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A COURSE IN MODERN JEWISH THEOLOGY

FOR THE

ADULT LEARNER

Darryl Peter Crystal

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

1985

Referee, Dr. Samuel K. Joseph

Referee, Dr. Barry S. Kogan

DIGEST

This thesis is a presentation of a course in modern Jewish theology designed for adult learners. Based on a study of adult development and readings in modern Jewish thought, the course which is described in this thesis helps adults to: (1) understand Jewish beliefs about God in light of the challenges to religious belief in the modern era, i.e., Emancipation, the Holocaust, philosophy; (2) integrate Jewish beliefs about God in their lives as a means of celebration for joys and consolation for sorrows; and (3) develop a personal Jewish belief system about God and theology.

Methodologically, I proceed in three steps in the development of the thesis. First, I review the fields of modern Jewish thought, developmental psychology, general education, faith development, and Jewish education. This review provides the background for the content and methodologies for the course. Next, I generate a series of basic assumptions for the course based on the literature review. The assumptions inform both the content and the teaching methodologies of the course. And finally, I outline a series of lesson plans for a course in modern Jewish theology. These lesson plans contain educational models which reflect the needs and interests of adult learners as well as the agenda of modern Jewish thought.

The main elements of each chapter can be described as follows: Chapter One is a presentation of the introduction

of the thesis, description of the need for a course in modern Jewish theology, and an outline for the methodology for the research and the development of the course.

In Chapter Two of the thesis I examine the nature of the adult learner and the field of adult education. The nature of the adult learner is studied through the fields of: adult physiology, developmental psychology, and educational psychology. The discussion of adult education examines four theories of learning, and presents a philosophy of adult education called "andragogy," based on the work of Malcolm Knowles; andragogy focuses on helping adults to learn.

In Chapter Three I present and analyze research in the areas of faith development by James Fowler, and religious development by Gabriel Moran. I discuss the importance of these theories for Jewish adult education in this chapter, as well as in the basic assumptions and the analysis of the lesson plans for the course.

Chapter Four is an examination of the nature of the adult learner, and a variety of goals of adult Jewish education. The chapter draws on material from the Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox movements.

Next, in the fifth chapter I review different methodologies for teaching Jewish theology. I analyze various modern books about Jewish theology, and show how they reflect four different methods for teaching Jewish theology. These are: single-normativism, multiple normativism, atomism, and relativism. The course uses a

multiple-normative methodology for teaching Jewish theology.

Chapter Six is a presentation of basic assumptions for the form, teaching methodologies, and the content of the course. These assumptions represent a synthesis of the various fields of research considered in the thesis.

Based on the literature review and the assumptions presented in Chapter Six, I provide a series of lesson plans in Chapter Seven for a course in modern Jewish theology. The lessons deal with a selection of classical Jewish beliefs about God, and modern interpretations of them by: Leo Baeck, Mordecai Kaplan, Eugene Borowitz, and Eliezer Berkovits. Each lesson includes a set of objectives for the lesson, activities for the lesson, and an analysis of how the form and content of the lesson relate to the fields of literature previously discussed in the thesis. The lessons evolve from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered mode of instruction.

Chapter Eight contains the conclusion of the thesis. I discuss several key ideas from the literature reviews and shows how they relate to the form and content of the course. The appendix includes: (1) a list of charts to explain key ideas in the thesis; (2) materials for the lessons, i.e., lecture outlines and values exercises; (3) an analysis of the thought of the four thinkers presented in the course; and, (4) a guide to primary readings by each thinker.

It is my hope that this thesis will help adults clarify and develop their belief in God and in Judaism.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction, Need, and Methodology

Introduction

In 1966 <u>Commentary</u> presented a symposium on the state of

Jewish belief. In the introduction to the work Milton

Himelfarb made this statement about modern Jewish theology:

> Historically, some Jewries were more theological
> than others. The more advanced the culture they
> lived in and the more vigorous the philosophical
> life, the more they had to theologize. Medieval
> Spanish Judaism was more theological than
> Franco-German Judaism, Maimonides more than Rashi.
> In those terms, we live in Spanish and not
> Franco-German conditions, we too need theology.
> How much? More I would say than we are getting.(1)

This need for Jewish theology continued in the 1970's

and 80's. These decades saw a reemergence of fundamentalism

in the Christian community, and the development of the

havurah movement and modern American Orthodoxy(2) in the

Jewish community. Within Reform Judaism, in particular, the

recent publication of works on Rabbinic authority and Liberal

Judaism, the presentation of seminars at the 1982 CCAR

convention and at regional CCAR meetings on religious

practice and spirituality, an alumni seminar at Hebrew Union

College on spirituality and the creation of a task force on

spirituality at the 1984 UAHC Biennial, attest to a

heightened interest in Jewish practice and theology.

Need

This thesis proposes to prepare a course in modern Jewish theology for the adult learner. In addition to a heightened interest in Jewish religiousity, four phenomena define the need for a course in modern Jewish theology. These factors can be described as follows.

First, modern Jews are searching for religious meaning in their lives. William Kaufman summarized this search in the first chapter of Contemporary Jewish Philosophies when he gave this description of the modern Jew:

> He is striving to find meaning for his life--a
> meaning more inclusive and more compelling than the
> immediate gratification of money, pleasure,
> security. The age old questions still haunt man:
> What conception of God can I accept? What is the
> relation of God to the universe? How shall we
> conceive the relation of man to God? There is, in
> short, a deep seated metaphysical urge in human
> beings that cannot be stifled.(3)

Kaufman subscribes to Mordecai Kaplan's definition of religion. He believes that people are in search of salvation or fulfillment. He contends, "If the modern Jew is not to be swept along in the maelstrom of contemporary life he must be fortified with a knowledge of theological options and alternatives that are open to him."(4)

Rabbi Peter Knobel echoed this idea in a review of the work of Lawrence Kushner when he said:

> One can detect among educated urban Jews living
> almost wholly within the realm of secular culture
> (Jewish and non-Jewish) a vague feeling of
> dissatisfaction, a hunger pang that will only be

sated by the taste of spiritual food. Among the
many works available to them there is little to
slake this thirst.(5)

Knobel believes that Jews will take a variety of paths
to quench this spiritual thirst. He noted orthodoxy,
alienation, organizational Judaism, and mysticism as some of
the modern alternatives.(6)

Lack of acquaintance with modern Jewish thought by many
people represents a second reason for the preparation of a
course in modern Jewish theology. Martha White discusses
this need in her description of four types of Jewish learners
in <u>The Jewish Principal's Handbook</u>. White's "Jewish Basic
Learners," and "Prior Jewish Learners" provide good examples.
She says:

> Jewish Basic Learners have demonstrated high levels
> of success in secular life, but have limited or no
> formal Jewish learning. . .Jewish Basic Learners
> have many different reasons for wishing to become
> involved in Jewish education. A need for more
> intense Jewish identity (triggered perhaps by their
> own children's entrance in religious school) is
> often primary.
>
> Prior Jewish Learners are those with a prior level
> of knowledge who wish to upgrade their education. .
> .Jewish Prior Learners are interested in knowledge
> for its own sake . . .They especially like reading
> primary documents and confronting the writings of
> Jewish thinkers.(7)

In White's categories Basic Jewish Learners require a
first exposure to Jewish theology to enhance their Jewish
identity, and Prior Jewish Learners possess a grounding in
Judaica but want to confront Jewish thought and deepen their
understanding of Judaism.

In this area William Kaufman also makes the point that Jews who possess only a naive understanding of their Jewish faith may leave Judaism when they confront an untimely death or a sudden tragedy. He says, "It is my passionate belief that unless people are aware of alternate theologies, a tragedy can demolish a naive faith."(8) In essence people might believe that they must accept a supernatural God or no God at all.

Challenges to the Biblical/Rabbinic concept of a theistic absolute/supernatural God constitute the third reason for a course in modern Jewish theology. Mordecai Kaplan succinctly defined the dilemma faced by the modern Jew in the beginning of Judaism Without Supernaturalism. He said:

> Maimonides was prompted to write his Guide for the Perplexed because the few Jewish intellectuals of his day did not know what to make of the human traits and human conduct which the Bible ascribed to God. That God made man in His image, that God's wrath was kindled against those who disobeyed His laws, that God walked in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day--these and numerous similar anthropomorphisms were incompatible with what those intellectuals had come to regard as the nature of God. A similar situation, but on a far larger scale, is nowadays the source of perplexity to vast numbers of intelligent Jews who cannot reconcile the belief that the miraculous events recorded in the Bible actually happened with what reason and the present knowledge of cultural evolution testify concerning all such traditions. It is high time, therefore, that the problem of supernaturalism in the Jewish tradition should be confronted with the frankness, thoroughness and constructive thinking with which Maimonides faced the problem of anthropomorphism(9)

Kaplan held the belief that, in light of modern science

and reason, Jews need to confront the Jewish conception of God as described in the Bible. He maintained that Jews could no longer accept a supernatural idea of God, and therefore Jews need to reconstruct their belief in deity and their rationale for Jewish practice.

Modern Jewish thinkers offer a variety of interpretations of the challenges which cause modern Jews to reinterpret and redefine their beliefs in God. These include: modern science, the Emancipation, historical method, the Holocaust, psychology, and the creation of the State of Israel.(10) However, underlying all of these interpretations exists the conviction that modern Jews need to either reinterpret rabbinic Judaism for the modern era, or redefine the theological basis for Jewish belief. Theodore Lenn further validates this point in the study Rabbi and Synagogue in Reform Judaism where he notes that 17% of congregants surveyed, "believe in God in the more or less traditional Judaic sense," and 49% of those surveyed, "Believe in God in the more or less traditional sense 'as modified in terms of my own views of what God is, and what He stands for."(11) This data shows that challenges to the "traditional Jewish view" of God provides a third reason for the development of a course in modern Jewish theology.

Changes in beliefs about God and religion as people mature represents the fourth phenomenon which defines the need for a course in modern Jewish theology. Kenneth Stokes describes how maturity effects belief structure, in a

Christian context, in Faith Development and the Adult Life Cycle. This work is the summary of a conference by the Religious Education Association which tries to relate research in the area of the adult life cycle to faith development and religious education. Stokes said:

> If everything else about us changes as we grow older, what might we expect to happen to our faith? One of us mentioned a close friend--male, age 47, married, occasional church goer--who put it succinctly:
>
> 'I'm asking questions now I never even thought of in Confirmation Class.'
>
> Another told of a friend in her 40's, a devout Catholic who had just experienced the trauma of divorce. Although a caring priest assured her that the Church's attitude toward divorce has changed, her own feelings and misconception that divorce is a sin forced some difficult soul-searching upon her. Her comment reflects the new dimension of her faith-life.
>
> 'The social adjustment hasn't been nearly as hard as the faith adjustment. It's going to take me a long time to work this one through.'. . .
>
> If the young adult really has a sense of powerlessness in society, how does this affect his/her faith attitudes? If there is a significant mid-life transition in which one's values undergo scrutiny and change, what does this suggest for classes and retreats aimed at mid-life adults? If the older adult has to come to grips with the meaning of death and her/his personal preparation for it, does this not suggest some very special opportunities for ministry?(12)

Research in the phases of the adult life cycle indicates that people need to perform different tasks during the various seasons of adulthood.(13) Stokes believes that the particular tasks a person needs to perform will influence the theological questions he asks. Although the Lenn Report is

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not a longitudinal study, which resurveys people at different points in life, a similar pattern can be seen in the Jewish community. On a religiosity index which combines belief in God and Jewish identity, Lenn notes that 45% of the people between 20-29 can be considered religious, 40% between 30-39, 48% between 50-59, and 66% between 60-69.(14) These figures may mean that different generations have different orientations to religion, or they may indicate that people regard religion as more or less important during different developmental phases of adulthood.

In summary, the need for a course in modern Jewish theology is four fold. First, modern Jews are searching for religious meaning in their lives. The secular world leaves many people with a feeling of incompleteness. They seek fuller lives through religion. Second, many Jews know little about Jewish theology. A course in Jewish theology can help people develop stronger Jewish identity and provide them with an integrated faith with which to meet crises in their lives. Next, many modern Jews find it difficult to believe in the theistic absolute/supernatural conception of God offered by Biblical/Rabbinic Judaism. They seek to either reinterpret "traditional" Judaism's theology for their lives, or to redefine the nature of Jewish belief. Finally, people's belief about God and religion change as they mature and face different developmental stages of adulthood. A course in Jewish theology can help people reintegrate their belief systems as they grow and ask new questions in response to the

changes in their lives.

Methodology

This thesis, based on the preceding analysis, will use a three step methodology to design a course in modern Jewish theology for the adult learner. These steps will provide a framework for integrating literature from the fields of adult development and education with the work of Jewish thinkers and theologians. This method will create a course based on the needs and orientation of the learner, as opposed to a course based on organization of the content material. The three steps can be outlined in the following manner.

First, the thesis will review and analyze literature from the fields of human development and education. Specifically, this section will look at the following areas: adult physical development, adult psycho-social development, adult learning potential, general and adult learning theory, faith development, Jewish education, and teaching methodologies for Jewish theology. The presentation will describe each field and discuss its implications for a course in modern Jewish theology. This step will conclude with a presentation of assumptions for the form and the content of the course based on an overall consideration of the literature.

Next, the thesis will examine the work of four modern Jewish thinkers. The goal of this step will be to determine how each thinker addresses the areas raised in the assumptions for the content of the course, i.e. revelation, prayer, during the first step of the research. The analysis

of the thinkers will also provide background material for the specific content of the course which will be presented in the third step. This phase of the research will examine the following questions:

(1) How does the thinker gain knowledge about God?

(2) How according to the thinker did God communicate with people during Biblical times?

(3) Does God communicate to people today? If so, how?

(4) Is there a divinely given Jewish Law?
    (a) How did we receive it?
    (b) Why should we follow it?
    (c) Is there reward and punishment depending on adherence to the Law?

(5) Did God choose the Jewish people to follow the Law, or for a mission?

(6) Why does God let bad things happen?

(7) How does each thinker conceptualize God after the Holocaust?

(8) What does each thinker believe about salvation and a world to come?

(9) Did God perform miracles in the Bible?

(10) Does God perform miracles today?

(11) Can a person communicate with God? If so, how?
    a. What is the purpose of prayer?

These questions will provide a general orientation for research about each thinker. They will form the basis for the analysis of each thinker which will appear in the appendix.

The four thinkers to be studied are: Leo Baeck, Mordecai Kaplan, Eugene Borowitz, and Eliezer Borovits. These thinkers represent a variety of interpretations of modern Jewish belief. Leo Baeck lived in Germany before and

during the Holocaust. He is a Liberal Jew and represents "Ethical Monotheism." Mordecai Kaplan was born in Europe and raised in the United States. He was the founder of Reconstructionist Judaism. Eugene Borowitz is a thinker in the Reform movement in the United States. His interpretation of Judaism is called "Covenant Theology." Eliezer Berkovits is the final thinker. He represents a liberal view of Orthodox Judaism. The work of these thinkers will expose the learners to differing interpretations of modern Jewish belief, and hopefully challenge them to develop their own ideas and systems of Jewish thought.(10)

The last step in the thesis will present a series of goals and educational models/lessons for a course in modern Jewish theology. The presentation will integrate the material from the rest of the thesis project. The goal of this section will be to present a course in modern Jewish theology based on both the needs and the interests of the adult learner. It is hoped that this course will also serve as a model course for Jewish educators. The next chapter will begin the discussion of human development and education literature.

NOTES

(1) Martin Hillelfarb, ed. "The State of Jewish Belief," Commentary, 1966, vol. 42, August, p. 74.

(2) Eugene Borowitz, Choices in Modern Jewish Thought, pp. 218-221.

(3) William E. Kaufman, Contemporary Jewish Philosophies, p. 4.

(4) Ibid., p. 6.

(5) Peter Knobel, "Can Liberal Jews Rediscover the Inner Core of Spirituality? (Review Essay)." Journal of Reform Judaism. Fall, 1983, p. 55.

(6) Ibid., pp. 5-6.

(7) Martha White, "Adult Education," The Jewish Principle's Handbook, p. 474.

(8) Kaufman, op. cit., p. 8.

(9) Mordecai Kaplan, Judaism Without Supernaturalism: The Only Alternative to Orthodoxy and Secularism, 1967, p. ix.

(10) See, Borowitz, op. cit., Chapter 1.: Ira Eisenstein. "Religious Alternatives for the Contemporary Jew," Reconstructionist. 1960, Jan. pp. 7-8.: Herman Schaalmann. "President's Message," CCAR Yearbook 1982, pp. 4-7.

(11) Theodore Lenn, ed. Rabbi and Synagogue in Reform Judaism, p. 253.

(12) Kenneth Stokes, ed. Faith Development and the Adult Life Cycle, pp. 9-10.

(13) See, Robert J. Havighurst, Developmental Tasks and Education, Chapters 1, 6, 7, & 8.

(14) Lenn, op. cit., p. 258.

CHAPTER TWO

The Adult Learner and Adult Learning Theory

The goals for this chapter are threefold: first, to present a description of the adult learner, next to discuss theories to explain the dynamics of adult learning, and finally to present a philosophy of adult education for this thesis. This chapter draws on ideas from the fields of biology, psychology, sociology, and education in order to present a holistic view of the adult learner. A thorough understanding of the orientation, interests, and abilities of the adult learner is vital for designing integrated and effective educational models.

The discussion of the adult learner focuses on three main areas. The first is the biological aspects of adulthood, second the psycho-social dimensions of adulthood, and finally the cognitive abilities of adults. Within each area the description will divide adult development into three parts: early (17-40), middle (40-65), and late (65+) adulthood. These are the general divisions used by most adult development theorists. The goal of this section is to answer the question: Who is the adult learner?

Biological

Physical growth and deterioration form the framework in

which psycho-social and cognitive development occurs in adults. Health and endurance effect the level at which adults can learn, and can participate in society. This section examines the general physical status of adults in their early, middle, and late years.

Daniel Levinson gives this general description of adult physical and biological development in the early years:

By 20, most of the mental and bodily characteristics that have been evolving in the pre-adult years are at or near their peak levels. The young man is close to his full height and his maximal level of strength, sexual capability, cardiac and respiratory capacity, and general biological vigor. He is also close to his peak in intelligence and in those qualities of intellect that have grown so measurably in pre-adulthood, such as memory, abstract thought, ability to learn specific skills and to solve well-defined problems.

These characteristics remain relatively stable and near their peak levels until around age 40. Biologists often use age 30 as a reference point for studying age changes in adulthood, because most biological functions remain close to their highest levels until that age, and then decline gradually through the remaining years. In the late thirties, a man is normally still near his peak levels of biological and psychological capacity and within the era of early adulthood.(1)

John Santrock indicates that many of the physical changes with respect to bodily strength and deterioration, and brain functions apply to women as well as men.(2) He adds that, "From early adolescence until some point in middle adulthood, a woman's body usually undergoes marked changes in hormone levels that seem to be linked to the menstrual cycle."(3) And that, "The weight of the research evidence shows that there are definite mood swings in the female

associated with the middle of the menstrual cycle and the later premenstrual phase."(4) In general early adulthood is a time of health and vitality for most people.

A number of physical changes take place during middle adulthood. These changes include: a decrease in the senses of hearing and seeing. People become more far-sighted and loose the ability to hear some high pitches. The coronary arteries which supply blood to the heart also narrow and blood pressure usually rises during the forties and fifties. Additionally muscular strength and endurance usually decline during this period.(5)

Daniel Levinson tends to minimize the physical changes of middle adulthood in his study of the male life cycle. He does, however, note the psychological impact of these changes on men:

> A man at mid-life is suffering some loss of his
> youthful vitality and, often, some insult to his
> youthful narcissistic pride. Although he is not
> literally close to death or undergoing severe
> bodily decline, he typically experiences these
> changes as a fundamental threat. It is as though
> he were on the threshhold of senility and even
> death.(6)

The sex-related changes of menopause and male climacteric syndrome (hormonal changes which decrease a man's energy level and sexual potency) also occur in women and men during the middle adult years. Menopause results from decreased levels of estrogen, and causes the cessation of periodic bleeding. Hot flashes, increases or decreases in a woman's sex drive, atrophy or dryness of the vagina, and

depression may accompany menopause. "Most healthy and well-adjusted women pass through menopause with a minimum of difficulty," and, "Only about 20 per cent require medical therapy."(7)

Male climacteric syndrone is a phenomenon which is parallel, but not identical to menopause:

> The male climacteric syndrome differs in two
> important ways from menopause--it comes later,
> usually in the sixties and seventies, and it
> progresses at a much slower rate. During the
> fifties and sixties most men do not loose their
> capacity to father children, but there is usually a
> decline in sexual potency at this time. . .But
> while sexual potency may decrease, sexual desire
> does not necessarily decline. There are some
> changes in secondary sexual characteristics during
> the climacteric--the voice may become higher
> pitched, facial hair may grow more slowly, and
> muscular stature may give way to flabbiness.

Late adulthood is a period of gradual, but significant physical changes in men and women. Some of these changes include: decreased efficiency of the heart, higher blood pressure, loss of height due to a loss of muscle tone and bone tissue, decreased hearing ability and vision, and a slowing of some neurological functions.(9) Anderson gives a holistic insight into the significance of these changes in late adulthood:

> Physically, then, the elders have slowed somewhat,
> but they are by no means incapacitated. There is
> no physiological watershed at age sixty-five that
> should prevent people from working if they want to.
> Their strength is down slightly, their wind
> reduced; but neither condition is crippling and
> certainly not serious enough to disqualify them
> from most activities of "normal" life.(10)

The work of Alex Comfort, author of <u>A Good Age</u>, in regard to emotional and physical sexual response in late adulthood is summarized in this passage:

> Alex Comfort, a noted expert on the elderly, concludes that aging does induce some changes in human sexual performance, more often in males than in the female. Orgasm becomes less frequent in males, occurring every second or third act of intercourse rather than every time. . .In the absence of two disabilities -- actual disease and the belief that "the old" are or should be asexual -- sexual desire and capacity are life long. Even if and when actual intercourse is impaired by infirmity, other sexual needs persist, including closeness, sensuality, and being valued as a man or a woman.(11)

In summary, people experience physical peak periods and decline during adulthood. The early adult years (17-40), are a time of peak physical capacity and vitality. Although physical decline is considered to begin around 30, people can generally function at full capacity during these years. Middle adulthood witnesses a physical decline and an emotional awareness of this decline. Vision, hearing, musculature, and the cardio-vascular system are significantly effected. In this period there is a loss in strength, but not over all capacity. Late adulthood continues a person's physical decline. There is no sudden change at sixty-five. People can do most "normal activities," but the decline in energy and stamina is more significant with aging. In general, therefore, the literature suggests that while adults may be physically weaker and suffer some loss in sight and hearing, overall, learning is not significantly effected by

physical aging.   The next section will examine psycho-social

factors related to adulthood.

Psycho-social

The purpose of this section is to describe various

theories of adult psychology and development.   It will focus

on the interpersonal orientation of and the life tasks which

adults face.   The information will provide a framework for

understanding explicit adult needs and interests, and

implicit adult conflicts within the learning environment.

Specifically, the section will focus on the work of Erik

Erikson, Robert Havighurst, and Daniel Levinson.

Erik Erikson described eight stages of human

development.   Each stage is characterized by a developmental

conflict or crisis.   Erikson's first four stages take place

during childhood, the fifth is a transition stage, and the

last three happen during adult life.   Richard Stevens gives

this account of the meaning of Erikson's crisis stages:

> Erikson applies the term "crisis" to these stages
> to indicate that each involves a fundamental shift
> in perspective which, although essential for
> growth, leaves the person vulnerable to impairment
> of the quality concerned.   Each represents a
> "turning point" a crucial period of increased
> vulnerability and heightened potentials, and
> therefore the ontogenetic source of generational
> strength and maladjustment.(12)

In other words, at each stage a person faces a conflict

between two interpersonal qualities, i.e., intimacy versus

isolation.   The successful negotiation of this conflict

strengthens the person's ego, and helps the individual relate

more effective in society.

The fifth stage in Erikson's system marks the end of adolescence and the beginning of adulthood. Erikson calls the crisis at this stage, "identity versus role confusion." At this stage integration takes place as a person merges the skills and aptitudes acquired during childhood with a new sexual self developed during puberty. The person becomes aware of him or herself as a sexual person, and needs to assert this new role with family and peers. At this stage the promise of "career" is a tangible marker of the person's identity. For adolescents during this stage the peer group forms an important source of support for the individual's identity.(13)

Intimacy versus isolation is the first crisis of adulthood and corresponds to the early adult years:

> Early adulthood brings with it a job and the
> opportunity to form an intimate relationship with a
> member of the opposite sex. If the young adult
> forms friendships with others and a significant,
> intimate relationship with one individual in
> particular, than a basic feeling of closeness will
> result. A feeling of isolation may result from an
> inability to form friendships and an intimate
> relationship.(14)

During the fifth stage a person possesses a role and a sense of personal identity from the previous stages. Now, in the sixth stage, the individual begins to move beyond the formality of his/her role, and to relate intimately with other people. A person who successfully negotiates the conflict at this stage forms an intimate relationship with a significant person, and uses this relationship as a paradigm

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for other relationships. A person who is unsuccessful at

this stage fails to form significant relationships and feels

a sense of isolation from other people. The conclusion of

this conflict leads to Erikson's seventh stage, "generativity

versus stagnation."

Adults experience the conflict of generativity versus

stagnation during the middle adult years. Generally people

at this point in their lives have adolescent children or are

involved in mentoring relationships at work or in the

community. Erikson says:

> Generativity is primarily the interest in
> establishing and guiding the next generation or
> whatever in a given case may become the absorbing
> object of a parental kind of responsibility. Where
> this enrichment fails, a regression from
> generativity to an obsessive need for pseudo
> intimacy, punctuated by moments of mutual
> repulsion, takes place, often with a pervading
> sense (and objective evidence) of individual
> stagnation and interpersonal impoverishment.(15)

Erikson's eight crises reach their apex in the last

crisis, ego integrity versus despair. This crisis occurs

during late adulthood. This is a time when a person faces

their impending death and reflects on their life. If the

person has succeeded at all of the previous conflicts he will

reflect positively on life and resolve the crisis with ego

integrity. If he reflects negatively on life the solution to

the conflict will be despair. Erikson describes ego

integrity in these words:

> Lacking a clear definition I shall point to a few
> constituents of this state of mind. It is the

ego's accrued assurance of its proclivity for order
and meaning. It is a post-narcissistic love of the
human ego - not of the self - as an experience
which conveys some world order and spiritual sense,
no matter how dearly paid for. It is the
acceptance of one's one and only life cycle as
something that had to be and that, by necessity,
permitted of no substitutions . . . Although aware
of the relativity of all the various life styles
which have given meaning to human striving the
possessor of integrity is ready to defend the
dignity of his own life style against all physical
and economic threats . . . The lack or loss of
accrued ego integrity is signified by fear of
death: the one and only life cycle is not accepted
as the ultimate life.(16)

In conclusion, it is important to stress that Erikson's
is a maturational, as opposed to a hierarchical system of
development. In Erikson's system all people reach and go
through all of his stages. In a hierarchical system of
development, i.e., Kohlberg's stages of moral development, a
person must go through a primary level to reach an advanced
level, and not all people reach the highest levels in these
systems. Erikson's system gives a broad view of the stages
of adult development. Each person negotiates the eight ego
conflicts in an individual manner; and each person is more or
less successful at these developmental tasks.

Robert Havighurst constructs a theory based on the idea
of "developmental tasks." He divides the life cycle into six
parts: infancy, early childhood, middle childhood,
adolescence, early adulthood, middle age, and later
maturity.(17) Havighurst believes, "Living in a modern
society is a long series of tasks to learn, where learning
well brings satisfaction and reward, while learning poorly

brings unhappiness and social disapproval."(18)   Specifically

a developmental task is, "A task which arises at or about a

.certain period in the life of an individual, successful

achievement of which leads to happiness in the individual,

while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual,

disapproval by the society and difficulty with later

tasks."(19)

Havighurst differentiates between different origins and

types of developmental tasks. Developmental tasks generally

have one of three origins: physical, tasks related to the

development of one's body; cultural, tasks like reading and

citizenship which are societally imposed; and personal, those

tasks an individual adopts because they are vital to

fulfilling his or her personal values.(20) Based on these

origins Havighurst calls some tasks nonrecurrent, like

learning to walk and read, and other tasks recurrent, like

forming relationships and developing civic values.(21)

The following are the developmental tasks which

Havighurst has identified for each period of adulthood:

Early Adulthood:

Selecting a mate
Learning to live with a marriage partner
Starting a Family
Rearing children
Managing a home
Getting started in an occupation
Taking civic responsibility
Finding a congenial social group

Middle Age:

Assisting teen-age children to become responsible
     adults
Achieving adult social and civic responsibility
Reaching and maintaining satisfactory performance

in one's occupation/career
Developing Adult leisure time activities
Relating to one's spouse as a person
To accept and adjust to physiological changes of
    middle age.
Adjusting to aging parents.

Late Maturity:

Adjusting to decreased physical strength and
    health
Adjusting to retirement and reduced income
Adjusting to death of spouse
Establishing an explicit affiliation with one's
    age group.
Adopting and adapting social roles in a flexible
    way
Establishing satisfactory physical living arrange-
    ment(22)

It is important to include two points about Havighurst's

work as it appears in Developmental Tasks and Education.

First, this is not an empirical study. As a result while the

concept of "developmental tasks" may seem logical there is no

reason for accepting this list as the diffinitive formulation

of developmental tasks. Second, many of these tasks are

relevant only to a specific era or culture. Today many

people choose not to marry or opt for a homosexual life

style. These choices obviate several of Havighursts' tasks.

Daniel Levinson offers a third theory of development

during the adult life cycle. Levinson's book, Seasons of a

Man's Life, describes research he carried out with forty men

in their middle years. These men represented a cross-section

of occupational groups and cultures. Individual life

structure, eras, transition periods and stable periods were

the key concepts developed by Levinson in his research.

Individual life structure was the initial concept used

by Levinson to formulate his research on each man. He says:

> The concept of life structure provides a tool for analyzing what is sometimes called "the fabric of one's life." Through it we may examine the interrelations of self and world -- to see how the self is in the world, and how the world is in the self. When an external event has a decisive impact, we consider how processes in the self may have helped to bring it about and to mediate its effects. When an inner conflict leads to dramatic action, we consider how external influences may have touched off the conflict and decided how it would be played out. We try to determine how various aspects of self and world influence the formation of a life structure and shape its change over time.(23)

Levinson and his staff interviewed their sample to find the major components in their lives which influenced their life structure. Often family relationships, from childhood and married life, and occupation proved to be central components in a man's life structure.

Based on this research Levinson found that men's lives form a series of eras or seasons. "The eras are partially overlapping, so that a new one is getting under way as the previous one is being terminated. The sequence goes as follows:

1.   Childhood and adolescence: age   0-22
2.   Early adulthood: age 17-45
3.   Middle adulthood: age 40-65
4.   Late adulthood: age 60-? (24)

In its simplest form Levinson's theory maintains that a man continually builds and reevaluates life structures. The structure includes his family, occupational choice, and social involvement. Biological, intrapersonal, and

environment factors influence the nature of a man's structure
and reevaluation. The times when structures are in place are
called "stable periods," and the times of questioning are
called "transition periods." Levinson says.

> The orderly progression of periods stems from the
> recurrent change in tasks. The most fundamental
> tasks of a stable period are to make firm choices,
> rebuild the life structure and enhance one's life
> within it. Those of a transitional period are to
> question and reappraise the existing structure, to
> search for new possibilities in self and world, and
> to modify the present structure enough so that a
> new one can be formed.(25)

In essence Levinson's research shows that all men
respond to biological and personal developmental tasks at
predictable times. These responses alter the outline of a
man's life structure. These periods can be summarized as
follows:

The Early Adult Transition: Moving from Pre-to
Early Adulthood

The Early Adult Transition begins at age 17 and
ends at 22, give or take two years. Its twin tasks
are to terminate pre-adulthood and to begin early
adulthood. The first task is to start moving out
of the pre-adult world: to question the nature of
that world and one's place in it. . . The second
task is to make a preliminary step into the adult
world: to explore its possibilities, to imagine
oneself as a participant in it, to consolidate an
initial adult identity. . .

The First Adult Life Structure: Entering the Adult
World

This period extends from about 22 to 28. Its chief
task is to fashion a provisional structure that
provides a workable link between the valued self
and the adult society. A young man must shift the

center of gravity of his life; no longer a child in
his family of origin, he must become a novice adult
with a home base of his own.

The Age Thirty Transition: Changing the First Life Structure

This transition, which extends from roughly 28 to
33, provides an opportunity to work on the flaws
and limitations of the first adult life structure,
to create a basis for a more satisfactory structure
with which to complete the era of early adulthood.
. .A voice within the self says: "If I am to
change my life -- if there are things in it I want
to modify or exclude, or things missing I want to
add -- I must now make a start, for soon it will be
too late."

The Second Adult Life Structure: Settling Down

The second life structure takes place at the end of
the Age Thirty Transition and persists until about
age 40. This structure is the vehicle for the
culmination of early adulthood. A man seeks to
invest himself in the major components of the
structure (work, family, friendships, leisure,
community -- whatever is most central to him), and
to realize his youthful aspirations and goals.

The Mid-life Transition: Moving from Early to Middle Adulthood

The late thirties mark the culmination of early
adulthood. The Mid-life Transition, which lasts
roughly from 40-45 provides a bridge from early to
middle adulthood. . .

Some men do very little questioning or searching
during the Mid-life Transition. . .Other men
realize that the character of their lives is
changing, but the process is not a painful one . .
. But for the great majority of men this is a
period of great struggle within the self and the
external world. . .They question nearly every
aspect of their lives and feel that they cannot go
on as before. They will need several years to form
a new path or modify the old one.

Entering Middle Adulthood: Building a New Life Structure

The tasks of the Mid-life Transition must be given
up by about age 45. . .The opportunity to question

and search is present throughout middle adulthood
and beyond, but at this point new tasks
predominate. Now he must make his choices and
begin forming a new life structure.

The Subsequent Periods in Middle Adulthood

There is an Age Fifty Transition, which normally
lasts from about age 50 to 55. The functions of
this period in middle adulthood are similar to
those of the Age Thirty Transition. In it, a man
can work further on the tasks of the Mid-life
Transition and modify the life structure formed in
the mid-forties. . .

From roughly age 55 to 60, a stable period is
devoted to building a second middle adult
structure, which provides a vehicle for completing
middle adulthood. . .This period is analogous to
Settling Down in early adulthood.

Finally, from about 60 to 65, the Late Adult
Transition terminates middle adulthood and creates
a basis for starting late adulthood. The tasks of
this transition are to conclude the efforts of
middle adulthood and to prepare oneself for the era
to come.(26)

In conclusion, Levinson's theory provides an overall

framework for understanding the structures of a man's life.

During each period a man may choose to change or to maintain

the choices he made in his life regarding family, career, and

his other affiliations. For example, a man may feel satisfied

and fulfilled as a lawyer during his first adult life

structure in his 20's. However, during his early thirties,

"the Age Thirty Transition," he may choose to leave law for

another profession, or to redirect his efforts to become a

more successful and established lawyer. Levinson's theory

suggests the points of transition and stability. A person's

environment and psychological make-up determine the structure

of his life and how he will respond to these periods. (A

detailed diagram of the eras and periods appears in the
Appendix I A).

In summary, these theories provide a broad framework for
understanding development in the adult life cycle. The
theories are limited by both the variety of individual life
styles and choices, and the lack of a large empirical base.
It is difficult to formulate one theory with the many
lifestyles open to people today, and none of these studies
has a large enough sample to attempt concrete
generalizations. In this light, however, it is possible to
make several broad statements about peoples' concerns during
various parts of the adult life cycle.

First, early adulthood seems to be a time of identity
formation. Erikson calls this a time when a person, based on
an initial sense of self developed during adolescence,
experiences a conflict between intimacy and isolation. The
main issue is how will a person form his or her first
significant relationships outside of the family of origin.
Havighurst and Levinson also note that a person is forming an
initial identity in terms of career. Havighurst says that a
person is, "Getting started in an occupation,"(27) and
Levinson notes that this is the time when a person enters the
adult world and forms his first life structure. In all three
systems this is a time of formulating an adult self concept
and building intimate relationships.

For Levinson, middle adulthood is a time of transition
and stability. He notes that men either leave or reaffirm

their first life structure.(28) At the beginning of this period they may question their first life structure, and by the end of the period they have reached a new level of stability. Changing careers, or changing a family structure might occur during this period. Erikson and Havighurst also indicate that familial and mentoring relationships are significant during this period. Raising children, mentoring employees, and working with aging parents are some of the familial tasks which characterize this period.

Erikson calls the conflict of late adulthood ego integrity versus despair. This is a time when physical and social changes inspire a person to reflect on the character of his life. Physically, a person's health and vitality are below the peak levels of early adulthood, and socially a person generally retires and is no longer in the role of parent. Havighurst believes that a person must perform developmental tasks which help him adapt to the changes he experiences during this period, and Erikson believes that successful completion of previous crises and a positive outlook on life give a person a sense of ego integrity during this period.

These are very broad outlines of some of the tasks and conflicts people encounter during adulthood. The discussion of these tasks is informative, but not definitive. Each person must be encountered as an individual. Developmental scheme give an indication of the person's possible

orientation, but over-reliance on them can lead to erroneous assumptions based on stereotypes. The next section will focus on the cognitive abilities of adults and complete the discussion of the background of the adult learner.

Cognitive

An understanding of the cognitive abilities of adults throughout the life cycle provides an insight into the most effective means for teaching, and helps gauge teacher expectations. This section will present a summary of research about the cognitive abilities of adults. It will focus on psychometric measurements and information processing abilities. The first part of the section discusses early and middle adulthood, and the second part of the section discusses late adulthood.

The psychometric approach uses measurement-based tests to study intelligence. Raymond Cattell distinguishes between two types of intelligence from psychometric tests. The first, is crystallized intelligence. This is intelligence which, "involves skills abilities, and understanding gained through instruction and observation."(29) The second type of intelligence is fluid intelligence. "Fluid intelligence involves the adaptability and capacity to perceive things and integrate them mentally. It appears to be independent of formal education and experience."(30)

Based on an analysis of verbal abilities, and perceptual-motor abilities, John Horn, independently and in work with Cattel, believes that crystallized intelligence

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increases with age, while fluid intelligence declines

significantly after earlier adulthood:

> Horn (e.g., Horn ' Donaldson, 1980) believes that
> crystallized intelligence increases throughout the
> life span because it is based on cumulative
> learning experiences. By contrast, he states that
> fluid intelligence increases from infancy through
> adolescence, levels off during early adulthood, and
> then steadily declines in middle and late
> adulthood.(31)

Paul Baltes and K. Warner Schaie challenge Horn's

analysis. They believe that Horn's findings are more a

result of the type of tests he uses than of actual declines

in adult intelligence. They say that since Horn uses

cross-sectional testing, which tests a wide sample of people

at one time, and not longitudinal testing which measures the

same group over time, that in fact Horn's tests show cultural

differences and not differences in intelligence.(32) In

their own longitudinal test begun in 1956 they saw a decline

in fluid intelligence when the test was analyzed

cross-sectionally, but no decline when it was analyzed

longitudinally.(33)

Nancy Denney suggests a compromise position with the

concepts of unexercised and optimally exercised ability.

Denney's research can be summarized as follows:

> Nancy Denney (1981) believes that in order to
> better understand cognitive ability across the life
> span we should distinguish between unexercised
> ability (level of performance expected if the
> individual has no exercise and/or training on the
> ability in question) and optimally exercised,
> ability (level of performance expected if optimal

exercise and/or training have occurred). The proposed developmental levels for these two abilities are shown in figure 16.3, which indicates that both ability groups increase up to early adulthood and decrease gradually thereafter. The curve for unexercised ability has been drawn to decrease starting in early adulthood because abilities that are not exercised, such as those measured by performance subtests of intelligence tests and abstract problem-solving tasks, begin to decline in early adulthood.

The curve for optimally-exercised ability also has been drawn to indicate a decrease starting in early adulthood because even in abilities that are the most resistant to age change effects, such as verbal abilities and practical problem solving, there may be some decline . . . Of course, exercise or training can accumulate over a long period of time, even years or decades. Thus some types of ability might be unexercised for many young adults and optimally exercised for middle-aged adults. Such abilities should not decline from young adulthood to middle age. Indeed, they might even improve.(34)

Based on this discussion it can be assumed that there is some psychometric decline in adults during the various phases of the life cycle. However, this decline does not seem to be significant enough to radically effect the structure of adult education programs for adults in early and middle adulthood, and many adults in the late adult years. The summary next turns to information processing abilities.

Information processing generally involves the receiving and organizing of information. Memory is a key element in the processing process. Theorists generally divide memory into short term and long term categories. John Santrock in discussing a 1977 analysis by Craik of short-term memory said:

Tasks that rely primarily on short-term memory, or the conscious awareness of recently perceived

events, generally show little or no difference when we compare the performance of young and middle-aged adults. Indeed, even elderly adults typically do well on such tasks (Craik, 1977).(35)

In a summary of work by James Jenkins and a number of other researchers Santrock found that a memory deficit is more likely in middle-aged adults in the area of long term memory. He noted that the nature of the material to be remembered, the instructions given to the learner, and the degree of competency required effected the degree of memory deficit.(36) And with regard to cognitive functions in general in middle adulthood Santrock said:

> In general, the evidence reviewed suggests that a memory deficit in middle age is most likely when (1) the task taps long-term memory, (2) effective learning strategies are not mentioned to the learner, (3) critical tasks demand effortful "search" or "retrival", (4) the materials are unfamiliar and - difficult to verbalize, and/or (5) adults cannot perform well simply on the basis of previously acquired and well-learned knowledge and skills.(37)

Many of the phenomena discussed with regard to the learning abilities of people in middle adulthood also apply to elderly adults. As with middle-aged adults there is considerable debate about the effectiveness of psychometric tests for older adults. Horn and other theorists maintain that intelligence declines as people age. Other theorists, Schale, and Baltes, believe that it is more the bias of the tests than a decline in cognitive ability. They say that the tests are mainly geared for children or young adults, and that there is a cultural bias which discriminates against the elderly. In effect the literature is divided about cognitive

ability in late adulthood and its measurement.(38)

With respect to memory Santrock states that the same five facts which account for deficits in memory in middle adulthood also account for deficits in late adulthood. Additionally, Santrock makes the following five points about the learner in late adulthood:

> First, while effective learning processes might be sufficient to improve memory in middle adulthood, they are not always sufficient to improve the performance of elderly persons. With elderly persons the use of appropriate tests (usually recognition) also may be required. Second, even recognition testing can produce large differences between young and elderly adults, if learning activities at input are not controlled. . .Third, instructions to "learn" produce particularly large deficits in elderly groups, at least on tasks in which older adults are not highly skilled. . .Fourth, elderly persons perform as well as young adults in tests of memory for aspects of stimuli such as recency, frequency, and location of presentation. Such aspects apparently are stored automatically in memory. Hence, we have evidence that automatic memory processes do not decline with age. Fifth, elderly persons can be effective learners, if their considerable knowledge and skills are applicable to a task. Otherwise their performance can be poor, even when compared to middle-aged individuals.(39)

In summary, three observations can be made about the cognitive abilities of adults based on this analysis. First, theorists are divided about possible deficits in adult learning ability in middle and late adulthood on psychometric tests. Some theorists believe there is a loss of ability and others believe cognitive ability remains constant. In general those who believe there is a loss of ability say this

occurs in the areas of fluid (abstract), or unused knowledge. In terms of preparation for a course in adult education, particularly in the area of theology, this possible loss should be considered and an effort should be made to make presentations concrete rather than abstract.

Second, most theorists agree that short term memory does not seem to be greatly effected by age. This helps show that adults at any age are capable of learning. In terms of a course in adult education this means that people will generally be able to remember ideas and concepts as they are raised in a presentation or discussion.

Finally, this analysis indicates that the form of presentation affects the amount of deficit in long-term memory in adults. Efforts should be made to clearly introduce, repeat, and clarify concepts so that there will be the maximum opportunity for people to integrate them into long-term memory.

Summary

The preceeding discussion focused on the physical, psycho-social, and cognitive changes and development adults experience during their early, middle, and late years. Physically, adults reach their peak levels of strength and endurance during early adulthood. Most researchers say that age thirty is a person's biological peak and after that people experience a gradual physical decline. However, it is important to note that most writers also say that, barring a

serious illness, most adults can participate in all "normal activities" well into late adulthood.

In the psycho-social realm research generally divides adulthood into three eras or seasons: early, middle, and late adulthood. In general these eras are characterized by developmental tasks or conflicts which relate to a person's physical status; relationships to family, work colleagues, and friends; and internal psychological make-up. Early adulthood generally includes the formation of a first significant relationship outside of the family of origin, and the establishment and maintenance of an identity in the adult world. Middle adulthood includes, reassessment of one's identity, mentoring relationships with adolescent children and younger work colleagues, and a redefinition of a person's relationship with parents. Late adulthood involves adaptation to: physical changes related to aging, retirement, and the inevitability of one's death. These tasks are general indicators, but not absolutes for either a person's explicit or implicit agendas and concerns.

The study of adult cognitive development shows that people are capable of learning throughout their lives. While there may be some drop in cognitive ability, and there is generally assumed to be a deficit in long-term memory, these problems can be compensated for by the means of presentation and by appropriate review. Cognizance of these limitations are important sensitivities for the adult educator.

Learning Theory

This section will examine various theories which explain how people learn. This conceptual framework provides an important background for determining the educational philosophy and the most appropriate teaching methods for a given class. Behaviorism, cognitive development, social learning, and humanistic learning are the four theories discussed in this section.

Behaviorism, developed by Edward L. Thorndike, was the first systematic learning theory in the United States. Thorndike conceived of learning as a stimulus-response process. A given stimulus causes an organism to respond, and if the stimulus reoccurs the organism will respond again in the same way. In behaviorist theories, "Learning is explained through the processes of association, connection, reinforcement, conditioning, and extinction. The focus is upon the external behavior and environmental factors."(40)

B. F. Skinner is the most famous follower of the behaviorist school. The following description characterizes Skinner's work and his contribution to modern educational systems:

> The emphasis in Skinner's behaviorism is on
> learning through reinforcement of favorable
> responses. Behavior is a learned response and thus
> can be modified if environments are structured in
> particular ways. Skinner's theories have been
> influential in all forms of education. . .
> Programmed instruction, computer-assisted
> instruction, personalized systems of education,
> skills training, and competency-based education are
> only some of the forms of instruction that rely on

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the theoretical framework provided by behaviorist theories.(41)

Behaviorism focuses entirely on stimulus and response, it does not consider internal changes in an organism. In this light, it is a limited theory and other theories are needed to more fully explain learning.

Cognitive development theory, originated by Jean Piaget, offers a second explanation of how people learn. This theory maintains people learn by progressing through a series of developmental phases. At each level a person confronts the environment and either assimilates its stimuli or accommodates itself to them. Piaget described four stages of thought which can be summarized as follows:

The sensorimotor stage lasts from birth to about two years of age, corresponding to the period known as infancy. During this time the infant develops the ability to organize and coordinate sensations and perceptions with physical movements and actions. This coordination of sensation with action is the source of the term sensorimotor. The stage begins with the new born, who has little more than reflexes to coordinate his or her senses with actions. The stage ends with the two-year old, who has complex sensoriaction patterns and is beginning to operate with a primitive symbol system.

The preoperational stage lasts from two to seven years of age, cutting across the preschool and early middle school years. During this time the child's symbolic system expands. The use of language and perceptual images moves well beyond the capabilities at the end of the sensorimotor period. Despite these advances, however, a number of limitations cause the child's thought to fall far short of what is seen in the later middle school years. . .Among the major flaws are the child's egocentricity, an inability to conserve, and a failure to order objects in a series and classify them.

The concrete operational stage lasts from seven to eleven years of age, cutting across the major portion of the middle school years. During this time the child's thinking crystallizes into more of a system, and the flaws of the preoperational stage completely disappear. The shift to a more perfect system of thinking is brought about by several changes. One of these is the shift from egocentrism to relativism. Relativism is the ability to think from different perspectives and to think simultaneously about two or more aspects of a problem. . . One limitation of concrete thinking is that the child has to rely on concrete events in order to think in this way.

The last stage of development is the formal operational stage, which emerges between eleven and fourteen years of age. . .The most important single feature of this stage is the adolescent's ability to move beyond the world of actual concrete experiences. He or she can think logically, using abstract propositions. . .He or she can also use make-believe events or statements that are contrary to reality. Finally, the adolescent is able to conjure up many hypotheses to account for some event and then test these out in a deductive fashion.(42)

According to this theory children move from one level to the next as a result of experience and intellectual development. As the child matures his ego and intellectual capacity develop. Also, as the child encounters the world he develops increasingly sophisticated thought processes to explain contradictions in the environment. This model assumes that people learn through a combination of experience and development. However, once formal operational thought is achieved this model offers no further explanation for learning.

Social learning theory forms the third explanation for the process of human learning. This school of thought combines psychodynamic theory, which stresses internal drives

as determinants of learning, with either behaviorism or cognitive development theory.(43) The two schools of thought in social learning theory can be described as follows:

> One group of social learning theorists attempts to combine constructs of psychodynamic theory with the proven facts of behaviorism. These psychodynamically oriented learning theorists utilize such constructs as identification with others, internalization of values and behaviors, learning of dependency-independency, and learning of aggression in order to explain how learning takes place throughout life. . .
>
> The second type of social learning theory attempts to combine behaviorist principles with a number of principles drawn from cognitive theorists (Bandura, 1977). The key processes to explain learning in this view are modeling, observational learning, imitation, external reinforcement, vicarious reinforcement (observation of what happens to others), and self-reinforcement (recollection of what has happened to oneself). In this form of social learning theory, learning is neither explained by inner forces alone nor by environmental stimuli alone. It is explained "in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction of personal and environmental determinants. Within this approach, symbolic, vicarious, and self regulatory processes assume a prominent role (Bandura, 1977, pp. 11-12)."(44)

Humanistic learning theories make up the final presentation in this section. Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers represent this school of learning. The first basic hypothesis of Roger's educational philosophy can be understood as follows:

> We cannot teach another person directly; we can only facilitate his learning. This hypothesis stems from the propositions in his personality theory that "Every individual exists in a continually changing world of experience of which he is the center," and "The organism reacts to the field as it is experienced and perceived." It requires a shift in focus from what the teacher does to what is happening in the student.(45)

Roger's theory assumes that each person has an internal desire to learn, and that learning must come from within the individual; as opposed to the behaviorist view which says learning is stimulated by the environment. The theory assumes that given the proper setting and motivation a person will choose to learn. The basis assumptions of humanistic learning can be elucidated further:

> The basic assumptions of humanistic learning theory, which is called experiential learning, are presented by Rogers: (1) learning requires personal involvement of cognitive and affective aspects of the persons; (2) learning should be self-initiated; (3) learning should be pervasive -- make an impact on the behavior, attitudes, or personality of the learner; (4) self-evaluation should take place to determine if needs are met; (5) the essence of learning is the meaning that is incorporated into the person's total experience. Rogers sees these principles as applicable not only in self-directed learning but also in learning in groups.(46)

This theory assumes that learning comes from within the individual and that the person incorporates knowledge through either cognitive or affective experience. As stated above, the focus is no longer centered on the teacher as the stimulated of response, but the teacher becomes a facilitator for internal understanding and motivation.

In summary, this section presented four theories of learning. These theories differ as to their explanation of learning and their conception of the learner. Behaviorism and humanism represent opposite ends of a spectrum. The behaviorist school tends to see the learner as a machine. One finds the correct stimulus and the learner will be motivated to learn, and integrate the knowledge imparted by

the instructor. The humanistic school, as well as many
aspects of cognitive-developmentalism, see the learned as an
organism. In this model the learner is an internally
motivated entity which learns by interactions between himself
and his environment.(47) The models offer an important
contribution to the study of learning. Based on this
analysis the next section will propose a learning theory for
adult education which will provide the learning philosophy
for this thesis.

Adult Education/Learning Philosophy

The goal of this section is to present a learning
philosophy of adult education to be used in this thesis. The
philosophy will serve as a prism through which to view the
adult learner, and as a guide for the development of the
educational models for teaching Jewish theology. This
section will discuss: the differences between teaching
adults and children, the assumptions of adult education, and
principles for teaching adults.

Malcolm Knowles makes a distinction between pedagogy,
teaching assumptions and techniques for children, and
andragogy, teaching assumptions and techniques for adults, in
his discussion of the adult learner. In his book, The Modern
Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy versus Pedagogy,
Knowles makes the following observations about pedagogy:

> Most of what is known about learning has been
> derived from studies of learning in children and
> animals. Most of what is known about teaching has
> been derived from experience with teaching children
> under conditions of compulsory attendance. And

most theories about the learning-teaching
        transaction are based on the definition of
        education as a process of transmitting the culture.
        From these theories and assumptions there has
        emerged the technology of "pedagogy"--a term
        derived from the Greek stem "paid" (meaning
        "child") and "agogos" (meaning "leading"). So
        "pedagogy" means, specifically, the art and science
        of teaching children.(48)

    This passage points out that the majority of research

about teaching and learning comes from work with children,

and that the job of the teacher is to transmit skills and

information about the culture to children. Knowles suggests

that this definition is problematic when applied to adult

education for three reasons.

    First, people apply teaching methods developed for

children to adults, without consideration of possible

differences in orientation of adult learners. Knowles says,

"In my estimation, the main reason adult education has not

achieved the impact of which it is capable is that most

teachers of adults have only known how to teach adults as if

they were children."(49) This problem points out the adults

and children have different orientations to learning, and

that technique and assumptions that may be valid with

children, may not work with adults.

    Next, Knowles points out that the traditional system of

education may in fact be regressive and not progressive. He

says:

        I propose that our traditional education system is
        progressively regressive. The best education --
        the procedures helping people learn which are most
        congruent with what we know about the learning

process -- takes place in the nursery school and
kindergarten, and it tends to get progressively
worse in climbing up the educational ladder,
reaching its nadir in college. This is because the
forces at work from about the second grade on have
very little to do with learning. Most of them have
to do with achieving -- passing tests, . . .getting
into college, . . . or qualifying for a job.(50)

This passage points out that the focus of a great deal

of teaching is achievement and not learning. In the

traditional practice of pedagogy, students are taught how to

function within a system, and not how to think, act, and

learn independently.

Third, Knowles notes that educational process generally

focuses on transmitting knowledge of the culture, and not on

teaching people how to learn effectively. He makes the point

that in the Middle Ages there was a vastly limited body of

knowledge and education could be successful if it solely

transmitted knowledge to people. However, in the modern

world, educational and technological developments occur so

rapidly that the transmittal of knowledge is no longer

sufficient as the goal of the educational process. Instead,

Knowles maintains that the educational process needs to teach

people how to learn so they can pursue that knowledge which

they deem most important to their lives.(51)

To summarize, Knowles points out three problems with the

system of pedagogy based education. First, adults and

children have different orientations to learning. Second,

the traditional system of education focuses on achievement

and not on learning. And third, a modern educational system

needs to concentrate on developing the skill to learn and not on the acquisition of knowledge. Based on these problems and research about adults and how they learn, Knowles proposes a system of adult education called andragogy, "the art and science of helping adults learn."(51)

Andragogy is based on the beliefs that learning is internally directed and motivated, and that adults and children differ in their orientation to learning. Based on these concepts, Knowles developed four assumptions which described the differences between learning in adults and children, and which provide the basis for andragological teaching. These assumptions can be summarized as follows:

Changes in Self-Concept

This assumption is that as a person grows and matures his self-concept moves from one of total dependency (as is the reality of the infant) to one of increasing self-directedness.

Andragogy assumes that the point at which an individual achieves a self-concept of essential self-direction is the point at which he psychologically becomes adult. A very critical thing happens when this occurs: the individual develops a deep psychological need to be perceived by others as being self-directed. Thus, when he finds himself in a situation in which he is not allowed to be self-directing, he experiences a tension between that situation and his self-concept. His reaction is bound to be tainted with resentment and resistance.

The Role of Experience

This assumption is that as an individual matures he accumulates an expanding reservoir of experience that causes him to become an increasingly rich resource for learning, and at the same time provides him with a broadening base to which to relate new learnings. Accordingly, in the terminology of andragogy there is decreasing

emphasis on the transmittal techniques of
traditional teaching and increasing emphasis on
experiential techniques which tap the experience of
the learners and involve them in analyzing their
experience.

Readiness to Learn

This assumption is that as an individual matures,
his readiness to learn is decreasingly the product
of his biological development and academic pressure
and is increasingly the product of the
developmental tasks required for the performance of
his evolving social roles.

Orientation to Learning

This assumption is that children have been
conditioned to have a subject-centered orientation
to most learning, whereas adults tend to have a
problem-centered orientation to learning. This
difference is primarily the result of the
difference in time perspective. The child's time
perspective toward learning is one of postponed
application. . .

The adult, on the other hand, comes into an
educational activity largely because he is
experiencing some inadequacy in coping with current
problems. He wants to apply tomorrow what he
learns today, so his time perspective is one of
immediacy of application. Therefore, he enters
into education with a problem-centered orientation
to learning.(53)

These assumptions suggest that adults are much more

independent learners than children. Adults need to feel

self-directed in their learning, use their personal

experience, and learn to solve problems and not to simply

acquire knowledge. Adult education programs which conform to

these assumptions to a high degree, will successfully meet

the needs of adult learners, and those which do not reflect

these assumptions will be less effective. This section will

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next critique the four learning theories in light of these assumptions, and then present principles of teaching based on an andragological model.

Andragogy has the least in common with behaviorism, the first theory presented in the previous section. This theory, advocated by Thorndike and Skinner, suggests that learning occurs through a stimulus-response process. The job of the teacher is to create stimuli so the learner will incorporate the desire knowledge. Andragogy suggests, instead, that learning is an internal process. A person learns most effectively when he/she helps construct and control the learning environment. On the whole, while a stimulus-response technique would be effective if chosen by the learner, i.e., in a language course, this is not a generally successful technique for adult education because it makes the learners depend on the teacher, and it does not affirm the learner's personal experience and needs. According to Knowles research, as described above, learner motivation and participation would be higher in adult education programs which are learner centered and controlled, as opposed to those designed and implemented solely by the teacher.

Cognitive development was the second learning theory discussed above. This theory, proposed by Piaget, maintains that children learn as they either assimilate or accommodate stimuli in their environment. Children progress through various phases of cognitive development which culminate with

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formal operational thought, when they can reason abstractly. Although this theory is limited for the purposes of this thesis because it does not discuss adult learning in detail, it does however offer one particularly important insight for adult education. Piaget's theory suggests that children move from being more to being less dependent on teachers and parents for their learning. At the lowest levels, a learner depends on stimuli provided by the environment to learn, however, at higher levels the learner can control his/her own environment and in this way control the learning process. In this sense Piaget's work offers support to Knowles' theory of andragogy. Both Knowles and Piaget suggest that learners show greater independence as they move from child to adulthood. Knowles believes the adult education process must recognize and affirm this process of development.

Social learning theory was the third system presented to explain how people acquire knowledge. This theory attempts to combine psychodynamic explanations for learning with either behaviorism or cognitive development theory. In this theory learner identification with and modeling of others, and reinforcement of this behavior are central aspects of the learning process. To the extent that this theory borders on behaviorism and teacher control of the learners, social learning theory differs from andragogy as a teaching philosophy. And, to the extent that learner control of the classroom environment is affirmed by this theory, particularly where it acknowledges the way learners and

teachers mutually effect each other as change agents, this theory resembles andragogy. Overall, the impact which the learning environment can have, for either positive or negative change, is an important insight of this theory.

Humanism, as advocated by Maslow and Rogers, was the final theory presented. This theory assumes that a teacher cannot directly cause someone to learn by controlling stimuli and responses, instead, the teacher facilitates the student's interaction with the environment. learning is seen as an internal process of the student, not an external activity of the teacher. This theory most resembles andragogy as it is described by Knowles. Andragogy assumes that the learner needs to control the learning experience to the highest degree possible. This affirms the learner's life experience and allows the learner to study material on a problem-centered as opposed to a subject centered basis. The teacher facilitates the student's self-directed learning process according to this model. In this sense humanism most resembles andragogy as described by Knowles, and andragogy can be called a humanistic model of education.

To summarize briefly, each of the four theories presented explains different elements of the learning process. The theories can generally be divided into those which focus on learning as an external process controlled by the teacher, behaviorism and to a degree social learning, and those which view learning as an internal process of the student facilitdted by the teacher, humanism and cognitive

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development. Based on Knowles description of the assumptions which govern adult learning, I believe humanism is the most effective explanation for adult learning. Humanism concentrates on the use and affirmation of the learners experience and learner control of the educational environment, which are both key elements for adult learning as described by Knowles. In this light, this thesis will subscribe to andragogy as a humanistic explanation of adult learning. The last part of this section will outline principles of learning and teaching in an andragological learning model.

Based on the assumptions of andragogy Malcolm Knowles suggests seven conditions of learning and sixteen principles of teaching which maximize learner involvement and motivation. These principles describe the construction of a learning environment using an andragological model of learning. The conditions of learning and their related principles of teaching can be summarized as follows.

Conditions of Learning	Principles of Teaching
The learners feel a need to learn.	1. The teacher exposes students to new possibilities of self-fulfillment. 2. The teacher helps each student clarify his own aspirations for improved behavior. 3. The teacher helps each student diagnose the gap between his aspiration and his present level of performance. 4. The teacher helps the students identify the life problems they experience because of the gaps in their personal equipment.
The learning environment is characterized by physical comfort, mutual trust and respect, mutual helpfulness, freedom of expression, and acceptance of differences:	5. The teacher provides physical conditions that are comfortable (as to seating, smoking, temperature, ventilation, lighting, decoration) and conducive to interaction (preferably, no person sitting behind another person). 6. The teacher accepts each student as a person of worth and respects his feelings and ideas. 7. The teacher seeks to build relationships of mutual trust and helpfulness among the students by encouraging co-operative activities and refraining from inducing competitiveness and judgmentalness. 8. The teacher exposes his own feelings and contributes his resources as a colearner in the spirit of mutual inquiry.

The learners perceive the goals of a learning experience to be their goals.

9. The teacher involves the students in a mutual process of formulating learning objectives in which the needs of the students, of the institution, of the teacher, of the subject matter, and of the society are taken into account.

The learners accept a share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience, and therefore have a feeling of commitment toward it.

10. The teacher shares his thinking about options available in the designing of learning experiences and the selection of materials and methods and involves the students in deciding among these options jointly.

The learners participate actively in the learning process.

11. The teacher helps the students to organize themselves (project groups, learning-teaching teams, independent study, etc.) to share responsibility in the process of mutual inquiry.

The learning process is related to and makes use of the experience of the learners.

12. The teacher helps the students exploit their own experiences as resources to the levels of such techniques as discussion, role playing, case method, etc.

The learning process is related to and makes use of the experience of the learners.

13. The teacher gears the presentation of his own resources to the levels of experience of his particular students.

14. The teacher helps the students to apply new learning to their experience, and thus to make the learnings more meaningful and integrated.

The learners have a sense of progress toward their goals.

15. The teacher involves the students in developing mutually acceptable criteria and methods for measuring progress toward the learning objectives.

16. The teacher helps the students develop and apply procedures for self-evaluation according to these criteria.(54)

This chart outlined the basic considerations for learning and teaching adults in an andragological model. The model emphasizes an environment of trust where the teacher and students dialogue and learn from one another, learner control of and responsibility for their educational process, and clear goals and objectives by the teacher and the learners for their designed outcome of the educational process. This thesis will use these principles as guidelines for the basic assumptions about the form and content of the course and for the development of the educational models/lessons for teaching modern Jewish theology for adult learners.

Summary

This chapter presented an overall description of the adult learner and the educational philosophy for the thesis. The description of the adult learner examined, biological development, psycho-social development, and learning abilities, of people in adulthood. The second part of the chapter presented four different philosophies of learning, and analyzed andragogy as a philosophy for learning during adulthood. The next chapter will look at faith development and its implications for planning and teaching a course in modern Jewish theology.

NOTES

(1) Daniel Levinson, <u>The Seasons of a Man's Life</u>, pp. 21-22.

(2) John Santrock, <u>Life-Span Development</u>, p. 443.

(3) Ibid., p. 444.

(4) Ibid., p. 444.

(5) Ibid., p. 449.

(6) Levinson, op. cit., p. 26.

(7) John J. Burt, <u>Education for Sexuality: Concepts and Programs for Teaching</u>, pp. 48-49.

(8) Santrock, op. cit., p. 454.

(9) Ibid., p. 534.

(10) Ibid., p. 533.

(11) Ibid., p. 537.

(12) Richard Stevens, <u>Erik Erikson</u>, p. 42.

(13) Erik Erikson, <u>Childhood and Society</u>, pp. 231-233.

(14) Santrock, op. cit., p. 40.

(15) Erikson, op. cit., p. 231.

(16) Ibid., p. 232.

(17) Robert J. Havighurst, <u>Developmental Tasks and Education</u>, p. vii.

(18) Ibid., p. 2.

(19) Ibid., p. 2.

(20) Ibid., p. 5.

(21) Ibid., p. 41.

(22) Kenneth Stokes, ed., <u>Faith Development and the Adult Life Cycle</u>, pp. 22-23.

(23) Levinson, op. cit., p. 42.

(24) Ibid., p. 18.

(25) Ibid., p. 53.

(26) Ibid., pp. 56-62.

(27) Havighurst, op. cit., p. 90.

(28) Levinson, op. cit., p. 60.

(29) Santrock, op. cit., p. 464.

(30) Ibid., p. 464.

(31) Ibid., p. 464.

(32) Ibid., p. 465.

(33) Ibid., p. 465.

(34) Ibid., p. 466.

(35) Ibid., p. 468.

(36) Ibid., p. 474.

(37) Ibid., pp. 474-475.

(38) Ibid., pp. 540-541.

(39) Ibid., p. 548.

(40) John L. Elias, The Foundations and Practice of Adult Religious Education, p. 108.

(41) Ibid., p. 108.

(42) Santrock, op. cit., pp. 42-44.

(43) Elias, op. cit., p. 110,

(44) Ibid., p. 111.

(45) Malcolm Knowles, The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species, 2nd ed., p. 41.

(46) Elias, op. cit., p. 112.

(47) Knowles, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

(48) Malcolm Knowles, The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy versus Pedagogy, p. 37.

(49) Ibid., p. 37.

(50) Knowles, op. cit., <u>The Adult Learner</u>, p. 52.

(51) Knowles, op. cit., <u>The Modern Practice of Adult Education</u>, pp. 37-39.

(52) Ibid., p. 38.

(53) Knowles, op. cit., <u>The Adult Learner</u>, pp. 55-59.

(54) Knowles, op. cit., <u>The Modern Practice of Adult Education</u>, pp. 52-53.

CHAPTER THREE

Faith Development

The last chapter described the adult learner and proposed a model of how adults learn and how to teach adults. This chapter will focus on faith development. The goal of the chapter is to describe the theories of faith development and religious development, and how they effect adult education.

Faith Development

James Fowler is the pioneer in the area of faith development. This theory proposes that people evolve through stages in the structure of their faith development similar to developmental stages described by Erikson, Piaget, Levinson, and Kohlberg. Fowler and his associates conducted interviews with 359 people between 1972 and 1981 to learn the history of their faith development.(1) This section will examine the work of Fowler and other writers to assess the contribution of these theories for teaching theology to adults. The major topic areas are a description and a critique of Fowler's theory.

Description

Fowler's system defines seven structural stages of the

development of a person's faith. These stages focus on the

person's conceptualization of his faith, not on the contents

of faith, i.e., a person's particular religion. In this

context, Fowler gives this definition of faith:

> Faith is a person's or group's way of moving into
> the force field of life. It is our way of finding
> coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple
> forces and relations that make up our lives. Faith
> is a person's way of seeing him/herself in relation
> to others against a background of shared meaning
> and purpose.(2)

Fowler bases this definition on the work of H. Richard

Neibuhr, Paul Tillich, and Wilfred Cantwell Smith. The

definition assumes that faith is a "universal feature of

human living recognizably similar everywhere despite the

remarkable variety of forms and contents of religious

practice and belief."(3) In addition to this

conceptualization of faith, Fowler also distinguishes faith

from religion and belief. Based on Smith's distinction in

The Meaning and End of Religion, he gives this interpretation

of Smith's idea of religion:

> Speaking of religions as "cumulative traditions,"
> he suggests that we see a cumulative tradition as
> the various expressions of the faith of people in
> the past. A cumulative tradition may be
> constituted by texts of scripture or law, including
> narratives, myths, prophecies, accounts of
> revelation, and so forth; it may include visual and
> other kinds of symbols, oral traditions, music,
> dance, ethical teachings, theologies, creeds,
> rites, liturgies, architecture and a host of other
> elements. Faith, at once deeper and more personal
> than religion, is the person's or group's way of
> responding to transcendent value and power as
> perceived and grasped through the forms of the
> cumulative tradition.(4)

With the establishment of the idea of religion as a

subset or aspect of faith, Fowler next analyzes Smith's

definition of belief:

> Belief he takes to be "the holding of certain
> ideas." Belief, in religious contexts at least,
> arises out of the effort to translate experiences
> of relation to transcendence into concepts of
> propositions. Belief may be one of the ways faith
> expresses itself. But one does not have faith in a
> proposition or concept. Faith, rather, is the
> relation of trust in and loyalty to the
> transcendent about which concepts or propositions
> -- beliefs -- are fashioned.(5)

In Fowler's system faith is the universal way in which a

person conceptualizes reality. Religion means a culmination

of individual and group faith traditions. And, belief is the

holding of ideas or propositions which are based on faith.

Belief is an expression of faith, but it is not synonymous

with faith. Faith defines the relationship to the

transcendent while belief refers to the holding of a set of

ideas.

Relationship is another essential concept for

understanding Fowler's conceptualization of faith. He says,

"The patterns of faith that make self-hood possible and

sustain our identities are covenantal (triadic) in form."(6)

By this, Fowler means that people define their faith in

relation to others and to shared systems of value. Fowler

gives the example of a child in a family. A child relates to

his or her parents, and also relates to the "shared centers

of value and power" that the parents transmit. This is a

triadic covenantal relationship. Fowler believes that people define their faith throughout their lives by the way they relate to others, and to their shared centers of value and power.(7)

These concepts form the background for Fowler's seven stages. Fowler describes a person's level of faith development through the use of a number of scales. he looks at: their cognitive development as described by Piaget, their moral development as described by Kohlberg, their use of perspective as described by Selman, their bounds of social awareness, their use of symbols, their form of world coherence, and their conceptualization of authority.(8) (See Appendix I B for a chart showing the relationship between these theories.) The following summary outlines the key factors in each stage.

Pre-stage: Infancy and undifferentiated faith. This stage lasts from birth until the time the child can speak and use symbols. This stage relates to Erikson's first stage of trust vs. mistrust. In this stage, "the seeds of trust, courage, hope, and love are fused in an undifferientiatied way and contend with threats of abandonment, inconsistencies, and deprivations in the infant's environment."(9) If the infant feels cared for during this stage a sense of basic trust and mutuality develops, if the infant feels insecure a sense of isolation and a lack of mutuality develop. Trust and mutuality are the main strengths of faith at this stage.(10)

Stage One: Intuitive-Projective Faith. This stage generally lasts from ages three to seven. This stage, "Is marked by a relative fluidity of thought patterns," and, "the imaginative processes underlying fantasy are unrestrained and uninhibited by logical thought."(11) At this stage the child's cognitive processes are relatively undeveloped. The child does little to separate fact from fantasy, and, "The God of this stage is often a magical God."(12) Also at this stage the child is relatively ego-centric. "The gift or emergent strength of this stage is the birth of imagination. . .The dangers of this stage arise from the possible 'possession' of the child's imagination by unrestrained images of terror or destructiveness or from the witting or unwitting exploitation of her or his imagination in the reinforcement of taboos and or moral or doctrinal expectations."(13) The child moves to the next stage with the development of concrete operational thinking.(14)

Stage Two: Mythical-Literal Faith. This stage generally begins near age seven and ends in adolescence, but it can extend past adolescence, and into adulthood.(15) This stage can be described in this way:

> Greater cognitive ability has developed and persons
> begin to take on stories belonging to their
> community. The form and content of faith comes
> from authority figures, but there is a wider range
> of these figures now than there was in stage one.
> They include not only parents but other significant
> adults, teachers, and religious leaders. Concrete
> operational thinking has developed and symbols for
> God are usually anthropomorphic.(16)

In this stage the story is the operational mode of thought. The child does not step back and reflect on the story; literalness is a limitation of this stage. The child begins to move to stage three with the ability to use formal operational thought. The child can then start to think abstractly. Contradictions in stories also initiate the movement to the next stage.(17)

Stage Three: Synthetic-Conventional Faith. This stage typically begins near age twelve. A person usually will not move to stage four until early adulthood. Some people do not grow past stage three. This stage relates to the conflict Erikson describes between identity and role diffusion where the person develops an identity in relation to peers and society, and to Piaget's level of formal operational thought, where the person can work with abstract concepts.

At this stage new groups demand attention. Faith must provide a coherent orientation to these more complex involvements, synthesize values and information, and provide the person with a sense of identity.(18) At this stage a person generally conforms to external norms and expectations. The person develops an ideology, but does not step outside it to examine it critically. In this stage a "personal myth" and identity for the past and future develops. The dangers in this stage is internalizing others' expectations to the point of loosing future autonomy, or internal tensions giving rise to a sense of despair about God and ultimate meaning. Religiously, a person accepts values and ideas from religious

authorities at this stage. Value conflicts with authorities
and leaving the family of origin may initiate the transition
to stage four.(19)

Stage Four: Individuative-Reflective Faith. This phase
generally forms during young adulthood, but it may not form
in some people until their thirties or forties, if at all.
The following characteristics highlight stage four:

> Responsibility is the key to this stage, for all
> preceeding stages had authority outside of self and
> thus responsibility was non-existent or at least
> held to a minimum. In stage four one must face the
> tensions Synthetic-Conventional faith allowed one
> to evade. This tension is experienced as
> responsibility shifts from significant others and
> significant groups to self. Self awareness deepens
> as one assumes greater responsibility for one's
> choices or rejections. The result is that
> authority is more internalized. Full formal
> operations are used and one is able to reflect
> critically on one's faith. This brings a new
> awareness of the relativity of one's way of
> experiencing. The possibilities of changes,
> shifts, and vulnerability become more obvious.
> There is a desire and concern for inner
> consistency, integration, and comprehensive-
> ness.(20)

Fowler gives the example of a 28 year old man named Jack
to illustrate the change from Synthetical-Conventional to
Individuative-Reflective faith. Jack grew up in a lower
class ethnic family. He was very connected to his Church for
a time during adolescence, but moved away from this
affiliation when other boys in school made fun of him. In
high school Jack's identity came from his neighborhood, and
the gang he spent time with. At 19 Jack left home and joined
the army. This gave him a chance to reflect on his

environment and attitudes. Jack was exposed to the political

ideology of the Black Panthers and he learned about the

ideology of prejudice and the oppressed. Eventually Jack

internalized these values and developed his own new

orientation. He married a woman from the middle-class, and

they became leaders of a tenents' right movement.(21)

This example showed how a person moves from accepting

the values of a peer group and external authority to

developing an individual internal orientation during this

stage. In this stage individual acceptance of values and an

ideology is the central theme. Fowler says:

> The two essential features of the emergence of
> stage 4, then, are the critical distancing from
> one's previous assumptive value system and the
> emergence of an executive ego. When and as these
> occur a person is forming a new identity, which he
> or she expresses and actualizes by the choice of
> personal and group affiliations and the shaping of
> a "lifestyle."(22)

Religiously, a person might affirm a functional

religious system, or reject a dysfunctional system. The

central element at this stage is the shift from an external

to an internal locus of authority.

Stage Five: Conjunctive Faith. This faith stage

usually does not begin until middle adulthood. Fowler says,

"Conjunctive faith involves the integration into self and

outlook of much that was surpressed or unrecognized in the

interest of Stage 4's self-certainty and conscious and

affective adaptation to reality."(23) In this stage a person

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Integrates his or her unconscious with the internal ideology developed in stage four.

Fowler notes that this stage, "Knows the sacrament of defeat and the reality of irrevocable commitments and acts."(24) At this stage a person appreciates the paradox that exists in his life and in society as a whole. The person can recognize and resonate with various ideologies, and in this way can communicate at deeper and more intimate levels. As an illustration, at this stage, a person moves beyond viewing morality from the sole perspectives of right versus wrong, and can see the paradox in an ethical dilemma and appreciate the truth in both sides of a problem.

This stage also corresponds to the conflict Erikson describes between "Generativity and Stagnation." A person at this stage either communicates with people at deeper levels and passes on wisdom to the next generation, or faces the danger of stagnation and isolation.

Fowler gives this summary:

> The new strength of this stage comes in the rise of the ironic imagination -- a capacity to see and be in one's and one's group's most powerful meanings, while simultaneously recognizing that they are relative, partial and inevitably distorting apprehensions of transcendent reality. Its danger lies in the direction of a paralyzing passivity or inaction, giving rise to complacency or cynical withdrawal, due to its paradoxical understanding of truth.(25)

This is the highest stage which most people obtain. It appreciates symbol and myth, and has incorporated the person's internal authority ideology with the unconscious.

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The next stage universalizes the paradoxes of this era.

Stage Six: Universalizing Faith. This represents the highest level in Fowler's system. He has done little empirical research with people at this stage. He gives the examples of Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., in the last years of his life, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Dag Hammarskjold, Deitrich Bonhoffer, Abraham Heschel, and Thomas Merton as people who have Universalizing faith.(26) This stage can be summarized as follows:

> Persons at stage six are extremely rare and their average minimum age is around forty. . .Persons in this stage experience the kingdom of God as a love, felt reality. Their presence in the world is a transforming presence, and their sense of oneness of and with all persons is a permeative basis for decision and action. The paradox experienced in stage five no longer exists for their community is now universal and inclusive. . .Their love of God is totally unself conscious and totally integrated with every other aspect of their life. Constant pain of the stage six persons is seeing and understanding more than others and facing the challenge of continually universalizing their faith approach. They have the burden of maintaining, generating, and renewing the vision of cosmic meaning that will help support others.(27)

It is important to note that the person at stage six does not leave his or her religion, but instead uses the religious tradition as a basis for communing with and inspiring all people.

This summary outlines the highlights of Fowler's structural stages of faith. These stages show how a person uses a secular or religious ideology/frame of reference to

interpret the world. A person might interpret parents'
ideologies and have anthropomorphic images of God (stage 2);
they might use the ideology as imposed by society (stage 3);
incorporate and internalize a person ideology (stage 4);
delve into the unconscious, and while accepting an ideology
appreciate the value of others' ideas (stage 5); or develop a
universal frame of reference (stage 6). In the final section
of <u>Stages of Faith</u>, Fowler also analyzes the contents of
faith and conversion.

Fowler also analyzes the contents of the individual's
faith to help expand and clarify his system. A person's
character and the way he/she relates to the world are
determined in part by the way he/she orders the content's of
faith.(28) Fowler uses three concepts to describe how people
order the contents of their faith. They are: centers of
value, centers of power, and master stories.

Centers of value are, "The causes, concerns or persons
that consciously or unconsciously have the greatest worth for
us."(29) Belief in God's love, a desire for success or
money, the quest for personal power, or a belief in justice
and equality, are all examples of centers of value. The
center of value is the conscious or unconscious ideology or
goal that a person uses to direct his/her life or actions.

Centers or images of power refers to the power that we
ascribe to ourselves and others. Governments, business
institutions, family, friends, and God, are all examples of
centers of power. Fowler says, "We try to align ourselves

with power sufficient to sustain us and those persons and things we love."(30) In this sense Fowler believes that individuals trust and seek support from those centers of power they believe will help them confront the crises caused by people and by nature in their lives. Belief in the

benefits one gains from collective action in a union, or belief in God as a supernatural saviour and redeemer are further illustrations of this idea.(31)

The third concept in Fowler's analysis of the contents of faith is master stories. Master stories are, "The characteristics of power-in-action that disclose the ultimate meaning in our lives."(32) In other words, master stories are the explanations people give themselves for how they and their centers of power succeed or fail in fulfilling their values and goals. Fowler says, "When the 1980 Nobel peace prize winner, Adolfo Perez Esquival, gives up the security of his teaching and architectural practice to found and lead the 'Service for Peace and Justice in Latin America," he lives out a story that tells us something like 'the universal vocation of persons is the humanization of humankind."(33) Master stories are the tales people tell themselves to explain how their lives relate to their values and goals.

These three concepts help Fowler explain how a person thinks and acts at various stages of faith. They are the framework which he introduces to show how the structures of faith interface with a person's specific values and beliefs.

This is significant for a course in modern Jewish theology because a person who believes in a supernatural God who does miracles as a center of power will think of theology differently than a person whose center of power revolves around a naturalistic God who is unaware of the specifics of human life. The concepts help explain how the contents of one's faith work at various stages of faith.

As a last note, Fowler also discusses conversion or reorientation as a dynamic that occurs as part of the stages of faith. Conversion refers to a radical shift of the contents of a person's faith. Fowler gives the example of Nate Turner, a Black share cropper, who shifted his center of power from unionism to God while still at stage 4, Individuative-Reflective faith.(34) A conversion is basically a radical change in the content's of a person's faith. This may occur within a structural level or signify the change between a person's stage of faith. Fowler adds this distinction as a clarification to his overall system of faith development.

The preceding section outlined the main concepts in Fowler's system of faith development. This system describes how a person structures the contents of his or her faith at various developmental points in life. The next sections will present a critique of Fowler's system, and outline an alternative system which describes religious development.

Critique

Fowler's system attempts to merge cognitive systems of

development as expressed by Piaget and Kohlberg, with affective systems as expressed by Erikson, and religious conceptions by Smith and Neihbur. The system presents a structural-developmental model where a person must go through lower stages to reach higher levels of development. This section will critique Fowler's system, followed by a presentation of an alternative framework called "religious development," as described by Gabriel Moran, in the next section.

Three concerns arise within a critical perspective of Fowler's stage theory. These include: the nature of the framework, the intention of the framework, and the definition of faith.

The first question which arises in consideration of Fowler's system is: "What is he really studying?" Fowler defines faith as, "Our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces that make up our lives."(35) In this light he traces the various intellectual processes a person uses to order the world. In many ways, this is more a study of ego development than an exploration of faith.(36) The ego is the part of the psyche governing rational action. It interprets the basic needs as seen by the id and attempts to attain fulfillment for these needs in a "functional" manner. Fowler's system focuses more on this aspect of the person than on "traditional" definitions of faith.

James Loder emphasizes this point, in a review of <u>Stages of Faith</u>, when he compares Fowler's conception of faith with

the perception presented by Gehard Ebeling in "Jesus and

Faith." Loder notes that Ebeling's idea of faith: "gives

certainty to existence" by instilling the virtue of hope (the

ego only constructs meaning), "helps bring about the future"

by focusing on the possibility of human transcendence in the

world, "participates in the omnipotence of God" by

encouraging human participation in God's works, and "saves"

by stressing that belief in God forms a prerequisite for

healing.(37) Loder concludes this thought by saying:

> How does Fowler relate his understanding of faith
> to these basic aspects of the synoptic view, to say
> nothing of the Johannine or Pauline material, where
> there seems to be so much disparity? Fowler
> acknowledges this problem but never deals with it.
> My aim is not to be biblicistic but to come to
> terms with this which is so central to what
> Christian tradition has meant by the word
> "faith."(38)

Loder as well as other writers(39) suggest that Fowler's

theory makes a significant departure from conventional

understandings of faith. In this light, Fowler's system

focuses more on the cognitive aspects of how people structure

their world, than on the spiritual aspects of religion or

ideology. His main focus is on how people intellectually use

their faith as an ideology to govern their lives; he devotes

little or no time to discussing the affective and

transcendent dimensions of faith.

A second problem results from the hierarchical

construction of Fowler's stages. A tension exists between

descriptive, and prescriptive or normative uses of this

theory. Fowler says, "As our structural-developmental theory of faith stages has emerged and undergone refinements, it has become clear that we are trying to do both descriptive and normative work."(40) In other places Fowler notes that each stage has an integrity of its own, but their is a bias in the system towards facilitating human development to higher stages.(41) The danger with this type of hierarchy is that people will only strive for higher stages and neglect lower stages of development. Fowler notes that when he lectures to secular audiences they are primarily interested in stage six and are relatively unconcerned with the other stages.(42) This illustrates the tension inherent in a hierarchical structural-developmental system.

Gabriel Moran is one of the chief critics of Fowler's definition of the term "faith." In addition to the criticism which Loder makes, about Fowler's departure from the "conventional" understanding of faith, Moran takes exception to the way Fowler separates "faith" and "belief" based on the work of W. Cantwell Smith. Moran says:

> Smith sets up a dichotomy between the fundamental
> orientation of the individual (faith, ed.) and the
> externals (belief, ed.) (doctrines, behavioral
> codes, rites) by which the same individual or other
> people can understand that orientation. . .Smith's
> thesis, beginning with the book's title, is that
> faith and belief are two different things. The
> sacred books, such as Christian, Jewish, Muslim, or
> Hindu are all about faith and not at all about
> belief. There once was a time, Smith says, when
> the word believe could convey a sense of trusting
> and loving (a meaning still present in the German
> belieben); some of that meaning may have been there
> until the seventeenth century, but now
> believe/belief simply means the holding of certain

ideas as true. Smith wishes to reduce this
reduction of faith to the holding of certain ideas,
including whether or not a being called God
exists.(43)

Moran points out that Fowler, using Smith, in the second

chapter of Stages of Faith, separates the meanings of the

words faith and belief. Fowler and Smith contend that while

at one time both words connoted trust in the Divine, today

faith is the way a person structures his orientation to the

world, and belief is the possession of certain ideas. The

religions of the world tell peoples' stories of faith not

belief. Moran goes on to say that while he, "Resists

reducing faith to (1) assenting to truths that are not known

by reason and to (2) the objects that one holds that

way,"(44) he rejects the complete separation Smith and Fowler

make between faith and belief. Instead, he maintains that

belief and faith are both multi-valent terms in the modern

era. "The verbal form for the noun faith is to believe,"(45)

and the word belief has several meanings; trusting in a truth

not known by reason, the ordering of experience, and the

commitment to rational ideas, which are all related to faith.

Instead of separating faith from belief, form from content,

Moran wants to work at weaving together the meanings of these

two words.(46)

These comments do not exhaust the questions raised by

Fowler's work.(47) In summary, they have focused on three

areas. First, what is the nature of Fowler's study? Is

Fowler studying faith, or is a study of the stages of ego

development a more appropriate title for Fowler's work.

Second, there are problems based on the normative elements of the project. Once one creates a normative system to describe faith development the higher levels take precedence over the lower levels of development. This is appropriate for cognitive development, but it seems inappropriate to use a hierarchical model which implies valuation to describe faith in God and/or human ideas. Why should one affective way of relating to the world be viewed as superior to another? Finally, there are questions about the division Fowler makes between faith and belief. Is belief only "the possession of ideas," or does it also connote the ideas of trust and love associated with faith? The next section will examine a system called religious development proposed by Gabriel Moran which attempts to address some of these questions.

Religious Development

Gabriel Moran's book Religious Education Development, examines the broad spectrum of developmental literature and proposes a theory of development for religious education. The last part of this section noted one of Moran's criticisms of Fowler. Additionally, Moran also expresses concern about the normative elements of Fowler's system; his efforts to unify the systems of Piaget, who described structural phases which must preceed each other, and Erikson, who outlined phases that all people reach over time;(48) and Fowler's stages. Moran agrees that most people pass through stages one through four which are closely related to Piaget's cognitive stages, but he questions Fowler's construction of

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stages five and six. He also rejects Fowler's stage six

image of a "kingdom of God" and says that stages five and six

are really the same stage differentiated by the degree to

which a person acts on his faith; most adults reach some part

of this stage.(49) These comments provide the basis upon

which Moran constructs his theory. The next part of this

discussion will define Moran's key concepts and outline his

stages of religious development.

Moran proposes three main stages of religious

development, in contrast to Fowler, each of which is composed

of two moments. This is a proposed theory, it does not have

an empirical sample, as does the work by Kohlberg, Fowler, or

Piaget. Moran stays close to the framework which Fowler

developed, but he places a greater stress on the affective,

and the inspirational. The most important terms in Moran's

framework are religious and religion.

Moran gives an initial definition of religious as,

"Whatever keeps open the process of development."(50) He

uses religious as an adjective which, "reminds us that

experience always includes more than we have grasped."(51)

In other words, Moran believes that there is a limit to what

people can express about God and their lives at one moment.

An act or belief is religious if it keeps open the process of

questing to know God. In this sense Moran's definition of

religious development is circular; both words imply continual

growth and openness to learning.

In this light he differentiates religious from religion which he considers, "a set of objects."(52): the elements of practice of a given faith system. For Moran Religion and Religious become the operational terms instead of faith and belief used by Fowler.

Moran clarifies his terms further by comparing them to Fowler. He makes the point that Fowler has a hard time distinquishing the act of faith from the object of faith. He suggests that by using the word religious which refers to the personal act of faith and relation to the ultimate, and the word religion which is a system that can be acquired (stage two for Moran), one allows for cognitive analysis while preserving the affective elements of human experience.(53) This distinction provides the basis for Moran's stages.

Moran calls his first stage "The Simply Religious." This stage begins at birth and lasts till about five to seven years of age,(54) it corresponds to Fowler's pre-stage and stages one and two.(55) This stage has two moments: the physical and the mythic.

Physical contact predominates a child's early religious experience. Moran says that physical contact during this period is indispensable, "The right kinds and amounts lay the foundation for trust, care, and love."(56) Moran goes on to make two additional comments about the religious life of a child as characterized by this period:

> From the religious standpoint this period of life
> simply manifests two characteristics that apply to
> life as a whole: (1) Whatever good we have is ours

by gift, not by right, and (2) we are part of a
community of persons; we do not save ourselves, but
saving takes place, in, with, and through other
persons. . .

The religious life of the small child is one of
unending mystery and unalloyed wonder. The divine
is everywhere, manifested in life's daily miracles.
Ultimate questions of life and death, the origin
and purpose of the universe, quite naturally arise
for three - and four-year olds. No one has put
religion into them, although conditions can abort a
religious development.(57)

The mythic stage is the second moment of the "Simply

Religious," when the child starts to evoke stories and

imagery. The child relates to the world through these

stories and has not developed the concept of a personal God.

At this stage the child sees the world as a struggle between

good and evil, and life and death. The child uses a mythic

orientation to choose good and life.(58)

Moran calls his second stage, "Acquiring a Religion."

This stage runs from about ages five and six through

adolescence. Moran notes that, "most educational resources

in the modern world have been aimed at this stage of

development."(59) During this stage a person can store large

amounts of information and develops the capacity for abstract

thinking. The belief in a personal God characterizes the

beginning of the stage and fades towards its end. This stage

corresponds to some of Fowler's stages one and two, and all

of stages three and four. "The way beyond stage four opens

as individuals discover that Piaget's formal operations are

only an instrument in the search for life's deepest

meaning."(60) "Our People's Religion," and "Disbelief," form

the two movements of this stage.

Moran says that in the stage of "Our People's Belief," children, "Ask questions and receive answers that begin to clear up some of the mysteries of the universe."(61) At this stage the child begins to develop an integrated concept of the world based on the assumptions and value which parents, teachers, and society instill. Religiously, the child begins to internalize the religious myth of his culture. The myth helps give the child an identity in relation to the people. Also, at this stage a child usually has an anthropomorphic conception of God.(62)

The second moment in this stage is called "Disbelief." Moran describes Disbelief in this way:

> When the child of the second stage has built up a
> system of beliefs, more of reality intrudes and the
> young person must begin dismantling the system.
> This moment of development is not unbelief (a word
> that may not have any logically coherent meaning)
> but dis-belief, a movement guided by what the
> person is fighting against. One begins
> disbelieving the very beliefs recently acquired
> because both in their form and content they are too
> limiting for the journey toward adulthood.(63)

Moran also makes this observation about religions in relation to this stage:

> Ironically, the religious tradition sets the stage
> for its own problem by providing a coherent picture
> of the universe. Religious belief gives assurance
> that the world can be understood and that it is all
> right for the individual to trust his or her
> thinking.(64)

Specifically with relation to Judaism, Moran notes a

dynamic strength within Judaism for allowing doubt while maintaining affiliation during this stage. He says:

> Judaism, attached to definite behavior, has more room to allow doubts in the mind. Even to the extent of doubting the existence of God, a Jewish answer is: Pray to God about that.(65)

This moment in stage two allows for challenging and restructuring belief. The young person begins to move beyond this stage when he or she, "discovers that Piaget's formal operations are only an instrument in the search for life's deepest meanings,"(66) and when the person situationally leaves home or faces a crisis which forces a re-examination of previous religious perspectives.(67)

Stage three is called "Religiously Christian (Jewish, Muslim, etc.)." Moran says at this stage one, "reappropriates childhood's best attitudes," and "one no longer has a religion; one is religious in a particular way."(68) This stage corresponds to stages five and six in Fowler's system. This stage:

> Because it is an acceptance of diversity within unity, allows unending development. Tensions of dependence/independence or action/receptivity are always capable of being worked out in richer ways. . .The stage of religious adulthood is not a plateau or a peak but a journey toward the center of oneself and the universe.(69)

"Parable" and "Detachment" form the two moments of this stage. Parable indicates the mode of thought and outlook adults manifest in this moment. In this stage adults, "pass beyond the negative stance of disbelief and decide to set

their hearts on something."(70)   Moran notes that in this

stage people realize that they will never have rational

answers for everything, and begin to tolerate paradox in

their lives.   "The infant's sense of unity, the child's sense

of duality, and the adolescent's sense of rational system all

come together in adult religiousness."(71)   In this stage

religious language and symbol are not as much sacred texts as

a means for addressing the deeper meanings of life.   In this

sense, "A parabolic outlook gives one a sense of belonging to

a specific group and a particular history. . .The beliefs of

our people can now function not as blinders to a wider truth

but as a powerful stimuli to act on the behalf of all."(72)

People move beyond literal adherence to their religion, and

instead with a parabolic outlook use their religion as a

point of reference for relating to people and the world.

Moran feels that all people can reach this level of

development.   This sets the stage for the last moment in his

framework "Detachment."

Moran begins his discussion of detachment with the

statement that this term can easily be misunderstood.

Specifically, he views detachment as a common characteristic

of later life.   At this moment, "Detachment means the

willingness to wait, the determination and the patience to

stay at what one feels called to do."(73)   In this sense the

person in this moment maintains the virtues of the parabolic

stage which include a deepening of personal insight and

growth, and develops a new calm and acceptance of life.   In

many ways this corresponds to the virtue of ego integrity

described by Erikson, which includes, "the acceptance of

one's one and only life cycle as something that had to be and

that, necessarily, permitted no substitutions."(74) Moran

compares the unity of this stage to that of an infant and

says, "Now this unity is a synthesis of all of life's

elements, and prepares one for a new birth."(75) Detachment

for Moran is a final phase and not a highest level.

These stages provide a basic outline of Moran's theory

of human religious development. In light of this

presentation, and the criticism at the beginning of this

section of Fowler, it is important to make three observations

about these systems. First, the systems are highly similar.

Moran uses much of the same research as Fowler and points to

many of the same characteristics of cognitive development as

Fowler. This similarity is particularly apparent in the

initial stages of their systems where both draw heavily on

the work of Piaget and the structuralists. Second, Moran

makes a pointed effort to avoid the hierarchical tone in his

system which pervades that of Fowler's. Fowler focuses on

the movement between stages and presents stage six,

"Universalizing" Faith/ "the Kingdom of God," as the highest

level. Moran's work has a tone much more reminiscent of

Erikson. He notes that biological and cognitive development

effect the affective world, but he is more concerned with

offering a pattern of human religious life, than of creating

a scale for normative use. And third, both of the systems

have been developed primarily based on subjects who adhere to Western religions. There is no research to prove that these systems encompass Eastern religions and are universally valid. The next section will examine the implications of these systems for adult religious education.

Implications

This section will discuss the implications of Fowler's and Moran's theories for teaching adults about God and theology. Both systems described phases of adult development as they relate to faith and religion. The most startling implication of both systems is that adults change and develop after adolescence; the systems show that people develop more complex and integrated outlooks on life as they mature. For adult religious education this means that people also need to learn more about religion and theology as they develop. Conceptions of God and the universe learned during childhood will no longer function satisfactorally as people form more integrated world views. Religious education can expose people to new ideas about God and help them incorporate these ideas into their life systems. Belief in God does not have to end with childhood. This section will first consider Fowler and then Moran.

Four stages within Fowler's system have particular significance for adult education. These are levels three, Synthetical-Conventional faith, through level six, Universalizing faith. This analysis will first look at the descriptive implications of each stage, and then comment on

the normative implications of Fowler's theory. Following this commentary on Fowler the section will focus on Moran's theory.

Synthetic-Conventional faith is the first stage with particular relevance for teaching adults about religion. This stage usually parallels adolescence, but for some adults it represents their faith outlook during their entire lifetime. At this stage of faith the person deals with family and various social groups; faith must interpret the interrelations between these groups. Generally authority comes from outside the individual.

Ruth Haunz suggests that a religious concept of God is most appropriate for many people at this stage. The person views God with awe and a sense of mystery. A transcendent God who controls the world is an appropriate God concept for people in this stage of development because people see all authority in their lives as external to them. God is also seen as a ruler outside of the person.(76) This stage corresponds to much of the liturgy of a traditional Jewish service. Within, the High Holyday liturgy in particular, the image of God as "Our Father, our King," and the One who inscribes us in the Book of Life, parallels this conception. Fowler notes that the danger of this stage is that a person can be exploited by a religious authority figure, or may develop a sense of despair if religious expectations are unfulfilled.(77) The educator functions as a parent at this stage: providing beneficent religious guidance, and helping

the person sort out religious contradictions that may arise from a supernatural concept of God. A sensitive educator will be aware that a person is in the process of movement from an external God concept which the person adapts from society, toward developing an internalized God concept. A shift in role from teacher to mentor or guide will be needed as a person approaches stage four.

Fowler calls stage four Individuative-Reflexive faith. During this stage a person's locus of authority shifts from external figures to the self internally. The person distances himself from previous authority figures and develops an "executive ego."(78) A process model where the person is viewed as a co-partner in responsibility with God might be an effective model for this stage of development.(79) Also at this stage the educator might want to present several models of God for the learner. This affirms the learner's individual responsibility and independence, which is also important for adult education, and shows the learner that it is possible to believe in God as other than the authority figure of stage three. At this stage the learner is trying to develop a consistent internal ideology; by the presentation of options the learner can adapt the ideology which seems most consistent with his/her life experience.

At stage five the learner develops Conjunctive faith. A person usually does not move into this stage until at least thirty, when he/she has experienced some defeat and failure

in life. During this stage a person integrates the ideology developed in stage four with the unconscious. At this stage a person can resonant with various ideologies and realizes that no one ideology will provide the answers to all of life's questions. Paradox characterizes thinking at this stage.(80)

> A highly personal model of God would be supportive of this stage. A person's structure of faith is internalized and a personal God can better be a part of such an internal structure. This would eliminate a deistic model and perhaps models such as king, lawgiver, and ruler. More appropriate would be friend, husband, mother, or companion.(81)

At this stage also, the religious educator may again want to present a variety of models of God for the learner. The person is trying to reconstruct his or her faith orientation based on life experience and the unconscious. The presentation of a variety of options will give the person material to develop a personal eclectic or paradoxical model of God which is appropriate for this stage of development.

Universalizing faith represents Fowler's highest level of development. At this stage the person develops a universal principle which pervades his or her interactions with all humanity. This is an unselfconscious stage where the person lovingly accepts God and people. It is reached by very few people. Very personal models of God are appropriate for this stage, but models are generally less important for this stage than for the other stages.(82) By the time a person reaches stage six he or she is at a self-actualizing level of faith where the presence of a guide or teacher is

almost superfluous.

The descriptive versus normative use of Fowler's system represents an area of contention in religious education. Should the educator use Fowler's research as a guide for understanding the developmental processes of the learner or should the research be used as a hierarchy for stimulating growth through the stages. Fowler suggests that his system can and should be used as a normative model to project and encourage growth.(83) Other writers challenge this idea and contend that faith is not a sphere for normative development.(84) Based on my understanding of the research I do not belief this conflict can be adequately resolved at the present time. However, I believe that Fowler's system should be used as a descriptive tool and not as a normative model. My reasons are twofold. First, I reject the notion that one type of faith is higher or better than another. To use the model as a normative tool assumes this at an underlying level. Fowler could respond that a more complex or integrated model is superior to one that is less sophisticated. I believe that this is really a subjective judgement and that the form of faith is an individual decision. Second, I am generally reluctant to trust models as definitive interpretations of human experience. The use of a model of faith development as a normative tool leads to classification and objectification of people. I think this is counter productive to religious education which strives to see each person as a unique individual in relationship with

the Divine. When one uses a model as a normative tool the model can too easily take the precedence over the person. Based on this reasoning this thesis will use Fowler's system as a descriptive tool for education to help understand the orientations and interests of adult learners.

Gabriel Moran's system described three phases of religious development divided into six moments. His theory built on the work of various developmental theorists from the realms of education, psychology and morality. He developed his theory as a response to the normative quality of Fowler's work. At many places his phases parallel Fowler's, and at other points he reconstructs Fowler's and other researchers' stages. The following discussion will compare Moran to Fowler, and describe the implications of Moran's theory.

Moran's second stage, "Acquiring a Religion," takes place during adolescences and lays the foundation for adult religious development. This stage possesses two moments, Our People's Religion, and Disbelief. Moran gives this description of education's agendas during the phase of "Our People's Religion:"

> The Jewish, Muslim, or Christian child should
> acquire a sense of the past through the scriptures
> and their commentaries as well as through a
> behavioral code that includes ancient rituals.
> Such specific teachings and behavioral disciplines
> are by definition conservative. Many
> liberal-minded adults find restrictions of doctrine
> and moral prohibition distasteful. They forget
> that they became liberal by defining their position
> in relation to specific beliefs and codes. At a
> certain stage within religious development everyone

can use a definite religious position from which to
define his or her personal religious stance.

The teacher of religion at this point is neither
indoctrinator nor someone simply sharing or holding
a discussion. Rather, the attitude of the teacher
of religion is in effect the following: "I and my
people are not wrong. My way is not a false way.
I know it is true for me because I have experienced
it. I am going to show you a world that does
exist. I want you to see that world because it is
worth seeing. I want to invite you to join that
way. You can help this people by discovering ways
to resist the inevitable bias that is part of every
tradition. There is an adventure to join in
finding closer approximations of the truth."(85)

This phase corresponds to Fowler's Synthetic-Conven-

tional faith. Moran's description recognizes that the person

at this stage relies on external figures to interpret his or

her religious experience. Moran says that a person needs a

religion and that a spirit of involvement in a particular

truth instead of indoctrination is the most appropriate means

for instruction at this level.

Moran uses the word "systematic" to define the mode of

religious instruction during the Disbelief moment of this

stage. This is a time when an adolescent begins to find the

flaws in the religious system presented in the previous

stage.(86) He suggests at this phase that the educator

functions on an intellectual level with the learner. People

at this stage have a desire to order experience and theology

helps meet this need. Moran also rejects the idea of a

dramatic religious conversion. He prefers the notion of

several conversions or faith cycles in a person's life.

Additionally Moran sees the dynamic represented by the word

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"disbelief" at this stage. Inevitably the learner will reassess previous models.(87)

This dynamic corresponds in large part to Fowler's Individuative-Reflective faith. The person is beginning to take individual responsibility, and to internalize authority. (This parallels Knowles belief that people take more responsibility for themselves and their education as they move from child to adulthood.)(88) As I mentioned in the discussion of Fowler, I believe the presentation of various religious options would be helpful at this stage. In this way the learner can discover that Judaism offers variety beyond an authoritarian image of God.

The third stage in Moran's system is "Religiously Christian (Jewish, Muslim). Parable, and Detachment form the two moments during this stage. During this stage, one, "reappropriates childhood's best attitudes," and "one no longer has a religion; one is religious in a particular way."(89) Moran calls this the period of religious adulthood. A person is finished with formal education and begins the journey of adult life.

During the first moment of this period the person moves out of adolescence. He or she begins to look beyond the meaning of the scriptural texts and doctrines learned in previous stages. Moran says:

> The religious education principle re-emerges in full paradox. Religious education is a process of de-absolutizing answers, even the best of religious answers that can be learned in school.(90)

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As stated previously, Moran believes that something is religious if it "Keeps open the process of development."(91) In this sense, during the adult years life itself keeps open the possibility of development. Through constant struggles, successes, and failures in life a person needs to constantly grow and redefine his or her conception of reality. During this phase there is less need for formal religious instruction, a person may drift from religion at the beginning of the period and slowly redevelop a religious orientation as maturity increases. "Conversations with friends, books, and magazines, or weekly instruction within religious services may suffice for religious education at this age."(92) Overall Moran contends that:

> Religious education at this stage is not the building of one's case to score against one's adversaries. It is a journey of compassion for every human being who, no matter what his or her beliefs, is recognized, accepted, and loved as a fellow traveler on this earth.(93)

This stage differs slightly and lacks some of the detail of Fowler's fifth stage. For Fowler at this stage one is internalizing an ideology and negotiating paradox. His definition has the feeling of a struggle to determine a unified principle. Moran sees this stage as a constant circling back. One attempts to find deeper and deeper levels of meaning. Based on Moran's definition education which includes varying beliefs in the pursuit of "peace and love"(94) will be appropriate for this stage.

Centering is the second moment of this stage. This term

implies a "final recapitulation at life's center."(95) At

this stage a person generally has a greater acceptance of and

patience with life which enables a more profound level of

reflection. Moran believes that one of the tasks of

religious education during this period is to keep the elderly

in touch with the community. People do not fear death as

much as isolation: The young and the old have important

beliefs to give to each other.(96) In terms of specific

content for adults Moran notes:

> Of most importance here, no topic will be of
> greater interest than religious writing. The old
> don't necessarily want to take courses on death.
> Many of them are interested in theology, now as an
> aesthetic rather than an ideological work, biblical
> exegesis which the old now have a greater capacity
> to understand, and mystical writing which testifies
> to a final integrity.(97)

It is important to note that this stage is much more

universal than Fowler's sixth stage, Universaling faith.

Like Erikson's stage "Ego integrity vs. despair," this is a

stage which all people attain. This reflects the more

descriptive bent in Moran's work.

In summary, this section has examined the implications

of Fowler's and Moran's theories for adult religious

education. It presented a description of each stage the

writers described and assessed the form and content of

learning which could be applicable for each stage. It

stressed that religious education needs to be a life long

process as people grow and need to integrate new experiences

into their world view. Aproaches which affirm the

individual, incorporate experience, and provide for a variety
of interpretations of God and religion generally seem to be
the most appropriate. The next chapters will discuss the
goals of adult Jewish education and teaching Jewish theology.
They will present new information and incorporate the
material from this section.

NOTES

(1) James Fowler, _Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning_, p. 313.

(2) Ibid., p. 4.

(3) Ibid., p. 14.

(4) Ibid., p. 9.

(5) Ibid., p. 11.

(6) Ibid., p. 33.

(7) Ibid., pp. 16-17.

(8) Ibid., pp. 244-245.

(9) Ibid., p. 121.

(10) Ibid., p. 121.

(11) Ibid., p. 133.

(12) Ruth Ann Haunz, "Development of Some Models of God and Suggested Relationships to James Fowler's Stages of Faith Development," _Religious Education_, 73, 650.

(13) Fowler, op. cit., p. 134.

(14) Ibid., p. 134.

(15) Ibid., p. 149.

(16) Haunz, op. cit., p. 651.

(17) Fowler, op. cit., pp. 149-150.

(18) Ibid., p. 172.

(19) Ibid., pp. 172-173.

(20) Haunz, op. cit., p. 652.

(21) Fowler, op. cit., pp. 174-178.

(22) Ibid., p. 179.

(23) Ibid., p. 197.

(24) Ibid., p. 198.

(25) Ibid., p. 198.

(26) Ibid., p. 201.

(27) Haunz, op. cit., pp. 653-654.

(28) Fowler, op. cit., p. 276.

(29) Ibid., p. 276.

(30) Ibid., p. 276.

(31) Ibid., pp. 282-285.

(32) Ibid., p. 277.

(33) Ibid., p. 279.

(34) Ibid., pp. 282-285.

(35) Ibid., p. 4.

(36) James E. Loder, "Conversations on Fowler's Stages of Faith and Loder's Transforming Moment," Religious Education, 77, 135.

(37) Ibid., p. 135-136.

(38) Ibid., p. 137.

(39) See: Robert Wuthnow, in Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle, ed., Kenneth Sttokes, pp. 218-220; and Gabriel Moran, Religious Adult Education, pp. 122-123, and 133-138.

(40) Fowler, op. cit., p. 199.

(41) Moran, op. cit., p. 112.

(42) Fowler, op. cit., p. 211.

(43) Moran, op. cit., p. 123.

(44) Ibid., p. 123.

(45) Ibid., p. 124.

(46) For a fuller discussion see Moran, pp. 122-126.

(47) See: Walter E. Conn, "Affectivity in Kohlberg and Fowler," Religious Education, 76:33 - 48; A. Panzarells, "Reactions to Fowler's "Psychological Perspectives on the

Faith Development of Children," in B. Marthaler and M.
Sawicki (eds.), <u>Catechesis: Realities and Visions</u>, pp.
83-86; A. McBride and J. E. Hennessy, "Reactions" to Fowler's
"Stages in Faith," in T. C. Hennesy (ed.), <u>Values and Moral
Development</u>, pp. 211-223.

(48) Moran, op. cit., pp. 107-113.

(49) Ibid., pp. 117-121.

(50) Ibid., p. 129.

(51) Ibid., p. 130.

(52) Ibid., p. 130.

(53) Ibid., pp. 133-135.

(54) Ibid., p. 146.

(55) Ibid., p. 132.

(56) Ibid., p. 147.

(57) Ibid., pp. 146-147.

(58) Ibid., pp. 147-148.

(59) Ibid., p. 148.

(60) Ibid., p. 132.

(61) Ibid., p. 148.

(62) Ibid., pp. 149-150.

(63) Ibid., p. 150.

(64) Ibid., p. 151.

(65) Ibid., p. 151.

(66) Ibid., p. 132.

(67) Ibid., p. 152.

(68) Ibid., p. 153.

(69) Ibid., p. 132.

(70) Ibid., p. 153.

(71) Ibid., p. 153.

(72) Ibid., p. 154.

(73) Ibid., p. 155.

(74) Erik Erikson, Childhood and Society, p. 252.

(75) Moran, op. cit., p. 155.

(76) Haunz, op. cit., pp. 651-652.

(77) Fowler, op. cit., pp. 172-173.

(78) Ibid., p. 179.

(79) Haunz, op. cit., p. 652.

(80) Fowler, op. cit., pp. 197-198.

(81) Haunz, op. cit., p. 653.

(82) Ibid., p. 654.

(83) Fowler, op. cit., p. 211.

(84) Moran, op. cit., p. 112.

(85) Ibid., p. 200.

(86) Ibid., p. 150.

(87) Ibid., pp. 202-204.

(88) Malcolm Knowles, The Adult Learner - A Neglected Species, 2nd ed., pp. 55-59.

(89) Ibid., p. 153.

(90) Ibid., p. 204.

(91) Ibid., p. 129.

(92) Ibid., p. 205.

(93) Ibid., p. 205.

(94) Ibid., p. 204.

(95) Ibid., p. 206.

(96) Ibid., pp. 206-207.

(97) Ibid., p. 207.

CHAPTER FOUR

Jewish Adult Education

To this point, this thesis has surveyed secular
literature about adult development and literature about faith
development. This chapter will focus on the Jewish learner
and the goals of adult Jewish education. In a sense adult
Jewish education is both a very old and a very new field.
Historically, Jewish adult education dates to the time of
Josiah and the reading of the Book of Deuteronomy, and to the
academies at Yavneh and in Babylon.(1) However, the critical
study of adult Jewish education as an academic discipline is
a new and relatively unexplored field.(2) Samuel Cohen notes
in particular, "Eight doctoral theses, a half-dozen Master's
theses, and another half dozen surveys, hardly constitute a
significant body of research."(3) In this tentative light,
this chapter will give a demographic/motivational description
of the Jewish adult learner, and present a summary of goals
for Jewish adult education.

Marvin Beckerman offered a demographic/motivational
analysis of Jewish learners based on a study conducted by the
National Opinion Research Center. The study showed that
adults with higher educational levels, jobs in the white
collar sector, incomes above the national average, and
residence in large metropolitan areas (particularly suburbs),

tended to participate in adult education programs at higher levels.(4) Beckerman demonstrated that as a group the Jewish community exhibits these characteristics at a higher level than most other ethnic/religious groups in the country. However, while Jews participate at higher levels in general adult education programs, the study showed that Jews participate at lower levels in religious studies. Beckerman concluded that since most adult Jewish education is sponsered by synagogues he would expect participation to be relatively low, in programs as they currently exist.(5)

Samuel Cohen in a more recent article gave a more optimistic picture of participation in adult Jewish education. He noted that Jews in the 1970's are particularly concerned with Jewish identity and as a result participation is increasing in adult education programs. He suggested that at least 600,000 Jews participate in some Jewish adult education program annually (five or six sessions), out of an estimated Jewish population of 5,732,000.(6) These studies demonstrated that Jews are generally described as "white collar", more highly educated, and urban, and that there is growing interest in adult Jewish education.

A further analysis of the Jewish adult learner comes from Martha White. White describes four orientations of Jewish adult learners. The first is the "Jewish Basic Learner." "Jewish basic learners have demonstrated high levels of learning success in secular life, but have limited or no formal Jewish learning."(7) This type of learner often

needs to overcome past negative learning experiences.
Children entering religious school or life transitions may
inspire the learner to become involved in adult education.
Good teaching and peer group support are important for this
learner.(8)

White next describes "Prior Jewish Learners." "Prior
Jewish learners are those with a prior knowledge who wish to
upgrade their education."(9) Learners at this stage want to
learn for the sake of learning. They enjoy in-depth
discussion, lecture, and self-directed programs. They are
interested in integrating Jewish ideas and values into their
lives.(10)

"The main focus of Recreational Jewish Learners is
social rather than scholarly. These learners generally
comprise a wide age range and seek a community of shared
values and attitudes."(11) Recreational Jewish Learners want
to learn because the process is fun, and because they want to
meet other people. This is the largest group of
learners.(12)

The last group are "Homiletic and Inspirational
Learners." "The learners in this fourth category have
interests which generally involve a search for comfort with
some troubling problem."(13) Comfort and psychological
support form two important dynamics for learners in this
setting. White suggests a text approach with discussion for
Homiletic learners.(14)

The first part of this section has described the

motivational/demographic make-up of Jewish learners. In

general there seems to be growing interest in Jewish adult

education from both a professional and lay perspective.

Simultaneously adults enter Jewish adult education programs

with a variety of backgrounds, needs, and interests. The

second part of this section will discuss the goals of Jewish

adult education.

The goals of adult Jewish education vary depending on

the movement or group organizing a program. Huey B. Long

provided a particularly concise account of how each movement

views adult Jewish education in an analysis of literature for

the ERIC Clearing House on Adult Education:

> Since 1921 agreement appears to have been reached
> concerning the basic aims of Jewish adult education
> (76). The objectives are psychological reassurance
> for the individual Jew; reducing self-doubt and
> even self-hatred; fostering an intellectual loyalty
> to the Jewish community; restoration of the
> traditional Jewish ideal of "learning for its own
> sake"; drawing members closer to their synagogue
> and making prayer and worship a significant part of
> their lives (51 p. 149). The three major American
> Jewish groups, Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform,
> have established a different priority among the
> four purposes listed above.

> The points of emphasis according to the three
> groups have been distinguished by Rabbi Leon
> Feldman, as summarized by Knowles:

> Orthodox Jews emphasize the information and
> training necessary for the full observance of
> traditional Jewish laws, customs and observances.
> Reform Jews. . .emphasize 'cultural' Judaism rather
> than observances, problems of relationships between
> Jews and non-Jews, and problems of ethics and
> character building. Conservative Jews generally
> stand midway between the Orthodox and Reform
> ideologies, balancing observance and adult
> education for 'customs' and emphasizing the
> importance of understanding Jewish history (51, p.

149).(15)

Long's analysis indicates that the various movements share a common set of aims for Jewish education and that they prioritize these aims based on their ideologies/theologies. In general more traditional groups emphasize texts study and "Torah Li'shmah," as primary goals, and more liberal groups focus first on Jewish identity and values. Examination of the work of several movements and writers illustrates this trend.

The UAHC-CCAR Commission on Jewish Education listed three basic aims of Jewish adult education programs:

> Increasing identification, participation, and
> emotional satisfaction, a feeling that being Jewish
> is a challenging but rewarding experience, that
> Judaism makes a difference in our lives and
> relationships with others.
>
> Increasing knowledge, understanding, and interest
> in the basic elements of Jewish learning --
> history, literature, Hebrew, worship, and so on --
> for their own sake (Torah lishmah)
>
> Continuing the search for new and deeper insights
> into what it means to be Jewish.(16)

Similarly, Harold Krantzler, in the UAHC's guide for congregational adult education committees described the place of adult Jewish education as threefold. First, Jewish study as a discipline. Reform Jews are free to change and reinterpret tradition, but this must be done with knowledge of our history and traditions. Second, adult Jewish education provides "Jewishly literate leadership." These leaders, "Provide, not only the administrative leadership,

but also set the educational and emotional 'tone' of the congregation."(17)   And finally adult education instills a feeling of Klal Yisrael in Reform Jews.   Education helps Reform Jews feel part of the broader Jewish community.(18)

Samuel Dinin, the Dean of the University of Judaism, offered an additional perspective on the goals of Jewish education in general, in a symposium for the 50th jubilee of Dropsie College.   His goals included: the creative survival of the Jewish people in America, instilling the American spirit of democracy, integrating the student into the life of the Jewish people, teaching "Torah" in the broadest sense, helping the student integrate Jewish values in response to modern problems, concern for the state of Israel, teaching Hebrew, and teaching mitzvot/folkways.(19)   While this essay comes from the 1950's it maintains a more "traditional" orientation to Jewish learning.

In an address to the Religious Education Association, Simon Greenberg, of the JTS Schoken Institute, in Jerusalem, emphasized Talmud Torah as a primary value in adult Jewish education.   Greenberg said:

> Now when the Rabbis speak of the Jew's life long obligation, they do not have in mind education as thus understood.   They speak of "Talmud Torah" of the study of the Torah as the life long obligation. The emphasis then is upon the concept of study as a life long obligation, and not of the study of anything, but rather of study of Torah. . . .
>
> Talmud Torah implies that knowledge of and meditation upon the Torah are their own highest end.   Just as one does not read a poem or listen to music in order to achieve thereby something more desirable than the reading of the poem or the

listening to the music, thus one does not study
Torah in order to achieve thereby something more
desirable than the act of study itself.(20)

These passages illustrate the varieties of emphasis in
the conceptualization of the goals of adult Jewish education.
More tradition writers focus on "Talmud Torah," study for its
own sake, and instruction in religious observance as the aims
of adult Jewish education. Liberal writers also focus on
"Talmud Torah," but in addition include a strong concern for
Jewish identity as a primary goal of adult Jewish education.

   This thesis will take a liberal orientation to the goals
of Jewish adult education based on the work of the UAHC-CCAR
Commission on Education. It will take this orientation based
on the description of the Jewish learner by Martha White and
the description of adult religious development by Fowler and
Moran. The adult Jewish learner, particularly in a Reform
context, is looking for emotional/psychological support in
addition to cognitive knowledge. The liberal orientation
combines affective concern for the student's background and
place in life, with a cognitive concern to impart Jewish
learning.(21) In this way students who are entering an adult
education setting for the first time, as well as more
advanced learners can share an experience geared to their
needs. This orientation is also particularly significant in
light of the presentation of developmental literature. This
literature indicates that religious education can help people
deal with personal crises and problems. The liberal concern
for the "emotional satisfaction," and identity development of

the learner is also particularly relevant based on this research. The next Chapter will discuss the methodology for teaching Jewish theology.

NOTES

(1) Marvin M. Beckerman, "Adult Jewish Education: Present and Future Directions," Religious Education, 68; 85-86.

(2) Huey B. Long, Adult Education in Church and Synagogue: A Review of Selected Recent Literature.

(3) Samuel I. Cohen, "Adult Jewish Education - 1976," Religious Education, 72:149.

(4) Beckerman, op. cit., pp. 90-91.

(5) Ibid., pp. 91-94.

(6) Cohen, op. cit., pp. 150-151.

(7) Martha White, "Adult Education," in Jewish Principle's Handbook, p. 474.

(8) Ibid., p. 474.

(9) Ibid., p. 474.

(10) Ibid., p. 474.

(11) Ibid., p. 474.

(12) Ibid., p. 474.

(13) Ibid., p. 474.

(14) Ibid., p. 474.

(15) Long, op.cit., p.

(16) UAHC-CCAR Department of Continuing Education, "Philosophy and Goals," Bulletin No. 1, p. 1.

(17) Harold I. Krantzler, Your Congregation's Adult Education Committee, p. 5.

(18) Ibid., pp. 5-6.

(19) Samuel Dinin, in Samuel Dinin (ed.), The Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning: Written Symposium on "The Goals of Jewish Education," pp. 10-13.

(20) Simon Greenberg, "Lifetime Education as Conceived in the Jewish Tradition," Religious Education, 68: 341-342.

(21) UAHC-CCAR, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

CHAPTER FIVE

Jewish Theology

This Chapter will review various methodologies for
teaching Jewish theology and present the methodology for this
thesis. Two prefatory notes are important. First, unlike
Holocaust studies,(1) or Jewish womens' studies(2) almost no
material has been published about the goals or methodology
for teaching Jewish theology. Second, in this sense Jewish
theology is a paradoxical field. While very little has been
written about teaching in this area, there is a long
tradition of Jewish philosophy/theology beginning with Philo
and continuing into the modern era. This phenomenon
parallels the status of research in adult Jewish education as
discussed in the previous section. In light of the lack of
research, this Chapter will examine the methodology expressed
in a number of recent works in Jewish theology to assess
possible teaching options. The methodologies can be called:
single-normativism, multiple-normativism, atomism, and
responsivism.

Single-normativism refers to a methodology where the
author presents a single point of view about Jewish theology.
In modern writings on theology for popular audiences this
methodology appears on the traditional side in works like
This is my God, by Herman Wouk and Eight Questions People Ask

About Judaism, by Prager and Telushkin. Neither of these works is an effort on systematic theology. Wouk presents a personalized account of Orthodox Judaism, and Prager and Telushkin, while they deal with questions about belief in God and theodicy, write at a popular more than a critical level. However, both of these efforts illustrate single-normativism. The teacher can present a single ideology for the learners to respond to and integrate.

A more liberal version of single-normativism appears in Ever Since Sinai, by Jakob Petuchowski. Petuchowski interprets the meaning of Torah within the rabbinic context and in light of modern scholarship. The last chapter of the work offers a conceptualization for religious observance for Liberal Jews. The key point here is not as much the contents of the works as the use of a relatively systematic single approach to theology for learners to consider and adapt to.

Multiple-normativism forms the second methodology for teaching Jewish theology. This appears in a synthetic form in the works of William Kaufman, Contemporary Jewish Philosophies, and Eugene Borowitz, Liberal Judaism and Choices in Modern Jewish Thought: A Partisan Guide. In these works the authors summarize and systematize the works of various Jewish thinkers. Kaufman divides Jewish philosophy into the realms of the existentialists, and those who focus on transcendence. He evaluates the thinkers based on inner consistency, empirical validity, and pragmatic value.(3) Liberal Judaism is Borowitz's work for the

knowledgeable lay reader. He divides the work into four
major sections, Jewish people, God, Bible, and practice, and
uses a question and answer format within each section.
Borowitz gives an overview of each question he raises within
Jewish literature and modern systematic responses from Leo
Baeck, Martin Buber, Mordecai Kaplan, Abraham Heschel, and at
times himself. Choices in Modern Jewish Thought, organizes
itself by the thinker and looks at systematic and
non-systematic approaches to modern Jewish thought.

Jacob Neusner uses an anthology approach to
multiple-normativism in Understanding Jewish Theology. In
this work he uses the traditional categories of God, Torah,
and Israel, and presents the writings of various theologians
dealing first with classical and second with modern
theological issues. In summary, the normative approach
presents either single or multiple standards of Jewish
theology. The learner grows by either accepting the
philosophy of a given thinker, or integrating parts of a
philosophy into his or her life perspective.

Atomism is essential a sub-form of the normative
methodology. Within this approach the writer focuses on one
or two particular theological issues. This type of
methodology is reflected in the later work of Emil
Fackenheim, God's Presence in History, and The Jewish Return
into History, where Fackenheim focuses mainly on the
Holocaust, "The Commanding Voice," and Israel. This approach
is also reflected to a degree in Harold Kushner's When Bad

<u>Things Happen to Good People</u>. Kushner presents a naturalist type God concept and uses this to interpret suffering in the world. In contrast to the single or multiple normative approaches which give an entire system this methodology focuses on a single aspect of Jewish theology or belief.

Eugene Borowitz criticizes the atomist approach in "The Problem of the Form of a Jewish Theology." He notes that in the modern era there has been a problem creating a framework for Jewish theological discussion. As a result some writers suggest that the present generation should focus on one aspect of Jewish theology and elucidate that area. Borowitz rejects this idea and says, "While much can be learned by concentrating on a single religious motif and studying it in depth, its proper function and general significance emerge only when it is seen in the total context of the thought of which it is a part."(4) The problem of atomism is that it is difficult to understand the import of a single idea out of its broader context.

Responsive theology is a fourth possible methodology. This is a theory proposed by S. Daniel Breslauer. Breslauer notes that normative theology is usually concerned with validating itself, and is often confined to an intellectual elite. In contrast, responsive theology is more concerned with theology evoked by individual experience. He compares this to "depth-theology" described by Heschel:

> The focus is, rather, on the general human need to
> serve God, the restlessness with law, the problem
> of prayer as one besetting all people.

"Theologies divide us," Heschel wrote;
"depth-theology unites us." He reflected on Jewish
experiences in order to discover their
depth-theological meaning, and allowed that meaning
to be evoked by his use of language, his imagistic
vividness, his probing of the roots of each
experience. He refused, often to the distress of
his readers, to structure his theology in clearly
normative ways.(5)

Breslauer suggests that an autobiographical appraoch to theology which uses the persons life experience, as presented in the works of Arthur Waskow and Richard Rubenstein, provides one example of responsive theology. He also suggests the examination of various texts, narrative, legal, and liturgical, as a means to stimulate self awareness in the learner. In general, Breslauer believes that the task of responsive theology is to stimulate the learner to build his or her own interpretation of the world and Jewish experience. There is a danger of ego-centricity in this approach, but it opens the door to encounter with Jewish theology on a more universal level.(6)

This section has presented four possible methodologies for a course in modern Jewish theology. Single-normativism uses an individual systematic approach to Judaism. Multiple-normativism gives a variety of systems organized by topic, or by thinker; using synthesis or anthology. Atomism, examines a single idea or motif in Jewish theology. And, responsivism, which interprets Jewish theology and tradition in the prism of individual experience. These methodologies in some ways overlap, and in others can be mutually

exclusive.

This thesis will use a multiple-normative methodology based on topic/question areas which incorporates responsivism. The course will be organized by topic areas with a shared emphasis on understanding how several systematic thinkers approach Judaism and developing a personal interpretation of Jewish theology. The advantages and implications of this approach are fourfold. First, the organization by topic areas meets the learners need for relevance and immediate application of knowledge. The learner does not need to study a variety of individual thinkers in a subject oriented setting and apply the knowledge about their perspectives on Judaism at a later date. Second, the presentation of multiple thinkers meets the needs of the learner from a faith development perspective. At stage four, Individuative-Reflective the learner is trying to internalize a religious ideology. The presentation of various options shows the learner that there are God concepts beyond the authority model characteristic of stage three, and respects the learners need to choose and develop an internal locus of authority. This is also advantageous for learners at stage five, Conjunctive faith. They are beginning to learn that no one ideology is sufficient to explain all of life's experiences. Multiple options gives the learner material with which to develop a personal eclectic faith stance.

Next, the presentation of various options meets the particular needs of Jewish learners both at a basic and at an

advanced level of learning. For the basic learner exposure
to various options shows the learner that Judaism has more to
offer than the authoritarian God often associated with the
liturgy. Also, advanced learners will be challenged by the
intellectual stimulation.

Finally, the responsivistic perspective affirms the
learners life experience. Knowles emphasizes that adults
need to use their personal life experience as part of their
learning. This gives them an added frame of reference, and
it affirms them as people. The responsivistic perspective
stresses that theology is for everyone, that everyone can
understand God ideas and develop an integrate Jewish world
view. The next Chapter will present a synthesis of the
various fields presented and analyze their implications as a
whole for the form and content of the course.

NOTES

(1) See: Robert S. Hirt and Thomas Kessner, _Issues in Teaching the Holocaust: A guide._

(2) See: Ellen Sue Levi Elwell and Edward Levenson, _The Jewish Women's Studies Guide._

(3) William E. Kaufman, _Contemporary Jewish Philosophies_, Chapter 2.

(4) Eugene B. Borowitz, "The Problem of the Form of a Jewish Theology," _HUCA_ 40-41: 391.

(5) S. Daniel Breslauer, "Alternatives in Jewish Theology," _Judaism_, 30: 236.

(6) Ibid., p. 236-245.

CHAPTER SIX

Form and Content of the Course

This chapter will present the underlying assumptions for
the form and content of the course. It represents a
synthesis of all of the material thus presented in the
thesis. The discussion of form will present underlying
assumptions based on psycho-social development, educational
theory, and faith/religious development. The discussion of
the course content will briefly review the discussion of the
needs for the course, and will present topic areas for the
course based on the underlying assumptions and the need for
the course. This material provides a theoretical framework
for the presentation of the lessons themselves in the last
section of the thesis.

Fundamental Assumptions

This section will present five primary and two secondary
assumptions which govern the form of the presentation for a
course in modern Jewish theology. I use the word "form" to
refer to, the goals of the teacher in his or her interactions
with the learners, and in the learners interactions with each
other. These five assumptions are: (1) the course should
assist people to clarify their beliefs about God; (2) the
course should present various views about God and God ideas;

(3) the course should give a holistic presentation covering many theological rubrics; (4) the course should have a high level of learner participation; and (5) the course should enfranchise people and diffuse fears of learning. In addition to these primary assumptions the structure of the course should also be governed by two secondary assumptions: (1) the nature of the environment can facilitate or impede learning, and (2) the individual's life situation can influence his or her conception of God. This section will explain each of these assumptions and present its theoretical basis.

Assumption 1. A course in modern Jewish theology should assist people to clarify their beliefs about God. This assumption comes primarily from the work of Fowler, faith development, and Moran, religious development. Both authors suggest that people move through various stages in the development of their faith systems which evolve from simpler to more paradoxical and integrated levels. Based on this research a course in modern Jewish theology should help people clarify their beliefs about God in a manner appropriate to the individual's particular stage of development. This would occur as follows based on their systems.

Clarification of one's beliefs about God is particularly relevant at three stages of Fowler's taxonomy. These are: stage three, Synthetic-Conventional faith; stage 4, Individuative-Reflective faith; and stage 5, Conjunctive

faith. These stages generally occur from adolescence through adulthood.

Fowler calls the third stage of his taxonomy Synthetic-Conventional faith. At this stage a person functions with a single ideology which he or she uses as a filter to interpret events in life and in the world. A fundamentalist belief in an omnipresent and transcendent God would be an example of this type of belief structure. This stage usually occurs during adolescence, but may be the terminal stage for some people.(1) For people at this level of development, the task of the teacher is to help them clarify their beliefs about God. At this level the teacher should accept the learner's beliefs and help him or her apply this belief system to various situations. The goal is to clarify beliefs so the person can enhance life and face troubles in life with a more integrated belief system.

Stage four for Fowler is called Individuative-Reflective faith. In this stage a person moves from an adolescent type, ideology defined by his or her peer group and outside authorities, to an internally based belief system. This stage focuses on rationally based world views and demythologizes beliefs from previous stages. Often this stage occurs at the beginning of the transition to adulthood.(2) At this stage clarification takes the form of helping a person see the problems with his or her previous belief system, and explore the possibilities of a new world view. The person is often rejecting a mythical view of the

world, and clarification helps in the formation of an internally based rational view of God and the world.

Clarification of beliefs about God is also significant for Fowler's fifth stage Conjunctive faith. At this stage a person attempts to integrate the affective elements of youth with the cognitive parts of adulthood. A person has often experienced joy and sorrow in life and sees the difficulties involved in applying universal truths to all situations. An appreciation of paradox characterizes this stage.(3) Here clarification takes the form of helping a person understand the ramifications of different competing ideologies. The goal of the teacher is to help the learner explore and appreciate the various sides of the paradoxes he or she finds in a faith system.

Clarification applies to four stages of development as described by Moran. These are: Our People's Belief, Disbelief, Parable, and Detachment. The operational characteristics of these stages to a large degree resemble those described by Fowler. Moran differs from Fowler by suggesting that all people reach all stages, where Fowler suggests people may stop at a given stage of his (Fowler's) taxonomy.

Our People's Belief corresponds to the third stage of Fowler's taxonomy. At this stage of development the person acquires his or her belief system from external figures. Parents, family, and friends play a central role in shaping the person's belief system. The person usually has a single

set of beliefs which he or she applies to various situations. For Moran this often occurs in early adolescences.(4) As with Fowler at stage three, the task of the teacher is to help the learner clarify his or her belief system so it can effectively help him or her interpret life.

Disbelief follows Our People's Belief in Moran's framework. At this stage the person sees that the integrated, usually mythical, religion of adolescence cannot answer all of the problems one confronts in life. Also a person is more concerned with rational thought and wants to move away from previous belief in affective or supernatural religion.(5) At this stage the teacher can help the learner clarify the problems he or she finds with religion and explore new ways to create an integrated faith.

Moran calls his fifth stage Parable, which is part of a movement of life he calls Religiously Christian (Jewish, Muslim, etc.). Moran says this corresponds largely to Fowler's fifth stage. The person moves out of the stage of Disbelief and tries to incorporate religion into his or her life. At the stage the person appreciates the paradoxes inherent in religion.(6) As with Fowler's fifth stage the goal of the teacher is to help the learner clarify the implications of the various aspects of his or her religious belief system.

The final stage in Moran's system is called Detachment. This stage occurs in the later part of life as a person makes peace with the way he or she has lived and achieved during

life. The person at this stage believes in the value of life and appreciates life's unity.(7) At this stage the teacher can help the learner clarify and answer questions, as he or she moves to seeing life as a unity. Clarification can take the form of comforting for learners at this stage.

In summary, clarification is a task of the teacher in a course in modern Jewish theology at all levels. The teacher responds to the learner at his or her level of development and helps clarify the learner's views and beliefs and God. Through clarification the learner comes to see the ramifications of his or her beliefs about God as they are applied to theology as we experience it in our daily lives.

Assumption 2. A course in modern Jewish theology should present various beliefs about God. This assumption is also based on the work of Fowler and Moran. It suggests that as people move through various stages of religious growth the presentation of a variety of beliefs about God will help them develop a more integrated personal belief system. Based on this conception the presentation of various beliefs about God could function in the following ways in levels three through five of Fowler's and Moran's systems.

According to both Fowler and Moran people at a third stage of development, Synthetic-Conventional faith and Our People's Belief, use an ideology which they adopt from parents and other external authority figures. This is often an affective based belief system and relies on religious myth. At this stage presentation of various belief systems

about God can help a person strengthen his or her own belief system. Discussion of various ideas about God can challenge the learner and help the learner apply his or her belief system in a world which offers alternative faith structures. In this way the learner forms a stronger and more integrated belief system.

In the fourth stage presented by both writers the learner rejects the belief system established in stage three and looks for a more rational, internally based belief system. At this stage presentation of alternative belief structures is particularly important. The presentation of new forms of belief helps the learner see that one can remain religious while discarding mythical beliefs about God, or previous monolithic systems. It shows the learner that one can adopt an alternate view of God and still remain within the religious fold. For Moran the stage of Disbelief is the time when many people reject religion because, "Childish beliefs do not work anymore."(8) The discussion of various forms of religious belief helps the learner develop a system of faith functional for adult life.

Fowler and Moran both discuss their fifth stage as a time when adults form a belief system which integrates the affective and cognitive elements of their lives. People see that one belief system cannot provide all of the answers to the questions they have about life and they develop a paradoxical or parabolic structure of faith. For learners at this stage the discussion of various belief systems helps

them develop new facets to their own parabolic faith structure. On one level this form of presentation shows them how other people deal with the problem of belief in God in their lives and with the compromises inherent in any belief system. And on another level this gives the learner a variety of options to choose from in developing his or her own eclectic faith structure.

The presentation of various belief systems about God helps learners at each stage of development strengthen their belief system. Depending on the learner, it offers a form of challenge or presents new options, for their faith system. As with clarification this produces a more integrated belief structure.

Assumption 3. A course in modern Jewish theology should give a holistic presentation of belief systems about God governing many theological rubrics. This assumption is based on the work of Eugene Borowitz, in the article "The Problem of the Form of a Jewish Theology." As I stated earlier, in chapter five, Borowitz makes a distinction between atomistic and holistic methods of studying Jewish theology. In the atomistic method a given topic, i.e., theodicy or chosenness, is examined individually. A writer discusses this topic in depth, but does not show its relation to other areas of a theological system.

In the holistic method of studying theology a thinker develops a theological system, and shows how various rubrics within the system relate to and depend on each other. In the

article Borowitz analyzes the work of Heschel, Baeck, Kaplan, and Buber, as examples of holistic theological systems.

In addition to his overall analysis of the four thinkers in the article, Borowitz's main contention in the article is that, "While much can be learned by concentrating on a single religious motif and studying it in depth, its proper function and general significance emerge only when it is seen in the total context of which it is part."(9) By this statement Borowitz means that while it is insightful to develop a theology for Jewish practice or theodicy, this theology only has meaning when a thinker shows how this individual discussion relates to his/her concept of God, reward and punishment, or other rubrics. For example, my reaction to Jewish practice will differ if I believe that God punishes people who do not follow the mitzvot, than if I belief the mitzvot are human creations, and God was not directly involved in their genesis. In this sense, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts of a Jewish theology.

Based on Borowitz's insight, and on the need of the learner to develop an integrated system of belief, as discussed by Fowler and Moran, this course in modern Jewish theology will also work from the assumption that a holistic presentation of Jewish theological systems should be made, as opposed to the study of only one or two topic areas.

Assumption 4. A high level of learner participation
facilitates learning. This assumption maintains that a
course in modern Jewish theology should include a high level
of learner participation and discussion. Large group
discussion with the teacher as facilitator, small group
discussions, and individual reflection, should take
precedence over lectures and modes of presentation where the
learner is a passive participant. The rationale for this
assumption comes from Fowler's faith development, Knowles'
adult learning theory, and Levinson's life cycle development
theory.

An assumption implicit in both the work of Fowler and
Moran is that people's faith in God and belief in religion
changes and develops throughout their lives. Both writers
suggest that people move through stages or phases of
religious development as a response to their intellectual
development and to their life experiences. I believe that
because of these changes learners need time to talk and share
with each other. Learner participation gives people a change
to raise their questions, and integrate their experiences and
new beliefs. A lecture or learner passive format inhibits
this integration process.

Next, according to Malcolm Knowles, use, and affirmation
of, personal experience is vital to the success of adult
learning. Knowles approaches this assumption on two levels.
First, he notes that adults learn by relating new material to
their life experience. He says, "This assumption is that as

an individual matures he accumulates an expanding reservoir of experience that causes him to become an increasingly rich resource for learning, and at the same time provides him with a broadening base to which to relate new learning."(10) A high degree of learner participation provides an informational resource and gives the learners a change to learn through their experience.

Second, Knowles also makes a distinction between adults and children when discussing the importance of personal experience in the process of adult learning. He says:

> To a child, experience is something that happens to him; to an adult his experience is who he is. So in any situation in which an adult's experience is being devalued or ignored, the adult perceives this as not rejecting just his experience, but rejecting him as a person.(11)

Based on this reasoning, not only is learner participation vital as a positive learning tool, but the lack of learner participation and affirmation of the learner's experience can inhibit acquisition of knowledge.

Finally, the work of Havighurst and Levinson, in life cycle development, also suggests the importance of a high degree of learner participation as a means to facilitate learning. Two ideas that arise from their work, as discussed in chapter two of the thesis, are particularly relevant. First, both Havighurst and Levinson suggested that people move through broad stages in adulthood. Havighurst speaks of early, middle, and late adulthood, and Levinson speaks of seasons and eras in a man's life. These ideas suggest that

there are generally predictable developmental tasks, i.e.,
forming family/intimate relationships with significant
others, starting and developing a career, which all people
face.(13)

Secondly, these theories, as outlined in chapter two,
also suggest that there is a great deal of variety and
difference in the choices and ways in which people lead their
lives. In particular, Levinson noted that while seasons and
eras define the general points of change in a man's life,
that the time a man experiences a transition period and the
intensity of the changes he makes during that period vary
greatly from individual to individual.(14) In this sense
while there are predictable transition periods in a man's
life, and general developmental tasks for different periods
of adulthood, there still remains a great deal of individual
difference and variety.

These parallel phenomina of broad predictable life tasks
and patterns, and a high degree of variety in individual life
structures also suggest the importance of a high degree of
learner participation. The teacher can predict topics that
will be of general interest to the learners, but unless the
learners participate actively in the course, the teacher will
not know if he/she is actually meeting the learners needs and
desires for the course. Further, to the extent that a
person's interest in a course in modern Jewish theology comes
from situations he/she encounters in life, it is important to
have a high degree of learner participation so the teacher,

and the rest of the class, can respond specifically to the learner's concerns. In this sense the work of the life cycle development theorists also suggests the importance of a high degree of learner participation in a course in modern Jewish theology.

In summary, assumption four suggests that a high degree of learner participation is important for facilitating learning and the success of a course in modern Jewish theology for adult learners. This assumption is based on the work of Fowler and Moran in faith development, Knowles in adult education, and Levinson and Havighurst in adult developmental psychology.

Assumption 5. Diffusing adults' fears of learning and enfranchising learners is important for an individual's success in a course in modern Jewish theology. This assumption is particularly important for learners with little or no background in the study of philosophy or Jewish theology. This assumption is based on the work of Martha White as discussed in chapter four. White described four types of Jewish learners, "Jewish Basic Learners," "Prior Jewish Learners," "Recreational Jewish Learners," and "Inspirational Jewish Learners." White's analysis of the "Basic Jewish Learner," is particularly important for this assumption.

White says the "Basic Jewish Learner" is a person who is successful at learning in secular life, but who has had a negative experience with Jewish learning in the past. White

believes that this person may have become interested in Jewish learning because of some experience in his/her life, i.e., a death or tragedy, or because of the enrollment of children in religious school. Due to the person's previous negative experience with Jewish education, White says that the teacher needs to be sensitive to the learners fears of a Jewish educational environment, and suggests that peer group support and good teaching methods are vital for the success of this type of learner.(15)

In a course in modern Jewish theology these dynamics are even more pronounced. Many learners may fear the complexity of studying theology and philosophy, and they may also have fears about sharing their ideas about God and the way they believe God works or does not work in their lives. For learners who have had a past negative experience with Jewish education, as well for White's other categories of learners, it is important to diffuse any fears of the material, and to set a positive emotional tone which enfranchises the class. This will facilitate learning by providing an environment which feels relaxed and safe so the learners can overcome past negative associations with Jewish learning, and feel comfortable to share their ideas about God; and to explore new ways of thinking about the Divine.

Secondary Assumptions: Environment and Life Situation. In addition to the five primary assumptions for the form of a course in modern Jewish theology it is important to include two secondary assumptions. These are called secondary

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assumptions because they do not directly effect the teacher-learner interaction in the classroom. These are the environment, and the manner in which a person's life situation may effect his or her God concept.

Malcolm Knowles emphasizes the importance of the physical and psychological environment of a classroom for adult learning. These ideas appeared as principles of teaching and learning which evolved from Knowles four assumptions about the nature of the adult learner; an individual's self-concept changes from child to adulthood, the importance of using an adult's experience to facilitate learning, an adult's readiness to learn based on demands of his/her life/work situation, and a problem-centered orientation to learning for adult education, as discussed in chapter two of this thesis. He suggests four principles which make for an effective teaching environment in the adult learning setting based on these assumptions. The principles Knowles suggests for the learning environment are:

> The teacher provides physical conditions that are comfortable (as to seating, smoking, temperature, ventilation, lighting, decoration) and conducive to interaction (preferably, no person sitting behind another person).
>
> The teacher accepts each student as a person of worth and respects his feelings and ideas.
>
> The teacher seeks to build relationships of mutual trust and helpfulness among the students by encouraging cooperative activities and refraining from including competitiveness and judgementalness.
>
> The teacher exposes his own feelings and contributes his resources as a co-learner in the spirit of mutual inquiry.(16)

Knowles suggests that the creation of a positive
environment, both physically comfortable and emotionally
secure, is a vital ingredient in the successful presentation
of adult education programs.

The other secondary assumption about a course in modern
Jewish theology suggests that a person's life situation or
developmental phase in life may influence his or her
conception of God. Sister Ruth Ann Haunz, in an article
"Development of Some Models of God and Suggested
Relationships to James Fowler's Stages of Faith Development,"
describes three major models of God and relates them to
Fowler's stages of faith. The article suggests that people
might use different conceptions of God based on their level
of faith development according to Fowler's taxonomy. In the
conclusion of the article she says:

> I will conclude by suggesting that our models of
> God reveal more about who we are than they reveal
> about who God is. They correspond to and flow from
> our experience. They speak our faith or lack of
> faith or type of faith. They reveal our
> relationship not only with God but also with our
> companions in society as well as with our universal
> community.(17)

This article and Haunz's conclusion suggest that
people's belief system and beliefs about God may be
significantly influenced by their life situation and life
experience. For the teacher of a course in modern Jewish
theology this assumption serves as a possible guide for
understanding students responses to different God ideas. As

this is not a means for categorizing or judging people, but serves to orient teachers and learners alike to the way in which our life situations influence our beliefs.

In conclusion, this section has presented five primary and two secondary assumptions for the form of a course in modern Jewish theology. These assumptions govern the style of presentation, type of classroom interaction, and orientation of the teacher. The use of these assumptions will facilitate both receptivity to learning and integration of material by the learner.

Assumptions Determining Course Content

This section will present a synthesis of material in previous chapters relevant to the content of a course in modern Jewish theology. It will look at both historical and personal factors which determine the specific subject areas for such a course. This material will be used in the last section of this chapter as the basis for determining the specific topic areas. These assumptions include the following: (1) That reason and scientific method have challenged belief in a supernatural God; (2) That emancipation has changed the status of and affiliation needs in relation to the Jewish community; (3) That the Holocaust represents one of the most significant challenges to belief in God; (4) That people need to confront tragedies in their personal lives; (5) That people have questions about the meaning of life as they near death.

Assumption 1. Scientific method and reason as challenges to belief in God. In many ways this is the most fundamental assumption in the development of the content of a course in modern Jewish theology. While classical Judaism is not monolithic in belief about God, it for the most part, bases itself on a belief that God is transcendent and immanent. A supernatural God reveals the Torah to the Jewish people and will bring redemption for the people at the end of days. Modern historical and scientific method call this belief into question. Historically we now believe that the Bible originated with people and not with God, and scientifically we no longer believe that God suspends the order of nature. Mordecai Kaplan expressed this idea by noting the perplexity the anthropomorphic description of God caused for people in Maimonides day, and saying that, "A similar situation, but on a far larger scale, is nowadays the source of perplexity to vast numbers of intelligent Jews who cannot reconcile the belief that the miraculous events recorded in the Bible actually happened with what scientific reason and the present knowledge of cultural evolution testify concerning all such traditions."(18) This change in the nature of our perception of the world calls for a response from Jewish theology. We must either show how the traditional structure of Jewish belief stands in the light of modern scientific method, or reinterpret our beliefs based on our world view. The challenge of science and history forms the first assumption for the content of a course in modern Jewish theology.

Assumption 2. Emancipation has changed the nature of affiliation with the Jewish community. Prior to the modern era Jews were a corporate entity in society. People had to affiliate with the community as a result of the civil status of Jews in Christian and Islamic countries. As a result of civil rights granted to individuals during the Emancipation period of the 18th and 19th centuries there was no longer any external compulsion to participate in Jewish life. Eugene Borowtiz described the situation faced by Jews as follows:

> Society now taught the Jews that they were
> basically citizens. They might be Jewish in
> private, less extensive areas of everyday life if
> they so wished. The freedom granted was
> extraordinary but the condition created a split in
> the Jewish soul. One had one's modern and one's
> Jewish lives. How to relate them intellectually
> emerged as the continuing problem of modern Jewish
> thought.(19)

Emancipation highlights two questions which Jewish theology must confront. First, if people have rights as citizens independent of the Jewish community why should they affiliate with the community; what can Judaism offer them? Second, if modern society conceives of all people as equal how do Jews reconcile this idea with the doctrine of chosenness within Judaism? Emancipation assumes that a course in modern Jewish theology will confront these issues.

Assumption 3. The Holocaust represents one of the most significant challenges to the belief in a just God. The Holocaust was the most tremendous tragedy for the Jewish people in the modern era. The doctrine of evil as a

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punishment for sin no longer holds based on the suffering and death of so many innocent people, Jews and Gentiles, during the Second World War. A course in modern Jewish theology must address this issue as part of its content.

Assumption 4. People need to confront tragedies in their personal lives. The success of Harold Kushner's book, When Bad Things Happen to Good People, attests to the need people feel to reconcile their belief in God with personal tragedies in their lives. William Kaufman in the first chapter of Contemporary Jewish Philosophies, also suggest that people need to find a metaphysical meaning in God. Specifically, on the second point he said, "It is my passionate belief that unless people are aware of alternate theologies, a tragedy can demolish a naive faith."(20) The tragedies that people face directly and indirectly in life suggest that a course in modern Jewish theology must address the issue of God and God's justice on a personal level.

Assumption 5. Nearness to death raises theological concerns for people. Daniel Levinson and Erik Erikson both see late adulthood as a time of resolution. Erikson describes the conflict of this period as one between ego integrity and despair (See Chapter Two). If the person can make peace with his achievements and failings in life he will manifest ego integrity, if not despair.(21) Levinson discusses "late late adulthood" in a similar vein. Specifically in terms of religion and salvation he says:

> A man in his eighties knows that his death is
> imminent. It may come in a few months, or in
> twenty years. But he lives in its shadow, and at
> its call. To be able to involve himself in living
> he must make his peace with dying. If he believes
> in the immortality of the soul, he must prepare
> himself for some kind of afterlife. If not, he may
> yet be concerned with the fate of humanity and with
> his own immortality as part of human evolution.(22)

This assumption suggests that for people who believe in

God, a course in Jewish theology should in some way address

the issue of salvation and an afterlife. This is an issue

which all people will confront.

In conclusion this section has presented five

assumptions which govern the selection of the content for a

course in modern Jewish theology. These assumptions have

included both historical ideas, and beliefs about human

development. The next section will present the specific

topic areas to be covered in the course. It will refer to

each of these assumptions as they are relevant for specific

areas.

Content Areas

This course will teach people about Jewish theology so

they can develop or enhance their system of Jewish values and

beliefs to celebrate their joys, find consolation in their

sorrows, and relate more fully to the Jewish people. Based

on the assumptions discussed in the previous section the

course will present views of God which redefine traditional

Jewish beliefs based on the challenges of the modern era, or

reinterpret traditional beliefs based on these challenges and

modern era, or reinterpret traditional beliefs based on these challenges and assumptions. The course will cover six major topic areas in response to the assumptions described in the preceding section. These are: God and revelation; prayer, theodicy, life after death, chosenness, and Jewish practice. The remainder of this section will show how each of these topic areas relates to the assumptions discussed above. The last chapter of the thesis will present lesson plans for each of these topic areas.

1. God and Revelation. The first assumption, that reason and scientific method have challenged belief in a supernatural God, forms the rationale for this topic area. This assumption suggests that since people today believe the universe is governed by natural laws, they reject the belief in a God who works independently of nature. With this assumption people can no longer accept the doctrine that God transmitted the Torah to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai, since this would imply that God violated these laws and principles. In this topic area the course should present ideas which show how one can reconcile belief in the physical world as we know it, with belief in God, and in the validity of the Torah.

2. Prayer. The need to discuss the relevance of prayer in the modern era also comes from the first assumption. If we challenge belief in a supernatural God who does miracles, and answers our prayers, why do we need to pray? If we do not

believe God will intervene to help us, why offer supplications and praise? The course should respond to these questions and present the value, if any, prayer has for the modern Jew.

3. Theodicy. The importance of this topic area is based on three of the assumptions presented above. First, theodicy needs to be discussed because of the challenge to traditional belief in God? If one rejects the notion of a supernatural God one needs to offer a substitute explanation to account for evil in the world. If one maintains a belief in a God who is transcendent and immanent, one needs to explain why God lets evil occur. In either case, if one reinterprets or redefines Jewish belief, an explanation for evil is vital.

Assumptions three and four, the Holocaust and personal tragedies, also suggest the importance of discussing theodicy. The scale of the violence and suffering of the Holocaust, and of other genocides in the modern world, demand that one who believes in God confronts these events. Understanding, if not an answer is crucial. Also, tragedies in the lives of individuals speak of the importance of discussing theodicy. How can individuals reconcile personal tragedy with their belief in God? This is a deeply personal issue and its importance greatly exceeds the demands of intellectual consistency in the explication of a philosophy of Judaism.

4. Life After Death. This is a significant topic for

discussion because of the challenges to belief in God, the

area of theodicy, and the last assumption from above, concern

about salvation when one nears death. Mordecai Kaplan made

the point that in the premodern era people justified the

evils they experienced in life with a belief in the world

beyond.(23) If one questions belief in a supernatural God,

this belief also comes into question. Because of the

challenge of science, a course in modern Jewish theology must

present a view of life after death. Particularly since life

after death is no longer an answer to evil, this is a

critical issue.

Life after death is an important issue also based on

Levinson's and Erikson's discussion of late adulthood. When

people near death they make peace with disperate parts of

their lives, and those who believe in God prepare themselves

for their salvation. Based on this human need, a course in

modern Jewish theology should discuss life after death.

5. Chosenness. This area is relevant to a course in modern

Jewish theology because of two of the assumptions above.

First, if one no longer believes in a God who directly

communicates with people there is no longer a warrant to say

one people is the elect of God. The course needs to explain

chosenness in light of the modern challenge to the

traditional notion of God. Emancipation forms a second

reason for the discussion of chosenness. If the modern era

suggests that all people are equal, how can Judaism explain

election which suggests that the Jews are different or

unique. In view of the pluralistic nature of modern society a course in modern Jewish theology needs to explain the doctrine of chosenness.

6. Jewish Practice. Continuing with the theme of Emancipation from above, a course in modern Jewish theology needs to explain the value of a particular set of customs and practices. If Emancipation says that all people are essentially the same why should the Jews follow a particular and not a universal rite. In relation to the challenge to belief in God, if Jews no longer believe they are fulfilling the commands of God, as suggested by Rabbinic Judaism, why should the people maintain particular Jewish practices. If one no longer believes in the warrant of divine revelation why should one live as a Jew and practice Judaism.

These six topic areas will form the basis for the course model for a course in modern Jewish theology. The model will also include introductory and concluding lessons, and will incorporate the assumptions for the form of the model discussed in the first section of this chapter.

NOTES

(1) James Fowler, <u>Stages of Faith Development: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning</u>. pp.172-173.

(2) Ibid., pp. 181-183.

(3) Ibid., pp. 197-198.

(4) Gabriel Moran, <u>Religious Education Development</u>. pp. 148-150.

(5) Ibid., pp. 150-153.

(6) Ibid., pp. 153-155.

(7) Ibid., pp. 155-156.

(8) Ibid., p. 152.

(9) Eugene Borowitz, "The Problem of the Form of a Jewish Theology," <u>HUCA</u>, 40-41, p. 91.

(10) Malcolm Knowles, <u>The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species</u>. p. 56.

(11) Ibid., p. 56.

(12) Robert J. Havighurst, <u>Developmental Tasks and Education</u>.

(13) Daniel Levinson, <u>Seasons of a Man's Life</u>. p. 18.

(14) Ibid., pp. 56-62.

(15) Martha White, "Adult Education," <u>Jewish Principle's Handbook</u>. p. 474.

(16) Knowles, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

(17) Ruth Ann Haunz, "Development of Some Models of God and Suggested Relationships to James Fowler's Stages of Faith Development," <u>Religious Education</u>. p. 655.

(18) Mordecai Kaplan, <u>Judaism Without Supernaturalism</u>. p. ix.

(19) Eugene Borowitz, <u>Choices in Modern Jewish Thought:</u> <u>A Partisan Guide</u>. p. 8.

(20) William E. Kaufman, <u>Contemporary Jewish Philosophies</u>. p. 9.

(21) Erik Erikson, <u>Childhood and Society</u>. pp. 268-269.

(22) Levinson, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

(23) Mordecai Kaplan, <u>The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish Religion</u>. pp. 50-51.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Lesson Plans/Course Guide

Introduction

This chapter will present the general goals and specific
lesson plans for a course in modern Jewish theology. The
goals and lesson plans will be based on the nature of the
adult learner and the assumptions for the course as described
in the previous chapters of the thesis. Each lesson will
include three sections. First, a statement of the objectives
and purpose of the lesson. These will serve as guidelines
for the teacher. Second, the lessons themselves. This
section will list the specific activities and transitions in
each lesson. And, finally, an analysis of each lesson. The
analysis will show how the material and the presentation
relate to the various theories presented above. As a last
note, the educational materials used in any lesson, i.e.,
values clarification exercises or worksheets, and the
outlines for any lecture presentations, will appear in the
appendix.

Goals

The goals for the course represent general areas upon
which the teacher should focus. The goals relate both to the

cognitive content of the course, and the affective growth of the learner and his or her relationship to the Jewish people. The four goals for the course are:

(1)   The learner will be able to articulate a belief system about God and explain the strengths and weaknesses of this system.

(2)   The learner will be able to apply his or her belief system about God as a means to help celebrate joys and confront tragedies in life.

(3)   The learner will display a positive feeling about Judaism, and his or her relationship to the Jewish people.

(.4)   The learner will display a positive feeling toward adult Jewish education.

The rationale for each of these goals can be stated as follows based on the presentation of theories of adult development, adult education, faith development, and the needs for a course in modern Jewish theology.

(1) Articulate a Belief System about God. This goal relates to the cognitive aspects of the course. The importance of one's ability to articulate a belief in God, or the understanding of a system of belief in God is important on both a universal secular and particular Jewish level.

On a universal level, the importance of being able to express one's beliefs about God is expressed by Fowler, Kaufman, and Borowitz. Fowler says that one's system of faith is, "Our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relations that make up our lives."(1) For Fowler a person's system of belief, whether

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it is based on a secular or religious ideology, is the means by which he or she orders reality and responds to the world. In this sense a person can relate more openly to others if he or she is aware of the beliefs by which he or she interacts with the world.

Kaufman suggests that a person, "Is striving to find meaning for his life--a meaning more inclusive and more compelling than the immediate gratification of money, pleasure, security."(2) He believes that at some point in life people seek to find a meaning for their existence based on a concept of God. In this sense, as with Fowler, a person can live life more effectively if he or she can articulate this belief system and recognize its strengths and failings.

Borowitz stresses the importance of a system of beliefs as opposed to ideas in isolation. He believes that ideas about God interact and affect each other. Isolated beliefs lead to contradictions and dissonance in life, while a system of belief gives a person a unified framework with which to relate to others.(3)

Judaically, it is important for a person to be able to articulate his or her beliefs for two reasons. First, while the operational principle in Judaism is, naseh v'nishmah, "we will do and we will listen," or understanding comes from action; the modern world often emphasizes understanding first and then practice. For many Jews today it is important to understand the intellectual underpinnings of their beliefs before they are comfortable experimenting with Jewish

practice. Second, in a pluralistic world, with many systems of belief, it is important for Jews to understand their beliefs about Judaism in order to interact effectively with people of other faiths. Self-understanding leads to more effective understanding of others. In sum, these general and Jewish reasons express the importance of a person's ability to articulate his or her belief system about God.

(2) Application of Beliefs about God. This goal encompasses the affective application of the content of the course to people's lives. Two assumptions for the content of the course, discussed in the last chapter, emphasize the importance of this goal. These were the relevance of a course in modern Jewish theology because people face tragedies in their lives, and because people who believe in God prepare for personal salvation when they near death. Both of these assumptions show that discussion of Jewish beliefs about God is important to people on more than an intellectual level. Belief in God cannot avert death or personal tragedy, but after a loss belief can help a person reconstruct his or her world. The ability to apply the ideas about God discussed in a course in modern Jewish theology can give people hope in difficult times.

Positively, the ability of a person to apply his or her beliefs about God can also help sanctify special times in life. Fowler notes, "Faith is a person's way of seeing him/herself in relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose."(4) A person's belief in God can

add meaning to joys in life by giving a larger context in which to relate these events. The application of one's beliefs about God takes the course beyond an intellectual exercise and makes it a vehicle for adding meaning to people's lives.

(3). Positive Feelings about Judaism and the Jewish People. This goal comes from the discussion of Jewish adult education. Most significantly, the UAHC-CCAR Commission on Jewish Education described one of the basic aims of Jewish adult education as:

> Increasing identification, participation, and emotional satisfaction, a feeling that being Jewish is a challenging and rewarding experience, that Judaism makes a difference in our lives and relationships with others.(5)

This statement suggests that the goal of teaching people about Judaism should include giving people a positive feeling about Judaism and the Jewish people, so they will want to participate more actively in communal life and feel more emotionally satisfied as a result of their participation.

(4) Positive Feeling Toward Jewish Education. Secular and Jewish literature about adult education both suggest the importance of this goal. Barton Morgan stressed both "the desire to learn," and a positive, "mind set," as two key factors which influence the success of adult education. He said, "Learning is an emotional problem as well as an intellectual one; consequently, the student must want to

learn or he will not achieve much, if anything, especially if he is an adult."(6) For students to learn and to want to continue learning they need a positive attitude to their educational enterprise.

Judaically, the work of Marvin Beckerman, and of Martha White, also suggests the importance of fostering a positive outlook to Jewish adult education. Beckerman noted that on the whole Jews participate more in adult education programs than people of many other ethnic groups. But with this high level of participation, Jewish involvement in religious education programs is relatively low.(7) This suggests that people need to have a positive experience in courses in Jewish education if they will continue to participate. More specifically, Martha White identifies a group of adult Jewish learners called, Basic Jewish Learners. White notes that many learners in this category are high achievers in secular society, but need to overcome negative past experiences with Jewish education.(8) This suggests a specific need for a positive experience and attitude toward learning in courses in Jewish education taught at the adult level.

This section presented the goals and the rationale for each goal for a course in modern Jewish theology. The remainder of this chapter will present the specific lessons for the course.

Lesson One

Introduction

This lesson will give the learners an opportunity to meet the teacher and each other, and will introduce the discussion of modern Jewish theology. The personal orientation of the lesson will begin the construction of a positive classroom environment as discussed by Knowles in the seondary assumptions for the course.(9) The second part of the introduction will focus on the dilemma of theology in the modern era: How do people in the modern era understand the supernatural emphasis of Jewish tradition in light of the discoveries of modern science? The lesson outline will present the objecives for the lesson, activities, and an analysis of how these relate to the goals of the course and research about adult learners.

Objectives.

The following are the objectives for this lesson:

(1) The learner will become a member of a classroom community by learning the names of three new people.

(2) The learner will express his/her feelings about the conflict between the Biblical/ Rabbinic description of God and a scientific view of the world by completing a values clarification exercise and discussing this exercise in class.

(3) The learner will assess his/her childhood education about God through a values clarification exercise and share this experience in the class.

Activities.

The following outline presents the activities for the lesson.
The rationale for these activities will appear in the
analysis. The story and values clarification exercise appear
in the appendix.

(1) Introduction.   Format: Large Group Sharing

   (a) Class Format. The teacher explains the
        main activities of the evening will be
        personal introductions and an overview of
        the course.

   (b) Personal Introduction. The teacher makes
        sure everyone has a name tag. The teacher
        gives a brief personal introduction and asks
        each person in the classroom to introduce
        him/herself. In the introduction the person
        should include, name, some of the roles they
        play in life, and one of their favorite
        heroes.

(2) Story.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

   (a) Transition. The teacher introduces the
        story, as a story which confronts one of
        the tensions many people feel on the High
        Holydays. The teacher also might give a
        brief introduction about the biography of
        the Baal Shem Tov.

   (b) Story. The teacher tells the story. The
        story describes how on one Yom Kippur the
        Baal Shem Tov went to heaven to plead with
        God to grant life to the Jewish people for
        the year to come, and to learn the identity
        of the messiah.

   (c) Analysis and Transition. The teacher brief-
        ly discusses the tension the story illus-
        trates about the High Holydays between God
        as a heavenly judge, and our questions about
        God as people living in the modern world who
        find it hard to accept this type of belief,
        i.e., a tension between belief in a super-
        natural God or no God at all. The teacher
        may want to further illustrate the tension
        with reference to the prayers U'netaneh

tokef and _Avinu Maleinu_ from the High
Holyday liturgy.(10)

The teacher next introduces the values clar-
ification exercise as a means for the class
to think about and discuss this dilemma.

(3)   Values Clarification Format: Small/Large Group
         Exercise.

   (a)   Introduction.   The teacher explains the
         questions on the exercise.   The teacher asks
         people to break-up into small groups (num-
         ber and size will vary with the class; 6
         is optimum), individually complete the
         exercise, and discuss their answers as a
         group.   The teacher also tells the whole
         class they will discuss the exercise as
         a later part of the lesson.

   (b)   Values Clarification Exercise.   The exer-
         cise asks questions about the Bible,
         theodicy, chosenness, and personal educa-
         tion about God.

   (c)   Large Group Discussion.   Once the small
         groups have had a chance to complete and
         discuss the exercise the class reforms as
         a large group.   The teacher leads a dis-
         cussion about group responses to the exer-
         cise.   The teacher notes particularly the
         range of people's beliefs about God, and
         the way people's beliefs about God have
         changed between their childhood education
         and adulthood.

(4)   Closure.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

The teacher summarizes the activities of the
class.   The teacher also notes how our beliefs
about God change as we grow and develop.(11)
The teacher says that the course will help
explore the way modern Jews have dealt with the
questions discussed during class.

Finally, the teacher introduces the option of
keeping a personal journal for the class.   A
topic for the journal will be presented at the
end of each class or people can develop their
own topics.   This is a means of reinforcing and
integrating the class content and discussions.
First topic: As a child I learned. . . about
God.

Analysis.

This lesson contains two main sets of activities. The first is the icebreaker/introductions, and the second is the introduction to the course with the story and values clarification exercise. The analysis will show the importance of each of these activities based on the theoretical material previously discussed in the thesis.

Several factors call for the use of an icebreaker as an opening activity for a course in adult education. First, Malcolm Knowles, as stated in one of the secondary assumptions for the form of the course, suggests that a warm and positive environment is a factor which facilitates adult learning. Knowles suggests that in a positive environment a teacher accepts and respects each student, and helps create an atmosphere of mutual trust among the learners.(12) Personal introductions help create this type of environment.

Additionally, the creation of a positive learning experience was stressed as one of the goals of the course. This helps counteract negative associations about Jewish education from childhood, and the low level of participation by Jews in religiously oriented adult education programs.(13)

The request for people to share different roles they play in life is based on Havighurst's theory that people have different development tasks in the various stages of adulthood.(14) The sharing of this information can help the teacher assess what phase of adulthood a person might most effectively describe a person, and thereby give the teacher

additional insight into some of the life tasks which the person might be facing. This will also be helpful for understanding people's responses to the values clarification exercise in the second part of the lesson.

The second part of the lesson includes the story and the values clarification exercise. These activities serve to present a basic assumption of the course that people need to reinterpret or redefine Jewish belief about God based on the challenges of the modern era.(15) This is one of the fundamental assumptions for the selection of the content of the course. The story illustrates how this assumption directly relates to people during the High Holyday period. It helps the individual relate personally to the task of theology. The values clarification exercise shows how this assumption applies to various areas which a person might find to be relevant. The personal sharing also helps to create a positive and trusting classroom environment, the importance of which was discussed above.

Fowler and Moran's descriptions of the phases of adult religious development also suggest the use of the values clarification exercise. The way in which a person relates to the questions in the exercise may give the teacher an indication of his or her level on Fowler's scale. A person who responds to the question about the giving of the Torah, "Do you mean God really does not speak?" would be at level two or three in Fowler's system. A person who responds to the question, "I'd like to think of God as communicating with

people, but I am not sure how this could happen in our world?" might be at level four or five. And a person who says, "I used to believe in all of that stuff, but now I know that people created religions." would be moving from level three to four in the taxonomy. Fowler's system helps the teacher understand the students responses from a developmental perspective, and may help the teacher predict what type of belief system which might be most appealing for a given student.

Finally, the sharing of various beliefs about God, and the response to the questions about childhood education about God, help people see that our beliefs in God change as we mature. This helps people break from the notion that they must hold hard and fast to one concept of God. It also avoids the crisis of a person who loses faith based on a naive concept of God when faced with a personal tragedy, as described by Kaufman.(16)

This analysis shows the value of an "icebreaker" session and a values exercise during the first class session. The second session will further define the challenges to Jewish belief in the modern era. It will also continue to build a class environment based on trust and respect for student abilities.

Lesson 2

History of the God Idea and Challenges

This lesson will describe the Jewish idea of God in the Bible and in medieval times, and will examine the challenges to Jewish belief in the modern era. The lesson will also focus on the questions the learners want addressed in the course and on individual learning goals for the course. The lesson outline will include objectives, activities and analysis. The content of the lecture appears in the appendix. (Note: The course uses lectures in the first several lessons to impart basic knowledge about theology. As the course develops the use of the lecture mode decreases and the learners lead the class sessions).

Objectives.

The following objectives describe the goals of the classroom experience for this lesson:

(1)   The learner will demonstrate an understanding of the Biblical/Rabbinic idea of God by showing how two events from modern history or, his/her life represent challenges to this idea.

(2)   The learner will show a feeling of responsibility and enfranchisement for his/her learning by listing two questions of personal importance, and two personal goals for participation in the course.

Activities

(1)   Introduction.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

(a)   Class Format. The teacher will outline the major topics for the class session: Biblical/Rabbinic ideas of God, challenges to Jewish belief in the modern era, personal

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goal setting.

(2) Biblical Rabbinic   Format: Lecture/Discussion
    Idea of God.

    (a) Transition: "Job Description for God."
         Pass out the job description of God to orient
         the class to the topic for the lecture.

    (b) Lecture: Description of the image of God
         in the Bible and Rabbinic literature. The
         lecture emphasizes the idea of God's
         transcendence and immanence. It focuses on
         God as Redeemer, Judge, and Giver of the
         Torah. See the appendix for a detailed
         outline of the lecture.

(3) Modern Challenges   Format: Small/Large Group
       to the
Jewish Belief in God.

    (a) Transition. At the end of the lecture
         the teacher suggests that while Judaism is
         not monolithic in belief, the Biblical/Rab-
         binic idea of God has provided the basis of
         Jewish belief and action until the modern
         era. The modern era has witnessed many
         dramatic events in history, and scientific
         and cultural developments which have chal-
         lenged the traditional Jewish belief in God.
         The teacher then asks people to divide into
         small groups and as groups determine what
         they think are the five historical, cultural
         or scientific events which have been the
         most significant challenges to Jewish be-
         lief, and why.

    (b) Small Groups. The small groups should brain-
         storm and develop their ideas for presenta-
         tion.

    (c) Analysis. Once the groups have developed
         their lists the teacher should process the
         results with the entire class. The main
         thesis underlying the presentation is: The
         challenges to modern Jewish belief mean that
         Jews must either redefine Jewish belief to
         answer the challenges of the modern era; or
         reinterpret Jewish belief based on a new
         "modern" conception of God. The teacher
         should consult the basic assumptions for the
         course for more input.

(4) Personal Goal   Format: Individual and
     Setting.   Large Group

   (a) Introduction: The teacher makes a transi-
        tion from the challenges to goal setting.
        The teacher tells the students that the body
        of the course will have two foci. First, it
        will present the ideas of four major Jewish
        thinkers about how modern Jews should respond
        to the challenges to Jewish belief. If
        appropriate, the teacher should mention
        Baeck, Kaplan, Borowitz, and Berkovits.
        Second, the course will help the learners
        develop their own answers to the challenges
        to Jewish belief. Based on these foci the
        students should be asked to individually
        write out questions they have for the course
        and their goals for what they would like to
        gain from the course.

   (b) Individual Writing. Students write ques-
        tions and goals.

   (c) Large Group Processing. The teacher asks
        people to share their questions and goals.
        The teacher facilitates class discussion and
        closes the lesson with a review of the ses-
        sion and orientation of the course.

Analysis.

This lesson focused on the Biblical/Rabbinic idea of God and

challenges to this belief, and on the questions and goals of

the learners. This section will analyze these two areas as

the main divisions of the lesson.

   The relevance of discussing challenges that confront

Jewish belief comes from the basic assumptions for the

content of the course. As stated above, the course assumes

that Jews need to redefine or reinterpret Jewish belief in

the modern era. The mode of small groups discussing their

perceptions of challenges to Jewish belief is based on both

Knowles and Fowler. Knowles says that it is important for

the educational process to affirm the skills and experience of the learner. This gives the learner a framework in which to place new information, and affirms his or her personal identity.(17) The use of small groups to determine the challenges to modern Judaism, gives people a chance to formulate problems Judaism confronts based on their personal experience and expertise. The use of large group processing gives people a chance to express their ideas based on their faith perspective. Fowler's theory suggests that people in the same classroom may be at different levels of faith development. Small and large group dialogue gives the learner an opportunity to frame the challenges to Jewish belief based on his or her particular faith perspective.

Knowles, Havighurst and Levinson, and Fowler's insights all attest to the importance of the second part of the lesson: learner establishment of questions and goals. Knowles suggest that adults learn most effectively when they, "Perceive the goals of a learning experience to be their goals," and when they, "accept a share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience."(18) The part of the lesson where learners articulate their questions and goals helps meet this criteria.

Havighurst, Levinson, and Erikson, the psycho-social developmental thinkers, all suggest that people have different personal agendas based on their place in life. A person might have different life tasks as Havighurst suggests, different transitions or seasons according to

Levinson, or different Eriksonian conflicts at different phases in life. The main point is that in an adult classroom people will have various personal agendas based on their place in life and their particular life history. The class articulation of goals and questions helps the teacher more effectively meet these individual needs.

Finally, as with stages of psycho-social development, Fowler and Moran also suggest that people can be at different places in their faith or religious development. The articulation of questions and goals helps the teacher respond more appropriately to the student based on his or her faith perspective.

The next lesson will give a detailed introduction to the thinkers and will look at the first issue in the course, the giving of the Torah.

Lesson Three

God and Revelation

This lesson will present the beliefs of Leo Baeck, Mordecai Kaplan, Eugene Borowitz, and Elizer Berkovits about God and revelation. The lesson will present the views of these thinkers as responses to the challenges to Jewish belief of the modern era which were discussed in the previous class. The thesis for the presentation is that because of these challenges Jews need to redefine or reinterpret Judaism in the modern era.

Additionally, the lesson will introduce the learners to the dilemma approach. In this approach the lesson revolves around a dilemma which relates the course content to problems people might encounter in their lives. This lesson uses a dilemma based on a child who does not want to participate in confirmation because she does not believe in a God who gave the Torah at Mount Sinai. The dilemma gives the learners a means of integrating the cognitive material in the course with personal experience.

Objectives

The following objectives should be the focus of the lesson:

(1) The student will display an understanding of how various thinkers respond to the challenges to belief in God and revelation posed in the modern era by choosing the view of a thinker which has the most meaning for him/her and articulating the reasons for this choice in a class discussion.

(2) The student will display his/her integration of Jewish thinkers' responses to modernity by responding to a discussion problem where an answer must be given

based on personal insight and the views of the thinkers. The student will demonstrate this knowledge in small and large group discussion.

(3)   The student will show trust for the class by participating in small and large group discussions.

Activities

The following outline presents the activities for this lesson. Specific resources for activities 1 and 2 may be found in the appendix.

(1)   Introduction.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

    (a) Review the Previous Lesson. Highlight the key issues the class raised as challenges to Jewish belief in the modern era. This should be brief, the theme will be addressed in more detail in the lecture.

    (b) Introduce Class Format. Describe the dilemma approach, and the lecture with the views of the four thinkers, as a means of relating the class to personal experience.

    (c) Present the Dilemma. Give the dilemma to the class. Let people read over it and clarify any questions. Tell the class they will return to the dilemma after the lecture, and solve the problem in small groups.

(2)   Lecture.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

    (a) The lecture describes how Baeck, Kaplan, Borowitz, and Berkovits respond to the challenges the modern era presents to Jewish belief. It discusses their beliefs about God and revelation. The appendix provides a detailed outline of the lecture.

(3)   Break. (The class can have a break at this point if the teacher feels it is appropriate).

(4)   Small Group Problem Solving.

    (a) Transition. After the lecture divide the class into small groups. In the groups give people the following tasks: (i) Each person should share which God idea presented had the

most appeal and why; (ii) The group should
decide and note if there is any consensus and
be able to report on this to the whole class;
(iii) The group should solve the Stern Family's
Dilemma.

(b) Give the groups time to work. The teacher should
be available to clarify issues and facilitate
group discussions.

(5) Closure.

(a) Processing. The groups should report about their
God ideas and their solutions to the Stern Family
dilemma. The teacher should note how the presenta-
tions of personal beliefs about God helped or
hindered the groups' responses to the dilemma.

(b) Journal. For people keeping journals they can
write on the topics: I liked_____'s
belief about God because . . . ; I believe that
God . . . ; and/or I believe revelation means. . .

Analysis. The rationale for the form and content of this

lesson comes from both the literature on faith development

and literature on adult education. This section will discuss

how both fields affected the development of this lesson.

First, the faith development literature influenced the

choice to present the views of four thinkers in the lecture,

and throughout the course. Assumption 2 for the form of the

course suggests that a course in modern Jewish theology

should present a variety of theological positions. This

assumption notes that adult learners are generally at levels

three through five in Fowler's system, and levels three

through six in Moran's. The presentation of a variety of

thinkers serves three purposes. First, the potpourri

approach means that a learner should agree, or at least feel

close to, one view presented. A variety of learner

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orientations suggests a variety of views. Second, the variety can serve as a challenge to learners. People at level three of Fowler's system, Synthetic-Conventional Faith, and at level three in Moran's, Our People's Belief, generally have a single belief system with which they relate to the world. Presentation of other systems gives them a means to challenge their beliefs and integrate them with other world views. Finally, the presentation of a variety of beliefs appeals to people on level five of Fowler's system, Conjunctive Faith, and level five of Moran's, Religiously Christian, Jewish, Muslim, etc. These people have a personal belief system, but enrich their system by learning from others' faith and religious systems. They appreciate paradox and know that no one system can answer all of the questions life raises. The use of various systems in the course gives these learners additional resources with which to enrich their faith perspectives.(19)

The use of small groups in the dilemma approach is valuable from both faith development and educational perspectives. The faith developmental literature indicates that people in a given class may have different faith orientations. The use of small group discussion gives each learner a chance to respond to the material based on his or her particular orientation. This avoids the situation of the teacher presenting a monolithic idea which the learner must accept regardless of personal belief.

Educationally, this approach, particularly with the use

of dilemmas which relate the course content to real experiences, responds to Knowles contention that adults learn most effectively in settings which affirm their personal experience.(20) Small groups give each person a chance to respond to the course content based on their personal experience, and beliefs about God. The dilemma approach gives people a rubric with which to relate the material to their lives. It demonstrates to the learner that discussion of theology is not only an intellectual pursuit, but may have personal applications as well.

Finally, the use of the dilemma approach itself is suggested by Bloom in the taxonomy of learning. This taxonomy lists six types of questions or activities as means of reinforcing learning. These categories range in hierarchical order from those which require recall of knowledge to those which call for the student to evaluate and critique information.(21) Synthesis is the fifth level in this hierarchy, it calls for students, "(1) to produce original communication, (2) to make predictions, or (3) to solve problems."(22) According to this taxonomy, the use of problem solving in the dilemma approach is one of the most effective ways for helping students integrate and retain knowledge.

This analysis has suggested that the presentation of a variety of theological positions, and the use of small groups and the dilemma approach, are effective choices for this lesson based on the faith development and the adult education

literature presented in the thesis. The next lesson presents the doctrine of the Jews as God's chosen people.

Lesson 4

Chosenness

This lesson focuses on the doctrine of chosenness in Judaism. On a content level the lesson presents the Biblical and Rabbinic interpretations of chosenness, and it shows how the four thinkers reinterpret and redefine chosenness based on the challenges of modernity. The form of the lesson continues the dilemma approach introduced in the previous lesson. In this lesson the teacher does not present the views of the four thinkers. Instead, the learners analyze the thinkers ideas in small groups based on worksheets. This change gives the students more responsibility for their learning.

Objectives:

(1) The learner will display an understanding of the doctrine of chosenness and modern responses to this doctrine by choosing the view of one thinker as closest to his or her own view and discussing the reasons for this choice in small and large group discussions.

(2) The student will display an integration of the doctrine of chosenness in his or her life by responding to a dilemma problem about chosenness in small and large group discussions.

(3) The student will display increased responsibility for his or her learning by independently interpreting the views of four Jewish thinkers about chosenness.

(4) The learner will show trust for the class by participating in small and large group discussions.

Activities:

The following outline lists the activities for the lesson. The resources for activities, 1, 2, and 3 may be found in the

appendix.

(1)   Introduction.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

    (a) Review. Review the key ideas presented about
        each thinker and the approach used during the
        previous lesson.

    (b) Transition. Introduce the topic and format for
        this lesson. The key activities include: presen-
        tation of the dilemma, lecture on chosenness,
        and small group analysis of the thinkers' posi-
        tions and solution to the dilemma.

    (c) Presentation of Dilemma. Give the dilemma to the
        class. Let people read the dilemma and answer
        any questions. Move from the presentation of the
        dilemma to the lecture.

(2)   Lecture.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

    (a) The lecture presents the description of
        chosenness in the Bible and in later Jewish
        literature. It provides a background to the
        responses of the four thinkers to the doctrine
        of chosenness in the modern era.

(3)   Small Group Analysis   Format: Small Group
      and Problem Solving.

    (a) Divide the class into small groups and distribute
        the worksheets with the thinkers' discussions of
        chosenness. Instruct the class to first read the
        sheets and make a choice about which thinker they
        agree with individually. Afterwards the groups
        should see if there is consensus and then solve
        the dilemma.

(4)   Closure.

    (a) Processing. Have the groups come back together
        to share their views of chosenness and solution
        to the dilemma. Focus on how people as individ-
        uals respond to the doctrine of chosenness.

    (b) Preview. The teacher should tell the class that
        the next two lessons will discuss the problem of
        evil, theodicy. One less will focus on natural
        evil that occurs in the world and the other on the
        Holocaust. The teacher should ask for eight vol-
        unteers to prepare presentations about an individ-
        ual thinker. A resource guide for the presenta-

tion appears in the appendix.

(c) Journals. For people who are keeping journals
    they can write on: I agree with_____
    about chosenness because. . . or, To me the
    Jewish belief about chosenness means . . .

Analysis

This analysis examines the content and the form of the lesson

based on the various fields of literature presented in the

thesis. The initial rationale for discussing the doctrine of

chosenness appeared in the previous chapter. The challenge

to belief in a supernatural God who elected the Jewish

people, and modern beliefs in democracy and equality

challenge Judaism's traditional doctrine of chosenness. With

this basis the content aspect of the analysis talks about

chosenness based on Moran's framework for religious

development.

Moran's discussion of religious development anticipates

possible learner reactions to chosenness. Three of his

stages are particularly relevant. He calls the third era in

his system, "Our People's Belief." At this phase a person

adheres to one belief system and tries to use this system to

answer any questions raised by life.(23) A person at this

phase would find the doctrine of chosenness particularly

attractive. It attests to the superiority of his faith over

other systems.

Moran calls the fourth phase in his system "Disbelief."

During this phase people begin to see that the one system

they held as sacred and inviolable cannot satisfy all of

their demands for unity in life. Some people may reject religion at this point, and others express doubt while maintaining contact with their faith community.(24) People at this stage may find the doctrine of chosenness troubling, and may need to reinterpret this idea. Since their belief no longer provides all of the answers they require they may find it difficult to believe God actually chose their people. Rejecting chosenness or given it a more universal definition may characterize people's reactions at this phase.

The fifth stage in Moran's system is called "Religiously Christian, Muslim, Jewish, etc." At this stage a person internalizes his or her religious belief and realizes that no one system can provide a set of universal answers to theological questions.(25) A person may again find the doctrine of chosenness appealing at this stage. The individual recognizes the specialness of his or her own religion and its personal value. In this sense, the person can affirm the unique insight his or her religion provides for relating to God. This discussion shows the importance of discussing chosenness in a course in modern Jewish theology, and possible learner reactions to this discussion.

The use of small groups, the dilemma approach, and the learners interpreting the thinkers' ideas about chosenness, are the main elements of the form of this lesson. The importance of small groups and of the dilemma approach were discussed in detail during the last lesson. This analysis will focus on the rationale for increasing learner

responsibility by having the learners interpret the work of each thinker.

The importance of giving learners responsibility in the educational process relates to the fourth goal of the course: The learner will develop a positive feeling toward adult Jewish education. On a secular level, Knowles stresses that adults learn more effectively if they, "Accept a share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience, and therefore have a feeling of commitment toward it."(26) The establishment of personal goals by the learner was the first step in this process. In this activity the process continues as the learners begin to take responsibility for teaching the course. Previously, the teacher lectured about the thinkers, now the learners interpret the thinkers for themselves. In this way the learners own their learning and participation in the course. This helps counteract the negative experiences that some learners had in religious education during childhood,(27) and provides the learner with a positive experience in adult education.

This section has examined the significance of discussing the doctrine of chosenness and the importance of giving adults responsibility for their learning in education programs. The next section will present a discussion of modern interpretations of theodicy.

Lesson Five

Theodicy

The next two lessons focus on the conflict between the
reality of evil in the world, and the belief in a loving and
just God. The fifth lesson focuses on the problem of natural
evil. This lesson examines the evil that occurs as part of
the functioning of the world. It describes the theological
dynamics of the problem of evil, and examines responses to
this problem from the Bible, Rabbinic literature, and modern
theology. The sixth lesson describes the problem of evil as
the result of voluntary human action. This lesson
specifically looks at human evil in terms of the Holocaust.

The following presentation will outline the objectives
and activities for the fifth lesson on natural evil. The
sixth lesson will outline the objectives and activities for
the lesson on human evil, and will include the analysis of
the two lessons. Supplemental materials for both lessons
appear in the appendix.

Objectives:

The objectives of this lesson are that:

(1) The learner will demonstrate an understanding of
     Jewish responses to the problem of evil by choosing
     the view of one modern thinker as closest to his or
     her own view and discussing the reasons for this
     choice in small and large group discussions.

(2) The learner will demonstrate an integration of his or
     her belief about theodicy in his or her life by
     responding to a dilemma problem in small and large
     group discussions.

(3) Learners will display increased responsibility

for their learning by researching the view of a
modern Jewish thinker about theodicy, and making a
class presentation about the thinker.

(4) The learner will show trust for the class by partici-
pating in small and large group discussions.

(5) The learner will express a positive appreciation for
Judaism as a religion to guide his or her life by
articulating how Judaism helps him or her to respond
as an individual to crises in life, in small and large
group discussion.

Activities:

The following outline lists the activities for this lesson:

(1) Introduction.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

    (a) Review. Review briefly the last class session
and each thinker's interpretation of chosenness.
This review is important because a thinker's view
of chosenness impacts on his view on theodicy.
If the Jews are especially elected, and God will
redeem them, then suffering appears in a different
light, than if there is no all-powerful redeeming
God.

    (b) Introduce Lesson Format; The main activities
include: presentation of the dilemma, lecture
on theodicy, individual presentations on the
thinkers views of theodicy, group responses to the
thinkers and dilemma.

    (c) Presentation of the Dilemma. Present the dilemma
for this lesson and allow time for response and
clarification. The dilemma appears in the
appendix.

(2) Lecture.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

    (a) Jewish view of the problem of evil. The lec-
ture presents the logical problem involved in
saying that God is just and evil exists. The lec-
ture also shows the Biblical and Rabbinic respon-
ses to evil, and introduces the modern discussion
of theodicy. See the appendix for a detailed out-
line of the lecture.

(3) Individual Presentations. Format: Lecture/Discussion

    (a) Four individuals were asked the previous week to
read selections by the thinkers and present a

thinker's interpretation of theodicy in the modern era. The teacher can supplement the presentations if necessary.

(4) Large Group Processing.   Format: Individual Reflection/Large Group Discussions

(a) Processing of the Presentations and Dilemma. In the large group the teacher should ask people to consider as individuals which interpretation of theodicy appeals the most to them, and how they would respond to the dilemma. Once people have had an opportunity to consider their responses the teacher should lead the class discussion and responses to these tasks.

(b) Preview. The teacher should tell the class that session 7 will discuss prayer, and session 8 will discuss salvation. The teacher should invite interested learners to form two committees to prepare the presentations for these classes. Resource material about the topic areas in general and about how each thinker conceives of the topic areas appears in the appendix for these lessons.

(c) Closure. At the end of the class the teacher should summarize major themes as they appeared in the discussion. For those learners who are keeping journals topics may be: I believe bad things happen because. . .; I most agree with _____'s response to the problem of God and evil because . . .

Lesson Six

Theodicy

Lesson 6 confronts the problem of belief in a just God in the face of the evil and suffering people cause to each other. This lesson continues the discussion of theodicy begun in Lesson 5. Specifically, this lesson focuses on the Holocaust. For Jews today the Holocaust represents the ultimate evil committed to Jews and to all people. This lesson will present the dilemma raised by the Holocaust and examine the responses of the four thinkers.

Objectives

The objectives for this lesson are that:

(1) The learner will demonstrate an understanding of Jewish responses to human evil by choosing the interpretation of one modern thinker as closest to his or her own view and discussing the reasons for this decision in a large group discussion.

(2) The learner will demonstrate an integration of his or her belief about the reasons for human evil in his or her faith system by discussing in a large group his or her belief about God's role during the Holocaust.

(3) Learners will demonstrate increased responsibility in the class by researching the view of a modern Jewish thinker about God's role during the Holocaust.

(4) The learner will show a positive feeling for Jewish education by participating in classroom discussions.

Activities

The activities in this lesson build on the discussion of theodicy in Lesson 5. Using the general theological basis for the discussion of evil, this lesson explores the reasons for suffering people cause to each other. In format this

lesson also relies primarily on large group discussion. This allows more time for direct response to the individual learner presentations. The following outline summarizes the lesson:

(1) Introduction.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

    (a) Review. Review the main points from the previous discussion of theodicy. Focus on the theological construction of the problem of evil and the responses to the thinkers. Also, acknowledge the work of the individuals who made presentations during the previous class.

    (b) Introduce Lesson Format. This lesson will include a brief lecture which will serve as a set induction, presentation of the views of the four thinkers by members of the class, and group discussion.

(2) Lecture.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

    (a) This is a very brief lecture. It defines the problem of suffering which people cause each other as it is represented by the Holocaust. It begins with a brief reading from Night, by Elie Wiesel, and follows with a short analysis. See the appendix for the outline of the lecture.

(3) Learner Presentations.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

    (a) Four learners will make presentations about the views of Baeck, Kaplan, Borowitz, and Berkovits about the Holocaust. After each presentation there will be time for questions, and for any additions by the teacher.

(4) Small Group Processing.   Format: Small Groups

    (a) After the completion of all four presentations the teacher will have the class divide into small groups. The groups will discuss: (1) Which interpretation of the Holocaust has the most appeal for the group members? (2) How do the members of the group explain God's existence during the Holocaust?

(5) Closure.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

    (a) Group Presentation. The groups will present their

responses to the small group tasks to the class as a whole. The teacher should look for areas of consensus and disagreement and point these out to the class.

(b) Summary. The teacher should summarize the major themes of the class discussion at the end of the lesson. For those people keeping journals, sample topics are: (1) I agree with _____ about the Holocaust, because . . . (2) During the Holocaust I believe God. . .

Analysis

This analysis discusses the presentation about theodicy in Lessons 5 and 6. Lesson 5 focuses on natural evil, and Lesson 6 concentrates on human evil. The analysis will examine first the form and then the content of the lessons.

Both lessons expand learner responsibility and participation in the classroom. The primary device used to achieve this goal is individual learner presentations. Learner presentations increase learner responsibility in two ways. First, they take the focus away from the teacher as the only person who imparts knowledge in the classroom. Second, they build confidence for the presentors, and for the rest of the class, by showing that the learners can in fact research and synthesize the work of modern Jewish thinkers. This increased learner responsibility facilitates adult learning in general,(28) and helps give the learner a more positive feeling toward adult Jewish education.(29)

The assumptions for the content of the course, in the last chapter, outline the importance of discussing theodicy in a course in modern Jewish theology. This chapter gives three reasons for discussing theodicy. First, science and

modern historical method challenge the belief in a

supernatural God who judges the wicked and redeems the

righteous. Modern philosophy asks for empirical proof for

this idea of God. Religion must respond to this challenge.

Second, the chapter notes that the crises people face in

their personal lives make it important to discuss theodicy.

These two lessons respond to the problems raised by natural

catastrophies and human evil. This discussion gives the

learner a background with which to confront tragedies when he

or she experiences them in life.

The last assumption for the content of the course states

that the Holocaust itself raises a challenge to Jewish belief

in the modern era. After the Holocaust many Jews ask how

they can continue to believe in a just and loving God. The

enormity of the tragedy calls for a response from Jewish

thinkers and theologians. Particularly today when atheism,

agnosticism, and conversion, are valid options for Jews, a

course in modern Jewish theology needs to confront the

Holocaust's challenge to belief in God and Judaism.

The discussion of theodicy is also important from the

perspective of faith development. The work of both Fowler

and Moran suggests that life crises can serve as transitions

from one stage of faith to another. In Moran's system a

person moves from stage three, "Our People's Belief", to

stage four, "Disbelief," when the monolithic belief system of

adolescence begins to fail. Moran says:

When the child of the second stage has built up a

system of beliefs, more of reality intrudes and the
young person must begin dismantling the system.
This moment of development is not <u>unbelief</u> (a word
that may not have any logically coherent meaning)
but <u>dis-belief</u>, a movement guided by what the
person is fighting against. One begins
disbelieving the very beliefs recently acquired
because both in their form and content they are
much too limiting for the journey toward
adulthood.(30)

This passage suggests that a person moves from stage

three to stage four in Moran's system, (these stages together

comprise an era for Moran), when the reality of life begins

to present the individual with challenges to which the belief

system in stage three cannot respond. Personal and communal

tragedies represent the type of challenges which every

individual faces, and which can cause the disintegration of

an adolescent belief system and lead to stage 4, Disbelief.

The problem of evil can also mark the movement from

stage 4 to stage 5 in Moran and Fowler's systems. Both Moran

and Fowler describe the fifth stage in their systems as a

time when a person learns that not one system of faith can

provide all of the answers to life's challenges. The person

adopts a parabolic or paradoxical faith where he or she

accepts the mysteries inherent in life and learns from a

variety of faith systems.(31) In particular Fowler notes

that familiarity with personal tragedy marks the transition

into this stage. Fowler says:

Stage 5 knows the sacrament of defeat and the
reality of irrevocable commitments and acts. What
the previous stage struggled to clarify, in terms
of boundaries of self and outlook, this stage now
makes porous and permeable. Alive to paradox and

the truth apparent in contradictions, this stage
strives to unify opposites in mind and
experience.(32)

In this analysis Fowler notes that people in stage five

have usually experienced struggle and defeat in life. This

has made them aware of the limits of their faith system, and

alive to the truth found in paradox and parable. For these

people the confrontation with evil in their lives helps them

move beyond a singular faith system in stage four; and the

discussion of theodicy, the problem of evil, helps them

clarify this movement and more clearly understand the

paradoxes in their faith system.

This section examined the form and content of Lessons 5

and 6. It talked about the importance of increasing learner

responsibility in the classroom, and the value of discussing

theodicy in a course in modern Jewish theology. The next

lesson focuses on prayer, and continues the pattern of

increasing learner responsibility.

Lesson Seven

Prayer

This lesson will be prepared and presented by a group from the class. The lesson will include a background presentation, a summary of the views on prayer of the four thinkers, and time for class discussion and interaction. The learners will decide on the specific mode for presenting the content of the lesson. The following outline includes the objectives for the lesson and the analysis. A guide for the teacher to help the learners prepare the lesson appears in the appendix.

Objectives

The teacher's objectives for this session are:

(1)   The learner will demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of prayer and God's role in prayer in the pre-modern era, and modern Jewish ideas about prayer, by comparing the pre-modern conception of prayer with the interpretation of prayer of a modern Jewish thinker, in a class discussion.

(2)   The learner will demonstrate integration of his or her belief about prayer by describing the purpose of communal worship in his or her life, in a class discussion.

(3)   Individual learners will display a positive feeling for adult Jewish education by preparing and presenting the class session on prayer.

(4)   The learner will display trust for the class by participating in class discussions.

Analysis

This lesson culminates the process of the students taking progressively more responsibility for their learning,

with the learners planning and presenting the class session. This process has been significant in two ways. First, it has provided a positive environment for adult learning. Knowles stressed the importance of the learners having responsibility for the planning and operation of their learning experience,(33) and of validating learner experience(34) as factors which maximize learning in the adult education setting. Allowing learners to plan and implement individual lessons gives them an increasing share in the responsibility for running the class, and validates their personal experience and competence as adults.

Second, the increased level of learner participation in the operation of the class works to achieve the fourth goal of the course, giving the learners a positive feeling toward adult Jewish education. Learner planning and implementation of lessons demonstrates to the learners that they are capable of serious and independent study of Judaism. This counters some of the negative experiences White alludes to in the childhood education of many Jewish learners.(35) Hopefully this positive experience will inspire learners to continue participating in adult Jewish education and participate more actively in other areas of Jewish life.

Neither Fowler nor Moran specifically addresses prayer in the formulation of their systems. However, based on their discussions of faith and religious development several conclusions about the importance of prayer to people at different stages of growth can be made. The following

summary will look at stages three through five of Moran's system.

Prayer can be assumed to be relatively important for people in the third stage of Moran's system, "Our People's Belief." The reasons for this are two-fold. First, on an affiliational level, prayer ties the individual to the community. Prayer gives the person a means of showing his or her commitment to the norms of the community, and consequently forms a major part of a person's religious life. Second, the person at this stage wants to construct a system of belief which can respond to and sanctify life's joys and sorrows. Personal piety gives the individual a means to bring religion into many realms of his or her experience. These ideas suggest the importance of prayer to people at stage 3.

In contrast to stage 3, people at stage 4 in Moran's framework would most likely find little value in prayer. This stage is called "Disbelief." At this stage people begin to see the flaws in their previous religious belief system. At this stage people shy away from the spiritual aspects of religion and look for a more rationally oriented belief system. Moran says, "Especially for the academically bright student, there is a moment at which building the philosophical system (with an accompanying anti-religious attitude) seems to be the answer to all problems."(36) At this stage prayer becomes less important for people because they are challenging their previous beliefs and prayer

represents a tie to the values they are questioning.

In the fifth stage of Moran's system people may again return to prayer. At this stage people are not looking for absolute meanings and appreciate the multivalent aspects of religious belief. Moran describes the transition in this parabolic stage as follows:

> Persons in this historical era are being forced beyond the second stage (Our People's Belief and Disbelief, ed.),. They pass beyond the negative stance of disbelief and decide to set their hearts on something. . . . A parabolic attitude is the recognition that the search for answers must go on but with different expectations of success. We realize that we are never going to reduce life to a rational system.(37)

At this stage as people set their hearts on a religious value, and as they realign their expectations, they again begin to appreciate the value of prayer. They understand that they do not need to know the outcome of their prayers, and can appreciate the value of the act of prayer itself.

This section analyzed the form and content of the lesson. It described the culmination of the progression of increased learner responsibility for planning and implementing the class sessions, and the way learners might respond to a discussion of prayer at various stages of Moran's system. The next lesson looks at the doctrine of salvation and the world to come, in Judaism.

Lesson Eight

Salvation

This lesson examines the Jewish beliefs about salvation and the world to come. As with the last lesson, this session will be prepared and presented by a committee from the class. The presentation will include the classical view of these doctrines, and modern responses. The discussion below includes the objectives for the lesson and the analysis of the form and content of the lesson. A guide for the teacher to use in helping the students prepare for the lesson appears in the appendix.

Objectives

The objectives are:

(1) The learner will demonstrate an understanding of the classical Jewish belief in salvation and the world to come and modern interpretations of this doctrine, by comparing the view of a modern Jewish thinker about salvation with the classical view in class discussions.

(2) The learner will demonstrate integration of his or her knowledge about classical and modern beliefs about salvation and the world to come by expressing his or her own belief about salvation and supporting it with reference to the material presented during the session in class discussions.

(3) Individual learners will display a positive feeling for adult Jewish education by preparing and presenting the class session on salvation and the world to come.

(4) The learner will display a positive feeling for adult Jewish education by participating in class discussions.

Analysis

This lesson uses the same form of presentation as Lesson

7. The learners prepares and presents the class session.

For an analysis of the value of this mode of presentation and

its relation to the curriculum please refer to the discussion

in the analysis for Lesson 7.

The final section of the chapter on the form and content

of the course discusses the importance of the discussion of

salvation and the world to come in a course in modern Jewish

theology. This discussion lists two factors which attest to

the importance of discussing this topic area.

The first reason for discussing life after death is the

challenge to the classical belief in God by modern scientific

method. In the pre-modern world people believed in a

supernatural God who would make restitution for the evils

people experienced in this world in a life to come. Modern

science has challenged this belief by asking for verifiable

proof for the existence of an afterlife. Since people cannot

prove that an afterlife exists, this belief is called into

question, and must be redefined or reinterpreted in the

modern era.

Second, the psycho-social development literature

suggests that as people near death they begin to reflect on

their lives and to make peace with God, based on their

religious beliefs. The confrontation with death in late

adulthood also suggests the importance of discussing

salvation and the world to come, in a course on modern Jewish

theology.

In addition to these factors, the faith development

literature sheds light on learner reactions to the discussion
of life after death. As with prayer the importance of this
topic area will vary depending on a person's stage of
development and personal orientation. In stage 3 of Moran's
system, Our People's Belief, salvation may be a particularly
important concept because the person wants to construct a
holistic religious system. Salvation serves as a reward for
the believers.

In stage 4, Disbelief, life after death may be less
important. The person wants to construct a rational system
of belief. Consequently, a belief in an afterlife which is
not empirically verifiable would be dissonant to the belief
system of a person at this stage.

At Moran's, fifth stage, Religiously Christian, Jewish,
Muslim, the person may again be interested in this topic
area. The person is ready to move beyond the heavy reliance
on rationalism of the previous stage, and may again question
the existence of a hereafter.

Finally, Moran suggests that people in the last phase of
life, Detachment, may not be interested in discussing death
and salvation. Moran gives this account of the perspective
of the person at this stage:

> I am assuming this characteristic to be common in
> later life. Those who have come to terms with life
> and befriended death are aware that the human being
> leaves this world as he or she arrived. The very
> old have something of the same simple vision of
> unity as the infant.(38)

Moran suggests that at this stage the person no longer focuses on life's paradoxes, but instead the person sees the world as a unity. The person at this stage accepts the finite nature of human life and makes peace with death.

Based on this analysis Moran, suggests that people at this stage will not be interested in studying death. They are interested in religious writings at this stage, as aesthetic and not as ideological works. In this light, according to Moran, speculation about the world to come would not be of interest to people at this final stage.(39)

In conclusion this analysis discussed the importance of examining the doctrines of salvation and the world to come in a course in modern Jewish theology. The discussion suggests that these doctrines will be of greater or lesser interest to people based on their place in life and stage of religious development.

Lesson Nine

Jewish Practice and Conclusion

This lesson will present the classical and modern discussions about the purpose and function of ritual observance, and it will summarize the course. The format for the presentation on ritual will follow the basic structure of the lessons previously presented. The summary will mainly focus on the learner's experience of and growth during the course.

Objectives

The objectives for this lesson are:

(1) The learner will demonstrate an understanding of the classical and modern bases for Jewish ritual practice by comparing the rationale of a modern Jewish thinker for Jewish practice with the classical rationale in class discussion.

(2) The learner will demonstrate integration of his or her knowledge of the classical and modern bases for Jewish practice by describing his or her rationale for Jewish practice and supporting this position with reference to classical and modern sources in a class discussion.

(3) The learner will display a feeling of trust for the class and comfort in the learning environment by participating in class discussions.

(4) The learner will demonstrate a positive feeling for adult Jewish education by sharing two insights he or she gained from the course in a small and large group discussions.

Activities

The activities for this lesson are:

(1) Introduction.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

     (a) Review. The teacher should briefly review the previous week's class about salvation. The teacher should be sure to acknowledge the work of

the people who prepared and presented the class session.

(b) Introduce Lesson Format. The teacher should introduce the agenda for the class meeting: lecture and discussion on ritual, and closure activities.

(2) Lecture.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

(a) Presentation of Dilemma. The teacher should present the dilemma on ritual to the class as an introduction to the lesson.

(b) Lecture. The teacher should present the lecture on classical and modern bases for Jewish ritual practice. The outline for the lecture appears in the appendix.

(3) Discussion.   Format: Large Group
                                          Discussion

(a) The teacher should lead the class in a discussion of the lecture. To start the discussion people as individuals should decide with which modern thinker they agree, and how they would respond to the dilemma. Once people develop their opinions the class should process the ideas of the thinkers and develop a solution to the dilemma.

(b) Closure and Journal. The teacher should summarize the main issues and ideas raised by the class at the end of the discussion. For those people keeping journals they may want to write an entry on the topic: I agree with _____ about the reasons for rituals, because. . . ; or I believe we practice Jewish rituals because. . .

(c) Break. The teacher may want to take a break at this point to divide the discussion on ritual from the final closure activities.

(4) Summary.   Format: Lecture/Discussion

(a) Introduction. The teacher should introduce the activities for the class summary. These include: brief notes by the teacher, small group values clarification exercise and sharing, large group discussion.

(b) Teacher's Summary. The teacher should briefly summarize the goals of the course and the process used to achieve the goals. The teacher may refer to the God ideas of the four thinkers, (see the

lecture for Lesson Three in the appendix), and
should share his or her reflections about the
class.

(5) Small Group Summaries.   Format: Small Groups

    (a) Values Clarification Exercise. The teacher should
        distribute the values clarification exercises and
        the learners should complete them individually.
        The first four questions are a repetition of the
        initial values clarification exercise in Lesson 1.
        The last questions ask the learner to list new
        insights gained during the course. See the
        appendix for the new questions.

        Once everyone has completed the exercise the
        learners should share their responses. They should
        note changes and new insights in their belief
        systems.

(6) Closure.   Format: Large Group
                                                   Discussion

    (a) Processing. Once all of the groups have completed
        the values clarification exercise and discussion
        the class should reassemble. The teacher should
        facilitate the class in processing the exercise.
        The teacher should look for changes in people's
        beliefs, and point out new insights gained by the
        learners.

    (b) Party. End the last class with refreshments for
        all!

Analysis

This lesson discusses classical and modern Jewish views

of ritual and provides a summary and conclusion of the

course. The analysis will examine the theoretical basis for

the form and content of each of these areas.

The lesson follows the same basic pattern as the

previous lessons in the course. This lesson uses a more

teacher centered approach. This method was used primarily to

provide a shorter presentation than one involving student

presentations. In this way the last topic area is linked to

the summary session. A learner presentation could also be

used to conclude the course based on the models presented in

Lessons 7 and 8, if the teacher wanted to encourage greater

learner participation.

The rationale for discussing the bases for Jewish ritual

practice in the modern era was presented in the previous

chapter. This discussion stresses the challenge to belief in

a supernatural God by scientific method, and the freedom to

disassociate from the Jewish community as reasons which

attest to the importance of discussing the basis for Jewish

ritual practice. Additionally, Fowler's taxonomy offers a

further rationale for the discussion, and provides a guide

for anticipating learner reactions to ritual observance.

In Synthetic-Conventional faith, stage three of Fowler's

system, the person uses a single faith structure to interpret

the world. Fowler says:

> A person's experience of the world now extends
> beyond the family. A number of spheres demand
> attention: family, peers, street society and
> media, and perhaps religion. Faith must provide a
> coherent orientation in the midst of that more
> complex and diverse range of involvements. Faith
> must synthesize values and information; it must
> provide a basis for identity and outlook.(40)

In this stage religious rituals can be particularly important

for the individual. The individual is trying to construct a

faith system to integrate the disperate parts of his or her

experience. On a sociological level symbols and rituals give

the person a means of reinforcing this belief system. Based

on this analysis examining the basis for and practice of

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religious rituals will be important for learners at this stage.

In stage four, Individuative-Reflective faith, the person begins to govern his or her life, by internal versus external authority. The self and not family or friends determines the individual's faith orientation. Fowler says, "The self, previously sustained in its identity and faith compositions by an interpersonal circle of significant others, now claims an identity no longer defined by the composite of one's roles or meanings to others."(41) For people at this stage of development religious symbols will have meaning as they relate to a person's internal faith structure, and not as tokens of group allegiance. At this stage the discussion of the origin and basis of ritual practice is important for helping the individual establish personal ownership of his or her faith heritage.

In the fifth stage of Fowler's taxonomy, Conjunctive faith, the person tries to integrate the rational self developed in stage four with more affective elements of his or her life. Fowler says, "This stage develops a "second naivete (Ricoeur) in which symbolic power is reunited with conceptual meaning."(42) At this stage the person strives to create a more integrated personality and he or she develops a new appreciation for symbols and religious rituals. This suggests that the discussion of classical and modern Jewish ritual observance will also be an important topic for learners at this stage.

In summary, learners at stages three through five of
Fowler's taxonomy all value rituals and will find the
discussion of the basis for Jewish ritual observance
important in a course on modern Jewish theology. Learners at
each stage relate to rituals from their developmental
perspective, and invest rituals with meaning based on this
perspective.

The importance of the closure activities comes from
Knowles theory of adult learning and White's discussion of
the adult Jewish learner. In Knowles' work he stresses the
importance of adults setting the goals for their learning and
of feeling a sense of accomplishment toward those goals.(43)
This increases the satisfaction of adults with the
educational process, and facilitates adult learning by giving
people the responsibility for their education. Lesson 2
began this process with the establishment of learner goals
and the clarification of learners' questions. The closure
activity gives the learner's a chance to assess their
progress and to affirm their learning experience. This gives
the learner's a positive feeling about themselves and the
course, and encourages further participation in adult
learning activities.

The fourth goal for the course said the activities
should provide the learner with a positive feeling toward
adult Jewish education. Martha White noted that a
significant portion of Jewish learners had negative
experiences in their religious education as children, and as

a result feel uncomfortable in adult learning settings.(44)
To compensate for this negative experience, and to stimulate
further participation in adult education by all learners the
goal calls for a positive learning experience in this course.
Closure activities give the learners a chance to affirm the
positive aspects of their cognitive and affective learning in
the course. Cognitively it gives the learners a final chance
to summarize and clarify their learning, and affectively it
gives the learners a chance to acknowledge their feelings
about learning and their interpersonal relationships in the
class. These dynamics attest to the importance of the
closure activity.

In conclusion, this analysis discussed the presentation
on Jewish ritual observance, and the closure activity. It
provided the theoretical basis for these activities based on
the various learning and developmental theories discussed in
the course. The final section of this chapter will provide a
final analysis of the lessons as a whole.

General Analysis

The lessons presented in this chapter attempt to meet four overall goals for the course. These goals includes helping the learner: articulate a belief system about God; apply this belief system to his or her life; develop a positive feeling towards Judaism and the Jewish people, and develop a positive feeling toward adult Jewish education. This analysis will show how the form and content of the course helped achieve each of these goals.

Helping the learners articulate a belief system about God and explain its strengths and weaknesses formed the first goal of the course. This goal evolved from Fowler's discussion of the importance of a person's belief system as a means of interpreting one's internal and external world, and from Kaufman's belief that a person, "Is striving to find meaning for his life -- a meaning more inclusive than the immediate gratification of money, pleasure, security."(45) The course fulfills this goal in two ways.

First, the course presents the interpretations of Judaism of four modern thinkers. The course as a whole presents each thinker's belief about God, and shows how the thinker uses this belief to reinterpret or redefine Jewish belief in the modern era. This gives the learners a variety of options from which to choose so they can adopt one of the thinker's systems as their own, or use the thinkers' systems as a basis for forming or enhancing their own belief system. In each lesson the learners were asked to choose one thinker

with whom they agreed and to discuss the reasons for this choice. In this way, in progress of the course, the learners actually did articulate an interpretation of modern Judaism for various theological rubric.

Second, the learners had the option to keep a journal, and to write an entry after each class section. In this manner, if a learner conscientiously maintains his or her journal, she/he had a written personal theology at the end of the course. This learning mode concretely fulfills the first goal.

The second goal calls for the learners to apply their belief systems to their lives. This goal was achieved through the use of both the dilemma method and class discussions. The dilemma method gives the learners an actual situation related to each theological rubric in the course. By solving the dilemmas the learners apply the cognitive material of the course to actual situations. The class discussions in response to the views of the thinkers and the dilemmas give the learners time to share their feelings and beliefs with other people. This gives the learners an opportunity to talk about the ideas of the course as they related to events in their lives. These two modes of learning help the class members apply the belief systems to their lives.

Developing a positive feeling toward Judaism and the Jewish people is the third goal of the course. This goal is based on the goals of Jewish education as described by the

UAHC-CCAR Commission on Education.(46)   The course meets this

goal in two ways.   First, the dilemma approach and the class

discussions show the learners that Judaism and Jewish

theology provide religious systems which help them more fully

lead their lives.   The course teaches the learners about

Jewish God ideas and how these ideas help them interact with

non-Jews, celebrate personal joys, and confront crises based

on human finitude.   Second, as a learning experience with

other Jewish adults, the course shows the learners that

participation in Jewish communal activities can be fun and

rewarding.   Both of these aspects of the course increase the

learner's identification with the Jewish community.

Finally, the course tries to foster a positive attitude

toward adult Jewish education.   This goal developed from

Beckerman's (47) and White's(48) research which indicates

that participation in adult Jewish education is relatively

low, and that many adults had negative experiences as

children in Jewish educational settings.   The course

confronts these problems in two ways.   First, the course

actively involves the learners in the educational process.

Learners set goals for the course, and take responsibility

for planning and presenting lessons.   This process invests

the learners in the success of the class and provides a

positive feeling towards the class as the learners move

toward the achievement of their goals.

Secondly, the dilemma approach and the class discussions

provides a positive feeling towards Jewish learning by giving

the learners a means of applying the cognitive material in the course to their lives. Barton Morgan suggests that the application of course material to a learner's experience is one of the most important factors in facilitating a positive attitude toward adult education.(49)

In conclusion this section shows how the modes of presentation and the content of the course helps achieve the four goals of the course. The next chapter will conclude the thesis.

NOTES

(1) James Fowler, <u>Stages of Faith Development: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning</u>, p. 4.

(2) William Kaufman <u>Contemporary Jewish Philosophies</u>, p. 4.

(3) Eugene Borowitz, "The Problem of the Form of a Jewish Theology," <u>HUCA</u>, 40-41.

(4) Fowler, op. cit., p. 4.

(5) Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Department of Continuing Education, "Bulletin No. 1" February 10, 1973, p. 1.

(6) Barton Morgan, <u>Methods in Adult Education</u>, 3rd ed. p. 20.

(7) Marvin Beckerman, "Adult Jewish Education: Present and Future Directions," <u>Religious Education</u>, vol. 68.

(8) Martha White, "Adult Education," <u>Jewish Principle's Handbook</u>, p. 474.

(9) Malcolm Knowles, <u>The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species</u>, pp. 77-78k.

(10) Central Conference of American Rabbis, <u>Gates of Repentence</u>, pp. 106-109 and 121-122.

(11) See the discussion of Fowler in Chapter Three.

(12) Knowles, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

(13) See the discussion of goal #2 for the course in this chapter.

(14) See Robert J. Havighurst, <u>Developmental Tasks and Education</u>.

(15) See assumption #1 for the content of the course in the preceding chapter.

(16) Kaufman, op. cit., pp. 9.

(17) Knowles, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

(18) Ibid., p. 78.

(19) See assumptions #1 and #2 for the form of {

in the preceding chapter.

(20) Knowles, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

(21) Myra Sadker and David Sadker, "Questioning Skills," in Classroom Teaching Skills: A Handbook, p. 159.

(22) Ibid., p. 170.

(23) Gabriel Moran, Religious Education Development, pp, 148-150.

(24) Ibid., pp. 150-153.

(25) Ibid., pp. 153-155.

(26) Knowles, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

(27) White, op. cit., p. 474.

(28) Knowles, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

(29) See goal #4 for the course in the beginning of this chapter.

(30) Moran, op. cit., p. 150.

(31) See Moran op. cit., pp. 153-155; and Fowler, op. cit., pp. 197-198.

(32) Fowler, op. cit. p. 198.

(33) Knowles, op. cit., p. 78.

(34) Ibid., pp. 56-57.

(35) White, op. cit., p. 474.

(36) Moran, op. cit., p. 151.

(37) Ibid., p. 153.

(38) Ibid., p. 155.

(39) Ibid., pp. 206-207.

(40) Fowler, op. cit., p. 172.

(41) Ibid., p. 182.

(42) Ibid., p. 197.

(43) Knowles, op. cit., p. 79.

(44) White, op. cit., p. 474.

(45) Kaufman, op. cit., p. 4.

(46) Union of American Hebrew Congregations, op. cit., p. 1.

(47) Beckerman, op. cit.

(48) White, op. cit., p. 474.

(49) Morgan, op. cit., p. 20.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

This thesis presents a course in modern Jewish theology
for adult learners. The thesis draws on literature from the
fields of adult development, education and adult education,
faith development, Jewish education, and modern Jewish
thought. Work in these fields was summarized and analyzed in
order to develop assumptions and provide background material
for the form and the content of the course. This conclusion
provides a summary of how each of the five major areas of
literature, impacts on the lessons presented in the preceding
chapter.

Adult development, as discussed in Chapter Two, offers
three particularly important insights for this thesis which
influence the formulation of the lessons in Chapter Seven.
First, the research on physiology of adulthood shows that,
while adults reach their physical and intellectual peak
between ages 17 and 30, they are still capable of learning
and leading active lives well into late adulthood, i.e., age
65 and beyond. In previous years educators confined their
activities to childhood, viewing education for adults as
superfluous. Research which shows that adults are physically
and intellectually active throughout their lives, suggests
the importance of developing classes and programs geared for

adults.

Second, the work of Erikson, Havighurst, and Levinson in adult developmental psychology offers two important insights for this thesis. First, these writers suggest that there are predictable eras and seasons in adulthood. Havighurst defines various life tasks people work on during early, middle, and late adulthood; Erikson talks about conflicts or tensions which exist during various phases of adulthood; and Levinson suggests that there are periods of transition and change which people experience during adulthood. This research suggests that there are general issues which will be of importance to adults during different phases of their lives. Issues of intimacy and relationship are concerns of early adulthood, providing for and teaching the next generation involves the middle adult years, and making peace with one's life is a task in later years. To the extent that these issues effect affiliation with a religion and raise theological concerns, the general patterns of adulthood give important reference points for the development of the form and content of the course. Specifically, the content areas of, "life after death," and "theodicy," which become concerns based on people's life experience; and the methodology of the dilemma approach based on actual situations appear in the course as a result of considering predictable life patterns and crises.

In addition to the predictable aspects of adulthood suggested by the work of the developmental psychologists,

their work also points to the fact that there is a high degree of individual difference in each person's life. Levinson's work in particular notes that some men make radical changes during a transition period in their lives, and other men keep their life structures, i.e., family, friends, and career, basically intact. Also Erikson suggests that people experience various degrees of success and failure as they move through the different conflicts he describes in his system. This insight, the high degree of variety in individual experience, suggests the importance of learner participation in the development of the lessons and in class discussions. This helps to insure that the course meets each individual's particular needs and that individuals have an opportunity to talk about personal concerns as they arise in relation to the material presented in the course.

The study of education and adult education literature also effects the form and the content of the course. The Examination and adoption of Malcolm Knowles theory of adult education, "andragogy," is the single most important aspect of the lessons in Chapter Seven derived from the educational literature. Knowles makes four assumptions about adults as learners. These assumptions include: people become more self-sufficient as they mature. The experiences from an individual's life facilitates learning. An adult's readiness to learn is a product of his or her immediate life tasks, and adults use a problem or task versus subject-centered approach to learning. Within the lessons these assumptions provide

the basis for three aspects of the methodology of the course.

First, Knowles' insight into the increased level of self-sufficiency of adults compared to children suggests the progressive increase in learner participation in the planning and implementation of the lessons in the course. The course moves from a teacher to a student-centered approach based on this assumption.

Second, these assumptions also influence the use of the dilemma method as a mode of set induction for the lessons. The dilemma method demonstrates to the learners that theology is not solely an intellectual concern, but that issues involving theology intricately relate to their lives. The discussion of God and revelation as the result of a teenager's refusal to participate in confirmation, or the discussion of theodicy based on a child's injury in a car accident, tie theological issues to the individual's personal experience.

Lastly, the emphasis on class discussion and the keeping individual journals both relate to Knowles assumptions for adult education. Both of the methodologies provide the individual with an opportunity to clarify and reflect on the ideas the class examines, and on his or her own beliefs about God and religion. This maintains the problem-centered orientation to learning by allowing people the time to explore the ramifications of their beliefs, and emphasizes the individual's self-sufficiency by giving him or her responsibility for integrating the ideas presented in the

class either orally with other class members, or in writing. In these ways Knowles' beliefs about adult education become an important part of the development of the course as presented in the lesson plans.

The work of Fowler in faith development, and Moran in religious development, as described in Chapter Three shapes two of the basic assumptions for the content of the course. Both Fowler and Moran describe systems which explain the individual's development in relation to his or her religion and beliefs about God. Allowing for the differences in the two systems, both writers offer the insight that people's beliefs about God change as they mature. A toddler conceptualizes God differently than an adolescent, and an adolescent thinks of God differently than an adult. This suggests that religious education, and the task of theology, does not stop at the end of high school. People's way of conceptualizing God changes throughout their lives and therefore religious education is a life long task.

Within the basic assumptions for the course, described in Chapter Six, this insight that beliefs about God change, is fundamental to the assumption that a course in modern Jewish theology should assist people to clarify their beliefs about God, and the assumption that a course in modern Jewish theology should present various belief systems about God. In general, since people's beliefs about God change as they mature, the course outline should help them clarify their beliefs about God at and within each developmental stage; and

the course should present various options for belief in God

so the learner can learn of new ideas about God when his or

her old belief system becomes dysfunctional. Within the

course, the presentation of four thinkers and their systems

of modern Judaism provides the learners with various options

for Jewish belief in the modern era. The use of the values

clarification exercises, the class discussions, and the

journals gives the learners a framework in which to clarify

their beliefs about God. In this way the course reflects

both of the assumptions derived from the work of Fowler and

Moran.

Jewish education, discussed in Chapter Four, represents

the next main body of literature in the course. In this

area, the thesis notes that Jews have been actively involved

in religious education since before the common era. However,

the thesis also notes that participation in adult Jewish

education activities in contemporary society is relatively

low. Martha White adds that a proportion of adult Jewish

learners need basic Jewish studies. As a result of this

research the course which the thesis presents in modern

Jewish theology, attempts to enfranchise the learners and

provide them with a positive experience in Jewish education.

Based on Knowles research in secular adult education the

course uses the dilemma method and class discussions to

affirm learner's experience; and has the learners set

personal goals for the course, in order to create a positive

learning environment and experience with adult Jewish

education.

Lastly, research about issues confronting modern Jewish thought and the four thinkers presented in the thesis, represents a significant influence in the development of the course. A common denominator in all of this research is the belief that challenges to Jewish belief in the modern era from scientific method, philosophy, the Emancipation, and the Holocaust, call for Jews to reinterpret classical Jewish theology, (based on a supernatural concept of God) to respond to these challenges, or to redefine Jewish theology based on a new modern idea of God. This common denominator shapes both the content and the form of the course.

On a content level the need to reinterpret or redefine Jewish belief in the modern era provides for the selection of the thought of several Jewish thinkers for the focus of the course, and for the holistic presentation of their systems of modern Jewish belief. The course presents the views of four thinkers, Leo Baeck, Mordecai Kaplan, Eugene Borowitz, and Eliezer Berkovits to expose the learners to a rang of modern Jewish thought from naturalism to orthodoxy. Each thinker represents a different way of responding to the challenges to modern Jewish belief which the learners can adopt or reject. Further, the course presents the response of each thinker to a variety of theological rubrics because as a thinker changes his belief about God he also changes his belief about and interpretation of various theological concepts, i.e., prayer or chosenness. In these ways the need to reinterpret or

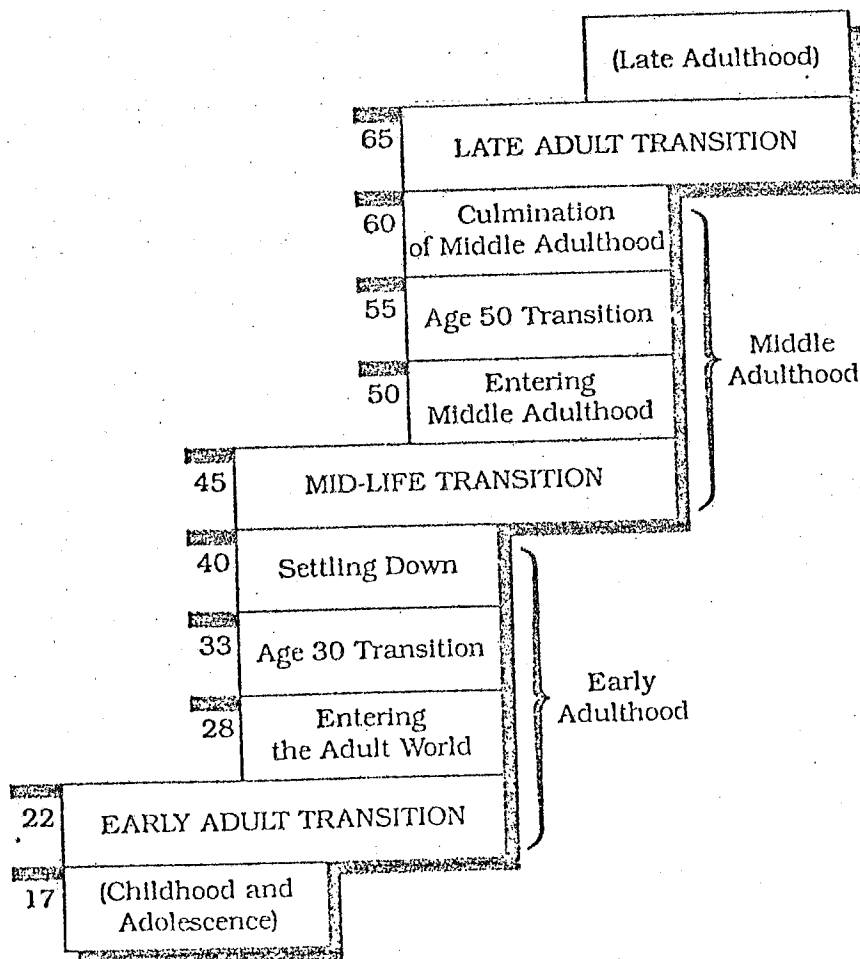redefine Jewish belief shapes the entire content of the course.

In terms of methodology the need to reinterpret or redefine modern Jewish belief determines the teaching style that the course suggests. In addition to the basis in adult education research, the course uses a learner centered mode of presentation to give the learners an opportunity to respond to the ideas presented about each thinker. The ideas of the four thinkers may be new for many learners and activities that are learner centered give the class a chance to integrate the views of the thinkers into their belief and value system. In this way the research on modern Jewish thought significantly effects both the form and the content of the course.

In summary, this conclusion shows the way in which the areas of research for this thesis, adult development, education and adult education, faith development, Jewish education and modern Jewish thought, influence the basic assumptions, the methodologies, and the content of the course outline presented in the thesis. It is this author's hope that through participation in a course of this nature, people will be able to clarify and enhance their belief in God and their relationship to the Jewish people.

Levinson's Stages of Development

Levinson's schema of stages is depicted graphically on the jacket of *The Seasons of a Man's Life* as follows:

DEVELOPMENTAL PERIODS
IN EARLY AND MIDDLE
ADULTHOOD

	(Late Adulthood)	
65	LATE ADULT TRANSITION	
60	Culmination of Middle Adulthood	Middle Adulthood
55	Age 50 Transition	
50	Entering Middle Adulthood	
45	MID-LIFE TRANSITION	
40	Settling Down	Early Adulthood
33	Age 30 Transition	
28	Entering the Adult World	
22	EARLY ADULT TRANSITION	
17	(Childhood and Adolescence)	

Fowler and Developmental Theory

FOWLER'S SEVEN STAGES OF FAITH

Primal Faith (Infancy): A pre-language disposition of trust forms in the mutuality of one's relationships with parents and others to offset the anxiety that results from separations which occur during infancy.

Intuitive-Projective Faith (Early childhood): Imagination, stimulated by stories, gestures, and symbols, and not yet controlled by logical thinking, combines with perception and feelings to create long-lasting images that represent both the protective and threatening powers surrounding one's life.

Mythic-Literal Faith (Childhood and beyond): The developing ability to think logically helps one order the world with categories of causality, space, and time; to enter into the perspectives of others; and to capture life meaning in stories.

Synthetic-Conventional Faith (Adolescence and beyond): New cognitive abilities make mutual perspective-taking possible and require one to integrate diverse self-images into a coherent identity. A personal and largely unreflective synthesis of beliefs and values evolves to support identity and to unite one in emotional solidarity with others.

Individuative-Reflective Faith (Young adulthood and beyond): Critical reflection upon one's beliefs and values, understanding of the self and others as part of a social system, and the assumption of responsibility for making choices of ideology and lifestyle open the way for commitments in relationships and vocation.

Conjunctive Faith (Mid-life and beyond): The embrace of polarities in one's life, an alertness to paradox, and the need for multiple interpretations of reality mark this stage. Symbol and story, metaphor and myth (from one's own traditions and others'), are newly appreciated as vehicles for grasping truth.

Universalizing Faith (Mid-life or beyond): Beyond paradox and polarities, persons in this stage are grounded in a oneness with the power of being. Their visions and commitments free them for a passionate yet detached spending of the self in love, devoted to overcoming division, oppression, and brutality.

Fowler and Developmental Theory

	Faith Stages by Aspects						
ASPECT:	A. Form Of Logic (Piaget)	B. Perspective Taking (Selman)	C. Form of Moral Judgment (Kohlberg)	D. Bounds of Social Awareness	E. Locus of Authority	F. Form of World Coherence	G. Symbolic Function
STAGE:							
I	Preoperational	Rudimentary empathy (egocentric)	Punishment –reward	Family, primal others	Attachment/dependence relationships. Size, power, visible symbols of authority	Episodic	Magical -Numinous
II	Concrete Operational	Simple perspective taking	Instrumental hedonism (Reciprocal fairness)	"Those like us" (in familial, ethnic, racial, class and religious terms)	Incumbents of authority roles, salience increased by personal relatedness	Narrative-Dramatic	One-dimensional; literal
III	Early Formal Operations	Mutual interpersonal	Interpersonal expectations and concordance	Composite of groups in which one has interpersonal relationships	Consensus of valued groups and in personally worthy representatives of belief-value traditions	Tacit system, felt meanings symbolically mediated, globally held	Symbols multidimensional; evocative power inheres in symbol
IV	Formal Operations (Dichotomizing)	Mutual, with self-selected group or class— (societal)	Societal perspective, Reflective relativism or class-biased universalism	Ideologically compatible communities with congruence to self-chosen norms and insights	One's own judgment as informed by a self-ratified ideological perspective. Authorities and norms must be congruent with this.	Explicit system, conceptually mediated, clarity about boundaries and inner connections of system	Symbols separated from symbolized.. Translated (reduced) to ideations. Evocative power inheres in *meaning* conveyed by symbols

Fowler and Developmental Theory

V	Formal Operations (Dialectical)	Mutual with groups, classes and traditions "other" than one's own	Prior to society, Principled higher law (universal and critical)	Extends beyond class norms and interests. Disciplined ideological vulnerability to "truths" and "claims" of outgroups and other traditions	Dialectical joining of judgment-experience processes with reflective claims of others and of various expressions of cumulative human wisdom.	Multisystemic symbolic and conceptual mediation	Postcritical rejoining of irreducible symbolic power and ideational meaning. Evocative power inherent in the reality in and beyond symbol *and* in the power of unconscious processes in the self
VI	Formal Operations (Synthetic)	Mutual, with the commonwealth of being	Loyalty to being	Identification with the species. Transnarcissistic love of being	In a personal judgment informed by the experiences and truths of previous stages, purified of egoic striving, and linked by disciplined intuition to the principle of being	Unitive actuality felt and participated unity of "One beyond the many"	Evocative power of symbols actualized through unification of reality mediated by symbols and the self

Lesson One: Activity 2

Story.   It was late on Yom Kippur Afternoon, and Moshe was about to start the Neilah service, the service to conclude the fast and the Day of Atonement.   It was late on Yom Kippur afternoon and the Baal Shem Tov was no where to be found.

Where was the Baal Shem Tov? The Baal Shem Tov had ascended to heaven to talk with God.   On this Yom Kippur the Baal Shem Tov was worried about his people and he went up to heaven to plead for the lives of the Jews of his congregation.

There in heaven the Baal Shem Tov came before the celestial throne and he began to speak.   He began to argue with God.   He said, "God today is the Day of Atonement it is the day of judgment between you and your people, on this day you inscribe us in the book of life or the book of death, but God before you seal your decree I need to plead my case and settle accounts with You!"

"God, I admit that in the past year the Jews have not kept Your laws as we should. God, some of us eat trafe, and some of us work on Shabbos. God, I even admit to some Jewish thieves. But, God how do these sins compare with Your judgment? God, for eating trife and for working, do we deserve pogroms and disasters? God in the past year You have not been fair. And God, Master of the universe, for You to settle accounts with us, I demand that all of the Jews in my

congregation be granted a year of life and health."

And as the Baal Shem Tov spoke, he saw God nod, and God granted his request. So, not to let God off lightly, the Baal Shem Tov continued. "Lord, God, throughout the world, Your people have suffered this past year. There have been fires and plagues and expulsions. God is this fair. God Your people have promised to serve You, how can You allow such harm to befall your sacred possession? God, not only for my people, but for Jews everywhere, I demand a year of health and peace.

And as God heard the Baal Shem Tov, even the Divine was moved to repentance and agreed to give all of the Jewish people a year of health and peace.

Now, the Baal Shem Tov was inspired. He thought to himself I can't stop now. So, the Baal Shem Tov decided to ask the one, the ultimate question. He decided to ask God, who the messiah is and when he would come? But by chance, as the Baal Shem Tov was reading his arguments he looked down to his own village and his own synagogue, and he saw Moshe leading the Neilah service. And as he watched he saw Moshe, an old man who had lead the service for years, grow faint and near exhaustion. Then, before he could ask God for the identity of the messiah, the Baal Shem Tov turned and left heaven. He feared that the time for this last question could mean the difference between Moshe eating and not eating, between life and death. And so with salvation for the world close the Baal Shem Tov decided that this one life was more

important than the world to come.

adapted from the story as told by Rabbi Eric Friedland

Rabbi Emeritus, Temple Sholom, Chicago

Lesson I: Activity 3

Values Clarification Exercise:

Please choose the answer to each question which corresponds most closely to your belief. The last two questions are for open responses. Please answer these based on your experience.

(1)   I believe that stories in the Bible and Jewish tradition of miraculous events, like the parting of the Red Sea, the Burning Bush, or God sending plagues to punish people, are:

     (a) True and accurate accounts of what happened.
     (b) Events which are caused by God, but not directly as they are told.
     (c) Natural events which people interpret as Divine.
     (d) I'm not sure. I think they are natural but God also may be involved.

(2)   I believe the Torah comes:

     (a) Directly from God to Moses.
     (b) As the result of people perceiving or encounting God and writing about this experience.
     (c) From people who wrote their ideas about God.
     (d) May have some parts that God inspired, and the rest is human.

(3)   When people say the Jews are the "Chosen People," I believe this means:

     (a) God selected the Jews to follow the Torah, and God will bring redemption to the world because of the Jews' leadership.
     (b) The Jewish belief in the Torah, whatever its source, gives the Jews a mission to bring peace to the world.
     (c) The concept should be thrown out. All people should be involved in creating a better world.
     (d) Jews throughout history have sought and experienced God in some way. As a result of this feeling Jews feel called to bring peace and make a better world.

(4)   When tragedies in people's lives or in the world happen, I believe this is because:

     (a) God lets it happen. God could prevent tragedy, but does not because human beings were given free will. The righteous will be rewarded in a world to come.
     (b) God lets evil happen because of the need for free will, and people need to fight evil.

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    (c) God does not cause bad things or want them to
        happen. God is the Power that makes for good in
        the world, and faith in God can help people face
        tragedy.
    (d) I'm not sure none of these answers seems right.

(5) As a child I learned about God by/from. . . .

(6) I as a child believed that God. . .

Lesson II: Activity 2a

Job Description for God

WANTED: GOD - RULER OF THE UNIVERSE

Job Qualifications:

(1) Create world from nothing.
(2) Punish evil and reward good.
(3) Redeem people of Israel from slavery in Egypt.
(4) Give Torah to the Israelites as a guide and provide
    for an oral tradition to keep the Torah current.
(5) Speak with prophets - agents of divine plan in the
    world.
(6) Listen to prayers and answer on occasion.
(7) Send a messiah to redeem the world at the end of time.

Tenure track position. Must be fluent in Hebrew, English,
and German. Send Applications to GOD: Search Committee P.
O. Box 613; Cincinnati, OH

Lesson II: Activity 2b

Lecture: History of God idea in Judaism - Outline

  I. Introduction

      A. Transition from Job Description. Fictional idea
         of God's job.

      B. Goal of Lecture: To show Biblical and Rabbinic
         ideas of God before the modern era.

 II. Biblical Idea of God - Three Key stories as illustra-
     tions of Biblical idea of God.

      A. Creation: God creates world out of nothing,
         makes people, plants, animals and Shabbat.

      B. Exodus: God does wonders at the burning bush,
         with plagues, and the Red Sea. God is involved

in history and committed to the Jewish people.

  C. Sinai: God gives laws for the people. Thunder and lightning. The Torah is a revealed code of legislation.

III. God Idea in Jewish Literature. Extend the ideas of God in the Bible to show deeper layers of meaning and additional insights.

  A. God is One. Based on the Shema. Bible henotheism, many gods ours is central. Rabbis challenged gnosticism - only God is involved in creation and the world.

  B. Creation Idea Remains Constant. Illustration of Yotzer Or in liturgy.

  C. Exodus. Idea in liturgy: Mi chamocha. Also added layer: Midrash of angels rejoicing and God's grief at the drowning of the Egyptians. God is a redeemer for the Jews and compassionate for all people.

  D. Sinai. Addition of the oral law to the written. Importance of Torah and mitzvot as the pillars of Jewish life based on God's command.

  E. Messiah. Biblical basis, but fruition in later literature. A personal messiah will come and bring: ingathering of exiles, resurrection of dead, and World to Come.

IV. Attributes versus Essence. The idea that these things illustrate God's qualities, not God's essence or nature.

  A. Bible: Exodus 33:17-23. Cannot see the face of God.

  B. Jewish Philosophy Offered Some Proofs for God. Argument from design and causation, but normative beliefs held.

V. Conclusion. Summarize main points of part II of the lecture and make a transition to definition of challenges in the modern era.

Lesson III: Activity 1.

Stern Family Dilemma

Sam and Barbara Stern are active members of Temple
Emanuel. Both Sam and Barbara come from very Jewishly
committed families. Sam was the president of his Hillel when
he was in college, and Barbara was president of her youth
group and spent a year studying in Israel while she was in
college. Their oldest child, Jan, is in confirmation class.
Jan is an exceptionally bright student in public school and
in religious school. She has always enjoyed going to
religious school and participating in activities at the
Temple.

During the past few weeks the confirmation class has
been studying the holiday cycle. This is a general
preparation for planning the confirmation service beginning
in March. After the second class in the unit Jan came home
and said she needed to talk with her parents. She said that
she has been giving a great deal of thought to confirmation
over the past several months. She thought about the Jewish
things she does at home and about religious school and she is
not sure she believes in what people are supposed to confirm.
She said that as they studied Shavout she learned that this
holiday commemorates God giving the Torah to Moses and the
people of Israel on Mount Sinai. Jan said she does not
believe that this is where the Torah came from; and that
since she cannot accept this belief she does not feel she can
participate in confirmation which celebrates this event, and
which affirms this idea of God. What do you believe? How
would you respond to Jan?

Lesson III: Activity 2.

Lecture: Four Beliefs about God and Revelation.

   I. Introduction

      A. Transition from Activity 1. Show the relation of
         the "Stern Family Dilemma," to the challenges to
         modern Jewish belief discussed during the last
         session. Stress the way the challenges, particu-
         larly science, Emancipation, and the Holocaust,
         necessitate a redefinition or reinterpretation of
         Jewish belief.

      B. Introduce the topic for the lecture. The talk
         will present the way four modern Jewish thinkers
         view God and revelation in response to the chal-
         lenges to Jewish belief.

  II. The Four Thinkers

A. Leo Baeck

1. Biography. (1873-1956). Studied: Conservative Seminary in Breslau and Liberal Seminary in Berlin. Army Chaplain WWI. President Jewish Council in Nazi Germany. Sent to Theresienstadt. After the war lived in London and taught at Hebrew Union College.

2. Belief in God. Baeck maintains a belief in a God who is both transcendent and immanent. He sees the tension between science which cannot prove God, and religion which is susceptible to personal bias and subjectivity. He describes this tension by the use of three paradoxes to belief in God: God is distant, yet known to humanity; people have free will, yet are created by God; God is the source of meaning, yet life is meaningless without human action. Baeck resolves the paradoxes by relying on a sense of mystery which can make peace between reason and religion. The person of faith transcends the paradoxes with action.

3. Revelation. The prophets exemplified the person of faith. They did not speculate about God, but were overwhelmed by an experience of the Divine. Through this sense of God they learned of "The Commandment." This refers to Kant's ethical imperative. The Torah represents the prophets' record of their experience of God, and desire to transform the Commandment into a system for human equality and peace.

B. Mordecai Kaplan

1. Biography (1881-1983). Born Eastern Europe. Son of Orthodox rabbi. Studied at Jewish Theological Seminary and Columbia University. First served an Orthodox congregation. Invited to head the Teacher's College at the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1909. Founded Reconstructionist Society in 1922. Published Judaism as a Civilization, in 1934. Zionist and leader of the Jewish community.

2. Belief in God. Kaplan rejects supernatural ideas of God, i.e., the God described as the Biblical idea of God. He calls God the Process or Force that makes human fulfillment possible. He uses the experiential idea that once people fulfill their survival needs they

will seek greater personal fulfillment, as evidence of this idea of God. Also an analogy of a compass pointing north as its guiding principle, to show how God works for order in the universe.

3. Revelation. Kaplan also rejects supernatural revelation. Based on Kaplan's belief in God, when a person discovers a religious truth, a truth which facilitates human fulfillment/salvation, the person has a revelation. The Torah is a collection of Jewish religious truths.

C. Eugene Borowitz

1. Biography (19 - Present). Born Columbus, OH Studied at Hebrew Union College and Columbia. Professor of Education and Jewish Thought at Hebrew Union College, New York.

2. Belief in God. Belief in an all-powerful caring God is a cornerstone of Borowitz system of Judaism. Borowitz rejects the idea that God communicated specific content in revelation to Moses and the prophets. He does however, accept that these figures, and people today can know God. Additionally, Borowitz believes in a corporate revelation to the Jewish people. The Jewish people feel tied to one another as a community of faith, i.e., Jewish solidarity during the Six Day War, and this provides a second principle for interpreting Jewish belief. Finally, Borowitz believes in autonomy. God created people with free will and the power to shape the world and their religious lives.

3. Revelation. Borowitz does not see the Torah as a document transmitted from God to Moses, the sages, and the prophets. He believes people created the Torah in their individual and corporate response to God. In this way the Torah evolves and Jewish practice can change to keep the covenantal relationship with God fresh and alive.

D. Eliezer Berkovits

1. Biography (1900-Present). Born Oradea, Transylvania. Ordained at the Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary. Served as a rabbi in Berlin until 1939. After that he served in England, Australia, and the United States.

Chairman of the department of Jewish Philosophy at Hebrew Theological College, in Chicago. Currently lives in Israel.

2. Belief in God. Berkovits represents an Orthodox position in the context of the course. He believes, like Baeck, that experience, not speculation is the way to know God. He suggests that the prophets actually encountered God, but in the process God hid a part of the Divine nature, so the prophets could survive the experience. As a result the prophet knows he encountered God, but relates this experience through the filter of his own personality.

3. Revelation. For Berkovits the Torah and the Oral tradition both come from God. He believes both parts of the Halacha were given at Sinai as a guide for Jewish life.

III. Conclusion

A. Summarize the main ideas of the lecture. Tie them back to the challenges and the "Stern Family Dilemma."

Thinker	Baeck	Kaplan	Borowitz	Berkovits
Biography	(1873-1956)	(1881-1983)	(19 -Present)	(1900-Present)
	Studies: Breslau Seminary and Berlin Liberal Seminary. Pres. Jewish council in Nazi Germany. Inmate Theresiestadt Lived: U.S. and Eng. after WW II.	B.E. Europe. Studied: Jewish Theological Seminary and Columbia University. Founder: Reconstructionist Judaism. Dean: JTS Teacher's College.	B. Columbus, OH Studied: Hebrew Union College and Columbia University. Professor Education and Jewish Thought, HUC-JIR, NY.	B. E. Europe. Studied: Hildesheimer Rabbinical Seminary. Rabbi in Germany until 1939. Served in: Eng., Aust., and U.S. Taught: Hebrew Theological College, Chicago
Belief in God	God is transcendent and immanent. Sees three paradoxes in Jewish belief: God is near, yet far; Humans created, yet free will; Life is limited, but has meaning. A religious feeling resolves the paradoxes and leads to action.	Rejects supernatural ideas of God as stated in the Bible. God is the Force or Process that makes human fulfillment possible. People seeking morality and fulfillment once their basic needs are met exemplifies this Force.	Also believes in a transcendent and immanent God. People experience God individually, and the people of Israel as a corporate entity also encounter God. God preserves human free will as a vital part of the encounter.	God is transcendent and immanent. The prophets actually encountered God. In the process of revelation God hides part of the Divine nature so the prophet is not overwhelmed. Each prophet gives a personal interpretation to revelation.
Revelation	In their encounter with God the prophets learn of God's unity. They derive a universal ethical Commandment from this. The Torah represents their expression of the Commandment.	Supernatural revelation does not occur. When a person creates an an idea which aids human fulfillment, this is a religious idea and can be called revelation. The Torah is a collection of Jewish religious ideas.	There is no direct revelation with a prescribed content. The Torah is a human document which can be revised to keep the covenant continually fresh and alive.	God gave the Torah and the means of its interpretation to Moses and the Children of Israel at Mount Sinai.

Lesson IV: Activity 1.

Mark's Dilemma

        Mark lives in Florence, South Carolina. He works in a
small law partnership with his friend Tom. Mark grew up in
Florence and has always belonged to the Reform Temple.

        Last Sunday at the Methodist Church Tom's pastor gave a
sermon and described the Jews as, "The Chosen People of God."
Tom did not understand fully what his pastor meant in the
sermon. Monday morning, at work, Tom told Mark about the
sermon, and asked Mark to explain to him what Jews mean when
they describe themselves as the "Chosen People." What do you
believe and how would you answer Tom?

Lesson IV: Activity 2.

Lecture: The Chosen People Idea in Judaism.

  I. Introduction

      A. Transition from Mark's Dilemma to the Lecture. Ex-
          plain the lecture and present the Biblical and Rab-
          binic ideas of the doctrine of chosenness. Small
          groups will evaluate its modern implications.

 II. Biblical Idea of Chosenness.

      A. Biblical Roots Ex. 19:5. "If you harken to My
          voice and keep My covenant, you shall be My trea-
          sure among the peoples of the earth; you shall
          be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

      B. Historical Setting. The Israelites were a unique
          nation among pagan peoples. The Torah kept the
          people distinct.

III. Chosenness in Rabbinic Literature and Jewish Tradi-
      tion.

      A. Particularism. Jews have 613 commandments. Jews
          accepted the Torah when the 70 nations of the
          world would not. Ha Levi as an example of the
          extreme of particularism. Jews differ in kind
          not degree. Only Jews receive prophecy.

      B. Universalism. Gentiles have 7 commandments of
          the sons of Noah. Righteous of nations have a
          place in the world to come (R. Joshua, Tos. San.
          13:2). Tancanah of Rabbenu Tam Christianity is
          not paganism.

IV. Summary. Summarize origins of idea and universal and particular aspects. Note the idea still implies separate classes of people. Point out the problem of this idea in a scientific world which believes in democracy. Make a transition to the small groups looking at the ideas of the thinkers and solving Mark's dilemma.

Lesson IV: Activity 3.

Chart for Learners: Jewish Ideas of Chosenness.

The following chart presents the four thinkers' ideas about the Jewish doctrine of election. Choose the idea which seems closest to your belief. Based on your idea and the ideas of your group respond to Mark's dilemma.

1. Leo Baeck

Leo Baeck gives a two fold response to the problem raised by chosenness. First, based on his belief that the Jewish prophets actually encountered God, Baeck acknowledges the validity of the particular aspects of chosenness. In The Essence of Judaism, he says, "Everyone who is in possession of a truth feels a peculiar responsibility bestowed upon him which separates him from all other men"(p.62).

However, Baeck makes a second point that the Jews transformed particularism into a universal idea. In this light he says, "Election is a prophetic calling of an entire people. This mission goes beyond Israel itself; it is an election for the sake of others" (The Essence of Judaism, p.67). By this statement Baeck means that the Jews gave chosenness a new meaning. Instead of living as unique servants of God, the Jews acquired an ethical mission to bring knowledge of God and morality based on God to the world. Chosenness for Baeck implies a universal mission of Israel.

2. Mordecai Kaplan

Kaplan rejects the doctrine of chosenness on theological and ethical grounds. Theologically chosenness implies a God that can choose one people from another. Kaplan rejects this kind of supernatural God. Ethically it would imply the superiority of one people to another. Kaplan rejects this as out of keeping with modern morality based on human equality.

In place of chosenness Kaplan suggests the term or doctrine of vocation. In <u>Questions Jews Ask:</u> <u>Reconstructionist Answers</u>, he defines vocation in these words, "By vocation we mean the dedication of a People to the task of giving to the world those universal values which its experience reveals to it" (p. 211). All peoples of the world are capable of a vocation when they teach others about ideas from their national experience which further fulfillment for all humanity.

3. <u>Eugene Borowitz</u>

Borowitz distinguishes between inner and outer dimensions of chosenness. Internally, he notes that chosenness in rabbinic Judaism implied adherence to the system of mitzvot. Based on his definition of revelation, and stress on personal autonomy, Borowitz rejects the rabbinic definition. Within Judaism Borowitz believes the people should commit themselves to keeping the covenant with God alive and fresh, based on the needs of the time and the demands of Israel's corporate history with God.

Borowitz also talks about chosenness in relation to non-Jews. In this discussion Borowitz accepts a certain degree of universalism, but places a high value on Jewish uniqueness and particularity. He says that not all religions have a monotheistic outlook and lead to morality. And he says, in the article, "The Chosen People Concept as it Effects Life in the Disapora," "Even as Judaism here would be freshly open to the religious truth which the gentiles share, it would most likely be based on the fundamental appreciation that the Covenant between God and the People of Israel contains a spiritual insight unmatched elsewhere" (<u>Journal of</u> <u>Ecumenical Studies</u>, 12:4, p. 566). In this sense Borowitz rejects the idea that God specifically chose the Jews and gave the Jews a particular set of laws, but he feels the Jews have a unique spiritual insight unmatched by other religions."

4. <u>Eliezer Berkovits</u>

Berkovits believes God chose the Jewish people to lead the nations of the world to a time when all nations will enjoy the wholeness of relationship with God. The Jews possess a unique system of belief in God, and the task of the Jewish people is to inspire all nations to focus on a spiritual relationship with God, as opposed to worldly pursuit of power.

God chose the Jews people in particular because the nation needs to inspire the other nations of the world, not teach them. A people is the smallest unit which can form a

society which serves as an example of government devoted to God. Beyond this requirement the Jews can testify to their relationship with God, but this cannot be proven objectively. The Jews have both a high level of particularity and a universal task in Berkovits system.

Lesson V: Activity 1.

The Greenberg Family Dilemma

Janet and Ron Greenberg belong to the Free Synagogue. They have three children Eddie age 9, Susan, age 7, and Robbie age 5. Janet and Ron are both architects. They are active members of their Temple and all three children attend religious school.

Late on a Sunday afternoon Robbie was playing kick ball with his friends from school. Robbie's friend Dave kicked a long ball which went into the street in front of Robbie's house. Robbie ran into the street without looking to get the ball, and as he got to the ball a car hit him. The driver left without stopping to see what happened and Robbie was unconscious in the street.

Janet saw everything from the window of the house and ran out to help Robbie. When she got to him he was unconscious and it looked like he had several broken bones. Janet called an ambulance immediately and they rush Robbie to the local hospital.

At the hospital the doctors found that Robbie was in a coma, and may have done some damage to his spine. He was placed in traction and sent to an intensive care unit. The doctors wanted to monitor Robbie and when he stabilized do any necessary surgery.

Why do you believe accidents of this type happen? How would you respond to Robbie's family? (Based on an actual case)

Lesson V: Activity 2.

Lecture: Judaism and Cosmic Evil.

I.   Introduction

   A.   Transition from Dilemma. Emphasize the dilemma presents the problem of evil or bad things happening which we all face.

   B.   Lecture Format. Explain that the lecture will present the logical problem presented by belief

in God and the reality of evil, and will show
how this relates to the dilemma; and the Bible's
idea of evil. Also mention that four people from
the class will make presentations about modern
responses to the problem.

II. The Logical Analysis

A. This part of the lecture presents three prem-
ises upon which the Bible bases its belief in God
and God's activity regarding evil. Logically,
if a person accepts any two of the premises the
third must be rejected. They are:

- God is all powerful. The Bible presents God
  as the creator of the world and everything in
  it; nothing is beyond God's capabilities.

- God is wholly good. The story of creation
  repeats over and over again that God saw His
  work was good. Also the Psalms: 25:8; 86:5;
  100:4-5; and 118:68, say God is good. This is
  in contradiction to other religions, particularly
  gnosticism, which tell of a good god fighting
  an evil God.

- Evil is real. The story of Job is one of the
  Bible's most telling narratives about the prob-
  lem of evil. It shows that the Bible does ask
  Why do the righteous suffer.

B. Once the premises are presented point out how the
acceptance of any two disqualifies the third.
Refer to the Greenberg dilemma as follows:

- Good + Powerful $\neq$ Reality of Evil. If these
  two premises are true, evil must not be what we
  think. It must be a test and not really evil.
  Robbie's accident was part of God's plan.

- Powerful + Reality $\neq$ Good. If God is really
  all-powerful and if evil is actually real then
  God cannot be good. Therefore, since God is
  not really good, Robbie's accident happened
  because God wanted to cause pain to Robbie and
  suffering to his family.

- Good + Reality $\neq$ Powerful. If God is really
  good and if evil is real then God cannot be
  the all-powerful figure who controls the
  universe. Robbie's accident happened as a
  result of natural laws and God was not involved.
  Either God steps back from the world, or God is
  finite.

III. Biblical View and Closure

   A. Briefly re-emphasize the discussion of the Bib-
      lical view of the three premises. Make the point
      that the Bible holds these three premises in ten-
      sion and does not give any single answer to the
      problem of evil. (For additional teacher back-
      ground see Eugene Borowitz, Liberal Judaism,
      pp. 190-207; or Harold Kushner, When Bad Things
      Happen to Good People, pp. 31-45).

   B. Summary. Conclude by saying that these premises
      define the problem of evil in the world. The
      Biblical view holds these ideas in tension. The
      presentations about each thinker will show how
      they deal with the problem of evil.

Lesson V: Activity 3.

Learner Presentations.

      During this part of the lesson learners will present the
response of the four thinkers to the problem of evil. To
prepare the learner's for this project the teacher should go
over the lesson with them. The teacher should explain the
problem of evil as it will be presented in class, and should
brief the learners about the dilemma. To prepare their
presentations the learner should consult the primary readings
by their thinker, (see the chart of supplementary readings
for Natural/Cosmic Evil), and may consult secondary readings
about the thinker. The learners may also want to look at
Eugene Borowitz, Liberal Judaism, pp. 190-207, for background
reading about theodicy. The learner presentations should
last about 5 minutes. They should describe the thinker's
response to the problem of evil, relate the response to the
three premises, and give the thinker's response to the
Greenberg dilemma. The learners should also be prepared to
answer questions from the class. The teacher should offer to
help the learners prepare in any way they feel is needed, and
tell the learners that she/he will try to fill in any gaps if
the learner gets stuck. In addition to the supplemental
readings the teacher can consult the appendix for each
thinker to learn his interpretation of the problem of evil.

Lesson VI: Activity 2.

Lecture: Human Evil/The Holocaust

   I. Introduction

      A. Orientation. The focus of this lecture is the

Holocaust as an example of unparalleled evil
caused by human beings to others. The thrust is
theological, not historical. The teacher should
first explain the theological orientation of the
lecture, and then briefly relate human evil to
the three premises discussed during the previous
class. The question now is why does God let human
beings hurt each other?

B. Transition. Introduce the Elie Wiesel reading
   from Night as an example of the suffering during
   the Holocaust.

II. Reading

A. Read the following selection from Night.

I witnessed other hangings. I never saw a
single one of the victims weep. For a long time
those dried-up bodies had forgotten the bitter
taste of tears.

Except once. The Oberkapo of the fifty-second
cable unit was a Dutchman, a giant, well over six
feet. Seven hundred prisoners worked under his
orders, and they all loved him like a brother. No
one had ever received a blow at his hands, nor an
insult from his lips.

He had a young boy under him, a pipel, as they
were called--a child with a refined and beautiful
face, unheard of in this camp.

(At Buna, the pipel were loathed; they were
often crueller than adults. I once saw one of
thirteen beating his father because the latter had
not made his bed properly. The old man was crying
softly while the boy shouted: "If you don't stop
crying at once I shan't bring you any more bread.
Do you understand?" But the Dutchman's little
servant was loved by all. He had the face of a sad
angel.)

One day, the electric power station at Buna
was blown up. The Gestapo, summoned to the spot,
suspected sabotage. They found a trail. It
eventually led to the Dutch Oberkapo. And there,
after a search, they found an important stock of
arms.

The Oberkapo was arrested immediately. He was
tortured for a period of weeks, but in vain. He
would not give a single name. He was transferred
to Auschwitz. We never heard of him again.

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But his little servant had been left behind in the camp in prison. Also put to torture, he too would not speak. The SS sentenced him to death, with two other prisoners who had been discovered with arms.

One day when we came back from work, we saw three gallows rearing up in the assembly place, three black crows. Roll call. SS all around us, machine guns trained: the traditional ceremony. Three victims in chains---and one of them, the little servant, the sad-eyed angel.

The SS seemed more preoccupied, more disturbed than usual. To hang a young boy in front of thousands of spectators was no light matter. The head of the camp read the verdict. All eyes were on the child. He was lividly pale, almost calm, biting his lips. The gallows threw its shadow over him.

This time the Lagerkapo refused to act as executioner. Three SS replaced him.

The three victims mounted together onto the chairs.

The three necks were placed at the same moment within the nooses.

"Long live liberty!" cried the two adults.

But the child was silent.

"Where is God? Where is He?" someone behind me asked.

At a sign from the head of the camp, the three chairs tipped over.

Total silence throughout the camp. On the horizon, the sun was setting.

"Bare your heads!" yelled the head of the camp. His voice was raucous. We were weeping.

"Cover your heads!"

Then the march past began. The two adults were no longer alive. Their tongues hung swollen, blue-tinged. But the third rope was still moving; being so light, the child was still alive. . .

For more than half an hour he stayed there,
struggling between life and death, dying in slow
agony under our eyes. And we had to look him full
in the face. He was still alive when I passed in
front of him. His tongue was still red, his eyes
were not yet glazed.

Behind me, I heard the same man asking:

"Where is God now?"

And I heard a voice within me answer him:

"Where is He? Here He is--He is hanging here
on this gallows. . . ."

That night the soup tasted of corpses.

III. Closure

A. Pause for Any Class Reactions. Afterwards frame
    the problem presented by the Holocaust. Six mil-
    lion Jews died during the Holocaust. The Nazis
    committed the atrocity and the world did almost
    nothing to help the Jews or stop the Nazis. Based
    on this tragedy we as Jews ask where was God?

    Finally, introduce the learners with the responses
    by the four thinkers.

Lesson VI: Activity 3.

Learner Presentations

The following considerations should guide the learners'
presentations:

I. Teacher Preparation

A. Nature of Material. Eliezer Berkovits is the
    only one of the three writers who directly add-
    resses the Holocaust. The other writers talk
    about the Holocaust only briefly and as a function
    of human evil. When working with the learners
    point out this fact and suggest that the learners
    focus on human evil first and the Holocaust as an
    example of large scale human evil.

B. Teacher's Reference. The teacher can read the
    supplementary material on the thinkers, or refer
    to the appendix on each thinker to learn their
    responses to the Holocaust.

II. Learner Preparation

A. Framework of the Discussion. The teacher should go over the material and the format of the lesson with the learners. The teacher should note the point about the thinkers' orientations to the Holocaust, in I. A. above.

B. Materials. The teacher should refer the learners to the primary and secondary materials on Human Evil, in the chart on supplementary readings.

C. Expectations. The teacher should give the learners the format for their presentations, including: approximately 5 minutes, longer if desired; give the thinker's view of human evil; give the thinker's response to the Holocaust; offer any personal reflections about the thinker's ideas; be available to answer questions.

Lesson VII

Learner Presentation Guide

The following ideas and considerations should guide the teacher in helping the learners prepare this presentation:

I. General Expectations

A. Learner Responsibility. The learners should have as much control of and responsibility for the development of the form and content of the lesson as possible.

B. Content. Generally, while the learners have a free hand, the teacher should encourage them to present some background information about Jewish prayer, the views of the four thinkers, and use some sort of introductory activity to spark the interest of the class.

II. Focal Issue.

A. Classical versus Modern Prayer. Within the context of the course the session should focus on the question: What does prayer mean for us if we challenge the belief that it in some way serves, or helps us become like a supernatural God? If we do not believe in a God who hears prayers, or if we do not believe in a God who created us that we can emulate, why do we pray?

III. Background on Prayer

A. Possible Content. The learners may want to des-
    cribe Jewish prayer, i.e., three services a day,
    Shabbat, and holidays. They could also include
    tension between <u>Keva</u> and <u>Kavannah</u>. They can also
    point out the underlying assumption that prayer,
    as well as study and all parts of classical Jewish
    practice, are means to emulate God. They help
    people become better human beings, and they ful-
    fill God's commandments.

B. Resources. The learners may want to consult any
    or all of the following:

    1. Eugene Borowitz, <u>Liberal Judaism</u>,
        pp. 426-440.

    2. Louis Jacobs, <u>A Jewish Theology</u>,
        pp. 183-198.

    3. Henry Cohen, <u>Why Judaism?</u>, pp 37-46.

IV. Possible Dilemmas.

A. The learners could use one of the following as an
    introductory scenario:

    1. Shul-again? A conflict between a husband
        and wife in middle adulthood about going to
        High Holyday services. The wife says why do
        you really want to go? You always get so up-
        set with the things it says in the prayerbook.
        Do you really think God is judging you on Rosh
        Hashana? Why do you say those words?

    2. A skit with a debate during services. One
        person reads the first Torah blessing and a
        second interrupts and challenges the prayer.
        How can you pray those words, do you believe
        them? Why are we here anyway?

V. Resources on the Thinkers.

A. Materials. The teacher should refer the learners
    to the materials on the chart of supplementary
    readings. They can use the primary and secondary
    materials. The teacher may want to refer to the
    discussion of each thinker's view on prayer in the
    appendix for the thinker.

<u>Lesson VIII.</u>

<u>Learner Presentation Guide</u>

The following ideas and considerations should guide the teacher in helping the learners prepare this presentation:

I.   General Expectations

    A.   Learner Responsibility. The learners should have as much control of and responsibility for the development of the lesson as possible.

    B.   Content. Generally, while maintaining learner development of the lesson, the teacher should encourage the learners to present some background information about salvation and the World to Come, the views of the four thinkers, and use some kind of introductory activity to peak the class' interest.

II. Focal Issue

    A.   Classical versus Modern Ideas about Salvation. Classical Judaism believes in a supernatural God who will provide for some sort of afterlife at the end of time. This may be physical resurrection, or a spiritual afterlife. Modern Jews may find it difficult to accept this belief. No one has died and returned to report on an afterlife, and belief in resurrection violates our experience of the world as we know it. This raises the question how do modern Jews interpret the doctrine of salvation within Judaism?

III. Background on Salvation

    A.   Possible Content. In the background section the learners may want to include:

        1.   The Jewish idea about the messiah. A person who will restore the Davidic kingdom, rebuild the Temple, and gather the exiles. This messiah is heralded by Elijah and sent by God.

        2.   The prophets idea of a general redemption. Isaiah, Micah, and Jeremiah's ideas of redemption.

        3.   The Biblical concept of Sheol. A region to go to after death, whose dimensions are unclear in the Bible.

        4.   The doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The soul lives on and is judged after death.

5.   Resurrection. The revival of the body after
     death.

6.   References to resurrection and the messiah
     in the traditional prayerbook.

7.   Reform ideas about the hereafter.

B.   Resources. The learners may want to consult:

1.   Eugene Borowitz, <u>Liberal Judaism</u>,
     pp. 208-222.

2.   Louis Jacobs, <u>A Jewish Theology</u>,
     pp. 292-322.

IV. <u>Possible Dilemmas</u>

A.   The learners might want to use one of the dilemmas
     below to begin the lesson:

1.   A member of the Temple's visitation committee
     regularly calls on an elderly member of the
     congregation and helps with shopping and run-
     ning errands. The elderly person asks the
     volunteer about his or her beliefs about what
     happens when you die.

2.   A teenager is confronted by a fundamentalist
     Christian who asks: What do you think is go-
     ing to happen to you when you die? The teen-
     ager is confused by the conversation and turns
     to his or her parents for counsel.

V.   References on the Thinkers.

A.   Materials. The learners can consult the primary
     materials on salvation in the list of supplemen-
     tary materials. They may also want to consult
     the secondary materials. The teacher may want
     to consult the appendices on each thinker for
     background information.

<u>Lesson IX: Activity 2a</u>

<u>Congregation Achim Tovim Dilemma</u>.

     Congregation Achim Tovim is the only synagogue in
Outoftheway, New York. The congregation has 110 families
including Reform, Conservative, Orthodox and
Reconstructionist Jews. Over the years the congregations has
debated a great deal about the structure of services and the
minhagim for the congregation.

The congregation's ritual committee has nine people. They represent all spectrums of belief from the congregation. Two members of the committee have drafted a proposal which says that in order to remain a member of the congregation people must observe Shabbat, and keep Kosher in their homes. The committee needs to act on this proposal. Some members want to reject it out of hand, others want to compromise in some way. The committee as a whole feels it is important to understand why we practice Judaism, and to live Judaism as part of our lives?

What do you see as the importance of Jewish ritual observance? How would you respond to this situation?

Lesson IX: Activity 2b

Lecture

I.   Introduction

    A.   Transition. The teacher should refer to the dilemma as a means of starting the lecture. The dilemma raises the question: If we challenge the belief that God commands us to do mitsvot, how do we reinterpret or redefine our reasons for ritual observance in the modern era?

    B.   Orientation. Tell the learners that the lecture will present the classical belief about the reasons for ritual observance and the responses of the four thinkers.

II.   Classical Belief

    A.   This part of the lecture should emphasize the classical idea that the Torah and its means of interpretation were given by God to Moses and the Jewish people on Mount Sinai. The teacher should also outline the fact that there are 613 mitsvot even though many of them pertain to the Temple service. The distinction between mitsvot ben adam le-havero, ethical mitsvot with discernible reasons; and mitsvot ben adam le-Makom, divinely ordained mitsvot without a clearly discernible reason, should be presented to the learners.

III.   The Modern Thinkers.

    A.   Leo Baeck. Baeck sees Jewish law and practice as an outgrowth of the historical experience and mission of the Jewish people. The mission of Israel calls on the Jews to teach the world about God and about the Commandment. During their life in Palestine the Jews fulfilled this task and

even sought converts. Once Palestine was conquered the Jews needed to focus only on the survival of the people. Jewish law developed to preserve the Mission of Israel. The law functions as a "Fence around the Torah" to preserve the people. In this sense Baeck sees Jewish law as a survival mechanism. This is his end point in the discussion. He says the performing of a ritual does not receive the status of a good deed, but he does not provide a means for change and development in Jewish law.

B.   Eugene Borowitz. The discussion of Borowitz's interpretation of ritual functions on theoretical and experiential levels. Theoretically, Borowitz does not believe God gave the text of the Torah and its means of interpretation at Sinai. Instead he bases his justification for Jewish practice on individual experiences of God, and the corporate experience of the Jewish people. He offers four criteria for deciding on Jewish practice: knowledge of God, i.e., conscience or prayer; relationship to the covenant; creativity, innovations for modern times; and responsibility, preserving the integrity of the covenant and the basic meaning of the practice. These criteria allow diversity, while providing for development of new practices.

Experientially, Borowitz uses the example of a birthday cake to illustrate that all people need rituals as reminders of specialness in life. Rituals reach people at a level different from the normal cognitive interface with life.

C.   Kaplan. Kaplan rejects the classical rationale for ritual practice as a series of actions designed to influence a supernatural deity. Kaplan believes in God as the Force which makes for salvation. Based on this definition he cannot accept the idea that rituals came from God at Mount Sinai. In place of this rationale he suggests that rituals evolve as the folkways of a people. Therefore, since the people created, rituals, a congress of representative Jewish leaders can change and adapt rituals for the modern era. One must stay consistent with the spiritual need the ritual was originally intended to fulfill, but adaptation is possible.

D.   Berkovits. Berkovits represents the positions of Orthodox Judaism. He believes that in fact God gave the Torah and its means of interpretation on Mount Sinai. He explains the nature of this phe-

nomenon in his discussion of revelation. He be-
lieves that Jewish law is important for
two reasons. First, philosophically, he believes
that any system of ethics that is not based on God
will in the end become subjective and a means for
exploiting people. Ethics needs belief in God as
the absolute authority. Second, experientially,
the mitsvot provide a vehicle for conditioning
the body and soul to serve God. If a person con-
tinually practices self-control by following the
mitsvot, in a time of ethical trial, he or she
will be able to overcome temptations because of
this conditioning. In this way the body and not
only the mind can serve God. These ideas give
justification for Berkovits belief in Torah from
Sinai.

IV. Closure.

    A. Summary. Review the main points of the dilemma
and the lecture. Open the class discussion
based on this framework.

Lesson IX: Activity 5

Values Clarification Exercise

Repeat question 1-4 in the values clarification exercise
in Lesson I.

In addition, add the following two questions:

1. Three new ideas or insights I gained through this course
are. . .

2. The most important thing to me in the course was . . .

Appendix III A

Leo Baeck

Leo Baeck stresses the theory of "ethical monotheism," among the four thinkers in this thesis. Baeck followed Abraham Geiger and Hermann Cohen as a modern Jewish thinker in Germany. His work gives an interpretation of Judaism which tries to balance modern critical scholarship with classical Jewish thought. This section of the thesis will present an overview of Baeck's thought. It will discuss Baeck's ideas about God and prophetic revelation, and then apply these ideas to Baeck's conceptions of prayer, chosenness, theodicy, the world to come, and Jewish law.

God and Revelation

Leo Baeck's conceptions of God and revelation form the cornerstone of his interpretation of Judaism. For Baeck, prophetic revelation, in the Bible, represents a paradigmatic encounter with the Divine. The experience of Moses and the prophets provides both the foundation of Judaism and an insight into the paradoxes involved in humanity's relationship to God. This section will focus on three areas: Baeck's view of revelation, the three paradoxes to human belief in and experience with God, and Baeck's solution to the paradoxes.

The description of revelation in Baeck's work focuses on both the nature and the content of the prophetic experience. In general, Baeck believes that the prophets' view of

religion, as described in the Bible, created a "revolution" in the ancient world. He says, "With the Hebrew religion an entirely new formative principle appeared among mankind."(1) The following discussion will present Baeck's discussion of the nature and the content of the revelatory experience.

Leo Baeck gives the following description of the nature of the prophetic experience:

> The most significant feature of the vision of the prophets was its intuitive and practical character. . . . They do not try to fathom the ultimate principles of experience; they are totally alien to all kinds of speculation. . . What compels them to think is an ethical urge -- they are overwhelmed by an irresistible truth. . .They speak because they must speak, and it is this inner compulsion which so convinces us that we hear in them the voice of conscience. What they say was given to them by God.(2)

Baeck makes two key points in this passage. First, he describes the immediacy of the prophetic experience. The prophets feel overwhelmed by a moral urge, and this urge compels them to speak. Baeck says that the prophets link this urge with an awareness of God. The intensity of the moral urge and its universal nature point to God. Second, as a corollary of this experience, Baeck refutes morality based on philosophy. An immediate experience of God, not philosophical reasoning by human beings, is the true source of morality.

In addition to the description of the nature of the prophetic experience, Baeck provides a further discussion of the content, or implications, of his view of revelation. He

describes the import of the revelatory experience in these

words:

>Finite and limited man is not the source of this
>good; for the good demands an unconditional,
>absolute foundation. Its basis can therefore be
>found only in the One God, the outcome of whose
>nature is the moral law. . . .The One God is the
>answer to all mystery; he is the source of all that
>is eternal and ethical, creative and ordered,
>hidden and definite. From this alliance between
>the secret and the commandment issues all existence
>and significance. Thereby unity is apprehended:
>commandment is linked to secret and secret to
>commandment.(3)
>In this passage Baeck points out that through the

revelatory experience the prophets learn of the unity of God,

and of God as the source of universal morality. The prophets

perceive that since human beings are finite they lack the

authority and the knowledge to create a universal system of

moral law. Finite human authority leads to corruption and

immorality, and human beings lack the eternal knowledge which

knows of the consequence and compensates for evil. Baeck

believes that in the revelatory experience the prophets learn

of God's unity, and of the "Commandment" for a just and moral

world.

Baeck's extension of the prophets' belief in God and the

Commandment to Judaism as a whole can be seen in the

following passage. This passage shows how belief in God

leads to morality:

>The optimism of Judaism consists of the belief in
>God, and consequently also a belief in man, who is
>able to realize in himself the good which finds its
>reality in God. From this optimism all the ideas
>of Judaism can be derived. Thereby a threefold
>relationship is established. First, the belief in

oneself: one's soul is created in the image of God
and is therefore capable of purity and freedom; the
soul is the area in which reconciliation with God
is always possible. Secondly, the belief in one's
neighbor: every human being has the same
individuality that I have; his soul with its
possible purity and freedom also derives from God;
and he is at bottom akin to me and is therefore my
neighbor and brother. Thirdly, the belief in
mankind: all men are children of God; hence they
are welded together by a common task.(4)

The prophets taught the Jewish people and the world

about belief in one universal God. Based on this belief in

God a person learns to first trust him or herself, and how

God relates to his or her life. Next, based on a belief in

God as caring for the individual personally, the person then

develops compassion for other people as fellow creations of

God. And finally, the individual universalizes concern for

his/her neighbor as a child of God to all humanity; the

person sees all people as creations of the Divine.

In summary, Baeck believes that the prophets had an

immediate experience of knowing God. Based on this

experience they learned of the Commandment, the idea that

there is a unity in the world, and that God is the source of

an absolute morality. From this idea the prophets developed

a universal mission to care for all people and to teach all

people about God and the Commandment.

This discussion outlined Baeck's interpretation of

revelation, however, before beginning the discussion of the

three paradoxes Baeck sees to belief in God, it is important

to note several points about this view of revelation. First,

this is a contentless experience of revelation. The prophet

senses the Commandment, and believes in the unity of God. As a consequence, while this view gives Judaism a sense of universalism, it does away with the belief that the Torah and the oral tradition came directly from God. Since the rvelation is contentless, the claims of direct verbal revelation in Judaism, can no longer stand. (This point will be addressed further in the critique.)

Second, Baeck leaves undetermined the actual source of the revelatory experience. He suggests that the Commandment comes from knowledge of God, but he does not state whether God communicates with the prophet, or whether the prophets senses unity in the world and calls this God. The later interpretation seems to be the actual meaning of Baeck's view of revelation.

And lastly, it is important to note that Baeck's "Commandment," resembles Kant's "Categorical Imperative." Both ideas provide principles for a universal form for morality to which all people should subscribe. For Baeck, the Commandment, is a contentless revelation from God which says, "Thou shalt. . . , "or "Thou shalt not. . ." The prophet interprets proper human action based on his vision of God's desire for unity among all people and a divine kingdom. Kant's Categorical Imperative also provides a universal form or paradigm by which people can determine proper actions. For Kant an action is moral if it can apply categorically to all situations. In this way both the Commandment and the Categorical Imperative suggest a principle or form by which

an individual can determine moral actions. These notes highlight the implications and significance of Baeck's view of revelation.

In addition to his discussion of revelation, Baeck outlines three paradoxes for belief in God. These paradoxes are based on a belief that God is both transcendent and immanent. The paradoxes try to resolve how God can be wholly different from people, yet known and be present in human life. Baeck describes the paradoxes in these words:

> The first, as we saw, was that of man as created by God, with the conflicting elements that God is the distant and the holy One apart from all that is human while he is at the same time the near One, the God of my heart, profoundly connected with all that is human. This is the paradox that God is at one and the same time the unfathomable and ineffable One and yet the cause on my certainty and the source of my life.
>
> The second and more far-reaching paradox we saw to be concerned with the fact of human freedom -- the contrast between man as created and creator, between man as having been placed in the world, bound by his origin, his life fixed and determined -- and yet independent and free to choose his path.
>
> The third paradox concerns the worth of man: life having been created by God, has its eternal quality and lasting meaning and yet remains within the sphere of mortality, insane and meaningless, unless men create it by their deeds. Life has its divine quality and yet man has to make it divine. Though life is a creation of God, it needs man's deed to become the kingdom of God -- for it is the life of man who has yet to become holy. The first two paradoxes are interwoven into the last one; in it feeling of the created being and the ethical feeling merge into one. The paradox that the divine is at once near and remote in the experience of man, the created creature, enters into the pardox of his freedom in that he experiences the presence of God in the task of his life and the exaltedness of God in the purpose of his life.(5)

To summarize, Baeck believes that three paradoxes exist for a person who believes that God is both transcendent and immanent; wholly other, yet present in the world. The first is that god is near and far. People believe they are created by God, and they wonder how this creator can be close and still be a creator. Second, people are caused to exist by God, yet possess free will to determine their actions. If people are created how can their actions be free? Finally, people are limited, yet their lives have significance. It is the task of humanity to create the divine kingdom. Baeck believes that religious feeling and deeds resolve these paradoxes.

Religious feeling, according to Baeck, resolves the paradox between God's distance and nearness. Baeck says, "The unity of this world and the world beyond are thereby felt with absolute conviction. Though conceptions and words may express separation, religious feeling experiences the profound connection between these two worlds."(6) In other words, when people try to analyze or theorize about God they feel a paradox between God as near and far. However, when a person trusts God, like the prophets during the revelatory experience described above, the person no longer feels perplexed by the paradox, but instead senses God's unity and experiences God as a creator. Baeck acknowledges the paradox between rational thought and religious belief, and suggests that allowing the religious feeling to enter and pervade one's life resolves this paradox.

Righteous actions bring unity to the second and third paradoxes. Although God created human beings, people still have free will. Righteous deeds affirm the knowledge that people are created and the freedom given to people by God. A righteous action acknowledges that people resemble God and that God wants people to follow the path of justice. People have the freedom to commit evil acts, but these acts deny God and separate people from the Divine. In like manner, righteous actions also affirm the significance of humanity. They show that people believe in an oversall purpose to creation and in God as a beneficent creator. Righteous actions help build the kingdom of God and give finite human beings a stage in eternity.

Baeck's paradoxes explain the dilemma which many religious people face. How can God be near and far, how can I be created yet have free will? Baeck acknowledges the tension people feel when they try to conceptualize the Divine. He finds unity in a religious feeling which affirms God, and in righteous actions which follow the plan God determined for the world.

This section presented Leo Baeck's discussion of revelation, and his beliefs about the paradoxes inherent in religious belief when a person believes in a God who is transcendent and immanent. These ideas form the basis for Baeck's interpretation of Judaism in the modern era. The next section will discuss Baeck's view of prayer based on his ideas about God and revelation.

Prayer

Leo Baeck's discussion of prayer focuses on the spiritual aspects of a person's quest for God, not on worship, organized communal prayer. Prayer can be equated with "religious feeling" in Baeck's interpretation of Judaism; an attempt by the individual to transcend the paradox between God's distance and presence. Baeck gives this description of prayer:

> Whatever Judaism expresses in prayer -- be it the longing to elevate one's soul to God; be it the desire for deliverance from danger and affliction or for redemption from sin and guilt; be it the desire for gifts of life and the road to the blessing -- it is always this tension between the sense of God's exaltedness and the sense of his proximity from which there arises the feeling of him who prays to God. There is thus always in it a wonderful intermingling of mystery and certainty: it is as if heaven and earth touched each other and the far God thereby became the near God. In prayer the life-impulse of the man who knows that God has created him turns toward the foundation of its existence. To the living God turns the living man whose inner-most being craves for the elevation and fulfillment of transcending the limitations of mortality. To speak of the expansion of life is thus a true word of prayer.(7)

In this passage prayer represents an outpouring of the human soul toward God. The person senses the paradox, and the distance between God and humanity, and yearns to bridge this gap. The person does not receive God's intervention in answer to a supplication, instead the person feels in touch with God. This feeling of closeness to God gives the person strength with which to again affirm God through righteous deeds. The person "knows" God, and again longs to fulfill

the "Commandment." In this way prayer responds to the
paradoxes of belief in God in Baeck's interpretation of
Judaism.

Choseness/Election/Mission

Baeck's conception of Jewish particular and universal
election flows from his interpretation of prophetic
revelation. The prophets believed that God called them to
lead Israel in the paths of righteousness; and in the course
of their mission they reinterpreted God's charge to include
the peoples of the world as well. Baeck described the
election of Israel in these words:

> Hence this word primarily expresses a historical
> fact: there was assigned to this people a peculiar
> position in the world by which it is distinguished
> from all other peoples.
>
> This statement implies a valuation: it declares
> the difference justified, the peculiarity valuable,
> and the resulting segregation of Israel to rest on
> lasting foundations. The difference is
> acknowledged as something which lends meaning to
> the life of Israel. It justifies the covenant
> between God and Israel, for which he lifted it out
> of the darkness of its inarticulate past and in
> which alone it discovered its true path and the
> promise of its future. . . . Everyone who is in
> possession of a truth feels a peculiar
> responsibility bestowed upon him which separates
> him from other men. . . . Revelation and election
> are complementary conceptions.(8)

Baeck acknowledges that the Jewish people do in fact
feel different from other peoples based on the tradition of
the prophets. He notes in this vein that this gave the
people, "The capacity to act with freedom and to remain

indifferent to numbers"(9) and that, "the elect people are to

be judged by stricter standards."(10) However, in addition

to this distinctiveness, Baeck also believes that election

created a sense of universalism and mission within Judaism.

Baeck says:

> That this particularism soon acquired its ethical
> emphasis was an expression of the genius of
> Judaism, which saw every fact as a task and every
> reality of human life as a shaping force. National
> exclusiveness was transformed into ethical
> exclusiveness, the uniqueness of Israel's
> historical position into a uniqueness of religious
> obligation. The covenant between people and God
> was transformed into a commandment, a bond which
> gave Israel its sense of dignity and
> conscience.(11)
>
> From this conviction there arose the idea of the
> world historical-mission of Israel and its
> responsibility before God and man. Election is a
> prophetic calling of an entire people. This
> mission goes beyond Israel itself; it is an
> election for the sake of others. All Israel is the
> messenger of the Lord, the "servant of God" who is
> to guard religion for all lands and from whom the
> light shall radiate to all nations.(12)

These passages show how Leo Baeck interprets the

election and mission of Israel. Based on an experience with

God, the prophets feel called to lead Israel to

righteousness. They believe Israel should be judged by

standards that are harsher than those of the rest of the

nations. And based on this election and sense of purpose the

Jewish people developed a universal Jewish mission: the goal

of bringing the knowledge of God to peoples of the world.

Theodicy

Baeck's explanation of evil in the world follows as a
corrollary to his conceptions of revelation and chosenness.
Baeck believes the prophets learned of God's unity and the
Commandment, in their revelatory experience. Through the
belief in God's unity, Baeck suggests that the world was
created and is still governed by God. Additionally, Baeck
believes God rules the world with justice and calls on people
to freely choose the path of righteousness. The Jewish
mission, according to Baeck, is to teach the world about
God's unity, and bring universal peace to all of humanity.
Theodicy comes as a corollary to these beliefs because it
must explain why Jews and Gentiles suffer evil if God wants
to create a universal divine kingdom. Why is their evil if
God wants justice and righteousness? Baeck attempts to
respond to the question of evil, for Jews, who are the agents
of God's universalism, and for Gentiles, through discussion
of these concepts: "submission," "martyrdom," and "patient
justice."

> In light of this understanding, human suffering is
> seen in a new way. For it responds to the voice of
> God, to the "thou shalt," with adherence to the
> commandment that each day must contain service to
> God even if it is also a day of suffering. Like
> everything else which is sent into his life,
> suffering comes to man independently of his
> volition; but man must mold and shape it as a free
> agent exactly as he must mold and shape everything
> in the sphere of his existence. He faces the task
> of making that part of his life into which

suffering has entered a portion of the kingdom of
God; he must reshape it, surmount it ethically and
thereby raise himself above mere casuality.(13)

The riddle of life tends to become the great
contradiction of existence. But even this
contradiction becomes in the Israelite soul only
the counterpoint carrying higher harmony in which
the voices from above and below unite once more.
Unity is maintained even in the contradiction: the
unity of God and therewith the unity of life. The
Only God is the source of life and life is borne by
him, even in all suffering and in spite of all
suffering. In times of affliction unity abides --
as submission to the love of God.

. . .The submission to the love of God, as it is
felt here, is not a banal "philosophy" and
contemplation; nor does it involve an indifference
to life. It is simply the yearning of man to
overcome his feeling of God's remoteness by the
feeling of God's nearness.(14)

In these passages Baeck seems to maintain that human

suffering, particularly evil caused by nature, ultimately

comes from God. The readings imply that God directly or

indirectly through a guiding principle, i.e. a rule or rules

set to govern the world, causes suffering. Baeck does not

offer an explanation for suffering other than, "The wisdom of

Judaism. . .sees life as a task imposed upon man by God.

Suffering is part of that task."(15) Instead he focuses on

humanity's response to suffering. Our job if we believe in

God is to submit to our lot, to accept the pain, and to

affirm God by living ethically in spite of our troubles.

This bridges the gap between the distance we feel from God,

and helps us feel near to God, again.

Baeck carries this idea to its logical extreme in his

discussion of martyrdom. Baeck says:

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The climax of this obligation is martyrdom. For
martyrdom is the truest possible sanctification of
God's name, the ultimate proof that God is man's
God. . . .The ethical demand extends beyond the
boundaries of individual life, and it is therefore
appropriate that life be sacrificed for it. Above
human life stands the commandment in which all life
fulfills itself. The sacrifice of life is
therefore the true fulfillment of life.(16)

Baeck believes that God gives humanity the freedom to
choose good or evil. Human evil and suffering comes when
people choose against God and the ethical path. As God's
agent, martyrdom becomes a sacred task for Israel. For
Baeck, Israel's belief in the ethical and in God takes
precedence over life itself. Evil comes because of human
choice and suffering is meaningful because it affirms and
sanctifies God's name.

"Patient justice" provides a sense of resolution in
Baeck's theodicy. He believes that while the world at times
appears unjust, in the end evil individuals and nations are
punished by God.

It is in this manner that the men of the Holy
Scriptures view world history, the rise and
descent, the winding ways and byways within it.
Because they were certain of the beginning, they
also remain certain of the end, the goal. Thus,
when, as it so often happens, one people wanted to
destroy another and ultimately, in its desire to
break another, shattered itself, Israel heard the
fall as the word of final judgment. Often, the
judgment was pronounced only after generations.
But Israel knew that beyond history and revealing
itself within it, there dwells the great patience.
World history has become patient justice.(17)

This passage suggests that in addition to giving

humanity freedom to choose good or evil God also provides for justice to rule in the long run. Baeck believes that God acts in the world, and that in time evil will be punished. This last passage is particularly meaningful because it was written in Germany during the second World War. Baeck maintained his basic beliefs about God and Israel's mission throughout the Holocaust.

In summary, some evil is caused by God, and other evils come from human action. It is Israel's job to affirm God and the ethical commandment even in the face of suffering. Israel needs to pursue always the vision of the good which comes from God. This view as well as the rest of Baeck's thought will be evaluated at the end of this discussion.

Teshuvah and Eternity

In addition to the concept of "patient justice", Baeck's interpretations of teshuvah and eternity provide a feeling of hope for humanity. As mentioned above, Baeck believes that human existence begins and ends with God. Sin means that a person rejects God's commandment and turns away from righteousness. Teshuvah, atonement and reconciliation, function as the processes by which a person returns to God; once again adheres to the categorical imperative. The process on an individual level foreshadows salvation on a macrolevel. The messianic age will come when all people know God and return to the path of righteousness. The following three passages describe Baeck's view of sin, return, and the

messianic age:

> Thus man stands at the judgement seat of God.
> Every duty of our life is God's commandment; always
> we remain in the debt of God. In this debt to God
> is expressed the human and earthly side of our
> nature; that is the destiny of our freedom and the
> paradox of the commandment. But human independence
> can also produce guilt and fate; it can become a
> fetter, the fettering "freedom" of fate. Man
> acquires guilt not when he lags behind, but only
> when he opposes God's demands, abandon's or rejects
> God's ways and thus turns away from the freedom in
> which his origin and purity are to find their
> realization. His deed in turning away from and
> disowning God becomes aimless, or as the Bible
> calls it, sin. Man thus become solitary,
> directionless, separated from God.(18)

> Man can "return" to his freedom and purity, to God,
> the reality of his life. If he has sinned he is
> always able to turn and to find his way back to the
> holy, which is more than earthly and beyond the
> limitations of his life; he can hallow and purify
> himself again; he can atone. He can always decide
> anew and begin anew. For there is always the
> constant possibility of a new ethical
> beginning.(19)

> For Judaism the kingdom of God is not a kingdom
> above the world or opposed to it or even side by
> side with it. Rather it is the answer to the world
> given by man's goal: the reconciliation of the
> world's finiteness with its infinity. It is not a
> future of miracle for which man can only wait, but
> a future of commandment which always has its
> present and even demands a beginning and decision
> from man. In its idea lies the knowledge that man
> is a creative being, the contradiction of the
> conception that he remains bound and confined in
> the doom of guilt which only a miracle can
> break.(20)

These passages described Baeck's view of sin, return and

the messianic age. Sin comes when man rejects God's path,

and tries to govern his life with his own "fate." Return is

always open to people. Through return humans as responsible

beings can reconcile themselves with God. They move from a

stress on this world and regain their sense of the beyond.
The messianic age comes when all people choose for God and
decide for the commandment. It is the job of the Jewish
people to keep the commandment, even when persecuted to a
remnant, so the world has an avenue of return.

Baeck's interpretation of eternal life within Judaism
also provides hope for humanity in the face of suffering.
Baeck gives the following account of eternity:

> Beyond the beginning and beyond the end there
> abides the nearness of God, the eternal source and
> the eternal goal. With all its deficiencies and
> limitations, its pain and its suffering, man's
> life, as the rabbinic saying puts it, is but a
> place of "preparation," an "antechamber": it is
> only the "life of the hour." The true life is "the
> eternal life." As the image of God man is destined
> to be different from the world, to be holy and to
> be "a child of the world to come."(21)

In this passage Baeck unequivocally states a belief in a
world to come. Later he adds, "Basic to Judaism was the
imageless spiritual conception of immortality, which permits
of no representation, hardly even a verbal one. 'The world
to come, none has seen it, besides thee, O God, alone!'"(22)
In this light, the world to come is an undefined goal which
gives meaning to life. Baeck describes the world to come as
a place which will compensate for suffering in this world;
even though Jews may need to sacrifice their lives for God,
in the world to come God balances the ledger. At the end of
his discussion of the World to Come Baeck notes the tension
between life in this world and the next with the words of
Rabbi Jacob, "One hour of Teshuvah and good deeds in this

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world is more than all the life of the world to come; an hour of bliss in the world to come is more than all the life of this world."(23)

In sum, Baeck's interpretations of _teshuvah_, the messianic age, and the world to come offer hope for people in the face of suffering. With _teshuvah_, Israel and the nations atone for their sins, and reunite with God. The world to come offers a vision of humankind united through _teshuvah_ in the service of God. And eternity provides compensation for those people who suffer in this world through natural or human cases. These concepts make Baeck's system a whole. God calls people to service and creates a world where in the end the righteous receive a reward.

Jewish Law

Baeck sees Jewish law and practice as an outgrowth of the historical experience and mission of the Jewish people and not as directly communicated from God. The mission of Israel calls on the Jewish people to teach the world about God and the commandment. During their life in Palestine the Jews fulfilled this task and even sought converts to Judaism. With the conquest of Palestine the Jews no longer had the resources to seek converts, and Jewish survival itself became the people's overriding concern. Jewish law developed to preserve Jewish distinctiveness. The law functioned as a "Fence around the Torah" to preserve the Jewish people and to keep the Jewish mission alive. In time the Law itself became

sacred. The Law insured Jewish survival which kept alive
service to God and the Jewish mission. In this regard Baeck
blesses the Law as a means of survival and piety, but
maintains a stress on justice and the ethical value of
practice: "The performance of a ritual statute is never
regarded as a "good deed"; only religious and ethical action
is so viewed".(24) The following passage presents this
analysis in Baeck's words:

> In accordance with the severity and duration of the
> struggle which Judaism had to conduct, these duties
> were exceedingly numerous. They included manifold
> statutes, forms, customs, and institutions -- e.g.,
> the dietary laws and Sabbath rules, elaborated in
> the Talmud and usually given the erroneous name of
> the ritual Law. These serve not the religious idea
> itself but mainly the protection it needs -- a
> security for its existence through the existence of
> the religious community. This, and only this, is
> the primary measure of their value.(25)

Critique

The comments in this section will focus on both
strengths and weaknesses of Baeck's interpretation of
Judaism. The section on weaknesses will discuss the
empirical problems of the work, the issue of theodicy, the
interpretation of Jewish Law, and the mode of interpretation
as a valid expression of Judaism. The section on strengths
will include: consistency of interpretation, existential
appeal, and personal validity.

The first problem which arises in consideration of
Baeck's work is its empirical validity. Baeck says that the
prophets perceived God created them, and that they as human

beings are created in the image of God. Based on these premises they say God wants people to act righteously, according to the Commandment, and they propose, the mission of Israel and eternity as corollaries of this belief. Baeck maintains as well that the average person also feels this sense of God and being created by God; this feeling provides motivation for righteous action. The basic problem with this interpretation is that there is no way to prove it. This belief raises the questions: how do I know that this is really God which I perceive, and how does one distinguish a true from a false revelation? These are questions which I do not believe can be answered in Baeck's framework for Jewish belief.

Baeck's justification for suffering comes as an extension of his belief in God and revelation. God created the world and God gave people freedom to choose good or evil. As a result, Baeck believes, we cannot always know the reason why something bad happens, and evil committed by one person against another comes as a consequence of human freedom. As a response to evil people should continue to affirm their belief in God through righteous acts even in the face of suffering. Baeck suggests that in the end evil nations will fall and the righteous will receive a reward in the world to come.

This theology has the advantage that it is consistent. If one accepts Baeck's basic belief in revelation and a God who is beyond the world the rest of the system follows

logically. However, this system of delayed reward and
punishment does not seem fair. How do I know that righteous
people will eventually be rewarded. Also, as Harold Kushner
suggests, in When Bad Things Happen to Good People, if a
human being killed or tortured another person for the good of
ten other people or to teach people a lesson, that person
would be put in jail. Can we judge God, in whose image we
are created less rigorously. Baeck's theology of suffering
is consistent, but it does not seem fair. (A response from
Baeck's point of view will appear in the discussion of the
strengths of Baeck's work.)

Next, Baeck believes that Jewish Law arose as a "fence"
to maintain the integrity of ethical monotheism. Once the
Jews lost predominance in Palestine and suffered persecution
as a minority people they needed a system of religious deeds
to maintain their unity as a people and their belief in God.
In this light, Baeck says that Judaism sees only the ethical
and not the ritual deed as a commandment. This
interpretation has problems on two levels. First, he leaves
unanswered the question: How does a modern Jew decide about
ritual practice? He suggests that ritual laws are
spiritually fulfilling, but he does not address the problem
of choosing between the myriad of practices that have
accumulated in the Jewish tradition. I believe part of this
dilemma comes from the apologetic nature of the work. Baeck
wants to show that the entire Jewish tradition possesses
validity. Therefore this is not the forum in which to

address change. One can assume since Baeck states that only the ethical laws are commanded that he does allow for change in ritual practice.

The second problem raised by Baeck's discussion of Jewish law permeates his work: Is Baeck an accurate spokesman for Judaism or does he offer only one person's opinion and interpretation. The issue of Jewish law illustrates this point. Baeck says in the Essence of Judaism that only the ethical Laws are commanded by God, ritual practices were added as a means for preserving Jewish unity and only later developed a spiritual component.(26) Traditional Judaism suggests that both the written and oral Law come from God. Both ethical and ritual commandments emanate from the Divine. Baeck presents himself as a spokesman for Judaism and wants to maintain the integrity of the people's experience. He talks of the Bible as legend,(27) and says that the prophets did experience contact with God. However, it is important to note that although Baeck presents himself as more of a spokesman than an interpreter, that in fact his views are interpretation, and an interpretation which differs in important ways from the view of Judaism as presented in traditional sources.

The first strength of Leo Baeck's system lies in the consistency of his interpretation. I believe that if one accepts Baeck's basic assumption about the nature of prophetic and historical revelation that the rest of his system follows logically. If one accepts that God is the

start and finish of the world who created humanity in the divine image, then Baeck's views of the mission of Israel, theodicy, prayer, and the law follow as logical extensions of his basic premise. Delayed reward and punishment might not seem fair, but if one does not know God's essence and if one expects to return to God, these beliefs may or may not offer a sense of purpose and consolation, but at least they are logically consistent.

Next, I believe Baeck's system has appeal on an existential level. Baeck suggests that people perceived God as creator on a personal level which defied intellectual description. He does not suggest that God intervened to part the Red Sea, or that God literally spoke with Moses. On this level if one believes in God as a power in the world, beyond human experience, Baeck's presentation has a personal appeal and offers articulate interpretation of Judaism.

Finally, Baeck's work has a personal validity. Leo Baeck wrote The Essence of Judaism (final edition) in 1922. This work presented his basic interpretation of Judaism as described in this conceptualization. Baeck began writing This People Israel: The Meaning of Jewish Existence, in Germany in 1938 and completed the work shortly before his death in 1956. He expands on his ideas in This People Israel, and focuses to a larger extent on the meaning of Jewish existence and the experience of the Jewish people. Overall he does not change his views about God, revelation, or the mission of the Jewish people. On this level Baeck's

experience and his continued faith offer the most meaningful

testimony about the truth and meaning in his thought.

NOTES

(1) Leo Baeck, <u>God, Man, and Judaism</u>, p. 9.

(2) Leo Baeck, <u>The Essence of Judaism</u>, pp. 31 - 32.

(3) Ibid., p. 84.

(4) Ibid., p. 87.

(5) Ibid., pp. 158-159.

(6) Ibid., p. 102.

(7) Ibid., pp. 104-105.

(8) Ibid., pp. 61-62.

(9) Ibid., p. 63.

(10) Ibid., p. 67.

(11) Ibid., p. 66.

(12) Ibid., p. 67.

(13) Ibid., pp. 136-137.

(14) Ibid., pp. 114-115.

(15) Ibid., p. 139.

(16) Ibid., p. 173.

(17) Baeck, <u>This People Israel: The Meaning of Jewish Experience</u>, pp. 36-37.

(18) Baeck, <u>The Essence of Judaism</u>, op. cit., p. 161.

(19) Ibid., p. 163.

(20) Ibid., p. 243.

(21) Ibid., p. 182.

(22) Ibid., p. 185.

(23) Ibid., p. 186.

(24) Ibid., p. 263.

(25) Ibid., p. 263.

(26) Ibid., pp. 258-270.

(27) Baeck, op. cit., <u>This People Israel: The Meaning of Jewish Existence</u>, pp. 56-59.

Appendix - III B

Mordecai M. Kaplan

Introduction

Mordecai Kaplan presents an interpretation of Judaism
called Reconstructionism. This formulation of Judaism
attempts to confront the problems raised by supernaturalism
which is inherent in rabbinic Judaism. Reconstructionism
views Judaism as a civilization, gives a naturalistic account
of God, and a new rationale for Jewish belief. This section
will first discuss Kaplan's view of God and the fundamental
principles of Reconstructionism. Then it will apply this
material and present Kaplan's discussion of revelation,
prayer, theodicy, the world-to-come, Jewish law, and
chosenness.

God and Reconstructionism

Kaplan's discussion of God revolves around a distinction
between supernatural and natural conceptions of the Divine.
He contends that Judaism and other religions believed in a
supernatural idea of God and salvation until the modern era.
By supernaturalism Kaplan means (1) that God transcends the
world and humanity. (2) God is not subject to the laws of
nature and can suspend natural laws in order to perform
miracles to help or punish the Jews or other people. (3)
Through this supernatural power God elected the Jewish people
for special service. (4) It becomes the mission of the

Jewish people to follow God's laws and in return God will

protect and redeem the people.(1)

(5) Additionally, Kaplan sees the focus of

supernaturalism as "other worldly" salvation. He gives this

explanation of the need and function of God and salvation in

supernatural religion:

> When men suffer from evils that are apparently
> irremediable, they are confronted with the
> alternative of utter pessimism and demoralization,
> or of fitting their experience of evil into some
> pattern of thought that will enable them to see in
> it at least an opportunity for future good. Faith
> is the possibility of heavenly reward after death
> is, therefore, an expression of this psychic need
> for an outlook on life that would make evil appear
> other than inevitable defeat and frustration.
> Salvation meant the ultimate realization of all the
> joy that eluded our pursuit on earth, a state in
> which the ego was no longer rebuffed, inhibited and
> frustrated in its desires, but achieved at last
> self-fulfillment so complete and transfiguring that
> it glorified all that had gone before.(2)

Kaplan believes that people developed a supernatural

image of God to compensate for the limits and lack of control

in their lives. Since people could not control nature or

defeat death, they developed a God who could. According to

this view God revealed Himself to the Jewish people at Mount

Sinai, performed miracles to save the people, gave a code of

law to insure salvation, and compensated for the evil in the

world with life after death. This, for Kaplan, is the God of

the supernaturalistic interpretation of Judaism.

This conception of Judaism and religion according to

Kaplan is no longer functional for many people in the modern

world. He says:

Modernism is rendering the foregoing
supernaturalist world-outlook obsolete for an
increasing number of human beings. Too much has
been learned about various religious traditions,
with their myths, legends and wonder tales, to
permit the average thoughtful person, who is
accustomed to integrate his knowledge into a
coherent pattern, to place any more credence in the
miracles recorded in the Jewish tradition than
those recorded in any other . . . With the
rejection of the historicity of the miracles goes
the rejection of the traditional version of
Israel's chosenness and the authoritarian character
of the past.(3)

In place of a supernatural idea of God, Kaplan offers a

natural interpretation of godhood. In a reply to a letter by

Rabbi Myron Fenster in Question Jews Ask: Reconstructionist

Answers, Kaplan rejects secularism as a response to the

problem of supernaturalism, and offers his interpretation of

God. He says:

As man learns to bring under control more and more
of the forces of his own body and in his
environment, he feels he can dispense with
religion, or belief in God; what he cannot control,
he has to accept with resignation. Others,
however, and I among them, assume that man, once
his physiological needs are satisfied, begins to
experience the need to overcome such traits as
self-indulgence, arrogance, envy, exploitation and
hatred, or to bring under control the aggressive
forces of his nature. That constitutes man's true
destiny. Therein lies his salvation.

From that point, it is natural to arrive at the
next step, which requires no blind leap into the
dark. The next step is to conclude that the cosmos
is so constituted as to enable man to fulfill this
highest human need of his nature.

A magnetic needle, hung on a thread or placed on a
pivot, assumes of its own record a position in
which one end of the needle points north and the
other south. So long as it is free to move about,
all attempts to deflect it will not get it to

remain away from its normal direction. Likewise,
man normally veers in the direction of that which
makes for the fulfillment of his destiny as a human
being. That fact indicates the functioning of a
cosmic Power which influences his behavior. What
magnetism is to the magnetic needle, Godhood or God
is to man. . .

The fact that the cosmos possesses the resources
and man the abilities -- which are themselves part
of those resources -- to enable him to fulfill his
destiny as a human being, or to achieve salvation
-- is the Godhood of the cosmos.(4)

In this definition God is no longer the all-powerful

transcendent figure of supernaturalism. Instead, God is the

sum of the powers and forces in the universe that help people

achieve their full human potential. Salvation no longer

takes place in the world-to-come; rather salvation occurs

when people fulfill their human destinies. On an individual

level Kaplan says, "When our mind functions in such a way

that we feel that all our powers are actively employed in the

achievement of desirable ends, we have achieved personal

salvation."(5) And on a communal level he says, "In its

social aspect, salvation means the ultimate achievement of a

social order in which all men shall collaborate in the

pursuit of common ends in a manner which shall afford the

maximum opportunity for creative self-expression."(6) In

this light, God is the Power that brings order to the

universe and makes for beauty, good, and righteousness, and

people serve God, (relate to God), when they fulfill their

potential as human beings.

In addition to this idea of God, Kaplan uses two other

concepts to formulate his interpretation of Judaism. The

first concept is reevaluation: determining the human origins

of customs and traditions. And the second concept is

civilization: the corporate development of people and

religions.

Kaplan makes a distinction between transvaluation and

revaluation in determining the significance of Jewish

customs. He says, "Transvaluation consists in ascribing

meanings to the traditional content of a religion or social

heritage, which could neither have been contemplated nor

implied by the authors of the content."(7) In other words,

Kaplan believes that in the past various customs and

traditions existed and religious leaders would invest these

customs with meanings which spoke to their needs and differed

from the original intent of the custom. Kaplan gives the

example of Exodus 20:21 which allows local sanctuaries and

altars, being reread by the later sages to forbid local

altars and centralize worship in Jerusalem.(8) Kaplan

rejects this method of determining practice because it is

inconsistent with modern thought and method.

Kaplan proposes revaluation as a means of countering the

transvaluation used to determine practice in Judaism. He

says:

> Revaluation consists in disengaging from the
> traditional content those elements in it which
> answer permanent postulates of human nature, and in
> integrating them into our own ideology. When we
> revaluate, we analyze or break up the traditional
> values into their implications, and single out for
> acceptance those implications which can help us
> meet our moral and spiritual needs; the rest may be
> relegated to archeology.(9)

As opposed to the inherited or traditional meaning of an idea, Kaplan wants to determine the meaning of a practice by looking at its historical root, and fitting that root with contemporary needs. As an example, the Sabbath is no longer a symbol of God finishing the work of creation or of the covenant at Sinai, but instead stands as a time to affirm God as the Force in the universe which brings order above evil, makes life special, and makes possible this worldly salvation.(10) With revaluation Kaplan divorces rituals from their traditional meanings, based on supernatural underpinnings, and using scientific method he traces the origins of Jewish practices and focuses on naturalistic meanings for their observance.

Civilization, or nationalism, is the second concept which Kaplan uses to formulate his interpretation of Judaism. Based on sociology, as described by Emil Durkheim, Kaplan replaces the concept of the Jews, or other people, as specially elected agents of God, with the idea of the Jews as a civilization. He gives this definition of Judaism as a civilization:

> The definition of Judaism as a civilization is intended to correct certain errors and affirm certain truths.
>
> This definition negates (1) the notion that Judaism is nothing more than a religion, in the conventional sense, as a system of beliefs and practices, whether revealed or achieved, centering in a belief in God, and (2) the notion that Judaism is a way of life transmitted by biological inheritance as a sum of racial characteristics and

habits.

This definition affirms that:

(1) Judaism is the ongoing life of the Jewish
People. Jews are aware of themselves as a People,
in terms of a common history and a common destiny.
The life of the Jewish people is embodied in a
dynamic pattern of language, history, institutions,
beliefs, practices and arts.

(2) Jewish religion is what makes of the pattern an
organic whole, and gives meaning and purpose to
Jewish life, both individual and collective.

(3) Judaism as the civilization of the Jewish
People, necessarily undergoes change, as it
encounters changing conditions, with the Jewish
religion, as the soul of that civilization,
undergoing corresponding changes.

(4) As a civilization, Judaism must naturally
interact with other civilizations. To affirm its
individual character, it must express itself,
whether affirmatively or negatively, in terms that
are relevant to those other civilizations.

(5) As a modern civilization, Judaism should
recognize as valid the ideal of freedom of thought.
. .It must, therefore, regard as legitimate and
normal the co-existence of various groups within
Judaism, which have different secular and religious
ideologies.(11)

This passage outlines the key elements of Kaplan's

definition of Judaism as a civilization. Instead of divine

revelation the Jewish people receives its warrant as a

sociological entity, one nation among the nations of the

world. This definition of Judaism resolves three important

problems. First, it provides a non-supernatural account of

Judaism. The Jewish people existed and formed its God idea

as an expression of its socio-cultural heritage. The people

formed their God idea, God did not constitute the people.

Second, it provides for change within Judaism. Jewish

practice no longer comes as a divine command, instead it is

part of a religious heritage and can be changed to fit modern times. And finally, this definition gives a new interpretation of the place of Judaism in the world. Judaism is no longer a superior or elected religion among the nations; instead, Judaism is a civilization like others and can learn from and interact with other faiths. The full importance of this interpretation of Judaism will appear as the discussion focuses on specific rubrics of theology.

In summary, Kaplan redefines God and the Jewish people within his interpretation of Judaism. In place of a supernatural deity, Kaplan says, God is the Power or Force in the universe which brings order and makes human fulfillment possible. This image of God appeals to the modern mind and uses faith that the order in the universe comes from God. In addition Kaplan uses scientific/historical method and sociology to redefine Judaism and Jewish practice. He hopes to create a method which helps people achieve fulfillment while avoiding supernatural or theurgic practices. In this light the Jewish people becomes one nation among many and not an elected agent of God. The next sections will present Kaplan's views of various theological rubrics based on this interpretation of God and Judaism.

Revelation

In contrast to Borowitz, Baeck, and Berkovits, revelation as such plays an insignificant role in Kaplan's interpretation of Judaism. The three other thinkers in this

thesis give lengthy presentations about revelation because this forms the basis for their interpretations of Judaism. As noted above, Kaplan does not believe in a supernatural interpretation of God. Consequently, he does not need to explain how God revealed the divine will to people in general and to the Jewish people in particular. Kaplan believes that Judaism is a civilization and therefore the people created the, "pattern of language, history, institutions, beliefs, practices, and arts,"(12) of the Jewish nation.

While Torah and the tradition become the works of people in Kaplan's system of Judaism, he still leaves room for a naturalistic idea of revelation. He says:

> When our forefathers declared an idea to be
> divinely revealed, it was because, in the light of
> their faith in God and their conception of Him,
> they were convinced that such an idea was somehow
> related to God's purpose, and to the fulfillment of
> their destinies as individuals, as Jews, and as
> human beings. We today, who look upon God as the
> Power that prods man to become fully human, must
> regard as divinely revealed any idea that helps
> individuals and groups to achieve the full stature
> of their humanity. Man's discovery of religious
> truth is God's revelation of it, since the very
> process of that discovery implies the activity of
> God. That is the sense in which the concept of
> revelation is indispensable in modern religious
> thinking.(13)

In this passage Kaplan offers an interpretation of revelation consistent with his beliefs about God. Since God is the Process which makes fulfillment possible, any idea which leads to fulfillment for human beings comes from God. God does not communicate explicit verbal or experiential content to a person from outside the realm of nature, but

reveals ideas to people as part of the natural functioning of the world. This is a naturalistic view of revelation based on an analysis of the function of revelation in ancient Israel.

Prayer

Kaplan gives an account of prayer which also flows from his belief about God. Prayer serves as a means for the individual to make contact with the higher parts of him or herself which make fulfillment possible. He explains the nature and function of naturalistic prayer in this way:

> All thinking -- and prayer is a form of thought -- is essentially a dialogue between our purely individual egocentric self and our self as representing a process that goes beyond us. . . . In seeking a solution through thought, we expect that the answer comes to us from the side of our human nature which is open to, and represents, the divine Process. In a moral problem, we seek our answer not from the self that is identified with our appetites, passions and ambitions, but from the higher self, which represents the good of society and, in the last analysis, the goal of the Cosmic Process that governs the evolution of mankind.

> . . .When we wish to establish contact with the Process that makes for human salvation, we can do so only by an appeal to the higher self that represents the working of that Process in us. From the higher self, which is identical with our conscience, the moral censor of our acts, and which represents God as operative in our life, we seek the answer to prayer. That answer comes in the greater power to transcend our self-centered drives, control our aggressive impulses, banish our fears, and achieve a creative and happy adjustment to the conditions of our personal life.(14)

Prayer helps a person transcend the self-centered parts of his/her nature, and become aware of the unity and wholeness of the universe. This unity is what Kaplan calls

the Force that makes for salvation/fulfillment. Through

contact with this force the person gains strength to confront

life's problems and troubles. Prayer is not a theurgistic

attempt to influence a supernatural deity through the

practice of prescribed rituals;(15) instead, prayer is a form

of self-actualization, where the individual uses conscience,

the personal aspect of deity, to appreciate and draw strength

from the awareness of the greater Process at work in the

universe. For Kaplan petition is now obsolete(16) and prayer

helps a person gain strength to realize his/her human

potential.

It is important to add that even with this

interpretation of prayer Kaplan still values public worship.

In discussing the value of maintaining Hebrew as the

vernacular of Jewish worship he makes this comment about

communal worship in general:

> The function of worship is not only to commune with
> God. If that were its sole purpose, there would be
> no need for public worship. In worshipping as a
> congregation, we seek a sense of fellowship with
> those who share in our religious tradition. The
> sense of togetherness which is effected by public
> worship is of incalculable worth in laying the
> basis for communion with the Divine.(17)

Public worship serves a dual function. On one level it

unites the Jewish people. Through prayer the people affirm a

common heritage and set of beliefs. And on a second level

the experience of communal worship lays the basis for

individual communion with God. Participation in an

interdependent community reminds the individual of the

interdependent nature of the universe and the Power that makes for unity and fulfillment. Kaplan affirms the value of both public and private worship in his interpretation of Judaism.

Theodicy

Kaplan's discussion of evil needs to reconcile his belief that God is the Force which brings order and goodness to the world, with the reality of evil and sorrow in human life. He rejects the idea that God will supernaturally make things right, and the idea that evil can ever adequately be explained.[18] Instead he suggests that while evil exists people have the capacity to bring order and good to the world. We cannot explain evil but we can respond to it. People can act to make the world better, and they can have faith that in the end order will rule over chaos. The following passages present Kaplan's thoughts about evil:

> Once we learn to regard evil as the chance invasion of sheer purposelessness, and learn to identify all meaningful factors in the world with good and blessing, we become adjusted to whatever befalls us, not in the spirit of desperate resignation, but of hopeful waiting.[19]

> For purposes of religion, we need not undertake to account for the existence of evil and suffering by proving them in detail to be serving some good. All that religion calls upon us to believe is that the element of helpfulness, kindness and fair play is not limited to man alone but is diffused throughout the natural order.[20]

> The ancient Jew kept up his courage in the face of evil with the thought that he must never despair, since the Creator could at any time effect a miracle, if necessary, to remove that evil. The

modern Jew, even if his scientific view of the
world has lead to his placing reliance on the
orderly processes of nature rather than on the
possibility of their being suspended, can keep up
his courage, in the faith that the persistent and
patient application of human intelligence to life's
problems will release the creativity that will
solve them. Whatever ought to be can be, even
though it is not at present in existence.(21)

We must, however, have faith that the good latent
in man will eventually emerge and will triumph over
those conditions that we recognize as evil. We
should not expect to live to witness the
achievement of the full salvation of mankind:.
However, by faithfully participating as individuals
in the activities that make for human salvation, we
can at least have a foretaste of it.(22)

In summary, Kaplan believes that evil can be defined as,

"The chance invasion of sheer purposelessness."(23) Evil

happens in the world when order does not prevail. This

definition does not explain evil. Kaplan says that a

satisfactory explanation has not been found for evil, and

that explanations cannot turn evil into good. In place of an

explanation people can act. People act based on a belief

that as morality brings order to human action, so too, there

is a force making for good in the realm of nature.(24) Based

on this faith people use their creative powers and try to

bring order to the world. Kaplan does not believe this will

happen immediately, in our life times, but that in the end

order and good will triumph over evil. Salvation for all

humankind will some day occur.

Finally, in this spirit, in a response to a child about

polio, Kaplan says:

God did not make polio. God is always helping us

humans to make this a better world, but the world
cannot at once become the kind of world He would
like it to be. When men make use of the
intelligence God gave them, they learn more and
more of the laws of health, by which all kinds of
illness can be prevented or cured. When the doctor
relieves your pain, when he helps you to get back
more strength and better control of your muscles,
it is with intelligence that God gives him.(25)

This response affirms Kaplan's belief that God does not
cause evil, and that God gives people the power to combat
evil in the world. It is important to note that Kaplan wrote
that response for a first printing of Questions Jews Ask, in
the spring of 1956. Sabine and Salk had just perfected the
anti-polio vaccine in 1955.

Salvation/The World-to-Come

The description of human life as finite in Kaplan's
discussion of the problem of evil alludes to his
interpretation of immortality in Judaism. Kaplan rejects
belief in other-wordly salvation. He finds this idea
dissonant with modern ideas of life and reality. This
supernatural interpretation of existence does not logically
proceed from the modern scientific view of the world.
Kaplan, therefore, says that life is finite, and that the
only forms of salvation occur when people achieve fulfillment
in this world, or when their good deeds are remembered after
their death. These ideas appear in the following excerpt
about Kaplan's interpretation of the Jewish conception of
immortality:

Prior to the modern revolution in men's thinking, there was a Jewish conception of immortality which consisted of some definite and some vague ideas about a post-mortem existence for human beings. The definite ideas were the belief in the bodily resurrection of the dead at some time before the Day of Judgement, and the belief in the world to come, which those adjudged to eternal life would inhabit. . . .

All these ideas, that were once generally prevalent among Jews, have become obsolete in the light of two basic assumptions which are part of our general way of thinking in the modern world. (1) It is generally assumed today that the physical world will continue, for as long a period as the mind can grasp, the same processes that we see at work in nature today. (2) It is also assumed that the individual personality cannot be understood except in its physical and social context, and that, with the death of a person, all personal individuality is inconceivable.

However, we should not infer from those assumptions that we can afford to treat the ancient beliefs concerning after-life as mere fictions of imagination. . . . To limit our perspective on human life to the span of our earthly existence would destroy all values. Insofar as the good we do while we live, bears fruit after we are gone, we have a share in the world to come.(26)

This passage illustrates Kaplan's conception of immortality in Judaism as described above. It is important to note that this idea flows from Kaplan's idea of God as the Power that makes for salvation, and his polemic against supernaturalism. The idea of limited life on earth comes from Kaplan's naturalistic view of life. Salvation occurs in this world through the Force in the world that makes fulfillment possible for people. For a more detailed discussion of this interpretation of God in Kaplan's thought please refer to the first section of this chapter.

Halacha/Jewish Practice

Kaplan approaches the area of Jewish practice from both
theoretical and practical levels. He offers a naturalistic
interpretation and rationale for practice in keeping with his
views about God and humanity. This system reinterprets, or
revaluates, Jewish practice to give it meaning for the modern
person. This section will look first at Kaplan's theoretical
discussion of practice, and then his views about implementing
this theory.

On a theoretical level, Kaplan distinguishes between
symbolism and theurgy. "Theurgy is the performance of magic
rites on the assumption that they set in motion effects
beyond the scope of natural law."(27) Kaplan maintains that
most ancient religions used theurgistic rites to influence
supernatural deities. He believes that Judaism evolved from
a primarily theurgistic to a more symbolic religion. To the
extent that Jews practiced animal sacrifice and followed
specifically prescribed rituals they participated in the
theurgistic world view of their times.(28)

In contrast to theurgy, Kaplan says, religious
symbolism, "Comes into being when rites and observances are
practiced for what they do to stir the mind and the heart
religiously. They are a means of enabling man to commune
with himself, or with his fellow-man, about divine
things."(29) Rites do not represent a means of influencing a
supernatural God, but help the worshipper sense the reality
of God in the world. For Kaplan the task of

Reconstructionism is to revaluate Jewish rites and rituals so they have symbolic and not theurgistic meanings.

In the modern world Kaplan believes, "The chances of retrieving Jewish ritual practice are greater if we learn to approach them from a socio-psychological, instead of a theological standpoint."(30) In this light, Kaplan says that rituals perform three functions. First, "If they are religious in character, they act as a means of communication concerning states of mind pertaining to God which are regarded as helpful by a number of people."(31) Second for people in a community, "Symbols, therefore, perform for them the additional function of articulating their collective mind or soul."(32) And finally, the religious symbol makes people aware of God and, "By making them aware of that relationship functions normally as a means of their salvation."(33) Religious symbols, help people communicate about God, join together as a community, and remind people of the values that make for fulfillment.

This definition of the meaning of religious symbolism expands the range of Jewish religious action beyond the realm set in traditional Judaism. All Jewish life and tradition now serves as a source for creating Jewish rituals. Kaplan expresses this change in these words:

> From the point of view of Judaism as a body of
> revealed doctrine, it becomes impossible to
> reconcile the idea of the covenant and its
> implications with the scientific and ethical
> assumptions that govern our daily thinking and
> acting. But no such difficulty confronts us, if we

regard Judaism as the civilization of the Jewish
people. Then covenantship becomes the sense of the
creative possibilities of Jewish life. These give
value and meaning to the fact that we are heirs to
the Jewish past. Consequently the garnered
experiences of the Jewish people as stored up in
its tradition, and in the institutions to which it
has given rise, are so many resources available to
us in our efforts to achieve personal and social
salvation.(34)

For Kaplan the goal of Jewish ritual practice is no

longer serving a supernatural God in a covenantal

relationship. Kaplan sees the goals of ritual practice as

helping a person become aware of the Power that makes for

fulfillment in life, and as helping the individual relate to

the community. Rituals can be changed over time in order to

discard those that have lost their meaning as symbols, revive

those rituals which have grown stale, and create new rituals

to give meaning to the tradition and people's quest for God.

Finally, since Kaplan breaks from rabbinic authority as

the determinant of religious practice, the question arises:

Who should set the standards for ritual practice, and be

responsible for creating new practices. In response to this

question Kaplan says:

Since the ultimate authority to give direction to
Jewish life must come from the Jewish People
itself, Reconstructionism emphasizes the concept of
the Jews as one People, with a common history and a
common will to continue as an identifiable group.
To give reality to the idea of Jewish peoplehood,
Reconstructionism proposes the organization of
Jewry as a network of cooperating local organic
communities. Only on the basis of such communities
can a democratic type of authority be established,
which can develop new standards and laws that the
people will be willing and able to carry out.(35)

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Since rituals perform the function of uniting the community, and helping the individual become aware of the Force that makes for fulfillment through the community, Kaplan believes the community as a whole should develop and modify Jewish ritual practice. The individual has a right to dissent from communal practice, and must invest each practice with personal meaning, but the standard of practice as a whole comes from the community. Through this definition Kaplan preserves the value of Jewish ritual practice while confronting the dilemma of its origins in supernaturalism.

Chosenness

Kaplan rejects the doctrine of chosenness as part of his reconstruction of Judaism. He bases his rejection on theological and ethical grounds. He frames his objections in the following words:

> Why cannot the faith in God's choice of Israel
> function today as it did in the past? The reason
> is not far to seek. It is because the form that
> this doctrine took in the past is out of drawing
> with our modern conception of God and incompatible
> with our highest ideals. To imagine that God loves
> the Jewish people more than others, we must in the
> first place conceive of God as a loving God, not
> merely in the sense of evoking love in man, but in
> the sense of actually experiencing desire as man
> does. . . Nor can we, with our knowledge of history
> and comparative religion, accept the traditional
> version of an exclusive revelation, which the
> covenant implied for our fathers.(56)

In this passage Kaplan rejects chosenness on theological grounds because it would imply a supernatural God who could choose one people over another, and he rejects chosenness on

ethical grounds because as a student of history it is immoral

to see one people as superior to another. In his

interpretation God is a naturalistic deity and all people are

chosen to the extent that they bring salvation, the potential

for human fulfillment, to the world.

Kaplan expresses the idea of universalism by using the

term vocation to replace chosenness. He defines vocation as

follows for the Jewish people:

> That does not mean that Jews need reject the
> inspiration of faith in a high destiny for the
> Jewish People. That faith should henceforth take
> the form of belief in the vocation of the Jewish
> People instead of its chosenness. By vocation we
> mean the dedication of a People to the task of
> giving to the world those universal values which
> its experiences have revealed to it. Consecration
> of the Jewish People to its vocation makes it a
> "holy People," but nothing in such a vocation
> implies that other Peoples cannot become just as
> holy.(37)

The uses of the term vocation provides a role for the

unique destiny of a people which avoids appeals to

supernaturalism. All peoples can play a special role in

history by sharing with other nations their unique beliefs

and experiences. The sharing of experiences makes human

fulfillment, salvation, possible by contributing new insights

to each person's and nation's quest to fulfill his potential.

This definition affirm's each civilization's uniqueness.

Finally, Kaplan addresses a pivotal question raised by

his use of vocation: If the goal of the individual is

personal salvation, and if all nations can make this

salvation possible, why should the individual belong to a

particular group or civilization? Kaplan responds to the

question as follows:

> We identify ourselves with a historic group to
> satisfy two needs of our nature: the need of
> belonging, and the need of orientation. The need
> of belonging is the need to feel ourselves part of
> a People that is dedicated to the consecration of
> life and that seeks to help us achieve, through
> participation in its life, our own self-fulfillment
> as human beings. The need of orientation is the
> need to achieve an intelligent understanding of our
> place in relation to nature and to society. To
> supply that orientation is one of the functions of
> a religious tradition.(38)

In this passage Kaplan suggests that one needs to

participate in a religious heritage in order to achieve

fulfillment. A person alone cannot gain the insight to

fulfill his/her potential. Additionally, Kaplan acknowledges

that one cannot rationally prove that a particular group

needs to continue in existence. He says:

> The reason for wishing to have the Jews remain a
> permanently identifiable group is not to be found
> in any universal principle. It is as ultimate a
> matter of feeling as the will to live.(39)

In this way one cannot prove that Jews need to exist or that

one as such needs to belong to the Jewish people, but as a

Jew one feels the reality of Judaism and therefore opts for

the civilization. Kaplan stresses the importance of

naturalism and universalism while still allowing for Jewish

particularity.

Critique

The last part of this section will present a critique of
Kaplan's work. Before beginning this analysis it is
important to note that the preceding discussion presented
only a portion of Kaplan's work and thought. Kaplan's work
covered many areas of modern Jewish thought and this
presentation necessarily limited itself to those areas most
relevant to a course in theology. The critique will examine
Kaplan's work in terms of empirical validity, internal
consistency, and pragmatic value.

I found Kaplan's work most wanting in the area of
empirical validity. Kaplan presented his interpretation of
Judaism as an alternative to supernaturalism. One of
Kaplan's primary reasons for developing his system was that
modern people can no longer prove the existence of a
supernatural God or believe in this type of God based on our
scientific view of the world. In part I agree with Kaplan.
We cannot prove that a supernatural God exists. However, I
do not think Kaplan's system is in fact any more reliable
empirically. Kaplan believes in God as the Force that makes
for salvation. He says that once our basic survival needs
are provided for we still seek a higher level of
fulfillment.(40) He believes that at this level people seek
to improve themselves and create moral order in the world.
On a personal level I can accept this statement, but on an
empirical level this does not always fit with reality, not
all people want to improve themselves, and there is no

empirical reason to call this striving God, and not simply human nature. On this level Kaplan tries to formulate a theory to fit the reality of the world, his theory does fit reality, but in the end one must accept it on faith, and not on a purely rational level, as Kaplan suggests.

Second, in terms of internal consistency, I believe Kaplan did an excellent job in the presentation of his method for Judaism. He formulated his idea of God as the Power that makes for salvation and he applied this idea consistently to each main rubric of theology. Prayer, chosenness, and theodicy, all took on new definitions based on Kaplan's idea of God. Kaplan's work was also exceptional because he went to great lengths to provide answers to possible questions raised by his work. This shows both intellectual integrity and sensitivity to his audience.

Finally, I felt split when evaluating the pragmatic value of Kaplan's work. On the positive side I appreciated his honesty and his realism. In his discussion of theodicy, he said both that evil is real and that there is no satisfactory answer for evil. On a pragmatic level I believe this type of honesty is valuable and is better than trying to present an apology for God. On the negative side while Kaplan's work was comprehensive and honest I felt I wanted more. Kaplan does not provide a personal God as "other." For him a personal God exists only to the extent that one internalizes one's values and lives with faith in the order of the universe. Personally, I want more from God, I want a

sense that even if God does not act, God cares.

Pragmatically, my demand of God also has problems, but I look

for a more personal vision of the Divine.

NOTES

(1) Mordecai Kaplan, <u>Judaism Without Supernaturalism</u>, pp. 21 - 24.

(2) Mordecai Kaplan, <u>The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish Religion</u>, pp. 50-51.

(3) Kaplan, <u>Judaism</u>, op. cit., p. 24.

(4) Mordecai Kaplan, <u>Questions Jews Ask: Reconstructionist Answers</u>, pp. 83-85.

(5) Kaplan, <u>Meaning</u>, op. cit., p. 53.

(6) Ibid., pp. 53-54

(7) Ibid., p. 3.

(8) Ibid., p. 4.

(9) Ibid., p. 6.

(10) Ibid., Chapter 2.

(11) Kaplan, <u>Questions</u>, pp. 12-13.

(12) Ibid., p. 13.

(13) Ibid., pp. 154-155.

(14) Ibid., pp. 105-106.

(15) Kaplan, <u>Judaism</u>, op. cit., Chapter 3.

(16) Kaplan, <u>Meaning</u>, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

(17) Kaplan, <u>Questions</u>, op. cit., p. 241.

(18) Ibid., pp. 117-118.

(19) Kaplan, <u>Meaning</u>, p. 67.

(20) Ibid., p. 75.

(21) Ibid., p. 80.

(22) Kaplan, <u>Questions</u>, op. cit., p. 127.

(23) Kaplan, _Meaning_, op. cit., p. 67.

(24) Ibid., p. 75.

(25) Kaplan, _Questions_, p. 119.

(26) Ibid., pp. 180-181.

(27) Kaplan, _Judaism_, op. cit., p. 38.

(28) Ibid., pp. 41-44.

(29) Ibid., p. 38.

(30) Ibid., p. 49.

(31) Ibid., p. 49.

(32) Ibid., p. 49-50.

(33) Ibid., p. 50.

(34) Kaplan, _Meaning_, op. cit., pp. 95-96.

(35) Kaplan, _Questions_, op. cit., p. 231.

(36) Kaplan, _Meaning_, op. cit., p. 94.

(37) Kaplan, _Questions_, op. cit., p. 211.

(38) Ibid., p. 16.

(39) Kaplan, _Judaism_, op. cit., p. 105.

(40) Kaplan, _Questions_, op. cit., pp. 83-85.

Appendix III C

Eugene Borowitz

Introduction

Eugene Borowitz represents an interpretation of Judaism called "covenant theology." Borowitz developed his interpretation of Judaism as an outgrowth of the work of previous thinkers. His writing examines the strengths and weaknesses of previous thinkers, and the pragmatic responses of world Jewry to historical trends and events. His goal is to develop an interpretation of Judaism which preserves the liberal belief in autonomy, but also uses faith in God as a means of arbitration for practice and ethics. This analysis will discuss six major areas of Borowitz's work. These include: revelation and God, Jewish practice, prayer, chosenness, theodicy, and salvation.

Revelation: God and Covenant

Borowitz's discussion of revelation provides the foundation for the rest of his interpretation of Judaism. In this discussion he separates himself from Orthodoxy which demands adherence to a community standard, and from those liberal modern interpretations of Judaism which substitute various modern ideologies, instead of Judaism itself as their guiding principle for belief and practice. Borowitz introduces the theory "covenant theology" to compensate for the problems he sees in Orthodoxy and some varieties of

liberalism. This theology maintains autonomy while preserving Judaism as its fundamental guiding principle. This section will discuss Borowitz's belief in autonomy, his problems with liberal theologies, and his interpretation of covenant theology.

Borowitz believes that autonomy represents the "hallmark" of liberal Judaism. In his understanding of Judaism, Orthodoxy derives its authority from the Torah and halacha which were given to the Jewish people by God on Mount Sinai. In a discussion of Shavuot and the giving of the Torah he says:

> Though I cannot commemorate the giving of the Torah in the objective sense that traditional Judaism understood it, I celebrate the establishment and the continual re-establishment of the relationship between God and Israel. I rejoice in <u>kiyum brit</u>, the inauguration of the full Covenant with the Israelite people rather than <u>matan torah</u>, the giving of the body of law and instruction by which it was to be lived.

Borowitz rejects the idea that halacha should set the limits of Judaism and Jewish action. He maintains that liberal Jews reject halachic authority and choose autonomy for three primary reasons. He summarizes liberal reasoning in this way:

> If the liberal affirmation of autonomy is so fundamental a break with rabbinic belief, why do Jews determined to reclaim the Jewish ground of their existence insist upon it? Three general responses have been propounded in the century and a half or so of liberal thought. First, the evident value of changing Jewish practice, despite traditional prohibitions, implies the legitimacy of an enlarged Jewish role for personal decision.

Second, autonomy is validated by the new, academic
way of understanding the development of Jewish
tradition and by facing up to the internal
contradictions this reveals. Both of these
approaches seem far more compelling to the modern
mind than the dogmatic assertion which creates two
radically different realms of human knowledge by
insisting that Torah is a qualitatively unique
instance of Divine revelation. Third, western
civilization seems correct in asserting that being
self-legislating, rather than other-determined,
constitutes a major sign of proper human
dignity.(2)

This passage highlights three reasons for Liberal

Judaism's break with Orthodoxy and halacha. First Liberal

Jews saw benefits in changing laws, and traditions. Changing

the structure of the service, and rejecting laws like the

agunah, provided a more meaningful religious life and

corrected injustices in the tradition. Second, based on

Biblical criticism and historical method, Jews saw

contradictions in the Bible, and no longer felt comfortable

basing their lives on a system claiming verbal revelation.

And finally, the model of free choice seemed more consonant

with human dignity than Orthodoxy which demanded adherence to

outside authority. This analysis shows the reasons Borowitz

and other liberal thinkers rejected Orthodoxy. They

substituted a belief in human autonomy for Divine verbal

revelation as their guiding principle. This idea forms a

corner stone for Borowitz's interpretation of revelation and

covenant theology.

Borowitz's second step involves a refutation of previous

liberal thought. This step appears consistently in his books

and articles. He believes that all previous thinkers, from

Hermann Cohen, to Leo Baeck, to Mordecai Kaplan and Martin

Buber substitute a principle from Western civilization in

place of Judaism as the basis for their interpretation of

Jewish belief.   In the article, "Covenant Theology -- Another

Look," in Worldview, Borowitz in turn refutes each of these

thinkers.   He believes that each thinker emphasizes either a

universalism which in the long run obviates Judaism, or a

particularism which only comes from people and cannot

command.   He says:

> We existentialists could not be satisfied with a
> theory which made the Jewish people and Jewish
> practice only options, though useful ones.   To us,
> our Jewishness was a primary affirmation.(3)

In other words, when Cohen discusses God as a universal

idea, or when Kaplan talks about the Jews as only one people

in humanity, or when Buber advocates an I-Thou relationship

equally for all people, Judaism looses its special warrant.

Borowitz believes these thinkers are substituting belief in a

variety of universalism for belief in Judaism.

Additionally, Borowitz believes that the failure of

universalism to prevent the Holocaust, and to offer guidance

in modern society leads to rejection of interpretations of

Judaism based on universalism.   He describes the failure of

universalism in these words:

> Our corporate existence has suffered even more from
> the collapse of almost all the old rationalistic
> and social controls on our autonomy.   We have
> little confidence in human reason; cults promising
> salvation burgeon and experiential groups offering
> fulfillment multiply.   Rationality tends to be

reduced to being logical rather than mandating a
qualitative ethics.(4)

In this step Borowitz highlights the failure of much of
previous liberal thought because it places its trust
primarily on universalism and rationality. Faith in these
beliefs alone has failed to create an ethical society and
provides no basis for Judaism as a religion distinct from
other faiths. On both rational and existential levels
Borowitz wants more.

The final step in Borowitz's discussion of revelation
resolves the dilemmas created by this analysis. In this step
Borowitz affirms autonomy as the other liberals, but
additionally gives a "Jewish" guiding principle for
establishing practice and ethics. In its simplest form
Borowitz suggests that in addition to the individual Jew's
contemporary experience of God, the Jew also shares in a
corporate Jewish revealed experience. He believes the Exodus
and Sinai gave the Jewish people a corporate experience with
God. Therefore, the individual Jew lives in a dynamic
religious tension. The individual must balance his/her
interpretation of tradition and experience of God, with the
demands of the Jewish people's Divine encounter. In this
formulation the individual no longer uses reason alone to
interpret Judaism, but the Jewish heritage receives an equal
voice. Borowitz expresses this conceptualization as follows:

> Such a Jew is a quite particular sort of man. So
> are all men, none of whom can live outside the
> finitudes of history. Yet as one of the covenant

people his style of existence aims at universalism, messianically achieved, and is founded on autonomy called into being by a God who commands him to live out their relationship but does not deprive him of his freedom in responding. He knows autonomy is basic to living for his people teaches him its significance through an embracing community style of individualistic existence and strengthens him in its pursuit by its concern for his proper response to his freedom in covenant. So even as he comes to a life of autonomy via God and the people of Israel, so he fulfills it not merely in terms of what is law for his private good alone but what is an appropriate act for a member of a covenant people serving its God. Torah is still subordinated to the God-Israel relationship as in all non-orthodoxies. It is not thereby reduced to ethics, folkways or a response to a purely personal situation. In this formulation, Israel is not merely a historical or social category but an existential one. So Torah is kept from becoming an individualistic matter, tending to communal anarchy. Rather by linking the individual situation indissolubly with that of the people Israel as God's covenant folk, a new foundation for corporate, yet individualistically centered patterns of behavior become possible.(5)

In this passage Borowitz affirms the type of individual religious encounter which Buber describes.(6) The individual Jew determines his or her relationship to reality through an encounter with God. But additionally Borowitz suggests the Jew also participates in a corporate Jewish encounter with God. This encounter gives meaning to Jewish particularity, and provides the individual with a Jewish as opposed to a universal filter with which to view the world. Borowitz indicates the nature of this corporate encounter by comparing Sinai with the Six Day War. He says:

Jewish hope, moreover, is linked to what God does in historic time. If the Jews find themselves in a house of bondage, they await God's saving action here and now. . .

That Monday afternoon when the war began and no
news of what was taking place came through, there
was black anxiety throughout the Jewish world. The

question was not military, who would win. It was
theological. Would God abandon the people of
Israel again and allow the citizens of the State of
Israel to be slaughtered by Arab armies?. . .

Then came the victory, clean, sharp, and decisive.
. . They knew all the technical reasons for the
Israeli success but they also knew these did not
explain what had taken place. Without soldiers and
generals, without equipment and training nothing
could have happened. What happened, however, was
more than they alone could do, and so Jews
naturally and necessarily gave thanks to Him who
works wonders and delivers his people from Egypt.
Jews saw him once again as he who remembers his
covenant.(7)

Borowitz does not believe that the Six Day War and

Israel's victory proves God exists. Instead, the Jewish

experience during these days in June, gave people an

existential experience of how God can work in the world in an

age of disbelief, and gave people an experience with which to

renew their hope. The Six Day War also taught the Jews about

living as a covenant people. Everyone felt touched by this

experience. It illustrates how Jews everywhere actually live

as a collective, a community bound to one another.

For Eugene Borowitz "covenant theology" means that the

belief in a Jewish communal encounter with God replaces

reason as the foundation for Jewish living. Previous liberal

thinkers constructed their interpretations of Judaism based

on a belief in reason and/or universal experience. Borowitz

accepted the value these thinkers placed on autonomy and the

individual, but added a collective Jewish encounter with God,

to form a dynamic interpretation of Judaism. This theory

provides the foundation from which the rest of Borowitz's

thought evolves. (As with the other thinkers critique of

Borowitz will be reserved until after the full presentation

of his system).

Jewish Practice

Borowitz discusses Jewish practices on both experiential

and theoretical levels. The theoretical discussion comes as

an extension of Borowitz's view of revelation. In "Toward a

Theology of Reform Jewish Practice," Borowitz offered four

criteria by which a Reform Jew can decide which practices and

actions to include in his life. These guidelines include:

knowledge of God, relationship to the Jewish covenant,

creativity, and responsibility. Through the application of

these criteria a Reform Jew can establish which practices are

most appropriate for his or her life.

In greater detail, Borowitz suggests knowledge of God

means that a person using reason, conscience, or an encounter

with the Divine decides what actions God requires from

him/her to lead an ethical religious life.(8) Next, as a

check against anarchy the person balances his/her inspiration

against the covenant. The person weighs his/her action in

terms of the Jewish community and heritage.(9) Both of these

criteria come directly from Borowitz's interpretation of

revelation as discussed above. These are the two "dynamic"

elements in this discussion. In terms of creativity Borowitz

says, "The Jew standing in the present moment bears a responsibility to create new forms appropriate to his present faith."(10) The Jew needs to create new rituals for current needs. Finally, by responsibility Borowitz refers to the goal of Reform Jewish practice; he says, "The Reform Jew is not merely indulging in casual recreation or determining proper etiquette. He is searching for the means to a goal, a significant goal, the Kingdom of God."(11) As a final check the Reform Jew judges his/her decision about practice and action by the final criteria, the universal mission of the Jews, the covenant people. These four criteria give the Reform Jew a basis by which to decide which practices to keep and which to change from the heritage of the covenant community. They balance autonomy with responsibility to the covenant.

In his most recent work, Liberal Judaism, Borowitz offers an experiential explanation for observance. He maintains his belief about autonomy while at the same time stressing a positive role for ritual in Reform Judaism. He makes four main points about Reform Judaism's relationship with ritual. First, he notes that the early reformers rejected ritual. They stressed rationality over the need for "ceremonial" observance. They discarded many Jewish ritual practices and instead focused on teaching people to live an ethical life.(12)

Second, Borowitz builds a case for ritual observance based on human needs and experience. He says,

"Anthropologists assure us that no human community anywhere has lived without ceremony."(13)   Borowitz uses the examples of birthday cakes and the United States Bicentennial as secular rituals which demonstrate that in fact rituals form an integral part of people's lives.   The disappointment most people feel if their birthday passes unnoticed attests to the human need for ceremony and celebration.

Borowitz's case for rituals in general paves the way for Jewish rituals in particular.   He believes Jewish rituals perform three important functions.   First, religion, and religious rituals, are important because, "It seeks to turn much of everyday life into special moments."(14)   Rituals elevate people beyond the common place and help teach them about the specialness of life.   Second, rituals tie the individual to the Jewish people.   Borowitz says, "These rites and the many others which punctuate our daily lives immediately connect us with the Jewish people."(15)   By performing Jewish rituals the person feels closer to the covenant community.   And finally, rituals help people draw closer to God.   Borowitz says, "By words, acts, tunes, attitudes, silences, perhaps with the use of special or ordinary artifacts, we human beings pause and reach out to God."(16)   For Borowitz rituals perform the task of making Jews aware of God and God's role in the world on a regular basis.   On this level Borowitz strongly advocates ritual observance as a way to sanctify life, draw closer to the Jewish people, and feel aware of God.   Acts touch people in

ways which the intellect alone cannot reach.

As a last point Borowitz affirms individual choice regarding ritual observance. He makes a case for the importance of ritual and suggests each Reform Jew needs to decide for him/herself which rituals bring the most sanctity to life. He affirms the plurality of Reform practice as follows:

> Liberal Judaism will therefore always have a
> variety of practice among individuals and some
> difficulty in reaching community agreement for
> joint observance. From the liberal perspective,
> such pluralism is not only healthy but desireable;
> from it, particularly from the creative energy it
> releases, arise the new forms which keep Judaism
> alive.(17)

In summary Borowitz balances affective needs, with autonomy, with a commitment to the Jewish people in his discussion of ritual. People need rituals as affective or spiritual reminders of the specialness of life and of their relationship with God. They reach deeper levels than rationality alone. However, based on the idea that Judaism and Jewish rituals derive from human beings in quest for God, each individual has a right and responsibility to shape his/her own rituals. Each person possesses autonomy. Finally, the individual must balance this autonomy with a respect and responsibility to the Jewish people. Judaism needs creativity and change, but the individual needs to act responsibly in relation to the covenant between God and the entire Jewish people.

Prayer

Borowitz approaches the topic of prayer from the perspective of autonomy as described above. The basic question he addresses can be stated as: "If we are autonomous individuals why do we need fixed forms of worship?" Borowitz states the problem in these words:

> Wherever we turn in human relations, we shall not escape this dilemma: people need regularity but prefer what is fresh. Without a combination of the two we are doomed to boredom or flightiness. We cannot put the proper balance between them into a rule for that would end spontaneity. The best we can do then is to analyze both values so as to see how we might keep them in proper tension in our lives.(18)

Borowitz addresses both of these levels, the fixed, and the spontaneous, in his discussion of prayer. Borowitz gives two main reasons for fixed prayer. The first relates to his discussion of God. He says:

> The rabbis make rules for prayer because they believe it must be an ongoing ingredient of Jewish life: They have a simple reason for requiring regularity: God remains God and is not, so to speak, merely occasionally God. Though we may feel we do not need God or we can get along without God, we should discipline ourselves to keep our relationship with God strong.(19)

In this passage Borowitz supports regular prayer as a sign of service to God, and as a means for enabling the individual to feel close, and avoid feeling estranged, from God. This response functions on the human level; Why do people need prayer? Not on a philosophical plane.

Borowitz offers allegiance to the community as a second reason for fixed prayer. He says:

> Jewish prayer must begin with the individual Jewish soul but it cannot end there for we share our people's corporate, historic relationship with God. Classic Jewish worship speaks for this spiritual community, gathered to express and renew the Covenant. . . .
>
> We must have regularity in Jewish prayer, then, for pragmatic reason, the Jewish people needs to know when to gather and what to do together.(20)

In this sense Borowitz supports fixed forms of worship as a means of remembering the covenantal relationship with God, as a pragmatic tool for preserving the community.

Borowitz gives traditional and contemporary responses for the need for spontaneity in prayer. Traditionally Borowitz discusses personal prayer and kavanah as means of bringing spontenaity to fixed worship. He notes:

> Traditional Judaism also provided much place for private prayer. The Psalms were always treated as a guide to personal meditation. Beyond that what the individual Jews wanted to do about solitary worship was largely left to them and the records indicate that Judaism had a lively history of private spirituality.(21)

In addition to this level of private prayer Borowitz also suggests that kavanah, personal intention, adds spontaneity to the fixed prayers. He says, "The rabbis' desire that all commandments be done with kavanah, proper intention, applies with special force to prayer."(22) He believes that praying with "proper intention" gives new life to the fixed forms with each reading of the prayers.

Borowitz also addresses <u>kavanah</u> on a contemporary level. In terms of the Reform movement he says:

> The desire to involve the individual worshipper
> more actively strongly motivated the modernization
> of Judaism after the Emancipation. For people
> whose education, activities, and aesthetic values
> were now largely determined by general society, the
> traditional service no longer was evocative and
> fulfilling. So the early liberals reworked its
> forms to make it culturally effective.(23)

In this passage, while Borowitz has supported fixed prayer in traditional Judaism, he recognizes the need to modernize prayers so they continue to reach the hearts of modern worshippers. He sees a need to update prayers to give them modern meaning.

In summary, Borowitz balances the needs of <u>keva</u> and <u>kavanah</u> in his discussion of prayer. He supports fixed prayer in general as a way of maintaining a relationship with God, and as a form of commitment to the Jewish community. Additionally, he sees a need for spontaneity in prayer. He supports changes in prayer to inspire the worshipper. This accounts for Reform's modernization of prayers. He states these views concisely at the end of his discussion when he says:

> We cannot escape our human dilemma. We need rules
> to guide and spur us but we cannot fully be human
> unless our free spirits animate our relationships.
> Jews also know that their needs as individuals must
> be balanced by their relationship with God as part
> of the Jewish people. In prayer as in all the
> fixed structures of our religion, <u>keva</u>, regularity,
> rightly makes its claim upon us as does <u>kavanah</u>,
> inner devotion. We create our liberal Jewish way
> of life out of a judicious balance of the two.(24)

In conclusion, this passage highlights Borowitz's

discussion of prayer. It talks about human needs for fixed

actions and for creativity. On both sides of this dilemma

Borowitz advocates more action; more commitment and prayer.

This discussion focused on the human experience of prayer.

It did not address the nature of divine warrant for prayer,

or the answer if any God gives to prayer. These questions

seem peripheral to the central thrust of Borowitz

presentation. He advocates Jewish commitment, and avoids the

more theological/philosophical aspects of prayer.

Chosenness

Borowitz's interpretation of chosenness evolves as a

result of his view of revelation. As opposed to direct

verbal revelation of the Torah at Sinai, and Jewish election

by God to fulfill the precepts of the Torah and bring

redemption, Borowitz believes in a non-verbal revelatory

experience through which the Jews established a covenantal

relationship with God. He says:

> For the Orthodox Jew, the law and the proper means
> of its interpretation are God-given. For the
> non-Orthodox Jew the law is created by the people
> of Israel as a result of standing in Covenant with
> God. Jewish law then is essentially a human
> invention.(25)

In this light, Borowitz replaces the term "chosenness"

with the term "Covenant." Instead of an experience of

selection or election, the Jewish people sensed God, and

formed a relationship, a "brit," with the Divine. Borowitz discusses this new definition of revelation and its ramifications for "chosenness," in terms of Jewish practice and Jewish uniqueness.

Borowitz discusses the implications of this definition of revelation and chosenness for Jewish practice as follows:

> This non-orthodox sense of Covenant carries with it
> an emphasis on human creativity. Each generation
> has the responsibility to see to it that the acts
> through which the Covenant relationship is lived
> are appropriate to that generation's situation.
> This understanding of Covenant provides for a freer
> possibility of change and development than did
> traditional Judaism. In this construction, then,
> people play a self-determining, autonomous role;
> they are their own lawmakers. But since they carry
> out this function in relation to God, as part of
> the Household of Israel in continuation of the
> historic Covenant of the Jews, their creativity is
> conditioned by God's reality and Jewish community
> and tradition.(26)

This passage addresses the internal dimensions of chosenness. With Borowitz's definition of revelation and Covenant the Jew is no longer chosen to follow a particular set of laws. Instead, the Jew accepts a responsibility to create appropriate practices for each age and to balance this creativity against commitment to God and the Jewish people.

Uniqueness corresponds to the external dimension of chosenness. The Jew's relationship with other people. Borowitz addresses this aspect of chosenness as follows:

> What then happens to the notion of uniqueness so
> closely associated with chosenness? Is the People
> of Israel only another of the many peoples who have
> searched for and found God and is their Covenant
> only historically different from what others have

expressed in their own ethnic way? These questions
properly note that, in describing the human
activity which led to the People of Israel's
Covenant, nothing was said which could not be said
of all peoples. But if the God of Israel is indeed
the one and only God of the Universe, then
religions with another sort of God -- though
monotheistic -- cannot be considered its
substantive equal. Moreover, not every resulting
religious way of life can be said to express a
living relationship with God and be as appropriate
to God's purposes in history as is the People of
Israel's corporate life in Covenant. Obviously the
claim for Jewish uniqueness will be modified here
depending on how positive an appreciation of the
achievements of specific religions one feels one
can make. Yet, even as Judaism here would be
freshly open to the religious truth which the
gentiles share, it would most likely be based on
the fundamental appreciation that the Covenant
between God and the People of Israel contains a
spiritual insight unmatched elsewhere. Moreover,
since personal relationships are too richly
significant to be exhausted by rational
description, but are best seen in the lives people
live as a result of having them, the uniqueness of
the Covenant will be better embodied in the way the
People of Israel tries to conduct itself in history
(in individual lives and families and communities)
than in any ideas or concepts of its teachers.(27)

Borowitz makes two important points in this passage.

First, he clearly states that Judaism is unique and can be

seen as superior to other religions. If one believes in the

Covenant, then it will serve as a filter with which to view

other religions. Jews can accept the insights of other

religions, but in the end they use Judaism and the Covenant

as a means to assess the value and truth of other faiths.

Second, Borowitz makes the point that Jewish actions,

not words or teachings represent the true mark of the

authenticity of Judaism's Covenant. It is how we treat other

people, Jews and non-Jews, which attests to the truth of the

covenant.

In conclusion, Borowitz focuses on Covenant, a mutual relationship with God, and not chosenness, election by the Divine. He says that internally this allows for more flexibility of interpretation; and externally preserves Jewish uniqueness. Borowitz ends his discussion with this definition of uniqueness and does not focus on Mission.

Theodicy

Borowitz devotes relatively little time to discussing theodicy in his works. A concise summary of his beliefs about God and the problem of evil appears in these words from Choices in Modern Jewish Thought:

> The notion of relationship provides an approach to
> living with the problem of evil and, specifically,
> the Holocaust. Relationships exists not only when
> there is immediate confirmation of them but also in
> its absence. To trust means that the relationship
> is considered still real though no evidence is
> immediately available. One also believes such
> confirmation will be forthcoming. The practice of
> Judaism, the life of Torah, is an effort to build a
> strong relationship with God. Within the context
> of such closeness, Jews have largely been able to
> live with the evils in the world.(28)

Implications concerning natural and human evil can be drawn from this passage and from Borowitz's belief in autonomy. Natural evil exists, but remains unexplained. In Liberal Judaism, Borowitz analyzes many Jewish responses to evil and concludes:

> That leaves us in a most difficult situation, the
> familiar one of Jewish tradition. The evil is real

and God is good. If there is ultimate meaning in
the universe then it must mean, somehow, that God
is the embracing power of all that is including
evil.(29)

For Borowitz natural evil exists. However, if one
believes in a relationship with God, one can accept the evil
in the hope that over time good may come and faith will be
renewed. Even when there is no sign of the relationship, the
Covenant still exists.

This definition for natural evil also applies, with the
addition of human freedom, to moral evil. Borowitz
predicates his interpretation of Judaism on a revelation
which allows for freedom and autonomy. God becomes known to
the Jewish people, and they create forms of worship and
service. With the freedom to serve God comes the freedom to
reject God and do evil. For Borowitz the Holocaust and other
evil committed between people comes as a result of human, not
Divine action. He stresses this point in Liberal Judaism,
when he cites the work of both Heschel and Baeck as responses
to the Holocaust. For both of these thinkers the Holocaust
happened as a result of human action, and, is not, "An
indictment of God but of humankind."(30)

In summary, Borowitz devotes little time to the
discussion of theodicy. He believes in relationship with God
and in autonomy. Relationship with God provides hope
although there is evil and God seems distant. Human freedom
explains how God can be good while people commit evil
actions. This offers a partial response to the dilemma of

theodicy, however, Borowitz leaves unanswered the question:
Will people who do evil ultimately bear responsibility for
their actions? For Borowitz the righteous at times suffer in
order to preserve human freedom.

Salvation

Borowitz uses the ideas of relationship with God, and
God as the ultimate power to form the basis of his
interpretation of salvation and life after death. He notes
the problems many people have with this idea: it is
difficult to talk about death, and our scientific minds
suggest that when we die life ends. But, based on reports of
people who have been revived when they appeared dead(31)
(Lazarus syndrone), and his view of God, Borowitz says:

> Naturalism hoped to find what is truly real by
> reducing everything to its smallest physical
> constituent. The other view, mine, and I think
> that of Jewish tradition, sees reality most clearly
> in the most complex thing we know, a person. The
> one perspective breaks everything down to
> impersonal energy. The other says we see ultimate
> reality more clearly as we build upward from human
> nature to that which transcends and fulfills it.
> If God is the most real "thing" in the universe,
> then we may hope that, as we make our lives ever
> more closely correspond to it, we may personally
> share God's eternity despite our death. And
> knowing ourselves to be more fully human through
> our individuality, we trust that the God who is one
> will preserve our oneness and grant us personal
> survival after death.(32)

Borowitz adds two additional points which clarify his
view. First, "Despite Marx, my desire for life after death
will not desensitize me to social evil but actually will

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intensify my struggles in this world."(33) Since he feels

tied to God's purpose through the covenant relationship and

personal experience he will not reject this world for a world

to come. And second he says, "I am, however, inclined to

think that my hope is better spoken of as resurrection rather

than immortality for I do not know myself as a soul without a

body but only as a psychosomatic soul."(34) Borowitz

hesitates, but suggests that after-life, if it exists, will

resemble life in this world. He knows of himself as a body

with a soul, and suggests that an afterlife will be based on

what is in some way a part of previous experience. It is

important to note that Borowitz's view of resurrection

strongly resembles Orthodoxy. He does not clarify in detail

the implications of a belief in resurrection for modern

Reform Judaism.

In summary, Borowitz bases his view on life after death

on Jewish tradition, and his sense of God. He experiences

God as real, and the most ultimate reality. Based on this

perception, he believes death will preserve a relationship

with God as the central force in the universe. This

relationship will preserve the integrity of the individual

because integrity and autonomy are primary ingredients of

life in this world. Also resurrection will probably be in

the form of an afterlife because it parallels the way in

which we know ourselves in this life. This view of life

after death is strongly based on Borowitz's experiential view

of God and God's relationship with the world.

Critique

This section presented an overview of Eugene Borowitz's work and thought. It summarized his basic schema, "Covenant theology," and applied this schema to a variety of theological areas. The remainder of this section presents a critique of Borowitz's work. It makes an opening general comment, and then judges his work by the criteria of empirical validity, consistency, and pragmatic value.

In general, my main criticism of Borowitz's work lies in the fact that he spends a disproportionate amount of time analyzing the work of other thinkers, and devotes almost no time to presenting his own position, as a result I understand the origins of Borowitz's thought, but the implications of his system need further clarification. In his two most recent works, Borowitz devotes only two chapters to his own thought in <u>Choices in Modern Jewish Thought</u>, and in <u>Liberal Judaism</u> he relies more on the work of Cohen, Baeck, Heschel, Buber, and Kaplan, than on his own thought. This approach presents two problems. First, in other places Borowitz rejects the thought of these writers as placing universalism above Judaism. He says:

> Let me be blunt. Our theologians in the past
> century have acted as if they knew a truth superior
> to Judaism. But I do not know a body of knowledge
> or a system of understanding God and man and
> history superior to Judaism. I do not have a faith
> more basic to my existence than my Judaism.(35)

In this passage Borowitz suggests that his system corrects

the excesses of past liberal thinkers. However, Borowitz's

work is incomplete when he rejects their work and then does

not present a detailed account of his own thought.

Second, the lack of detailed explanation results in many

unanswered questions in Borowitz's work. Borowitz relies on

an individual religious encounter similar to Buber's

"I-Thou," for the person to learn of God and God's will.

However, he does not deal with the phenomenology of this

experience. He begins to address this on the corporate level

with his comparison between Sinai and the Six Day War;

however, this still leaves the individual experience

unexplained. Similarly, this lack of explanation leaves

other questions unanswered. One can assume that Borowitz

believes in a transcendent and immanent God because he says

people have a relationship with God, and he suggests that

some form of revelation occurs for people to learn God's

will? Borowitz never gives a full account of God's nature or

power in his system of belief. Also, in the discussion of

prayer, Borowitz describes why we need prayer, but does not

address the question of the efficacy of Jewish prayer. This

lack of explanation detracts from the overall value of

Borowitz system.

Empirically, it is difficult to prove the validity of

Borowitz's interpretation of Judaism. Borowitz bases his

theology for Jewish practice on knowledge of God and on

autonomy. The person asks, "What would God want me to

do?"(36) In Borowitz's interpretation of Judaism it is

impossible to get a reliable answer to this question. Each person determines the answer for him or herself. As a result the person may only be hallucinating or may misinterpret God and there is no check on this experience. There is no way to determine an inauthentic from an authentic encounter with God. Borowitz suggests additional criteria to arrive at Jewish practice, but these criteria, while they provide a check and balance, do not alleviate the subjectivity of the system. This is a problem inherent in an experiential interpretation of Judaism.

Internal consistency is the second criteria. Overall, I believe, once one accepts Borowitz's basic premise he presents and applies his system consistently. Borowitz believes in God and sees God as the ultimate force in the world. For Borowitz people know God and God gives people freedom. In this light, Borowitz's interpretations of revelation, theodicy, and salvation, are all examples of the consistent application of his beliefs.

Borowitz believes people know God, but that God does not communicate explicit verbal content in revelation. Therefore when Borowitz sees Judaism as peoples' response to God, this comes as a consistent application of his beliefs. If we do not receive the Torah directly then Judaism represents our striving for God, not divine legislation.

In his discussion of theodicy Borowitz believes that God maintains the relationship with humanity even when there is evil and we feel God has deserted us. In this way natural

evil comes not as punishment, but as a consequence of the nature of God's creation. Human evil comes from people abusing the freedom to choose given by God. On a pragmatic level I feel disheartened by these responses; I, on a personal level would like a solution to the problem of evil. However, they appear to be consistent within the general framework of Borowitz's thought. Borowitz believes in God's relationship with the Jewish people, and with humankind, he maintains faith in this relationship even in the face of evil. He consistently holds to his basic trust in God.

Salvation provides a final example of Borowitz's consistency. Again, Borowitz trusts in God, and uses this trust to form his belief about life after death. Since God is the most "real" thing in the world, and since God prizes autonomy, God must preserve our relationship with the Divine and our autonomy after death; therefore, there must be some form of afterlife. I do not believe this idea, again, is empirically verifiable, but it shows that Borowitz upholds his beliefs in God and autonomy, and that he is willing to apply them consistently to speculation about the world to come.

Finally, I find Borowitz's system tremendously rich in the area of pragmatic value. Borowitz addresses a critical problem in previous Liberal thought. Why do we need Judaism, if we use universalism in one of its forms to interpret our religious heritage. Borowitz offers a valuable insight when he suggests that all previous thinkers in one way or another

placed universalism over Judaism. Borowitz addresses this problem with the suggestion that in addition to the individual's encounter with God, the people also experienced a collective encounter with the Divine. In this way in addition to individual decisions about Jewish belief and practice the individual also acts as part of the corporate Jewish people. In this way Judaism replaces universalism as a guiding principle. As I stated above, I believe that on an empirical level it is difficult to verify this system, but overall it answers the basic problem in Liberal thought: "Why Judaism?" Borowitz sees the problem of a tremendously wide range of "authentic" Jewish responses, but he affirms this diversity as part of God's overall intention by giving people autonomy.

In conclusion, while I wish Borowitz presented, and discussed in more detail the implications, of his thought, and while his interpretation of Judaism is difficult to accept empirically, I believe his work possesses tremendous value as a pragmatic response to the problems of the work of previous Reform thinkers.

NOTES

(1) Eugene Borowitz, How Can a Jew Speak of Faith Today?, p. 67.

(2) Eugene Borowitz, Choices in Modern Jewish Thought: A Partisan Guide, p. 245.

(3) Eugene Borowitz, "Covenant Theology -- Another Look," Worldview March, 1973, p. 22.

(4) Borowitz, Choices, op. cit., pp. 260-261.

(5) Eugene Borowitz, "The Problem of the Form of a Jewish Theology," HUCA, 1969 - 1970, vol. 40 - 41, pp. 406-407.

(6) Ibid., p.406.

(7) Borowitz, How Can a Jew, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

(8) Eugene Borowitz, "Toward A Theology of Reform Jewish Practice," CCAR Journal 1958-1960, pp. 27-28.

(9) Ibid., pp. 28-29.

(10) Ibid., p. 31.

(11) Ibid., p. 32.

(12) Eugene Borowitz, Liberal Judaism, pp. 410-411.

(13) Ibid., p. 412.

(14) Ibid., p. 415.

(15) Ibid., p. 416.

(16) Ibid., p. 417.

(17) Ibid., p. 423.

(18) Ibid., p. 428.

(19) Ibid., p. 431.

(20) Ibid., pp. 432-433.

(21) Ibid., p. 436.

(22) Ibid., p. 431.

(23) Ibid., p. 437.

(24) Ibid., p. 440.

(25) Eugene Borowitz, "The Chosen People Concept as it
Affects Life in the Diaspora," Journal of Ecumenical Studies,
Fall, 1975, vol. 12:4, p. 566.

(26) Ibid., p. 566.

(27) Ibid., pp. 546-568.

(28) Borowitz, Choices, op. cit., p. 284.

(29) Borowitz, Liberal Judaism, op. cit., p. 206.

(30) Ibid., p. 198.

(31) Ibid., p. 211.

(32) Ibid., p. 221.

(33) Ibid., p. 222.

(34) Ibid., p. 222.

(35) Eugene Borowitz, "Faith and Method in Modern Jewish
Theology," CCAR Yearbook, 1963, vol. 73, p. 224.

(36) Op. Cit., Borowitz, "Toward a Theology of Reform
Jewish Practice," p. 27.

Appendix III D

Eliezer Berkovits

Eliezer Berkovits demonstrates the position of
traditional or halachic Judaism among the four thinkers.
Berkovits sees himself as a representative of the views of
Yehuda Halevi in the modern era.(1) He gives a defense of
Judaism based on the experience of encountering God in
revelation, as opposed to a logical proof for the existence
of God based on philosophical reasoning. The prophets
encounter with God provides the starting point from which
Berkovits unfolds his interpretation of Judaism. This
encounter reveals God's concern for humanity, transcendence
in the world, hidden nature in history, and demands
concerning the law. This chapter will describe Berkovits'
interpretation of God and revelation and show its relation to
Berkovits ideas concerning prayer, theodicy, chosenness, and
the law.

God and Revelation: "The Encounter"

This section describes Berkovits' view of revelation and
of faith in God and Judaism for the modern person. At the
outset it is important to stress that, in the style of
Halevi, Berkovits believes religion and philosophy represent
two distinct disciplines. Philosophy can describe God, but

only religion actually testifies to God's existence. At the conclusion of his discussion of philosophy and religion Berkovits says:

> The finest theories about friendship are no substitute for a friend. Intellectual understanding does not constitute "fellowship" with the Supreme Being. Thinking about God philosophically or metaphysically is not encountering Him. But without this encounter there can be no Judaism; without it there is no religion.(2)

In this sense Berkovits believes in a "religious" encounter with God, as opposed to philosophical understanding or proof of God's reality. We believe in God because of experience, not because of deduction. Berkovits goes on to describe the prophetic encounter with God in these words:

> As we have already observed, the encounter is an actual experience in which all the sense of man participate, yet it is certainly no material vision of the deity which is revealed. There are signs, a voice, which convey with irresistible force knowledge of the Presence which is yet invisible. The knowledge is not derived, but is immediate. The Presence is "felt"; it envelops the whole of the human being. It communicates itself with such overpowering certainty that no doubting is possible for those whom it confronts.(3)

Berkovits believes that the prophets encountered God with their entire being. The encounter is of such a nature that by its power alone the prophet believes in God. Berkovits goes on to note a paradox involved in the encounter. How can God who is all powerful encounter a prophet without overwhelming and destroying him? Berkovits resolves this conflict with a further description of the

prophetic experience. In the prophetic encounter God hides part of the all-powerful Essence. This hiding protects the prophet from God's full power, but at the same time convinces the prophet of the reality of God's concern. Berkovits expresses this idea in these words:

> Obviously, not just any form of life sustained in the prostrate form of the prophet will allow the encounter to occur. It is not enough to endow him with a measure of life that may make of the prophet some new creation in the old external "garb." The spirit has to set Ezekiel on his feet, so that the prophet may again be himself. His own self must be returned to him, otherwise no encounter with Ezekiel is possible. But Ezekeil may retain his personal identity in the encounter, if God -- in revealing His presence -- protects the prophet against His own "consuming" essence. All protection, however, that shields the prophet hides God from him. God can only reveal Himself to man by hiding Himself in the very act of revelation. . . He reveals Himself that His concern for man may be known; He hides Himself in the very act of revelation, in order that the subject of His concern may not be consumed by the very knowledge "shown" to him. He reveals Himself as the "hiding" God that man may live in his sight.(4)

This passage focuses on the notion of freewill in relation to an all-powerful God. If God changes the prophet, making him a new person, in the encounter this destroys freewill. The prophet is then only God's agent. God must make the Divine Essence known while maintaining the integrity of the prophet. Berkovits says God does this by hiding a part of the Divine Essence in the process of revelation. In this way the prophet knows of the reality of God and God's concern, while at the same time retaining his own identity. It is important to note that within this type of experience

the prophet does not receive explicit verbal content. He is a man of God overwhelmed by the Divine, not a secretary transmitting God's record book. This fundamental notion of a "hiding God" appears through Berkovits' interpretation of Judaism.

Berkovits' description of the prophet's encounter with God leads to two questions. First, what does the prophet do after or between encounters? And second, how do Jews through the ages know God if they are not immediately involved in the prophet's experience? For both the prophet and the individual, faith based on the encounter with God provides an answer. In the following passage Berkovits describes how the encounter gives a person faith, and can serve as a beginning for those who have not personally experienced God:

> In the encounter man is "shown" not that God happens to care at one particular moment, but that He is a caring God. Therefore, even after the actual experience of the relationship has passed, the knowledge remains with man that God does not withdraw, that He does not abandon man, that the relationship of concern is not severed, even though it is no longer experienced. The knowledge follows logically from the encounter. But what is logic in the absence of the experience! Logically speaking, a caring God ought to care always, but alas! Generally we do not seem to be able to recognize His care and concern; most of the time God is silent or -- as if -- absent. Transcendental divine indifference seems to replace the short and extremely rare moments of the relationship in the encounter. It is here that faith has its place and function. Faith turns the theological consequences of the encounter into living reality. Through faith we know that even though God seems to be absent, yet He is ever present all the time. . .Through the power of faith we know, as if by actual experience, that His gaze is always upon us --- no matter where we turn -- we are forever in His presence.(5)

This passage answers both of the questions raised by
Berkovits' description of revelation. The prophet continues
to believe in God after the encounter, as a result of the
encounter's very nature. The encounter gives him faith in
God, and faith sustains the prophet with an awareness of
God's goodness manifest in the world. The individual
participates in the Jewish people primarily through the
vehicle of faith in the encounter; believing "as if" we had
the actual experience. For the Jew the encounter at Sinai
becomes a memory and a part of him. Sinai becomes more than
an event in the past, it is an actual event in the
consciousness of the Jew. It is with the internalization of
the encounter that the Jew begins to long for God, and sense
God's presence in the world and in history. Berkovits
expresses these ideas in this way:

> The awareness of the Divine Presence may not in
> itself be very conclusive; in itself such a sense
> may be completely subjective, a feeling to which
> nothing in reality corresponds. However, for him
> who starts out in his quest with the memory of the
> actual encounter, and the very real sense of
> estrangement from God which followed it, the
> awareness in faith of the Presence is like finding
> a lost treasure which is recognized by its familiar
> marks. In view of the original encounter, all
> faith is an act of recognition.(6)

In this passage Berkovits gives an interpretation of how
Jews interpret revelation and learn of God since Sinai. Not
all Jews encounter God. Those who do not share in the memory
of the encounter at Sinai. They believe in this "original"

encounter with God through faith. Based on their faith they
can then sense God's Presence in the world; they can know
this is God, and not a fantasy.

In summary, Berkovits' discussion of revelation, the
prophets encounter with God, introduces two concepts which
underpin the rest of his interpretation of Judaism. The
first is the notion of the "hiding God." In order for the
prophets to freely accept God, God must hide in the process
of revelation. If God's full glory were known the prophet
would feel overwhelmed to serve God and lose freewill. God
hides in order to express care and to preserve freewill for
humanity. Second, Berkovits talks about faith or the "as if"
experience of the individual Jew. Not all people participate
in an encounter with God. If they do not they internalize
the original encounter with God through faith in the
prophets' revelation, "as if" they experienced it at Sinai.
This gives people a prism with which to see God's presence in
the world and live as Jews.

Prayer: "An Illustration"

Berkovits' discussion of prayer echoes his conception of
revelation. Here he concerns himself, with a paradox of
prayer, a peak religious experience, and with practical
considerations. In effect this discussion illustrates how
Berkovits' interpretation of Judaism remains consistent in a
second theological area. This section will describe the
paradox of prayer, the peak prayer experience, and their

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implications for the individual.

Berkovits describes the paradox inherent in prayer in these words, "Pouring out one's heart before God, does one have an actual experience of the presence of God, does one actually behold God as one's vis-a-vis?"(7) In other words Berkovits asks: How can a person pray and express his/her deepest concerns, if the person does not know God is listening or will respond? Berkovits attempts to solve this dilemma by analyzing the nature of prayer, and the possibility of a Divine response.

Berkovits begins by describing the peak experience of prayer and how one can pray outside of this experience. He gives a picture of "true" prayer in these words:

> In the rare moments when the rarest among great
> religious personalities do have an acute experience
> of confronting the Divine Presence, all human needs
> disappear and all prayer has been fulfilled. After
> the experience, recalling it in memory, one may
> break forth in jubilation and thanksgiving; during
> the experience, however, wishless silence would
> seem to be the natural attitude. In prayer man
> searches for the Presence, yet one may search for
> it only by turning to the Presence. The more
> intense the experience of being forsaken by God,
> the more fervent the prayer for God's nearness; yet
> one can pray to Him because he is near.(8)

This passage shows that for Berkovits prayer is turning to God. In the ultimate prayer experience the person actually encounters the Divine. This experience gives the person a humbling sense of awe as it happens, and inspires the person in daily life once it concludes. However an underlying question still remains: How does a person pray

when he/she is not sure that God will respond and create a

peak prayer experience?

Berkovits answers the question posed by the individual

in prayer in these words:

> Prayer takes its origin from a loss of intimacy
> with God, from the actual experience of God's
> hidden face. How then can man in the midst of his
> experience that God is hiding Himself from him,
> that He is not present for him, that his "ways are
> hidden from the Eternal One," how can he step
> forward into the Presence and ask for relief from
> the crushing experience of non-Presence? There is
> only one way of doing it: notwithstanding the
> negative personal experience, to turn to God <u>as if</u>
> He were present and to pour out one's heart before
> Him for His "absence.". . .it is man's
> responsibility to set the truth always before him;
> to live all the days of his life and perform every
> one of his deeds with the awareness that it all
> takes place in the presence of God. Only because
> of that is prayer possible in Judaism.(9)

For Berkovits prayer is possible because the person acts

"as if" God were listening. This idea is based on the

concept of a "hiding God." As mentioned in the preceding

section, Berkovits believes God hides from humanity in order

to preserve freewill. God is continually present, but does

not manifestly act in the world because it would inhibit

people from freely choosing their own directions. In this

light, since it is possible to pray and encounter God,

although rare, the individual prays "as if" there was an

actual encounter. In this manner the individual acts

according to God's ways, and is always prepared to encounter

the Divine.

The "as if" response tells how people can pray, but leaves unanswered the question: Does God answer prayer? Berkovits' response to this question takes two forms. First he distinguishes between appropriate and inappropriate prayers. And second he tells how prayers are answered.

Berkovits discusses the category of "T'filat Shav," as inappropriate prayers. A "T'filat Shav" is an impossible prayer. This is a prayer for a miracle or a prayer to change an existing fact or circumstance. In this regard Berkovits says:

> We believe that it is in keeping with authentic
> Jewish teaching to say that praying for a miracle
> is T'filat Shav, a futile prayer. Not that God
> does not perform miracles, but miracles are not
> performed in response to prayer. A Jew prays for
> the possible, not for the impossible.(10)

Berkovits defined prayer as turning to God, and acting "as if" one were in the Divine Presence. If one asks for a miracle or for personal gain one is concentrating on the self and not on God. The distinction between appropriate and inappropriate prayers leads Berkovits to a discussion of the form of Jewish prayer and how it is answered by God.

Berkovits provides the following interpretation of Jewish prayer:

> A person who is about to drown and who is saved
> against all odds may well acknowledge his rescue as
> an answer to prayer. Such may be a visible divine
> response. The Jew, however, prays in
> acknowledgement of man's absolute dependence on
> God; he prays for understanding in the realization
> that all human understanding is from God; he prays
> for daily bread and daily health, knowing that

whatever his share may be, it is granted to him by
God. He asks for divine protection, because
without it he could not survive a single moment.
Asking for God's blessing in such a mood, he does
not look for spectacular answers to his prayers.
However, he is sure with the conviction of faith
that whatever he is and whatever he holds is due to
the fact that, at least some of his prayers are
being answered all the time.(11)

This passage expands on the theme of the "hiding God."
The Jew believes both that God is always present, and that
God does not act directly in the world. The Jew prays for
God's blessing and hopes thereby that God will continue to
provide. The individual, based on faith, knows that God has
answered prayers in the past for the Jewish people, and hopes
that God will continue to bless and provide for the
community. To the question: Does God answer prayers?
Berkovits answers, "Yes." Based on faith we know that God
does not work directly, and we also know that God has
answered prayers from our ancestors in the past.

This section outlined Berkovits' discussion of Jewish
prayer. It talked about the peak experience of prayer and
the posture of appropriate Jewish prayer. And secondarily it
responded to the question does God answer prayers. This last
question leads to the discussion to theodicy. Why does God
act or remain silent in the face of human suffering?

Theodicy

Berkovits' discussion of theodicy evolves from his
belief in the "hiding God"; a God who withdraws from the
world to give freedom to humanity. He acknowledges that

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suffering exists in the world no matter how much people want
to avoid it.   However, based on the encounter he accepts
suffering as part of God's plan.   He says:

> There is no getting away from it: we know of God
> from the encounter; from the same encounter we also
> know Him as the Creator; and we know also of the
> imperfections of the creation by experience.   It
> is, therefore, an imperfect world that the perfect
> God desired to create. . . .
>
> The world is apart from God; it is, therefore, of
> necessity, imperfect.   A perfect creation would
> have extinguished itself by tumbling back into God.
> A faultless universe, devoid of evil, would not be
> distinguishable from the Creator; it would be one
> with Him.(12)

This passage suggests that by design God made the world
imperfect.   If the world was perfect it would not exist
separate from the Divine.   These ideas, God's limits and an
imperfect world, form the basis for Berkovits' discussion of
cosmic and human evil.

Cosmic evil, disasterous acts of nature, comes from a
world which is imperfect and indifferent to human activity.
It is the task of humanity, in imitation of God's concern, to
bring order to the world.   Berkovits describes the world in
this way:

> All forms of energy are indifferent to
> considerations of righteousness or mercy; all
> biological needs or desires are brutally unaware of
> the existence of any moral code.   The human body,
> the vital tool of individual moral conduct, is
> essentially amoral. . . . All the purely organic
> needs in nature seek their own satisfaction
> exclusively.   Physiologically and biologically, the
> organic nature of man strives to preserve its
> vitality and effectiveness in an essentially
> selfish way.(13)

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This passage offers two important insights about evil and humanity. First, cosmic evil comes as the result of the imperfection of creation. The energy forces in the world strive to keep their own equilibrium, they act indifferent to morality. The death of an infant or a severe storm comes as the result of the world's imperfection, not as Divine interventions. Second, the passage foreshadows the task of humanity and the purpose of halacha. People have a spirit with which to control their bodies. It becomes the task of humanity to bring order and morality to the world. As God cared for people, so should people care for the world.

Berkovits' discussion of evil caused by human beings also evolves from the idea of a self-limiting God. He says:

> The question is, why does God not prevent His creatures from spreading misery and sorrow in His creation?
>
> In answer to the problem, it has rightly been pointed out that any specific intervention on the part of God would not only render the doing of evil impossible, but would eliminate the foundation of all ethical action as well . . . . One cannot frighten people into goodness. In order to be good, man has to choose the good; but there is choice only when there is freedom. In order to be good, man must be free to be wicked, if he so desires; he must be permitted to choose between good and evil. . . .When we discussed the cosmic phase of the problem, we found that an imperfect creation was freedom's only opportunity. But what is true of creation in this context is also valid for God's continued relation to the history of the human race. No doubt, God is sufficiently powerful to intervene every time a wrong is committed; it would indeed, be a small matter for Him to eliminate all evil and injustice from the earth. But His _evident_ intervention would destroy not only evil, but also the essence of man's humanity, i.e.,

his moral responsibility. Man is man if he may
choose between alternative courses of action and if
he can do so in moral freedom.(14)

Berkovits explains evil caused by human beings to each
other by saying that if God intervened in history to demand
the good or to explicitly correct an evil, then human freedom
would no longer exist. Berkovits consistently maintains this
explanation for an individual death or for mass killing on
the scale of the Holocaust. It is, however, important to
note that Berkovits leaves room for Divine intervention. In
this passage he suggests that God may work indirectly to help
those who suffer. This type of intervention aids people
without jeopardizing human freedom. Berkovits believes those
who feel in touch with God's Presence can sense this type of
action in the course of history.

Additionally, Berkovits contends that God is ultimately
responsible for human history and will intervene at some
point if humanity goes beyond limits acceptable to the
Divine. Berkovits says:

The freedom may be misused at any time or it would
not deserve its name. Yet, there is reason to
assume the risk is a calculated one. The
possibility of failure must lurk forever as an
alternative in this world; otherwise freedom,
choice, and responsibility would not be meant
seriously. On the other hand, notwithstanding
failure, creation as such cannot fail. The
ultimate responsibility of the Creator for his work
is itself the guarantee of final success. There
must be safeguards against the threat from
creation's imperfection; the extent of freedom is
limited by the law. Failure is always a
possibility, but it can never be fatal to the
purpose of the Creator.(15)

This passage shows that while Berkovits believes God often withholds aid or punishment, that in the event of a crisis which would totally disrupt the Divine plan in history God would intervene. At another point Berkovits says explicitly, "This same opportunity granted man in the form of freedom and responsibility may in history necessitate the corrective act of the miracle."(16) In the final analysis human suffering as the result of cruelty by one person to another comes because God allows people to choose to do good or evil in the world. As a result of this self-limitation by God, the innocent may at times suffer at the hands of the wicked. God remains aware of the course of history, and may intervene directly or indirectly to insure the success of creation.

Before concluding this section it is important to focus briefly on Berkovits discussion of the Holocaust. Two concepts, the hiding God and faith, underlie Berkovits thought. The concept of a self-limited hiding God has been discussed at length above. Berkovits maintains this idea consistently in his discussion of theodicy in Faith After the Holocaust. He distinguishes between two types of Divine concealment. The first comes because of a sin by the individual, and God turns away leaving the individual to suffer from "divine neglect." Second, Berkovits talks about Divine concealment, not as the result of sin, but as the result of human freedom. Berkovits makes the following distinction in terms of Jewish history:

At the same time, looking at the entire course of
Jewish history, the idea that all this has befallen
us because of our sins is utterly unwarrented
exaggeration. There is suffering because of sins;
but that all suffering is due to it is simply not
true. The idea that Jewish martyrology through the
ages can be explained as divine judgement is
obscene. Nor do we for a single moment entertain
the thought that what happened to European Jewry in
our generation was divine punishment for sins
committed by them. It was injustice absolute;
injustice countenanced by God.(17)

Berkovits believes that the suffering of Jews in the

Holocaust came because God gave freedom to humanity, and

humanity abused this freedom. Later in the same discussion

Berkovits recounts the effects of God's self-limitation and

long-suffering nature:

This is the inescapable paradox of divine
providence. While God tolerates the sinner, he
must abandon the victim; while he shows
forebearance with the wicked, he must turn a deaf
ear to the anguished cries of the violated. This
is the tragedy of existence: God's very mercy and
forebearance, his very love for man, necessitates
the abandonment of some men to a fate that they may
well experience as divine indifference to justice
and human suffering. It is the tragic paradox of
faith that God's direct concern for the wrongdoer
should be directly responsible for so much pain and
sorrow on earth.(18)

These two passages show that Berkovits maintains his

belief in God's self-limitation as the cause of Jewish

suffering during the Holocaust. In this light for Berkovits

the question was not, "Where is God?", but instead, "Where

was man?"(19)

Berkovits also discusses faith and Jewish history in his

response to the Holocaust. He asks: "What is special about

the Jews, that made the world feel so threatened?"; and "Can

Jews maintain faith, after this disaster?" Berkovits

believes that the unique nature of the Jews brings them in

conflict with the world, but that this nature also provides

the basis for faith after the Holocaust. Berkovits gives

this interpretation of the Jews and the nations:

> There are two realms: the realm of the Is and that
> of the Ought. The history of the nations is
> enacted mainly in the realm of the Is. It is
> naturalistic history, essentially power history.
> The history of Israel belongs chiefly into the
> realm of the Ought, it is faith history, faith that
> what ought to be, what ought to determine and guide
> human life, should be and will be. Faith history
> is at cross purposes with power history.(20)

Berkovits sees Judaism as the bearer of faith in a world

of power. The Jews represent a world of spirit where people

care for one another and resolve conflicts peacefully in the

spirit of God; "Ought" history of how the world should exist

ideally. The nations represent the rule of power. Berkovits

gives the examples of Christian religion and the Nazi party

as nations which try to gain power and rule all of the other

nations of the world: This is "Is" history, the history of

earthly power. The Jews as a force counter to this trend in

the world threaten the powerful by teaching peace and earn

their wrath. This accounts for Jewish persecution and

suffering. In this light the Jew after the Holocaust faces a

choice. The individual can continue to believe in this

mission and in God's Presence, or the individual can reject

this call and turn away from God. Based on the creation of

the State of Israel, and his interpretation of world history

Berkovits chooses to affirm his faith.(21) At the same time

he allows that his answer comes from outside the experience

of the Holocaust, and therefore is limited.

In summary, the concept of God's self-limitation

underlies Berkovits' discussion of theodicy. God's

limitation made room for the world, and caused the world to

be imperfect. This accounts for cosmic evil. God also

limits divine contact with humanity. This gives people

freedom to choose good or evil, but also allows for suffering

in the world. In the end Berkovits believes that God insures

the success of creation. In the event of a crisis that would

thwart history God can intervene directly or indirectly to

aid humanity. After the Holocaust the individual faces a

choice. The individual Jew can continue to believe in God

and the mission of the Jewish people or the individual can

reject the Divine. The next section focuses in greater

detail on Berkovits' conception of the purpose and mission of

the Jewish people.

Chosenness

Berkovits believes the Jewish people possesses a world

historical mission. As a people called by God the Jews

accepted the task of leading all people to live under God's

rule. This idea is expressed in the following passage which

contrasts a nation with a holy nation:

> The idea of a holy nation is not to be confused
> with that of nationalism. The goal of nationalism

is to serve the nation: a holy nation serves God.
The law of nationalism is national self-interest;
the law of "a kingdom of priests" is the will of
God. From the point of view of nationalistic
ideology, the nation is an end in itself; the "holy
nation" is a means to an end. Since, however, the
end is the wholeness of life in relationship to
God, it obviously points beyond the national frame.
The holy nation is the instrument for the
realization of a supra-national purpose in history.
The nation works toward a universal goal. It does
not exclude other nations; on the contrary, the end
which it serves seeks the completion of its
aspiration by them.(22)

God chose the Jewish people to help all nations live
under the divine rule, as a world wide "kingdom of priests."
This notion arose earlier in an excerpt from Faith After the
Holocaust, where Berkovits calls Judaism a religion of "ought
and faith," as opposed to the nations which live by "is and
power."(23) Based on their knowledge of God through the
encounter it is the Jew's task to help all people learn to
know and serve God.

The notion of chosenness raises two questions: Why
choose one people? And why the Jews? Berkovits responds to
these two questions in the following two passages:

> The goal of Judaism is accomplished when it is
> reached by all mankind. Since, however, the goal
> is not essentially the teaching of noble ideals --
> which would indeed be rather easy and ineffective
> -- but the realization of the teaching in history,
> one has to start with the smallest unit of living
> reality within which the deed of Judaism may become
> history-making; and such a unit is the nation.
> Individuals may teach a nation is needed in order
> to do effectively. However, nationality here is
> not an ideological requirement but a historical
> necessity. The gradual realization of the
> universal purpose in history is unable to dispense
> with the instrumentality of the holy nation.(24)

It is, however, not altogether irrelevant to ponder
on the point that it was not Israel that was
chosen, but rather Israel that came into being by
having been chosen. God never chose the Jews; but
any people whom God chose was bound to become the
Jewish people. The choice of God made Israel. Why
was it one family that was singled out and not
another?. . . Who will care to fathom the mind of
the Almighty! Let it suffice for us to grasp that
"a people of God" is a practical requirement for
the penetration of the divine purpose into the
history of man, that it is needed for the
fulfillment of man's destiny on earth as intended
by the revealed will of the Creator. As to the
rest, Jews can only testify that it happened to
them.(25)

These passages answer the two questions raised by

Berkovits' interpretation of the mission of Israel. Why was

a nation chosen? Berkovits believes the task of a chosen

nation is not only to teach the world, but additionally to

model righteous behavior. A nation was chosen because this

is the smallest entity which governs itself, and can thereby

serve as a model for the world. Why were the Jews chosen?

Berkovits believes that any nation that was chosen would have

become the Jewish people. Beyond that Berkovits says: "Only

God knows, but we can testify to our experience." The next

section focuses on Jewish law; the system whereby the holy

people governs itself.

Halacha

Berkovits fundamentally believes that Jewish law comes

from God. In Not in Heaven: The Nature and Function of

Halakha, his English treatise on the dynamics of Jewish law,

he says:

The Torah was given at Sinai. It was given to a
whole nation as a way of life for all generations.
However, in order to guide the daily life of an
entire people through all its history, not only
Torah knowledge was needed. A leadership is
required to deal with problems of the day as they
arise -- with questions of interpretation -- and it
must have the authority to make decisions.(26)

This passage outlines Berkovits' basic belief about the

halacha. He believes that the Torah and the power to

interpret the Torah came from God on Sinai. With this as an

orientation this section will discuss Berkovits'

philosophical analysis for the origin of the law, and two

justifications for observing the law.

The experiential basis for Jewish law, for Berkovits,

comes from the encounter with God at Sinai. According to

Berkovits, God revealed both Divine concern for humanity, a

contentless awareness of God in revelation, and the law

itself at Sinai. Berkovits suggests that people develop the

law as they learn of God's attributes and desires to imitate

God in their lives. These ideas are expressed in the

following passage:

The encounter reveals not only God's concern, but
also what He desires of man. The relational
attributes are God's law for man. God, whose
essence must be hidden reveals Himself by caring
involvement in His creation, making manifest "these
things" in which he delights, is of necessity
revealed as the Lawgiver. . . The encounter at
Sinai revealed God as well as his law to
Israel.(27)

This passage gives Berkovits' account of the

transmission of the law. Simply, God gave the law to Moses

and the people at Sinai. By this Berkovits implies the Torah

and the possibility of interpretation as the elements of the

law. In a sense observance of the law then functions like

faith. For Berkovits it is, "The bond that preserves the

relationship of divine concern beyond the fundamental

religious experience of the encounter itself."(28)

It is important to note at this point that Berkovits

experiential explanation of the origin of the law seems to

contradict his early statement that the Torah was given at

Mount Sinai. The former statement implies that God gave the

specific content of the law to Moses in a verbal revelation.

Berkovits' experiential explanation of revelation suggests

that people derived the law through a contentless non-verbal

revelation. This is a tension which remains unresolved in

Berkovits' work.

Berkovits gives two justifications for following the law

which are distinct from his analysis of the origins of the

law. First, on a logical or philosophical level, Berkovits

examined the conflict between reason and revelation as

sources for the law throughout history. He believes that

revelation alone provides a source for the obligatory nature

of the law. He says:

> All secular ethics lack the quality of absolute
> obligation. They are as changeable as the desires
> and the wills that institute them; the law of God
> alone is as eternal as His will. Secular ethics,
> derived as it must be from a relative will, is
> subjective; God alone is the source of objectivity
> for all value and all law. Relativistic ethics,

serving the goal of subjective desire, is
essentially utilitarian; the desire of God alone
makes the object of the desire an end in
itself.(29)

This passage suggests that only a system of law provided

by God can obligate all people to follow it. Systems based

on reason fall prey to human concerns and subjectivity. One

follows Jewish law because it provides the ultimate system

for righteous living, based on God's authority.

On an experiential level adherence to both ethical and

ritual laws keeps a person morally alert and insures that the

individual will lead an ethical life. Berkovits believes

that while a person's spirit may continually desire morality,

the body can lead a person to immoral acts. In contrast to

Christianity which rejects the body based on this phenomenon,

Judaism affirms the body and uses the system of _mitsvot_ as a

means of bodily moral training. Mitsvot give the body a way

to prepare itself so when it faces a trial it will be able to

choose the good and overcome evil. In this way the body as

well as the spirit are directed toward God.(30) Berkovits

summarizes this idea in these words:

> What appears to be a purely religious observance
> has, as we saw, its ethical relevance through its
> function as the "indirect method." Through its
> creation of an almost "organic" awareness of "an
> other" and its claims, the system of religious
> observance conditions for effective ethical act,
> i.e., not exclusively egocentric behavior. The
> "purely religious," thus, always has indirect
> influence on ethical and moral practice.(31)

On this level ritual practice helps to elevate the
person's mind and body to service of the Divine. In this way
Berkovits unites the ethical and the religious as means for
sanctification of life.

This section discussed Berkovits' interpretation of
Jewish law. He believes that the Torah and its
interpretation originate with the encounter between God and
the people at Sinai. The law provides a source of ultimate
obligation, and serves as a means by which the individual can
sanctify life in the presence of God.

Critique

This section will focus on two weaknesses and one
strength which unify Berkovits thought. The weaknesses are
contradictions in his interpretation, and justifications for
his ideas which pose as explanations. The strength lies in
an overall thoroughness and consistency in his presentation.

The first contradiction in Berkovits' thought lies with
his interpretation of prayer. He says that the person should
pray "as if" in the presence of God. The individual should
direct his or her thoughts in prayer towards the Divine and
the paths of the Divine, and not towards him/herself.
However, at the same time Berkovits also says that a person
prays for his/her daily needs in traditional Jewish prayer.
It seems to say on one hand that a person focuses solely on
God and on the other to say that one actually does pray for

personal needs.   Berkovits responds that this type of

personal prayer is in fact not egocentric, but instead

teaches the individual that she/he depends on God to meet all

daily needs.   An inappropriate prayer asks for divine

intervention to change a fact.   This answer attempts to

respond to the contradiction in Berkovits' thought, but I

believe his twofold definition of prayer is still

problematic.

A second contradiction, which also illustrates a

justification posing as an explanation, appears in Berkovits'

discussion of halacha.   Berkovits believes people learn of

the law from the encounter with God at Sinai.   In this

encounter God conceals part of the divine Essence to protect

humanity, but at the same time makes known both divine

concern and the law.   Berkovits then says the law comprises

the Torah and the mechanism for interpretation in the

halacha.   This does not seem to logically follow.   Berkovits

seems in one place to say revelation comes as an overwhelming

experience, and in another to say this experience contains a

written narrative.   In this sense, while Berkovits sees

himself as giving an explanation of revelation in Judaism, he

is in fact only justifying a preconceived position.   He

provides an experientially believable account of the

encounter, but the receipt of the Torah from this experience

does not seem to follow as a logical result of his

description.

The justification/explanation phenomenon appears again

in Berkovits' discussion of the election of Israel. To the question: Why choose a people and not individuals? Berkovits responds, "Logically we need a people so they can model the functioning of the law for the rest of humankind. To the question: Why the Jews? Berkovits responds, "Any people that God chose would have become the Jews, more than that only God knows." I agree that logically a people can demonstrate God's plan where an individual can only teach, but Berkovits' explanation does not convince me the Jews actually represent the chosen people. The arguments, "It is our experience," or, "It's God's will," are not logically sound or convincing. Here again it appears that Berkovits comes with a preconceived image which he frames in the form of an explanation. Berkovits says at the outset of God, Man, and History,(32) he intends to follow in the foot steps of Yehudah Halevi. Berkovits remained true to his word. Halevi believed in the election of the Jewish people based on experience and faith, Berkovits holds his belief based on the same premises. However, these premises represent justifications of a preconceived position, not logically deduced explanations.

The strength of Berkovits' work lies in the depth of his presentation. In his explanations of revelation, prayer, and theodicy Berkovits states a position and tries to answer the questions which his position raises. In discussing revelation Berkovits believes people learn of God through an encounter with the Divine. The question which follows from

this position is: "How does one avoid the danger of personal subjectivity in encounters with the Divine, and interpreting God's presence in the world?" Berkovits answers that one avoids subjectivity by appealing to the memory of the original encounter. This provides a measure with which to interpret future experiences of God. While this reasoning is weak because it validates a truth by appealing to an equally unverifiable truth, I believe Berkovits attempt to confront this issue stands as a strength in his work.

In his discussion of prayer Berkovits also attempts to confront difficulties raised by his position. Berkovits believes that at times people experience God during prayer, and at times God directly answers prayer. This raises the question: "What happens the rest of the time, why does God not answer all prayers?" Berkovits addresses the dilemma on two levels. First, he talks about appropriate expectations in prayer; and second, he talks about God hiding and not answering prayer to preserve human freedom. In this case Berkovits again predicates his answer on the readers acceptance of an unprovable experience with God, but he applies his position consistently, and he tries to help readers understand possible contradictions that may arise from the premises in his interpretation of Judaism.

Lastly, Berkovits also gives in depth accounts of his view of evil and theodicy. He goes to great length to explain both cosmic and human evil within the context of his thought. Here, too, Berkovits' explanation is consistent

based on his account of revelation, and goes to great length to describe the ramifications of his system (The good suffer, because God is long-suffering with the evil).

In conclusion Berkovits' interpretation of Judaism is both enlightening and troubling. It is enlightening because he takes a position on Judaism based on his view of the prophetic encounter with God, and applies this view in depth and consistently to a number of situations. It is troubling because it is based on a preconceived notion about the inviolability of Judaism and presents itself as a logical explanation while in fact Berkovits is justifying his position. Additionally, his argumentation while applied to a number of situations is at times weak and contradictory. He proves premiss "B", by relying on "A" which is also unverifiable; and, in terms of prayer two definitions appear which seem mutually exclusive. However, with its strengths and weaknesses Berkovits work provides a comprehensive view of modern Judaism.

NOTES

(1) Eliezer Berkovits, <u>God, Man, and History: A Jewish Interpretation</u>, p. 9.

(2) Ibid., p. 17.

(3) Ibid., p. 31.

(4) Ibid., pp. 33-34.

(5) Ibid., pp. 40-41.

(6) Ibid., p. 45.

(7) Eliezer Berkovits, <u>Prayer</u>, p. 11.

(8) Ibid., pp. 11-12.

(9) Ibid., pp. 12-13.

(10) Ibid., pp. 88-89.

(11) Ibid., p. 93.

(12) Berkovits, <u>God, Man, and History</u>, op. cit., p. 76.

(13) Ibid., p. 105.

(14) Ibid., pp. 143-144.

(15) Ibid., p. 80.

(16) Ibid., p. 151.

(17) Eliezer Berkovits, <u>Faith After the Holocaust</u>, p. 94.

(18) Ibid., p. 106.

(19) Ibid., p. 7.

(20) Ibid., p. 112.

(21) Ibid., see pp. 137-169.

(22) Berkovits, <u>God, Man, and History</u>, op. cit., p. 137.

(23) Berkovits, <u>Faith After the Holocaust</u>, op. cit., p. 112.

(24) Berkovits, <u>God, Man, and History</u>, op. cit., pp. 137-138.

(25) Ibid., pp. 139-140.

(26) Eliezer Berkovits, <u>Not in Heaven: The Nature and Function of Halakha</u>, p. 47.

(27) Berkovits, <u>God, Man, and History</u>, op. cit., pp. 86-87.

(28) Ibid., p. 89.

(29) Ibid., pp. 102-103,

(30) Ibid., Chapter 11.

(31) Ibid., p. 127.

(32) Ibid., p. 9.

Appendix IV

Supplemental Readings

The following chart provides a list of outside readings for learners who want to do more in-depth study. The chart provides readings for each thinker based on the topic areas presented in the course.

God

Leo Baeck: God, Man and Judaism. pp. 9-15. The Essence of Judaism. pp. 83-39, (supplementary readings on the paradoxes of faith, The Essence of Judaism, pp. 96-107, 120-123, 158-161).

Mordecai Kaplan: Questions Jews Ask: Reconstructionist Answers. pp. 77-89.

Eugene Borowitz: How Can a Jew Speak of Faith Today? pp. 36-58. "The Problem of the Form of a Jewish Theology," HUCA, vol. 40-41, pp. 391-408. "Covenant Theology - Another Look," Worldview, Mr. 1973, pp. 21-27.

Elizer Berkovits: God, Man, and History, pp. 31-49.

Revelation

Leo Baeck: The Essence of Judaism, pp. 31-39.

Mordecai Kaplan: Questions Jews Ask: Reconstructionist Answers, pp. 154-155.

Eugene Borowitz: See the readings in the section on God.

Eliezer Berkovits: See the readings in the section on God.

Chosenness

Leo Baeck: The Essence of Judaism, pp. 59-72.

Mordecai Kaplan: Questions Jews Ask: Reconstructionist Answers, pp. 204-211.

Eugene Borowitz: "The Chosen People Concept as it Effects Life in the Diaspora," Journal of Ecumenical Studies, vol. 12, Fall, 1975, pp. 553-568.

Eliezer Berkovits: God, Man, and History, pp. 133-140.

Theodicy: Natural/Cosmic Evil

Leo Baeck: The Essence of Judaism, pp. 114-117, 136-139,
172-175.
This People Israel: The Meaning of Jewish Existence, pp.
36-38.

Mordecai Kaplan: Questions Jews Ask: Reconstructionist
Answers, pp. 115-121.

Eugene Borowitz: Liberal Judaism, pp. 190-207.
Choices in Modern Jewish Thought a Partisan Guide, pp.
282-285.

Eliezer Berkovits: God, Man, and History, pp. 75-81,
103-106, 141-155.

Theodicy: Human Evil/"The Holocaust"

Leo Baeck: This People Israel: The Meaning of Jewish
Existence, pp. 385-386, 392-403. Also see readings on
Natural/Cosmic Evil.

Mordecai Kaplan: Questions Jews Ask: Reconstructionist
Answers, pp. 117-118. The Meaning of God in Modern Jewish
Religion, pp. 130-140. Also see readings on Natural/Cosmic
Evil, and Eugene Borowitz, Choices in Modern Jewish Thought:
A Partisan Guide, pp. 109-113.

Eugene Borowitz: Liberal Judaism, pp. 193-195. Also see
readings on Natural/Cosmic Evil.

Eliezer Berkovits: Faith After the Holocaust, pp. 94-96,
101-107, 137-143. Also see God, Man, and History, pp.
141-155.

Prayer

Leo Baeck: The Essence of Judaism, pp. 103-107.

Mordecai Kaplan: Questions Jews Ask: Reconstructionist
Answers, pp. 102-106, 241-242.

Eugene Borowitz: Liberal Judaism, pp. 426-441.

Eliezer Berkovits: Prayer, pp. 11-19, 87-100.

Salvation

Leo Baeck: The Essence of Judaism, pp. 182-189, 240-249.

Mordecai Kaplan: Questions Jews Ask: Reconstructionist Answers, pp. 180-181.

Euguene Borowitz: Liberal Judaism, pp. 208-233.

Eliezer Berkovits: God, Man, and History, pp. 151-155.

Jewish Ritual Practice

Leo Baeck: The Essence of Judaism, pp. 260-270.

Mordecai Kaplan: Questions Jews Ask: Reconstructionist Answers, pp. 228-237. Judaism Without Supernaturalism, pp. 37-54.

Eugene Borowitz: "Toward a Theology of Reform Jewish Practice," CCAR Journal, April, 1960, pp. 27-34. Liberal Judaism, pp. 410-426.

Eliezer Berkovits: God, Man, and History, pp. 127-130. Not in Heaven: The Nature and Function of Halakha, pp. 47-48.

Secondary Sources

Leo Baeck: Eugene Borowitz, Choices in Modern Jewish Thought: A Partisan Guide, pp. 53-74. William Kaufman, Contemporary Jewish Philosophies, pp. 125-141.

Mordecai Kaplan: Eugene Borowitz, Choices in Modern Jewish Thought: A Partisan Guide, pp. 98-120. William Kaufman, Contemporary Jewish Philosophies, pp. 175-216.

Eugene Borowitz: William Kaufman, Contemporary Jewish Philosophies, pp. 94-108.

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