



## NEWS & VIEWS

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Blog Issue

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### Donor Doubles Gift with New Challenge Match

Thanks to 180 donors who helped us reach our challenge match goal, we received \$18,000 today! We are so grateful. Inspired by our success, the anonymous donor has decided to do a second match to bring us to double *chai*.

Help us plant the seeds for continued growth and join us in reaching this new goal: If 180 more donors **give by Tu B'Shvat on February 10**, the donor will give Hebrew College another \$18,000. Please consider giving before December 31 for tax benefits this year and to help Hebrew College put your gift to work immediately.

If you have already made your gift this year, thank you.

[Give now](#)

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# 70 FACES OF TORAH

Posts from this [Hebrew College-hosted blog](#) are published weekly in [Patheos](#).

## I Dreamed a Dream

*Parashat Vayeishev (Genesis 37:1-40:23)*

By Rabbi Avi Strausberg, Rab`15  
Director of National Learning Initiatives  
[Hadar](#), Washington, D.C.



We have dreamed a dream and there is no one to interpret it. This verse from this week's *Parshat Vayeishev* strikes me as painfully sad. It is the voice of two people who are lost and disempowered, who find themselves unable to make meaning of the world around them.

In this week's *parsha*, Joseph, after refusing the advances of Pharaoh's wife, finds himself thrown into the dungeon, with the Chief Baker and the Chief Cupbearer as his fellow prisoners. The Baker and the Cupbearer wake in the morning, enveloped in the memory of the previous night's dreams, and they are visibly troubled. Joseph asks, "Why are your faces sad today?" They respond, "We have dreamed a dream and there is no one to interpret it." Joseph responds, "Don't interpretations belong to God?"

We can interpret Joseph's response one of two ways. Perhaps, Joseph is saying, "Of course there is no one to interpret your dreams. Why look to a human interpreter? Only God can interpret dreams." Or, perhaps Joseph is saying, "Do not despair. There is, in fact, an interpreter, and that interpreter is none other than God." Either way, what happens next is surprising. After instructing them that God is the only interpreter, Joseph then offers to step into this role previously reserved for God and to interpret their dreams himself.

[Read more](#)

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## COMMUNITY LEARNING

### Me'ah: Where Teachers Are Learners

By Rabbi Leonard Gordon, D. Min.  
Instructor, [Hebrew College Me'ah Programs](#)



[Me'ah](#) students are eager scholars. Whatever prior experience they do or don't have with Jewish texts

In each class, starting from week one, I set aside time for the students to discuss a primary source or sources in *hevruta*, small groups, usually of three students. Students read the text aloud, stopping to ask questions and offer insights. My role during *hevruta* time is to stand back and give the students the opportunity to appreciate that they are empowered readers and commentators. In this way, expertise is democratized and students can respond to the text from their own experiences and prior learning. Whether or not the students have prior experience with Bible, Talmud, Midrash or Modern Philosophy, everyone finds new perspectives and asks generative questions. As a result, every class has its surprises, and new insights for me to take home. The Me'ah classroom is always lively.

Years ago, when I left the college campus for my first pulpit, I made a personal commitment to keep my teaching fresh and current by staying alert to new scholarship and finding opportunities to teach each year on new topics. First at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and later at [Hebrew College](#) and its Me'ah program, I have been blessed to be able to keep my promise to myself.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be a Me'ah instructor, to have the fellowship of the staff, and my fellow teachers, and most of all the many active and engaged learners who sign up for our courses. Me'ah is the perfect place to teach and learn, to inspire and be inspired.

Read more

*This winter/spring, Rabbi Gordon will teach the [Me'ah Classic](#) at Congregation Eitz Chayim in Cambridge, MA and the [Me'ah Select class](#) "The Sacred and the Profane: Creating Modernity and the Modern Jew," at Temple Emunah in Lexington, MA. Learn more about all of Hebrew College's [community learning](#) programs for all ages, stages, and backgrounds.*



## See you in 2020!

We wish you a joyous Hanukkah and a wonderful beginning to the new decade! News & Views will return in January.

