

Course Description

Sefer Vayikra asks some surprisingly modern questions: What does it mean to come close to God? How do we repair relationships when we make mistakes? What makes something holy? How should holiness affect the way we treat other people?

This class will cover much of sefer Vayikra, which explores such questions in the form of commandments regarding korbanot, teshuvah, kedusha, interpersonal mitzvot, leadership, Shabbat and the holidays, and shemitah. In addition to discussing these fascinating topics, we will emphasize improving reading and translating skills through frequent chavruta (partner) learning of the text of the Chumash as well as selected classical and modern commentaries. We will cover some sections in depth and some sections more cursorily as time allows.

Course Goals

Students will:

- Develop skills in reading, translating, and analyzing Chumash.
- Learn to identify textual questions and use commentaries to address them.
- Develop the habit of looking beyond the surface of the text to discover deeper meaning, personal relevance, and contemporary applications.

Texts & Materials

- Sefer Vayikra / Chumash
- Teacher-provided source sheets, handouts, and worksheets
- Students are strongly encouraged to use a **three-ring binder** to keep Chumash materials organized and accessible throughout the year.

Major Units

1. **Korbanot:** What does it mean to come close to G-d?
2. **Sin & Teshuvah:** What happens when we make a mistake?
3. **Kedusha:** What does holiness look like in everyday life?
4. **Boundaries & Relationships:** Why does Judaism place boundaries around human behavior?
5. **Sacred Time:** How do Shabbat and the holidays transform time?
6. **Shemitah & Yovel:** What would society look like if we truly believed that everything belongs to G-d?

Attendance

Chavruta (partner) learning is where most of our skills development occurs and is an extremely vital part of this Chumash class. I expect students to attend every day of class so that they can gain maximum benefit from this invaluable experience. Additionally, I find that even though students will “get a copy of the notes” when they miss class, that material learned from a student’s notes is rarely integrated meaningfully. As you will see below, my grading rubric reflects the great value I place on consistent attendance. Each student will be allowed two absences each quarter. Additional absences will impact the class participation component of the grade. Three tardies will count as one absence.

Grading & Assessment

Your grade will be determined by the following components:

- **40%** Academic assessments (ie. quizzes, tests, midterm, final, homework, projects)
- **60%** Class Engagement (ie. attendance, attention, participation and behavior)

Class Expectations

1. **Be prepared.** Arrive on time with your Chumash and a notebook. Class will begin and end on time.
2. **Take notes.** Note-taking reinforces learning and helps you prepare for assessments and assignments.

3. **Be attentive.** Keep your head up, avoid side conversations, and give your attention to the speaker or task at hand.
4. **Participate.** Read aloud when called upon, answer questions, contribute to discussions, and work productively during chavruta and classwork.
5. **Be respectful.** Speak and act respectfully toward classmates and the teacher at all times.
6. **Take responsibility for your learning.** Ask questions, seek clarification, and make productive use of class time.

Academic Integrity & AI

Honesty and integrity are core values. PLEASE ask questions when you need help rather than compromise your integrity. Students are expected to complete their work honestly and independently. Cheating, copying another student's work, submitting someone else's work as your own, or using unauthorized resources during an assessment are not permitted. Any assignment or assessment affected by academic dishonesty will receive zero credit.

AI may be used only when specifically permitted by the teacher and may not replace a student's own thinking, analysis, or writing. When AI use is permitted, students may be required to disclose and explain how it was used.

Contact Information

You can reach me by Whatsapp or text on my cell phone, (619) 846-0343 or by email at ariellaadatto@gmail.com. I turn my phone on Do Not Disturb when I go to bed, so you can text or whatsapp at any time. Call twice to get through if it's urgent.

I look forward to a wonderful year learning with you!