Religious Studies 111. EXPLORATION OF JEWISH VALUES: An Introduction to Judaism
Spring, 1999
Prof. H. M. Ravven
Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:30 - 1145, Couper 207

A. The Values of Exodus: Covenantal and Personal Ethics

Week I - VIII  The Book of Exodus

Week I  January 19 & 21
Exodus 1 - 2  Egyptian Slavery and the Young Moses

Week II  January 26 & 28
Exodus 3 - 4  The Commissioning of Moses

Week III  February 2 & 4
Exodus 5 - 11  The Struggle between Pharaoh & Moses

Week IV  February 9 & 11
Exodus 12 - 15:21  Passover and Exodus

Week V  February 18 (No Class February 16)
Exodus 15:22 - 18  The Wilderness

Week VI  February 23 & 25
Exodus 19 - 20  The Covenant

Week VII  March 2 & 4
Exodus 21 - 24  The Law

Week VIII  March 9 & 11
Exodus 25 - 40  Establishment, Defiance, and Reëstablishment of Israelite Worship

Week IX  March 30  Passover: The Memory of Exodus Ethics Renewed
(No class April 1st, Passover)
Students prepare and lead a Passover Seder  (Passover begins Wed., March 31st at sundown)

The Haggadah: Old and New

Week X  (April 6 & 8)  The Universal Ethics and Politics of Exodus
Michael Walzer, Exodus and Revolution
MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS APRIL 6th.
April 8 Film, “The Ten Commandments”

B. Prophetic Justice

Week XI  April 13 & 15
The Book of Isaiah, chapters 1, 2, 5, and 40

C. Integrity in the Face of Catastrophe  
   Week XI  April 20 & 22  
   The Book of Job, chapters 1 - 7

D. Traditional Rabbinic Values  
   Week XIII  April 27 & 29  
   Torah from Our Sages, Pirke Avot: Ethics of the Ancestors

E. Final Papers  
   Week XIV May 4 & 6
Requirements

1. Class Attendance and Participation including leading and preparing a Passover Seder.
   
   Since class participation counts for 25% of the grade for the course, absences will be counted heavily.

2. Weekly Papers--LINE-BY-LINE COMMENTARIES
   
   A 2 - 3 page paper is due each week on ALL the reading. The papers should raise important issues rather than merely summarize. Papers on the texts must be in the form of line-by-line commentaries. Papers must be handed in on time. Late papers will be penalized -- a half-grade for every day late. The paper for the week is due on Tuesday.

   *NOTE: Papers that have not been proofread or that contain obvious spelling or grammatical errors will be returned uncorrected and penalized for lateness.*

   Reread your own papers. Better yet, read them out loud to a friend or roommate. Write the way you speak but remove all colloquialisms. Aim toward clarity, precision, depth of insight, and water-tight evidentiary support.

3. Midterm
   
   An in class midterm exam will cover Michael Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution* on April 6th.

4. Final Paper
   
   Every student will complete a 10 - 12 page term paper whose topic will be, “Traditional Jewish Values and Modern Experience: What Can We Learn from the Past? Where does the past fail us?”
   
   First Draft: April 20
   Final Draft due: May 7

4. Teaching Style
   
   My teaching style tends to be non-directive and open-ended. I want you to take a lot of responsibility for your learning. I want you to find issues and angles that are significant to you and pursue them. Your curiosity should drive your learning to a large extent. At the same time, this is not a free for all. I expect you to work very hard and have rigorous standards -- as I do.

   I believe that the quality of your work reflects the extent and the quality of your engagement in the texts and the issues raised. You need to find the hooks
that makes this material significant to you so that you can “own” the process of learning.

5. Grading

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Papers</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
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First Draft = 1/3 credit
Final Draft = 2/3 credit
1. Think of some American values: Make a list of at least five.
2. Think of what you think are some Jewish values: Make a list of at least five.
3. Compare the two lists. Where do they coincide? Where do they differ?
7. The Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt: What do you know about it?
8. Can you think of any values that might come out of it?
9. Can you think of other ways of telling the story that would bring out other values?
10. Can you think of any contemporary events --personal or public-- that could be told as an Exodus story? What are the values implicit in those events told in this way?