



# SKIRBALL

The Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning at Temple Emanu-El

One of the Seven Species  
(*Shivat HaMinim*)

*Olive*, Marcia Borland, 2005



## wheat

*“Rabbi Hanina ben Pazzi said: Thorns need not be hoed nor sown—they sprout on their own, rise straight up, and grow. But wheat—how much pain, how much labor is needed before it can be made to grow!”*

– Genesis Rabbah, 45:4

# Seven Species

*Shivat HaMinim*

*“For the Lord your God will bring you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, springing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive-trees and honey... And you shall eat and be full and you shall bless the Lord God for the good land he has given you.”*

–Deuteronomy 8:7-10

The seven kinds of produce listed in Deuteronomy 8:8 are commonly referred to as the Seven Species or *Shivat HaMinim*. They are considered archetypal products of the Land of Israel, and they are particularly invoked during the holiday of Tu B'Shvat, the New Year for the Trees (this year, February 13), and on Shavuot, when the first fruits of the harvest, called *bikkurim*, were offered in the Temple in Jerusalem. *Bikkurim* were offered only from among these Seven Species.

All seven varieties have one thing in common: their main growing or flowering season is between the holidays of Passover and Shavuot. Thus, the fate of these crops is determined between Passover and Shavuot. Too much rain or not enough, too much sun or not enough, and too much wind or not enough, could destroy each of these crops.

The theme of this Course Guide is the Seven Species, or *Shivat HaMinim*. Discover the different layers of meaning in these fruits as you read quotations about each species from both Jewish and general sources. The artwork featured here was created by artists who attend the Artists' Beit Midrash. Enjoy!

# the book

## The Jewish-Arab Relationship in Modern Israeli Literature and Film

*The Leon Finley Course in Jewish Studies*

REUBEN NAMDAR

Monday 6:30–8:00 PM: **Feb** 6, 13, 27 **Mar** 6, 20, 27 **Apr** 3, 10

The Jewish-Arab conflict affects not only Israel's politics, but also its culture. Israeli writers and filmmakers, Jewish and Arab alike, explore the complexity of this relationship, highlighting the attraction as well as the repulsion, the animosity as well as the compassion. Acquaint yourself with the writings of Amos Oz, A.B. Yehoshua, Anton Shammas, and others. View films such as Raffi Bukai's masterpiece *Avanti Poplo*. Gain a deeper understanding of the complicated, often tragic, encounter between these two cultures.

## Prophets, Princesses, Villains, and Kings: Reading the Bible as Literature

REUBEN NAMDAR

Monday 8:15–9:45 PM: **Feb** 6, 13, 27 **Mar** 6, 20, 27 **Apr** 3, 10

The books of Samuel and Kings are, for various reasons, lesser known to the Jewish-American reader than other parts of the Bible. They contain superbly dramatic, psychologically nuanced, and artistically masterful tales. These are stories of jealousy and piety, heroism and cruelty, lust and greed. Meet some of the most powerful characters in the Bible: the somber prophet Samuel, the tragic king Saul and his offspring—prince Jonathan and princess Michal—and the mercurial robber, lover, musician, and poet-turned-king, David. Explore the dark and complex relationships between the mythological ancestors of ancient Israel and savor the rich language, lush textual fabric, and psychological insight of these epic tales.

## Sarah, Hagar, Abraham: Things Fall Apart

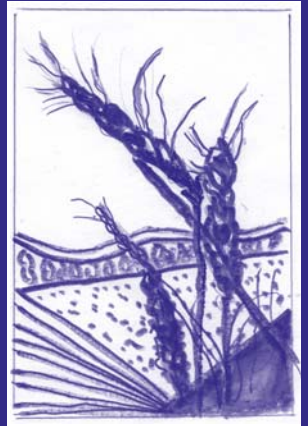
WENDY AMSELLEM

*The Harrison S. Kravis Course in Jewish Studies*

Tuesday 6:30–8:00 PM: **Feb** 7, 14, 21, 28 **Mar** 7, 21, 28 **Apr** 4

As she enters her late seventies and is still childless, Sarah decides to take matters into her own hands and marries her maidservant Hagar to her husband Abraham. What were Sarah's, Hagar's, and Abraham's hopes for this union? Where do things go wrong? What implications might this story have for later relationships between Arabs and Jews? Study Genesis chapters 16 through 21 as well as the history of rabbinic interpretation of this story.

## wheat



*“The man who sows wrong thoughts and deeds, and prays that God will bless him, is in the position of a farmer who, having sown tares [weeds], asks God to bring forth for him a harvest of wheat. He who would be blest, let him scatter blessings. He who would be happy, let him consider the happiness of others.”*

– James Allan,  
*Above Life's Turmoil*

*Wheat*, Rochelle Spergel,  
2005

barley

*“One day Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, ‘My daughter, should I not try to find a home for you, where you will be well provided for? Is not Boaz, with whose servant girls you have been, a kinsman of ours? Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. Wash and perfume yourself, and put on your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor....’”*

– Ruth 3:1-3

the book *continued*

Joseph and His Brothers:  
O Brother, Where Art Thou?

WENDY AMSELLEM

Tuesday 8:15–9:45 PM: Feb 7, 14, 21, 28 Mar 7, 21, 28 Apr 4

Although Joseph begins his life as the favorite child of a wealthy father, he soon finds himself wrenched from his home and sold as a slave in a foreign country. Why does this happen? How does he pull his life together and rise up through the ranks of Egyptian society? Study the Joseph narrative as it appears both in the Hebrew Bible and the Koran. Highlights include Joseph’s violent encounter with his brothers, his amorous intrigue with his boss’s wife, and his final emotional reconciliation with his family after a twenty-two year separation.

Rediscovering the Weekly Torah Portion

ARLENE AGUS

☼ Wednesday 12:00–1:30 PM:

Feb 8, 15, 22 Mar 8, 15, 22, 29 Apr 5

Each week, in synagogues throughout the world, Jews read not just a single section of the Torah, but the *identical* section of the Torah. This yearly cycle is both study and ritual, an ongoing immersion in the rhythm, wisdom, history, and timeless foundation of Jewish civilization. Study the upcoming stories and themes of exodus and rebellion, the Ten Commandments, the Levitical rites, and the ethical and legal precepts intended as cornerstones of a life of holiness. Applying creativity and imagination, use the weekly Torah portion as a focal point and springboard for connecting your life to greater concepts and lessons. Through guided study of diverse classical and contemporary commentaries, develop tools to read the weekly portion in depth.

Esther: The Book of Hiddenness

DR. FREEMA GOTTLIEB

☼ Wednesday 1:45–3:15 PM:

Feb 8, 15, 22 Mar 8, 15, 22, 29 Apr 5

Why is the only book in the Bible where God’s name is not mentioned even once so cherished? In a tale of suspense and ironic twists of intrigue and passion, an obedient orphan girl named Esther becomes a mature leader overnight, commanding and charming the men around her to save her people from genocide. Discern the hidden realm of spirituality that allows Esther to pare away her own ego and become the focus for the Divine Presence. With explanations from the Talmud, Midrash, Kabbalah, and Hasidic masters—and a fresh look into poetry, drama, and art—discover why Esther, in her final role, stepped away from history to become an author of a story that has been passed down through generations!



# heritage

## The Jews and the Christians: A Parallel History

MARCIE LENK

*The Hans A. Vogelstein Course in Jewish Studies*

Monday 6:30–8:00 PM: **Feb** 6, 13, 27 **Mar** 6, 20, 27 **Apr** 3, 10

Trace the history of Jesus followers (later called Christians) and other Jews in the first centuries after Jesus' death. This was the time that both Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism developed. How did Christianity move from a Jewish movement to a primarily gentile one? Who were the Rabbis? How did they respond to Jesus followers in their midst? Looking at texts from the New Testament, Josephus, the Church Fathers, and the Talmud, as well as archaeological discoveries, follow the development of Early Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism, looking for points of contact and divergence.

## Jewish History and Jewish Memory

NOAM M. ELCOTT

*The William Rosenwald and Ruth Israels Rosenwald  
Course in Contemporary Jewish History*

Tuesday 6:30–8:00 PM: **Feb** 7, 14, 21, 28 **Mar** 7, 21, 28 **Apr** 4

"Memory is constantly on our lips because it no longer exists." So runs the provocative argument whereby the current memory boom—museums and memorials, memoirs and histories—is the last gasp of a society unable to transform history into living memory. In these debates, Jews, "the people of memory," have emerged as a model for a world in mnemonic crisis. Explore the ever-changing fabric of memory and the current memory explosion, and the place of Jews within them. Probe the many faces of Jewish memory, from Deuteronomy and the Haggadah through medieval rituals and modern memorials. Question the boundaries that separate fact and fiction, static archives and living ceremonies, Jewish history and Jewish memory.

## barley



*"On either side  
the river lie  
Long fields of  
barley and of rye,  
That clothe the  
wold and meet  
the sky;  
And thro'  
the field  
the runs by  
To many-tower'd  
Camelot."*

— Lord Alfred  
Tennyson, *The Lady  
of Shalott*

*Barley*, Alice Forman, 2005

## vine (grapes)

*“One who learns from the young, who is he like? Like one who eats dull [unripe] grapes and drinks wine from the wine-press. And one who learns from the elderly, who is he like? Like one who eats ripened grapes and drinks mature wine.”*

– Ethics of the Fathers, 4:20

## ideas

**Jewish Questions in Contemporary Art**

NOAM M. ELCOTT

☼ Tuesday 2:30–4:00 PM:

**Feb 7, 14, 21, 28 Mar 7, 21, 28 Apr 4**

The world of contemporary art is unsettling and strange. However, it is also among the most innovative and provocative realms of our culture. Get a foothold in current art trends and discover how contemporary artists have addressed Jewish questions such as sacred space, Jewish identity, Israeli politics, ritual, and memory. Class time will be divided between galleries and museums, artists' studios, and the Skirball Center.

**How Did It All Begin and How Will It End?: Creation and Eschatology, Science and Religion**

DR. NEIL GILLMAN

*The Robert S. and Kimberly R. Kravis Course in Jewish Studies*Tuesday 6:30–8:00 PM: **Feb 7, 14, 21, 28 Mar 7, 21, 28 Apr 4**

Human beings are inherently curious about beginnings and endings. That is why we spend considerable time and energy expounding elaborate theories about how the world got started and how the world will end. Such theories have become an integral dimension of both science and religion, engendering fierce debates over the centuries and in today's headlines. Investigate some of those theories, what they have in common, how they differ, and why we even bother worrying about them at all.

**Anthropology and the Bible**

RABBI REBECCA JOSEPH

Thursday 6:30–8:00 PM: **Feb 9, 16, 23 Mar 9, 16, 23, 30 Apr 6**

Think about the Bible in ways that help to better understand the society it represents and its culture. More than a century of anthropological research demonstrates that while religious beliefs and practices vary widely within the human family, all religions exhibit some common characteristics. Use anthropological concepts and cross-cultural comparisons to look at how the Bible poses and solves some common human problems such as interpreting physical appearance, forming families, and limiting interpersonal violence.

## Exploring Jewish Prayer and Piety

DR. DAVID KRAEMER

*The Pincus Family Course in Jewish Studies*

Thursday 6:30–8:00 PM: **Feb** 9, 16, 23 **Mar** 9, 16, 23, 30 **Apr** 6

What does it mean to be “religious”? “Pious”? What is prayer, really? And what does all of this have to do with spirituality? Explore Jewish prayer and other pietistic practices and consider how they help us answer these questions. Piety is expressed in a wide variety of ways, not just through prayer. Investigate the concepts and practice of sacrifice, praise, prayer, study, and meditation. Ask—always—how the Jewish way of doing these things relates to that of other religious communities.

## Jewish Ethical Questions

DR. DAVID KRAEMER

Thursday 8:15–9:45 PM: **Feb** 9, 16, 23 **Mar** 9, 16, 23, 30 **Apr** 6

A religion that lives “in the world” has to address the ethical questions we all ask as our lives progress. A religion that tends to notice details—and speak in nuances—addresses these questions in even greater complexity. This is the way of Judaism: to ask the questions and admit that there are often not easy answers. Explore the Jewish ways of “doing ethics” but also address common ethical questions relating to birth and death, money and charity, relationships and sexuality. You may not receive definitive answers but will be challenged to develop your own Jewish ethical responses.

## Custom and Tradition in Jewish Life: Why Jews Do the Things Jews Do

DAVID WACHTEL

Thursday 8:15–9:45 PM: **Feb** 9, 16, 23 **Mar** 9, 16, 23, 30 **Apr** 6

Why do we break a glass at a wedding? Why do we leave a stone when we visit a cemetery? Why do we light candles on the Sabbath? Why do we cover the mirrors in a house of mourning? Why do we dip apples in honey on Rosh Hashanah? Although such customs are not Jewish law, for a wide variety of Jews, these customs help define what it means to be Jewish. Examine a variety of both ancient and modern customs that have entered into Jewish practice from China to India, from Israel to the United States.

## vine (grapes)



*“Men who have created new fruits in the world cannot create a system whereby their fruits may be eaten. And the failure hangs over the State like a great sorrow.... [A]nd in the eyes of the people there is the failure; and in the eyes of the hungry there is a growing wrath. In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage.”*

– John Steinbeck,  
*The Grapes of Wrath*

*Grapes*, Arlene Sokolow,  
2005

# life

## fig

*“Whenever you go to the fig tree, you are likely to find ripe fruit to eat. Similarly, whenever you go to the Torah, you will find nourishment for the spirit.”*

– Babylonian Talmud,  
Eruvin 54a-b

## The Jews of Iran: A Purim Persian Cooking Class

JENNIFER FELICIA ABADI

*This course includes 1 lecture of one and a half hours and 3 cooking classes of two and a half hours.*

Monday 6:30–8:00 PM (Lecture): **Feb 6**

Monday 6:30–9:00 PM (Cooking Classes): **Feb 13, 27 Mar 6**

---

In preparation for Purim, return to ancient Shushan and meet the modern Iranian Jewish community. Learn about the centrality of food to Purim and about the lives of Jews from Iran, which is where the Purim story took place. Delve into the traditional sweet and savory dishes prepared by Iranian Jews, and then roll up your sleeves and make some of them. In two cooking classes, learn how to prepare two full, multi-course Persian meals. In a third class, prepare various Middle Eastern Purim treats, including carrot halvah and date-stuffed pastries, and discover why they are specifically made for this holiday.

## “A Night Different from All Other Nights”: A Passover Cooking Class

JENNIFER FELICIA ABADI

*This course includes 1 lecture of one and a half hours and 2 cooking classes of two and a half hours.*

Wednesday 6:30–8:00 PM (Lecture): **Mar 22**

Wednesday 6:30–9:00 PM (Cooking Classes): **Mar 29 Apr 5**

---

Tired of gefilte fish and brisket at your seders? In this class, learn the basics of Passover and how various Middle Eastern and Sephardic cultures celebrate it. Discover the Moroccan tradition of *mimooneh*, which celebrates the return to leavened food at Passover’s conclusion. Then, head to the kitchen where you will prepare and sample Moroccan, Syrian, and Libyan harosets, which represent the mortar used by the Jews in their labor in Egypt, as well as main courses for the seder, including a Turkish layered matzah pie and Iraqi chicken with figs, tomatoes, and coriander. In the second cooking class, learn to prepare various couscous dishes, in addition to pastries and other sweets traditionally eaten after Passover at the *mimooneh* celebration.



## The Art and History of the Passover Haggadah: From Pharaoh's House to Maxwell House

DAVID WACHTEL

*The Jane Moyses Gilder Course in Jewish History*

Thursday 6:30–8:00 PM: **Feb** 9, 16, 23 **Mar** 9, 16, 23, 30 **Apr** 6

The Haggadah is the text used by Jews around the world to celebrate the holiday of Passover. Combining liturgy, images, music, and memories, the Passover Haggadah is an enduring fixture of Jewish culture that harkens back to the very origins of the Jewish people. Investigate the development of the Passover Haggadah, tracing its history across the millennia from the days of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt to the present day. Review some of the most interesting textual features of the Haggadah and learn about the unique imagery found in illustrated and illuminated Haggadah manuscripts of the Middle Ages as well as the beautiful printed haggadot of the last five centuries.

Answer the question, “*Mah nishtanah?*” How is the Passover Haggadah different from all other Jewish books?”

fig



*“O excellent!  
I love long life  
better than figs.”*

– William Shakespeare,  
*Antony and Cleopatra*

## Who studies at Skirball?

*Men and women.* Reform Jews and  
Orthodox Jews, Conservative  
Jews, Reconstructionist Jews.

“I’m just a Jew” Jews. **Non-Jews.** *Secular Jews.*

Twenty-five year olds, eighty-five year olds.

Forty year olds and sixty year olds.

***Straight Jews and gay Jews.***

Atheists, theists, agnostics.

*Manhattanites and Brooklynites.*

“I’m from Queens.” “The Bronx.”

***“Jersey.”*** Israelis, Canadians, Germans,

Brits. Hebrew-speaking Jews,

Russian-speaking Jews,

Yiddish-speaking Jews. Seasoned learners.

*“I haven’t...since my Bar Mitzvah!”*

Jews who say: “I want to learn.”

*Fig*, Nicole Bigar, 2005

## pomegranate

*“Did the pomegranates blossom yet?” [Song of Songs 7:13]—this refers to the young children who sit and learn Torah. They sit in rows like the seeds of the pomegranates.”*

– Song of Songs  
Rabbah, 6:17

A study experience  
designed for 30-  
and 40-somethings

# openings

Engaging study.  
Discussion and debate.  
Dinner and conversation.

Join with other 30-  
and 40-something  
Jewish New Yorkers  
for a meaningful and  
stimulating evening

## once a month on wednesday nights

7:00 PM Dinner  
8–9:00 PM Study and Discussion  
\$100 for the series

**Jan 25 Feb 22 March 29 April 26 May 10**

### theme

Who Is a Jew? Identity, Biology, and Politics

### facilitator

Rabbi Leon A. Morris, director, Skirball Center

The nature and criteria of Jewish identity have changed throughout time. Trace the development of Jewish law on this issue from the Bible through our own day. Analyze the interplay between biology and faith, how Jews define themselves and are defined by others, conversion to and out of Judaism, and the phenomenon of “lost tribes” reclaiming their Jewishness. Ultimately, think about and discuss the ways that definitions of Jewish identity can impact our own self-understanding of what it means to be a Jew.

# ideas café

**A weekly salon  
in a Jewish  
environment  
open to  
all voices.**



**Tuesdays at 8:00 PM**

**February 7, 14, 21, 28, March 7, 21, 28 April 4**

Hungry for intellectual give-and-take in a relaxed setting? Then join us at the Ideas Café. Meet others over wine, cheese, fruit, and, of course, coffee at small, candle-lit tables and discuss vital current issues that affect Jewish and American life.

**It's a meeting of minds where spirited discussions move at a rapid pace—sometimes with very surprising results.**

You'll find our sessions provocative, stimulating, and fun—and, above all, a great intellectual experience. Dror Bikel, Rabbi Leon A. Morris, Daniel Septimus, and Roy Wasserman will moderate the Ideas Café on alternating weeks.

Join us for a chance to meet new friends, share your thoughts, and hear what others think about the issues that affect us all. See you on Tuesday!

**No reservations necessary. \$10 per session at the door. \$5 for Skirball Center students.**

Visit us online at [www.ideascafe.org](http://www.ideascafe.org) for specific information about each week's topic.

**pomegranate**



*“Or at times a  
modern volume,—  
Wordsworth’s  
solemn-thoughted  
idyl, Howitt’s  
ballad-dew, or  
Tennyson’s  
enchanted reverie,—  
Or from Browning  
some ‘Pomegranate,’  
which, if cut deep  
down the middle,  
Shows a heart  
within blood-  
tinctured, of a  
veined humanity!”*

– Elizabeth Barrett  
Browning,  
*Lady Geraldine’s  
Courtship*

*Pomegranate,*  
Barbara Freedman, 2005

olive

*“The Sages taught:  
Just as olive oil  
brings light into  
the world, so do  
the people of Israel  
bring light into  
the world.”*

– Song of Songs  
Rabbah, 1:2

# SUNDAY Seminars

Sundays 10:00 AM–2:00 PM

Coffee and bagels are served.

## MARCH 19

### France and the Jews, France and the Arabs

FRED ROSENBAUM

The third largest Jewish community in the world experienced a wave of anti-Semitic attacks beginning in 2000. What was the origin of this widespread Judeophobia in France and why has it ebbed in the past two years? Examine French anti-Semitism from the Dreyfus Affair to the Holocaust, and then focus on the period since Charles de Gaulle, in which the Arab world has loomed large in French foreign policy and the fast-growing Moslem minority has had a major impact on French politics and society. How have French Jews responded and what are their prospects in this environment?



## APRIL 2

### The Haggadah: Its Structure and Message

RABBI LEON A. MORRIS

The Haggadah is the most widely used Jewish text in contemporary Jewish life, yet this rich and complex compendium of ancient sources eludes most of its readers. Explore a variety of central Jewish texts that form the basis of the Haggadah to better understand the seder's ritual script in a way that underscores the physical and spiritual dimensions of freedom.





## A Course for Engaged Couples

# Friends & Lovers

*(Re'im Ahuvim)*

RABBI LEON A. MORRIS

Wednesday 7:00–9:00 PM

**February** 8, 15 **March** 1, 8, 15, 22 **April** 5

**You are getting married.**  
**Mazal tov!**

But in planning a wedding that reflects who you are, the myriad symbols and rituals of Jewish tradition can seem baffling. This special course for engaged couples will allow you to find your own path through the vast array of Jewish traditions. Explore the options that Judaism offers an engaged couple so that you can make choices that speak to you. Familiarize yourselves with the components of the wedding ceremony itself, including music, *ketubah* (marriage contract), food, and other rituals. In addition, study stories of love and relationships from Jewish sources, examine the psychodynamic and legal aspects of marriage, and allow us to help you prepare for the big day and for the years that follow.

olive



*“I like them all, but especially the olive. For what it symbolizes, first of all, peace with its leaves and joy with its golden oil.”*

—Aldous Huxley

*Olive*, Marcia Borland, 2005



## date (honey)

*“No part of the date palm is wasted: The fruit is eaten, the embryonic branches [lulav] are used for the Four Species of Sukkot, the mature fronds can cover a sukah, the fibers between the branches can make strong ropes, the leaves can be woven into mats and baskets, the trunks can be used for rafters.*

*Similarly, no one is worthless in Israel: some are scholars, some do good deeds, and some work for social justice.”*

– Numbers Rabbah, 3:1

## The Skirball Center’s... 3-Year Certificate Program in Jewish Studies

# Iyun



**6 semesters | 10 weeks each | 180 hours**

Classes meet Wednesday evenings  
from 6:30–9:30 PM **beginning Fall 2006**

**T**he IYUN program facilitates a serious and intense engagement with Jewish texts—biblical, rabbinic, and modern. Applying methods of critical inquiry to in-depth study of primary sources, IYUN equips students with tools for lifelong learning. IYUN cultivates a community of learning in which students and faculty bring their life experience, secular knowledge, and critical judgment to the exploration of traditional and contemporary Jewish texts. By relating to Jewish texts in their historical contexts and from a variety of perspectives, students will learn to analyze, process, and selectively apply them to enrich their Jewish lives, relationships, and communities.

Applications for IYUN’s third class  
will be available in June 2006.

For more information about the  
application process, please visit  
**[www.adultjewishlearning.org/iyun](http://www.adultjewishlearning.org/iyun)**

**UJA**  **Federation**  
of New York



**SAVE THE DATE**

**MAY 23–JUNE 4, 2006**

SKIRBALL 2006 | 13

# Israel Study Trip

## The Heavenly and Earthly Jerusalem

Join Rabbi Leon A. Morris and noted educator Ophir Yarden for a thoughtful and intellectually stimulating trip to Israel. Using the land of Israel as a context for our study, explore the theme of “The Heavenly and Earthly Jerusalem” through biblical, rabbinic, medieval, and modern texts.

We will begin our trip on Yom Yerushalayim (the anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967) and conclude with the festival of Shavuot, standing at the site where our ancestors brought their first fruits to the ancient Temple 2,000 years ago.

### The trip includes:

- ▶ 9 nights at Prima Kings Hotel in Central Jerusalem
- ▶ 2 nights at Kibbutz Hotel Nof Ginnosar on the Sea of Galilee
- ▶ Seminars, lectures, cultural events, and holiday celebrations
- ▶ Two Shabbatot in Jerusalem with a variety of religious and secular options

### Cost

- ▶ **\$3,099** pp (double occupancy) including airfare, hotel, breakfast, most lunches and dinners, all transfers, deluxe bus, and all fees and tips.

To reserve your place or to view a tentative itinerary, visit our website at [www.adultjewishlearning.org/israel](http://www.adultjewishlearning.org/israel) or call 212.507.9580

## Get ready for your trip with...

### A Conversational Hebrew Crash-Course

MICHAL NACHMANY

Monday, 6:30–8:00 pm: **April 24, May 1, 8, 15**

Open to Israel trip participants and others. The course fee is \$110. To register, call 212.507.9580 or visit [www.adultjewishlearning.org/israel](http://www.adultjewishlearning.org/israel)

date (honey)



*“It is the nature of the strong heart, that like the palm tree it strives ever upwards when it is most burdened.”*

– Sir Philip Sidney

*Date*, Marilyn Bodek, 2005



# Courses

## AT A GLANCE

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
	FRANCE AND THE JEWS, FRANCE AND THE ARABS (p. 10)	THE HAGGADAH: ITS STRUCTURE AND MESSAGE (p. 10)	PURIM PERSIAN COOKING CLASS (p. 6)
		THE JEWS AND THE CHRISTIANS (p. 3)	HEBREW 2 : THROUGH THE HAGGADAH (p. 16)
		THE JEWISH-ARAB RELATIONSHIP (p. 3)	HEBREW 3 : THROUGH THE HAGGADAH (p. 16)
		READING THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE (p. 1)	JEWISH QUESTIONS IN CONTEMPORARY ART (p. 4)
		SARAH, HAGAR, AND ABRAHAM (p. 1)	JEWISH HISTORY AND JEWISH MEMORY (p. 3)
Recommendations for Beginners			
Bible Courses			
Rabbinic Texts			
History Courses			
Theology / Philosophy Courses			
Literature Courses			
Contemporary Issues			
Daytime Courses			
Evening Courses			

All classes take place at  
10 East 66th Street  
New York, NY 10021  
**Phone** 212.507.9580  
**Fax** 212.570.0826  
**www.adultjewishlearning.org**

### Library Privileges

All students enrolled in a Skirball Center class will have borrowing privileges at the Ivan M. Stettenheim Library, Congregation Emanu-El’s own expansive collection. For library information, call 212.744.1400, ext. 361.

**The library is open:**  
Sunday: 10–4; Monday: 10–6  
Tuesday–Thursday: 10–6:30  
Friday: 10–2

### Refund Policy

A full refund may be requested after the first class meeting or if a course is cancelled. After the second class, prorated credit (good for one year) for any course is available. No credit will be given after the third class. The registration fee is non-refundable.

### Getting There

Courses at the Skirball Center are held at 10 East 66th Street, between Fifth and Madison Avenues in Manhattan.

- By Bus:**  
M1, M2, M3, M4, M18, M66, M72
- By Subway:**  
N/R/W 5th Avenue Station  
4/5/6 59th Street Station  
or 68th Street Station  
F 63rd Street Station



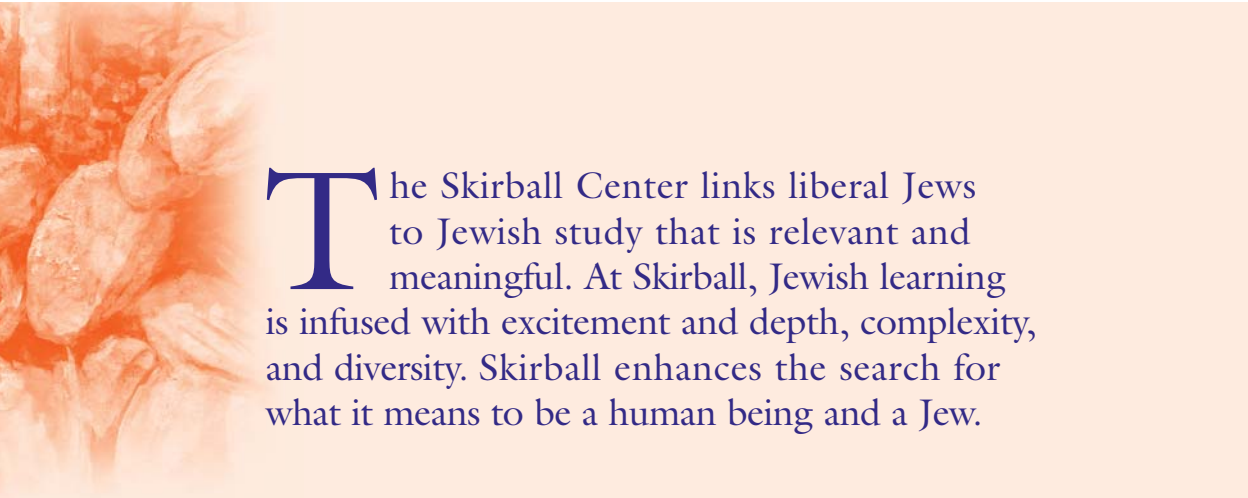
	Wednesday	Thursday
CREATION AND ESCHATOLOGY (p. 4)		
JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS (p. 2)		
REDISCOVERING THE WEEKLY TORAH PORTION (p. 2)		
ESTHER: BOOK OF HIDDENNESS (p. 2)		
PASSOVER COOKING CLASS (p. 6)		
COURSE FOR ENGAGED COUPLES (p. 11)		
ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE BIBLE (p. 4)		
JEWISH PRAYER AND PIETY (p. 5)		
THE ART AND HISTORY OF THE PASSOVER HAGGADAH (p. 7)		
JEWISH ETHICAL QUESTIONS (p. 5)		
CUSTOM AND TRADITION IN JEWISH LIFE (p. 5)		

Skirball Center

Rabbi Leon A. Morris, *Director*  
Adina Gerver, *Assistant Director*  
Judith Berdy, *Administrator*

Advisory Council

Dr. Steven Bayme  
Roger Bennett  
Dr. David Gordis  
Dr. Frances Gottfried  
Dr. Alfred Gottschalk  
Dr. Lisa Grant  
Charles Grossman  
Michelle Lynn-Sachs  
Dr. Kerry Olitzky  
Dr. David M. Posner  
Fred Rosenbaum  
Dr. Robert Seltzer  
Barry Shrage  
Dr. Ronald B. Sobel  
Leah Strigler  
Marcia Waxman



The Skirball Center links liberal Jews to Jewish study that is relevant and meaningful. At Skirball, Jewish learning is infused with excitement and depth, complexity, and diversity. Skirball enhances the search for what it means to be a human being and a Jew.

The Jewish Braille Institute can make it possible for any visually impaired or blind person to participate in Adult Jewish Learning courses at the **Skirball Center**. Given reasonable lead time, JBI can prepare relevant reading materials in the appropriate format. For more information or to volunteer in the JBI studios call **The JBI Library: 800.433.1531**.

# In the Original

## A NEW Hebrew language program

Designed for those who want to read the Bible and classic Jewish texts in the original!

### LEVELS

- 1** For those who do not yet know the alphabet or how to read phonetically
- 2** For those who can read letters and vowels and are ready to learn grammar and vocabulary
- 3** For those who have some vocabulary and grammar and want to increase their fluency and understanding



## January Intensive Mini-Semester

This January, learn to read Hebrew... \* Twice a week for one month. An entire semester of Hebrew squeezed into one month!

**COST: \$190** *To register for the January intensive mini-semester, please call 212.507.9580 or visit us online at [www.adultjewishlearning.org](http://www.adultjewishlearning.org)*

**LEVEL 1** **Hebrew** MICHAL NACHMANY  
Monday + Wednesdays 6:00–7:30 PM: **Jan** 9, 11, 18, 23, 25, 30 **Feb** 1

**LEVEL 2** **Hebrew** MICHAL NACHMANY  
Monday + Wednesdays 7:30–9:00 PM: **Jan** 9, 11, 18, 23, 25, 30 **Feb** 1

\* if you already know how to read, begin to understand!

## Spring Semester

**LEVEL 2** **Hebrew: Through the Haggadah**  
MICHAL NACHMANY  
Monday 6:30–8:00 PM: **Feb** 6, 13, 27 **March** 6, 20, 27 **April** 3, 10  
For those who can read letters and vowels, apply that knowledge to the Haggadah while increasing your vocabulary and knowledge of grammar.

**LEVEL 3** **Hebrew: Through the Haggadah**  
MICHAL NACHMANY AND RABBI LEON MORRIS  
Monday 8:15–9:45 PM: **Feb** 6, 13, 27 **March** 6, 20, 27 **April** 3, 10  
Read parts of the Passover Haggadah, explore its themes and deeper meanings, while delving into the many layers of the Hebrew language. No seder will be the same again!

# cooperative **learning** communities

**C**ombine dialogue and small group discussion in a unique approach to study and creative thought. Join communities of fellowship that will empower you to connect to the great texts and ideas of the Jewish past while engaging in an intellectual and experiential journey through Bible, Talmud, medieval commentaries, Kabbalah, Hasidic thought, modern literature, and more.

Each year, the **Writers' and Artists' Beit Midrash** focuses on a particular theme that is elucidated through text study and discussion and that ultimately finds expression in the creative work of its participants.



This year's theme is **The Universal and the Particular**. Though Jewish tradition has encouraged a special relationship with fellow Jews, responsibilities toward non-Jews are built into Jewish law. Explore the dialectic between the universal and particular in Judaism. When has one or the other been stressed? What is the correct balance between the two? How has the globalization and democratization of the modern world influenced the way we think about these questions?

*These courses are made possible in part by a generous grant from Targum Shlishi, a Raquel and Aryeh Rubin Foundation.*

## VISITING NOVELISTS

(Above right from left to right)  
Melvin Jules Bukiet, Johanna Kaplan,  
and Binnie Kirshenbaum

## ARTISTS' BEIT MIDRASH

TOBI KAHN AND RABBI LEON A. MORRIS

Monday 7:00-9:00 PM:

**February** 6, 13, 27 **March** 6, 20, 27 **April** 3, 10

Apply your artistic talents to the theme of "The Universal and the Particular" as you explore Jewish sources and create new visual commentaries to the ancient texts of our tradition. Together with other artists, share previously created work and explore, individually and as a group, the imaginative and creative possibilities of Jewish teachings. This unusual experience is co-facilitated by a rabbi and a renowned artist whose own work blends modern art with the life of the spirit.

## WRITERS' BEIT MIDRASH

DANIEL SEPTIMUS

Wednesday 7:00-9:00 PM:

**February** 8, 15, 22 **March** 8, 15, 22, 29 **April** 5



Join a small group of fiction writers interested in a writing workshop that is geared toward engaging Jewish content and learning. This Beit Midrash is divided into three sections: text study, in which we will examine the theme of "The Universal and the Particular" in Jewish sources; the workshop, in which each student will receive critique and support from a professional writer and fellow students; and three "Writers on Writing" sessions, in which visiting novelists Melvin Jules Bukiet, Johanna Kaplan, and Binnie Kirshenbaum will explore with you the ways they negotiate the relationship between Judaism and writing. Interested applicants are required to submit a writing sample with their registration.

## Core Faculty

One of the most distinctive elements of the Skirball Center is its core faculty. This creative team of talented and dynamic scholars works collaboratively to design the courses each semester. In addition to teaching courses, the faculty plays an integral role in shaping the character of the program.



**WENDY AMSELLEM** is a faculty member at the Drisha Institute and an adjunct faculty member at City College of New York. She is currently pursuing a PhD from NYU in Rabbinic Literature. Wendy is an alumna of the Drisha Scholar's Circle and has a BA in History and Literature from Harvard University.



**NOAM M. ELCOTT** is a contemporary art critic and a doctoral candidate in the history of modern art and culture at Princeton University. Noam spent two years in Berlin as a Fulbright scholar. He has written on Jewish and Holocaust art and memory, and has taught throughout the New York metropolitan area on the intersections of Judaism and contemporary culture.



**DR. DAVID GREENSTEIN** is Rabbi-in-Residence at The Academy for Jewish Religion, where he teaches Rabbinics, Kabbalah, and Jewish Thought. He also teaches at the Jewish Theological Seminary. David holds a PhD in Rabbinics and Kabbalah. He has published articles on Jewish aesthetics, pluralism, and Talmud. He is founder and Director of The Shiluv Project at Shelter Rock Jewish Center, NY.



**DR. JOEL HECKER** is Associate Professor of Jewish Mysticism at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. He is the author of *Mystical Bodies, Mystical Meals: Eating and Embodiment in Medieval Kabbalah*. Joel has taught in a variety of Jewish educational venues including Yeshiva University, the Academy of Jewish Religion, and the Jewish Theological Seminary. He is completing an annotated translation of the *Book of the Angel Raziel*. He is on sabbatical this Spring.

## Adjunct Faculty

**JENNIFER FELICIA ABADI** wrote and illustrated her cookbook-memoir, *A Fistful of Lentils: Syrian-Jewish Recipes from Grandma Fritzie's Kitchen*, and is currently working on her second book, *Writing Your Family Cookbook: A How-To-Guide for Preserving Your Family's Unique Culinary Heritage*. She caters for special occasions, bakes for Kiva Café (in Tribeca), and created "The Traveling Palate," a monthly dinner party where guests enjoy a four-course meal while learning about less-common cuisines and cultures in an intimate setting.

**ARLENE AGUS** is an executive consultant to Jewish family foundations. Her numerous works on Jewish theology and religious feminism include *What Happens After I Die?* and *Jewish Women: New Perspectives*.

**DR. NEIL GILLMAN** is Professor of Jewish Philosophy at the Jewish Theological Seminary. A world-renowned thinker and teacher, Neil is the author of several seminal books on Jewish theology, including *Sacred Fragments: Recovering Theology for the Modern Jew*.

**DR. FREEMA GOTTLIEB**, author of *The Lamp of God: A Jewish Book of Light, Jewish Folk Art, and Mystical Stonescapes of Prague Jewish Town and Village Graveyards*, is a freelance writer and teacher living in New York.

**RABBI REBECCA JOSEPH** was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary and holds a doctorate in Anthropology from the University of California, San Diego. She teaches and lectures widely on religion and culture.





**DR. DAVID KRAEMER** is Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics at the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he is also Seminary Librarian. As Librarian, David oversees the greatest collection of Judaica in the Western world. An accomplished scholar, David has published many books and articles, including *The Meanings of Death in Rabbinic Judaism*, *The Mind of the Talmud*, and *Responses to Suffering in Classical Judaism*. His next book is *The Gastronomic Jew*. He is a Senior Core Faculty Scholar at Skirball.



**MARCIE LENK** is the Berman Fellow at Harvard University and a PhD candidate in the field of Early Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism. She has taught at Hebrew College's Me'ah program, the Drisha Institute, the Pardes Institute, and Midreshet Lindenbaum. Marcie has also taught in a variety of Christian seminaries in Jerusalem, including the Ecce Homo Convent and Tantur Ecumenical Institute. Marcie holds BA and MS degrees from Yeshiva University and an MTS from Harvard Divinity School.



**RABBI LEON A. MORRIS** has served as Director of the Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning since its inception. He received his ordination from Hebrew Union College in 1997 where he was a Wexner Graduate Fellow. Leon has worked extensively as an educator with the Jewish community of India, and returns there regularly. He co-produced a radio documentary on contemporary Jewish life in India, which premiered on Radio Canada in December 2003. For three years, Leon served as Director of New York Kollel: A Center for Adult Jewish Study at HUC-JIR.



**MICHAL NACHMANY** is a graduate of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Michal has taught modern and liturgical Hebrew for the past 15 years at synagogues and institutions throughout the city.



**REUBEN NAMDAR** was born and raised in Jerusalem. He completed his BA (Sociology, Philosophy and Iranian Studies) and his MA (Anthropology) at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His first book, *Haviv* (a collection of short stories), was published in 2000 and won the Ministry of Culture's award for Best First Publication and the Jerusalem Fiction award. Reuben has also published book reviews and translations of medieval Persian poetry. He is currently living in New York City, working on a novel and teaching Hebrew language and literature.



**DR. REGINA STEIN** is Director of the Hadassah Leadership Academy. She has taught for CLAL, the Wexner Heritage Foundation, and the Bronfman Youth Fellowship in Israel, as well as at the Academy for Jewish Religion, the Jewish Theological Seminary, Temple University, and the Pardes Institute in Jerusalem. Regina is co-author of *Timetables of Jewish History*. She serves as Academic Coordinator of IYUN.



**DAVID WACHTEL** is the Senior Research Associate for Special Collections at the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary. He holds advanced degrees in Medieval History and Jewish Studies from Columbia University. He serves as the Rabbi for the Nathan I. Nagler Bnai Brith Senior Residence Home and is Adjunct Lecturer of History at Queens College of the City University of New York. He has taught and lectured in the United States, Israel, and Europe on a variety of topics in Jewish history and Jewish art, to both general and academic audiences. His most recent publication is *Image and Impression: Rare Prints from the Collection of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America*.

**TOBI KAHN** is internationally acclaimed as a painter and sculptor. Tobin has taught at the School of Visual Arts since 1985. In addition to having created a chapel, he has had his work shown in over 40 solo museum and gallery exhibitions and is in the permanent collections of the Guggenheim Museum, the Houston Museum of Fine Art, the Jewish Museum, and the Skirball Cultural Center, among others.

**FRED ROSENBAUM** is the founding Director of Lehrhouse Judaica, the West Coast's largest school for adult Jewish education. He is the author of three books and numerous articles on modern Jewish history and has taught at the University of San Francisco, San Francisco State University, and Berkeley's Graduate Theological Union.

**DANIEL SEPTIMUS** is the Editor-in-Chief of MyJewishLearning.com. He previously served as the Assistant Director of the Skirball Center. He has an MA in creative writing from the University of Manchester. His literature column, "Between the Lines," appears monthly in *The Jerusalem Post*.



*Pomegranate,*  
Barbara Freedman, 2005

# Support the Skirball Center

Because ideas can transform us.  
Because Jewish texts belong to each and every one of us.  
Because we need not take our texts literally in order to take them seriously.

## We need your support.

Temple Emanu-El provides the in-kind contribution of our facilities and some additional support. However, our primary funding comes from tuition and a designated endowment that cannot cover the cost of our exceptional, unique, and expanding programs.

Join those who have acknowledged our role as an intellectual home to a wide spectrum of curious and searching Jews from every background and perspective, those who are enabling us to fulfill our vital mission.

### ENDOWMENT

- Anonymous
- Thomas Epstein\*
- Leon Finley\*
- Richard Gilder
- Josephine C.S. Jordan\*
- Henry Kravis
- Lionel I. Pincus
- William Rosenwald\*
- The Skirball Foundation
- John Vogelstein
- The Women’s Auxiliary of Temple Emanu-El
- In honor of Dr. Ronald B. Sobel*

\* OF BLESSED MEMORY

### ANNUAL SUPPORT

*Contributions made between January 1, 2005 and November 31, 2005*

#### Gifts above \$75,000

- The Skirball Foundation

#### Gifts between \$50,000 and \$74,999

- UJA–Federation of New York

#### Gifts between \$10,000 and \$24,999

- Bunny Barb
- The Nathan Cummings Foundation
- With the support and encouragement of Sonia Simon Cummings*
- Charles and Carol Grossman
- Sidney, Milton and Leoma Simon Foundation

#### Gifts between \$5,000 and \$9,999

- Herbert C. Bernard
- Emme Levin Deland *in memory of Bill Levin*
- The Gottesman Fund
- Barbara C. Freedman
- Schwarz Family Foundation/Jeffrey and Wendy Schwarz
- Melanie and Howard Snedcof
- Targum Shlishi/A Raquel and Aryeh Rubin Foundation
- Zeitz Foundation

#### Gifts between \$1,000 and \$4,999

- William and Vicki Abrams
- Anonymous
- Neil and Juliet Cooper
- Robert and Janie Schwalbe
- Robert D. Siegfried
- Dr. Ronald B. and Joanne Sobel

#### Gifts between \$100 and \$999

- Lloyd Abrams
- Barbara Benenson and Marc Warren
- Bernard and Constance Breslin
- Jeffrey and Ann Caplan
- Joseph and Sally Cooper
- Inge N. Dobelis
- Bettijane Eisenpreis
- Muriel Simon Goldblatt
- Frances A. Hess
- Mark I. Kalish
- Susan Kippur
- Steve L. Kopitko
- Rabbi Leon A. Morris and Dasee Berkowitz
- Maxwell and Dorothy Moss
- Jane Oppenheim
- Judith Princz
- Paula Roga
- Dr. Jill and Michael Salberg
- Mathilda Scheuer
- Manfred Sondheimer
- Elise Strauss
- Ettie Taichman
- Jeanne Theodore
- Marcia and Robert Waxman
- Dorothy and Robert Wigod

*We also express our gratitude to the many other donors who support our work by including a contribution with their tuition.*



YOU MAY REGISTER BY

Mail

One East 65th Street  
New York, NY  
10021

Phone

212.507.9580

Fax

212.570.0826

Web Site

adultjewishlearning.org

PAYMENT METHOD

Please check off payment  
method below.

☐ Check

Made payable to  
**Skirball Center**

Please send to:  
Skirball Center  
One East 65th Street  
New York, NY 10021

Credit Cards:

☐ MasterCard

☐ VISA

☐ American Express

CARD NUMBER

EXPIRATION DATE

SIGNATURE

All registrants, please  
fill out the information  
below:

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

EMAIL

The Skirball Center reserves  
the right to cancel courses  
for insufficient enrollment.

Limited scholarships  
are available. Inquire  
by appointment  
with Rabbi Morris,  
212.507.9580.

MASTERS GROUP DESIGN, PHILADELPHIA, PA

Discounts *(Tuition reductions may not be combined.)*

Please indicate which discount, if any, applies.

- ☐ An individual registering for more than one course: **20% off** each additional course
- ☐ Members of Temple Emanu-El: **25% off** each course
- ☐ Senior citizens (age 65 and older): **10% off** each course
- ☐ Age 30 and below: **10% off** each course

Registration

Indicate course selection(s) below:

Eight-Week Courses	Tuition	Discount Applied	Final Cost
(\$215 through Jan. 23; \$250 after Jan. 23)			
The Jewish-Arab Relationship	\$		
Reading the Bible as Literature	\$		
Sarah, Hagar, and Abraham	\$		
Joseph and His Brothers	\$		
Rediscovering the Weekly Torah Portion	\$		
The Book of Hiddenness	\$		
The Jews and the Christians	\$		
Jewish History and Jewish Memory	\$		
Jewish Questions in Contemporary Art	\$		
Creation and Eschatology	\$		
Anthropology and the Bible	\$		
Jewish Prayer and Piety	\$		
Jewish Ethical Questions	\$		
Custom and Tradition in Jewish Life	\$		
The Art & History of the Passover Haggadah	\$		
Hebrew 2: Through the Haggadah	\$		
Hebrew 3: Through the Haggadah	\$		
Friends & Lovers			
(\$215 through Jan. 23; \$250 after Jan. 23)			
Course for Engaged Couples	\$		
Beit Midrash			
(\$245 through Jan. 23; \$265 after Jan. 23)			
Artists' Beit Midrash	\$		
Writers' Beit Midrash	\$		
Cooking			
Purim (\$175) Passover (\$130)			
Purim Persian Cooking Class	\$		
Passover Cooking Class	\$		
Openings (\$100)			
for 30- and 40-somethings			
Who Is a Jew? Identity, Biology, & Politics	\$	N/A	
Sunday Seminars (\$50 each)			
France and the Jews, France and the Arabs	\$		
The Haggadah: Its Structure and Message	\$		
Total number of courses			\$ _____ (\$20.00)* \$ _____ \$ _____
Total cost of courses			
Annual registration fee per academic year I have enclosed a contribution in the amount of			
Total amount enclosed			\$ _____

\* Do not add this fee if it was paid with your Fall 2005 registration.



*Seven Species (Shivat HaMinim)*

Created by students in Skirball's  
Artists' Beit Midrash

Spring | 2006

SKIRBALL



The Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning at Temple Emanu-El

**One East 65th Street • New York, NY 10021**

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
WARMINSTER, PA  
PERMIT NO. 225