

Fundamentals of Judaism

*Rosenfeld*

This course will concern itself with an examination of a number of fundamental concepts of Judaism. Its theologic postulates, its philosophic formulations and its halachic fabric will be analyzed from the contemporary perspective. Not only will the theoretic basis of faith be studied but emphasis will be placed on relating the mitzvot - the ceremonial and the ethical, the social and the ritual - to the experience of modern man and his society.

The course will seek to locate contemporary Jewry in Judaism and in modern thought and to develop a consistent philosophy of Judaism for the individual Jew and for the entire people.



1. The Sources of Judaism

- a) Written and oral law
- b) The chain of tradition
- c) Origin and structure of halachah
- d) Major legal and religious writings

2. The Revelation of G-d

- a) Creation
- b) G-d and nature
- c) Natural and Supernatural
- d) Personal G-d
- e) Providence
- f) Names of G-d

3. Sabbath

4. The Divine Norm

- a) Freedom of will
- b) Good and evil
- c) Sin
- d) Reward and Punishment
- e) Teshuvah - Repentance and Forgiveness

5. Man

- a) As a natural creature
- b) As a social being
- c) As a spiritual and intellectual giant

6. Eschatology of Judaism

- a) Immortality of soul
- b) Messiah
- c) Resurrection
- d) World-to-come

7. Communication between G-d and Man

- a) Revelation
- b) Prophecy
- c) Prayer

8. Worship

- a) Sacrifice
- b) Prayer
- c) Study

9. Fundamental Beliefs

- a) 13 principles
- b) 10 Commandments
- c) Shema



10. Attributes of G-d

- a) Existence
- b) Actional attributes

11. Freedom as a Jewish ideal

- a) Its philosophic roots
- b) Exodus
- c) Its social and political implications

12. Eretz Yisroel

- a) As a religious ideal
- b) As a national ideal

13. The Mitzvoth

- a) Classification
- b) Rationalization
- c) The moral and ethical law
- d) The socio-economic order of the Torah
- e) The rituals and ceremonials

14. Holiness - The ultimate in Judaism