9] The Shoah

In today's world of Holocaust deniers and with the disappearance of survivors, it is crucial to know precisely what happened during the time period of the Shoah. We must be resolute in our commitment to the phrase "Never Again!" and pay homage to the memories of the 6 million lost.

The purpose of this class is to:

Develop an understanding of the world of East-European Jewry

Understand what Nazism was and how/why the ideology spread among the masses.

Learn about life in the Ghetto

Learn the extent of the Nazi atrocities

Understand the history of Christian Anti-Semitism

Explore physical and spiritual resistance of the Jews.

[Block 16 or Block 17] 21st Century Zionsim

This course provides an in-depth understanding of the Zionist narrative and how it conflicts with the Palestinian narrative. Topics covered throughout the course include Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees, settlements, border disputes, security concerns and the struggle for peace. By addressing these complex issues head on, students will gain the knowledge to effectively articulate an informed position regarding one of the longest running post WW2 conflicts.

Course Objectives:

The goals of this course are threefold: To provide the students with greater context and comprehension of Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict, to encourage each student to develop his/her own understanding regarding the conflict, and to develop the skills necessary to articulate their understanding to others.

[Block 12] History of Zionism

Where did the idea of building a state of Israel start? Was it in the tanach? In a coffee shop in Vienna? In a ghetto in Europe? Who are the influencers who brought the state of Israel to reality? How does a nation whose people disagree on almost everything, combine forces and build a country whose establishment seemed to be an impossible? Join us as we meet the characters and explore the exciting moments in the creation of the State of Israel.

