

Judaism 101: Back to Basics
Congregation Beth-El Zedeck
2023/5784

Session	Date	Topic	Readings (to be completed in advance)
1	October 11	What is a Jew? – Defining basic terms; The People of the Book – Torah and the ever-expanding Jewish Library	<i>JL</i> , Part 1, 11 (and cross-references)
2	October 18	Great Ages and Ideas of Judaism I – The Formative Period: Ancient Israel through the Talmudic Period	<i>JL</i> , Part 2; <i>A Short History</i> , Ch. 1-3
3	October 25	Great Ages and Ideas of Judaism II – Creativity and Persecution: The Medieval and Early Modern Periods, Antisemitism	<i>JL</i> , Part 3-4, 10; <i>A Short History</i> , Ch. 4-6
4	November 1	Great Ages and Ideas of Judaism III – Flourishing and Diversity: America, Zionism/Israel, Modern Jewish Religious Movements	<i>JL</i> , Part 5-8; <i>A Short History</i> , Ch. 7-11
5	November 8	The Path We Walk Halakhah, Mitzvot, Shabbat, Kashrut	<i>JL</i> , ch. 320-323, 326; <i>The Sabbath</i> (entire book), <i>Living...</i> , p. 26-70, 82-92
6	November 15	How We Talk to God Jewish Prayer	<i>JL</i> , Part 15; <i>Entering...</i> , p. 3-38
7	November 29	Jewish Time Tables Seasons and Festivals of the Jewish Calendar	<i>JL</i> , Part 13; <i>Living...</i> , p. 139-210
8	December 6	Rhythms of our Lives From Birth to Death and Beyond	<i>JL</i> , Part 14; <i>Living...</i> , p. 211-267
9	December 13	“Jewish Values” Concepts from Tradition applied to contemporary times	<i>JL</i> , Part 12; <i>Judaism’s Ten Best Ideas</i> (entire book)
10	December 20	The Many Jewish Views of God	<i>Finding God</i> (entire book)

Sources for Class Reading:

- *Jewish Literacy*, Joseph Telushkin
- *A Short History of the Jewish People*, Raymond Scheindlin
- *Judaism’s 10 Best Ideas: A Brief Guide for Seekers*, Arthur Green
- *Entering Jewish Prayer: A Guide to Personal Devotion and the Worship Service*, Reuven Hammer
- *The Sabbath: Its Meaning For Modern Man*, Abraham Joshua Heschel
- *Living a Jewish Life*, Anita Diamant
- *Finding God*, Rifat Soncino and Daniel Syme
- *Choosing a Jewish Life: A Handbook for People Converting to Judaism and for Their Family and Friends*, Anita Diamant
- *To Life! A Celebration of Jewish Being and Thinking*, Harold Kushner