

KosherTorah School

for Biblical, Judaic & Spiritual Studies

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In-Depth Review of the Foundations of Torah Beliefs

The Laws of the Foundations of Torah (Hilkhot Yesodei Torah)

from the Mishneh Torah Law Code of Maimonides

A 10-Part Audio Series

Course Outline

1. Chapter 1, 1-6

Introduction into the difference between universal Torah for everyone, and particular Halakha, which is only for Jewish observance.

First universal rule is to KNOW, and not just believe that there is a First Cause to all existence.

How and why this is essential is explained using examples from the Guide to the Perplexed, as well as from the Lurianic Kabbalah of the Ari'zal.

The meaning and purpose of the Biblical command, na'aseh v'nishmah (to do, and to hear).

2. Chapter 1, 7-9a

What does it mean that God is One?

The nature of God's unity is a baffling contradiction.

God is called Ayn, the Nothing. Nothing is Zero, and God is One.

If God is Nothing, and God is One, and Nothing is Zero, then Zero is One.

How can it be that $0 = 1$? This reality cannot exist in our universe, but it does exist for God.

This class defines for us what is God, what is God to the universe, and what is God to the person.

This is viewed from the points of reference of metaphysics, and more down to Earth human political, and social needs.

3. Chapter 1, 9b-12

The Myth of God's Body.

Torah speaks in the language of man. A very important lesson defining the difference between juvenile theology, and actual spiritual truth.

The relationship of the famous statement, “na’aseh v’nishmah” and the pshat and sod of Torah, as well as its relationship to the Kabbalah worlds of Yetzirah and Beriah, and the difference between Biblical prophecy and Rabbinic wisdom.

The meaning of understanding God's unity and how we expand our understanding of this essential reality through our exploration of all knowledge. We acknowledge that God is to be found everywhere, and in everything. Our mission is to learn how to recognize this.

4. Chapter 2, 1-5

The Secrets of Creation.

The Torah obligation to study, and to understand the many disciplines of the sciences. How is one to love and be in awe of God? There is only one way, and that is to cultivate an appreciation for the Works of God. One must understand that the Word of God can never contradict the Works of God. Therefore, nature (God's works), teach us the true meaning of God's Word.

The beginning of our study about angels, and their modes of communicating with human beings through telepathic thought projections. Speculations about the true nature of “angelic” beings.

5. Chapter 2, 6-9

The Secret of Angels

Maimonides elaborates the order of angels, as best as we can know them.

Avraham Abulafia, in his commentary to Maimonides' Guide to the Perplexed, Sitrei Torah (Sod Vav) elaborates on the relationship of angels to the Active Mind, and its relationship to a greater understanding of the famous archangel Metatron. Abulafia's understanding of Maimonides helps us understand many questions that normally remain unanswered.

This class validates Maimonides' understanding of the secrets of the Torah.

A selection herein may also indicate that the Zohar borrowed material from Maimonides, thus proving its late antiquity.

6. Chapter 2, 10-12

The Nature of Knowledge. A discussion about Metaphysics

How metaphysics differs from physics, how the natural differs from the supernatural.

How the development of science, and the application of the scientific method to the pursuit of knowledge peels back the metaphysical, and brings it into the physical.

Is this what was meant when the Zohar predicted that before Mashiah comes, the gates of wisdom would be opened?

What we can and cannot know about God. A discussion of the Kabbalah concepts of the Ayn Sof and Zeir Anpin, and how this relates to Jewish ritual prayer (Ben Ish Hai).

Concluding remarks about the true nature of the study of Ma'aseh Merkava, and why it is so important, especially in our days.

7. Chapter 3, 1-9

The Role of Science in Torah

Science is required learning. Scientific knowledge is the domain of the scientist, not the

Rabbi. Scientific knowledge expands, and many old cherished beliefs are required to change because of new discoveries.

This class discusses Rabbinic geocentrism, as found in Maimonides and emphasizes the non-religiously binding nature of these teachings.

This lesson also contains a full review of classical geocentrism, and how it has been proven wrong by modern science. We also discuss the ramifications of antiquated scientific beliefs found in Judaic literature, and what should be done with them.

8. Chapter 3, 10 - 4, 12

The Four Elements in Plato, Maimonides & the Kabbalah

The four elements are fire, air, water and earth. They are the foundation of traditional understandings of science, and medicine. Although this ancient system of understanding modern chemistry is antiquated, it is still used today by many systems of alternate medicine. Therefore, understanding this system today still has value.

Readings from Plato's "Timaeus" and R. Vital's Etz Hayim. The four element system was embraced in Judaism, and serves as the foundation of any moralistic, and kabbalistic teachings.

Reference to the Ishim angels and their role in bringing force into form.

Initial discussion about the sphere, "under the moon," and the denizens that inhabit this realm.

9. Chapter 5

The Things that We Need to Do for God

The laws of sanctifying God's Name. What these commandments actually mean, and how in reality they have nothing to do with God at all.

These laws revolve around the respect due us as individuals, and as a group.

Human dignity must never be compromised. Then again, there are times when necessary compromises need to be made. This class reviews these parameters.

When and how laws must be followed. A discussion of religious violators of secular law, and our obligations to report, and hand-over the perpetrators.

Also discussed is the issue of medicaments, and how because of their medical purposes, they are not required to be subject to laws of kosher food.

10. Chapter 7 (1-2)

The Way and Psychology of Prophecy

An overall review of the actual psychological nature of the prophetic experience, and how it needs to be understood as a collective human potential and phenomena, as opposed to an element of ethnic religion.

Full discussion includes a review the psychological characteristics needed to cultivate the introverted, intuitive mind, necessary for exploring the archetypes of the collective unconscious.

How and why prophetic images differ from individual to individual.

What are who are the Ishim entities experienced within the prophetic vision, and how their existence, and presence is to be interpreted.

What is the Pardes spoken of in prophetic ascent. What happened to the Four Sages who ascended into the Pardes, referred to in the Talmud, Hagigah.

11. Chapter 7 (3-6)

The Way and Psychology of Prophecy

An overall review of the actual psychological nature of the prophetic experience, and how it needs to be understood as a collective human potential and phenomena, as opposed to an element of ethnic religion. The art of prophecy and Biblical interpretation.

Archetypes, and their meanings. The Collective Unconscious, and the back-door in and out of the human mind. Music, and dance. The ecstatic mind-set, its impotence of merging emotional passion, intellectual reason, with imaginative imagery. Oscillating consciousness, the difference between Sage and Prophet, and the evolution of revelation. The Difference of Moses. How his prophecy was different from all others. Being that prophecy is physiological and psychological, if Moses was different, this means that his difference was as such genetic, and psychological. The nature of Moses' actual extraterrestrial encounter, and what this might mean with regards to the authority of Halakha.

12. Chapter 7:7-8:1

Who is a Legitimate Prophet, What is Legitimate Prophecy

A review of what exactly is prophecy, and how this differs from what is called "ruah ha'kodesh" (Divine inspiration). Who can receive such inspiration, and where does it come from?

Discussion of the Jungian concepts of the Collective Unconscious, the Numinous, and their associations with the Jewish concepts of the Neshama soul, and Magids (spirit guides).

How to recognize legitimate spiritual leaders, and role models.

An extensive warning and description how to identify cult leaders, and the danger of their teachings.

Why Moses is different. Moses was accepted as a prophet not because of wonders, but rather because of his close encounter which was witnessed by the whole nation. Examples of how something like this could be in modern times.

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