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TEACHING ADOLESCENTS ABOUT GOD

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for the Degree of Master of Arts.

18 April 1983

5 Iyar 5743 - Yom Ha-Atsmaut

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

FOR MY PARENTS,

whose abiding sense of religious truth

has brought me to this work.

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INTRODUCTION

The nature of teaching God is by definition a complex one. Its avoidance in Synagogues and schools has lead to a prominent gap in the curriculum of the Reform religious school. However the quantitative research of James W. Fowler has aided in defining the possibilities for a coherent approach, whilst a view of the psychology of the Jewish adolescent grounds that approach upon a focussed objective. This study has sought to clarify the personality of the adolescent and his/her place in the developmental faith stage sequence. It has determined what is and is not consistent with the structure of adolescent thinking, whilst determining how God should be appropriately taught in the classroom. An overview of the existing curricula material is portrayed with relation to these findings, leading to a desiderata of supplementary material, in the hope of initiating further similar attempts and the return of God to the classroom. For it is believed that a genuine search in the appropriate enviroment and with the correct means, will lead to a greater sense of God's will. For as Dr. Eugene Borowitz

frequently and poignently reminds us:

> Religion today need not fear deep, heart-rending doubt so much as the trivial, cocktail-party coffee-klatch variety. To many a modern person a few terms like theodicy and anthropomorpnism, a few names like Bertrand Russell and Albert Camus, a few quick judgements like failure of nerve or infantile projection, and the game is over. The possibility of religious faith is closed before it is opened. The dogma of rejection is sealed with the prejudice of intellectual self-righteousness. At their worst, our students reflect this superficiality, refusing to challenge religion very deeply, for to doubt much would mean that they would have to affirm much. Better not to admit that one cares very much at all, nor to even object very forcefully. The modern style is cool. ("On Dealing With Doubt." See Bibl.)

CHAPTER ONE

THE ADOLESCENT STAGE

Theories of Adolescence

An examination of the theories of adolescence demonstrates two opposing basic positions. One position characterises adolescence as a period of inevitable and useful "storm and stress." The other position maintains that if too many emotional or traumatizing events occur, the personality will be distorted for life. Consequently, this latter position advocates a smooth, transitional period of adolescence.

G. Stanley Hall began work on the concept of the adolescent in 1904. According to Hall, adolescence was a time for the appearance of conflicting forces that should be viewed as normal for maturation,[1] thus he introduced the phrase "sturm und drang" to characterise the universal developmental psychology of the adolescent.

This "instability and fluctuation"[2] that Hall described is readily apparent in adolescent behaviour. Young people can exhibit dynamic energy one hour, lethargy

the next, they can demonstrate euphoria one day and depression the next or vain conceit followed by a degree of modesty. Hall's biogenetic theory, however, assumed the acceptance of the concept of ontogeny recapitulating phylogeny; the idea that the child passes through in its development the course already taken by the 'race'. Hall speculated that adolescence corresponded to a period in pre-history (barbarism) marked by large scale migrations. For the race and individual it is a time of upheaval, giving rise to myths and sagas; poetic descriptions of this traumatic uprooting. In a similar way these racial experiences resonate in adolescents through tales of heroic leaders and their battles. Thus adolescence, Hall postulated, is full of turbulence because the child has to separate him/herself forcefully from the grasp of parents. Only by openly rebelling against established values can the adolescent be expected to grow up mentally healthy.[3]

Anna Freud expanded the work of Hall and made a generalised theory from her psychoanalytic experience with disturbed children. Her work emphasised the changes that take place during adolescence and the effect to which these changes are disruptive for the individual. She stated that "the biological changes which occur during puberty are endowed with tremendous powers resulting in the creation of chaos in the psyche of the adolescent."[4]

The weakening of the ego together with increased strength of the instinctual forces forced her to conclude that it made it impossible for the adolescent to function in a balanced and harmonious way: "The relationship established between the forces of the ego and the id is destroyed, the painfully achieved psychic balance is upset with the result that the inner conflicts between the two institutions blaze afresh."[5] Thus the adolescent is either controlled by his/her impulses or is over-repressed; in either case the adolescent cannot function well so that "to be normal during the adolescent period is by itself abnormal."[6] This adolescent turmoil is defined as an emotional condition that represents significant disruption in psychological equilibrium leading to fluctuation in moods, confusion in thought, rebellion against one's parents, changeable and unpredictable behaviour. Typical or normal adolescents, it was thought, need to experience adolescent turmoil. If they do not, they stay overdependent on their parents, have trouble developing their sense of identity and have difficulties relating well to peers.

Hall's biogenetic theory and Freud's use of psychoanalytical analysis assumed the characteristics of adolescence, so described, were inherent and universal. However, advocates of the second position took their lead from the studies of Margaret Mead who observed the primitive

cultures in Samoa and New Guinea. Her investigations lead her to consider that adolescence didn't seem to be a stormy, stressful experience for these youngsters, and that there were ways of avoiding the storm and stress of adolescence.[7] The inevitable aspect of development that Hall had suggested was replaced by the notion that adolescence was a cultural invention and that which Hall was observing was due to a number of social realities in family structure, workplace and school at the turn of the century. The continuity of development between childhood and adolescence was an emphasis of those writers, like Clarence Kingsley, who concluded that modern psychology had demonstrated that "the development of the individual is in most respects a continuous process and that, therefore, any sudden or abrupt transition between the elementary and secondary school or between any two successive stages of education is undesirable."[8]

A synthesis of the effects of social learning on adolescent development and continuity between childhood and adolescence was demonstrated by Rolf E. Muus, who perceived the problems of adolescence as being culturally determined and the result of social expectations rather than as an inevitable occurence in development. Muus feels that external social experiences exert greater impact on changes in behaviour than do any internal physical maturational processes. He believes that environ-

mental factors, such as socioeconomic status, culture, home environment and exposure to different models of behaviour and different patterns of discipline, explain the differences in adolescent development and the fact that, although many find the period to be exceedingly stormy in Western Society, others experience relatively smooth sailing. He also points out, changes in behaviour reflect changes in an environmental situation and that the behaviour in even one adolescent may vary from rebellious, insensitive, and disobedient to sensitive, conforming and considerate depending on the situation involved.[9]

Accepting the findings of cultural anthropology but using a stage-theory, Erik Erikson modified the theories of psychosexual development as conceived by Freud. Thus in his study of ego development, Erikson has related biological maturation with changes in social role and coordinated both with the person's mode of adaptation[10] (adaptation being the balancing of assimilation; the bending of reality to fit the shapes of the structure of the mind and accomodation; the bending of the structures of the mind to fit new perceptions of reality, leading eventually to a stage transition involving the structural whole of intellectual operations). His theory describes the emergence of new capacities for individual adaptations and point to the distortions for which the failure to emerge will give rise.

Each of the eight stages of development is initiated by a crisis between the possibilities presented by the emerging new capacities and the failure to integrate them into one's being. The stages are also cumulative in that with each new crisis, the successful or unsuccessful resolution of past stages are taken into account, so that each new stage requires a reworking of past solutions.[11]

At the end of childhood, the youngster has a well-established initial relationship to his/her skills but because of the rapid growth and development of secondary sexual characteristics, those earlier resolutions have to be questioned again. However, in adolescence it is the ego identity formation as perceived by others that determines how the individual will connect roles and skills cultivated earlier with a new sense of inner sameness and continuity. The importance of matching self-perception to the perception of others is evidenced by the continual need for reassurance and love:

> To a considerable extent adolescent love is an attempt to arrive at a definition of one's identity by projecting one's diffused ego image on another and by seeing it thus reflected and gradually clarified. This is why so much of young love is conversation.[12]

The contrary position to this is the crisis of rebellion when the adolescent sees his/her own limits in opposition to authority figures.

As a part of this formation and integration of ego identity, there is a tendency to seek responsibility elsewhere for models of integration and this leads to the creation of idol-worship and emulation. This loss of responsibility for the self also shows itself in the forming of cliques and groups with a common identity (clothes, speech, hair, etc.) under which the adolescent can be submerged.[13]

The resolution of ego identity is of paramount importance at this stage, otherwise role-confusion will occur. Since self-perception is governed by the views of others, the adolescent's crisis is heightened by younger siblings' and adults' views of them as non-adults, though from different perspectives. The adolescent mind is in a state of social moratorium where the consequences of actions are not fully considered and ideological outlook can cloud the view of practical reality and thus it is the ideological nature of society that attracts the adolescent, and it is those social and cultural values as affirmed by family and peers that find "confirmation" in the young person.[14] Therefore when social conditions and favourable relationships support young people in building a firm sense of ego identity, then there is a feeling of commitment and fidelity to those communities and their ideological nature.

According to Erikson, there are seven tasks that

must be mastered in order to resolve this identity crisis. They consist of the following:

1. Time perspective versus time diffusion. Successful resolution of this task involves the realisation of a lifetime ahead of the adolescent in which to fulfill goals and manifests its difficulty of resolution in the impatience of youth.
2. Self-Certainty versus identity consciousness. An adolescent must first acquire a degree of autonomy and then social status amongst peer groups. Because they are not yet able to develop self-certainty on their own, they seek out peer group affiliations that will help them develop this capacity.
3. Role experimentation versus negative identity. Young people will experiment and affiliate with different groups that have wide viewpoints.
4. Anticipation of achievement versus work paralysis. In exhibiting idolisation, adolescents remove responsibility from fulfilling their own potential and may eventually give up all hope of achieving their own goals.
5. Sexual identity versus bisexual diffusion. The attainment of sexual maturation and acceptance of a personally satisfying psychosexual

role.

6. Leadership polarisation versus authority diffusion.

   The adolescent must learn to be "a leader of some and a follower of others."[15]

7. Ideological polarisation versus diffusion of ideals.

   This task requires that the adolescent develop a general ideological position, but without the reliance upon it for mere distinction and thus intolerance of others.[16]

If these seven tasks are not adequately resolved, then "identity confusion" will persist.[17] Recent literature dealing with adolescence cites Erikson's concept of ego-identity as having increasing importance. Coleman (1961) by way of empirical investigation finds that adolescents are cut off from the larger segment of society and thus depend more upon each other. Consequently this adolescent sub-culture has created its own language and its own value system. The wide gap between the value systems of parents and children results in the misconceptions that adults have with particular regard to sex and academic success which is not really as important as adults would like to think, but it is social pressure that is a high priority to the young mind.[18]

In studies conducted by Offer, Ostrov and Howard

(1981), a significant minority of adolescents tested went through emotional turmoil: 15% attested to feeling empty emotionally, being confused most of the time or hearing strange noises. Thus they concluded that the vast majority of adolescents make a relatively smooth transition to adulthood. Through the findings of the research[19], it was demonstrated that adolescents are not afraid of their sexuality, generally liking the recent changes in their bodies. They were relaxed under everyday circumstances and believe they could control their day to day trials and tribulations without undue concern. From this, Erikson's position is maintained that "adolescence is not an affliction but a normative crisis, i.e. a normal phase of increased conflict characterised by a seeming fluctuation in ego strength and yet also by a high growth potential."[20]

Cognitive Development of the Adolescent

Adolescent cognitive thinking as described by Jean Piaget is the "formal" stage of his epistemological hierarchy, and constitutes the final and highest stage in the sequential, universal, and invariant systemisation. This formal stage of thinking is preceeded by the concrete stage of middle childhood. During this stage thinking is limited primarily to "thinking about things". By contrast in the formal stage thinking is about words, ideas, concepts, hypotheses, propositions, etc. There comes about

an ability to think abstractly, form hypotheses, theorize. to imagine many possibilities and combinations, to generate multiple solutions to problems and to perform operations in the mind by mentally manipulating objects without those objects being present. Thus "thinking about thinking" takes place and there is a reflection on one's own thought processes.[21]

An important hallmark of the formal stage is the reversal of the relation between concrete reality (actuality) and possibility. In the concrete stage actuality is in the foreground. In the formal stage, the relationship is reversed and possibility comes to the foreground. New possibilities can be derived from recombinations of variables, without regard to whether they were ever previously experienced.[22] As an example, adolescents were presented with a number of metal rods of varying length, thickness, shape and material. The subjects were given the problem of explaining the rods' differences in flexibility; first they made a list of factors for hypothesis and studied each in turn, testing one factor alone whilst using the others as control. Thus they determined which factors affected flexibility and which did not. This complex system of classification and measurement requires a combinatorial system and a coordination of inversion and reciprocity.[23] Thus able to transcend the empirical evidence, formal thinking can

construct ideal states and with this ability to extrapolate and imagine perfection, the adolescent can be harsh in judgement of personal, social and political terms of others and the self. Since there is now a possibility to conceive of the appearance of a number of perspectives in a problem, the adolescent can take the perspective of others when assimilating them into his/her own. There is also a new reflection on the course of his/her life: the adolescent begins to be able to construct a personal past and an anticipated future based on hypothetical transformations of the self. This effort of shaping one's life in self-discerned patterns and aspirations leads to a development of personality.[24]

The development of formal thinking is far from commonplace as research shows 50% of the adult population does not achieve this epistemological stage. It cannot be assumed that all adolescents are formal thinkers, though there is a potential at adolescence to achieve this. Further those people who are formal thinkers do not necessarily always utilise formal operations, they may rely upon known solutions and apply standard thinking; thus, rather than term adolescents as formal thinkers, it is more accurate to describe the stage as formal thinking.[25]

Moral Development of the Adolescent

Lawrence Kohlberg and associates studied how people

structure their experience and judgements of the social world. Using Piaget's method of inquiry, they developed a succession of stages through which moral reasoning progresses. These stages, like Piaget's, are invariant, hierarchial and universal. Adolescence marks the beginning of the second division at the conventional level of moral judgement. At this level, maintaining the expectations of the individual's family, group or people are perceived as valuable in its own right, regardless of immediate and obvious consequences. The attitude is one not only of conformity to personal expectations and social order, but also of loyalty to it, of actively maintaining, supporting and justifying the order, and of identifying with the persons or groups involved in it.[26]

At this level there are two differentiated stages:

Stage 3: The motive of this stage is to please those people who matter most and achieve what is expected of one's role in relation to others. There is much conformity to stereotypical images of what is majority or "natural" behaviour. Behaviour is frequently judged by intention of being "nice".

Stage 4: Here orientation is towards authority, fixed rules and the maintenance of the social order. Right behaviour consists of doing

> one's duty, showing respect for authority and maintaining the given social order for its own sake.

These orientations and their view of social relations seen in context of formal thinking is constricted by the interaction of others and the guidance of available moral thought. There is therefore a limited application of the moral perspective based primarily on the extension of known relationships.

Thus the progress for this level is in role-taking and in understanding stable interpersonal relationships with a resulting sense of community, however, this is still primarily tacit and unexplored.[27]

The Fourteen Year Old

The contemporary study of adolescence defining it as a socially dependent stage, thus changing from age to age as the onset of puberty occurs four months earlier each decade, allows us to conclude that adolescence today can be catergorised from the age of ten to sixteen years. The lower limit determined by the biological and sociological developments of the child and the higher limit by the gradual sociological independence of the adolescent in terms of decreasing emotional, financial and physical support from parents.[28] The fourteen year old is thus above the median on this spectrum. We meet them in the

confirmation classes of our religious schools having just participated in a self-focussed Jewish ceremony that is widely considered as a rite of passage between childhood and adulthood. Bar/Bat Mitzvah thus marks a Jewish separation between the fourteen year old and younger counterparts. This fourteen year old will generally be developing normally as he/she resolves internal conflicts towards a strong ego identity unless the supportive environment that the adolescent requires has been or is absent. Thus he/she will feel many of the drives and emotions of the adult but spends a major amount of effort on learning to integrate them to self and thus appears inconsistent. It is a time for the beginning of assertion of independence from parents and yet the adolescent still needs them within rescue distance. It is, therefore, a time that he/she needs increasing freedom to find the reality of independence but with limits. He/she seems dispassionate to self yet very sensitive to others' evaluation.

The fourteen year old is at the stage of formal operations yet some of these children may be still developing the capacity for it, as the world of abstractions suddenly begins to take on the form of reality and words, constructs, concepts and ideas become interesting in themselves and subject to experiment. There is a definite benefit from the interchange between adolescent and adult in intellectual debate and enjoyment is derived from it.

There is a spread of fourteen year olds over the conventional moral level either at stage three or four. Generally they do the accepted thing but insist that it is their own decision. They require reasons for standards set for them and often raise questions that they cannot answer. Their concern is for good intentions without hurting feelings though this may justify otherwise questionable behaviour. They have a strong sense of loyalty which provides them with a satisfying sense of fulfillment.[29]

CHAPTER ONE - Footnotes

[1]G. S. Hall. Adolescence: Its Psychology and its Relation to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education, vol. 2, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1904), p. 74.

[2]Ibid., p. 75.

[3]G. Partridge. Genetic Psychology of Education: An Epitome of the Published Educational Writings of President G. Stanley Hall of Clark University, (New York: Sturgis & Walton Co., 1912), p. 84.

[4]A. Freud. The Ego and the Mechanism of Defense, translated by C. Baines, (New York: International Universities Press, 1948), p. 188.

[5]Ibid., p. 158.

[6]A. Freud. "Adolescence" in Psychoanalytic Study of the Child, vol. 13, ed. Ruth S. Eissler et al., (New York: International Universities Press, 1958), p. 275.

[7]Margaret Mead. Coming of Age in Samoa, (New York: New American Library, 1950), p. 31. Recently refuted in D. Freeman. Margaret Mead and Samoa, (Harvard UP, 1983).

[8]National Education Association. Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, "Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education" U. S. Bureau of Education Bulletin, no. 35, (Washington, DC: 1918), p. 9.

[9]R. E. Muus. "The Implications of Social Learning Theory For An Understanding of Adolescent Development" in Adolescence, 11:41, (1976), p. 61.

[10]R. E. Muus. Theories of Adolescence, (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 34.

Footnotes (continued)

[11]E. H. Erikson. Childhood and Society, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950), p. 234.

[12]Ibid., p. 262.

[13]R. E. Muus. Theories of Adolescence, p. 36.

[14]E. H. Erikson. Childhood and Society, p. 263.

[15]E. H. Erikson. "The Psychosocial Development of Children" in J. M. Tanner and B. Inhelder, editors, Discussions on Child Development, vol. 3, (New York: International Universities Press, 1955), p. 183.

[16]Ibid., p. 168ff.

[17]E. H. Erikson. Identity: Youth and Crisis, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), p. 188.

[18]J. S. Coleman. The Adolescent Society, (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961), p. 51.

[19]D. Offer. "Adolescent Turmoil" in New York University Education Quarterly, (1981), p. 30.

[20]E. H. Erikson. "Identity and the Life Cycle: Selected Papers" in Psychological Issues Monograph Series, vol. I: no. 1, (New York: International Universities Press, 1959), p. 116.

[21]J. Piaget. Six Psychological Studies, (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1967), p. 60f.

[22]B. Inhelder and J. Piaget. The Growth of Logical Thinking From Childhood to Adolescence, (New York: Basic Books, 1958), p. 46.

Footnotes (continued)

[23]Ibid., p. 108.

[24]J. Piaget. Six Psychological Studies, p. 64-70.

[25]E. Dulit. "Adolescent Thinking a la Piaget: The Formal Stage" in Journal of Youth and Adolescence, vol. 1, no. 4, (1972), p. 298-299.

[26]L. Kohlberg. "From Is to Ought: How to Commit the Naturalistic Fallacy and Get Away With It In the Study of Moral Development" in T. Mischel (ed.), Cognitive Development and Epistemology, (New York: Academic Press, 1971).

[27]M. M. Wilcox. Developmental Journey, (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), p. 115.

[28]R. E. Muus. Theories of Adolescence, p. 7-10.

[29]M. M. Wilcox. Developmental Journey, p. 112-114.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FAITH DIMENSION

Definitions of Faith

James W. Fowler has researched into the psychology of human development and the quest for meaning from which he has constructed six stages of faith. His theological basis is grounded in the work of Tillich and H. Richard Niebuhr and as clarified by Wilfred Cantwell Smith. Fowler therefore defines faith as:

a) Faith is a person's or community's way-of-being-in-relation to an ultimate environment. As such it includes, permeates and informs our-way-of-being-in-relation to our neighbours and to the causes and companions of our lives.

b) Faith may be but is not necessarily religious in that it need not be defined in cultic or institutional terms.

c) Faith is a primary motivating power in the journey of the self.

d) Faith is a structured set of operations in

which cognition and affection are inextricably bound together.

e) Faith is an active (dynamic) phenomenon in that it involves acts of knowing, constructing, or composing an apprehension of an ultimate environment and thus is always relational (covenantal).[1] Fowler describes it as the triangular relationship between self and other bound by shared centres of value and power. This relationship is dynamic in that evolvement and renewal of the connections between the three must always be taking place.[2] From this triadic system, three major types of faith can be identified: Polytheistic faith, exhibiting a lack or diffuse pattern of faith and identity; Henotheistic faith where transient centres of value and power are invested with a focal perspective and Radical Monotheism involving placing trust and loyalty in the principle of being and to the source and centre of all value and power. Radical monotheism does not negate less universal or less trancendent centres of value and power but it does demand a prioritising of henotheistic centres beneath it.[3]

Fowler makes a distinction between faith and belief; whereas faith is an orientation of the personality and is a quality of the person not of the system; belief is one of the ways faith expresses itself arising out of the effort to translate experiences of and relation to transcendence into concepts or propositions. Belief then,

is the holding of certain ideas as opposed to the relation of trust in and loyalty to the centre of ultimate concern defined as faith.[4]

This differentiation is important to recognize when the question is asked "What do you believe?" as if that were the key to understanding. Rather, in order to see what people "believe" on a significant level of depth, the question should be one of faith; "On what or whom do you set your heart?"[5] If this realisation of the connection between faith and belief is thus made, rather than reducing faith to belief in credal statements, then the possibility of religious faith will be opened for the emerging adolescent.

The structural-developmental theory of faith therefore can be a theory of personal knowing and acting. It involves a commitment to take seriously the decisions and actions that shape character, and the stories and images by which individuals and communities live. Therefore a description can be made relating structural stages of faith to the crises and challenges of the developmental era of the adolescent.

Fowler has used the psychosocial theory of Erikson to underpin his structural-developmental approach to faith structuring. A resolution of a stage depicted by Erikson led to a corresponding change in the structural operations of faith; and, thus, new faith change determines the

format of the next crisis in an Eriksonian era. The importance, therefore, of Erikson is that he supplies the functions by which people grapple with faith in their particular stage.[6] Thus, for adolescents the resolution of ego identity versus role confusion is paramount when considering structuring faith in a fourteen year old. The support needed to continually reassure self-perception is vital to the continuing and dynamic development of faith. It must, therefore, take place in a challenging but supportive environment to which the young person expresses fidelity and finds in it ideological form of world coherence.[7]

Aspects of Faith:

Fowler takes seven categories for use in each stage of faith development. These categories are demonstrative of the fact that faith is holistic-knowing incorporating the totality of ego development. These seven "aspects" include the logical reasoning described by Piaget and the moral judgement of Kohlberg, as well as social perspective concerns (authority, role-taking, bounds of social awareness, form of world coherence) and the role of symbols. A stage is a connected unity of the differentiated aspects that become more complex and comprehensively wider at the higher stages:[8]

Aspect 1: Form of Logic builds upon Piaget's theory of cognition development focussing upon patterns of reasoning and judgement. Fowler has distinguished two kinds of reasoning; the logic of rational certainity which describes the understanding of cognition that Piaget describes and the logic of conviction. The first is objective in that it is demonstrable, propositional and replicable. The second is a combination of rationality and passionality that Piaget separates out as affective, but that Fowler incorporates in the mode of knowing defined as ecstatic or imaginative. This logic of conviction includes within it the logic of rational certainity thus deepening the role of reason in faith in a more comprehensive structuring activity.[9]

Aspect 2: Role-taking relies upon the research performed by Robert Selman on social-perspective taking, that is the development of the ability to take the perspective of others.[10]

Aspect 3: Form of Moral Judgement is a modification of Kohlberg's study of moral decision making. Since Kohlberg bases himself on the narrow notion of cognition as defined by Piaget, his logical structures are expanded to include inherent affective or emotive elements in moral judgements.

Aspect 4: Bounds of Social Awareness focusses on how wide and inclusive a person identifies his/her community of faith. It takes account of the weight given to the claims

of other individuals and groups.

Aspect 5: Locus of Authority describes the way people interpret and rely upon sources of authoritative insight or "truth" regarding the nature of the ultimate environment. It suggests what criteria are needed for discerning reliable authority and how it is justified.

Aspect 6: Form of World Coherence represents the approach employed in composing and holding a comprehensive sense of unified meanings and thus conceiving of patterns of coherence in their ultimate environment.

Aspect 7: Symbolic Function. Since faith involves people in relation to realities that can only be represented symbolically, this aspect describes the way a person uses and responds to symbols. These have been broken down into five types: symbolic names and people (e.g. God); symbolic objects (e.g. mezzuzah, tefillin); symbolic statements (e.g. Sh'ma); symbolic acts (e.g. Kiddush) which consciously and subconsciously shape faith and assist in the expression of belief.[11]

Synthetic-Conventional Faith Stage of Adolescence

This is stage three in the six stage faith development theory. In its adolescent form, it does not find its transition from stage two before the ages eleven or twelve and the transition to stage four may begin at ages seventeen or eighteen.

1. Form of Logic

The emergence of formal operational thinking allows for the formation of a variety of hypothetical solutions or explanations and produces methods to test those hypotheses. Thus in problem-solving, formal operational thinking can manipulate propositions and symbols to create possible realities and futures. Thus reality can be a part of possibility (as opposed to the reverse in stage two). Its ability to transcend direct experience enables this form of logic to construct ideal states and view the course of life from a position outside of its present reality. A remembered past and anticipated future can be formed and thus self-discerned aspirations begin to exhibit themselves in personality. This can be nutured if the becomming self is constantly confirmed or shattered if it is not accepted or remains undiscovered.[12]

2. Role-taking

Parallel with the appearance of early formal operations, there can emerge a new dimension in taking the perspec-

tive of others. In simple perspective taking (during earlier concrete operations) the child can imaginatively construct another person's perspective with regard to an independent object. This allows for a better understanding of the object by comparing and contrasting the two perspectives upon it and allows for an expanded awareness of the other person.[13] However with formal operations the adolescent can construct perspectives of another upon him/her self. This is of course mutual between adolescents and so is called mutual interpersonal perspective taking.[14]

The exhibition of personality referred to above is very much influenced by this perspective-taking as the image of self as viewed by others is constructed. The holding together of more than one perspective of the self and others allows for a third person perspective, unidentical with either and transcending both. It is this phenomenon that will allow, in a socially acceptable environment, a shared understanding of God as a transcendent perspective.

The new experiences in mutual perspective taking that adolescents confront (in young love or friendship) must have similar reimaging for God. For if God is to remain in an adolescent's faith at this stage, God must seem to be able of reaching the depths of self and others that the adolescent cannot fathom, as well as knowing, accepting and confirming that emerging self. Fowler has

suggested therefore that the image of transcendence that appeals to adolescents in stage three is a divinely personal significant other.[15]

3. Form of Moral Judgement

The conformist position of moral decision making is a product of the perspective taking described above and as such can be determined by a third person perspective.[16] However it is limited to the interpersonal construction of that perspective and thus deals only with the direct concerns of the adolescent. Compassion, caring and fidelity are shaped by an understanding of law which is seen primarily as a vehicle for supporting good behaviour and correct intentions.[17] Justice is therefore the means by which 'good' people are protected from those that do not share common perceived virtures.[18]

4. Bounds of Social Awareness

The adolescent stage is the first one in which a community may determine the values and commitments the young person holds. This community is one with which the adolescent has immediate contact; that is family, peers, members of the Jewish community groupings that he/she is involved with. However identification with communities that do not share similar values is not possible.[19] There is a perception of a separation between differing communities,[20] as well as an orientation towards other groups as collec-

tions of individuals rather than a cohesive alternative societal form.[21] This aspect is particularly relevant to Erikson's description of adolescent fidelity as the young person must feel supported by his/her community or a sense of role confusion will occur.[22]

5. Locus of Authority

Authority is placed in those persons or institutions in which the adolescent invests trust. Authority figures are, thus, personally respected for their qualities and have to be sanctioned by the institutions that the adolescent identifies with.[23] The locus of authority is external to the self though personal responsibility is accepted for choosing available sources of guidance. Thus there is a shift in respect from the authority of parents to the authority of teachers, leaders, or peer group. The young person may be aware of this shift but may not recognize that his/her values are still determined externally by others. God's authority thus derives from commitment exerting order upon the adolescent's identity.[24]

6. Form of World Coherence

For the person in stage three there is a diversification of outlooks that is held in separate combinations. These segmentations of an adolescent's life overlap as do their influence upon the young person.[25] However, they may not always be in agreement, therefore, the adolescent must

synthesize the values that each of these significant others express, and either 'compartmentalize'; that is holding onto differing and contradictory values in the presence of different groups (i.e. peers or family)[26] or create a hierarchy of authorities where one significant group predominates over the others. This tacit system enables the young person to hold beliefs and values which are grounded in the authority of significant others but which manifest contradictions and allow for a wide interpretation of central values and affirmations.[27]

7. Symbolic Function

The symbol for the adolescent is inextricably bound up with the concept that it symbolizes, so that meaning and symbol define each other. The symbols held as important are identified with because of their inseparable connectedness to the sacred itself, and, therefore, become themselves sacred. Thus, the symbol may have a variety of meanings including metaphorical.[28] The Bible is not simply a book of stories, but becomes a guidebook offering examples for good and loving attitudes; for whatever content has been learned by the adolescent. The symbol no longer requires a concrete referent, but it is still bound to the meaning it symbolizes. So a desecration of the Bible is perceived as a desecration of the meaning it symbolizes.[29] There is a danger that if previous developmental functions of symbols have not been experi-

enced in their continued use and progressive significance, then the symbol can be emptied of sacredness and lead to a vacuum of meaning.[30]

Faith Stage Transformation

Each faith stage needs a full realisation and integration of all the aspects of that stage and thus there is a given time for ascendancy into the next stage as the requirements of the previous one are completed. However Fowler has explicated faith stage transition in terms of a rising spiral movement, rather than the sequential model posed by Piaget. Each successive spiral stage is linked to and adds on to the previous one, without supplanting the issues addressed in that stage or negating the process by which they were resolved. Successive issues are addressed with new levels of complexity within each stage and thus the spirals overlap each other, moving outward towards greater individuation culminating in stage four. The new structural features of each successive stage means a reworking of the contents of one's previous faith stage. Passing through the centres of all stages are the thematic and convictional continuities that support the centering of the complete faith stage development.[31]

It is the disturbance in the certainity of the soundness of perceptions that upsets the balance between assimilation and accomodation. When assimilation can no longer occur, accomodation forces the structures of the mind to adapt to a new and higher level.[32] Just as there is for Piaget, formal thinking as opposed to formal thinkers, so too in the faith developmental spiral; adolescents

can utilise the structuring of their appropriate stage but may also rework or reconstitute earlier aspects of ego development in a recapitulation of their faith development.[33]

The transition from one stage to another can be a long and painful process of relinquishment and reconstruction since it involves enduring the dissolution of a set of structuring operations. It entails living with ambiguities and lack of a sense of coherence until that transition evolves into a full resolution of the next stage.[34] Thus in the faith dimension doubt must play its part as a necessary process in the forming of new structures to be integrated and resolved. The role of doubt is therefore an important aspect in the consideration of making a transition between faith stages.

Developmental theory however is limited in that it cannot be responsive to the individual if the person is "boxed into" a rigid scale. Neither should it be viewed as an evaluative scale by which to measure the comparative worth of people. The stages are models for which the interrelations of thinking and activity can be better understood and clarify the aims of an educational process.[35] Developmental theory can only be an engineering tool for constructing social environments and cannot be used as a universal norm in responding to the individual.[36]

Thus our objective should be to provide concrete building blocks for an adolescent's development in abstract

experiences by use of a "sponsoring" technique; the term used by Erikson and expanded by Fowler to describe the person, community or enviroment that provides affirmation, encouragement, guidance and models for a young person's development. The sponsor may support or confront depending on circumstances of doubt or self-deceptions respectively The sponsor should be able to provide the experiences and be a model for this development.[37]

Stage Three and Beyond: The Jewish Fourteen Year Old

Sharon Parks has distinguished two substages within Fowler's Stage Four and thus clarifies the difficulties that confront Fowler when describing those adolescents who have moved up out of Stage Three. He defined a large sample as "equilibriated transitionals" who are between the Conventional and Individuative Stages.

Parks, drawing on the work of Kenneth Keniston, describes this era as being one of self-awareness, individuated from family and holding values and integrity that are distinguished from the conventional community,[38] that is an explicit rather than a tacit system of knowing. The most significant aspects that are different in this newly discovered era are in the realms of Locus of Authority and a resulting Form of Dependence. In this transition from conventional to post-conventional faith, the Locus of Authority shifts from those assumed centres of trust outside the self through sources of authority one has chosen to that which is located within. Parks compliments this cognitive dimension with an affective movement in dependence, moving from trusting others to trusting within.[39] In discussing Fowler's aspect of Bounds of Social Awareness, Parks details that young people select an affiliate group with which to identify, but the group is set apart from the rest of society and it shapes its members.[40]

These transitional qualities that Fowler discovered

are described by Keniston as resulting in ambivalence towards self and society.[41] This may take the form of rejecting self or society. On the other side, the faith of such a young person seeks the ideal as he/she utilises the capacity of formal thinking. This ideal must be consistent and of a pure quality that upholds the purity of the emerging identity and reflects its concern for ideal conditions. As has been noted, it is the ideological nature of society that attracts the adolescent and is thus affirmed by them in terms of loyalty.

The unsuitability of Fowler's Stage Three to completely describe the Jewish fourteen year old as a conventionalist, especially in a non-dogmatic religious faith, is now apparent with the availability of placing such an adolescent in a transitional stage between Fowler's Stages Three and Four as researched by Sharon Parks. I, therefore, devised a random sampling test to determine exactly where the Jewish adolescent stands vis a vis each of the aspects of Fowler's and Park's stage descriptions. The test, comprising twelve questions, was answered by nineteen fourteen year olds from four religious school classes in three separate schools, two in Westchester, New York and two in Manhattan, New York. The majority of young people consisted of ninth graders though some were of the eighth grade. The test followed a six month period of observation of these adolescents in the classroom and weekend

retreat situations. On coding the responses to the test, these reflective observations were taken into account in ambiguous replies. Because of this relationship with the respondents, I was able to eliminate a small number of students whose replies were typically inappropriate. The aspects of role-taking and symbolic function were coded on two separate questions and were to ensure that the results of these important aspects of adolescent faith were valid. For it is third person role-taking (4) that allows for an understanding of God as transcendent and a personally meaningful symbolism (4) that provides an expression of that understanding.

The questions, the aspect to which they refer and the coding system followed appears below. Examples of typical replies are also listed.

TESTING OF JEWISH FOURTEEN YEAR OLDS ACCORDING TO THE DEVELOPMENTAL FAITH STAGES OF FOWLER AND PARKS

Form of Logic

Question 4: Jack is Laura's grandson. Laura is Michael's mother. What relationship could Jack be to Michael?

Question 5: By what process did you do the last question?

Coding: 3-Early Formal Operations

4-Formal Operations

Examples: jotting on page=3
"I draw a picture in my head"=3
"figured it out"=4

Role-Taking

Question 11: If someone asked your best friend to describe you, what would they say?

Question 12: What would you add or subtract from this description of you?

Question 6: My teacher is a real bitch, she treats us like shit and never lets us talk in class or contribute in any way at all. She must be a terrible mother to her own children. What do you think of this statement?

Coding: 3-Deep concern for others' judgements of self and heavy reliance upon interpersonal virtues for evaluating truth or value

4-ability to judge oneself and others critically in the light of world view

Examples: (for question 6)
"I would probably agree that she is a bad mother."=3

Testing (cont.)

"The statement is not necessarily true because your students are there to learn and for nothing else unlike one's own children."=4

(for questions 11 and 12)
"she laughs a lot and she's really nice"=3
"They would describe me the same as I would describe myself."=4

Form of Moral Judgement

Question 7: If someone has to steal a rare drug to cure an illness for someone they love because they can't afford to buy it, should they? Why or why not?

Coding: 3-good intentions and showing of empathy

4-orientation towards societal system: Law and acceptance of consequences

Examples: "Yes, if they love the person they were doing it for"=3
"They should but the person must be willing to face the consequences"=4
"They should first try every other possible way of getting it; if they can't, they should be able to because life is important"=4

Bounds of Social Awareness

Question 8: Complete the following sentence one of two
Question 9: ways; I like/do not like Christians (Christianity) because.....

Coding: 3-out groups related to as individuals but not as alternative systems

Testing (cont.)

4-assimilates perspectives of other groups into their own norms

Examples: "I don't like Christians because its not my religion"=3
"I like Christians because they are people, but I don't believe Jesus is a savior"=4

Locus of Authority

Question 1: Please mark on the continuum the answer to this statement; I make important decisions according to the advice of.....?

Coding: 3-assumed sources of authority

4-chosen sources of authority

Examples: middle of line-equal balance between chosen and choosing authorities=3
positively skewed-(mark to left) more emphasis on chosen source=4

Form of World Coherence

Question 3: Pick the letter or letters that complete this sentence for you: I have the same values as a) my parents b) my friends c) my Jewish tradition d) my hero or heroine e) none of these

Coding: 3-interaction in a tacit system (compartmentalization)

4-ability to hold together explored systems (dicotomizing)

Examples: "b" or "d"=3

"a & b" or "e"=4

Testing (cont.)

Symbolic Function

Question 2: Please fill in the gap in the sentence; The Menorah means _____ to me

Question 10: Finish this sentence; when I see the flames of a candle, I think of.....?

Coding: 2-literal correspondence understanding-concrete referent

3-abstract symbolism directly linked to symbol

4-personally meaningful symbolism separated from symbol

Examples: (for question 2)
"a seven-branched candlestick"=2
"a tradition of Judaism"=3
"nothing"=3
"symbolizes my ancestors"=4
"personally very little"=4
(ed.: symbol emptied of sacredness)

(for question 10)
"fire"=2
"a warm feeling"=3
"when I see the flame of a candle, I think of freedom and peace"=4

TABLE 1

INDIVIDUAL CODING

ASPECTS OF FAITH

	Locus of Authority	Symbolic Function	World Coherence	Form of Logic	Role Taking	Moral Judgement	Social Awareness	Symbolic Function	Role Taking
	QUESTION NUMBER								
Student No.	1	2	3	4 & 5	6	7	8 & 9	10	11&12
1	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	2	3
2	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	4
3	4	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3
4	4	2	3	4	3	4	4	4	3
5	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4
6	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	2	3
7	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	2	3
8	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	4
9	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4
10	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
11	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	3
12	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	4
13	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4
14	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	2	3
15	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	3
16	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4
17	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	2	4
18	4	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3
19	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	2	4
Total	75	57	69	68	70	68	72	55	67
Average	3.95	3	3.63	3.58	3.68	3.58	3.79	2.89	3.53
Mode	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	2	4

TABLE 2

CODING BY STAGES

Question	Aspect	Fowler Stage 2	Fowler Stage 3	Parks 'Young Adult' Stage
1	Locus of Authority		1	18
2	Symbolic Function	2	15	2
3	World Coherence		7	12
4 & 5	Form of Logic		8	11
6	Role-Taking		6	13
7	Moral Judgement		8	11
8 & 9	Social Awareness	8	4	15
10	Symbolic Function		5	6
11 & 12	Role-Taking		9	10
Total		10	63	98

The analysis of Jewish fourteen year olds shows there to be a higher correlation of certain aspects of faith to the 'young adult' stage (coded here as four) than to Fowler's stage three. (See tables one and two.) When computing the mode (most frequently occuring score) of individual aspects all but one had a majority frequency of four; that is, representing the young adult stage. There was an overall majority of code four as well when considering the test as a whole. Both modes for the aspect of symbolic function showed a distinctly lower level somewhere between Fowler's second and third stage. The emptying of sacredness from Jewish symbols due to a loss of centering as has been mentioned before was in evidence in a number of replies. This, therefore, seems to be an aspect of faith that is in need of development in order to create an integrated stage of faith for the adolescent. However the other aspects tested determine that there is a consistency amongst them and should allow for a coherent and critical faith structuring.

The implications of these findings are therefore:
1. Recognizing a person's faith stage allows us to provide models for nuture and growth applicable to that stage.
2. The faith stage of a Jewish adolescent serves to organise the totality of his/her life in all aspects except the meaningful use of symbolic function for which we must provide the opportunity for personal constructions

of images and insights in religious language, rituals and symbols.

3. The world coherence of the adolescent demands a full commitment of the ego identity in word and action.

4. The opportunity to understand the concept of transcendence is available if appropriate vocabulary and experience can be provided for the imagination. However this will not occur by way of transmissive models of education rather by an evolving self awareness and perspective on others utilising the centering continuities of Judaism.

5. Nuturing a person within a faith stage will provide support for new horizons of faith growth, and this must be accomplished with a sponsoring guide as opposed to merely a "teacher".

CHAPTER TWO - Footnotes

[1]J. W. Fowler. Life Maps: Conversations on the Journey of Faith, ed. J. Berryman, (Waco, Texas: Words Books, 1978), p. 23-24.

[2]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981), p. 17.

[3]Ibid., p. 22-23.

[4]Ibid., p. 11-13.

[5]Ibid., p. 3.

[6]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 107.

[7]Ibid., p. 109.

[8]J. W. Fowler. Life Maps, p. 39-41.

[9]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 102.

[10]R. L. Selman. "Social Cognitive Understanding" in T. Lickona, ed., Moral Development and Behavior, (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976), p. 299.

[11]M. M. Wilcox. Developmental Journey, (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), p. 228.

[12]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 152.

[13]M. M. Wilcox. Developmental Journey, p. 106.

[14]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 73.

Footnotes (continued)

[15]Ibid., p. 153.

[16]Ibid., p. 74.

[17]M. M. Wilcox. Developmental Journey, p. 104.

[18]Ibid., p. 111.

[19]Ibid., p. 110.

[20]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 161.

[21]M. M. Wilcox. Developmental Journey, p. 108.

[22]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 77.

[23]M. M. Wilcox. Developmental Journey, p. 110.

[24]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 154.

[25]J. W. Fowler. Life Maps, p. 61.

[26]M. M. Wilcox. Developmental Journey, p. 101.

[27]J. W. Fowler. Life Maps, p. 62.

[28]Ibid., p. 64.

[29]M. M. Wilcox. Developmental Journey, p. 115. See also R. Goldman, Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1964), p. 69.

[30]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 163.

Footnotes (continued)

[31]Ibid., p. 274.

[32]M. M. Wilcox. Developmental Journey, p. 57.

[33]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 289.

[34]J. W. Fowler. Life Maps, p. 38.

[35]Ibid., p. 38. See also M. M. Wilcox, Developmental Journey, p. 166.

[36]D. E. Huebner. "From Theory to Practice: Curriculum" in Religious Education, Vol. 77:4, (July-August, 1982), p. 374.

[37]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 286.

[38]S. Parks. "Young Adult Faith Development: Teaching in the Context of Theological Education" in Religious Education, Vol. 77:6 (November-December, 1982), p. 664.

[39]Ibid., p. 659.

[40]Ibid., p. 667.

[41]K. Keniston. "The Struggle of Conscience in Youth" in Conscience, ed., C. Ellis Nelson, (New York: Newman Press, 1973), p. 336.

[42]S. Parks. "Young Adult Faith Development," p. 667.

CHAPTER THREE

EXISTING TEACHING MATERIALS

Teaching about God in Progressive Judaism

The Pittsburgh and Columbus platforms along with the Centenary Perspective of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, in their statements relating to God describe the way in which God is perceived and affirmed in Reform Judaism. Thus the Pittsburgh platform proclaimed in 1975,

> We encourage in every religion an attempt to grasp the Infinite One, and in every mode, source or book of revelation held sacred in any religious system the consciousness of the Indwelling of God in man. We hold that Judaism presents the highest conception of the God-idea as taught in our Holy Scriptures and developed and spiritualized by the Jewish teachers in accordance with the moral and philosophical progress of their respective ages. We maintain that Judaism preserved and defended amid continual struggles and trials and under enforced isolation this God-idea as the central religious truth for the human race. [1]

Whilst in Columbus in 1937 the God-idea was described thus,

> The heart of Judaism and its chief contribution to religion is the doctrine of the One, living God, who rules the world through law and love. In Him all existence has its creative source and mankind its ideal of conduct. Through transcending time and space, He is the indwelling presence of the world, we worship Him as the Lord of the Universe and as our merciful Father.[2]

The transformations that the world and the Jewish people had gone through between 1937 and 1976 lead the Centenary Perspective to state,

> The affirmation of God has always been essential to our people's will to survive. In our struggle through the centuries to preserve our faith, we have experienced and conceived of God in many ways. The trials of our own time and the challenges to modern culture have made steady belief and clear understanding difficult for some. Nevertheless, we ground our lives, personally and continually, on God's reality and remain open to new experiences and conceptions of the Divine. Amid the mystery we call life, we affirm that human beings, created in God's image, share in God's eternality despite the mystery we call death.[3]

All of these statements allow for a wide variety of possibilities for a personal theology embracing pantheism, panentheism, monotheism, agnosticism and theonaturalism but excluding polytheism and atheism.[4] Thus there is no single

directive God-idea to transmit to our Jewish adolescents, rather the spectrum of possibility for belief provides a rich and diverse choice for personal synthesis.

The ability of the adolescent to hold together explored systems as investigated in the previous chapter ensures that the Reform desire, not to provide credos or dogmas in religious belief is one that is not just theologically sound but psychologically available as well. Though a critical choice of theological position can not be made at this stage, the holding of more than one position is definitely possible and their mutual exclusiveness can be recognized.

However there was an absense of direction in the teaching of theology by the Reform movement, because of this non-prescriptiveness, until 1977. The annual curricula of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations from 1937 to 1956 avoided the theological teaching issue entirely, not mentioning God at all. From 1957 onwards, though theological concerns were felt to be essential in education, the abundance of theological positions within the movement made it impossible for them to designate specific ages at which students might be exposed to historically validated Jewish belief systems, and in so doing chose to ignore the dilemma. It was not until 1960 that the following paragraph appeared in the UAHC curriculum,

> If we may view God, Torah and Israel as the three elements which together encompass Judaism, it would seem that our curriculum's subject matter deals mostly with Torah and Israel. For both pedagogic and religious reasons we believe that teaching about God is best done indirectly, though with firm purpose, through the entire curriculum as opposed to being done directly as a single subject among other subjects. The literature and the history, the ethics and the observances which go to make up Torah provide us with the concrete and practical situations in which we may come to know and learn about God. Knowing the background of our religious people Israel and participating in its life today renew for us the sense of our continuing Covenant with God and provide us with the living context in which we may understand our relations to Him better. As long as teachers are aware that the subject matter is largely a means of learning about and serving God, then this program's attempt to teach the pre-high school child about God in terms of concrete and life-centred situations may prove successful.[5]

This concept of indirect theological instruction, though of vital importance when considering development of moral judgement cannot provide a full and ego-fulfilling integration of the God-idea. In addition a cognitive study of the various theological systems will challenge the form of logic in the adolescent as they apply their formal thinking to each contrasting theological approach.

1977 saw a fuller analysis of the problem of teaching Reform Jewish theology written by Dr. Eugene B. Borowitz, pointing to the direction in which instructional material

would be constructed and theological issues finally tackled in the classroom:

> 1. We do not accept the Jewish tradition as authoritative but claim a Jewish right to dissent from it.
> 2. No aspect of contemporary culture or its totality merits sufficient confidence that Jewish tradition should be interpreted in its terms.
> 3. Modern philosophy offers us no single, compelling standard of judgement.
> 4. Modern Science offers us no single, compelling standard of judgement.
> 5. I do not see that it will be possible to synthesize elements of the contemporary pluralism into a higher unity which captures the good of them all.....
> 6. The popular mind will.....treat this fragmentation by practising an unconscious eclecticism.
> 7. The result of this uncertainity is that there is no generally agreed upon outline of what constitutes the agenda for liberal Jewish theology.[6]

However Borowitz concludes that non-rational approaches to theology will be given priority because of 1) an affirmation of orthodoxy, 2) an unquestioning adherence to Jewish ritual, 3) feelings as a substitute for intellect, 4) interest in mysticism, 5) emphasis on the self as a

source of insight, 6) Israel as an object of faith, and 7) the Holocaust being a determinant of contemporary Jewish theology.

This approach confirms the underlying sense of ego identity that must prevail when teaching about God. An aspect that Fowler found difficult to catergorize,[7] but one that Borowitz lucidly analysises in terms of Jewish sociology.

Research was conducted in 1977 by Gertman and 1980 by Syme to determine whether there was positive non-prescriptive God teaching occuring in the Reform religious schools, following the outlines laid out by the UAHC curriculum. Gertman found, in a National survey of Reform religious schools, that theology was infrequently taught up to eighth grade and after that in only 40% of all religious schools. Most schools waited until 10th grade to teach theology because that was normally the Rabbi's class and Gertman so concluded that more teacher training in theology was needed.[8]

The study showed that theology has effectively been removed from the Reform religious school prior to Junior High School and suggested a reluctance on the part of un-prepared teachers to approach the subject for fear of doing more harm than good when treating the subject of God.

The implications of this are profound when relating them to Fowler's observations on cognitive theology:

without cognitive integration of faith stages that carry latent concepts up through the spiral of transformation, it is difficult to obtain a meaningful and centering faithing without an act of 'conversion'.[9] The need for self-aware and continually developing sponsors has been explicated, but the very nature of faith development being an orientation of the personality of the individual, rather than merely an imposed curricula activity mandates its construction to be supported by a supportive and stimulating enviroment, and not merely by the 'experts' in the field. The questions cannot be avoided, adolescents will unceasingly concentrate on their way-of-being-in-relation to their community and to themselves, so that teachers can only seek to perpetuate this searching by being better prepared themselves, rather than by trying to avoid the subject completely.

Syme's research indicated that, in the data obtained, teachers did express God-talk in an overwhelmingly non-prescriptive fashion as stipulated by the movement. Over 90% of all functional pedagogic thought units presented in class sessions on God, were non-prescriptively phrased, and this was irrespective of the ideological self-categorization of the individual teachers assessed. However his research discovered that teachers were primarily directive in their God-talk rather than responsive to the questions and searchings of their children.[10]

However, Fowler has determined that a transcendent perspective of God will occur in adolescence only through mutual interpersonal perspective taking. One that allows for a third person perspective unidentical with either and transcending both, which accepts and confirms that emerging self. Thus this will not occur by transmissive models of education, but rather by an evolving perspective on self and others. Furthermore, according to Borowitz, when discussions of Jewish theology occur, a group-dynamic pattern may fix the roles of students and teacher: the students attacking Judaism while the teacher is its defender. Thus students should be motivated to articulate their beliefs and their reasons for them as an independent, personal matters, as well as in response to their fellow-students' questions. This responsive mode of teaching should be extended to the point where the teacher may raise doubts about Jewish belief in such a way as to permit students to discover the depths of their own resources of faith and knowledge when responding.[11]

Using Syme's conclusions, we see the ideological parameters that Reform Judaism sets for the classroom: These are that the teaching should be non-prescriptive, except for the traditional Jewish stipulations that there should be a positive affirmation of the One God, who has been conceived in history but is present today also. This approach to teaching theology will be added to Fowler's

seven aspects, particular that of 'Form of Logic,' and 'Form of World Coherence' when analysising and critiquing the existing curricula material available for use in Reform religious schools.

Criteria for Analysis

The following psychological criteria were used to critique curricula material for use in teaching God, taking into account the ideological parameters defined above. Each is governed by the 'young adult' stage characteristics and limitations of Fowler's seven aspects of faith.

1. Form of Logic

   Does the material provide cognitive non-prescriptive theology that enables the student to utilise formal thinking? Is there also included material that sparks the imagination and sense of ecstatic? Is reality presented as part of possibility and an opportunity to construct personally discerned ideal states?

2. Role Taking

   Does the material allow the student to judge him/herself and others critically in the light of ideas presented? Is this achieved using a responsive mode of classroom interaction? Are the concepts of a transcendent God so presented, as to know,

accept and confirm the emerging identity of the student by nature of a divinely personal significant Other? Is the potential sacredness of all emphasized in the perspective upon others?

3. Form of Moral Judgement

Are moral judgements orientated towards a societal system with clear implications of consequences described?

4. Bounds of Social Awareness

Does the material assimilate the perspectives of out-groups within the students' norms? Is there a sense of inclusion of the students' commitment and fidelity towards Judaism? Is the historical conception of God in an ongoing Jewish community validated?

5. Locus of Authority

Are decisions sought from students by means of chosen sources of authority? Is Divine authority and religious truth derived from order exerted upon the students' identity? Is there provided facility for a sponsoring guide to be positively involved in the process of locating and commiting oneself to truth, as well as dealing with the transformation of doubt?

6. Form of World Coherence

Does the material provide the opportunity to hold together explored systems, that are fully represented by way of relevant vocabulary and experience?

7. Symbolic Function

Does the material provide examples of abstract symbolism that is directly linked to that symbol? Does the material seek to develop personally meaningful symbolism that is separate from the symbol itself? Is there a full use of the different types of symbols: language, names, objects, statements, and ritual acts? Are symbols previously emptied of sacredness filled with renewed significance and integrated into the totality of a student's faith?

Meyer Levin. Beginnings in Jewish Philosophy, (New York: Behrman House, 1971)

Levin proceeds in this text from simple explanations of the nature of the world around us, through an awakening realisation by Jews of that world, to determining cognitive understandings of God. The concepts of reward and punishment, prayer, suffering, Ten Commandments, ethics, and life after death are phrased in the form of responses to basic questions about them. A mystical interpretation of religious experiences concludes the book.

The introduction emphasizes the open questioning that Judaism encourages, as well as its historical development of ideas. In presenting the emerging religious traditions that have evolved in Jewish history, Levin refers to the symbols of each age, that were significant to belief (p. 42). When dealing with theology, Levin provides a clear and succinct, yet less than full analysis of a number of theological positions. This presentation of different kinds of 'knowing' about God does not give the student the capacity to construct forms of logic based on his brief material. Scriptural, Rabbinic and Hasidic metaphors are brought to describe the God search, but no allowance is made for personal role-taking on the part of the student or directed towards him/her. Thus the heavy historical account is not matched by a meaningful

personal orientation towards a search for God.

Here, therefore, there is no explication of a full system that the student can explore and hold in conjunction with others. A resulting lack of world coherence will therefore occur. There is, in fact, rather an emphasis on the linkage and similarity between differing theological positions, at times blurring their distinctiveness, for as Levin writes (p. 111): "Unity far outweighs outward differences." This approach does not serve to provide the means of explicit understanding, that the student needs to integrate into his/her faith stage.

The use and function of prayer is not given its wide-ranging full value and thus limits the understanding of the student (p. 91). Hillel's dictum is used to ensure the worth of all peoples (p. 156) and their struggles, whilst commitment to Judaism is encouraged even in diverse groups (p. 111).

The ideals of a messianic age are described in brief, historical and traditional modes, as are all the parallel chapters; this will enable the student to be cognitive of the terms and explanations that Judaism offers for each of these implications of faith, particularly a non-rationalist faith which sets the balance in most of the discussions.[14] Merely this, however, will not develop a full integration of all aspects of faith when using this material.

Levin thus provides for ability in the realms of 'Form of Moral Judgement,' 'Bounds of Social Awareness' and 'Locus of Authority' but because a 'Form of Logic' and 'Role-Taking' are not exploited, a resulting lack of 'World Coherence' can be expected when using this material alone.

Roland B. Gittelsohn. Wings of The Morning. (New York: UAHC, 1969)

& Richard A. Levine. Teacher's Guide to Wings of The Morning, (New York: UAHC, 1971)

Student's Workbook for Wings of The Morning, (New York: UAHC, 1972)

Gittelsohn's book begins with a detailed description of the order and rationality of the Universe. It moves onto a comparison between a concept of God proved from the order of nature, and a traditional Jewish belief. Finally it determines the implications of a naturalist faith in terms of ethics, Jewish People, Ten Commandments, prayer, suffering and afterlife. Each chapter is concluded with short passages stating 'other views' upon the nature of the specific topic, and 'thought starters' to expand and apply the text itself. These 'other views' are mostly of secondary material and contrast a traditional and other modern outlooks with Gittelsohn's naturalist explanations in the body of the text. There is no attempt to create a systematic format of other views as there is with Gittelsohn's own material.

In a letter to students at the beginning of the book, Gittelsohn explains the reason for this format:

> Because my religious views are among the most significant attitudes in my life, I shall try to present them as

> emphatically and persuasively as I can. Yet you are entitled to become aware of the other points of view too. Therefore, wherever possible, I have inserted at the end of a chapter quotations culled from writers whose interpretations differ from mine.[12]

This text is, therefore, virtually a description of a prescriptive theology, with a few random alternatives in writings upon other thinkers. It does not therefore allow for a holding together of more than one explored system which are fully described and analysed. For, even though Gittelsohn allows for an acceptance or a rejection of his ideas, he places no coherent system in its place. The Student's workbook is basically a preparatory assignment for recall and comprehension of the text, though with some application and analysis as well. The teacher's guidebook states categorically that its ultimate objective is to instruct teachers to give guidance, not answers (p. 1) but specifically does not intend to be a lesson plan, rather an additional source of materials and questions:

> The most important thing to be remembered by all teachers is that class sessions are to be based on discussion and group participation and are not lectures. The basic principle is that the teacher should not give to the pupils any information that they are able to find out or reason for themselves, and the class should first be given an opportunity to answer all questions before the teacher supplies the information.[13]

At the rear of the teacher's guide is a small selection of audiovisual aids, which together with the drawings at the beginning of each chapter and a number of cartoons, make up the only alternative models of teaching to the recommended discussions and quizzes. This, therefore, coupled with the layout of the teacher's guide, though not regimenting the teacher into a specific lesson plan, provides little or no suggestions for responsive interactions in the classroom. As Gertman pointed out, (And You Shall Teach Them Diligently, p. 37) since theology has not been an integral part of the religious school curriculum, teachers require positive assistance in classroom activities that will fulfill the goals and objectives of the topic. This is sorely lacking in this text.

As a good introduction to the course, students are asked to clarify their thoughts on God and prayer by means of a true/false questionnaire, these are then evaluated at the end of the course. Chapter One mentions in passing, the concepts of knowledge as a foundation for faith (p. 11), freedom of thinking in Judaism (p. 16), developmental growth (p. 8) and a recognition of the importance of doubt (p. 19) but does not provide opportunities later in the text for the students to experiment with these. In addition there is a definite aversion to a use of imagination or ecstasy as a form of logical conviction as defined by Fowler (see page 13).

There is a tendency to have students evaluate Christian concepts of God and humankind, resulting in students passing negative judgement upon opinions of out-groups, whose perspectives become assimilated into Jewish norms. This does not achieve Gittelsohn's goal of sharpening the clear differentiation between them, as in the case of the investigation into the Trinity (p. 127) or the efficacy of the sign of the Cross (Teacher's Guide, p. 68). An historical assessment of traditional Jewish views of God begins with a description of symbolic names for God (p. 133) but all are ultimately negated in favour of the naturalist interpretation. Even a personally transcendent God is not offered as a valid concept, for the author does not conceive of God that way, though the lack of this experience is bemoaned on page 166.

Gittelsohn presents a section on God being the sum total of ideals allowing the student to view reality as a part of possibility (p. 169) and appreciate the changing notion of the 'coming of the Messiah' (p. 212). The place of ethics is discussed in terms of social values of the community in which differing peoples lives (Teacher's Guide, p. 48) and this is an appropriate method for reaching a form of moral judgement. Ritual as a symbolic expression receives a mention. Yet there is no sense of renewed significance for the student or integration into the totality of faith development. The definitions of

prayer and their legitimate uses are explored, emphasizing the critical adolescent concept, '<u>lehitpalel</u>' to judge oneself. Various functions of prayer are presented so that a synthesis may occur.

Therefore, though Gittelsohn provides a challenge for the student's set of formal operations, and presents faith as a holistic knowing, he does so prescriptively and in a transmissive manner. The Teacher's Guide continues this method merely adding to the same process. This removes the ability of the student to fully utilise their 'Form of World Coherence,' or 'Role-Taking.' 'Locus of Authority' is defined by an order of nature which does not extrapolate to a personal God, whilst the 'Bounds of Social Awareness' are at times, overstepped, in terms of the adolescent's ability to view out-groups. 'Symbolic Function' is only treated in part and is not integrated into the totality of the student's developing faith.

Thus from the criteria developed, this material does not fulfill many of the requirements for full faith stage development and integration. Though it attempts to cover a number of the aspects with great depth and perception, others are left unresolved for the student.

E. B. Borowitz. Understanding Judaism, (New York: UAHC, 1979)

& Alan D. Bennett, Howard Laibson, and Richard Shapiro. A Teaching Guide for Understanding Judaism, (New York: UAHC, 1982)

Borowitz introduces his text by emphasizing the importance of free discussion of ideas in past and present Judaism and presents the book as a means for Jewish study-arguements (p. xv). Thus the chapters are arranged in response to a series of questions that young people ask; these cover ethics, the nature of the Jewish People, historical realities and belief in God. The teaching guide provides a useful exercise in analysing the photographs that begin each chapter along with other strategies for suggested classroom activities. A list of additional textual and audiovisual resources accompanies each chapter in the teaching guide. There is, therefore, provided for the teacher a means to implement the text above and beyond the study-arguements that the author advocates. Many of these involve student interaction in a specific and directive form and as such encourage role-taking to take place. The author, in a note to the teacher, in the teaching guide concurs with our psychological criteria when he writes:

> Facing the options should help your students clarify where they now stand

> and make them aware of views they may someday find more acceptable. Besides, it will put them into the situation of having to decide things for themselves, exactly what liberal Judaism would like to encourage and what they, at this stage of their life, are ready for.[15]

This will result in a testing between absolute freedom of ideas and liberal Judaism's teachings on a particular issue, and the author recognizes that, through this tension will occur a development in faith.

A special note is given to the historical concept of belief in each chapter, but Borowitz makes plain that this material is secondary to the main goal; "We want to help the students explore and strengthen their own belief, not merely to acquire fascinating data about how Jews once believed" (Teaching Guide, p. 2).

The recognition of a holistic knowing to integrate a faith stage is clearly understood by Borowitz and amply reflected throughout the text:

> Each chapter begins with something from the student's personal experience, preferably one which will evoke feelings as well as ideas. I would like to think that they may be more effective than that, leading the student to invest self as well as mind and emotion in the topic raised. All three levels should be touched if we are to have effective religious education.[16]

Chapter One is a direct challenge to the students to judge themselves and self-assess their perspectives on

themselves and others. This emphasis on ethical behaviour, therefore begins this book on God in Judaism. It is the orientation of the personality that builds to formulate a concept of faith, through the interaction of that self with significant others and with the historical community.

The concept of 'yetzer ha-ra' as a directive influence, upon an individual's moral decision making takes into account the adolescent's particular requirement of adjusting to the community around him/her and realising the consequences of his/her actions (p. 12). The teaching guide gives practical applications on this subject for the student to determine for him/her self within a group identity (Teaching Guide, p. 5).

Chapter Two encourages the student to form a locus of authority within themselves, but one that is confirmed without. The criteria used for decision making is the avoidance of losing control upon the self, and this creates an authority-making that exerts an ordering influence upon the student. This is complimented in the teaching guide by what is probably the most effective model of teaching for faith development, that of role-play (Teaching Guide, p. 9).

The clear explanation of the symbolic act renews the significance of the objectives of ritual and offers the student the capability to judge for him/her self. This is based on personal and communal familiarity with the ritual, leading hopefully, to a more meaningful use of it.

The invention of new rituals (Teaching Guide, p. 13) invests the symbolic nature of the act, with a great deal of renewed significance. However the exercise in the teaching guide (p. 16) on writing a prayer foreshadows any explanations of symbolic language and concepts of the function of prayer.

The recognition of the family circumstances of many students who read the book, supports the one parent Jewish household in which they may live. This allows the student to identify with a community that may value highly the role of the family, but also takes into account the needs and struggles of those without. However the teaching guide to this chapter (p. 18) does not provide one teaching strategy to translate the book's recognition of this vital aspect into the classroom.

The text and the teaching guide extending it, enable the student to construct a vocabulary for their sense of the ideal (p. 93 & Teaching Guide, p. 28) in terms of a contrast between Messiah and Messianic Age.

The importance of defining the student's commitment to Judaism, whilst not at the expense of not identifying with the common culture, is dealt with in a chapter entitled; "Why do Jews have to be different" (p. 103). Thus confronting the question leads on to a discussion of the holy (separate) people.

The unique and fascinating section on Bible and

tradition with responses by Orthodox and Conservative spokespeople enables the student to hold explored systems in a coherent fashion and be able to distinguish the differences between them.

On reaching the chapters on theology, Borowitz explains an historical conception of God in Judaism, but includes this statement; as a validation of the student's personal quest;

> You are a part of that process. With all your Jewish education and now this book we are sharing with you our best Jewish ways of understanding God. With our combined efforts, maybe you will then go on to help us find an even better way of understanding our great God.[17]

Chapter Two of part four is a key section in bringing an understanding of Jewish thought. The introduction to the teaching guide suggests that this chapter be read early on, so that the concepts of symbols can be understood when dealing with figuative meanings, (as shown by the use of quotation marks in the book). A good set of teaching strategies accompany the text integrating them into all aspects of faith development. There is a separate paragraph on the renewal of significance of symbol-words as well as a recognition of a loss of meaning from others.

There is a very lucid account of the nature of Jewish thought on God, though no theological terms or expressions are used, nor names attributed to theological

positions. This does not give the student the full vocabulary and expression of Jewish theology that he/she is capable of having. The teaching guide only defines two such words, those of immanence and transcendence (Teaching Guide, p. 52).

Belief is encouraged both through an understanding of the Jewish conception of God as well as a certain amount of healthy personal doubt, and these two are described hand in hand. Thus development may occur (p. 201). The problems that this belief will then face, defines the nature of the following chapters on the nature of evil, suffering and after-life. This culminates in the author asking the student to put trust or faith in their developed belief, when logical answers cannot be given (p. 222). This is a good use of the student's ability to view the possible through the real, by use of an extrapolated imagination. Finally the author, when examining the need for different religions does not ask the students to evaluate the perspectives of an out-group, thus recognizing the limited ability of the student to do this.

The text therefore reflects all the criteria for faith development that have been used to analysise it. The teaching guide provides a variety of useful strategies to implement these in the classroom. The author himself almost acts as sponsor for the student, ever guiding and directing the material that has gone before, enabling the

student to gain the experience and understanding of a developing faith.

However the lack of a full expression of Jewish theological expressions, appropriate for this age group, does not allow the student to fully develop a 'Form of World Coherence.'

S. Bissell. God: The Eternal Challenge, (Denver: ARE, 1980)

& S. Bissell. God: The Eternal Challenge, Leader Guide. (Denver: ARE, 1980).

The format of the Bissell material is different from that of the other authors in the field. Bissell uses the mini-course design to provide cognitive and affective objectives for her course. The term 'leader guide' is also indicative of a possible use of the material outside the strict boundaries of the classroom. The term mini-course is widely used to describe thematic units of short duration, which for this particular course extend a minimum of 16 hours up to a possible year long curriculum. (leader guide, p. 4) The mini-course is a short-term, high interest, in-depth course designed to teach this selected body of knowledge, and experience.[18]

In an overview of the course, a description is given of the material and its goals:

> God: The Eternal Challenge is based on source materials which stretch the mind and an experiential component which challenge and deepen faith. The course which is strongly rooted in traditional Jewish sources, is enriched with a variety of activities, including Values Clarification exercises, creative writing opportunities and art projects. Thus it represents a purposeful blend of the cognitive and affective realms.[19]

There is also a section of preparation for the leader in teaching the course (leader guide, p. 5); it suggests encouraging a testing of the material and ideas amongst the class, as well as the importance of peers responding to the challenges of the group. It suggests students be asked to keep and share a journal of their developing ideas. The supportive enviroment in which the course is to be taught is clearly described (leader guide, p. 6) as are suggestions for audiovisual means to achieve this. There is a glossary of theological terms defined for the leader, which includes all the expressions that the course seeks to introduce.

Sessions begin with a questioning about God, followed by the historical development of Jewish concepts of God. Various attributes of God are discussed, including the notion of God the Creator, Revealer and Redeemer. The implications of a personal understanding through prayer, doubt, and Covenantal relationship concludes the 'Eternal Challenge.'

All through, however, God is considered a divinely personal significant Other than can confirm the developing self. This approach will allow for an understanding of transcendence in the adolescent. Each section moves from abstract concept to concrete referent, so that God the Creator is manifest in b'rachot, God the Revealer in Torah, God the Redeemer in an ideal future, and God the

Judge in justice. This seeks to achieve the development of meaningful symbolism that can be linked to the concept it represents, and by introducing the concept first, does not invest the symbol with an exclusive meaning, but allows for personal interpretation to be added on.

At the top of each page, separated from the main body of the text there is printed a quotation from the classical Jewish sources which epitomises the concepts described below. A continuous thread of past and present thought thus runs through the text. The link between the classical sources and the narrative is pronounced by use of Hebrew terms that are found in both.

An exercise in selecting God concepts that personally appeal, presumes a reality of God from the very beginning. This is confirmed by an historical description of the characteristics and names of God. This gives the student an orientation to the vocabularly and language of theology. The leader guide then recommends students discuss which of the names or nature of God means the most to them, and why (leader guide, p. 10).

An investigation into four views of Creation allows the student to hold separate hypotheses and determine distinctions between them. The material does not give full details of the hypotheses, but the leader guide does list other references and audiovisual aids (leader guide, p. 11). When discussing God as Judge, and the reasons

for evil, students are asked to create their own symbol of divine justice for interpretation (page 11). In a later chapter students are asked to evaluate the degree of idolatry that Christianity and Buddhism offer in their symbols, which will be automatically high, as students assimilate these notions into the norms of Judaism.

It is suggested that the sesson on prayer be held in the sanctuary with a worship service (leader guide, p. 21). This is a way in which the material to be taught in the course can be integrated into the complete experience of the individual. Music, gestures, and liturgy all are combined to comprise this affective understanding of communication through prayer. At this point of the course, midway through the material, the student is asked to evaluate his/her own faith and then directed on, to find expression of that faith in music, aesthetics, and ritual acts.

The requirements of a mutual partnership between individuals and God necessitates that the attributes of the student be considered in relationship to their concept or sense of God (p. 29). Following this, the student traces their own developmental path of faith, analysing their route along the way (p. 31) and the direction they are headed.

The course thus succeeds affectively by providing many and varied structured experiences in developing

symbolic function and role-taking. However its cognitive material falls short of providing challenging forms of logic or a full sense of world coherence. The material achieves as a sponsoring guide, utilising the first person plural pronoun in its narration and being sensitive to students' doubts and struggles throughout the course. It provides for no development in 'Form of Moral Judgement' and thus the emphasis on the other aspects of faith, though covered well, do not ground the emerging faith stage in the centring structures of Jewish theology.

S. Rittner. The Why Do I Have to Pray Book (A Text That Isn't), (Boston: Rittner Publishers, 1982) You Don't Have to be Moses to Teach About God and Prayer, (Boston: Rittner Publishers, 1982)

Rittner expresses the concern that the models of teaching prayer in the Jewish religious school fall short of achieving their desired aim, primarily because students have not been exposed to mature God concepts, but rather remain with those inherited from very early years. Thus his material introduces the students to those concepts as a means to promote an understanding of prayer. The material differs in that it is not to be used as a primary teaching tool, but rather as a supplement to a variety of other topics:

> The Why Do I Have to Pray Book is not intended as a year or semester course in and of itself. I wrote it specifically to be used as a part of other courses within your curriculum. In this way you can really have fun with it. If you believe that students learning prayers in your Hebrew School need more theological background, the book can be assigned as part of that course. On the other hand if you would like to run a unit dealing with God and prayer as a part of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah course or Bible course, it can be incorporated in these contexts.[20]

The teacher's guide (You Don't Have to be Moses to Teach About God and Prayer) offers a number of suggestions

for teachers when using the book. Rittner gives examples of how he has treated a number of situations in the classroom (teacher's guide, p. 29) and alleviates a lot of concern about the nature of theology and its application in the classroom. A number of comprehension questions are posed in the teacher's guide for the text itself and a wide variety of teaching strategies and activities are listed, but not directly linked to any particular portion of the text. These include Values Clarification, creative writing and audiovisual techniques according to the needs of the material in question and the class. The text itself provides two agree/disagree exercises for the students to complete at the end of each major section of the book; those of teaching theology and prayer (p. 69 and 131). Each question in the agree/disagree chart derives from comment in the material covered.

The introduction to the text seeks to identify with the concerns of the adolescent. It does so by utilising an unfortunate sense of humour, which may be unappealing to the older student, and considered condenscending. However the author shares with the student, feelings he or she may be having with a book on God and prayer.

An analysis of historical conceptions of God that follows, is selective and simplistic, interspersed with exercises that relate to discussions broached in the narrative. A description of contemporary God concepts is

treated lightly and without serious consideration or critical thinking. Two main ideas are contrasted, that of God as 'Superdaddy' and God as 'Impersonal Drive' (p. 59). These are then applied to the daily routines of a young person's life, in order to show the implications of each. There is no reference to modern Jewish thought on theological issues presented. The way in which these two positions are related to daily life do not cover the full implications of each case.

The second part of the book again seeks to appeal to students by relating ideas about prayer to their every-day occurrences. Rittner wishes to provide a link with the student's newly developed concept of God and the view of prayer he or she holds. In this way the prime focus of the book is achieved. However the over-emphasis that the author gives to the superficial realities of an adolescent's life; food, sports, relationships or sex (p. 83), whilst eagerly encouraging some kind of prayer concept, will not provide a challenging and integrated sense of God and prayer.

A description of ritual objects for Jewish prayer (p. 116) returns the discussion to an identification with Jewish practices, as does a brief summary of the history of Jewish worship (p. 127).

This is therefore primarily a text of cognitive theological material with a specific aim of clarifying

the function of prayer for the student and affirming its use. It does not allow for a holding of the major theological positions in Judaism. However there is a strong outreach to the students imagination and many opportunities for stimulated further discussion about personal thought and action. It does not deal with the other aspects of faith, though it does not claim to be an exclusive text for any course.

The 'Form of Logic' is well covered, though this will not lead to an explored 'Form of World Coherence.' It involves the student in 'Role-taking' but 'Bounds of Social Awareness, 'Locus of Authority' or 'Symbolic Function' are not covered. Thus we have material that addresses the early faith stage development of the adolescent but does not lead that individual to a full integration of their faith development.

CHAPTER THREE - Footnotes

[1]E.B. Borowitz. Reform Judaism Today, (New York: Behrman House, 1983), p. 190.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

[4]D. B. Syme. Prescriptive and Non-Prescriptive Teacher Language in Intermediate Grade Classes about God in Reform Jewish Religious Schools, D. Ed. Thesis, (Teachers College: Columbia University, 1980), p. 36.

[5]E. B. Borowitz (ed.). The Curriculum for the Jewish Religious School, (New York: UAHC, 1960), p. 19.

[6]D. B. Syme. Prescriptive and Non-Prescriptive Teacher Language..., p.40. This is a summary of E. B. Borowitz. "Liberal Jewish Theology in a time of Uncertainty, a Holistic Approach" CCAR Year Book, Vol. 87, 1977. p. 124-70.

[7]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 110.

[8]D. B. Syme. Prescriptive and Non-Prescriptive Teacher Language..., p. 49.

[9]J. W. Fowler. Stages of Faith, p. 286.

[10]D. B. Syme. Prescriptive and Non-Prescriptive Teacher Language..., p. 57.

[11]E. B. Borowitz. "On Dealing with Doubt" Jewish Teacher, 33 (Dec. 1964), p. 17.

[12]R. B. Gittelsohn. Wings of The Morning, (New York: UAHC, 1969), p. 3.

Footnotes (continued)

[13]R. A. Levine. Teachers Guide to Wings of The Morning, (New York: UAHC, 1971), p. 1.

[14]Compare the statement of E. B. Borowitz. "Liberal Jewish Theology in a Time of Uncertainity, a Holistic Approach" CCAR Year Book, Vol. 87, 1977. p. 182-4.

[15]E. B. Borowitz. "To the teacher," in A.D. Bennett, H. Laibson, & R. Shapiro. A Teaching Guide for Understanding Judaism, (New York: UAHC, 1982), p. 1.

[16]Ibid., p. 2.

[17]E. B. Borowitz. Understanding Judaism, (New York: UAHC, 1979), p. 185.

[18]A. F. Marcus. "Designing and Teaching Mini-Courses and Short Units" The Jewish Teachers Handbook, Vol. 2 (Denver: ARE, 1981), p. 23.

[19]S. Bissell. God: The Eternal Challenge, Leader Guide, (Denver: ARE, 1980), p. 4.

[20]S. Rittner. You Don't Have to be Moses to Teach About God and Prayer, (Boston: Rittner Publishers, 1982), p. 16.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE S''PPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

Focus of New Material

The analysis of the existing curricula demonstrates that each piece of material emphasises different aspects of faith. The aspects most consistently covered are 'Bounds of Social Awareness' and 'Locus of Authority,' those covered in a majority of texts were 'Form of Logic,' 'Role-Taking' and 'Form of Moral Judgement.' However 'Form of World Coherence' and 'Symbolic Function' were rarely covered in most texts. That these two aspects of faith are not directly explored in the classroom as part of a curriculum designed to develop a stronger and more mature sense of faith, implies that a full integration of the 'young adult' faith stage cannot take place. This is especially relevant in the light of the research done on the Jewish adolescent and their ability with symbolic function. We found the level of understanding of this aspect to be proportionally lower than those of other aspects. Therefore there needs to be appropriate material

on 'Form of World Coherence' and 'Symbolic Function' for the fourteen year old in the Reform religious school.

In presenting a desiderata of new educational material, I outline a general schema and goals for the course, with some lesson plans directly intended for use in the classroom. These should be used as a requisite supplement to the existing curricula material.

Teaching Strategies: What Do We Mean By God?

Goals for the course:

The 'young adult' stage of faith development determines that the 'Form of World Coherence' for the Jewish fourteen year old is an explicit system, aspiring to a comprehensive ideology. Abstract concepts can be employed freely in the construction and communication of an outlook. They are more internally differentiated than at stage three. Thus we must provide the vocabularly and experience that will allow adolescents to hold abstract concepts in comprehensive form. At the same time we seek to develop the adolescent's concept of symbol-words for God. We must begin with concrete analogies and allow the symbols to affect the student personally, whilst keeping the symbol and symbolised bound together. Having achieved this, it is now required to translate their content into usable concepts, thus separating the import of the symbol from

the symbol itself. This will involve a high degree of interpretative activity for the student, at the same time seeking to minimize the direct influence of the symbol; allowing the student to bring it to light and control it.

As a way to teach the adolescent, 'What do we mean by God?' using symbol-words, it is suggested that the simplified six systems of modern Jewish theology be presented and taught in comprehensive fashion, leading to a personal evaluation of their effect on the student's faith development. Modern theologies have been chosen as a means to provide optimum identification with each and the six presented are those that represent the fully systemised theologies that are compatible with Progressive Judaism. The nature of this material requires that one such thinker and his God be fully explicated in each session, developing the symbol-words that describe his position, followed by a culminating session to evaluate the implications of holding each belief about God and a personal synthesis of some of the concepts and symbols introduced.

Outline of Sessions

THINKING AS A WAY TO GOD

Session One: Introduction and 'The Great Idea' of Hermann Cohen

"What do we mean by God" - As an introduction to the first

session and the course of sessions as well, the teacher will lay the enviromental and affective foundations, clarifying that the thinkers presented will only be analysised as to their views on God, Jewish practices and observances, Jewish Peoplehood, the nature or cause of evil, and prayer. These are simplified explanations appropriate for the fourteen year old and do not include any judgements upon the nature of their thinking. As a brief summary Understanding Judaism by Eugene B. Borowitz is recommended for the student. (or Paths to Jewish Belief by E. F. Fackenheim and Challenge to Confirmands by A. J. Wolf if available). For the teacher good descriptions of these thinkers and their positions can be found in Great Jewish Thinkers of the Twentieth Century edited by Simon Noveck, or A New Jewish Theology in the Making by E. B. Borowitz. A critical analysis of these thinkers and their inter-relationship can be gained from E. B. Borowitz's new book, Choices in Modern Jewish Thought (A Partisan Guide). See Bibliography for full references. Preparatory notes for the teacher:

1. The teacher should clarify their own thinking about God and be prepared to share their reasoning with students, both about affirmations and doubts. Students will benefit greatly from the subjective experiences of those who are involved with Judaism in a wide variety of expressions. Remember there

is no singular correct notion of God.

2. The teacher should encourage students to inquire openly and freely, to respond directly and honestly without fear of equivocation and enable the students to discover their own solutions.
3. The teacher should be fully involved in classroom exploration leaving discussions open ended and ensuring a warm and supportive enviroment in the class where no-one can ridicule another or even his/her self.
4. The teacher will grow too through teaching this topic and should be aware of this and as such be prepared to discuss with those peers who can act as sponsor for him/her.

The German Jewish Philosopher Hermann Cohen argued that thinking is what makes us different from animals, particularly in the realm of ethics; making decisions about what is good or bad, as a part of thinking. The best thinking tries to understand the world as a whole and when ideas are true ideas, that is as close as one can come to knowing something is real. Therefore the idea of God is the greatest idea; one that takes in all the reality one can think of. Having such an all embracing idea makes God real and important especially with regard to thinking about what is right or wrong.

The observances and practices that allow us to be

more sensitive to human ethics are ones which should be encouraged in Judaism. Thus Yom Kippur is the day for people to think about improving themselves and Shabbat is the day to allow all that we have, including ourselves, the freedom to cease work and consider our unique ability to co-opt a day of rest. However those observances that go against our sense of reason must be revised for they are not compatible with our best thinking. All other practices can be kept, but they are not necessary only in as far as they make us more ethical.

The Jewish People, for Cohen, is purely a religion that holds this idea of God and has a mission to instruct humankind in reaching a universal ethical outlook. Cohen died before the Holocaust, but believed that suffering is the price Jews have to pay in order to carry out their mission. Thus Jews should bear pain bravely for the sake of this important duty.

Session Two: The Mysterious Great Idea of Leo Baeck

Rabbi Leo Baeck (1873-1956) followed the arguments of Hermann Cohen when expressing what he meant by God. However he supplemented Cohen's concept of God as the Great Idea with a personal feeling of the mystery of God. Baeck decided that a God-idea that required us to be the best we could, did not allow for religious experiences that touch us. Thus he included into the idea of an ethically centred God-idea, the notion that God can be personally

sensed and felt from within us.

Baeck believed that since everyone could think about truth, the Jews could not have had a revelation that no-one else had. But he pointed to history which showed that Jews have always been ethical, and were the first to take on this task. Therefore Jews are pledged to keep this role and carry out their mission. In this way they are a people set apart from others because they have taken on this responsibility which cannot be shirked at any cost.

Leo Baeck was the only major modern Jewish theologian to survive a Concentration Camp, but his theory of evil was worked out before the Nazis came to power. He believed that the source of evil was the rejection of ethical behaviour by people; Since people are free to do good or evil, they can choose either way and are responsible for that choice. As barbarically as the Nazis treated the Jews, Leo Baeck, the Rabbi of Theresienstadt carried out, in saintly fashion, the ethical duties to his people. The power for good or evil is thus completely ours.

Session Three: Power in Nature by Mordecai Kaplan

This approach sees God in nature. The order that exists in the universe whether it is in the sun that rises every day or the apple that drops every time, allows us to trust the processes of nature. Thus God can mean all those things in nature that help us become better persons.

This God cannot be described as personal but rather as a Power or Process, which Rabbi Kaplan (1881-) uses in his writings.

Kaplan wished to make Jewish practices as meaningful as possible because he had eliminated any compulsion from God to do them, so he wanted people to want to carry them out. He said people could do this by first strongly identifying with other Jews and then together work out how they wished to 'reconstruct' their Judaism. Each decision would be based on the needs of the community and thus people would want to do them. Kaplan did not believe that Jews have the only truth in religion but felt that there is a strong sense of community amongst Jews that adds a special flavour to the way we live. So we should in no way regard ourselves as chosen. Kaplan's God cannot be held responsible for evil because his God is limited in power; limited to only those forces in nature that allow us to become better people. Therefore we have to emphasise our good and better nature in order to counter evil. When we pray, we speak to ourselves and this inner reflection will force us to improve. When we pray in a group, it helps bring us all together to encourage us to be better. Therefore the Synagogue is a very important place for Jews to meet and pray.

FEELING AS A WAY TO GOD

Session Four: The Independent Existence of Franz Rosenzweig

A different group of thinkers believe that our minds are just one part of what it is to be a person. In order to get a total sense of the world and of God, we must go beyond thinking--we need to rely more on feelings. When we think we are worthwhile and yet we know that we will not last forever, there is a sense of value about our very being that comes from something more lasting and important than ourselves and that is God. Having realised that, now we can put our minds to work, as did Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929) and determine what this God is like and what God does. For this God is independent of people and yet can be personal towards them.

The way in which each Jew is related to God is via God's Covenant with the Jewish people. This relationship determines what they should do, to best live up to the Covenant, as have all Jews beforehand.

Session Five: The Most Real Person by Martin Buber

Martin Buber (1878-1965) in his famous philosophical poem "I-Thou" suggested that there is a difference between thinking about somebody and about a friend. A friend is someone you can feel especially close to, though you can't necessarily explain it. From this Martin Buber felt God is everyone's close personal friend. Sometimes we feel we have a sense that God is with us, and that becomes so close and special that even if we don't sense

God later on we can know God is real. Since God is greater and more important than anything else, God is the Most Real Person we know.

Buber felt that only those religious acts that supported this friendship should be followed, and that the relationship should be the only factor in determining what tnings to do in Jewish Law. Like Rosenzweig, Buber placed great importance on the Covenant Jews have with God, as a means for all Jews to have a direct relationship with God.

Buber considered that evil could not be fully explained. The relationship with God in this case becomes less direct, but as with a faithful friend, we feel the pain of being left alone, but await the time when our friend will return.

Session Six: Appreciating our World by Abraham Joshua Heschel

Rabbi Heschel (1907-72) said we should go even further with our feelings; we should express our continual wonder of the world and its beauty. Instead of trying to get an idea of God from our experiences, we should be overwelmed that God made them possible. God then is the source of everything, and everything we see is a part of God's greatness. In fact God is so great, we cannot begin to express what God is like.

Thus Heschel tells us that we must fulfill all of God's commandments as these are the way in which Jews have always come to God. Heschel believed too, that evil was the result of our abusing the freedom that God gave to us. He felt that people didn't always try their best to choose good. But he did not think people had a right to question God about our suffering, but rather be appreciative of God's presence instead.

Session Seven: A Divine Simulation

A final session to bring together the God of the differing thinkers and to apply the notion of that God to particular circumstances, thus providing a contrast of concepts and actions. Finally a personal evaluation of the student's faith and doubt using symbol-words understood and expressed personally.

Lesson Plans

Session Five: The Most Real Person by Martin Buber

Objectives: Each student will be able to,

-Describe feelings of friendship both in presence and potential absence.

-List attributes of God that are described in human terms (anthropomorphisms)

-Analysise Biblical conceptions of God's personality

-Apply God's personality to directly linked symbol-words

-Compare the relationship between real friends to God
-Compare the implications of the analogies of those relationships
-Evaluate the nature of the I-Eternal Thou relationship

Teaching Strategies

The teacher announces it is the first day of summer camp, which you have been going to for a number of years, you should greet your old friends whom you have not seen for a whole year.
Students role-play, the teacher picking out at first two students to role-play, then adding every other member of the class by stages, onto the scene.
Teacher stops the role-play.
Teacher announces- it is the last day of camp now, you had a wonderful summer, and this is the last time you will be all together again. Now say goodbye to your friends.
Teacher stops the role-play.
Teacher then asks students to describe their feelings towards their friends in the first role-play and in the second role-play. Teacher lists them on the board in two columns (columns A & B). Teacher asks students to remember their feelings towards their friends, and how real they felt their friends were at that moment.
Split students into two groups, ask one group to make a

list of all the attributes of the best people they know. Ask the other group to make a list of all the attributes of God they know. Get each group eventually to pick out the best ten on their list and put them on the board in a further two columns (columns C & D). First compare lists and then explain the task of each group to the other. In what ways are they similar and or different? Hand out sheet of Biblical verses describing God's personality. Ask students to read and interpret what the Bible is expressing.

1. And God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness." (Genesis 1:26)
   - Compare personality of God and people; Zelem Elohim
2. Shall not the Judge of all the world, do right? (Genesis 18:25)
   - God is all good and fair.
3. The Lord! The Lord!- a God compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in holiness and faithfulness extending kindness to the thousandeth generation, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. (Exodus 34: 6-7)
   - God is kind and merciful
4. Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel
   who leads Joseph like a flock (Psalm 80:2)
   - God's loving care and protection

5. The Rock!- His deeds are perfect,
   Yea, all His ways are just;
   a faithful God, never false,
   True and upright is He. (Deuteronomy 32:4)
   - God as faithful refuge and shield.

The Bible thus describes God in human terms (anthropomorphisms) and these become symbol-words for God: Judge, Shepherd, Rock etc. List these terms on the board in column E.

Martin Buber taught that since our expression of God is similar to those of the best people we know (Zelem Elohim), we can feel close to God when we have a sense of the feelings that describe being with a close friend (Column A), and as we remember the real feelings about being with a friend, we can really feel God. Since God is greater than anyone else. God is the 'most real person' we know. Compare to Biblical symbol-words and add into column E. Have students discuss what friends can and should do for each other and the responsibilities towards each other, thus providing analogies for humankind and God which the students should extrapolate and interpret:

1/Should you do everything a friend tells you to do?
(God's Commandments)

2/Can you be the only friend with this person or should you share him/her with others and when?
(God's People)

3/What things can you ask or expect of your friend?
(Prayer)

4/If something bad happened to you, and your friend is not there, how are the items in column B accentuated?
(Personal Suffering)

As a close, have a student read the second line of the Shema:

"And you shall Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your might."

How might Martin Buber love God? The teacher should respond too.

Session Seven: A Divine Simulation

Objectives: Each student will be able to,

-Recall the symbolised meaning of God for a given thinker.
-Apply the attributes of their thinker's God to a set of circumstances.
-Differentiate the attributes of the God of different thinkers.
-Evaluate the practical effects of the God of these thinkers.
-Synthesise a personal Divine attribute.
-Evaluate the nature of personal belief in symbol-words, both its strengths and weaknesses.

Teaching Strategies

The teacher lists the six thinkers on the board with their symbol-words and asks students to choose a thinker that appeals to them. (or allocate an even number to each). Students then form groups according to thinker and 'become' their God according to the thinker's definition.
Each group is given an amount of time to produce an "I am....." statement.
The teacher then becomes the worshipper praying to God, whilst God-groups formulate answers to the 'prayers.'
Worshipper's prayers:

1. O God, the rich heritage of my Judaism has been laid out for me by my ancestors. As a liberal Jew, I cannot accept today everything in my tradition. But I want to know how to decide which things to keep, which to change and which to discard. So God, please tell me, what is to be my criteria for observance?
2. My God and God of Ages Past, before the reading of the Torah, an account of your relationship with my ancestors, we say a b'racha which indicates that you chose the Jewish People apart from all others. Is this really so and why did you do it?
3. We praise you, Adonai, our God but do you really listen to our prayers and can you do something about that which we seek or ask.

4. O God, My God, where were you in Auschwitz? Do you know what happened there? Couldn't you do anything about it? Why or why not?
5. God full of mercy and compassion, mighty and exalted, what is the most religious act that I can do for you and why?

The God-groups should respond to the worshipper's prayers. The worshipper can ask for clarification should it be required.

Only if a God-group has something to add from that which has already been said, should it reply as well.

The teacher should ask the class the following questions for discussion,

1. What are the differences between the God groups?
2. How will these differences affect the worshipper's future actions?
3. If you were the worshipper, which response would you pick or do you have an alternative not yet mentioned?

For closing, the teacher should ask each student and then him/her self to complete the following sentences:

a) At this moment, for me, God is.....

b) But I'm not sure about.....

The teacher should emphasize the continuous nature of the question "What do we mean by God" and remain behind to answer further questions.

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