

LIMMUD CLASS SUMMARY:

The Secrets of Creation. Modern science and the Kabbalah share many concepts, from a big bang creation of an evolving universe to the import role of life. Astrophysicist Howard Smith will explore the modern scientific picture of the creation and the physical nature of the created world, the need for human responsibility, and discuss related concepts in the Kabbalah. His presentation is based on a new illustrated translation and commentary of the Kabbalistic classic, *The Secrets of Creation* by Rabbi Meir Ibn Gabbai. This new material has been prepared for publication by Rabbi Art Green, Debra Band, and Dr. Howard Smith. In this presentation, artist Debra Band will show and discuss her new art on the Kabbalistic stages of Creation. (Rabbi Green is unable to attend.)

BIOS

Dr. Arthur Green:



Dr. Arthur Green was the founding dean and is currently rector of the Rabbinical School and Irving Brudnick Professor of Jewish Philosophy and Religion at Hebrew College in Newton MA. He is Professor Emeritus at Brandeis University, where he occupied the distinguished Philip W. Lown Professorship of Jewish Thought. He is both a historian of Jewish religion and a theologian; his work seeks to form a bridge between these two distinct fields of endeavor. He is a leading figure of Neo-Hasidism in the contemporary Jewish world, seeking to articulate a contemporary Jewish mysticism, based on the Hasidic model. He was the founder of Havurat Shalom in Somerville, Massachusetts in 1968, the beginning of the *havurah* movement in American Jewish life.

Educated at Brandeis University and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, where he received rabbinic ordination, Dr. Green has taught Jewish mysticism, Hasidism, and theology to several generations of students at the University of Pennsylvania, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (where he served as both Dean and President), Brandeis, and now at Hebrew College. He has taught and lectured widely throughout the Jewish community of North America as well as in Israel, where he visits frequently.

Dr. Green is author, editor, and translator of over twenty books. Among his scholarly works are *Tormented Master: A Life of Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav* and *Keter: The Crown of God in Early Jewish Mysticism*. Dr. Green is also well known for his translations and interpretations of Hasidic teachings, including *The Light of the Eyes* by R. Menahem Nahum of Chernobyl (Stanford, 2021). Most recent of his theological writings is *Judaism for the World: Reflections on God, Life, and Love* (Yale, 2020), winner of the National Jewish Book Award. His commentary on the Hebrew prayerbook will be published in 2022.

Debra Band



Debra Band's acclaimed illuminated books, each a collaboration with leading scholars, meld classic Jewish texts, midrash and western culture into rich visual midrash. Among these are *The Song of Songs: the Honeybee in the Garden* (2005) *I Will Wake the Dawn: Illuminated Psalms* (2007), *Arise! Arise! Deborah, Ruth and Hannah* (2012), *Kabbalat Shabbat: the Grand Unification* (2016), *All the World Praises You: an Illuminated Aleph Bet Book* (2018) and *Qohelet: Searching for a Life Worth Living* (forthcoming, 2023). The paintings from each book have been exhibited across the United States and Canada. Her ketubot grace homes across the world See www.dbandart.com. Debra resides in Potomac, Maryland with her husband, psychiatrist Michael S. Diamond, MD and menagerie.

Dr. Howard Smith



Dr. Howard Smith is a senior research astrophysicist and teacher at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, an author on over 400 scientific journal articles, and the recipient of awards for excellence in teaching from Harvard. He was previously the chair of astronomy at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum, and has observed the heavens with dozens of telescopes around the world and in space, leading international research teams studying how stars form and the nature of galaxies. He is also a longtime student of Jewish mysticism and publishes frequently on science and religion and the essential, complementary roles they play in helping us understand the cosmos. He emphasizes the new and radical implications of recent scientific discoveries, particularly those made in the past twenty years. He is the author of the book, *Let There Be Light: Modern Cosmology and Kabbalah, a New Conversation between Science and Religion* (New World Library); his website is www.lettherebelightbook.com. He is active in the Boston Jewish community.

