



NEWS & VIEWS

February 6, 2020 | 11 Shevat 5780

Blog & Events Issue

70 FACES OF TORAH

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

Sighing Towards The Source of Life

Parashat Beshalach (Exodus 13:17-17:16)

By **Rabbi Jordan Braunig, Rab` 14**
Director of Community Building
[Tufts University Hillel](#)



This week we are treated to a thrilling journey from bondage to freedom, complete with a quick escape – oppressors at our heels, a trek on dry land between spectacularly split seas, a song of liberation on exultant lips, and, finally, jubilation on the shores of deliverance. The high drama, suspense, and intense joy make *Parashat Beshalach* undoubtedly among the great mythic moments of the Torah. Less appreciated is the fact that it's followed by an epic comedown replete with grumbling, general dissatisfaction, and complaints. The turnaround time from miraculous salvation to deep discontent is both staggering and not completely surprising. Those whose lives were transformed in their trek from enslavement to freedom grew thirsty and, no matter how supreme your spiritual high might have just been, when you need water, you need water.

We are used to recalling the Exodus; the glory of our redemption from *Mitzrayim* is called to mind liturgically on a daily basis. Yet, this week we are more apt to focus, instead, on the role of our complaining. The *midrash* imagines this grumbling beginning even in the midst of the sea. One journeyer turns to another and says, “We had mud there and we have mud here.” For me, this feels like a top-notch complaint, completely ignoring the wonder of the moment and fixating on the petty discomfort. The Torah text itself provides ample examples of groaning and *kvetching* in the days after the people's miraculous deliverance from slavery.

water shortage or even famine in a place named for the bitterness of the water, and people realize their predicament and they complain. The bitter waters of *Marah* are only the beginning. In Chapter 16, it is the people's grumbling about a lack of food that precipitates the giving of manna. And then, only a chapter later, another situation unfolds in which fear spreads that there will not be enough to drink. In each case, Moses is confounded by the *kvetching*, while the Holy One seems to listen and respond in kind. A careful reader of parables could only come to one conclusion in reading these stories: complaining catches the attention of the Divine.

[Read more](#)

COMMUNITY LEARNING

Hakker Na, Recognize This: It's Why She Teaches

A conversation with Dr. Rachel Adelman, Associate Professor of Bible at Hebrew College

By **Hindy Finman**

First-year student, [Rabbinical School of Hebrew College](#); rabbinic intern and educator, [Open Circle Jewish Learning 20s & 30s](#)



It was a cold, rainy, winter night in Jerusalem, and a surprisingly warm sunny afternoon in Boston, when Dr. Rachel Adelman and I connected thousands of miles apart to video chat about what it is like to teach community learners in Hebrew College's [Me'ah](#) and [Open Circle Jewish Learning](#) programs. As a first-year rabbinical student at Hebrew College, I had seen Dr. Adelman around the building, always with a smile that seemed to suggest that she had something on her mind. Or I'd hear her excited voice resonate through the walls as she taught a class on the Bible. You see, she loves what she does—teaching Torah—because Dr. Rachel Adelman loves Torah.

When asked what her favorite moment in Tanach is, Dr. Adelman's facial expression changes from speculation to excitement as she recounts the moments with [Judah and Tamar](#) (Genesis: 38). Tamar is the daughter-in-law of Judah, and he thinks she has caused the death of two of his sons. Judah sends her off as a widow and neglects her with the false promise to marry his youngest son. She then dresses up as a harlot and seduces him by the side of the road in exchange for his seal, cord, and staff. A few months later it is discovered that Tamar is pregnant and Judah proclaims that she should be burned.

[Read more](#)

[View spring courses](#)

Hebrew College offers [community learning](#) programs for all ages, stages and backgrounds, and [graduate leadership programs](#) in rabbinical, cantorial, education, and Jewish studies, all within a pluralistic environment of open inquiry, depth, creativity, and compassion.

IN THE NEWS

Hebrew College President Sharon Cohen Anisfeld, and Rabbinical School Dean Rabbi Dan Judson were featured in a [cover story](#) in the January 31 issue of *The Jewish Journal* in an article entitled "After campus sale, Hebrew College awaits big changes." "I would say Hebrew College is in an extraordinary moment of change and opportunity right now," said President Anisfeld in the story.

[The Rabbinical School of Hebrew College](#) Dean Rabbi Dan Judson was a panelist at the February 5 [Boston Athenæum's](#) Community Conversations panel discussion centered around the question: "What qualifies as knowledge and how is it transmitted?"

Shoolman School Associate Dean **Deborah Skolnick Einhorn, PhD**, has been [appointed Head of School at Milton Gottesman Jewish Day School in Washington, D.C.](#) We are grateful for all that Deb has done for Hebrew College over the past 18 years, as an educator, advisor, mentor, and Associate Dean of the Shoolman School. We will miss Deb's creativity, her passion for Jewish education, and her dedication to the many Hebrew College students she has inspired, but we know that she will go on to make a meaningful difference for so many students and their families at Milton.

EVENTS

April 29, 2020

Save the Date for our Spring Event!

Leadership, Learning, and Love

An evening of music, conversation, and celebration

6:30 pm at Temple Israel, Boston

More details coming soon!

FEBRUARY

Taking it "Seriously": Doubt, Trust and Halakhah with Rabbi Avivia Richman

In partnership with [Hadar](#).

MARCH

Teens Take Action Open House
Learning Philanthropy to Make Change

Hebrew College's Jewish Teen Foundation of Greater Boston (JTJFGB) hosts an evening of

February 17 | 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Hadar, 10 Phillips Place, Cambridge, MA
[Learn more & register](#)

Azamra: Alternative Shabbat Community Minyan

Join Rabbi Lev Friedman, Rab`18, for a morning service in the Hebrew College Beit Midrash, followed by a pot-luck vegetarian kiddush luncheon. Supported by the [Hebrew College Innovation Lab](#).

February 22 | 10 am - 12 pm
Hebrew College Beit Midrash
[Learn more](#)

February Yom Iyyun: Teen Mental Health

A Hebrew College Rabbinical School and School of Jewish Music Yom Iyyun on Teen Mental Health with Support from the Ruderman Synagogue Inclusion Project – a partnership between the Ruderman Family Foundation and Combined Jewish Philanthropies.

February 26 | 9 am - 3:30 pm
Hebrew College
[Learn more](#)

March 3 | 7-8:30 pm
Hebrew College
[Learn more](#)

Seeing Torah Gallery Opening

"Seeing Torah" is a visual diary documenting artist Anita Rabinoff-Goldman's study and artistic response to each of the 54 portions of the Torah over the cycle of a single Jewish year. Refreshments will be served.

March 24 | 6 pm
Hebrew College
[Learn more](#)

Re-envisioning Jewish Inclusion in 2020 and Beyond: How Interfaith Couples & Families Belong

A one-day program including panel discussion, text study, and presentations. Supported by the [Hebrew College Innovation Lab](#). Breakfast and lunch available.

March 26 | 8 am - 4 pm
Hebrew College
[Learn more](#)

