



MESSIANIC JEWISH

THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

Teaching and living a prophetic vision of Jewish life renewed in Yeshua

SL502 - Jewish Practices in a Messianic Context

Rabbi Joshua Brumbach (rebyosh@bethemunah.org)

March 21 – May 30—Spring 2021

Sundays, 12:00pm-2:00pm EDT

Populi: <https://mjti.populiweb.com>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Jewish practices give structure and meaning to Jewish communal, family, and individual life. This course surveys the calendar and lifecycle events of Judaism. Its purpose is to explore these events as connected elements of a vital Jewish communal, family, and individual life. Distinctive aspects of Messianic Jewish lifecycle and calendar events will also be examined.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE CURRICULUM

This class is required for all MJTI degree students.

RELEVANCE

An appreciation for the basic structure and rhythms of Jewish life is crucial to forming vibrant and informed Messianic Jewish communities. To live, and guide others, through a dynamic encounter with Jewish spirituality, one must know and have a basic understanding of Jewish practice. Therefore, this course will introduce students to the calendar, lifecycle events, and daily observances of Judaism. It will also equip students to live and lead others in a way that is deeply engaged with, and respectful of tradition, yet creative and Yeshua centered.

PREREQUISITE

There are no prerequisites for this course, however, one year of college-level Hebrew may be helpful.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

This is an online video-conference course. The student must have a computer, headset, and high-speed internet access.

COURSE FORMAT

Online video conference with some asynchronous online discussion (on Populi).

REQUIREMENTS

Full participation in video conferences, online discussion threads, and a final paper. Students will also occasionally be assigned readings to summarize and present to the class.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Dosick, Wayne. *Living Judaism: The Complete Guide to Jewish Belief, Tradition and Practice*. New York: HarperCollins, 1995 (any edition acceptable).
- Dresner, Samuel H. *I Asked for Wonder: A Spiritual Anthology of Abraham Joshua Heschel*. New York: Crossroad, 2018 (any edition acceptable).
- Greenberg, Blu. *How to Run a Traditional Jewish Household*. New York: Fireside, 1983.
- Kasdan, Barney. *God's Appointed Times*. Clarksville: Lederer, 1993.
- Kasdan, Barney. *God's Appointed Customs*. Clarksville: Lederer, 1996.

ARTICLES (TO BE PROVIDED)

- Brumbach, Joshua. "The Role of Torah and Jewish Tradition."
- Hillel, Vered. "A Messianic Jewish View of Divorce."
- Kinzer, Mark S. "Israel's Eschatological Renewal in Water and Spirit."
- MJRC Standards of Observance - available online via PDF packet - http://ourrabbis.org/main/documents/MJRC_Standards_Aug2014.pdf

RECOMMENDED READING

- Greenberg, Irving. *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays*. New York: Touchstone, 1988.
- Feinstein, David. *The Jewish Calendar*. Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, 2003.
- Heschel, Abraham Joshua. *The Sabbath*. Boston: Shambhala Books, 2003.
- Kaunfer, Elie. *Empowered Judaism: What Independent Minyanim Can Teach Us about Building Vibrant Jewish Communities*. Woodstock: Jewish Lights, 2010.
- Levertoff, Paul Philip. *Love and the Messianic Age*. Marshfield: Vine of David, 2009.
- Milgram, Goldie. *Living the Jewish Lifecycle: How to Create Meaningful Jewish Rites of Passage at Every Stage of Life*. Woodstock: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2009.
- Rothschild, Fritz A. *Between God and Man*. New York: Free Press, 1959.

ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS AND DEADLINES

Classes will be held once a week on Sunday mornings at 12:00pm (Noon) EDT. We will meet via Zoom for a live two (2) hour interactive webinar.

Full participation in video conferences, online discussion threads, and a final paper. I may also occasionally assign each student the responsibility of preparing and presenting some of the day's assigned reading to the class.

There will also be a final paper not to exceed 3,000 words. The assignment will be posted on Populi on Friday, May 20th and must be uploaded to Populi no later than Sunday, May 30th by 11:59pm.

Final paper (3,000 words) due by Sunday, May 30, 2021 by 11:59pm.

If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail me at rebyosh@bethemunah.org.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week & Date	Title of Lesson	Required Reading
Week 1 March 21-25	Judaism as Faith in Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dresner, Introduction pp.7-16, “Religion” 61-65; “Holy Deeds” 115-122 • Brumbach Article, “The Role of Torah and Jewish Tradition”
Passover Break – March 28-April 4 – No Classes		
Week 2 April 5-8	Halakhah and Daily Jewish Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dosick, Ch. 6, Sections 1-5, 7-10, pp. 247-268, 271-284 • Kasdan (Customs), 89-96 • Greenberg, 198-207 • MJRC Standards, “Halakhah and Messianic Judaism,” 1-9
Week 3 April 11-15	Early Life Stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dosick, Ch. 7, Sections 1-5, pp. 285-295 • Kasdan (Customs), 16-23, 27-34, 37-44 • Greenberg, pp.233-254
Week 4 April 18-22	Middle and Late Life Stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dosick, Ch. 7, Sections. 6-25, pp. 295-312 • Greenberg, 215-232, 283-298 • Kasdan (Customs), 58-63, 71-84 • Hillel, “A Messianic Jewish View of Divorce”
Week 5 April 25-29	Immersion and Unique Messianic Jewish Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dosick, Ch. 6, Section 6, pp. 269-271 • Kasdan (Customs), 111-120 • Kinzer, “Israel’s Eschatological Renewal in Water and Spirit” (provided) • MJRC Standards, “Tevilat Mashiach,” 47-48 and “Zichron Mashiach,” 48-49
Week 6 May 2-6	Shabbat and the Jewish Calendar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dosick, Ch. 4, Sections 1-5, pp.119-130 • Greenberg, 301-307 • Dresner, “Sabbath” 57-60 • Kasdan (Times), 1-11
Week 7 May 9-13	Holidays: Rosh Chodesh and the Fall/Winter Cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dosick, Ch. 4, Sections 6-8, pp.130-157 • Kasdan (Times), 63-70, 77-86, 91-104
Week 8 May 16-20	Holidays: Spring/Summer and Customs Related to Israel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dosick, Ch. 4, Sections 9-18, pp.158-182, 195-199 • Dresner, “The Land” 146-152 • Yuval Reading, 56-77 (to be provided)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this course successfully, the student will be able to:

- Understand and explain the overarching devotional narrative of the Jewish Holidays and lifecycle events;
- Explain the basic historical background to each of the holiday and life cycle events;
- List the main components of Jewish communal practice of the major holidays;
- Demonstrate the ability to adapt the Jewish tradition of celebration to meet the needs of life in contemporary society and Messianic Jewish Communities;
- Articulate an organic place for Yeshua within Israel's tradition of celebration, commemoration and life cycle.

ASSESSMENTS

Grades will be awarded according to the following criteria: class participation (40%), online discussions and article preparation and presentation (20%) and a final 3,000-word paper (40%).

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades and grade point equivalents:

A	100-94	C+	79.9-78
A-	93.9-90	C	77.9-75
B+	89.9-87	C-	74.9-70
B	86.9-83	F	Below 69.9
B-	82.9-80		

STRUCTURED WORK HOURS

20 hours	Video conference sessions
20 hours	Asynchronous online discussion and article preparation
30 hours	500 pages of assigned reading
<u>20 hours</u>	<u>Final Paper (3,000 words)</u>
90 hours	Total structured hours

Standard MJTI Assessment Rubrics

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE DISCUSSION				
<i>Analytical Reflection</i>	<i>Evidence/Support</i>	<i>Interaction</i>	<i>Writing</i>	<i>Total</i>
30%	30%	30%	10%	100%
<p>Demonstrates a serious attempt to grapple with the Unit material.</p> <p>Analysis is reasonable and gives opportunity for interaction.</p> <p>Asks relevant questions.</p>	<p>Supports discussion points with references to assigned readings, logical analysis, and examples.</p> <p>Gives citations (work, page number) for material quoted or paraphrased.</p>	<p>Interacts with the instructor and other students.</p> <p>Discusses agreement or disagreement with classmates' analytical reflections and provide explanation of logic; and/or respond to questions posed in classmates' analytical reflections, and when appropriate, reference assigned readings, logical analysis, and examples.</p>	<p>Writes in clear, concise, and grammatically acceptable terms.</p>	

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR ESSAYS				
	<i>A (exemplary)</i>	<i>B (adequate)</i>	<i>C (passing)</i>	<i>F (failed)</i>
<i>Quality of thought</i>	Fresh or even original	Mostly derivative or clichéd	Fully derivative; clichéd	No evident effort to understand
<i>Engagement with subject</i>	Deeply engaged	Modestly engaged	Superficially Engaged	Disengaged
<i>Organization</i>	Well organized	Somewhat choppy	Poor	Disorganized
<i>Mechanics of writing and documentation</i>	Nearly error-free	Some errors or sloppiness	Many errors and very sloppy	Filled with errors and sloppiness
<i>Argument & support</i>	Well-argued and documented	Reasonable clarity and support	Roughly argued and poorly documented	No clearly supported argument or support

MJTI COURSE POLICIES

1. **Preparation:** Each student is expected to be prepared for and to participate in the online class discussions.
2. **Dishonesty and plagiarism:** Any form of dishonesty (copying from another student's work or allowing your work to be copied) or plagiarism (passing off another's work as your own, not giving appropriate credit to another's ideas) will not be tolerated. Such misconduct will result in an automatic "F" grade for

the class and a permanent notice placed in the student's academic record. If you are unsure whether an action is permissible or not, please check with the instructor.

3. **Incompletes:** Incompletes will only be granted when the instructor and Academic Dean agree that significant extenuating circumstances have prevented a student from finishing the course work by the stipulated due date. Extenuating circumstances are major, unplanned, unanticipated, and unavoidable disruptions in one's life or work. To request an incomplete, fill out the form "Request for Grade Incomplete" on the MJTI Webpage (<http://www.mjti.org/forms>). The form will be automatically be sent to the Registrar who will request permission from the Instructor and then the Academic Dean for final approval. If the Incomplete grade is granted, the completed course work is due to the instructor within 8 weeks of the final assignment of that quarter. If the work is not completed within this time, the instructor, based on the amount and quality of the work that has been completed, determines whether a reduced grade or a grade of F is warranted. Further extensions of time, justified by extreme circumstances, are granted only by the Academic Dean.
4. **Leave of Absence/Withdrawal:** MJTI programs are designed to permit students to pursue their studies while managing the many responsibilities they have as adult professionals. MJTI will consider a leave of absence for a student who is experiencing hardships that make effective progress in her/his academic program unusually difficult. Students who, due to unforeseen and serious circumstances (including personal, family emergency, medical, and military service) are unable to take or complete a course during the academic year may submit a Request for a Leave of Absence status to the MJTI Registrar's office. Such status is granted at the sole discretion of the Academic Dean.

Students desiring to drop or withdraw from courses after registering may do so by submitting a Change of Course Status form to the Registrar. If the course is dropped before the quarter begins, the only financial penalty charged is a \$30.00 drop/withdrawal fee. If the change is requested after the quarter begins, the student will be refunded according to the refund policy stated on page 28 of the current catalog. Non-attendance does not constitute official withdrawal. A student who begins a course and does not officially withdraw will receive the grade earned for the entire course, which will usually be a failing grade. MJTI does not accept unofficial withdrawal from a class. A student who officially withdraws from a class will receive a W on their transcript.

5. **Extensions:** Extensions of the due date for the final assignments are not permitted. Students who do qualify for an Incomplete should submit as much work as possible by the due date so that the instructor has time to grade all work in time to meet the instructor's deadline for submitting grades to the MJTI office. At the instructor's discretion, work may be accepted later than the due date, with a deduction of grade for each late day.
6. **Change of Student Status:** A student who has registered to take a course for credit may switch to the status of auditor up to, and including, the last day of the fourth week of class by submitting a Change of Status request form to the Registrar (<http://www.mjti.org/forms>). The tuition differential will only be refunded if the request form is received by the end of the fourth week of the course.
7. **Discussion privacy:** The course discussion is accessible only to those registered for the class through Populi. To ensure a positive forum for course interaction, students are asked to refrain from excerpting lessons or thread discussions from the course in any format. This will enable the cultivation of a safe and honest forum for dialogue.
8. **Instructors and Email:** Regardless of the course format, instructors shall be available during the course week for private contact from students via email. Instructors are required to respond within 24 hours of receipt (Sunday – Thursday) of student inquiries made via email. These guidelines apply both to email from students and to student questions asked of the instructor in asynchronous discussion.
9. **Questions:** If you have any questions regarding assignments, feel free to e-mail them to the instructor at rebyosh@bethemunah.org.