

Rabbi Rachel S. Mikva, Ph.D.

Chicago Theological Seminary
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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2009-present **Assistant Professor, Schaalman Chair of Jewish Studies**
Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago IL.

Courses include:

Dangerous Religious Ideas

Exploring themes of chosenness, martyrdom, reward and punishment, salvation and redemption within Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the course endeavors to problematize the concepts and equip students to address them in constructive ways.

The "Great Books" of Judaism

An overview of Jewish thought and practice utilizing the great works of Jewish literature from the rabbinic period to modernity.

Faith and People of Israel II

An introduction to historical, literary and theological interpretation of the prophetic, poetic and wisdom texts of the Hebrew Bible.

Jewish and Christian Interpretations of Genesis

Comparative exegesis of key passages in Genesis, including narratives of creation, expulsion from Eden, Abraham's call, Sarah and Hagar, the binding of Isaac, etc., leading to broader discussion about hermeneutics, history and theology.

2008-2009 **Assistant Professor, Jewish Theological Seminary, NY.**
2005-2008 **Adjunct Instructor, Jewish Theological Seminary, NY.**

Courses include:

Introduction to Exegesis

Midrash for Beginners

The Hebrew Bible and its Interpretation

Miqraot Gedolot II – Medieval Rabbinic Bible Commentary

Fall 2008 **Visiting Professor, HUC-JIR, NY.**

World of Rabbinic Literature

A whirlwind tour of rabbinic literature from the tannaitic period through medieval codes, responsa and biblical commentary.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, cont.

- 1997-2003 Rabbi, Community Synagogue, Rye, NY.
- 1994-1997 Rabbi, Congregation Hakafa, Glencoe, IL.
- 1990-1994 Associate Rabbi and Director of Religious Education
K.A.M. Isaiah Israel Congregation, Chicago, IL.

EDUCATION

- 2003-2008 Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, NY
Ph.D., 2008; M.Phil., 2007
Midrash, Scriptural Interpretation and Rabbinic Literature.
 Doctoral Dissertation: "*Midrash vaYosha* and the Development
 of Narrative in Medieval Jewish Exegesis."
- 1985-1990 Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, OH
Ordination, 1990, Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters, 1989.
 Rabbinic Thesis: "Talking Back to God: An Examination of *Hutzpa*
 K'lapei Shamaya in the Babylonian Talmud."
- 1978-82 Stanford University, Stanford, CA
Bachelor of Arts with Distinction,
Departments of Drama and Communication.

ACADEMIC AWARDS

- Charles H. Revson Foundation Fellowship in Advanced Jewish Studies, JTS, NY, 2007-2008.
Lieberman Fellowship in Talmudic Studies, Jewish Theological Seminary, NY, 2004-2007.
Strook Fellowship in Ancient Judaism, Jewish Theological Seminary, NY, 2003.
Rabbi Morris H. Youngerman Prize for Homiletics, HUC-JIR, Cincinnati, 1990.
Rabbi Emil William Leipzieger Prize in Recognition of Significant Academic and
 Other Achievements, HUC-JIR, Cincinnati, 1989.
Herman E. Snyder Alumni Prize for Academic Excellence, HUC-JIR, Cincinnati, 1986.

SELECTED BOOKS AND ARTICLES

- 2010 "Weeping as Discourse Between Heaven and Earth: The Transformative Power of Tears
in a Midrash on the Binding of Isaac," in *Aqua roris: Crying in the Middle Ages*, Elina
Gertsman, ed. (forthcoming).
- 2009 "Epic and Romance, Narrative and Exegesis: Moses in the Minor Midrashim," in
Illuminating Moses: A History of Reception, Jane Beal, ed. (Brill Publishers, forthcoming).
 "Midrash in the Synagogue and the Devolution of Targum," (forthcoming).
- 2006 "Is Purity of the Family a Relevant Mitzvah for Reform Jews?" *Sexual Issues in Jewish*
Law (Pittsburgh: Freehof Institute for Progressive Halakhah, 2006).
- 2004 "Adventures in Eating: An Emerging Model for *Kashrut*," *CCAR Journal* (Winter 2004).

SELECTED BOOKS AND ARTICLES, cont.

- 2000 Review of *Evolving Halakha*, by Moshe Zemer, *CCAR Journal* (Fall 2000).
- 1999 *Broken Tablets: Restoring the Ten Commandments and Ourselves*, editor. (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 1999), designated "UAHC Significant Jewish Book."
- 1998 A Review of *Taking Hold of Torah: Jewish Commitment and Community in America*, by Arnold M. Eisen, *CCAR Journal* (Summer 1998).
- 1994 A Review of *Spiritual Intimacy: A Study of Counseling in Hasidism*, by Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, *CCAR Journal* (Summer 1994).
- 1990 "Text and the Human Document: Toward a Model for Rabbinical Counseling," *Journal of Reform Judaism* (Summer 1990).

INVITED LECTURES

- 2010 "Dangerous Religious Ideas," The Bernardin Center Shapiro Lecture, Chicago IL.
- 2009 "The Evolution of Story and its Impact on Scriptural Exegesis in the Middle Ages," Association for Jewish Studies Annual Conference (to be delivered Dec. 2009).
"A Medieval Jewish Interpretation of the Song at the Sea: The Poetics and History of *Midrash vaYosha*, International Congress on Medieval Studies (May 2009).
- 2008 "From Synagogue to Literature: What We Can Learn From the Redactions of *Midrash vaYosha*, Association for Jewish Studies Annual Conference (Dec. 2008).
- 2007 "How the Bible Became an Eternally Relevant Text," Scholar-in-Residence, KAM-Isaiah Israel Congregation, Chicago IL.
- 2002 "The Postmodern Mood in the Synagogue," A symposium (with Peter Ochs, Eugene Borowitz, Michael Strohm), HUC-JIR, NY.
- 2001 "Broken Tablets," Scholar-in-Residence, Congregation Micah, Nashville TN.
- 2000 "When Values Collide: Economics, Health and the Environment," Freehof Institute of Progressive Halakha.
- 1998 "And God Called Abraham: Peoples of the Book," Interfaith Symposium, Rye NY.
- 1997 "Beruria: An Exception to the Rule," Scholar-in-Residence, Milwaukee Jewish Fed.
- 1995 "For the Sake of Heaven," an invocation for the U.S. House of Representatives.
"Affirmative Action: Now What?" A panel for the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs.
- 1994 "A Feminist Critique of the Tradition," Valparaiso University Interfaith Conference, IN.
- 1993 "In Accordance with the Tradition of Moses and Israel: The Theology of Jewish Marriage," Jewish-Christian Clergy Retreat.
- 1992 "Structural Change in Jewish Education," Consultation on Jewish Education.