Was David, the second king of Israel a saint or a sinner, a hero or a villain, or all of these? This course will focus on how David is depicted in the books of Samuel and 1 Kings and in other biblical texts. We will compare the biblical portrayal of David with that of modern scholarship and also look at some rabbinic texts about David to see how he is transformed from the complex and often far from saintly biblical character into a paragon of rabbinic spirituality. Some of the texts will be studied in Hebrew and others in English translation. A reading knowledge of basic Hebrew is desirable.

As a final project for the course students might be interested in researching how the figure of David has inspired writers, artists, and musicians.

**From the Book of Samuel:**

1. The Selection of David (I Samuel 16)
2. David and the Philistine, and Saul’s Jealousy (I Samuel 16,17)
3. David and Jonathan (I Samuel 18:1-16)
4. David Spares Saul’s Life (I Samuel 24: 2-23
5. David and Avigail (I Samuel 25)
6. Death of Saul and Jonathan, and David’s Eulogy (I Samuel 31 and II Samuel 1)
7. David Becomes King over Judah and then Israel (II Samuel 2:1-11 and 5:1-5)
8. The Bathsheba Affair and Nathan’s Parable (II Samuel 11 – 12:25 see also Psalm 51)
11. The Designation of Solomon as Heir to the Throne (I Kings 1 – 2:1-11)

Excerpts from *I Chronicles*

Psalm 89 (Yahweh’s covenant with the Davidic royal dynasty).
**Required Texts:**
The JPS Hebrew-English *Tanakh*.


*These Readings will be placed on Reserve in the Library:*

*Selections from:*