



The Learning Circle

Adult education classes at the LJS

Purim (Spring) Term Classes & Courses 2024



The
Liberal Jewish
Synagogue

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Our rich adult education programme includes Classical Hebrew classes at all levels, and opportunities for learning and discussion about Judaism and Jewish life.

If you have any questions, such as which Hebrew class is the right level for you, or whether a class is online, in person or hybrid, please email: education@ljs.org and one of the staff will respond in writing or give you a call back.

If you would like to sign up for a course, please go online to: <http://tinyurl.com/5hbb22r8> for the registration form or contact education@ljs.org. Please note that registration is online only. There is also a QR code on page 19. The registration form enables you to buy books which are used in classes.

Courses are free for Members and Friends who have paid membership of the LJS. For non-members, termly fees are **£120.00**.

Purim (spring) term class dates

Tuesday classes run from 9 January to 26 March (no class on 13 February for half-term); Wednesday classes run from 10 January to 27 March (no class on 14 February for half-term), and Shabbat morning classes run from 6 January to 23 March (no classes on 10 and 17 February for half-term).

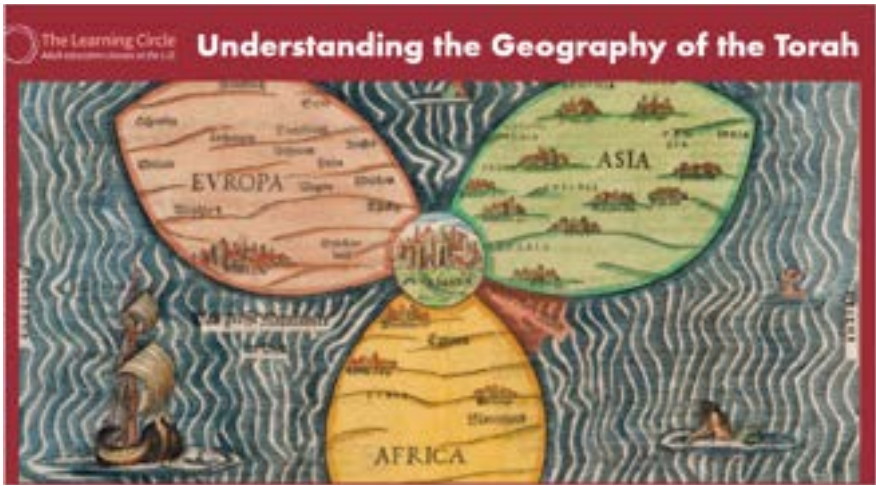


Tuesday Conversations

Tuesday mornings 11.15am – 12.30pm

Term: from 9 January to 26 March

This friendly group is led by Rabbis Alexandra Wright and Igor Zinkov, and Dr Dov Softi, with the occasional guest speaker. Biblical and rabbinic texts as well as modern poetry and short stories are studied, and there are also sessions on Jewish art and music. New students are always welcome.



Understanding the Geography of the Torah

Tutor: Dr Dov Softi

Tuesday afternoons 4.00 – 5.00pm;
repeated Tuesday evenings 5.45 – 6.45pm

Term: from 9 January to 26 March

This course focuses on understanding the structure of the five books of the Torah. The class has the opportunity to examine key Torah portions, adhering to the weekly Torah portions which are read at the LJS. Students will read the Torah portions, understand their meaning, and be able to see them in light of the bigger picture of the Torah. This course is suitable for those who can read Hebrew and have a basic understanding of biblical Hebrew, grammatical structure and basic knowledge of biblical Hebrew words.



Classical Hebrew for Not Quite Beginners

Tutor: Susannah Alexander

Tuesday evenings 7.00 – 8.00pm

Term: from 9 January to 26 March

This is a fun and supportive class which is a continuation of the Absolute Beginners class which began in September 2023. New students who would like practice in reading and understanding key prayers are also welcome.



Understanding Biblical Hebrew

Tutor: Dr Dov Softi

Tuesday evenings 7.00 – 8.00pm

Term: from 9 January to 26 March

Participants in this course follow the book *Prayerbook Hebrew the Easy Way* (available for purchase from the LJS) which focuses on understanding biblical and siddur (prayerbook) Hebrew. Participants also read key Torah portions to increase their understanding of the Bible as well as their Hebrew vocabulary. Suitable for those who can read basic Hebrew.



Gaining Confidence in Hebrew

Tutor: Dr Sally Gold

Tuesday evenings 7.00 – 8.00pm

Term: from 9 January to 26 March

If you can read a little Hebrew, this supportive, informal class will help you to improve. We are looking at the Book of Ruth. Your reading is guided and at your own pace, and questions about the language and texts encouraged. Your confidence will grow with your skills and understanding, and you will be on the path towards greater enjoyment and participation in synagogue services, using the Siddur and Bible, and life-cycle events.



Tricks, Tests and Tears in the Story of Joseph

Tutor: Rabbi Alexandra Wright
Tuesday evenings 7.00 – 8.00pm
Term: from 9 January to 26 March

When Joseph's brothers appear before him, they still do not recognise the younger brother they sold into slavery seventeen years earlier. He tests them to find out whether or not they have changed since they threw him into an empty pit. The build-up to the reconciliation is beautifully conceived. If you read Hebrew (even slowly) and want to build up vocabulary and a little bit of grammar, please join us for our rich discussion around the nuances of this story.



Exploring Judaism

Tutor: Rabbi Igor Zinkov

Tuesday evenings 8.10 – 9.15pm

Term classes: from 9 January to 29 April

Exploring Judaism is for people, including non-Jewish family members, who wish to know more about Judaism, Jewish history and the Jewish people. It is also an essential programme of instruction for people choosing Judaism by conversion. Class members are encouraged to read materials which are put online during the year. In addition to offering knowledge of Judaism, the course encourages practical experiences of Liberal Judaism and space for reflection within the group.

Exploring Judaism Purim Term Syllabus

Tutor: Rabbi Igor Zinkov

Tuesday evenings 8.10 – 9.15pm (unless otherwise stated)

- 9 January: The Messiah and the Messianic Age
- 16 January: Exploring Kashrut (Jewish dietary laws)
- 24 January (Wednesday): Seder Tu BiSh'vat
- 30 January: Life Cycle – Early Life Rituals
- 6 February: Life Cycle – Education and the Coming of Age
- 13 February: No class – half term
- 20 February: Life Cycle – Marriage and Mixed Faith Blessings
- 27 February: Life Cycle – End of Life, Funeral and Mourning
- 5 March: Different Forms of Judaism
- 12 March: Presentations from students
- 19 March: Exploring Purim
- 23 March (Saturday): Erev Purim – service and celebrations at the LJS
- 26 March: Exploring the Jewish Bookshelf – Contemporary Books
- 2 and 9 April: No class
- 16 April: Exploring Pesach (Passover)
- 23 April: Communal Seder for Pesach at 6.30pm at the LJS
- 28 April (Sunday): Erev Seventh Day Pesach – talk by Lord Dubs at 5.00pm at the LJS
- 29 April (Monday): Seventh Day Pesach – 11.00am service in the Sanctuary



Mussar

Tutor: Rabbi Monique Mayer

Tuesday evenings 8.10 – 9.15pm on 5, 12, 19 and
26 March

A new Mussar online course will be led by Rabbi Monique Mayer of the Bristol and West Progressive Jewish Congregation. As a student of Mussar, a 1,000-year-old Jewish ethical practice, Rabbi Monique Mayer believes it is the key to building relationships and creating sacred, relational community.



Classical Hebrew for Elementary Level Students

Tutor: Susannah Alexander

Wednesday evenings 7.00 – 8.00pm

Term: from 10 January to 27 March

This is a fun and supportive class for students who have completed a year of Beginners' Hebrew or can already read a little Hebrew but would like to learn more. We explore the texts that are the cornerstones of the Jewish year.



Women in the Bible

Tutor: Nitza Spiro

Shabbat mornings 9.45 – 10.45am

Term: from 6 January to 23 March

In this course we examine key female figures in the Bible, analysing their characters and roles in the context of psychology, sociology, politics and literature, often making comparisons with ancient texts of other cultures in that area and era.

Our discussions are in English, with texts read in Hebrew, enriching participants' vocabulary and understanding of grammatical structure. Members of the group receive weekly guidance of words and topics to think about prior to each lesson, making the learning more effective. Should be of interest to men, too!



Learning with Texts

Facilitator: Harriett Goldenberg

Shabbat mornings 9.45 – 10.45am

Term: from 13 January to 23 March

The theme for the term is ‘Who is a Jew?’, and asks what it is to be Jewish. The classes are led by the Rabbis and lay members of the class and will cover a range of ideas including *The Invention of Jews* by Shlomo Sands and the Legal Status of being Jewish, as seen through the British Courts. For a full timetable with a list of subjects and class leaders, please contact Harriett Goldenberg: hgoldenberg@btinternet.com.



Understanding Biblical Hebrew

Tutor: Dr Dov Softi

Shabbat mornings

Term: from 6 January to 23 March

Participants in this course follow the book *Prayerbook Hebrew the Easy Way* (available for purchase from the LJS) which focuses on understanding biblical and siddur (prayerbook) Hebrew. Participants also read key Torah portions to increase their understanding of the Bible as well as their Hebrew vocabulary. Suitable for those who can read basic Hebrew.

Please note this course commences at 10.00am to allow parents of Rimon Religion School children to attend Tefillah (prayers).



The LJS Chavruta

What is Chavruta?

Chavruta, which means ‘companionship’, is the study among small groups to uncover the meaning of specific texts. In doing so, we hope that our students gain a greater understanding of the passages and can apply it to their own lives. In studying together this way, long-standing friendships are often formed between study companions. The original concept has been adapted by Rabbi Igor Zinkov into a modern format for LJS Members and Friends. The LJS Chavruta encourages intriguing debates on applying traditional texts to our own lives using many of the different influences in our society, such as modern and classical literature, poetry, and music.

How it works

All participants are split into groups of 3-5 people. Each month, you receive a few texts and questions for study companions to discuss. Meetings can be virtual or in person and last for around an hour. For safeguarding reasons, in-person meetings can only be held at the LJS. There is no need to read texts or prepare anything in advance. The texts will be read and discussed during the session at a convenient time for each group. Conversations are not limited to the study sheet and questions provided, and discussion into other areas, texts and topics is encouraged. After the first two sessions, each group will have a feedback session with Rabbi Igor, and participants can continue studying within the same group, or join up with other study companions.

The LJS Chavruta Registration Form

The LJS Chavruta is only available to Members and Friends of the LJS. The registration form helps us to match you to your best study companion. Please only provide as much information as you would like. The aim is to make Chavruta rewarding and enjoyable for everyone taking part. **Register for the LJS Chavruta here: <https://tinyurl.com/ljschavruta>**

Registration

If you would like to sign up for a course,
please go online to:

<http://tinyurl.com/5hbb22r8>

for the registration form, or go to
www.ljs.org/education-adults.html, or email
education@ljs.org. Alternatively, you can scan
this QR code:



The Israel Abrahams Library

The Israel Abrahams Library at the LJS has over 6,000 books of Jewish interest covering prayer books, Bible commentaries, history, biography, philosophy, studies on Judaism and comparative religion, and books on Israel, art, sociology and literature. There is also a collection of DVDs including Israeli films, and some periodicals. The library regularly buys new books, and LJS members support it with generous donations.

The library is open on Shabbat mornings and during the week when the building is open. Please do pop in to browse, sit and read or borrow from our extensive collection. We look forward to welcoming you.

We have an online catalogue:

<https://www.librarything.com/catalog/LJSynagogue>

The link is on the LJS website www.ljs.org (under About Us/The LJS/Our library). To search the catalogue, go to 'Books' and make sure you are in 'All collections'; then at the right, in the box 'Search this library', enter the author or title required, and press Enter on the computer.

