



# JEWISH PHILOSOPHY

## COURSE OVERVIEW

**ENCOUNTER YOUR PAST,  
JUMPSTART YOUR FUTURE**



CTeen U is a joint initiative of  
Yeshiva University and the Chabad Teen Network.

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### LESSON 1 G-D'S EXISTENCE

For thousands of years, the Jewish people have been believers in an all-knowing, all-powerful G-d who created the universe and renews it everyday. But our Jewish faith is not a blind one—G-d may be infinitely beyond us, but His hand can be seen everywhere.



### LESSON 2 FAITH

We might believe in G-d at our core, but just as a skill must be consistently practiced, faith also needs continuous renewal. Being faithful requires commitment to the truth even when we are tempted to act against it.



### LESSON 3 DIVINE PROVIDENCE

The universe is not random. G-d continuously brings every atom of the universe into existence. This means there is no unnecessary part of creation, and every single person, place, thing, and time has a purpose and adds something important to the world.



### LESSON 4 THE MEANING OF SUFFERING

Great Jewish leaders never complained about their fate. They trusted that everything befalling them was good. Yet those same leaders, upon seeing the pain of their flock, argued incessantly with G-d: "Why must Your people suffer?!" The purpose of suffering remains a mystery until today. Only one thing we know: G-d doesn't want us to understand.



### LESSON 5 FREE WILL

While we can't choose our circumstances, humans are the only creation with the ability to choose our responses. Unlike robots, we're programmed to struggle with the constant dilemma of right vs. wrong.



### LESSON 6 TORAH

Is the Torah a book of rules, Moses' journal, or a history book? In truth the Torah is the blueprint by which G-d created the world. Its rules are not afterthoughts, but an expression of the plan by which He created everything. Studying Torah gives us an insight into the behind-the-scenes plan G-d has for the world.



### LESSON 7 PURPOSE

Does our world have a purpose? And if it does, what is it? Where does my life fit into the collective responsibility of all creation? To live a meaningful life we need to ask not what the world can offer us, but what we can offer the world. Because before we were born a mission was embedded within us by G-d—to perfect this earth. And each of us plays a unique role in that mission.





## LESSON 8 THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

Since ancient times the Jewish People have found themselves on the minds of even the most progressive and powerful nations. Despite repeated attempts to blend in with their host nations, Jews are constantly singled out—whether in social situations, media headlines, or company board rooms. What does it mean to be the chosen nation?



## LESSON 9 HAPPINESS

It seems that everyone is searching for happiness these days. Who doesn't want more happiness in their lives? A Jew is supposed to always be joyous, but what happens when we don't see any reason to be happy? Can we just learn to just switch on happiness at will?



## LESSON 10 RELATIONSHIPS

We are all looking for love. As one of the most powerful human emotions, love can also be the most volatile, mysterious, and difficult to find. When seeking love, we have to first know what to look for. Unlike popular culture, which often describes a self-centric approach to romance, Torah illustrates a different kind of love story.



## LESSON 11 MOSHIACH

The world was created with a purpose: to reflect G-d's Will and serve as a home for His presence. But the world seems full of mundane at best and tragedy at worst. We are here in this world to help it reach its purpose. When we live in a way that allows our soul powers to shine through, the time of Moshiach will be revealed—a time when there will be no more war, suffering, or bigotry, and all of society will feel and see G-d's presence.



## LESSON 12 MUSIC

Is that song still stuck in your head? Music has far more power than most of us realize. It is both the soul of language and the language of the soul. The themes, messages and tunes expressed in music have the potential to penetrate both our emotions and belief systems.



## LESSON 13 THE POWER OF SPEECH

Humans, unlike any other creation, are endowed with the ability to build goodness and kindness through our words. Our speech has so much power that words alone can build something or tear it down.



## LESSON 14 THE AFTERLIFE

Oblivion, the end of all consciousness, can be scary to contemplate. Torah explains that death as we know it is merely an end of the body. However, there is another, amorphous part of ourselves that will never die.

