



# TEMPLE SINAI LIFELONG LEARNING FALL 2008/5769

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## In Search of the Jewish Meaning of Life

Join us for the Henry Dorfman Memorial Scholar-in-Residence Program  
and an all-new format as three distinguished speakers address us  
on this year's "Issue-in-Residence"



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**Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin • Friday, October 24, 7:30pm**  
**How to Find the Hidden Link between  
Spirituality and Your Work**

Can Judaism help us find deeper meaning in our work and career? Are there Jewish "cures" for workaholism? Come learn how can we achieve balance in our daily lives.

A dynamic, humorous and challenging speaker, Rabbi Salkin is the author of the highly acclaimed *Putting God on the Guest List: How to Reclaim The Spiritual Meaning of Your Child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah*, one of American Jewry's best selling and most popular books.



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**Rabbi Irwin Kula • Sunday, October 26, 1:15pm**  
**Beyond Identity: 21st Century Judaism  
as a "Technology" of Meaning**

Can Jewish wisdom compete in the global marketplace of ideas? Does Jewish practice help us become a better human being? Come learn how Jewish wisdom speaks to our shared human questions and yearnings.

Rabbi Irwin Kula has appeared on The Oprah Winfrey Show, the Today Show, and The O'Reilly Factor. Newsweek ranks him as one of the "Top 50 Rabbis in America."



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**Sharon Duke Estroff • Tuesday, October 28, 7:30pm**  
**Jewish Parenting: Jewish Values  
for Digital Natives**

Does Judaism have something to say about cyber-bullying? Do you know the five Jewish parenting "power tools"? Come learn how Jewish wisdom can be applied to 21st century parenting issues.

Sharon Duke Estroff is an internationally syndicated parenting columnist whose articles address contemporary and traditional parenting issues within a Jewish context. Ms. Estroff is the author of *Can I Have a Cell Phone for Hanukkah? The Essential Scoop on Raising Modern Jewish Kids*.

**Rabbi  
Gershon's  
Friday  
Night  
Teachings  
for  
Fall/Winter**

**September 5  
Justice, Justice  
You Shall Pursue**

**September 12  
Overcoming Compassion  
Fatigue**

**September 19  
How to Prepare Your Heart  
for the High Holy Days**

**September 26  
Choose Life!**

**October 3  
How to Make this  
New Year Different  
from the Last**

**October 10  
The Problem with  
Possessions**

**October 17  
What I Learn about  
Life from the Book  
of Ecclesiastes**

**October 31  
How to Walk with God**

**November 14  
New Ways of  
Understanding God:  
The Theology of Jewish  
Religious Naturalism**

**December 5  
Someone Needs You:  
Do You Know Who?**

**December 19  
Chanukkah and "The  
Price of Privilege"**

**December 26  
What I Learn about Life  
from the Story of Joseph**

**January 2  
Moving On**

**January 9  
New Ways of  
Understanding Prayer  
for the 21st Century**

**January 23  
A New Name for God**

**January 30  
What's Up with the  
Ten Plagues?**

**SPOTLIGHT ON  
ISRAEL**



Join a group conversation about new developments in Israeli current events; the people of Israel and the history of war and peace in our homeland.

Instructor: Tsipi Israel  
4 Wednesday Evenings, 7:30pm  
October 15, October 29,  
November 5, November 19  
Course Fee: \$60  
Contact Patti Kahn:  
908-273-3617;  
patti@templesinainj.org

**JEWS AND CHRISTIANS  
STUDY TOGETHER:  
THE TALMUD FOR BEGINNERS**

**A four session course with  
Rabbi Avi Friedman, Summit Jewish Community Center,  
The Reverend Robert Corin Morris, Executive Director,  
Interweave Center for Wholistic Living, and  
The Reverend Lisa Green, Christ Church  
at Temple Sinai: October 17, October 24  
at Christ Church, Short Hills: October 31, November 7  
Fridays, 9:30-11:30am**

When Christians want to understand the Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament, the New Testament is their guide. When Jews want to understand the Torah – the heart of the Hebrew Bible – they turn to the Talmud, a vast collection of the “oral law,” or interpretation of the commandments in the Torah. This rabbinic wisdom was collected in both Palestine and Babylonia in the first few centuries of the Common Era, precisely when Christian teaching was taking its own authoritative form. In this informative introduction to the Talmud, we will compare Rabbinic and early Christian wisdom on the commandments of God in the Torah, looking for how they shed light on our lives today.

*Conducted by Interweave Center for Wholistic Living*

**Sisterhood Book Group**

Join the Sisterhood when we get together to discuss *Turbulent Souls, A Catholic Son's Return to His Jewish Family*, by Stephen J. Dubner on Wednesday, October 15 at 7:30 pm.

*Turbulent Souls* is the story of Stephen J. Dubner, the youngest of eight children in a devoutly Catholic home. The author discovers that both his parents were Jewish and converted to Catholicism before they met. His subsequent study and discovery of his Jewish roots lead to his ultimate decision to convert to Judaism.

The excitement of religious conversion continue to exert a dramatic hold on the contemporary imagination. In 1996, when Stephen J. Dubner, an editor and writer at The New York Times Magazine, published in that magazine an abbreviated account of his parents' choice of Catholicism over Judaism and his own subsequent return to the Jewish fold, he was deluged with mail: letters of approbation and disgust, accounts of parallel stories and so on. Dubner quickly became, in his own words, “a sort of Jewish poster boy,” a speaker in demand at synagogues, Chanukkah candle lighting ceremonies and even a Hasidic Bar Mitzvah. All this he recounts in the final chapters of his intense, acutely observed and, in its documenting of both his intimate and extended family's move through history from intolerance to open-mindedness, exigent memoir.

*(Excerpted from N.Y. Times, Nov. 8, 1998.)*

**LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**

Marvin Chasek	Patti Kahn
Eric Friedman	Aaron Rosenberg
Harvey Feuer	Jack Rossen
Rabbi Stuart W. Gershon	R Malcolm Schwartz
Eugene Helfand	Lennard Wharton

# SUNDAY LUNCH & LEARN

Join us for thought-provoking discussion provided by the Lifelong Learning Committee  
A donation of \$5.00 for lunch is much appreciated. Please RSVP to [office@templesinainj.org](mailto:office@templesinainj.org)

## The Who, What, Why, and How of *The Torah: A Women's Commentary* Rabbi Hara Person • November 16, 1:15pm

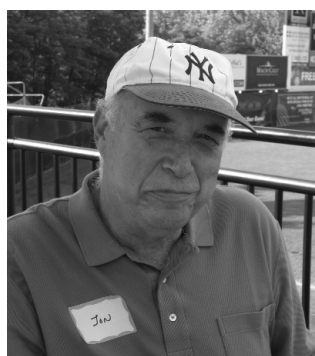


In December, 2007, after 14 years in the making, *The Torah: A Women's Commentary* was published. This groundbreaking book was the first comprehensive Torah commentary entirely written by Jewish women scholars and poets. We will discuss how the book came to be, what kinds of decisions went into its creation, what were challenges along the way, and how it is unique. In addition, we will look at an excerpt from the book itself and discuss ways it can be used.

Rabbi Hara Person is the Managing Editor of *The Torah: A Women's Commentary* and the incoming

Director of CCAR Press. She received rabbinic ordination from HUC-JIR in 1998, received a BA from Amherst College, Phi Beta Kappa and summa cum laude, and holds an MA in Fine Arts from NYU/ICP. She is co-editor *That You May Live Long: Caring for Aging Parents, Caring for Ourselves*, editor of the anthology *The Mitzvah of Healing* and co-author of *Stories of Heaven and Earth: Bible Heroes in Contemporary Children's Literature* (Continuum, 2005). Rabbi Person lives in Brooklyn, New York, with her husband and two children.

## Philip Roth: Pre-eminent American Jewish Writer and Seer Jon Plaut • December 7, 1:15pm



Almost all American Jews know that Philip Roth is one of the most pre-eminent Jewish writers. Focused on contemporary American and Jewish culture as he is, Roth presents a singular window into an understanding of ourselves and our times. In the last decade, Philip Roth has focused on contemporary American history with four unparalleled, creative works: *American Pastoral*, about a Newark Jew and his family living through the Newark riots, *The Human Stain*, about black-white relationships and our capacity for deception, *I Married a Communist*, about the McCarthy era, and *The Plot Against America*, about anti-Semitism and its effects on a New Jersey Jewish family. Sometimes the satirist, sometimes the straight historian, but always the brilliant creative writer, this award-winning novelist entertains us while he dissects our lives. The lecture will focus not only on Philip Roth the writer, but on

his exquisite insights into contemporary Jewish and American society.

Jon Plaut is a retired lawyer and long-time Temple Sinai member. He is currently president of the Board of Trustees of the Summit Free Public Library. He lectures there and at other area libraries and institutions across the state. He is an adjunct professor at Penn State University and Ramapo College and is a consultant-lecturer at Rutgers University. He is president of Global Learning, Inc., a New Jersey non-governmental organization. He was a Presidential appointee (President Clinton) from 1994-2002 to NAFTA and the author of the novel, *Sour Lake Texas* as well as many articles and publications. A graduate of Penn State University in engineering, he has law degrees from Georgetown and New York Universities, as well as a master's degree in cinema from NYU.

## The New Atheism: Loss of Soul in Modern Culture and the Question of God The Reverend Robert Corin Morris • January 11, 2009, 1:15pm



A wave of new books fiercely critical of religion and contemptuously dismissive of the very idea of God have soared to best-seller status. At the same time, brain research seems to show that the human species is "wired for belief" in some kind of Spirit or Divinity. This presentation will discuss the issues raised by "new atheist" scientists like Richard Dawkins and Daniel Dennett, then explore these questions: Is there something about modern culture that "eclipses" the sense of God our ancestors had? Is scientific knowledge really a replacement for

religious wisdom? Do our ideas of God need to change with new information about the world?

The Rev. Robert Corin Morris is Executive Director of the Interweave Center for Wholistic Living, an interfaith learning community housed at Calvary Episcopal Church in Summit. An Episcopal priest and a teacher of meditation and contemplative prayer, he has been a leader in Jewish-Christian dialogue and cooperation for forty years. He is the author of three books, including *Suffering and the Courage of God*.

## Who Are the Jews? a Genetic Perspective Harry Ostrer, M.D. • March 1, 2009, 1:15pm



This lecture will provide background for the formation of Jewish peoples as seen through the lens of population genetics. The lecture will feature historical views of Jews as tribes, race and people and will trace the formation of contemporary groups: Ashkenazi, Sephardic, Mizrahi. It will explore in depth the roles of migrations to new lands, founder mothers and fathers in those new lands, endogamy within Jewish communities, and a mixture with non-Jewish groups in forging the contemporary demography of Jews. Examples will be provided of different groups (Ethiopian Jews) genealogies (Cohanim, Levites, personal), and disease genes. In the process, it will compare the genetic construct of being a Jew against the religious and the cultural.

Harry Ostrer is Professor of Pediatrics, Pathology, and Medicine and Director of the Human Genetics Program in the Department of Pediatrics at New York

University School of Medicine. Dr. Ostrer received his undergraduate degree in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his M.D. degree from Columbia University. He subsequently trained in pediatrics and in medical genetics at Johns Hopkins University and in molecular genetics at the National Institutes of Health. He studies the genetics of Jewish populations, as well as the genetic basis of prostate cancer and other cancers and the genetic control of male sexual development.

With support from the National Cancer Institute, he mentored many young investigators on genetic epidemiology studies of cancer and other disorders. He is the author of over 100 original research and review articles and the book, *Non-Mendelian Genetics in Humans* (Oxford University Press, 1998). He is currently completing a book on Jewish history and genetics.

# ***It's Not Too Late to Talk: Communicating with Your Kids about Sexuality***

**Sunday, November 16, 11am-1:00pm**

**With Allyson Sandak, MA**

**Sexual Health Educator,**

**The Center for Family Life Education,**

**Planned Parenthood of Greater**

**Northern New Jersey**

A workshop for parents and other caregivers of middle and high school age children to help them create an environment of trust and comfort in talking with their children about sex and sexuality. In this interactive workshop, we will discuss and practice strategies for effective communication such as getting conversations started and using "teachable moments".

## **SUNDAY BAGELS & MOSTLY BIBLE STUDY**

**Torah: "Turn it, Turn it, for Everything is in it"**

**September 14, 11:00-1:00, Sandy Schlanger, R.J.E.**

What is Torah and why should we study it? How is traditional bible study conducted? What other Jewish literature is in the Tanakh? Using the story of Jacob, we will also discuss how God acts in the Torah.

**Modern Jewish God Concepts**

**October 26, 8:30-10:30 and November 16, 9:30-10:30**

**Rabbi Gershon**

What is THE Jewish concept of God? In fact, there are many Jewish ways of thinking about God, of which the Bible is just one. Nor did Jewish thinking about God stop with the Bible. In fact, it is ongoing. In this two session course we will explore the two most influential Jewish theologies of the 20th century: the "Limited God" concept of Rabbi Harold Kushner and the Religious Naturalism of Rabbi Mordechai Kaplan. We will learn why Harold Kushner's famous book, *Why Bad Things Happen to Good People*, struck such a powerful chord among millions of people around the world. We will learn what Kushner and Kaplan are really teaching about God and how their ideas may offer you new ways of thinking about God that really work for you.

### **"STAY TUNED!"**

**A 4-6 session college level course in Jewish Literature is in the planning stages, to begin in late October on a weekday evening. Please watch for more information, coming your way in September.**

**Leadership and Journeys in Genesis**

**October 26, 11:00-1:00, Arne Salkin**

During the fall program we study from the book of Genesis. We will compare the leadership models represented by biblical leaders in Genesis to the leadership models in our world today. The fall family program helps parents and students to examine their own "Jewish Journey," as we examine the extraordinary life journey of Joseph. "Hineni" is a biblical phrase meaning, "Here I am!" We will compare the "Hineni moments" in our lives with those in biblical passages.

## **HEBREW LITERACY**

### **Learn to Read Hebrew in 5 Easy Lessons!**

Are you a Hebrew novice? Then this course is for you. Come learn the alef-bet in 5 easy lessons on Monday mornings.

**Instructor: Loren Hurwitz**

**5 Monday morning sessions, 10-11am**

**Beginning October 27**

**This course is tuition-free.**

**There will be a book fee.**

**Contact Patti Kahn:**

**908-273-3617;**

**patti@templesinainj.org**

### **Learn to Read Hebrew**

We will provide eye-opening coffee and a wonderful teacher for religious school parents and all congregants who want to learn to read Hebrew. Once you have reading skills, continue toward understanding and fluency of Shabbat prayers.

**Instructor: Tsipi Israel**

**6 Sunday morning sessions,**

**9-10am, beginning**

**September 21**

**OR**

**6 Tuesday evening sessions,**

**7-8pm, beginning November 4**

**Course Fee: \$100 plus book fee**

**Contact Patti Kahn:**

**908-273-3617;**

**patti@templesinainj.org**

### **Learn to Speak Hebrew!**

Students will learn to speak, understand and write modern Hebrew. This course will include discussion of modern Israeli culture. If you need to brush up on your Hebrew reading skills, that will be no problem.

**Instructor: Tsipi Israel**

**9 Monday evening sessions,**

**7-8pm, beginning October 27**

**Course Fee: \$150 plus book fee**

**Contact Patti Kahn:**

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