

RABBI JACOB BRAUN



Rabbi Jacob Braun is currently in his 5th year teaching at NSHAHS. Raised in Englewood, NJ, he credits his parents who impressed upon him a strong sense of tradition and commitment to Jewish values. After attending Moriah, followed by MTA for high school, Rabbi Braun spent two years studying in Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh, where his Rebbeim exposed him to a world of learning that continues to shape him as a Jewish educator today. He subsequently devoted a third year to full time Torah study in the Beit Midrash of Yeshiva University, after which he earned a BA in psychology and an MS in Jewish education, as well as Semicha from Yeshiva University's RIETS. He began his teaching career at MTA before joining the NSHAHS team. He currently live in Woodmere with his wife and two very cute children.

What inspires me about teaching Limudei Kodesh:

"Seeing the look on a student's face when they are able to break down a preconceived notion and think about the world in a new way.,,

A historical figure I'd like to meet:

"Yirmiyahu HaNavi. He prophesied (and lived through) the destruction of the first Beit HaMikdash. The Gemara relates that a Navi could only experience prophecy while in an emotional state of joy – I would want to ask what he saw in our destiny that kept him so joyful while he was experiencing visions of such terrible destruction.,,

RABBI YEHUDA CHINSKEY



Rabbi Yehuda Chinskey has taught Chumash, Tanach, and Jewish Philosophy at NSHAHS for the past six years. He prides himself on making his classes enjoyable and alive, as well as focused and sophisticated. Rabbi Chinskey is also the Rabbi of the Young Israel of East Northport in Suffolk County, and previously worked as the Assistant Rabbi of the Young Israel of Long Beach. Rabbi Chinskey studied at Israeli yeshivot for eight years, including Yeshivat Lev Hatorah and Yeshivat Har Etzion (Gush). He holds Semicha from Yeshiva University's RIETS and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Education from Michlelet Herzog in Israel.

What inspires me about teaching Limudei Kodesh:

“What inspires me the most about being a Limudei Kodesh educator is knowing that I am having an impact on the future of our Jewish nation, building relationships with the students, and seeing their personal, spiritual, and educational growth each and every day.,,

A historical figure I'd like to meet:

“If I could meet one historical figure, it would be Rabbi Akiva. Rabbi Akiva embodies the concept of always seeing the potential in oneself and others. He understood the national greatness of the Jewish people and represents the ultimate level of a relationship a person can reach with Hashem.,,

RABBI DANIEL KAHANA



Rabbi Daniel Kahana joined NSHAHS in 2009, and also currently teaches at Beth Torah Congregation. Previously, Rabbi Kahana taught at Yeshivah of Flatbush High School and Barkai Middle School. He studied at Yeshiva University and Yeshivat Kisse Rahamim in Bnei Brak. Rabbi Kahana graduated from the Sephardic Rabbinical College in Brooklyn, and received a Master's Degree in Judaic Studies from Bar-Ilan University, along with an award for academic excellence at the Israeli Knesset. Born in Jerusalem, Rabbi Kahana resides in Brooklyn and in Givat Shmuel, Israel during the summer, together with his wife Susan and their five children.

What inspires me about teaching Limudei Kodesh:

"Engaging with students on the exhilarating endeavor of discovering the wisdom of the Torah is my great delight. This is a process and methodology of constantly finding new insights, ideas, and answers to the most contemporary and cutting-edge questions. A Rav does not simply impart Torah knowledge but engages students in this exciting process. I learn from and am enriched by my students each and every day.,,

A historical figure I'd like to meet:

"There are so many Biblical and Talmudic figures to choose from. A meeting with Rav Ashi, the redactor of the Talmud, would indeed be eye opening and invaluable. Perhaps I would choose to have a meeting with Rabbi Shmuel Hanagid (993- 1056), who was one of the most remarkable individuals – as he was a man who went from being a storekeeper to becoming the viceroy to the king in Grenada, Spain, the finance minister, the defense minister, and the head of the Jewish community. He was a master of the Hebrew language, legendary poet, Talmudist, and much more. His ability to seamlessly incorporate such a vast array of fields and expertise is astonishing and remarkable.,,

RABBI AVI MILLER



An aspiring lifelong student of Talmud, Rabbi Avi Miller has studied with students for over a decade, most recently as a member of the Judaic Studies faculty at NSHAHS since 2019. He is also the Associate Rabbi at Congregation Beth Sholom and is concurrently completing his doctorate in Talmud at New York University. Rabbi Miller credits his own NSHA Elementary School (Cherry Lane) education as the foundation upon which he has continued to pursue more advanced study. Rabbi Miller earned his A.B in Philosophy from Princeton University and his M.A in Jewish Philosophy from the Bernard Revel Graduate School. A Wexner Graduate Fellow, he received his rabbinic ordination from Yeshiva University's RIETS. He lives in Lawrence, New York with his wife Sarah, who is a certified pastry chef and dietitian, and their three sons, Samson, Akiva, and Rafi.

What inspires me about teaching Limudei Kodesh:

"I'm most inspired when my students offer tenable interpretations of a Gemara that I hadn't previously considered, and when students remain in touch – and even continue learning with me – years after our academic study has ended.,

A historical figure I'd like to meet:

"If I met Moses Mendelssohn, the 18th century German-Jewish philosopher, who at age 27, beat Immanuel Kant in the Berlin Academy's philosophy essay contest, I'd ask him a few questions. First, what were his thoughts on reconciling faith and reason, and whether in his pursuit of philosophical truth and Jewish continuity in the modern age, he'd rethink anything he'd published, knowing his grandson Felix would be baptized.,

RABBI YOSEF NAOR



Rabbi Yosef Naor is a first-year Rebbe at NSHAHS. Rabbi Naor has taught both formally in schools, shuls, and camps for several years, and has coached Yeshiva League hockey at the high school level. During the summer, Rabbi Naor is the assistant athletic director at Camp Neshar. Rabbi Naor studied at Yeshivat Sha'alvim for two years before pursuing Semicha at Yeshiva University's RIETS, where he primarily studied under Rabbi Eliakim Koenigsberg, and served as his shiur assistant for two years. Rabbi Naor also received a certificate in mental health counseling from Yeshiva University.

What inspires me about teaching Limudei Kodesh:

"I always had a passion for teaching, and ultimately decided to focus on Limudei Kodesh to pay forward what I received from my Rebbeim and teachers. They gave – and continue to give – me so much, and inspire me to spread the light as well.,,

A historical figure I'd like to meet:

"I'd like to meet the Ba'al Shem Tov, who started a movement in Jewish thought and practice that catered to the people of his generation and that has continued to grow and become stronger as the years go on. I would like to understand – in his own words – what he saw that made him feel the need to revolutionize Judaism in this way, and to hear what his goals were and what they would be today, if they would be any different.,,

MRS. LISA SEPTIMUS



Lisa Septimus teaches Judaic Studies at NSHAHS, and also serves as the Director of Student Life. In her active role as Rebbetzin at the Young Israel of North Woodmere, she is integrally involved with adult education and youth programming. Mrs. Septimus is a graduate of Nishmat's first U.S. Yoatzot Halacha cohort and has worked as a Yoetzet since 2013. She has fielded thousands of questions related to Taharat HaMishpacha with sensitivity, knowledge, relatability, and warmth. In the past, she served as the Yoetzet Halacha for Great Neck, and Interim Yoetzet Halacha of Manhattan. She holds a Master's Degree in Bible from Yeshiva University's Bernard Revel Graduate School and is a graduate of Stern College's Graduate Program for Advanced Talmudic Studies, where she subsequently served as the program's Sholet U'meishiva. Mrs. Septimus has taught adult ed classes and served as scholar-in-residence in numerous synagogues. She and her husband, Rabbi Yehuda Septimus, are the parents of four children.

What inspires me about teaching Limudei Kodesh:

"What inspires me most about being a Limudei Kodesh teacher is when students connect something we are learning to a relevant area of their lives or something they learned or heard elsewhere. Watching them create or apply a new connection is literally seeing the living Torah and the continuity of the mesorah.,,

A historical figure I'd like to meet:

"The historical figure I would most like to meet is Beruria. I want to hear what motivated her to learn Torah and what she most regrets.,,

MRS. SIGAL SHALOM



Sigal Shalom has taught Hebrew and Limudei Kodesh for over 25 years both in Israel and in the U.S., combining her love for Hebrew and Judaic Studies with her passion for education. In addition to teaching Chumash and Hashkafah at NSHAHS, Mrs. Shalom has worked as the Hebrew coordinator and an instructor at Yeshiva University for the last 12 years. She first arrived in the U.S. in 1999 with her husband as part of the Jerusalem Sephardic Program and worked with the Syrian Jewish community in Flatbush. When her family relocated to Great Neck, Ms. Shalom became an active member of the Iraqi Jewish community. Ms. Sigal graduated from Bar-Ilan University with a degree in Education and Judaic Studies, and previously taught and led Religious Zionist youth programs.

What inspires me about teaching Limudei Kodesh:

“My passion for Limudei Kodesh comes from the fact that it directly relates to objective truth and the meaning of life, which intimately connect us to ourselves, to each other, and to Hashem. The method of learning itself – the analysis, the questions, the questions about the questions, the picking apart of words and phrases – is a process that truly links us to our history as Jewish people and as Torah learners.,,

A historical figure I'd like to meet:

“I would like to speak to Rachel Imenu, an interesting figure both on an individual and a national level. As an individual, she is striking because while she is blessed with internal and external beauty and is Yaakov's greatest love, her life is filled with adversity and pain. She doesn't get to marry Yaakov at first, she struggles to have children, and when she finally does have children, one is almost killed by his brothers, and the second birth ends in her death. On a national level, she symbolizes the ultimate selfless mother. She is buried on the way to Maarat Hamachpela to advocate for the Jewish people, and generations have remembered her for the signs she gave to Leah. I wish I could ask her what she now understands about how her life played out, and what the meaning was behind all of her struggles. Perhaps her challenges and unmet wishes made her the best advocate for her children, and the one whose heart broke with ours when we passed her grave during our exile from Israel.,,

RABBI EFRAIM TEPLER



Rabbi Efraim Tepler recently completed his semicha studies at Yeshiva University's RIETS where he was a Wexner Honors Fellow. In addition to teaching Talmud at NSHAHS, Rabbi Tepler serves as a Rabbinic Associate at Lincoln Square Synagogue in Manhattan. Rabbi Tepler previously created new features for Mercava, the online Torah platform, spearheading the flowchart that transforms the written page of Talmud into a graphic illustration of the various stages of the Talmudic analytic process. Rabbi Tepler studied at Yeshivat Hakotel in Israel, and graduated from Yeshiva University with a Bachelor's Degree in Economics.

What inspires me about teaching Limudei Kodesh:

“What inspires me most about teaching Limudei Kodesh is that special look on a student's face when a Torah thought clicks in his or her mind. There is a certain excitement and inspiration that accompanies those moments that is almost transcendent and quite gratifying for both the teacher and student.,

A historical figure I'd like to meet:

“If I met Yosef haTzaddik, I would ask him what he thought about day after day in the Egyptian jail cell after being falsely accused, and how he maintained his hope and emunah.,

RABBI DAVID WEISS



For the past six years, Rabbi David Weiss has worked at NSHAHS and currently serves as Chair of the Talmud Department, Rosh Beit Medrash, and faculty advisor of the Boys' Torah Bowl Team. In the summers, he is a Maggid Shiur and Coordinator at Camp Morasha Kollel's Post-12th Grade Program. Rabbi Weiss previously served as a member of the Wexner Kollel Elyon at Yeshiva University, the Rabbinic Intern at Mount Sinai Jewish Center of Washington Heights, New York, and as a Night Seder Rebbe at Yeshiva University. Rabbi Weiss received Semichah from Yeshiva University's RIETS and a Master's Degree in Jewish Education and Administration at Yeshiva University's Azrieli Graduate School. While at Yeshiva University's Mazer Yeshiva Program, he learned extensively under Rabbi Michael Rosensweig, his future father-in-law, and served as his Shiur Assistant. Rabbi Weiss earned a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and was named Valedictorian of Yeshiva University's Sy Syms School of Business.

What inspires me about teaching Limudei Kodesh:

"I enjoy exposing students to Torah learning in ways they have never experienced before. It inspires me to see students really enjoy and appreciate Torah learning when it's taught in an engaging and relevant fashion.,,

A historical figure I'd like to meet:

"If granted the opportunity, I would love to meet and converse with Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, also known as 'The Rav.' As the Rebbe of most of my Rebbeim, I have already learned a lot from The Rav. His mastery of the entire Torah, both in terms of depth and breadth, coupled with his knowledge of worldly matters rendered him the leading Torah authority and teacher in our community. I would especially want to hear how The Rav would address the ever-present challenge of teaching the Torah's timeless values in current times with all of the challenges and opportunities inherent in modernity and outside culture.,,