

SUFFERING AND EVIL: OUTLINE

How are we to make sense of a world in which suffering and evil are conspicuous features? Our goal is to tackle a set of problems surrounding this question, utilizing the resources of Jewish thought and Western philosophy, also appealing to other sources of insight and culture, most notably imaginative literature.

The syllabus below is reproduced from earlier iterations of the course. Two major areas that I hope we will confront more thoroughly than in the past is the question of death and the early modern discussion (see van der Lugt volume listed below).

We will not be able to cover everything listed below; so the syllabus “on the ground” will evolve during the term. Also which parts we will discuss in class and which you will analyze in your writing. Most reading is available online, but you are responsible for keeping up with changes on a week by week basis.

Writing: Several assignments during the term, mainly your responding to primary sources and/or articles. YC is not a correspondence school. You are expected to attend and to be ready to contribute to our joint work.

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

A) Classical Jewish Sources:

1. Albo: *Sefer haIqqarim*: 4: 13-15. Jeremiah 12; Habakkuk 1-2.
2. Rabbinic Approaches: Urbach: *Hazal* 370-407; 415-427; 454-464 (=Eng. The Sages ch. 15, sections 1-4; 6; 8). R. Goldenberg: "Early Rabbinic Explanations..." (*Journal of Jewish Studies* 33, 517-25); Hagiga 5b: Rashi; R. Hananel; Maharal (*Nezah Yisrael*); R. Kook (*Orot haKodesh* III, p. 105 and 243). *Berakhot* 5, with R. Kook *Ein Ayya*. Elman: "Righteousness as Its Own Reward" (*PAAJR* 57)
3. Medieval Philosophical theories of providence: Rambam, *Guide* III, 8-18; 51. Diesendruck: "Samuel and Moses Ibn Tibbon on Maimonides' Theory of Providence" (*HUCA* 11).
4. R. Soloveitchik: *Kol Dodi Dofek* (Eng. *Fate and Destiny*) and *Out of the Whirlwind*.
5. E. Berkovits, *Faith after the Holocaust*.
6. Carmy, "Tell Them I've Had a Good Enough Life" (in *Torah uMadda Journal* 9, reprinted in *Jewish Perspectives on the Experience of Suffering*).
7. R. Aharon Lichtenstein, "Suffering and the Duties of the Heart" in Carmy, *Jewish Perspectives...*

B) Western Classics and Contemporary Philosophy:

1. Augustine, *City of God*, 1; 11:11-23; 12)
2. Lovejoy, *Great Chain of Being*, chapters 7-8.
3. Samuel Johnson: Review of Soames Jenyn
4. Dostoevsky: *The Brothers Karamazov* Books 5-6.
5. Hume "On Suicide" (and other 18th century writers)
6. Migotte, "Schopenhauer's Pessimism and the Unconditioned Good" (*Journal of the History of Philosophy* 33:4) and S selection.

7. Milbank, *Being reconciled : ontology and pardon*, chapter 1.
8. van der Lugt, *Dark Matters: Pessimism and the Problem of Suffering*
9. Topics in Analytic Philosophy: Peterson: "Recent Work on the Problem of Evil" (*American Philosophical Quarterly* 20). Sections in--M. Adams, *Horrendous Evil* ; Adams and Adams ed, *The Problem of Evil*; Howard-Snyder ed, *The Evidential Argument from Evil*; Van Inwagen, ed. *Christian Faith and the Problem of Evil*; Van Inwagen, *The Problem of Evil*; Warren, *Facing Death: Epicurus and His Critics*.

Availability: M;T;W;Th all day; 5th Floor Library and other haunts. e-mail: carmy@yu.edu. Phone= 718-252-0496 (best when I'm home—10-11:30 PM).

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שלום כרמי