

Title: Crisis of Faith: False Messiahs in Jewish History

Description: The history of messianism is the study of people, places and ideas that have produced both hope and disappointment for the Jews throughout the centuries. This course will examine the Jewish attitude to messianism and to people who claimed to be the messiah through an analysis of relevant textual material.

Course Outline:

1. Bar Kokhba
2. Messianic Figures under Islamic Rule
3. Messianic Speculation in the Medieval Period
4. Shabbetai Zevi
5. Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav and Hasidic Messianism
6. Secular Messianism of the Nineteenth Century
7. Zionism and the State of Israel

Source Material:

1. Bar Kokhba:
 1. Midrash Rabbah Genesis 64:10
 2. Spartianus, Vita Hadriani: Reinach, Textes 201
 3. Dio Cassius, Roman History, LXIX, 12-14 found in Yigael Yadin, Bar Kochba (New York, 1971), p. 257
 4. Yadin, p. 24
 5. Midrash Rabbah, Lamentations 2:4
 6. Sanhedrin 93b
2. Messianic Figures under Islamic Rule
 1. The Epistle to Yemen in Abraham Halkin, Epistles of Maimonides: Crisis and Leadership pp.123-127
 2. Maimonides, Letter to the Rabbis of Montpelier on Astrology (Hebrew) in Isaac Shilat, Iggerot Ha-Rambam (Jerusalem, 1988), p. 489
3. Messianic Speculation in the Medieval Period
 1. Sanhedrin 97b
 2. Sanhedrin 99a
 3. Abba Hillel Silver, A History of Messianic Speculation in Israel (Boston, 1959), p. 66
 4. Silver, p. 85
 5. Silver, pp. 124-25
 6. The Epistle to Yemen, pp. 114-115, 122-123
 7. Marc B. Shapiro, The Limits of Orthodox Theology: Maimonides' Thirteen Principles of Faith (Oxford, 2004) p. 147
4. Shabbetai Zevi
 1. Gershom Scholem, Sabbetai Zevi: The Mystical Messiah (Princeton, 1973) pp. 616-617

2. Scholem, p. 162
3. Scholem, pp. 741-743
4. Scholem, p. 920

5. Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav and Hasidic Messianism

1. Arthur Green, *Tormented Master: The Life and Spiritual Quest of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav* (Woodstock, Vermont, 1992) pp. 253-254
2. Green, pp. 263-264
3. Green, pp. 350-353

6. Secular Messianism of the Nineteenth Century

1. Johann David Michaelis, "Herr Ritter Michaelis Beurtheilung" in *The Jew in the Modern World*, edited by Paul R. Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz (New York, 1980) p. 37
2. Moses Mendelssohn, "Anmerkung zu des Ritters Michaelis Beurtheilung des ersten Theils von Dohm, ueber die buergerliche Verbesserung der Juden" in Mendes-Flohr, p. 43
3. The Reform Rabbinical Conference at Frankfurt, in Mendes-Flohr, pp. 163-165
4. Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Siddur Tefillot Yisrael* (Frankfurt, 1906) pp. 47-48
5. Marcus Horovitz, *Teshuvot Mateh Levi*, volume 2, number 28

7. Zionism and the State of Israel

1. Ketubot 111a
2. Rabbi Zadok Ha-Cohen Rabinowitz, *Open Letter*, in Mendes-Flohr, pp. 432-434
3. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Ha-Cohen Kook, *Orot* (Northvale, NJ, 1993) pp. 270-273
4. Rabbi Zvi Yehudah Kook in Aviezer Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism and Jewish Religious Radicalism* (Chicago, 1996), p. 132
5. Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values and the Jewish State* (Cambridge, Ma., 1992) pp. 214-215