

## 5783/2022-2023 New Mexico Miller Introduction to Judaism Program

### Under the Auspices of Shabbat with Friends NM

Rabbi Dov Gartenberg, Lead Teacher

Wednesday Evenings, 7-8:30pm

All Sessions held at ABQ Mennonite Church Library, 1300 Girard Blvd. NE, ABQ, NM 87106

Starting October 19, 2022; Ending May 24, 2023

Updated: Thursday, September 15, 2022

#### No Sessions

11/23/22 Thanksgiving

12/28/22 Winter Break

4/5/23 Pesah

4/12/23 Pesah

#### 3 Hour Session Dates

12/07/22

01/18/23

02/22/23

03/15/23

04/19/23

04/26/23

05/17/23

MITJ 5783 Schedule, Chronological Order of Topics

See Readings by Topic Below

Session Date	Topic Number: <i>On One Foot</i> : Required reading	Link to On One Foot Video	Imminent Jewish Holidays, Special Events, Notes.
1. 10/19/22	Topic 10 part 1: Starting Over: The High Holy Days		
2. 10/26/22	Topic 10 part 2: Starting Over: The High Holy Days		
3. 11/2/22	Topic 4 part 1: Holy Days: The Wheel of the Jewish Year.		
4. 11/9/22	Topic 4 part 2: Holy Days: The Wheel of the Jewish Year.		
5. 11/16/22	Topic 5 part 1: Shabbat: Palace in Time		
11/23/22	No Class, Thanksgiving Vacation		
6. 11/30/22	Topic 5 Part 2: Shabbat: Palace in Time		
7. 12/7/22 3-hour session 5:30 to 8:30 with dinner.	Topic 1: Beginnings: From Creation to the Edge of the Wilderness.		
8. 12/14/22	Topic 2 part 1: The World of the Bible.		
9. 12/21/22	Topic 2 part 2: The World of the Bible.		

12/28/22	Winter Break		
10. 01/04/23	Topic 3 part 1: Heart of Many Rooms. Understanding Jewish Diversity.		
11. 01/11/23	Topic 3 part 2: Heart of Many Rooms.		
12. 01/18/23 6-9pm 3-hour session	Topic 6: When Do I Bow? And Other Questions About Jewish Prayer.		
13. 01/25/23	Topic 8 part 1: God: Encountering the Holy.		
14. 2/01/23	Topic 8 part 2: God: Encountering the Holy		
15. 02/08/23	Topic 9 part 1 Talmud : An Argument for the Sake of Heaven		
16. 02/015/23	Topic 9 part 2: Talmud: Argument for the Sake of Heaven.		
17. 02/22/23 6-9pm 3-hour session	Topic 11 part 1 and 2: Kashrut: The Original Soul Food.		
18. 03/01/23	Topic 12 part 1: Philosophers, Poets, and Mystics: The Jewish Middle Ages.		
19. 03/08/23	Topic 12 part 2: Philosophers, Poets, and Mystics: The Jewish Middle Ages.		

03/15/23 6-9 3 hour session	Topic 13: Marriage, Love & Kosher Sex.		
20. 03/22/23	Topic 7 part 1: Passover: The Jewish Master Story.		
21. 03/29/23	Topic 7 part 2: Passover: The Jewish Master Story.		
04/05/23	No Class, Passover		
04/12/23	No Class, Passover		
22. 04/19/23	Topic 16: Out of the Darkness: Stories from the Holocaust		
23. 04/26/23 6-9 3 hour session	Topic 17: Israel: Dreaming of Deliverance		
24. 5/3/23	Topic 14, part 1: From Birth to B'nai Mitzvah: Raising a Mensch		
25. 05/10/23	Topic 14, part 2: From Birth to B'nai Mitzvah: Raising a Mensch.		
26. 05/17/23 6-9pm	Topic 15: A Time to Mourn: Traditions for Death, Grief &		

<b>3- hour session</b>	<b>Healing</b>		
27. 05/24/23	Topic 18: The Jewish Mission to Heal the World		

# New Mexico Miller Introduction to Judaism Program 5783 2022-2023

## Books and Reading Material for MITJ 5783

### Required:

- Adam Greenwald, *On One Foot: An Intro to Judaism Coursebook* (2015)
- Arthur Green: *Judaism's 10 Best Ideas: A Brief Guide for Seekers*

### Hebrew Primers: To Be Discussed.

- Linda Motzkin, *Aleph Isn't Tough: An Introduction to Hebrew for Adults* (2000)

### Recommended

- Joseph Telushkin, *Jewish Literacy: Revised Edition*
- Raymond Scheindlin, *A Short History of the Jewish People*
- Irving Greenberg, *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays*
- Heschel, A. J. *The Sabbath*
- Noam Zion: *A Day Apart: Shabbat at Home.*
- Lise Stern: *How to Keep Kosher*
- Joseph Telushkin: *The Book of Jewish Values*
- Joseph Telushkin: *Jewish Humor: What the Best Jewish Jokes Say About the Jews*
- Alana Newhouse: *The 100 Most Jewish Foods: A Highly Debatable List*
- Milton Steinberg: *As a Driven Leaf*
- Alan Morinis: *Everyday Holiness*
- Ari Shavit: *My Promised Land*

## Weekly Reading Assignments by Topic

### The 18 Topic Summaries Not in Chronological Order

1. **Topic One: Beginnings: From Creation to the Edge of the Wilderness.** Overview of the Torah: its basic narratives, personalities, and themes. Exploration of the concept of brit (covenant) as a basic motif of the Torah.  
**Recommended reading:**  
 Telushkin, Chapter 1-30
  
2. **Topic Two: The World of the Bible.**  
 Overview of the Hebrew Bible and the ancient history (Conquest of Canaan to Babylonian Exile) of the Jewish People. Discussion of the ways that the Bible is used in Jewish liturgical life. Examination of selected texts and concepts from Nevi'im and Ketuvim.  
**Required Reading:**  
 Kushner, 3-48  
**Recommended reading:**  
 Telushkin, Chapters 31-63  
 Scheindlin, 1-49
  
3. **Topic Three: Heart of Many Rooms.**  
 Understanding Jewish Diversity Understanding the varieties of Jewish-ness — including exploration of geographic, linguistic, ethnic, and religious diversity. Development and ideology of the modern Jewish denominations. Introduction of the concept of mitzvah and halakha as a lens to examine the philosophic underpinnings of Jewish religious diversity.  
**Required reading:**  
 Kushner, 49-86  
**Recommended reading:**  
 Telushkin, Chapters 116,-117, 120-121, 208-211, 222, & 225-229.

**4. Topic Four: Holy Days: The Wheel of the Jewish Year.**

Overview of the narratives, rituals, and themes of the major Jewish holidays, including: the Shalosh Regalim, the High Holy Days, Hanukkah, Purim, and Tisha b'Av

**Required reading:**

Kushner, 87-142

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapters 296-319.

Greenberg, Chapter 1: “Holidays as the Jewish Way”

- 5. Topic Five: Shabbat: Palace in Time.** Exploration of the practice of Shabbat, from its origins in the Ten Commandments to its contemporary observance. Overview of the principles of shmirat Shabbat, with an emphasis on helping students to determine how to begin incorporating elements of Shabbat observance into their lives. Examination of the meaning and practice of Shabbat rituals in the home.

**Recommended reading:**

Heschel, *The Sabbath*

- 6. Topic Six: When Do I Bow? And Other Questions About Jewish Prayer.**

Exploration of the mechanics and meaning behind Jewish prayer. Focus on the general rubrics of the prayer service, keva/kavanna, ritual garb and symbols, and comfort in the synagogue environment. Building familiarity with basic prayers and blessings—including Sh'ma, Amidah, Kaddish, and the basic blessing formula.

**Required reading:**

Kushner 197-214.

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapters 337-339, 341-352.

- 7. Topic Seven: Passover: The Jewish Master Story.**



Study of the Passover narrative, emphasizing its importance to shaping Jewish identity and values.

**Required reading:**

Kushner 124-129

**Recommended reading:**

Greenberg, Chapter 2: *“Judaism as an Exodus Religion.”*

8. **Topic Eight: God: Encountering the Holy.** Jewish approaches to theology, with emphasis on the concept of “wrestling with God” and a variety of ways of understanding God. Exploration of selected Jewish texts about God from the Bible, rabbinic literature, and the prayer book. Opportunity for developing and articulating a personal theology.

**Required reading:**

Kushner, 143-180

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapters 257, 268, 292-294.

9. **Topic Nine: Talmud: Argument for the Sake of Heaven.** Overview the development of Rabbinic Judaism and the ways in which it is distinct from earlier Biblical practice. Historical context of the late-Second Temple Period and the existential challenge posed by the destruction of the Temple. Examination of illustrative.

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapters 64-84

Scheidlin, 51-69

10. **Topic Ten: Starting Over: The High Holy Days.** Exploring themes and observances of the High Holy Day period—from Rosh Hodesh Elul through Yom Kippur, emphasizing the practice of teshuvah. Study of key symbols, prayers, and what to expect from Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services.

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapters 285-288

Greenberg, Chapter 6: *“Rebirth and Renewal: The High Holy Days”*

11. **Topic Eleven: Kashrut: The Original Soul Food.** Exploration of the practice of kashrut—its basic rules and concepts and how to

practically apply them to daily life. Emphasis on a developmental approach to taking on Jewish eating practices. Also, study the practice of brakhot before and after eating.

**Required reading:**

Kushner, 49-60

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapters 276 & 336.

**12. Topic Twelve: Philosophers, Poets, and Mystics: The Jewish Middle Ages.**

Overview of Jewish history from the end of the Talmud Period until the dawn of the Modern Period. Focus on the contributions of Rashi, Rambam, and Joseph Karo. Overview of the development of Kabbalah, including a basic discussion of the Zohar and the Tsfat/Lurianic tradition. Emphasis on the question: What role does the contributions of the Middle Ages—literary, halakhic, and mystical play in contemporary Judaism?

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapters 85-115.

Scheindlin, 71-121.

**13. Topic Thirteen: Marriage, Love & Kosher Sex.** Study of Jewish rituals for sanctifying relationships, with an in-depth focus on marriage rituals. Discussion of mikvah—both for conversion and for taharat ha-mishpacha. Exploration of Jewish ethics around intimate relationships and sexuality. Discussion of inclusion of LGBTQ Jews in contemporary Jewish life.

**Required reading:**

Kushner, 226-230.

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapters 326-328, 330

**14. Topic Fourteen: From Birth to B'nai Mitzvah: Raising a Mensch.** Exploration of the rituals and meaning behind Brit Milah and Simchat Bat, with a discussion of the significance of circumcision both for infants and for converts. Choosing a Jewish name, again focusing on both infants and conversion. Jewish parenting and different modes of Jewish education (both formal and informal). The significance of the B'nai Mitzvah ceremony.

**Required reading:**

Kushner, 215-226, 230-236

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapters 27, 295, 324-325.

15. **Topic Fifteen: A Time to Mourn: Traditions for Death, Grief, & Healing.** Understanding Jewish practices toward illness and healing, particularly the mitzvah of bikkur holim. Exploration of Jewish ethics regarding end-of-life, including questions about life support, autopsy, organ donation, etc. Overview of funeral and burial practices, as well as mourning practices including shiva, shloshim, and yartzeit. Jewish views on the afterlife.

**Required reading;**

Kushner 236-241

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapters 278-280 & 332-334

16. **Topic Sixteen: Out of the Darkness: Stories from the Holocaust.** History of anti-Semitism, from Biblical stories (Purim & Hanukkah), to Jews under Christian and Muslim rule, to the advent of racial anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. Holocaust survivor testimony and discussion of Jewish responses to the Holocaust.

**Required reading:**

Kushner, 259-277

**Recommended reading:**

Scheindlin, 19-215,

Telushkin, Chapters 240-246, 185-201.

17. **Topic Seventeen: Israel: Dreaming of Deliverance.** The significance of Israel in Jewish life and thought. Historical survey from Herzl through the founding of the State of Israel, with an emphasis on understanding the meaning and varieties of Zionism. Overview of Israeli geography and key sites. Focus on understanding the connection between American Jews and Israel, including the question of how we are to understand and respond to Israel's domestic and international struggles.

**Required reading:**

Kushner, 243-257.

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapters 133-184.

Scheindlin, 217-248.

- 18. Topic Eighteen: The Jewish Mission to Heal the World.** Closing the Topic with an exploration of three big concepts-- Tzelem Elohim, Tzedaka, and Tikkun Olam — which serve as the foundational principles of ethical monotheism. Closing celebration for the program and discussion of next steps for continuing learning.

**Required reading:**

Kushner, 293-304.

**Recommended reading:**

Telushkin, Chapter 291.