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NEWS & VIEWS

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Shavuot in Hong Kong

On the morning of Sunday, June 9, as his family and friends were in the midst of their evening Shavuot studies in Boston, Rabbi Or Rose was lecturing on his newest research project, “Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi’s Interreligious Quest,” over a breakfast blintz bar in Hong Kong.

Rabbi Rose’s lecture was the last of a weekend-long learning session at [The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong](#), a pluralistic, progressive synagogue that is home to a diverse community of Jews from around the world. Rabbi Rose, director of the [Betty Ann Greenbaum Miller Center for Interreligious Learning & Leadership of Hebrew College](#), served as the congregation’s Scholar-in-Residence during the Shavuot holiday.

“Spending Shavuot in Hong Kong with the UJC was both an honor and a deeply meaningful experience,” Rabbi Rose said. “I thoroughly enjoyed learning with the community, sharing the wisdom of the Hasidic masters with an intelligent and engaged group of participants. Meeting people from diverse backgrounds and vocations all interested in spiritual growth was special.”

Each year for Shabbat and Shavuot, which is traditionally celebrated with study sessions, the UJC Hong Kong community invites a scholar from a different part of the world to teach. Rabbi Rose's program, "Classic Hasidic Thought and the Modern Jew: Insights for Today's Spiritual Seeker" invited participants to engage in text study, meditation, and personal reflection. Rabbi Rose found it particularly powerful to teach about his late mentor, Rabbi Schachter-Shalomi (d. 2014), a pioneering teacher of Jewish mysticism and spirituality, as well as interreligious dialogue.

"It was an unforgettable trip!" said Rabbi Rose.

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Prayer Leader Summer Institute in Full Swing

More than 30 students from around Boston and across the United States came to Hebrew College for "Visions of Prayer Leadership," a new two-day intensive prayer leader seminar on June 3 and 4. The seminar kicked off [Ani Kinor](#), an eight-week Hebrew College summer learning program that includes daily, weekly and multi-week courses in leading services and teaching music.

"We wanted to create an opportunity for people outside the Hebrew College community to get a taste of the musical and spiritual life that emanates from Hebrew College," said Rabbi Dan Judson, dean of the [Rabbinical School at Hebrew College](#). "Students had the opportunity to study with a number of master teachers, including Rabbis Art Green and Ebn Leader, who brought a wealth of insights from Hasidic Jewish sources about prayer." Participants also studied vocal and mindfulness techniques used by prayer leaders with Hebrew College Head of Vocal Arts Cantor Lynn Torgove, Can`12, MAJS`11 and alumna Cantor Kate Judd, Can`15.

During the two-day intensive, participants studied the philosophy and practice of "shlichut," prayer leading. Presentations and beit midrash-style text study explored the theme of "Listening to Text and Context," including both physical and intellectual approaches to becoming an effective prayer leader. Participants included Hebrew College cantorial and rav-hazzan students as well as lay leaders, teachers, and musicians who are interested in Jewish liturgical music and prayer.

"The two-day course was stimulating and enjoyable, like all Hebrew College's offerings," said Naomi

Myrvaagnes, who is also taking [Hebrew College's Me'ah Classic program](#). “I signed up for *Ani Kinor* on general principles – it was a chance to learn with the best. The topic, prayer leadership, was a special incentive. As always, the instructors were expert, welcoming, and genuinely open minded. The learning was in an atmosphere of warmth and humor underlain by serious spiritual seeking. And you don't have to be an expert yourself to benefit from a course like this. We in the Boston community are fortunate to have Hebrew College in our midst.”

Ani Kinor [general courses](#) continue through the end of July.

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As we end our academic year, we thank the entire Hebrew College community for your continued support of our faculty, students, and programs. We are grateful for all that you do to help us empower Jewish leaders, professionals, and lifelong learners for a world in need of healing and hope.

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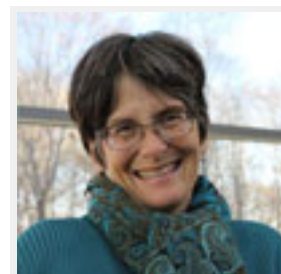
70 FACES OF TORAH

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On Grasshoppers and Angels

Parashat Sh'lach Lecha (Numbers 13:1-15:41)

By Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld
[President, Hebrew College](#)



At the beginning of this week's *parsha*, we encounter the Israelites in a moment of intense vulnerability and self-doubt.

The people have been wandering in the wilderness for over a year. So much is behind them: moments of miraculous rescue, relief, revelation; other moments of thirst, terror, and trembling; and always, the thin, almost imperceptible line between them.

What lies ahead is unknown. Guided on their journey by a pillar of fire at night and a pillar of cloud by day, these ex-slaves – still strangers to their own new-found freedom – are commanded to follow a God they cannot see to a land they cannot imagine. It is not difficult to understand why they slip so easily, again and again, from faith into raw fear.

As our portion opens, Moses is commanded by God to send men to “scout out the land of Canaan” – which he does immediately, selecting twelve spies, a leader from each tribe, and sending them off with these instructions: “Go up there into the Negev and on into the hill country and see what kind of country it is. Are the people who dwell in it strong or weak, few or many? Is the country in which they dwell good or bad? Are the towns they live in open or fortified? Is the soil rich or poor?”

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