JEWISH THEOLOGY - Rabbi Noam Raucher
Q2 2020

WEEKLY COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 - Unit 1: God and Us - See Assignments
Description: In the beginning we start with our own personal beliefs and experiences with God In this unit we will introduce ourselves and discuss our own personal beliefs and experiences with God. What caused you to think and feel this way. Has it evolved over time? How does this belief serve you, and how could it serve the people you work with?

Week 2 - Unit 2: God created God - article: GOD IN THE HEBREW BIBLE - Rabbi David Leiber's DHL
Description: Where God came from. There are over 100 names for God used in the Torah - Why? The God of the Bible is an evolving God. How are these titles different from and similar to one another. Equally the God of our for-father and mothers is different from that of the Prophets. How is each God portrayed depended on the book of the Torah we study?

Week 3 - Unit 3: The God of the Greats - article: GOD IN MIDRASH By: RABBI ILANA GRINBLAT and GOD IN THE TALMUD By RABBI GAIL LABOVITZ PH.D.
Description: We jump in time to the rabbinic period in Judaism to look at how the rabbis of Midrash and the Talmud changed and shaped what God is. How has this God changed from the God of the Bible?

Week 4 - Unit 4: God in Kabbalah - article: GOD IN KABBALAH By RABBI PINCHAS GILLER, PH.D.
Description: The God of these mystical paths differs from that of the more tangible stories in the Torah. What does it mean to receive God as the Kabbalists assume? And what does it mean to cling to God like glue as the Hassidic masters propose? Additionally, knowing how Jewish law and practice evolved from Kabbalistic circles, how has beliefs in God impacted how we act and carry ourselves in the world.

Week 5 - Unit 5: The God of the Philosophers - article GOD IN MODERN JEWISH THOUGHT By RABBI ELLIOT DORFF, PH.D.
Description: God as an idea - not an entity. We now enter the world of the Jewish philosopher. God is more abstract here than any other time in Judaism. Concepts and ideas of God get reinterpreted and changed to fit a more esoteric line of thinking.

Week 6 - Unit 6: God and Revelation
Description: How many Jews are there in the world? That's how many Gods there are in the world. God is One, but the idea of God varies from person to person. how is it that we come to know God, and how might that different from movement to movement.

Week 7 - Unit 7: The God in Prayer
Description: How do we related to God through prayer? The God of prayer has roots in Biblical literature, but who, what, when, why is the God that we pray with in our Tefillah? Does God want, need, or care about our prayers?

Week 8 - Unit 8: The Forest from the Trees: God, Evil, and Us
Description: The perspective of this class with be as a forest from the trees. Although we will also draw on our own personal perspectives to inform this conversation as well. Nonetheless, we will wrestle with what it means to experience evil in God's world.

Week 9 - Unit 9: God and Us Revisited - article: GOD AND US By RABBI JONATHAN WITTENBERG
Description: In our final unit will we recall the beliefs we shared in the first class and explore how they may have evolved. This conversation will require looking back over all of the previous classes to determine what might have given us further questions to consider.

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1 - Watch the assigned video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVvKul8oK3c
Consider one or two these questions and please journal about them: Do you experience God? If so, how? If not, have you ever? What has your experience with God been like? If you could use any other word for God during this course what would it be and why?

Week 2 - Read and prepare to discuss Rabbi David Leiber's DHL (z''l) article - GOD IN THE HEBREW BIBLE
Journal assignment: What questions do you have to the God of the Hebrew Bible?

Week 3 Read and prepare to discuss articles: GOD IN MIDRASH By: RABBI ILANA GRINBLAT and GOD IN THE TALMUD By RABBI GAIL LABOVITZ PH.D.
Journal challenge: Personal midrash - write a brief and sincere letter to god about anything on your mind. Then have God write one back to you. Just as sincerely.

Week 4 Read and prepare to discuss article: GOD IN KABBALAH By RABBI PINCHAS GILLER, PH.D.
Journal: Your own thoughts about God during this point in time in our class.

Week 5 Read and prepare to discuss article GOD IN MODERN JEWISH THOUGHT By RABBI ELLIOT DORFF, PH.D.
Journal question: Did one philosophical approach stand out overs for you?

Week 6 - In class shiur
Journal question: When was the first time your felt you came to feel God's presence and could articulate it?

Week 7 In class shiur
Journal question: Do you pray? If so, why and how? If not, why and do you do something in it's place? What do you say?

Week 8 In class shiur
Journal question: Can you recall a time in which you witnessed God's response to Evil in our world?

Week 9 Read and prepare to discuss article: GOD AND US By RABBI JONATHAN WITTENBERG
Journal assignment: Choose to continue to journal about your thoughts and experiences with God.