**“An Introduction to Jewish Thought and Culture”**

**Rabbi Mark S. Diamond**

**Schedule**: The course will consist of fifteen weekly sessions beginning on Tuesday, September 3, and concluding on Tuesday, December 10. Time to be determined.

**Language**: English

Proposed course title: **An Introduction to Jewish Thought and Culture**

Topics Number of Classes

1. Course Introduction 1
2. Bible 3
   1. The Call to Abraham
   2. The Exodus from Egypt
   3. The Covenant at Sinai
   4. The Promised Land
   5. Exile of the Ten Tribes
   6. Destruction of the First Temple/Babylonian Exile
3. Greece and Rome 1
   1. Hellenism
   2. Rome and the destruction of the Second Temple
4. Rabbinic Thought 3
   1. Mishnah
   2. Talmud
   3. Moses Maimonides
   4. Sephardi Jewry
   5. Ashkenazi Jewry
5. Jewish Mysticism 1
   1. Kabbalah
   2. Hasidism
6. Enlightenment/Modern Jewish Movements 3
   1. Haskalah
   2. Reform Judaism
   3. Orthodox Judaism
   4. Conservative Judaism
7. Destruction and Renewal 2
   1. Holocaust
   2. Zionism/Israel
8. Course Summary and Conclusion 1

**A brief description of the course**:

An introduction to Jewish thought and culture from the Torah through the twenty-first century. Students will explore trends and turning points in Biblical and Rabbinic literature, Jewish mysticism, modern Jewish movements, and historical developments in the evolving religious civilization of Judaism.

**Basic bibliography**: (you are kindly asked to provide one)

-A copy of the Hebrew Bible in English (suggested translation: *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures, The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text*, Jewish Publication Society, 1985)

-Source sheets provided by the instructor, including Rabbinic texts from the Mishnah and Gemara (Talmud), Moses Maimonides, Zohar, Hasidic masters, Moses Mendelssohn, Abraham Geiger, Moses Schreiber, Joseph Soloveitchik, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Elie Wiesel, David Hartman, Theodor Herzl, Ahad Ha-am, and others

**Meetings**: 2 x 45 min, once a week at times convenient to the lecturer and students.

I propose meeting on **15 consecutive Tuesdays** for 1 ½ hrs. each session.

**Form of the course**: online, via Teams KUL.

**Grading**: based on students’ participation, texts and other readings provided in advance of each class.

**Bio**

Rabbi Mark S. Diamond is a Senior Lecturer in Jewish Studies at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, and a Professor of Practical Rabbinics at the Academy for Jewish Religion California. Previously, he was Executive Vice President of the Board of Rabbis of Southern California and Director of the Los Angeles region of the American Jewish Committee.

Rabbi Diamond is a past president of the Los Angeles Council of Religious Leaders. He has developed and led numerous interfaith study tours, including a 2008 mission to the Vatican and Jerusalem highlighted by an audience with Pope Benedict XVI. He is coauthor of *Understanding Our Jewish Neighbors* and coeditor of *Understanding Covenants and Communities: Jews and Latter-day Saints in Dialogue*.

Rabbi Diamond is a Senior Rabbinic Fellow of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. He was awarded a Master of Arts degree in Jewish Studies, rabbinical ordination and Doctor of Divinity (honoris causa) from the Jewish Theological Seminary. He received his B.A. in Liberal Arts Magna cum Laude from Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota.