

LECTURE TOPICS

THE WRITTEN AND ORAL LAWS

1. Introduction to the Written Law
2. Introduction to the Oral Law
3. The Bible as History (You've Seen the Movie, Now Read the Book!)
4. Unearthing Ancient Mysteries: Archaeology and the Bible.
5. Why Not Write It All Down?
6. The Oral Law: Tradition or Invention? (Accuracy of the Oral Tradition)*
7. Criticizing the Critics: Responses to Biblical Criticism
8. Who Cares What Happened to the Ox? or Why Study Gemara?
9. Do I Have To Take That Literally? Midrash, Metaphor and Meaning.*
10. The Hidden Dimension: Mystical Aspects of the Talmud.
11. Rabbinic Laws, Customs, and Jewish Practice.
12. A Page of History: Content, History and Mystery of a Page of Talmud
13. The Printing of the Talmud
14. Prophecy, Sinai and Jewish Law.
15. The Seven Noachide Laws.
16. "An Eye For An Eye": What Does it Really Mean?
17. Torah Study and the Pursuit of a Livelihood.
18. Science and the Torah: Some Common Ground.
19. What Is Kabbalah?*
20. History, Concepts and Power of Kabbalah
21. Probability, Statistics and Minority Rights: An Analysis of a Mishnah.
22. A Mistaken Court: An Analysis of a Mishnah.
23. Marriage by Proxy and Personal Responsibility: Talmudic Analysis
24. Benefit and Loss: Talmudic Analysis
25. How to Prepare a Dvar Torah
26. Was Og Really 18 Feet Tall? Taking the Torah Literally
27. What If We Found Moshe's Tefillin? – Archaeology and Halachah

THE LAND OF ISRAEL

1. Occupied or Liberated: Whose Land Is It Anyway?*
2. Israel and Judaism
3. Israel and the Jews
4. Israel and the World
5. Halachic Questions in the IDF
6. A Father of Soldiers – Two of my Sons Fighting in Gaza
7. Jerusalem: Eye of the Universe (Multi-Media Presentation)
8. Yom Yerushalayim: Jews and Jerusalem, a Love Story
9. Israel Independence Day – Yom Ha-Atzmaut
10. Munich: Revenge, Justice and Self-Defense.*
11. Settlement in the Land of Israel
12. Hebron and the Double Cave: Mystical and Historic Significance
13. Masada Shall Not Fall Again: Halacha and Ethics of Masada
14. Seeds of Conflict: Religious Roots of the Middle Eastern Conflict
15. Islamic and Arab Attitudes to the Jews and Israel
16. Yeshiva Students and the Israeli Army
17. Religious Secular Tension in the State of Israel
18. The Sanctity of the Temple Mount
19. Exchanging Land for Peace
20. Bargaining With Terrorists
21. The State of Israel and the Arms Trade
22. Jewish State or State for Jews? The Ideal of a Jewish State in Jewish Thought
23. Why Do We Need a Country?
24. What is a Life Worth? Getting Back Our POWs.

LECTURE TOPICS

25. Civilian Casualties and Collateral Damage in Halachah.
26. Kosher Spies: The Mossad and Jewish Law

MEDICAL ETHICS

1. Introduction to Jewish Medical Ethics
2. The Obligation to Heal
3. The Mitzvah of Exercise
4. Do Not Resuscitate, Do Not Revive
5. “Triage” Rationing Resources, and Priorities in Medical Emergencies
6. Organ Donation and Transplants
7. Combat and Contact Sports in Halacha
8. Procreation and Birth Control
9. Abortion in Halachah
10. Cigarette Smoking and Halachah
11. Cosmetic Surgery and Body Modification
12. Genetic Engineering
13. Drug Use and Drug Abuse
14. Cloning in Halachah
15. Stem Cell Research
16. Alternative Therapies and Halachah
17. Mengele’s Medicine – Benefiting From Tainted Research
18. The Healing Arts – Tattoos, Piercing and Liposuction

SHABBAT, FESTIVALS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS

1. The Jewish Calendar.
2. The Shabbat : Who Invented the Weekend Anyway?
3. Mystical and Historical Insights Into Customs of the Shabbat Meals.
4. Origins, Meaning and History of the Shabbat Zemirot
5. What's Wrong With Bread, Anyway? (Pesach)
6. Daddy, Why Isn’t Charlton Heston in the Haggadah?
7. The Parting of the Waves: Haggadah Series (1-4 classes)
8. Laws and Customs of the Seder.
9. Are Birthdays Jewish?
10. The Ten Plagues.
11. Jews Are From the Moon, Egyptians Are From the Sun.
12. Exile of the Body, Exile of the Soul: The Exodus as Metaphor.
13. Ruth’s Roots and the Counting Covenant
14. Lag B’Omer: Archery, Bonfires and Mysticism
15. The 28th of Iyar: The Liberation of Jerusalem (Yom Yerushalayim).
16. Shavuot: When G-d and Man Touched.
17. Shavuot and the Creation of Time
18. Tu Bishvat: The New Year of Trees and Its Meaning.
19. And Rabbi Akivah Laughed: Tisha B'Av, From Destruction to Redemption
20. Spirals in Time: A Historical Outlook on Tisha B’Av
21. Gathering the Sparks: Tisha B’Av and the Role of the Individual
22. In G-d’s Image: Jewish Responses to Suffering and Tisha B’Av.
23. Belief in G-d, Belief in Self: The Fifteenth of Av
24. Shofar Blasts of History
25. Days of Awe or Awful Days.
26. How Do You Plead?: Divine Judgment on Rosh Hashanah
27. The Case for the Defense: Preparing for Rosh Hashanah
28. The Mitzvah of Teshuvah: Repentance
29. Eat, Drink and Be Merry! For Tomorrow We Fast.

LECTURE TOPICS

30. Don't Get Stuck With a Lemon: Laws and Philosophy of the Four Species
31. Alexander the Great and Simon the Just: A Chanukah Story
32. Three Corners, Two Guys and a Night in Persia (Purim)
33. Responsa on Repentance (Teshuvot on Teshuvah)

JEWISH PHILOSOPHY

1. Why is There a World?
2. In Search of Pleasure
3. The Whole Torah on One Foot: Oneness
4. Faith of the Hostages: I Chose the Path of Emunah
5. Arguments Without Animosity, Discourse Without Discord
6. Personal Autonomy and Family Loyalty
7. A Jewish Perspective on Wealth
8. Twelve Reasons that Everything Happens to Everybody
9. Tikvah, Hope: The Essence of Judaism
10. Truth, Loyalty and Lieutenant Hiro Onoda
11. Free Will and Conditioning: A Delicate Balance.
12. Free Will and the Purpose of Life
13. Free Will and Its Challenges
14. Radical Rebbes: Pshischa, Kotzk and Ishbitz
15. Too Many Mitzvot? Why is Judaism So Nitpicking?*
16. Honor, Dignity and Breaking Bones
17. The Kuzari: Historical background and selected topics. (Course)
18. Theophany: Why Bad Things Happen to Good People (& vice versa).*
19. Where on Earth is the World to Come? The Concept of Life after Life
20. Silence and Speech
21. Minority Report: Jews as a Protest Group
22. The Descent of the Generations: So What? (Yeridas Hadoros)
23. WWAD - What Would Abraham Do? How Abraham would deal with today's issues.
24. When Jake Meets Jane: Intermarriage
25. Six Thousand Years of Bread
26. Would the Real Amalek Please Stand Up
27. Belief and Action: An Introduction to the 13 Principles of Faith.
28. Maimonides' Thirteen Principles of Faith.
29. Why Do We Pray?
30. Fred, Wilma and the Age of the Universe
31. Dreams and Nightmares in Jewish Thought
32. The Boy With Two Heads: Is Religious Pluralism Possible?
33. Body and Soul: And G-d Made Man in His Image.
34. Torah From Tanzania: What we learn from animals.
35. Disagreement Without Discord
36. What Do We Mean When Say Mazaltov?
37. Crash Course in Judaism: Belief in G-d, The Mitzvot, Shabbat, Prayer, Sexuality, The Land of Israel
38. Jewish Heroes and Jewish Heroism
39. Hebrew: The DNA of Creation
40. Ten Commandments of Jewish Parenting
41. If I Ignore It Will It Go Away? - Can A Jew Be Apathetic About Judaism?
42. Is the Rabbi Always Right? - Infallibility, Da'at Torah and Rabbinic Authority
43. Jews and Gentiles: Co-operation or Competition?
44. "Vengeance Is Mine" - Revenge in Jewish Law and Philosophy
45. Triumphs and Traumas - How Judaism Deals With Life's Ups and Downs.
46. You Talking to Me? – Rage and Anger
47. Is Harry Potter Kosher? Judaism and the Occult

LECTURE TOPICS

49. The Jewish Home
50. Survivor- The Miraculous Jewish People*
51. Gratitude, Cheeseburgers and the Lord of the Flies
52. Derech Eretz – Is it more than “Please” and “Thank you”?
53. Does the End Justify the Means?
54. Night of the Living Dead – The Resurrection
55. George Orwell, Individuality and Free Will
56. Dealing With Uncertainty in Chassidic Thought
57. The Chassidic Revolution
58. Opposition to Chassidism
59. Happiness: Guaranteed
60. Steal This Lecture – Up the Revolution

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

1. Fake News, Social Media and Jewish Ethics
2. Hate Speech and Jewish Law
3. Wealth, Money and Possessions
4. Praying for the President: The prayer for the government
5. Prince Harry: Personal Autonomy vs. Family Loyalty
6. Who is a Jew? The Halachic Status of the Ethiopian Jews.
7. The International Dateline and Halacha
8. A Jewish Lawyer in a Non-Jewish Legal System
9. Martyrdom and the Commandment to Live.
10. Inter marriage and Conversion.
11. Surveillance and Privacy in Jewish Thought
12. All Creatures Great and Small: Animal Rights in Jewish Law.
13. Torah Safari of a Zoo or Aquarium (Tour)
14. The Ethics and Laws of Driving and Parking
15. Martial Arts and Halachah.
16. Grandparenting in Jewish Tradition
17. Hackers, Nerds and Software Pirates
18. Leadership, Morality and Competence (Saul and David)
19. Women as Rabbis.
20. Why Were Our Leaders Shepherds?
21. The Rooster, the Tree and the SUV – Judaism and the environment
22. Sameness, Equality and Gender - Men and Women
23. Don't Tell Anyone, But... (Confidentiality)
24. Is Your Home Your Castle. (Invasion of Privacy)
25. Introduction to Jewish Business Ethics
26. A Tale of Two Cities: Jerusalem and Sodom (Legislating ethical behavior)
27. Jewish Law in a Non-Jewish Society
28. Halachic Wills and the Laws of Inheritance
29. Child Custody and Adoption
30. Insider Trading: Is It Immoral or “only” Illegal?
31. Following the Laws of a State.
32. Capital Punishment: Deterrent, Atonement or Revenge?
33. Art and Imagery in Jewish Law.
34. In Her Place: Wife Abuse and the Agunah Issue in Jewish Law.
35. Trust in G-d!... And Buy Life Insurance.
36. Blurred Boundaries: Judaism and Politics
37. Beit Din or Court: Conflicts of Responsibility for a Jewish Lawyer.
38. Are Pork Bellies Kosher? The Futures Market in Halachah.
39. Brutal Honesty and Loving Lies

LECTURE TOPICS

40. Smooth or Kosher? Whiskey in Halachah
41. Praying to Angels, Blessing from Rebbes and Visiting Graves
42. The Laws of Sushi
43. Looking Good – Marit Ayin

MITZVOT AND THEIR RATIONALE

1. Asking Why: The Mitzvot and Their Rationale.
2. Rav Hirsch and Reasons for Mitzvos
3. Shukeling: Why Do We Sway When We Pray?
4. Justice, Charity and Tzedakah.
5. Soul Food: Rationale and Overview of the Dietary Laws.*
6. Love Yourself, Love Your Neighbor.
7. Halachah and Responsibility to Others.
8. The Legislation of Kindness in Halachah.
9. Honoring Parents
10. Strings Attached: The Mitzvah of Tzitzit
11. But Names Will Never Hurt Me: Lashon Hara: The Ethics of Speech.
12. Modesty, Shmodesty! As Long as You Look Good!
13. Mourning, Bereavement and Comfort.
14. Symbolism of the Sanctuary and the Synagogue

JEWISH HISTORY

1. An Introduction to the Study of Jewish History.
2. History, Origin and Meaning of the Shabbat Zemirot
3. Responsa on Repentance
4. Masada: Heroism and Courage or Sinful Suicide?
5. Shofars of History
6. Passion, Piety and Poetry: Poems of the Rabbis of Spain
7. An Overview Course of Jewish History: 175 years per hour
8. From Cairo to Cambridge: Jewish Treasures of Egypt (Cairo Genizah A/V)
9. "Some of My Best Friends Are..." Antisemitism: Causes and Effects.
10. Great Controversies in Jewish History:
 - a. Looking for an Argument? Controversy in Jewish Tradition
 - b. The Guide for the Perplexed: Faith Vs. Knowledge
 - c. The Renewal of Semichah (Ordination).
 - d. The Teaching of Kabbalah.
 - e. Chassidism and Opposition
 - f. Zionism and Anti-Zionism
11. An Historical Analysis of Tisha B'Av.
12. Archaeology and History of Purim (A/V)
13. Shabtai Zevi: A False Messiah – History, Aftermath and Lessons
14. Peter, the Jewish Bishop of Rome: Martyr, Apostate or Secret Agent?
15. Eat and Be Satisfied: History and Philosophy of Jewish Food.
16. A Prophet for Our Time: The Life and Philosophy of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch
17. The Ten Lost Tribes
18. The Lion of Prague: The Life, Views and Struggles of the Maharal
19. From Moses to Moses: The Life and Teachings of Maimonides
20. Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzatto – Life, Times and Legacy
21. Rav Moshe Isserles – His life and surprising views
22. Rav Simcha Bunim of Pysichsha
23. Rav Yosef Karo
24. Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch: A Prophet for Our Times
25. Sempo Sugihara and the Shanghai Rescue
26. Kristallnacht

LECTURE TOPICS

27. The Mother of Yeshivas – Volozhin
28. Al Andalus: The Jews of Spain
29. The Jews of China and Japan
30. The Jewish Communities of India
31. Torah From Trois: Rashi
32. Rav Avraham Yitzchak HaCohen Kook
33. Blood Libels – From Ancient Greece to New York State

MULTI-MEDIA PRESENTATIONS

1. Jerusalem: Eye of the Universe
2. Archaeology and the Bible
3. The Mikveh Through the Ages
4. Material Witnesses: The Torah Scroll, the Aleppo Codex and the Printed Book
5. Survivor Israel
6. From Cairo to Cambridge: Treasures of the Cairo Genizah
7. A Page of History: The Evolution of the Page of Talmud
8. The Hatred, the Passion and the Jews
9. A Taste of Talmud
10. Hebrew: DNA of Creation
11. Treasures of the Temple
12. What is Kabbalah?
13. The Rabbi Made Me Do It
14. Israel in Crisis
15. The Torah Scroll
16. Virtual Tour of Jewish Prague
17. Virtual Tour of Jewish Italy
18. History and Archaeology of Purim
19. History and Archaeology of Chanukah
20. The Jews of China
21. The Jews of India
22. The Jews of Australia
23. Escape to Shanghai
24. South Korea, Japan and the Jews
25. Shabtai Zevi: False Messiah
26. Al Andalus: Spain and the Inquisition
27. Blood Libels: From Ancient Greece to New York State
28. The Crusades
29. Israel: Occupied or Liberated?

MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS

1. Refuting a Christian Missionary
2. Sinning to Save a Soul
3. Who is the Real Messiah?
4. The Status of Christianity and Islam in Jewish Law
5. The Myth of Judaeo-Christian Ethics
6. Is Judaism a Cult?
7. An Introduction to the Siddur
8. How to Build a Jewish Library* (* and Why?)
9. The “Ba’al Teshuva” and His/Her Parents
10. Connecting Through Kiruv: Halachic, Philosophical and Practical Aspects of Outreach
11. What an Outreach Professional Should Know. (Course)
12. A Virtual Tour of Jewish Prague
13. Bridging the Gap

LECTURE TOPICS

14. One Step At a Time - Teshuva, Common Sense and Halachah
15. Help! My Spouse Is Becoming Religious!
16. Adults at Risk

ADVANCED CLASSES

1. Are Our Torah Scrolls Accurate? Does it Matter?
2. The Halachic Dateline
3. Adam, Sin and Free Will
4. Importance of Argument – Eilu VaEilu
5. Kol Yisrael Areivim – Responsibility for Each Other
6. Praying to Angels, Blessings from Rabbis and Visiting Graves
7. The Books of Life and Death
8. Confession of Sins
9. Idolater's Idiosyncrasies: Following Pagan Practices
10. Neshama Yeteirah: The Extra Soul of Shabbos
11. Lo Tasur: Do Not Deviate from Rabbinic Law
12. Six Hours or One? – Waiting After Meat
13. Smoking on Yom Tov

Tours

1. Torah Safari of a Zoo
2. Torah Safari of an Aquarium
3. Tour of a Natural History Museum
4. Tour of an Art Museum
5. Tours of locations around the world. Conducted tours in Australia, Botswana, China, Czech Republic, Egypt, Greece, Hungary, India, Italy, Israel, Japan, Morocco, Panama, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam and Zimbabwe