



CHABAD Winnipeg

For Immediate Release

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OCTOBER 2017

Six Jewish Debates Coming to Winnipeg

Winnipeg, MB— Rabbi Shmuly Altein of Chabad will recount 2000 years of Jewish history through the lens of six epic debates that rocked the Jewish world and still resound powerfully today.

Beginning Tuesday, October 31, at 7:30 pm, the Jewish Learning Centre will be offering a new six-session course from the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI), titled Great Debates in Jewish History.

In commemoration of 70 years since archeologist Eleazar Sukenik purchased the first Dead Sea Scroll in November of 1957, the community is invited to examine and unlock the stories of these ancient manuscripts and what their texts reveal about the heated dispute between the Dead Sea Sect and the Jewish establishment.

“Judaism welcomes debate and discourse,” Rabbi Shmuly Altein of Chabad-Lubavitch, the local JLI instructor in Winnipeg, told the Jewish Post and News. “This JLI course invites participants to gain fascinating insight into six mega-debates that have split the Jewish community throughout our history—and some of these matters continue to be debated today!”

Great Debates in Jewish History raises such questions as: Why were the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls opposed to rabbinic interpretation? What motivated the rebels at Masada? And what is the Jewish perspective on taking up arms in situations where defeat is inevitable? What role does nationalism play in Judaism? Are faith and reason mutually exclusive? What motivated the anti-Maimonideans in banning—and even burning—some of Maimonides’s works? And is religion designed to be a private and personal experience, or one to be proudly paraded in the public domain?

“Our goal is to invite participants to seek out the rationale behind both sides of each debate—even sides they may disagree with,” explained Rabbi Zalman Abraham, of JLI’s Brooklyn, NY headquarters. “In doing so, we hope to unite the community around the very issues that have divided us for so long,”

Like all JLI programs, this course is designed to appeal to people at all levels of knowledge, including those without any prior experience or background in Jewish learning. All JLI courses are open to the public, and attendees need not be affiliated with a particular synagogue, temple, or other house of worship.

Interested students may call 204-339-8737 or visit www.ChabadWinnipeg.org/JLI for registration and for other course-related information.

The Jewish Learning Institute is the adult education arm of Chabad-Lubavitch and a partner agency of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg. As the preeminent provider of adult Jewish learning in Winnipeg, JLI's mission is to make Jewish learning accessible and personally meaningful to every Jew, regardless of background or affiliation.

Chabad-Lubavitch provides Jewish education, outreach and social service programming for families and individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and affiliations. Thousands are touched by Chabad each year through our school, day camps, early childcare centre, adult education institute, library, kosher kitchen, family workshops, youth groups, and holiday programming.

