

November Update from Rabbi Hayyim Angel, National Scholar of the Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals

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November, 2013

To our members and friends: It is so inspiring to feel the excitement for learning I have encountered wherever I have been teaching. There is a palpable thirst in our community for Torah that combines tradition and contemporary scholarship; an open intellectual-textual approach that simultaneously inspires and elevates. These classes lie at the heart of our goals of the Institute, and we are grateful for the widespread positive response and support we have been receiving. Thank you for being part of our vision, and making this possible.

Here are some current highlights and upcoming classes:

- We have created a new area on our website, jewishideas.org, Online Learning. On this page you can find a list of links to online classes I have given. We expect this area to grow rapidly as we offer new classes through the Institute. Please join in on the Torah learning at jewishideas.org.
- The Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals is co-sponsoring a nine-part series of weekly classes with Lincoln Square Synagogue in the Book of Judges (68th Street and Amsterdam Avenue in Manhattan). The classes are taught at a high level and accessible to people of all learning backgrounds. Wednesdays from 7:15-8:15 pm from October 16-December 18 (except November 27). Classes are free and open to the public. Although the course has begun all are welcome to join as each lecture stands on its own.

As a sequel to this course, I will be giving a ten-part series on the First Book of Samuel on Wednesday evenings at Lincoln Square Synagogue from January 29-April 2.

- On Sunday, November 17, 7:30-8:30 pm, I will give a lecture at the Young Israel of Jamaica Estates, Queens: "The Books of the Maccabees and Rabbinic Thought: Getting to the Roots of Hanukkah." The class is free and open to the public.
- On Monday, November 25: I am lecturing to students at the New York University Hillel, in conjunction with our University Network program.
- I am teaching a course this fall semester on "How to Teach Bible in Synagogues" to the Graduate Program for Women in Advanced Talmudic Study at Stern College for Women (Yeshiva University). The goal is to train these elite future educators how to serve more effectively as scholars-in-residence or as future synagogue professionals. This is open to students in the Graduate Program only.
- I am teaching four undergraduate courses at Yeshiva University: Judges, Prophecies of Consolation (an Honors course), and two sections of Trei Asar (the "Minor Prophets"). Here are some other projects I have been working on:
- Development of a lecture series on the religious philosophy of our Institute. Through a series of lectures in Manhattan (we are close to determining time and location, and will let you know as soon as we do), and a number of lectures elsewhere, we will explore several central topics that impact on contemporary Jewish life. Our goal is to create a faithful, expansive worldview that incorporates great rabbinic voices from all over the Jewish world. This series, along with my teaching of Bible, will play a major role in different communities and campuses throughout the country over the next few years.
- I have prepared a Synagogue Companion with commentary on the Torah, Haftarat, and the Shabbat morning prayer service. This volume will contain short pieces—generally 300-500 words each, to deliver meaningful content to people of all backgrounds. The Institute will publish this volume in January 2014, and will distribute it to Institute members and to synagogues across the country.
- I just published a revised version of my first collection of biblical studies, Through an Opaque Lens: The Bible Refracted through Eternal Rabbinic Wisdom, as an electronic book and as a paperback on demand. Both versions are available from amazon.com.

· I am working with the Aleph Beta Academy (alephbeta.org) to develop online classes that survey the Bible. Thus far my classes on the Books of Joshua and Lamentations are online, and Judges should follow shortly.

Thank you for your support and encouragement, and I look forward to building this vision with you and the broader community in the coming year and beyond.

I welcome your ideas and suggestions. Please feel free to contact me at hangel@jewishideas.org. To join the Institute, to contribute, or to learn more about our work, please go to our website, www.jewishideas.org.

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