

# SYNAGOGUES & CONGREGATIONS

## New JLI Course Will Be Offered in Charlotte This Spring

### *Judaism Decoded: The Origins and Evolution of Jewish Tradition*

Have you ever questioned the authenticity of our Jewish tradition? What was invented by the rabbis, and what can be traced back to ancient biblical verses? And how do contemporary rabbis know how to adapt biblical law for modern times?

The answers to these and many more questions will be explored in a fascinating six session course offered by the Jewish Learning Institute of Charlotte. The JLI has earned an excellent reputation for in-depth study of both ancient wisdom and modern contemporary responsa.

Just as science follows the scientific method, Jewish tradition has a system to ensure its authenticity remains intact. Judaism Decoded sheds light on the mysteries surrounding biblical interpretation. How do we know our interpretation is true? If it is true, why is it subject to differences of opinion? And how do we know which interpretation reflects the original intent? Discover the elegance of the "source code" on which Torah law is built; enjoy the razor-sharp reasoning, intelligent debate, and compelling arguments of the Talmudic dialectic; and get a fascinating, behind-the-scenes glimpse of the most intellectually sophisticated religion in existence.

Included the six session course:

**1. THE DYNAMIC DUO:** If we have a written law, why do we need tradition? And if we have a tradition, what's the point of a written law? Discover the brilliance of this binary system.

**2. A FORMULA FOR ETERNITY:** Circumstances change, and, in most cases, so do the rules — unless the rules were created as principles to make them apply to any situation that may arise. Explore the systematic formula through which Jewish law is applied to solve modern-day dilemmas.

**3. RABBI MAKING RULES:** Is my rabbi allowed to change the law when he deems it necessary? When do rabbis have the power to legislate new laws?

**4. DEBATING THE DIVINE:** The Talmud is filled with all kinds of debates. If the law is Divine, should there be any room for discussion? And why does the Talmud record opinions that were ultimately overruled?

**5. LAWS THAT EXPIRE:** While most Jewish practices are as relevant today as ever, some laws have reasons that no longer apply. When does a law expire? How is it revoked?



**6. EVIDENCE FOR SINAI:** Judaism encourages us to question. How do we know the Torah is true? Why was Maimonides so convinced about the historic truth of the revelation at Sinai?

The course will be offered with evening and morning classes each lasting 90 minutes. The evening session will begin on Tuesday April 28 at 7:30. The morning class begins on Wednesday April 29 at 11. Cost is \$95 per person, \$175 per couple. For more info visit our website at [www.chabadnc.org](http://www.chabadnc.org) or call us at 704-366-3984. The JLI will be held at Lubavitch Education Center - 6619 Sardis Road, Charlotte, NC. ☆

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## Lag b'Omer Family Picnic at Ohr HaTorah on May 7

Lag b'Omer commemorates the anniversary of the passing the famed Talmudic Jewish leader Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. Rabbi Shimon lived in Israel some 2,000 ago when the Jews were oppressed by the Romans. Rabbi Shimon was a fearless leader who kept the light of Torah burning amongst his flock under the most trying circumstances. Bar Yochai was also the author of the Zohar, one of the earliest works on Kabbalah.

Rabbi Shimon spent more than twelve years hiding in a cave in northern Israel with his son where they studied the mystical and esoteric part of the Torah. Rabbi Shimon is credited with the introduction of Kabbalah as an integral part of Jewish studies. Rabbi Shimon was much revered in Israel and when his time to depart this world came he asked his students to celebrate the day rather than to mourn him. He explained that his death was ascendancy to the higher worlds where his soul would benefit greatly from the immense Divine Light.

Lag b'Omer has since become quite a festival in Israel. There are bonfires, music, and parades in his honor. Outdoor activities are planned for families and children as a tribute to Rabbi Shimon. It is

the most joyous day between Passover and Shavuot. Lag b'Omer also marks the day when a major epidemic that plagued the students of the famed Rabbi Akiva came to an end.

This year Lag b'Omer falls on Thursday, May 7. Ohr HaTorah will host a family outdoor celebration and picnic in the evening. For more information please visit our website at [www.chabadnc.org](http://www.chabadnc.org). ☆

