

The Song of Songs: Passion of the Spirit



Class Schedule - Shir HaShirim

The supreme piece of love poetry to surpass all others, the Song to Solomon unifies human passion and divine caring with every noble emotion of the human spirit. This class will explore the text both as a straightforward love story and as a metaphor for spiritual growth.

פרק א **June 15**
Holy of Holies

“To fully appreciate the glory of this song, one must read it not once, but three times over, each according to a different interpretation.” Not one single reading of the song can be complete without the others.

פרק א **June 22**
I am Black, But I am Beautiful

Rabbi Akiva’s favorite romance blooms between a beautiful maiden of Jerusalem and the two men who wish to win her heart. Who are these three unnamed figures of legend?

פרק ב **June 29**
Dodi Li: A Brush-Off So Sweet

The soul is caught in a bind between the spiritual love it desires and the material distractions it cannot live without. Is there anything that God can say to convince us to leave off our physical pursuits?

פרק ג **July 6**
The Dream Sequence

In dreamlike trance, the maiden searches the dark nights of exile for the true love whom she has perhaps undervalued. Her story has a happy ending: how can we make the dream a reality?

פרק ד-ו **July 20**
Solomon’s Blason

Join us to involve the senses in the metaphors of Solomon’s love.

פרק ד-ו **July 27**
Rashi’s Blason

What is attractive in a nation? How can we groom our spirits to make Judaism as beautiful as a love poem?

פרק ה **August 3**
Opportunity Knocks

“There comes one moment, once – and God help those who pass that moment by! – when beauty stands looking into the soul with grave, sweet eyes that sicken at pretty words.”

פרק ז-ח **August 10**
Shulamit’s Choice

The time has come for the soul to choose: which of the many calls will it heed? Will it give in to the seductive poetry of material pleasure, or will it elope into nature after the divine?

פרק ח **August 17**
Under the Apple Tree

The puzzling and mystical image of the apple tree provides us with a mixed metaphor of God’s love for his people, and the myriad of ways we can express love for each other.

All classes take place from 8:00 – 9:00 p.m., and meet on Wednesdays at the Women’s LifeCenter, 118 Skokie Blvd. in Wilmette. Classes are open both to women and men. Bring your own Hebrew-English Tanakh for study.

Shira Eliaser

Life Center Torah Network

Summer 2011

Life Center Torah Network

Shira Eliaser of the LifeCenter Torah Network teaches at Chicagoland Jewish High School. She is known for her animated blend of traditional commentaries with contemporary sociology and midrash. Drawing heavily on the influences of Dr. Esther Shkop and Dr. Tikva Frymer-Kensky, her fresh, dynamic approach to Torah study brings the text alive with meaning and drama.

The Women's LifeCenter is proud to host the LifeCenter Torah Network, an independent association for communal study under the directorship of Dr. Elysa Fisher and Chaya Klein. The Women's LifeCenter advances the interests of spiritual growth and physical wellbeing within the greater community, and we are grateful for their support.



The Women's LifeCenter is located at [118 Skokie Blvd.](#), in the Wilmette Commons shopping plaza. The Wilmette Commons is on the east side of Skokie Blvd just south of Old Glenview Road, one block north of Old Orchard.

About the Series

Summer Session 2011 classes are independent one-hour learning sessions on the featured text of the week. Drop-ins are welcome. Individual classes are \$12 each. Drop by when you are in town, or sign up for the sessions that interest you most! Advance registration is not required, so treat yourself to an evening of Torah and come on over!

Early Bird Special

Students who register before June 16 will receive a discounted rate of \$10 per session. Register for the entire series and pay only \$75! To reserve your spot, email shira@stanfordalumni.org or return the attached form to the Women's LifeCenter, at 118 Skokie Blvd, in Wilmette.

Teen Rate

Summer camp hasn't started yet? Morning shift at the coffee house bringing you down? Come on over to LifeCenter for a Thursday night workout! We'll challenge your mind and inspire your soul as we go through the texts of our tradition. Enjoy a special teen rate of only \$8 a session, or bring a friend with you for an additional 25% discount!

Registration Form: Life Center Torah Network

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Early bird Teen rate

Dates: Jun 15 Jun 22 Jun 29 Jul 6 Jul 20 Jul 27 Aug 3 Aug 10 Aug 17 Total Course fees: _____

Payment Information: Check enclosed Credit card upon arrival Check upon arrival Cash upon arrival

Make checks payable to Shira Eliaser. Mail to Women's LifeCenter 118 Skokie Blvd., Wilmette, 60091. For questions or to reserve a spot online, contact Shira Eliaser at shira@stanfordalumni.org.