

# Syllabus for the Contemporary Jewish Writing Class at Congregation Beth Ami in April-May 2015

by Gabor Por - May 21, 2015

Available online at [JewishBookWorld.org/tag/cjw/](http://JewishBookWorld.org/tag/cjw/)

## May 21: 6th class - Kabbalah / Jewish Mysticism

- Discussing **Introduction to the Kabbalah: interview with Daniel C. Matt**
- Introducing **Kabbalah Typology**
  - **Science:** academic principle, study of text  
*Gershom Scholem: Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*
  - **Magic:** folkways, superstition, tradition  
*Joshua Trachtenberg: Jewish Magic and Superstition A Study in Folk Religion*
  - **Religion:** integral part of orthodox Judaism  
*Shneur Zalman of Liadi and Menachem Schneerson: Tanya (Chabad)*
  - **Self-Help/Spirituality:** focus on personal enrichment  
*David A. Cooper: God Is a Verb*
  - **Business:** Making money through producing “Kabbalah” books, events, classes  
*Rav P. S. Berg: The Kabbalah for the Layman (The Kabbalah Center, kabbalah.com)*
  - **Christian Kabbalah:** From Renaissance on, starting with Giovanni Pico della Mirandola  
*Dion Fortune: Mystical Qabalah*
  - **Religion/Self-Help/Business:** well-marketed, to non-Jews too  
*Michael Laitman: Awakening to Kabbalah (Bnei Baruch, kabbalah.info)*  
*Yitzchak Ginsburgh: Living In Divine Space (Gal Einai, inner.org)*
- Sharing **books related to Kabbalah brought by the class**
- Introducing and discussing the **Kabbalah bibliography**
- Watching
  - **Kabbalah Me Official Trailer (2:05):**  
<https://youtu.be/Y7bpUsP3cH4>
  - **Parasha Bereshit: Kabbalistic Questions about Creation (4:21):**  
[https://youtu.be/ZDKxEDKb\\_tE](https://youtu.be/ZDKxEDKb_tE)
- Recommended readings, books and videos:
  - Books published by the **Jewish Lights Publishing**  
<http://jewishlights.com/page/category/KABB>
  - Information about the **Pritzker Edition of the The Zohar**, published by Stanford UP  
<http://www.sup.org/zohar/>
  - List of **scholars and students** who are interested in Kabbalah  
<https://www.academia.edu/People/Kabbalah>
  - **"Rethinking Jewish Mysticism"** - Rachel Elior  
[https://youtu.be/hhtyp5Ppa\\_E](https://youtu.be/hhtyp5Ppa_E)