Teaching Jewish Studies, Hebrew Scriptures, and the Historical Jesus in the Context of Jewish Studies at a Two-Year Public College

Rationale, Objectives, Evaluation

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Information on Judaica in American colleges, universities, and seminaries is scattered through a variety of sources. National surveys, school catalogues, dissertations, opinion columns, etc., have something to say about the scope of the discipline.1 Rarely is there mention of the teaching of Jewish Studies in a two-year public college with the exception of my pioneering articles.2 This chapter is parsed into two parts. Part 1 reviews the rationale, curriculum, and ideology that I introduced in the early 1970s to set up the first-ever public Jewish Studies program funded by the State of California. Part 2 deals with issues of faith, ideology, and biblical criticism in the teaching of Hebrew and Christian scriptures including my philosophy on biblical revelation and insertion of Jesus.

LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

School and Mission

The 104-acre Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC) campus is situated in the Southeast Central portion of the San Fernando Valley, an area of 234 square miles located approximately fifteen miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles. One of the nine public colleges of the Los Angeles Community College District, LAVC opened its doors in June 1949 with a student body of 440 and a faculty of 23. LAVC serves approximately 20,000 students mainly in the areas of Van Nuys, North Hollywood, Panorama City, Pacoima, Sherman Oaks, Valley Village, Studio City, Encino, Tarzana, and Burbank. Valley College is a student-focused campus that is known for its high-quality educational courses and that prepares its graduates for university or vocational work.

After teaching one semester of two sections in basic Hebrew and one course in Hebrew civilization (Fall 1970), it became clear to me that the educational needs of the Jewish community of the San Fernando Valley3 could be better served if more courses in Judaica were introduced on campus. There developed a widespread faculty-student agreement, supplemented by community support and interest, that courses in Jewish content should be part of the College

curriculum. The administration agreed, and the new curriculum in Jewish Studies was recognized in Fall 1972.

Rationale for Jewish Studies

The formation of a Jewish Studies Program at LAVC was established on the strength of a number of factors:

- Jews and Judaism are a dynamic and vital force in Western civilization but until the late 1960s have been generally shunned on their own merits as an academic discipline. Schools under Jewish auspices have always offered classes in Jewish content but their success in reaching the general community is minimal. A number of Christian schools of higher learning offer courses in classical Hebrew language and theology with various degrees of stress but often this is seen as *praeparatio* for Christianity. A number of departments of religion at colleges and universities teach Judaism as part of the "Judeo-Christian tradition," but these classes by and large coincide with so-called Old Testament thought and rabbinic Judaism, areas important for Christian origins, suggesting that the Jewish people is a non-entity for the last 1500 years. This void in education contributes to the ignorance of the Jewish people as a living culture and religion in history, which in turn feeds anti-Judaism and antisemitism.
- The present situation of Jews in the United States, as is true with other ethnic groups, is in dire need of change. Jewish norms, traditions, and culture have been compromised in the Jews' attempt to assimilate into the American way. It is clear that the melting pot cooks only when different groups full of complimentary but distinct ingredients assert their individuality. It is essential to recognize that there is something problematic in being a Jew in contemporary America. Thus, in addition to descriptive courses in Judaism, one needs analysis of problems presented in the religious and social history of the Jews. In an ethnic sense, the desire for Jewish Studies on campus is a minority's quest for identity.
- Traditionally, the Jewish collective memory goes back 4000 years. The Jewish experience is complex, diversified, and intellectual. It is not a come-by-night phenomenon. Jewish Studies belongs on campus not because of injustice, persecution, and guilt complex but because Jews as a group have contributed to the improvement and advancement of humanity. Indeed it is the Hebrew prophet and not the Greek philosopher who had the optimistic dream shared by all people of good will today that there will be no more oppression, poverty, and war and that humanity will one day be one family.
- The decade of the 1960s (Vietnam, counter-culture, "power-to-the-people" movements, Eichmann Trial, Six-Day War) seeded Jewish activism and relevancy on campus. Involved Jewish students and faculty requested and received academic classes that address the reality of Jewish existence, determination, and achievement. Hillel Council at LAVC and the greater Jewish community enthusiastically encouraged the Jewish Studies agenda. Also, administrative insight into the importance of the program proved to be present at the very beginning. Finally, UCLA's endorsement of a Jewish Studies major in March 1972 made it easier for the Curriculum Council of the Los Angeles Community College District to approve the Jewish Studies major at LAVC.

The rationale for Jewish Studies at LAVC, I claimed in 1972, would give the Jews (and others) of the San Fernando Valley a new sense of Jewish ethnic identity and would aid them in their

investigation of the culture, language, religion, nationality, and other aspects of their people. A half century later, my view has not changed.

The Jewish Studies Program (JSP)

The educational program in Jewish Studies at LAVC is designed to provide an opportunity for the student to complete a two-year undergraduate major in Jewish Studies. The major consists of a minimal eighteen semester-designated units in Jewish Studies. Students meet graduation requirements for an Associate Arts degree by completing a minimum of sixty semester units of course credit in a selected curriculum.

The educational objectives of JSP are (1) to satisfy the intellectual and cultural interests of the College; (2) to enable students to appreciate the rich Jewish heritage in all its aspects; (3) to help students understand the Jewish contribution to world culture in general and to Western civilization in particular; and (4) to develop the skills to read and interpret relevant sources in the long history of the Jewish experience.

Since the beginning, I nurtured, crafted, and taught all the Jewish Studies offerings. These included Hebrew and Yiddish language and literature in translation, history and civilization of the Jews, Jewish philosophy, the Jew in America, and American Jewish literature. In five classes, in particular, I consciously insert Jesus-related issues.

- *The Talmud: Mishnah as Literature* is a study of the Talmudic period, giving an analysis of the religious-cultural, socio-economic, and political conditions in Eretz Israel and in the Diaspora from ca. 330 bce to 500 ce. A unit on Jesus in Second Temple Judaism is part of the curriculum.
- *Israel: The Theory and Practice of Zionism* consists of a general survey of the historical survey of the area with an emphasis upon the social and political development of the State of Israel. The social and political institutions of the State of Israel are analyzed along with a general study of the geographic, economic, ethnic, and religious composition of the land of Israel. A general study is made of the ideological and historical background of the Zionist movement as well as a general survey of the origins of the Palestinian national movement.4 Imagining Jesus, views on Zionism, Palestinianism, and Christian Zionism is a current and exacting class exercise.
- *Jewish Religious Heritage* comprises an exploration of the major teachings of Judaism. A brief historical background dealing with the development of Judaism is related to an exposition of its central affirmations. The goal is to familiarize the student with what the Jewish religious tradition regards to be its essential genius and also provide an opportunity for an appreciation of the similarities and differences between Judaism and other major religious groups of American culture. Among the topics are the following: (a) The shape of faith: God, man, rites of passage, Jewish festivals, community; (b) The dynamics of faith: religious commitment and social problems, contemporary values, the present state of Jewish belief.5 Valid questions regarding the adherence or departure of Jesus and his followers (Jews and Gentiles) to the faith of Judaism are discussed.
- *Shoah/Holocaust: A Prototype of Genocide* describes pre–World War II Europe, emphasizes the nature of Hitler's Nazi movement in Germany, reviews the war years and program of genocide against the Jewish people of Nazi-occupied Europe, and considers reasons for and theological responses to the Shoah, roles of the perpetrators and victims, and results.6 Under

the rubric of Calvary and Auschwitz, belief and practice of European Christians are carefully debated in the tone of "What would Jesus have said and done?"

- *Judaism, Christianity, Islam*: A scholarly study of religion that explains the basic structure of religious belief and practice. It examines the cultural history and social aspects that influenced and shaped the growth and development of the Western religions in order to encourage a desire to understand as a means of overcoming the destructive exchanges that frequently accompany religious discussion. Jesus seen from views expressed in the Tanak, New Testament, and Koran are presented sacredly and in the context of conformity and conflict between the Abrahamic faiths.

Teaching Jewish Studies

Different disciplines have their own particular patterns of thinking, inquiry, or information gathering and processing. For example, scientific inquiry calls for classification, explanation of technical processes, detailed statements of fact often containing a definition or statement of principle, problem solving, and experiment reporting that involves discriminating observation, careful explanation, and considered conclusions. Many of the Jewish Studies courses taught at LAVC are interdisciplinary in scope. As such, the JSP is an instructional form of the humanities and its emphasis is on reading, writing, and reasoning.

What is the proper way of instructing these skills? There are as many approaches to teaching Jewish Studies as there are instructors in the discipline. At the two-year college level, however, teacher-student interchange is paramount. Take my approach to teaching Second Temple Jewish texts, for example.

A slogan of nineteenth-century *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Zunz, Scheinschneider, Jost) prevails in "higher" Jewish Studies: Every writer must be a "digger," and all scholars antiquarians. The traditional methods of teaching the Hebrew canon, New Testament, and Rabbinics in the original, found in upper division and graduate courses, namely, translation, expounding of grammatical intricacies, hoary lectures, etc., prove less than adequate at an introductory level. In its place, I use an historical-critical method that stresses that two-millennia-old Jewish texts and related literature are engaging diversified Judaism (religion) as an interpretation of ethnicity in the context of the Ancient Near East and the Greco-Roman era. On a given unit, one-third constitutes lectures on the socio-historical forces that motivated and shaped the contextual history. Two-thirds are devoted to a direct interpretation of the assigned texts in order to discern major values and trends found therein.

A deeper appreciation of cross-cultural explorations of Jewish and Christian literature and beliefs develops if the instructor plays more of a passive role than is traditionally assigned to him or her. By encouraging the student to do research at home in order to explicate the text in class, and answer questions of difficulty from a peer group, one plants in the students seeds of loyalty to great concepts, which otherwise would not grow from the total lecture method that often detaches the student from the material. Furthermore, the student gains self-reliance from such an exposure, his or her own germane ideas are able to sprout, and a relaxed teacher-student relationship is created.

By playing the role of a class catalyst, the instructor has many opportunities to present his or her own contribution and to refine it in light of class feedback to a greater degree than the straight lecture method. An ideal educational experience is thus fulfilled because the goal of discovering provocative ideas of the biblical and rabbinical age is brought about by professor and student exploring together.

This is aptly expressed by a parable narrated by S. Y. Agnon, Nobel Laureate in Literature (1966), in his novel *Guest for the Night* (1939):7

> It is like an architect who asked for a stone and they gave him a brick, for he intended to build a temple, while they intended to build a house to live in. Clearly, my intent at LAVC is to provide a secure home for Jewish Studies in the San Fernando Valley. I do not see it an ivory tower temple—all who are hungry for Jewish knowledge are welcome to take the classes and join in the learning experience.8

In the Introduction to *Methodology in the Academic Teaching of Judaism*, I raised the issues of what constitutes Jewish Studies, how to teach it, to whom, etc., and I expressed that undergraduate Jewish Studies classes are being broadly transformed from an exclusive to inclusive offerings. The once-narrow gates to higher Jewish education have been thrown wide to admit everyone, regardless of background, age, gender, and creed. In such a situation, the old structural lecture method (the "facts"-only school), where the student sits back and absorbs like a sponge the knowledge of a professor's lecture, would simply not do by itself. The Jewish Studies scholar should attempt to teach Judaism creatively and objectively without indoctrination. One must have the right to challenge students and to set and maintain scholarly standards, but one is also responsible to respect the students' right to learn, to ask questions, to defend beliefs, to express opinions, or disagree without repression or reprisal.

Arguably, Jewish Studies at a two-year college is more about teaching than researching and writing. In truth, however, both are equally important. To think otherwise, in my opinion, is to wither Jewish Studies.

SINAI AND CALVARY

Teaching Torah in the Academy

Successful teaching, I believe, is a learning exchange. Learning involves not only information given but the recipient's critical application of what that knowledge means to oneself as an individual and as a member of a community (faith-bound, or not). As I argue above, my major concern as a teacher is that I am less of a knowledge-dispenser and more of a knowledge-facilitator, who leads his student to make discoveries and articulate values and conclusions. Flexibility, innovation, implementation, enthusiasm, and relevancy are characteristic of a good teaching methodology. The college classroom should not serve as a podium for intellectual exhibitionism or be a forum for undisciplined free for all ranting. Some information and delight may result from such activities, but they are achieved at the expense of compromising student learning and scholarship. Instruction in the classroom ought to be student oriented so that students are involved in comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation rather than becoming amen-sayers to authoritative professorial ranting. Students will be able to ask appropriate questions, collect accurate information, evaluate its quality, and reflectively, and creatively analyze, synthesize, and organize the information. As a result, students will be able to reason logically and come to reliable conclusions that will enable them to successfully navigate lecture and text in the context of the class. Related are communication skills, social responsibility, and personal development.

My pedagogic philosophy in teaching the Hebrew Bible is infused with a binary *midrashic* model: *midrash 'atsmi* (self exegesis and eisegesis) and *midrash tsiburi* (explorations of others).

In teaching the Hebrew Bible, for example, I encourage my students to engage the text as is (*p'shat*), and in return, the Scripture begs, *darshani* (*d'rash*; "expound me"); and by sharing research and by learning from class discussion, seeds of *midrashic* activity are planted. Furthermore, the student gains self-respect from such an exposure, his or her germane ideas are able to sprout, dialogistical learning commences, and a relaxed teacher-student symbiosis is created. Also, I grow in stature as an educator. By playing the role of a class catalyst, I have opportunities to present my own contribution and to refine it in light of class feedback to a greater degree than by the straight lecture method. My goal is to integrate teaching and learning, rooted in the way of Midrash, and the reward is in the participatory doing.

I respect the binding authority of the Torah. The doctrine of the eternity of the Torah and the covenant between God and Israel—what I understand to be the deep truth behind the mythicized construct of *Torah mi-Sinai*—is implicit in verses that speak of individual teachings of Torah. Take, for example, phrases such as: "A perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your (lands of) dwellings" (Lev 3:17) and "throughout the ages as a covenant for all time" (Exod 3:16). Although the Sages describe a pre-revelatory Heavenly Torah (see, for example, *Genesis Rabbah* 8:2), this concentrates, I believe, more on the Torah's eternal humanistic values than on the specific details of the narrative or the laws. Indeed, the Rabbis speak of two strains: revelation ("everything which a scholar will ask in the future is already known to Moses at Sinai"; see *b. Meg.* 19b; cf. *b. Menaḥ* 29b) and the rabbinic understanding of revelation. The latter encompasses strict literalness and liberal interpretation, which sees theophany-related vocabulary and events as literary categories. By twinning the two dialectics of revelation and reasoning, the Sages may have taught more Torah than was ever received at Sinai.

I too try and follow in the footsteps of the Sages in this regard, but I do so with a twist. I combine modern biblical scholarship and classical Jewish learning to make sense of the *Tanak* in the life of the people then and now. I conflate profane and sacred ways to return to Sinai and back. Source criticism to unravel complexities in transmission (composition, dating, events) and perplexities in thought (Israelite religion, biblical theology), but I remain very much, perhaps wholly concerned with faith questions such as, "What does the holistic Torah teach?"

Various biblical verses point to the Pentateuch as "Torah" distinct from the rest of the Scriptures. The verse "Moses charged us with the Teaching (Torah) as the heritage of the congregation of Jacob" (Deut 33:4) suggests the inalienable importance of Torah to Israel: It is to be transmitted from age to age. This transmission has become the major factor for the unity of the Jewish people throughout their wanderings.

The rabbis of the Talmud kept the Torah alive and made its message relevant in different regions and times. This has been done by means of the Rabbinic hermeneutic of a dual Torah read into verses from the book of Exodus. The Rabbis find the hook to their oral Torah in the very words of the written Torah itself. Regarding God's words to Moses on the covenantal relationship between God and Israel, it is said in Exodus, "Write down (*ktav*) these words, for in accordance ('*al pi;* literally, 'by the mouth') with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel" (Exod 34:27). It also says earlier in Exodus, "I will give you the stone tablets with the teachings (*torah*) and commandments which I have inscribed (*ktav-ti*) to instruct (by word of mouth) them" (Exod 24:12).

The Sages saw the words *write, accordance,* and *instruct* as the legitimate warrant for the written Torah (*Torah shebiktav*) and the oral Torah (*Torah shehb'al peh*). In their view, the written Torah of Moses is eternal. The oral Torah is the application of the written Torah to forever changing historic situations, which continues to uncover new levels of depth and

meaning and thus make new facets of Judaism visible and meaningful in each generation. In other words, the Rabbis find written and oral word complements, which compliment written and oral Torah in the text of the Torah.

In sum, my teaching *Tanak*, critically speaking, at a public community college, accepts the existential position that God's teaching was shared at Sinai/Horeb, face *into* face (Deut 5:4), with all of Israel, present and future. Present, implies that God's primary revelation occurred and that the Torah is the memory of this unique theophany; future hints that Israel's dialogue with God is an ongoing process. This view holds that people know only a part of divine truth and that each generation seeks, makes distinctions, categorizes, and strives to discover more. My preferential Torah rallying cry: *Na'aseh ve-Nishma'*. ("We shall do and we shall hear [reason]." [Exod 24:7]). *Na*'*aseh* alone permits no ultimate questions; *nishma*' alone provides no ultimate answers. *Na'aseh* and *nishma'* together ask questions and attempt answers but leave many uncertainties unanswered. Yet uncertainty is truth in the making and the inevitable price for intellectual academic freedom.9

Dvar Yeshu'a

Religious beliefs and practices are often couched in religious creeds and outlooks that for many traditionalist Jews and Christians are rooted in the Bible, seen as monolithic and complete. Decades of academic biblical scholarship, however, show that the biblical canon is a product of historical, political, and social forces, in addition to religious ideology. Recent quests for the historical Jesus are eroding the teaching of contempt from the Cross at Calvary by finding the New Testament Jesus in the context of the Judaism of Erets Israel in first century. Thus the continuity of the historical Jesus with the Christ of faith is found only in cultic belief. My view of Jesus as a proto-pharisaic rabbi-nationalist closely aligned with the anti-Roman zealot insurrection is a proper though controversial *learning* topic in lower and upper division Judaica.

Teaching about Jesus and New Testament–related issues in Jewish settings of higher education is proper in classes covering Second Temple Judaism and/or Jewish-Christian relations through the generations. In the inaugural 2011–2012 Faculty/Student Seminar Series sponsored by the UCLA Center for Jewish Studies (October 10, 2011), I spoke on the Synoptic Jesus in the context of history and tradition. Among the perspectives I presented were establishing the historicity of Jesus, seeking ways of understanding Jesus in the religious and cultural milieu of Second Temple Judaism, and in the spirit of reconciliation, encountering the Jewish Jesus in a dialogue between Jews and Christians. I also shared that a number of contributors to Zev Garber, ed., *The Jewish Jesus: Revelation, Reflection, Reclamation* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2011) reacted vehemently about the cover that depicts Jesus reading from the Torah. Why? Concern over Jewish triumphalism and/or fear of Christian backlash supersessionism.10

My reasoning for advocating the legitimacy of *dvar Yeshu'a* in Jewish Studies classes is straightforward and transforming: dialogue, celebrating uniqueness without polemics and apologetics. As a practicing Jew who dialogues with Christians, I have learned to respect the covenantal role that Christians understand to be the way of the scriptural Jesus on their confessional lives. Also, Jew and Christian in dialogical encounter with select biblical texts can foster mutual understanding and respect as well as personal change and growth within their faith affirmation. Moreover, interfaith study of Scriptures acknowledges differences and requires that the participants transcend the objectivity and data-driven detachment of standard academic approaches, and encourages students at whatever level to enter into an encounter with Torah and Testament without paternalism, parochialism, and prejudice. My *dvar Yeshua* is infused with the

teachings of the Sages: *talmud torah 'im derekh eretz,* here meaning, study Torah and respect of ideological differences (*derekh erets*). Critically speaking, teaching, *dvar Yeshua* by conversation not conversion twists and winds to the wellspring of Torah (Teaching). Take Reflections and Reimagining, for example.

Reflections on Worldviews: Rabbinic Torah and the Testimony of Jesus[11]

There is a line of basic continuity between the beliefs and attitudes of Jesus and the Pharisees, between the reasons that led Jesus into conflict with the religious establishment of his day and those that led his followers into conflict with the Synagogue. Two of the basic issues were the role of the Torah and the authority of Jesus. Rabbinic Judaism could never accept the Second Testament Christology because the God-Man of the "hypostatic union" is foreign to the Torah's teaching on absolute monotheism. As the promised Messiah,12 Jesus did not meet the conditions that the prophetic-rabbinic tradition associated with the coming of the Messiah. For example, there was no harmony, freedom, peace, and amity in Jerusalem and enmity and struggle abounded elsewhere in the Land. This denies the validity of the Christian claim that Jesus fulfilled the Torah and that in his Second Coming the tranquility of the Messianic Age will be realized. As Rabbi Jesus, he taught the divine authority of the Torah and the prophets,13 and respect for its presenters and preservers,14 but claimed that his authority was equally divine and that it stood above the authority of the Torah. I agree with others who see this testimony as the major point of contention between Jesus and the religious authorities that ultimately led to the severance of the Jesus party from the Synagogue However, I maintain, that the quarrel began in the words of Jesus on the road to and from the Torah.

For example, the distinction between the positive articulation of the Golden Rule as given by Jesus15 and its negative form as given by Hillel.16 The Jesus' ethic as seen in Christianity is altruistic. It denies the individual objective moral value and dwarfs the self for the sake of the other. Hillel's moral code as understood within Judaism eliminates the subjective attitude entirely. It is objectively involved with abstract justice, which attaches moral value to the individual as such without prejudice to self or other.

Hillel's argument is that no person has the right to ruin another person's life for the sake of one's own life, and similarly, one has no right to ruin one's own life for the sake of another. Both are human beings and both lives have the same value before the heavenly throne of justice and mercy. The Torah teaching, "Love your neighbor as yourself,"17 means for the Sages *just* (sic) that, neither more nor less; that is, the scales of justice must be in a state of equilibrium with no favorable leaning either toward self or neighbor. Self-love must not be a measuring rod to slant the scale on the side of self-advantage, and concern for the other must not tip the scale of justice in his or her behalf.18

Hillel's point stands in contrast to the standpoint of Jesus, whom Christians believe is above the authority of the Dual Torah. The disparity of self and other in the ancestral faith of Jesus is abolished in the new faith in Jesus: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."19 This may well explain the words of Jesus on retaliation,20 on love of one's enemies,21 and on forgiveness at the crucifixion.22

The difference between Hillel and Jesus, the Synagogue and the Church, on the purpose of Torah and the person of Jesus, acquired new intensity after the passing of the Jewish Jesus and the success of Pauline Christianity.

Open Door Policy. The controversial role of Elijah's Cup at the Passover Seder and related matters of wrath, disputation, genocide, respect, reclamation and reconciliation. Streams of Jewish consciousness from the biblical period to the current epoch of Jewish memory and history with an emphasis of Jewish Self and Christian (Gentile) Other.

In the main, the pageantry of the Passover Seder focuses on two periods of Jewish history: the biblical Exodus from Egypt and the rabbinic recalling of the account. Through ritual food, drink, and animated reading and interpretation, the participant travels with the Children of Israel as if "s/he came forth out of Egypt," and sits at the table of the Sages as they observe Passover in Jerusalem and Bnei Brak. Alas, the forty-year trek from wilderness into freedom succumbed in Jewish history into a long night's journey into exile. "Begin with disgrace and end with glory" (m. Pesachim 10.4). That is to say, talk openly and informatively about exilic degradation and destruction, so that, in contrast, the experience of Jewish freedom and triumph are cherished and appreciated. Thus, it is suggested, nay expected, that the greatest tragedy of the Jewish Night, the Shoah in the lands of Christendom, be recounted on the night that accentuates Jewish birth and being. But for many Jews, it is not. How come? And for Christians who commemorate the Lord's Supper as a Passover, may it not be *asked*, what have you done actively (executed) and quietly (bystander) to the Lord's Anointed People?

A number of questions arise for those who insert contemporary genocide in the midst of freedom. Where is the Shoah inserted: beginning, middle, or end of the Seder ceremony? By inserting Shoah into the Haggadah, are we not turning Judeocide into a paschal sacrifice making it a biblical *holocaust* rather than a contemporary Shoah of millions? Nonetheless, the *why* of the Shoah is unexplainable and may explain why it is inserted in the second part ("future") of the service. Rabbinically speaking, the Four Cups at the Passover table represent the verbs of God's freedom in the biblical Exodus story (Exod 6:6–8). The Four Cups are the matrix around which the redemptive memories are spun. Cup One, the *Kiddush*, festival benediction of blessing and joy; Cup Two, in honor of God, the Redeemer of Jewish history; Cup Three, an abbreviated *Kiddush* for the benefit of latecomers at the transition between the first and second part of the Seder service; and Cup Four, the acknowledgement of the Passover of the Future. The Third Cup follows the Grace after the Meal without narrative accompaniment. Then a special cup, the Cup of Elijah, is poured to overflowing, and the door is opened and the "Pour Out Your Wrath" paragraph bellowed to the outside world. After the door is closed, the Fourth Cup is filled, and the "Egyptian Hallel" (Pss. 113–118), "The Great Hallel" (Ps 136), and "Benediction of Song" (m. *Pesaḥim* 10.7) are recited. Finally, the Fourth Cup is drunk at the close of the Passover Seder. The excruciating question, why Shoah memory and the curse of Nations (pagan and monotheistic) at the Cup of Elijah, symbolic herald of messianic peace?

According to the tradition of Rabbi Judah ben Bezalel, the Maharal of Prague (c. 1525–1609), one reads the "Great Hallel" with the Fifth Cup in hand, and in testimony to the passage, "Who remembered us in our low estate and has delivered us from our adversaries" (Ps 136: 23–24). So in our day, drinking from the Cup of Elijah testifies "to the land (He gave) for a heritage unto Israel" (Ps 136:21–22). Is there a link between Auschwitz and Jerusalem? Cause and effect or remembrance and never again? To drink or not to drink from the Fifth Cup is the thematic link extended to the celebrants of the Lord's Supper to experience the last meal of the Jewish Jesus with his Jewish disciples before the *Passover* of the ways.23 The learning objective invites the Prodigal Son to join the Children and together convert the "Cup of Wrath" to the "Cup of Love."

Exploring and experiencing aspects of cultural and religious dynamics is a raison d'être for a Jesus visit to my Jewish Studies class.

NOTES

1. See Zev Garber, "Jewish Studies on the American Campus: *Yiddishkeit* or Scientific Dialect" (Hebrew), *Hadoar* 72, no. 2 (December 4, 1992): 21–22.
2. *The Humanities in Two-Year Colleges: Reviewing Curriculum and Instruction* (Center for the Study of Community Colleges and ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, UCLA, Summer, 1975) reports, "no other information written by anyone but Garber has been discovered to indicate that Jewish studies courses are indeed being offered anywhere else" (p. 80). See the following ERIC documents: "Jewish Studies at a Two-Year Public College (and) Lower Division Judaica Problems and Solutions" (ED 086269, 1973); "Alternative Teaching Methods in Teaching Introduction to Judaism" (ED 099077, 1974); "The Journal Synthesizing Activity" (ED 114151, 1975); "Teaching Lower Division Hebrew Language and Literature at a Two-Year Public College" (ED 162703, 1978); and "Teaching the Holocaust at a Two-Year Public College" (ED 230226, 1983). Drawing upon my experience of setting up a Jewish Studies program, I served as the respondent in a special session of the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion devoted to "Teaching Religious Studies at Community Colleges" (Orlando, FL, November 22, 1998).
3. In the decade 1950–1960, the San Fernando Valley was one of the fastest growing urban areas in the United States with a percentage growth of 110%. The decade 1960–1970 saw a much slower growth rate and the population at the end of 1971 was about 1,246,177. Following the pattern of growth in the general community, the Jewish population trend in the Valley was on a continual upswing. In 1970, the overall Jewish population count in the greater Los Angeles area was nearly 600,000, of whom approximately 180,000 lived in the twenty-one communities, including North Hollywood, Valley Village, Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks, Encino, etc., served by LAVC.
4. See Zev Garber, "Teaching Zionism: The Introductory Course," *Shofar* 13, no. 1 (Fall 1994): 8–37.
5. See our "Notes on Teaching Jewish Religious Heritage," in the Introduction to Zev Garber, ed., *Methodology in the Academic Teaching of Judaism* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1986), 5–7. 6244-471.indb 24 10/21/2014 9:49:38 PM *Teaching Jewish Studies* 25
6. Cf. our "Teaching the Shoah: The Introductory Course," in Zev Garber, *Shoah, The Paradigmatic Genocide: Essays in Exegesis and Eisegesis* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1994).
7. S. Y. Agnon, *Guest for the Night* [*Ore'aḥ nata lalun*], translated by Misha Louvish (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004 [1939]), 101.
8. See Leonard Greenspoon, "Not in an Ivory Tower: Zev Garber and Biblical Studies," *Hebrew Studies* LI (2010): 369–373.
9. Extracted from my essay, "Torah Thoughts, Rabbinic Mind, and Academic Freedom," available online at http://thetorah.com/torah-thoughts-and-academic-freedom, accessed January 17, 2014.
10. See Zev Garber et al., "That Jesus Cover," *Shofar* 30, no. 3 (2012): 121–141.
11. My view on the historical Jesus is spelled out in Zev Garber, "The Jewish Jesus: A Partisan's Imagination," in Z. Garber, ed., *Mel Gibson's* Passion: *The Film, the Controversy, and Its*

Implications (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2006), 63–69. Reprinted with slight changes in Garber, ed., *The Jewish Jesus: Revelation, Reflection, Reclamation* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2011), 4, 13–19.

12. Cf., among others, Matt 26:62–64; Mark 14:60–62; Luke 22:60–70.
13. Cf. Matt 5:17–20.
14. Matt 23:1–3a.
15. Cf. Matt 7:12 and Luke 6:31.
16. The origin of the Golden Rule is Lev 19:18. Evidence of the Golden Rule as an essence of the moral life is found in Jewish tradition long before the period of Hillel and Jesus. For example, the books of Ben Sira and Tobit (both second century bce) expound: "Honor thy neighbor as thyself" (Ben Sira) and "What is displeasing to thyself, that do not do unto any other" (Tobit). Similarly, *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (first century bce) warns: "A man should not do to his neighbor what a man does not desire for himself."
17. Lev 19:18.
18. Cf. the Baraitha in *B. Metzi'a* 62a, which pits the view of the altruistic Ben P'tura against R. Akiba, and *Pesaḥim* 25b where a man asks Raba (280–352) what he should do if an official threatened to kill him unless he would kill another man.
19. Gal 3:28. Also, 1Cor 12:13; Col 3:11.
20. Matt 5:38–42; Luke 6:29–30.
21. Matt 5:43–48; Luke 6:27–28, 32–36.
22. Luke 23:34.
23. Double entendre is intentional; it is meant to question the accuracy of the institution of the Last Supper to be a Passover Seder meal. Luke 22:15 reads that "I (Jesus) have earnestly desired to eat this passover (offering, meal) with you (disciples) before I suffer" and follows with the benediction of the wine (*Kiddush)* and blessing of the bread (*Motsi*) (vs., 17–19). However, Mark 14:22–23 and Matthew 26:26–27 reverse the order of bread and wine before the meal. Further, I Corinthians 11:23–25 speak of breaking bread at the start of the meal and drinking the cup of wine *after* the meal. In sum, Luke follows the order of a Seder ritual; Mark and Matthew do not; and the older Pauline version in 1 Corinthians speaks of a *Chavura* fellowship and not the ritualistic Passover meal.