

JDST 3601

Prof. S. D. Benin

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## *INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM*

This course will survey major ideas and beliefs that help define Judaism as a religious system. We shall keep in touch via e-mail, and I shall send you websites to consult for primary sources to be read and discussed. Students should do all the reading **BEFORE** class, **and all work must be completed in order to receive credit**. Students will write 3 short papers—no more than 7 pages each-- on topics to be announced.

Since this is a short semester—we shall do 2 weeks of work EVERY week.

Required Texts:

*Hebrew Bible—original or in reliable translation*

Alexander, P. *Textual Sources for the Study of Judaism*

Donin, H. H. *To Be A Jew*

de Lange, N. *An Introduction to Judaism*

Steinsaltz, A., *The Essential Talmud*

Week I

### *INTRODUCTION*

Introduction: Who/What is a Jew/Judaism?

[b. Jewish History – 3,500 years in 100 minutes](#)

(To be read after opening lecture :)

1. Donin: 7-27

2. de Lange: 1-25

Week II

[Jewish History – 3,500 years in 100 minutes](#) (continued)

1. [Joshua, chapter 1](#)

2. [Book of Lamentations \(entire\)](#)

3. de Lange: 26-44

Benin, p. 2.

Week III

*The Two Torahs, Written and Oral*

1. [Exodus, chapters 19-20](#)
2. [Book of Deuteronomy \(entire\)](#)
3. [II Kings, chapters 22-23](#)
4. [Nehemiah 8-10](#)

Week IV

1. de Lange: 45-66
2. Steinsaltz: 3-100
3. Alexander: 1-6; 57-68; 9-16; 78-95

Week V

*God*

1. [Genesis, chapters 1-2](#)
2. [Exodus 3:1-4:17, chapters 32-34](#)
3. [Ezekiel, chapters 1-3](#)

Week VI

1. Alexander: 20-33; 105-155
2. de Lange: 67-83; 155-186

Week VII

1. de Lange: 119-141
2. [Psalms 145-150](#)
3. Steinsaltz: 101-107
4. Alexander: 6-9; 68-78; 16-20, 95-105
5. Donin: 142-206

Week VIII

*The Life Cycle*

A. [Sabbath](#)

1. [Exodus 20:8-11; 31:1-17](#)  
28-61-

2. Donin:
3. Steinsaltz: 101-107

Benin, p. 3

Week IX

### B. Sacred History and the Festival Cycle

1. *Exodus*, chapters 1-20

[chapters 22-23](#)

141-14

2. [Leviticus](#),

3. de Lange: 84-107;

4. Donin: 208-267

5. Steinsaltz: 116-174

Week X

### C. From Womb to Tomb

1. de Lange: 107-118; 147-154

2. Donin: 270-310

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4. Steinsaltz: 137-174

Week XI

### D. Purity

1. Donin: 97-120

2. Steinsaltz: 175-210

3. de Lange: 187-212

Week XII

### E. Women

1. Donin: 121-141

2. Steinsaltz: 211-275

3. de Lange: 213-225

- [The Jewish Encyclopedia](#) Finished in 1906 (12 vols.) Though supplanted by the newer *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (1971), is still well-regarded, and it is free, and on-line.
- [Index of Articles on Jewish Studies](#) also called RAMBI, the Hebrew acronym for this service provided by the Jewish National and University Library of the Hebrew University

- [Internet Jewish History Sourcebook](#) covers all periods

#### Useful websites

- [Israel Maps](http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/facts%20about%20israel/israel%20in%20maps/) <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/facts%20about%20israel/israel%20in%20maps/>
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- Benin, p. 4.
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- [The Twelve Tribes of Israel](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/tribemap.html) <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/tribemap.html>
- [A Page of Talmud](http://www.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/TalmudPage.html) <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/TalmudPage.html>
- [Mishnah: Pirqey Avot \(Chapters of the Fathers\)](http://www.shechem.org/torah/avot.html) <http://www.shechem.org/torah/avot.html>
- [TaNaKH –Hebrew Bible](http://www.mechon-mamre.org/e/et/et0.htm) <http://www.mechon-mamre.org/e/et/et0.htm>
- [Daf Yomi](http://www.dafyomi.org/) (Talmud in English and Hebrew; needs Real Audio)<http://www.dafyomi.org/>
- The Jewish Diaspora in Europe, 1st CE <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~atlas/europe/static/map11.html>
- <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Facts%20About%20Israel/People/Jewish%20Sacred%20Texts>
- <http://www.torah.org/learning/texts.php3>
- <http://www.henry-davis.com/MAPS/AncientWebPages/121.html>
- <http://www.henry-davis.com/MAPS/AncientWebPages/121A.html>
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