Title

Classical Hebrew

Description

This course will offer students an immersive journey through classical Hebrew. Throughout the course students will engage regularly with topics such as Israel, spirituality, politics, and history. This learning will help them develop their ability to explore these topics with everyone in a deep and meaningful way.

Objectives

To further develop and enrich the student's Hebrew skills as well as their capacity to leverage the Hebrew language in unpacking current and critical topics in both Judaism and modern society. To enhance the student's comfort engaging with both modern and classical Hebrew texts. To further develop the student's skill set in Hebrew roots, vocabulary, and syntax.

Unit 1: The journey to holiness

The journey to holiness begins with our ancient text and is pursued throughout the course of our lives. Holiness embodies not only our connection to the eternal one but to ourselves, each other, and the land of Israel. A close reading of the Biblical text Leviticus 19 with the application of context will reveal the depth of meaning in Hebrew roots.

Unit 2: Fulfilling interpersonal relationships

In our family relationships as in our community we experience both honor and fear. As we grow and develop, we learn both language and the many ways in which we can develop fulfilling interpersonal connections. A textual and grammatical comparison of Leviticus 19 and Exodus 20 will reveal the complexity of our relationships with parents and day to day observances such as Shabbat.

Unit 3: The complexity of charity

Our connection to the land of Israel is both spiritual and physical. Our long history of farming the land and the fulfillment of Jewish law teaches us much about the complexity of charity. A further close reading of Leviticus 19 helps us to understand both grammatical complexities in Hebrew as well as our obligation to the less fortunate amongst us.

Unit 4: The power of words

Our obligation to act in a kind, compassionate, and fair manner extends to every aspect of our day to day lives and to all our interactions. The very words we choose have a profound impact on how others feel about themselves and the world around them. A comparison of Leviticus 19 and Numbers 12 helps us to unpack the power words possess to help us understand both our similarities and differences.

Unit 5: Equality, compassion, and acceptance

We typically think of blindness as physical, however, blindness can manifest itself in many ways beyond the physical. A real challenge can be to remove the mental and emotional barriers which prevent us from seeing how we are all equal and in need of compassion and acceptance. A further close reading of

Leviticus 19 and Numbers 12 offers insights into how we understand what it means to be Jewish and accept all who choose to follow this path.

Unit 6: Is justice blind?

We often use the phrase, “justice is blind”, yet this does not only apply to courts. In the daily life of the community leaders play an important role in establishing and maintaining social equity. Exodus 23 offers answers and raises important questions about how we build a more fair and equitable community and society.

Unit 7: Our physical nature

We are created in the eternal one’s image yet in our ever-changing society attitudes and beliefs about our physical nature are also evolving. This is manifested today in the many ways in which it has become socially acceptable to alter our bodies. Leviticus 19 offers a framework to delve into the classical Jewish approach to this topic and how it can be interpreted.

Unit 8: The power of blessing

Grammar can be used as both a tool for constructing language as well as a tool to reveal the depth of meaning behind the words. A blessing can be both a statement and a question with the form revealing profound differences in meaning and emotional depth. A close reading of Genesis 27 provides insight into the complexity of what blessings offer to both those who give and receive.

Unit 9: Our spiritual nature

Where we came from in life is just as important as where we are going. When we think of where we came from, we often think of the physical place, however, just as important is the spiritual place. In reading Exodus 1 we will explore our physical as well as our spiritual journey as Jews.