



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

SL501 Messianic Jewish Spirituality

Rabbi Joshua Brumbach – rebyosh@simchatyisrael.org

January 14 – March 8 (Winter Semester 2023–24)

Time: Sundays, 10:30am Eastern

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

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The spiritual life of Messianic Judaism shares uniquely in the values and practices of Jewish tradition while also drawing from Christian tradition. This course provides a framework for understanding Messianic Jewish spirituality in terms of its sources in the two traditions, treating major issues and trends in Jewish piety including chassidut, mussar, Talmud Torah and liturgical prayer, and relevant sources in Christian piety including prayer, devotional writings, and charisma.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE CURRICULUM

This class is required for all MJTI degree students.

RELEVANCE

Messianic Jewish spirituality seeks to promote a vital, vibrant and mature relationship with God and humankind among those bound by the irrevocable covenant with Israel. It is rooted in Scripture, informed by Jewish tradition, dependent upon Yeshua's creative, redemptive, and intercessory work, and responsive to the Divine Presence. This course will introduce avenues for making Messianic Jewish spirituality a lived reality. We will delve into the central tenets of Jewish faith, piety and spirituality, exploring various means of nurturing this life in individuals and congregations.

PREREQUISITE

None

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

This is an online course. The student must have a computer and Internet access. Please contact Rabbi Michael Hillel (admin@mjti.org) for assistance with Populi.

COURSE FORMAT

Online webinar and asynchronous online discussion.

REQUIREMENTS

Full participation in weekly video conferences, online discussion threads, a midterm exam, and a final paper (3,000 words). Each week I may also assign each student the responsibility of presenting some of the day's assigned reading to the class.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Dresner, Samuel H. *I Asked for Wonder: A Spiritual Anthology of Abraham Joshua Heschel*. New York: Crossroad, 2018.
- Levertoff, Paul Philip. *Love and the Messianic Age*. Marshfield, MO: Vine of David, 2009. Available from First Fruits of Zion website at www.ffoz.com.
- Lichtenstein, Isaac. *The Everlasting Jew*. Marshfield, MO: Vine of David, 2013. Available from First Fruits of Zion website at www.ffoz.com.
- Rudolph, David and Joel Willits. *Introduction to Messianic Judaism: Its Ecclesial Context and Biblical Foundation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.
- A Traditional Siddur (Recommended Options: *Sim Shalom (Conservative)*, *Koren Sacks*, or *Artscroll*).

ARTICLES (will be provided by the instructor)

- Brumbach, Joshua. "The Role of Torah and Jewish Tradition in the Messianic Jewish Community."
- Kinbar, Carl. "Learning as a Spiritual Practice"
- Kinzer, Mark S. "Prayer in Israel, Prayer in Yeshua."
- _____. "Pots, Pans & Seraphim: Messianic Jewish Prayer in its Heavenly Context."
- _____. "Israel's Eschatological Renewal in Water and Spirit"
- Sacks, Jonathan. "*A Judaism Engaged with the World.*"
- Sherwin, Bryon L. and Seymour J. Cohen. "How to Study the Torah."
- MJRC Standards of Observance - available online via PDF packet: http://ourrabbis.org/main/documents/MJRC_Standards_Aug2014.pdf

RECOMMENDED READING

- Dosick, Wayne. *Dancing with God*. New York: HarperCollins, 1997.
- Goldstein, Niles Elliot. *Gonzo Judaism*. Boston: Trumpeter, 2006.
- HaLevy, Baruch and Ellen Frankel. *Revolution of Jewish Spirit*. Woodstock: Jewish Lights, 2012.
- 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.
- Milgram, Goldie. *Living the Jewish Lifecycle: How to Create Meaningful Jewish Rites of Passage at Every Stage of Life*. Woodstock: Jewish Lights, 2009.
- Rothschild, Fritz A. *Between God and Man*. New York: Free Press, 1959.
- Sherwin, Bryon L. and Seymour J. Cohen. *How to Be a Jew: Ethical Teachings of Judaism*. Northvale: Jason Aronson, 1992.
- Winkler, Gershon. *The Way of the Boundary Crosser*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005.
- Wolfson, Ron. *Relational Judaism*. Woodstock: Jewish Lights, 2013.

ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS AND DEADLINES

Classes will be held once a week on Sunday mornings at 10:30am ET. We will meet via Zoom for a live two and a half (2.5) hour interactive webinar.

Discussion question(s) may also be posted each week on Populi. Participation in these asynchronous online discussion threads will be crucial to learning in the course and to your course grade. In order to sustain a meaningful asynchronous discussion, students must log on to Populi and respond to each reflection question(s) and at least once in response to posts of other students.

There will also be a midterm exam, and a final paper of around 3,000 words. The final assignment will be sent to the class on Thursday, March 2nd and must be returned to the instructor no later than Sunday, March 12th by 11:59pm on Populi.

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

COURSE OUTLINE

Week & Date	Title of Lesson	Required Reading
Week 1 Jan. 14-18	Introduction to Jewish Spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Levertoff, 31-42 (Chapter 1)• Sacks article, "<i>A Judaism Engaged with the World</i>" (to be provided), 1-28
Week 2 Jan. 21-25	God in Jewish Thought	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heschel, 1-19 (Chapter 1)• Levertoff, 49-58 (Chapter 3-4)
Week 3 Jan. 28-Feb. 1	Prayer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heschel, 20-37 (Chapters 2-3)• Levertoff, 59-63 (Chapter 5)• Kinzer article, "<i>Prayer in Israel, Prayer in Yeshua</i>" (to be provided), 1-31
Week 4 Feb. 4-8	Prayer – Part II: The Siddur as an Instrument of Holiness MIDTERM EXAM (Due Sunday, February 11th)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heschel, 38-41 (Chapter 4)• Levertoff, 65-69 (Chapter 6)• Rudolph, 37-60• Kinzer article, "<i>Pots, Pans & Seraphim: Messianic Jewish Prayer in its Heavenly Context</i>" (to be provided), 1-7
Week 5 Feb. 11-15	Torah and Mitzvot	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Levertoff, 43-48 (Chapter 2)• Heschel, 73-92 (Chapters 6-7)• Rudolph, 72-81• Brumbach article, (to be provided), 1-11

<p>Week 6 Feb. 18-22</p>	<p>Learning as Worship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heschel, 66-99 (Chapter 5) • Carl Kinbar article, “<i>Learning as a Spiritual Practice</i>” (to be provided) • Rudolph, 61-71 • Sherwin chapter, “How to Study the Torah” (to be provided), 45-51.
<p>Week 7 Feb 25-29</p>	<p>Path of Discipleship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lichtenstein, 51-92 • MJRC Standards, “<i>Tevilat Mashiach</i>,” 47-48 and “<i>Zichron Mashiach</i>,” 48-49 (to be provided) • Kinzer article, “<i>Israel’s Eschatological Renewal in Water and Spirit</i>” (to be provided)
<p>Week 8 March 3-7</p>	<p>Love and Messiah/Course Conclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levertoff, 73-80 (Epilogue) • Lichtenstein, 93-101, 133
<p>SAUNDAY, MARCH 12TH</p>	<p>FINAL PAPER DUE</p>	<p>Due by 11:59pm (your local time)</p>

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- Explain what a vibrant Messianic Jewish Spirituality looks like
- Explain how Yeshua relates to, and renews and energizes Jewish life
- Provide a basic introduction to the life and work of Levertoff, Heschel, and Lichtenstein
- Explain the basics of Jewish prayer and its relevance to spiritual life
- Give a basic outline of the Siddur and explain core concepts within Jewish liturgy
- Explain how the course has deepened your relationship with HaShem
- Summarize the basic tools necessary to pursue a vibrant spiritual life

ASSESSMENTS

Grades will be awarded according to the following criteria:

- Attendance, preparation, and participation in class (40%)
- Participation in online discussion threads (10%)
- Midterm Exam (20%)
- Final 3,000-word paper (30%)

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

Direct Contact Hours

Video Conferencing 25 hours

Discussion Threads 10 hours

Total = 35 hours

Out of Class Hours

Reading 30 hours

Preparation 10 hours

Midterm Exam 10 hours

Final Paper 25 hours

Total = 75 hours

110 Total Work 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%
Demonstrates a serious attempt to grapple with the Unit material. Analysis is reasonable and gives opportunity for interaction. Asks relevant questions.	Supports discussion points with references to assigned readings, logical analysis, and examples. Gives citations (work, page number) for material quoted or paraphrased.	Interacts with the instructor and other students. 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.	Writes in clear, concise, and grammatically acceptable terms.	

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 coursework 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 Orbund. 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@simchatyisrael.org.