

## Jewish Learning Institute Introduces a Fascinating New Course This February

### The Jewish Course of Why

Jews always have questions and Judaism offers many traditions and customs that leave us with the question of "Why?" Why do we place a pebble on a headstone? Why do we say Mazal Tov? Why are Jews singled out for persecution?

The Jewish Course of Why

spans a diverse range of topics, from fun, light, and off-the-beaten-track questions, to more complex and controversial issues. Enjoy a fun and dynamic learning experience, encounter rational insights into the most intriguing aspects of Judaism, and give your Jewish knowledge a boost. Sign

up today for an unusually enlightening experience. Please visit [chabadnc.org](http://chabadnc.org) or [myjli.com](http://myjli.com) to register.

The six week course begins on February 9 with the evening course and February 10 with the morning course. The evening course will meet six consecutive

Tuesdays at 7:30 PM and will be led by Rabbi Yossi Groner. The morning class will meet on six consecutive Wednesdays at 11 and will be led by Rabbi Shlomo Cohen.

Participants will be provided with artifact text books and useful tools to continue their quest for knowledge. Fees for the JLI: \$99 per person, \$180 per couple. You can call our office for more information 704-366-3984.

#### Most Frequently Asked Questions

To develop the course and to select the most frequently wondered-about questions, JLI reached out to its student base and asked them to submit their most perplexing questions about Jewish culture and religion.

In a style that allows for easy conversation and in-depth discussion, the highly acclaimed course endeavors to tackle fifty "why" questions about Judaism. The course is not about the "what?" and "how?" It is about exploring the scholarly and sophisticated rationale behind mysterious Jewish beliefs and practices. Debunking common misconceptions and introducing little known but vital facts, the course will surprise, intrigue, and equip students with an arsenal of ideas about the richness, relevance, and scope of their heritage.

#### Starting a Deeper Discussion

There are few questions about Judaism whose answer can be packaged neatly in a nutshell and declared the answer. The course therefore strives to a different goal: to share perspectives, spark curiosity, deepen the conversation, shed light on oft-wondered-about beliefs and practices, and let participants decide on the answers for themselves. The goal is for students to walk away from The Jewish Course of Why with an understanding that Judaism contains a vastness of knowledge and that it is waiting for them to discover its deep mysteries.

Some of the fifty questions in the course:

Why have the Jews outlasted so many other groups of people throughout history? Why were there tribes that were "lost"? And why were they never found? Why is the Star of David a Jewish symbol? Why do some Jews say they are the "chosen people"? Is this not chauvinistic? Why is the Land of Israel important to the Jews? Why would anyone want to remain Jewish after so much suffering throughout the ages? Why doesn't Jewish law have provisions for someone who desires to convert out of Judaism? Why doesn't Judaism seek converts? Why are eggs pareve, when the chickens that make the eggs are not? Why aren't vegan foods automatically kosher? Why is Judaism caught up with details? Why does the Talmud prescribe different requirements for men and women? Why does Judaism place emphasis on praying with a congregation? Shouldn't prayer be a personal experience? Why do we pray? Doesn't God know what He is doing? Do we think we can change His mind? Why am I responsible for my actions if God knows what I will do in advance? Why are we born with inclinations that we are forbidden to act upon? Why don't Jews accept Jesus? Why does the Bible instruct us to "fear" God? Isn't fear a negative emotion? Why did Moses have a stutter? Why does the Bible call for animal sacrifice? Isn't it inhumane and violent? Why is slavery sanctioned by the Torah? Why do Jews follow a lunar calendar? Why do some Jews eat gefilte fish and cholent? Why do we place pebbles on a headstone? Why do we light candles on a yahrtzeit? Why do some people hold up a little finger when the Torah is lifted? Why do Jews toast with "L'chaim"? ☆



### Does someone important in your life:

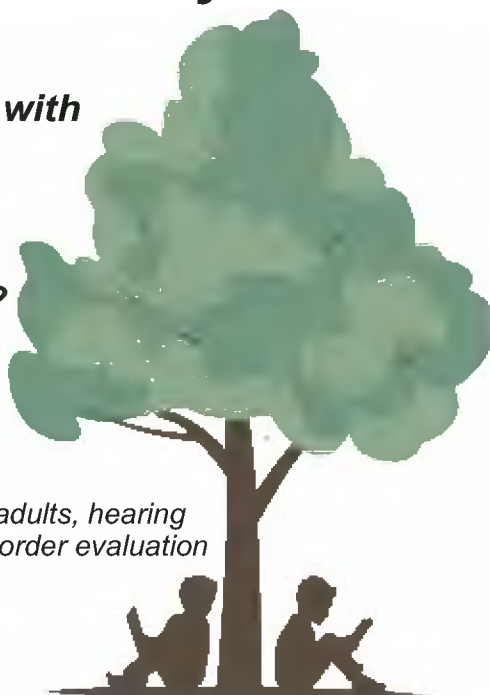
- ♦ Appear to listen but not hear?
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**CHARLOTTE PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

## Pre-Tu BiShevat Shabbaton Dinner on Friday, January 22

Congregation Ohr HaTorah invites all within the Charlotte Jewish community to an inspirational Friday night dinner honoring Tu biShevat – New Year for trees which falls this year on Monday January 22.

Tu biShevat is one of the exciting holidays observed in Israel each winter as the Talmud designated it as the Rosh Hashanah for trees. In Israel new trees are planted on this day and many Jewish communities in Diaspora celebrate by eating from the five fruits with which Israel is praised in the Torah.

Ohr HaTorah will host its mid-winter Shabbaton on Friday, January 22 at 5:20 PM with a fabulous Shabbaton dinner and exciting program for children and adults.

Join friends and family for an uplifting evening with delicious Shabbat cuisine, featuring an array of delightful Israeli wines as we explore the deeper meaning of the Tu biShevat holiday. Learn about the significance of this exciting holiday and its rich rituals and why we people celebrate a New Year for trees.

The Shabbaton will begin with candle lighting at 5:23 PM. Followed by a Shabbat service at 5:30 and Shabbat Dinner at 6:30 PM. Cost of Shabbaton is \$20 per person - \$54 per family. To reserve, visit the payment page at [www.chabadnc.org](http://www.chabadnc.org) or mail a check to 6619 Sardis Road, Charlotte, NC 28270. For more information, please call 704-366-3984 or email: [info@chabadnc.org](mailto:info@chabadnc.org). ☆