

THE RABBINICAL SCHOOL OF HEBREW COLLEGE

PREPARATION GUIDE

The learning and preparation you do prior to rabbinical school is an essential part of your path to the rabbinate. It is a time to deepen your Jewish knowledge and practice. We offer this learning guide to support you in your preparations for this path. It is organized around three major categories of Jewish identity: God and Jewish practice, Torah, and Israel. As a pluralistic school, we do not have prescriptions for what you should believe or how you should live as Jews. Rather, we support each other in a search for a meaningful and authentic engagement with Jewish tradition. This guide offers a variety of perspectives to help you gain knowledge and deepen your personal practice.

אֱלֹהִים אֶהְבֶּתֶם ENGAGING GOD, THEOLOGY AND JEWISH PRACTICE

God and Theology

- Neil Gilman, *Sacred Fragments*
- Arthur Green, *Seek My Face* and *Radical Judaism*
- David Hartman, *Living Covenant*

Jewish Practice

We encourage you to be cultivating your lived practice of Judaism. You should be in the process of developing a regular prayer practice, Shabbat practice and experience with the Jewish holiday cycle. We also encourage you to be exploring Jewish communities or a member of a particular Jewish community.

- Dan Judson and Kerry Olitzky, *The Rituals & Practices of a Jewish Life: A Handbook for Personal Spiritual Renewal*
- Yitz Greenberg, *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays*
- Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath & Man's Quest for God*
- Isaac Klein, *A Guide to Jewish Practice*
- Michael Strassfeld, *Jewish Holidays*

תּוֹרָה אֶהְבֶּתֶם ENGAGING TORAH STUDY

We encourage you to read the weekly *parsha* to familiarize yourself more fully with the written Torah. In addition, it would be valuable to start to familiarize yourself with and explore commentators to the Torah. Three excellent commentators to the Torah that we recommend reading along with the Torah are:

- Arthur Green, *The Language of Truth: The Torah Commentary of the Sefat Emet, Rabbi Yehuda Leib Alter of Ger* – This book features Rabbi Green's translations of excerpts from this great early 20th century Hasidic master along with Rabbi Green's commentary.
- Nehama Leibowitz, *New Studies in the Weekly Parasha* – This is an excellent resource for learning about the classic, medieval commentators and the core questions they explore.

- Avivah Zornberg, *The Beginning of Desire: Reflections on Genesis*, & *The Particulars of Rapture: Reflections on Exodus* – These books will also expose you to a wide variety of classic and modern sources as she explores fundamental questions of our humanity.

It is also worthwhile to gain some familiarity with classic rabbinic texts:

- Barry Holtz, *Back to the Sources*

ישראל אהבת **ENGAGING THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND CULTURE IN NORTH AMERICA, ISRAEL AND AROUND THE WORLD**

This is a vast category that encompasses Jewish history, culture, peoplehood as well as the land and State of Israel. We offer a few suggestions that help illuminate aspects of this category.

- Yehuda Amichai, *Open Closed Open: Poems*
- Steven M. Cohen and Arnold M. Eisen, *The Jew Within: Self, Family, and Community in America*
- David Hartman, *Conflicting Visions: Spiritual Possibilities of Modern Israel*
- David Grossman, *Someone to Run With*
- Raymond P. Scheindlin, *A Short History of the Jewish People: From Legendary Times to Modern Statehood*