

TEXTS:

Essentials of Judaism: A Complete Guide to Beliefs, Customs, and Rituals
by George Robinson
A History of the Jews, by Paul Johnson
Tanakh: The Hebrew Bible
Shalom Aleichem: A Hebrew Reading Primer

- Week 1** Overview of Class, Basic Concepts of Judaism
- Week 2** *Tanakh* (Bible): Origins, Revelation, Covenant, Mitzvot
- Week 3** *Tanakh*: Overview
- Week 4** Tfilah (prayer)
- Week 5** *Shabbat: The Jewish Calendar*
- Week 6** *Chagim* (festivals): Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur
- Week 7** *Chagim*: Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Chanukah, Purim, Shavuot
- Week 8** *Chagim*: Pesach, Omer
- Week 9** Anti-Semitism and *Shoah* (Holocaust)
- Week 10** Israel: The Land and the State, Yom Haatzmaut
- Week 11** Life Cycle: Birth, *Bar Mitzvah*, Confirmation, Education
- Week 12** Life Cycle: Marriage, Divorce, and Inter-marriage
- Week 13** Life Cycle: *Bikkur cholim*, after-life, death, mourning, messiah
- Week 14** Home observances: *kashrut*, *mezuzah*
- Week 15** Panel program: Different Perspectives on Jewish Teachings
- Week 16** Visit to Hendler Learning Center's Timeline of Jewish History

Plus: Various experiential workshops

Class schedule subject to change

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED . . .

- What's the difference between the Jewish and Christian Scriptures?
- What are the important Jewish holidays?
- Why do Jews mourn for seven days?
- Are Jews singled out for suffering?
- What is the significance of circumcision?
- What are some of the Jewish Sabbath observances?
- How can I begin practicing Judaism?
- Why is Israel so important to the Jewish people?
- Why don't Jews believe in Jesus?
- What is the Passover *seder*?
- Why do some Jews wear beards and skullcaps?
- Do Jews believe in Heaven and Hell?
- Why is a glass broken at the end of Jewish weddings?
- Will Jews accept me as a convert?
- Why do Jews fast on *Yom Kippur*?

**Learn the answers to these and other questions!
Sign up for the *Introduction To Judaism Course!***

TESTIMONIALS FROM PAST STUDENTS

- "Excellent - I really learned a lot, ploughed through a text I ordinarily would not have read for 'fun.'"*
- "I enjoyed the variety of instructors."*
- "Knowledge and openness of instructors was remarkable."*
- "I appreciated the opportunity to interact with the instructors."*
- "My sponsoring Rabbi was very helpful . . ."*
- "Museum trip was great."*
- "This was such a comprehensive course and a great value (very reasonable)."*
- "Each Rabbi had a different style which kept the course interesting each week."*
- "(The curriculum) followed a logical course and built on each previous week's lesson."*
- "The Hebrew reading class was excellent - I learned how to read finally!"*
- "Very effective; I enjoyed the open forum approach."*

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL OR E-MAIL:

Rabbi Michael Meyerstein, Executive Director
Baltimore Board of Rabbis
c/o THE ASSOCIATED
101 W. Mt. Royal Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21201
410-369-9253 Fax 410-484-2373
E-mail: mmeyerstein@associated.org

Sponsored by the Baltimore Board of Rabbis
President – Rabbi Amy Scheinerman
Vice-President – Rabbi Gila Ruskin
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Treasurer – Rabbi Avram Israel Reisner
Secretary – Rabbi Andrew Busch
Immediate Past-President – Rabbi Steven Fink
Executive Director – Rabbi Michael Meyerstein

Participating Synagogues and Rabbis
Conservative

Beth Am Synagogue - 410-523-2446
Rabbi Daniel Berg
Beth El Congregation - 410-484-0411
Rabbi Steven Schwartz, Rabbi Dana Saroken,
Rabbi David Greenspoon
Beth Israel Congregation - 410-654-0800
Rabbi Jay R. Goldstein
Beth Shalom Congregation of Howard County - 410-531-5345
Rabbi Susan Grossman
Bolton Street Synagogue - 410-235-5354
Rabbi Jonathan Panitz
Chevrei Tzedek - 410-542-9110
Rabbi Avram Israel Reisner
Chizuk Amuno Congregation - 410-486-6400
Rabbi Ron Shulman, Rabbi Deborah Wechsler

Reconstructionist

Columbia Jewish Congregation - 410-730-6044
Rabbi Sonya Starr
Beit Tikvah Congregation - 410-464-9402
Rabbi Elizabeth Bolton

Independent

Congregation Shalom Aleichem - 410-730-3917
Rabbi Yocheved Heiligman (Reconstructionist)

Reform

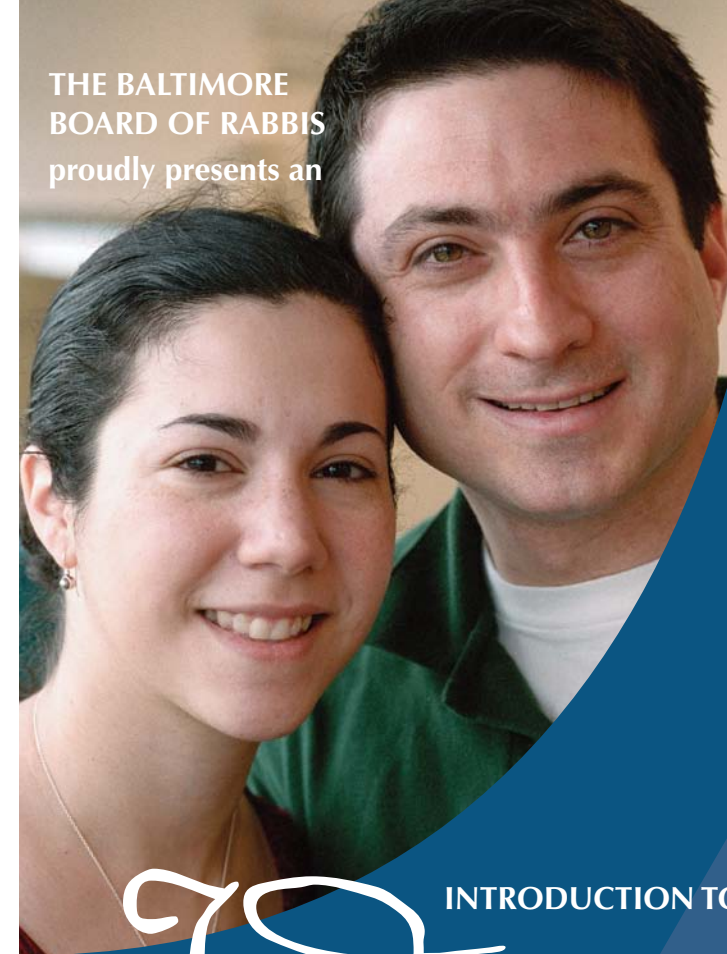
Baltimore Hebrew Congregation - 410-764-1587
Rabbi Andrew Busch, Rabbi Elissa Sachs-Kohen
Har Sinai Congregation - 410-654-9393
Rabbi Benjamin Sharff
Harford Jewish Center - 410-939-3170
Rabbi Gila Ruskin
Temple Beth Shalom - 410-974-0900
Rabbi Ari Goldstein
Temple Isaiah - 410-888-9100
Rabbi Mark J. Panoff
Temple Oheb Shalom - 410-358-0105
Rabbi Steven M. Fink, Rabbi Scott Nagel

Orthodox

B'nai Israel Congregation - 410-732-5454
Rabbi Alan Yuter
Ner Tamid-Greenspring Valley Synagogue - 410-358-6500
Rabbi Chaim Landau
Moses Montefiore Synagogue - 410-653-7485
Rabbi Yerachmiel Shapiro
Beth Tfiloh Congregation - 410-486-1900
Rabbi Chai Posner



THE BALTIMORE
BOARD OF RABBIS
proudly presents an



INTRODUCTION TO
Judaism

A 16-week course exploring
the rich heritage and traditions
of the Jewish people



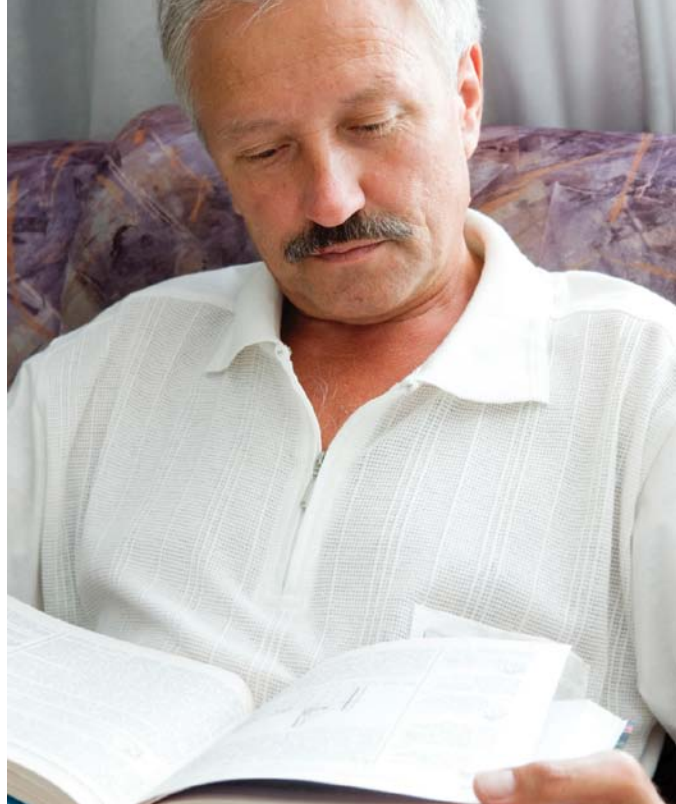
While Judaism is regarded as one of the world's great religions, it is much more than a composite of religious beliefs and practices; it is an evolving religious civilization. It is in that context that students who register for the *Introduction To Judaism* course will explore the fascinating world of Jewish culture, life-cycle and holiday observances, history and philosophy. The subject matter comes alive through the weekly study of sacred texts, animated classroom discussions and stimulating reading assignments.

The faculty consists of a cross-section of the community's leading rabbis representing diverse religious perspectives. Their teaching style combines scholarship with personal insights about Judaism taught in a warm, personable manner.

One highlight of the course is a panel discussion with four rabbis from the different theological streams of American Judaism. A lively exchange of views reveals each denomination's unique philosophy and practices. The course finale features a visit to the Hendler Learning Center's fabulous Timeline of Jewish History at Chizuk Amuno Congregation. Three thousand years of history comes alive through vignettes about fascinating Jewish personalities and events.

Since Hebrew is central to Jewish worship and ritual, students can also learn how to read Hebrew in an elective class, available at no additional cost. The class meets one hour prior to the weekly course and is taught by a highly-qualified instructor. By semester's end, students will have learned how to read basic prayers in Hebrew, thus enabling them to participate more comfortably in synagogue worship services.

The *Introduction To Judaism* course also offers students the opportunity to participate in a series of enrichment programs offered by the Jewish Outreach Network, a joint program of Jewish Community Services and the Baltimore Board of Rabbis. For example, students can attend the *Shabbat Experience* which features a Learners' Sabbath Service, lunch and moderated discussion. The *December Dilemmas Workshop* explores tensions that interfaith couples sometimes experience during the Chanukah and Christmas season. *Building A Jewish Future When You Don't Have a Jewish Past* examines Jewish identity



issues that frequently surface among non-Jews exploring a connection to Judaism. Students can avail themselves of other workshops offered from time to time on Jewish holiday observances and other issues of similar interest.

SPONSORING RABBI

Each course applicant must select a member rabbi of the Baltimore Board of Rabbis as his/her Sponsoring Rabbi. The on-going dialogue relationship between student and rabbi will maximize learning opportunities even more. Meetings with the Sponsoring Rabbi, at the student's initiative, allow for further discussion of Jewish issues or personal concerns that may arise. The final meeting at semester's end is used to review the student's responses to the Take-Home Final Exam. Students needing help identifying a Sponsoring Rabbi may contact Donna Kane, MA (410-843-7394).

IS THIS COURSE FOR YOU?

Since this course was first offered two decades ago by the Baltimore Board of Rabbis, hundreds of students, their spouses and significant others have enjoyed the kaleidoscopic interpretation of this 3,000 year-old religious tradition. *Introduction To Judaism* is open to anyone interested in

exploring Judaism's intellectual and spiritual riches. The course has been particularly popular with non-Jewish adults in a relationship with a Jew-by-birth. Often the non-Jewish partner is contemplating conversion to Judaism or is seeking a better understanding of the Jewish tradition. While the course does not lead to conversion, it may satisfy some or all of the requirements leading to conversion, depending on the Sponsoring Rabbi's criteria. A registrant's spouse, fiancé or significant other is encouraged to attend weekly classes at no additional charge. Jews-by-birth enroll as well to update their knowledge of Judaism.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The course is offered in the fall and spring of each year. The location rotates among several area synagogues in Pikesville or Owings Mills. A mandatory orientation session is held one week prior to the start of the semester. Classes meet weekly, usually on Monday or Thursday evenings from 7:30 until 9:00 p.m. The Hebrew reading elective class begins at 6:30 p.m. on the same evening.



Registration forms can be obtained from the Baltimore Board of Rabbis' office (410-369-9253, rschwebel@associated.org) and from participating congregational Rabbis (see listing elsewhere in this pamphlet). Registration materials, tuition and Sponsoring Rabbi form should be submitted by mail or in person at least one week prior to the orientation meeting.

TUITION

The tuition fee is \$350. Spouses or significant others may attend at no additional charge. The fee includes 16 weeks of classes, eligibility to attend the Hebrew reading elective, all instructional books and materials, Shabbat meal, tour of the Hendler Learning Center, special Jewish Outreach Network workshops and access to a Sponsoring Rabbi.

Tuition is payable in advance, and due no later than the date of the orientation meeting. Checks should be made payable to the Baltimore Board of Rabbis and may be sent c/o THE ASSOCIATED, 101 W. Mt. Royal Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21201.