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**“Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: The Challenge of Modernity”
Public Lecture at Rutgers on December 5**

NEW BRUNSWICK/PISCATAWAY, N.J. – A leading expert on biblical thought and modern Jewish Theology, Dr. Benjamin D. Sommer (Jewish Theological Seminary of America) will discuss his most recent book, *Revelation & Authority: Sinai in Jewish Scripture and Tradition* (Yale University Press, 2015), a finalist for both the National Jewish Book Award and the Jordan Schnitzer Prize awarded by the Association for Jewish Studies. Listing it as a recommended book in religion, *Publishers Weekly* described it as a "groundbreaking work . . . Clearly written and broad in application . . . an important read for Jewish laypeople, clergy, and scholars . . . [and] also likely to appeal to non-Jews who want to make modern biblical scholarship relevant for believers."

Sommer's lecture will focus on one of the most important, yet least understood, doctrines of Judaism, the oral Torah. He will address how the Talmudic rabbis understood it, how it relates to the written Torah, and how modern Jewish thinkers have adapted it.

The talk, "Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: The Challenge of Modernity," will take place on December 5 at 7:30 p.m. at the College Avenue Student Center, 126 College Avenue, New Brunswick. The lecture is free and open to the public. Sponsored by the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life, the talk is supported by the Sagner Family Foundation. Free parking is available. Advance registration is requested by emailing csjlrsvp@rci.rutgers.edu or calling 848-932-2033. For more information, visit the website BildnerCenter.Rutgers.edu.

Sommer is Professor of Bible at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Previously he was the director of the Crown Family Center for Jewish Studies at Northwestern University. His earlier book, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*, published in 2009, received a best book award from the American Academy of Religion and the Jordan Schnitzer Award from the Association for Jewish Studies. His first book, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66*, published in 1998, was awarded the Salo Wittmayer Baron Prize by the American Academy of Jewish Research.

The Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life connects the university with the community through public lectures, symposia, Jewish communal initiatives, cultural events, and teacher training.