

The growing concern over the quality of Jewish life has given rise to agonizing questions regarding our present attempts to produce rabbinic leaders who are properly qualified to meet the challenge of our predominantly secular society. Dr. Berkovits who is well known to our readers as the author of important philosophical works and as chairman of the Department of Philosophy at the Hebrew Theological College in Skokie, Illinois, previously occupied important rabbinic posts in Germany, England, Australia and the United States.

A CONTEMPORARY RABBINICAL SCHOOL FOR ORTHODOX JEWRY

For some time now we have been witnessing the continued decline of the rabbinical office and ineffectiveness of spiritual leadership in our communities. More and more the rabbi is becoming a functionary of an established organization which, though it may be functioning smoothly at times, yet is lacking vitality and significant contents. What can be more boring than most of our religious services in our synagogues and temples! The managements of our congregations are more often than not in the hands of people who vulgarize the organized religious structure of our life by impressing their "vision" and their "ideals" on the conduct of the affairs of our congregations. In the midst of all this organized sham the rabbinical functionary presides over a ritual department whence only little can issue that is inspiring or edifying. It would be most unfair to place the blame for this tragic decline in contents, value and vitality altogether at the doorsteps of the rabbinical office. The emptiness and vulgarization is mainly due to the general crisis of religion in the midst of an overpowering secular civilization. Nevertheless, the question is justified: Do our rabbinical schools adequately prepare our rabbis to enable them to meet the challenges of their office with any significant measure of success?

TRADITION: *A Journal of Orthodox Thought*

Because of the general spiritual and religious crisis of our times the task of the rabbi is a much more difficult one than it was even only a generation ago, incomparably more demanding than two or three generations before us. Our concern here is with the Orthodox segment in our communities, because it is ideologically closest to us and because only of the functioning of the Orthodox rabbinical schools do we have first-hand knowledge. Our question is: Do we have contemporary rabbinical schools in the United States or Israel that are capable of satisfying the need for effective spiritual leadership and guidance of Orthodox Jewry. By "contemporary" we do not mean any kind of ideological determination, but simply the designation of schools that are fulfilling their responsibilities in complete awareness of the fact that they have to educate rabbis and teachers who will be expected to serve in Jewish communities as they exist and struggle for meaningful survival in the closing phase of this twentieth century. We have, of course, to look for an answer to the *yeshivot* in this country or in *Eretz Yisrael*.

2.

In the main, there are two kinds of *yeshivot*. The first one is the old-world type, which has been transplanted as completely as such transplants are possible from Lithuania, Hungary, or Poland. Such are, for instance, the famous *yeshivah* at Lakewood or that of Telsh in Cleveland, or that of Ponewicz at B'nai B'rak in Israel, and many others. Then there is also a kind of modern Orthodox version of the old *yeshivah*, only two in numbers; the one, the large and world-renowned Yeshiva University in New York and the much smaller Hebrew Theological College of Chicago, now located in Skokie, Illinois. The curriculum of the old-world type is dedicated almost exclusively to the study of the Talmud and the Codes, with negligible emphasis on the Bible as a subject to be taught, and no teaching at all of the subjects that are generally known as *Chokhmat Yisrael*, i.e., Hebrew language or literature, Jewish history and philosophy, etc. In general, students at these schools are expected not to pursue any secular studies at colleges or universities. The cur-

A Contemporary Rabbinical School for Orthodox Jewry

riculum of the modern Orthodox *yeshivah* is different. There too there is great emphasis laid on Talmud and Codes, but *Chokhmat Yisrael* is part of the curriculum and general studies at colleges and universities are not frowned upon. Y.U. has its own college and university and the H.T.C. of Chicago also incorporates a junior liberal arts college, where graduates continue at other colleges and graduate schools.

There can be little doubt that the old-world type is not the kind of contemporary rabbinical school for which we are asking and that is needed. But one has no right to criticize them. They do not acknowledge that Jewish communities do live in the context of a secular civilization that confronts the Jew with innumerable intellectual, moral, and religious challenges. They do not recognize the problems that beset Jewry in our times. For them, Jews, even in the midst of the world, ought to and can encapsule themselves—as it were. Jews should live in a spiritual ghetto of their own making, where there are no problems and no challenges. Whether in Israel or in the New World, get inside of old-world Judaism, which is the only authentic one, and you may well ignore contemporary life. It is not their aim to be contemporary. One might rather say that according to them the source of all evil stems from being contemporary. Their goal is not to be contemporary. On the whole, they are successful in their educational philosophy as far as their own students are concerned. However, these schools have only a marginal existence on the circumference of the reality of Jewish life in our days. No doubt, in general, their graduates are good Jews, an asset to the Jewish community. Some of them go on to teach in Day Schools or *yeshivot* where they continue to teach and educate in the spirit in which they themselves have been educated. Occasionally, a fairly effective contemporary rabbi emerges from the old-world *yeshivah*, not because of the training that he received, but mainly of what he was able to make of himself partly on the basis of that training and partly, in conscious departure from it. But such cases are unintended by the school philosophy. In fact, the *Roshei Hayeshivah* actually discourage their students from entering the active rabbinate, who, of course, need not much discouragement. The overwhelm-

ing majority of their students simply do not have the qualifications to function in any way effectively in a contemporary congregation.

3.

As we have indicated, one cannot blame the old-type *yeshivah* for not being contemporary. But what of the modern Orthodox rabbinical schools? Their *raison d'être* is to educate teachers and spiritual leaders for the contemporary Jewish community. Do they fulfill the task that ought to be theirs? In order to answer the question, one has to take a critical look at their educational philosophy, their curriculum, and methodology.

What is most obvious to anyone familiar with the internal life of these institutions is the fact that they are lacking an over-all educational philosophy. General college studies, *Chokhmat Yisrael* subjects, and the study of Talmud and Codes are unrelated to each other. Judged by its educational philosophy and its interpretation of Judaism the talmudic department of the modern Orthodox rabbinical school could just as well take its place in the old-world *yeshivah*. It is no less unrelated to the real needs of the contemporary community as is the latter. On the other hand, the *Chokhmat Yisrael* department, usually with its more liberal attitude and more broadminded outlook, with its greater awareness of the realities of the contemporary scene, cannot in its educational endeavor link up with the spirit of what is being taught in the talmudic department. The two exist side by side, as if in airtight compartments. Usually, *Chokhmat Yisrael*, including the study of *Tanach*, is treated as a stepchild; even the very limited and inadequate time allotted it is granted begrudgingly. Yet, it was no less a man than Maimonides who maintained that only the philosophical interpretation of the Torah will teach a man the love of God. (Cf. *Moreh Nevukhim*, III, 52). One need not agree with Maimonides on this point. One thing, however, is certain: no generation of Jews needed more desperately a meaningful interpretation of Judaism in contemporary idiom than ours. From the point of view of present-day Orthodoxy, this could only be accomplished by the

A Contemporary Rabbinical School for Orthodox Jewry

harmonization of the *Chokhmat Yisrael* disciplines with that of the talmudic subjects.

In short, the modern Orthodox rabbinical school has no integrated educational philosophy. It teaches this and that and the other too. But teaching this and that is no education. At best, it is the teaching of skills; the skill of how to read a passage in the Talmud, how to give an halakhic decision, and in exceptional cases, also how to interpret a passage in a medieval text of Jewish philosophy, etc., etc.

4.

The truly depressing aspect of the modern Orthodox rabbinical college is that the results of its talmudic curriculum too are questionable. The method of teaching Talmud in such a school is not much different from the way it has been taught for generations. Then the method was of no vital importance, for if one studies a subject for 12-16 hours a day, seven days a week, all year, almost any method will work, especially in the complete isolation from the world in which the young Talmud student lives. But if a young Jew goes to college, studies *Chokhmat Yisrael*, lives in a contemporary world, and has only four to five hours a day to spend on learning Talmud two things are vital if he wishes to get significant results: the comprehensive educational philosophy that determines the atmosphere of the institution and is, to a large extent, the source of motivation for many, and the method of teaching. We have seen that the educational philosophy is missing. As to the second vital requirement for educational success, not only is there no method appropriate to the prevailing conditions, but there is not even the slightest realization that the new circumstances demand one. In fact, the highest ambition of the Talmud teachers in the modern schools is to imitate the method of the old schools.

Our present method concentrates on each subject with great intellectual intensity; it examines a theme from innumerable angles; it spends a great deal of time on every minutiae of the analysis. Its main ambition is to come up continually with

TRADITION: *A Journal of Orthodox Thought*

hidushim, new concepts, new distinctions and definitions, with interpretations never seen or heard before. In itself, all this may sound commendable. Unfortunately, the entire intellectual activity is not related to the time available for study. As a result, only an extremely small amount of talmudic material is covered apparently in great depth. One has to use the qualifying term "apparently," for at this point the question of the relationship between quantity and quality arises. Is depth of penetration real, is its effect lasting, if the material of study to which it is applied is extremely limited? The results show that the answer is in the negative. More often than not the instructors bask in the light of their own self-flattering brilliance, completely overlooking the needs of the students.

Certainly in the study of the Talmud, quality without due regard to quantity results in superficiality. This is especially true if one analyzes the *pilpul* method used in the study of Talmud. It is difficult to define it for the uninitiated. It stands for everything we said above about the method but in a greatly exaggerated form. Often the most important goal is to score a point in the debate. The intellectual sharpness of analysis often disregards the text which it pretends to interpret. In the past, some of the greatest authorities have warned against the *pilpul*. The only safeguard against its degenerating into hairsplitting irrelevance is a fairly adequate quantitative knowledge of numerous areas of the talmudic discipline. If, however, the method of *pilpul* is practiced within the very narrow limits of the talmudic material covered in the modern rabbinical college, the results of this method are devastating. After years of study, the great majority of students graduate from such a school without ever having acquired a sound *Derekh Halimud* (method of study), without being able to work independently in the field of *Halakhah*, without being able to give a fairly authoritative opinion on any half-way complex halakhic question, and certainly ill-equipped to deal with complex contemporary problems.

The program of Talmud and Codes that leads to ordination in the modern Orthodox school with which this writer is rather familiar will illustrate the point that we are making. Beginning after high-school graduation, the curriculum provides an eight-

A Contemporary Rabbinical School for Orthodox Jewry

year course. During the first five years the student concentrates on the study of the Talmud. The last three years represent the *Semikhah* (ordination) program proper. During the five years of Talmud the student covers an average of 25-30 *blatt* (double Talmud pages) per annum. Thus when he reaches the threshold of the *Semikhah* program the student had covered about 125-150 *blatt* of the entire Talmud on a more mature level. At this stage, partly due to the failings in the method, as analyzed above, most of the students have achieved a rather weak ability of self-study of Talmud. But now they are put on a three-year pressure-cooker course of Codes, studying chiefly *Yoreh Deah* and *Orach Hayim*. The study of Talmud is pursued on a very minor scale, mainly as an occasional auxiliary to the understanding of the Codes. As a result, the rather meek *Derekh Halimud* (method of independent study) acquired in the previous five years is being neglected. On the other hand, an inordinately high amount of Code is studied by rote, interspersed with an unhealthy measure of *pilpul*. In the years to come in the active rabbinate most of the Codes so learned and on such foundations will be forgotten. The rather inadequate competence of talmudic self-study will provide little motivation for further scholastic pursuits in the area of Talmud or Halakhah.

In this connection it is necessary to say a few words about the *Brisker Derekh*, i.e., the method of Brisk, so called after the great Rabbi Hayim Soloveitchik of blessed memory, once the rabbi of Brest Litowsk in Russia. It has been adopted in most of the *yeshivot* and rabbinical schools. It is a method of extremely clear and sharp analysis of basic principles which, as if in a flash, illuminate entire subjects and many difficulties. It usually achieves its goal by translating the "cases" and the "pictorial" examples by which the Talmud teaches into exact logically definable concepts. The method is the work of a unique genius. That is its drawback. To this day, the *Brisker Derekh* is a master key to a penetrating talmudic study, but it works only if applied by a first-rate mind. In the hands of lesser spirits it leads to futility. In a sense, it is tantamount to an intellectual disaster that it has become too popular. Genius cannot be popularized. It has found too many imitators, but genius cannot

TRADITION: *A Journal of Orthodox Thought*

be imitated. The *Brisker Derekh* is too potent a potion. Many of those who dabble in it today ought to be discouraged. At what level of "learning" ability should a student be introduced to it is a serious methodological question. It would seem to us that before a student is capable of studying by himself and fairly competently a *Blatt Gemarah* this method would actually make it more difficult for him ever to achieve competence of independent Talmud study. As indicated earlier, the method of Brisk translates the concreteness of the "case" into the abstract of a principle. One cannot get to the abstract except by way of the concrete. He who attempts to do it is like one who pours air into leaking bottles. Before "Brisk" the student must be introduced to a method that will enable him to master the concrete talmudic material in self-study. After that, "Brisk" can become a veritable blessing. But even then, it should be handed to the more gifted students. The average young man should rather be encouraged to concentrate on the plain, common sense understanding of the text. An occasional taste of Brisk is about all he can handle safely.

It is remarkable that, notwithstanding its many failings, some outstanding rabbis did come out from the modern Orthodox rabbinical schools, mainly by filling in by their own ability and energy a great deal of what is lacking in their alma mater. However, in the vital area of halakhic scholarship, related to the numerous new problems with which contemporary Jewries are confronted, the results have been truly disappointing. And yet, the rabbi of the old school will never be able to grapple successfully with the new problems. It is questionable to what extent any branch of knowledge is genuinely objective, in the sense of being independent of the individuality and circumstances of the scholar that works in it. Undoubtedly, however, halakhic insights and decisions do depend to a large extent on the approach of the talmudic scholar to the problems before him, on his philosophy of life, on his philosophy of Judaism, on his understanding of the essence and purpose of Halakhah.

5.

In the State of Israel the situation is rather different. There

A Contemporary Rabbinical School for Orthodox Jewry

are no modern Orthodox *yeshivot* at all. All the *yeshivot* are essentially of the old-world type. They, of course, do produce many fine and some outstanding *Talmidei Chakhamim*. Yet, the inadequacy of the rabbinical schools in Israel is even more glaring than that of their counterpart in the United States, be they of the old or the new type. The new reality of the State of Israel is incomparably more revolutionary and its demands on spiritual leadership more demanding than anything thus far experienced in our entire history. In addition, the stakes are much higher. The opportunities are richer than anywhere else; failure more damaging to Judaism than anywhere else. To insist on meeting the need for spiritual leadership in the midst of the new reality of the State of Israel with the old-world *yeshivah* is sheer futility. Neither its curriculum, nor its method of study; neither its understanding of the complex reality of a modern state nor its philosophy of life and Judaism, enables its graduates to grapple successfully with the intellectual or emotional, religious or ethical, moral or halakhic problems of this excitingly and painfully new reality.

It is rather sad to see how little understanding there is in the ranks of the established rabbinate in Israel for the new intellectual, religious, and halakhic problematic in the life of the nation. A friend of mine from my younger years, who presently occupies a very sensitive rabbinical position in one of the major cities in Israel confided to me the following (without the intention that the fact as such not be revealed). He has completed a manuscript on one of the books of the Bible, in which he discusses some theories of higher Biblical criticism. Even though the work is, in his opinion, a very effective refutation of those theories, he does not publish it for fear of his rabbinical colleagues, who would condemn him for occupying himself with such questionable studies. A well-known rabbinical and scholarly personality had the following story to relate. One of the leading rabbis in Israel approached him, requesting his help in establishing a modern rabbinical school in Israel. Upon being questioned what type of a school he had in mind, the rabbi answered that it would be a *yeshivah* like all the other important *yeshivot* in Israel, with the difference that in his intended rab-

TRADITION: *A Journal of Orthodox Thought*

binical college, elocution too would be taught. How far removed must a rabbinical establishment be from the life of the people, if one of its leading members believes that the problem of spiritual leadership may be solved by elocution lessons!

Leading rabbinical personalities of the old-world type have been wont to oppose establishing special schools for the training of rabbis. The very idea of a rabbinical seminary was and is anathema to them. In the Eastern European communities this might have had its justification. Ideally, the rabbi is not really a professional. The study and knowledge of the Torah are equally incumbent on all Jews. The obligation to keep the commandments of the Torah applies to all Jews alike. Theoretically, all Jews ought to pursue the same course of Torah study; they all ought to receive the same kind of education. It would then be natural that the most accomplished personalities that would come out of such a general educational system would, if so inclined, become teachers and guides to their fellow Jews. This indeed has worked through many generations. There was no need for a professional rabbinical school. It worked mainly because the world was largely closed for the Jew. The trades and business activities in which they were enabled to engage in order to earn a living were of a kind that did not require a great deal of professional training. A Jew could well spend his youth in the *Bet Hamdirash* without spending any time in acquiring a general education, working for a degree or diploma. The professions, or any kind of other activity that required a high measure of general education, were in any case not accessible for him. In that kind of a world, it might have made sense to speak of a rabbinical seminary with some contempt as a "rabbinical factory." The situation is rather different today, both in the Jewish communities in this country and in *Eretz Yisrael*. The kind of general education that is required of any citizen is such that a Jew, especially if he enters any of the free professions, must of necessity have a form of Jewish education widely different from the one that would enable him to function effectively, if he chose to be a rabbi. At the same time, because of the mass entry of the Jews into the professions and as a result of the necessary acquisition of often sophisticated ger

A Contemporary Rabbinical School for Orthodox Jewry

eral education by the Jewish masses, the task of the rabbinate itself and the nature of spiritual leadership too has changed. By the nature of its engagement in the life of the times it is a different Jewry that requires spiritual guidance and leadership. The purely talmudic education will no longer do in order to meet the demands for spiritual leadership in contemporary Jewries. The Jewish education of a physician or physicist, of an engineer or even a modern business man, cannot be identical with that of a rabbi. Because of the modern "professionalization" of trades and business, not to mention the free professions themselves, the calling of the rabbi too has been professionalized. This is even more valid in the state of Israel than in this country. There a small and relatively weak country must make a stand in the midst of a highly competitive and often—to say the least—unfriendly world. It can do it only by the highest form of professionalization, in science, agriculture, defense, technology, business, the judiciary, and administration. Obviously, a general, an atomic scientist, a police chief, cannot have the same kind of Jewish education as a rabbi. On the other hand, it is in this kind of a highly professionalized society that the Israeli rabbi has to function effectively. To imagine that the graduates of the ghetto *yeshivot*, transplanted to *Eretz Yisrael* of today, will ever be able to do it is not a dream, but a nightmare. The logic of the ghetto *yeshivot*, which abound in the State of Israel, demands the rejection of most of a general secular education, all higher education, and, of course, all professionalism. In other words, if consistently maintained, it would require the denial of the living reality of a Jewish people in a Jewish State—certainly so, prior to the coming of the Messiah. In an interview, recently published in one of the religious Israeli newspapers, one of the Chief Rabbis was asked about the lack of young rabbis in the Israeli rabbinate. In his answer, he was declaring with obvious satisfaction that, of course, "we do not have factories for the manufacturing of rabbis." Many fine *Talmudei Chakhamim* come out of the Israeli *yeshivot*, said he, if only they would be willing to enter the rabbinate! If there is to be a meaningful future for the rabbinate, I am afraid they will have to do away with that bogey of "a factory for the manufacturing of rabbis" and

establish an adequate contemporary rabbinical seminary. Otherwise, the present situation will continue to deteriorate and, while there may still be rabbis in Israel, the people in Israel will have no rabbis.

6.

What then would be a contemporary rabbinical school? Our remarks in this section of our discussion are made with a view of the conditions in the United States. The educational philosophy, however, on which they are based is—we believe—valid no less for the conditions in the State of Israel.

The curriculum must center around Bible and Talmud, but it should incorporate the study of *Chokhmat Yisrael*, like Hebrew, Jewish history and Jewish philosophy in a serious manner. It should also acknowledge ungrudgingly the necessity for a higher general education, leading to a college or university degree. Whether this is acquired within the school itself or outside it is not essential. (In fact, one may argue well for the undesirability of a general college or university administered by a rabbinical school.) It is decisive that such a curriculum be comprehended within an inclusive educational philosophy, within which Bible and Talmud together with *Chokhmat Yisrael* represent as one entity the teaching of Judaism in a manner that does not leave the general higher education of the student unrelated to the specifically Jewish part of the curriculum. The conceiving of such an educational philosophy is to be the responsibility of the leadership of the school, to be implemented in such a manner that it be actively present on every level of the curriculum. The faculty would have to be chosen in the light of its ability to render such an educational philosophy effective. Especially in the beginning this might pose some problems in the talmudic department. A strong leadership, however, would not find the difficulty insurmountable. There has to be one faculty of the talmudic and *Chokhmat Yisrael* departments, that at regular meetings in joint discussions and consultations of all members they decide on all affairs of the school which come appropriately under its authority. If at all possible, some of the faculty mem

A Contemporary Rabbinical School for Orthodox Jewry

bers should teach in both departments. The ultimate goal in faculty appointments should be a faculty in which every member, in addition to his Jewish scholarship, also possesses a higher academic degree.

The entire program, leading to rabbinical ordination and beginning after graduation from a *yeshivah* high school, should be planned for eight years. The first year of the program should be reserved to Jewish studies exclusively, with major emphasis on Talmud and the study of Bible and no more than one subject of *Chokhmat Yisrael*, this latter on an undergraduate level. The purpose of this year is to equip the student with a sound enough foundation on which to build the talmudic curriculum in the years to follow. It is also assumed that as the result of the concentrated study of the first year, in the years ahead—when the time for Talmud study will be more limited—the student will be able to advance by far better and use the available time to much greater advantage than is the case in the present conditions.

The curriculum of the next three years will be divided into three parts: Talmud and Bible, *Chokhmat Yisrael* and College. It is assumed that during this period the student will acquire a Bachelor of Arts degree. This should be possible by attending summer school. It is also very likely that, if the *Chokhmat Yisrael* courses are conducted on an academic level, general colleges and universities will be willing to accept them for credits toward a Bachelor's degree. The fifth year of the program should once gain be given over completely to Jewish studies as in the first years, i.e., Talmud and Bible, and no more than one *Chokhmat Yisrael* subject, the latter on the graduate level.

The study of Codes is to be reserved for the last three years, but never in such a manner that at any one time only Codes are taught. During the first two years of this phase of the program *Chokhmat Yisrael* would still be given and students would also be required to work for a limited number of credits toward a higher academic degree. The final year is to be limited to Codes, Talmud, and practical rabbinics.

Most important, however, will be the method of teaching. In the talmudic department the goal should be a sound com-

TRADITION: *A Journal of Orthodox Thought*

bination of quantitative and qualitative study. The first year Talmud should be taught on two tracks. Track A should concentrate on the study of the text with the classical commentaries of Rashi and *Tosafot*, including *Me'harsha* and an occasional *Maharshal* and *Maharam*. At times, but only rarely, the opinion of a *Rishon* might be introduced and also some glossa by some of the classical *Acharonim*. The goal at this level is to communicate a method of thorough understanding of the text. All *pilpul* should be avoided. Track B should be the study of another talmudic tractate in much less thorough manner, pursuing an understanding of the text with the help of Rashi's commentary only. By the end of the first year the student, having previously graduated from a Jewish Day School with several years of Talmud study in its curriculum, will be well on his way to independent Talmud study.

During the next three years the study of Talmud should continue to be conducted on two tracks. Only that now Track A of the first year becomes Track B. Track A, on the other hand, will be a comprehensive and in-depth study of individual themes (*Sugyot*). No more than three to four such themes need be studied in any one term. During a period of about four weeks the student is required to research the theme in independent study. He will have to study it in all its major ramifications in the entire Talmud with all the relevant commentaries of *Rishonim* and *Acharonim*, including the parallel passages in the Codes and some appropriate responsa literature. At this stage in his program the student should be able to turn to good use the research method that he is gradually acquiring in his general college studies. It should help him in the study of variant texts, in the examination of the sources, and the development of the theme at its various phases, as well as in the formulation of exact logical principles and concepts. Thus prepared, the students will attend the lectures on the subjects studied by themselves. On the fifth year level, which again is dedicated exclusively to Jewish studies, tracks A and B of the previous level would be retained, but pulled together in close proximity. For this purpose a major tractate of the Talmud is to be studied in accordance with the methods of both tracks, i.e., according to

A Contemporary Rabbinical School for Orthodox Jewry

B of the previous level page after page, as well as according to A, through the selection of major themes (*Sugyot*) from the same tractate. It is assumed that, following such a program by the end of the fifth year the student will be a competent *Talmid Chakham* in the sense that he will be able to do independent scholarly work on any talmudic and halakhic subject. At this level, the student will enter the *Semikhah* program proper. The study of Codes should be spread over the entire three year period. The emphasis is to shift only gradually from Talmud to Codes. During the first two years of this phase major importance should still be given to the study of the Talmud, only that Talmud now is to be Code-oriented, i.e., it will deal with those parts of the Talmud which are the foundations of the sections of Codes that are decisive for practicing rabbis. At this stage, Talmud will be studied with the maturity of the method accomplished and the double track of the previous phases may be eliminated. During the first two years the amount of Codes studied is gradually increased. The final year is then dedicated to intensive Code study, while the study of Talmud is continued only in support of the courses in Codes.

The purpose of the *Chokhmat Yisrael* subjects should be the acquisition by the rabbinical student of a fair knowledge of Jewish history, of the history of Jewish philosophy and its subject matter, of the development of Halakhah and halakhic literature, and a working knowledge of modern Hebrew. The study of at least one major work in Jewish philosophy should be a requirement for all students. A two year course of graduate work in one *Chokhmat Yisrael* subject should be obligatory on each student.

Such a program is an ambitious one. It will demand strong motivation and full concentration on the part of the student. During this period of study, he will not be able to engage in any kind of part-time work in order to earn the necessary funds for his studies. In cases where a student has the intellectual ability to master the program with success, where he shows aptitude and inclination for spiritual leadership, but is lacking the financial means, scholarships and loans should be available. To raise funds for such a purpose ought to be no less important

TRADITION: *A Journal of Orthodox Thought*

for the school administration than to raise all the other funds needed for the effective functioning of the school.

Needless to say that the best of rabbis alone will not necessarily save us from the vulgarity and boorishness, the boredom and vacuity that so often render our congregational organizations so repulsive. In order to achieve that, our entire educational system needs remaking; the Jew himself has to be changed and Judaism to be articulated afresh so that it may speak meaningfully to the contemporary Jewish condition in this country as well as in *Eretz Yisrael*. We have to strive for renewal and rebirth on the broadest front. But a vital section of that front is the one manned by the rabbi. The more desperate the spiritual condition, the more grievous the problems of faith and action, the greater the rabbinical responsibility and the greater the need for the dedicated and competent contemporary rabbi.