

Program Learning Plan



Jonathan Esterman MDiv

Portland Seminary

Dr. Doug Balzer

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Area of Specialization

My areas of specialization is to focus on building bridges between the Jewish community and the Christian Church at large by fostering shalom,¹ providing understanding and tolerance via context and education, and engaging dialogue between the two groups via a bridge “ministry” that functions as a “go between” for the two groups. This endeavor is to answer the research question of: How can Jews and Christians forge a theologically practical solution to enable them to resolve differences to offer a unified salvific solution, and as a result, support one another to work together to foster tikkun olam?²

Throughout history, the Jewish people have been systematically persecuted against as a result of being G-d's³ chosen people. Since Roman occupation of Israel, many Jews have been branded as Christ-killers and suffered at the hands of Christians in the Crusades and Holocaust in particular. This has caused a widespread distrust of Christianity and, as a result, fear of Christians in general. The early church was originally Jewish before being hijacked by the Roman government to be used as a force of rule. There are many Jewish harmonies within Christian theology and holy texts. I posit that a theological framework can be established to provide a unified salvific solution that both groups are amenable to and thus enable collaboration.

With this in mind, I would like to:

1. Research Jewish history and culture.

¹ Hebrew, “peace.”

² Hebrew, “reparation of the world.”

³ Out of reverence in Jewish tradition, the “o” is omitted.

2. Learn about the different subcultures within Jewish ethnicities, specifically the Sephardic, Ashkenazi, and Mizrahi groups.
3. Dive into a theological overview of Judaism, Christianity, and the Noachides to find philosophical and societal bridges that can be explored to affect real practical change.
4. Engage and extrapolate spiritual harmonies within current Jewish mysticism for a better understanding of similarities in each group's relationship to HaShem.⁴

Rationale for Specialization

I have chosen this topic because HaShem has called me to live out my Jewish ethnicity as an Orthodox Jew. Since being called to go back to my heritage, I have been diligently working on learning more about how to be Jewish for the past several years. I did not grow up in the Jewish culture, despite my heritage, and am viewed as an outsider instead of natural Jew. I was originally a Christian in high school, transitioned to Messianic Judaism for several years, and am now completing the path to the Jewish covenant by engaging and becoming part of the Orthodox community.

Specific Goals and Outcomes Desired

My goals are four-fold:

1. Become an expert on Jewish culture and tradition, permitting me to enter and learn more about the Jewish community. This is accomplished via a Module focused on Jewish History and Culture.
2. Study Jewish subcultures and how to engage both Jews and Gentiles cross-culturally. The

⁴ Hebrew, "The Name." Honorific title for G-d.

Jewish people are found within several cultures: the Sephardic (Spanish) culture, the American Jewish culture, the Ashkenazi (European) culture, the Mizrahi (Asian) culture, and the standard Orthodox cultures (a variety of them include Hasidic, Chabad, etc.).

This is accomplished via a Module focused on Practical Judaism in a Multicultural Setting.

3. Formulate a theological overview and unified salvific solution that is biblical and consistent to provide a compatibility between Jewish and Christian thought and praxis, enabling me to start the endeavor of a bridge ministry concept in my dissertation. This is accomplished via a Module focused on a Theological Overview of Judaism, Christianity, and the Noachides.
4. Engage current Jewish mysticism and thought, learning about spiritual connections within Jewish Kabbalah, as well as addressing theological similarities to Christian theology and spiritual observance. This is accomplished via a Module focused on Kabbalah and Its Impact.

Possible Conferences and Seminars

- Center for Humanity. Module 1. Seattle, WA.
- *Sephardic Winter Film Series*. Modules 1/2. Portland, OR.
- Skirball Jewish Museum. Module 2. Los Angeles, CA.
- *Chinese New Year Celebrations*. Module 2. Portland, OR.
- Oregon Jewish Museum and Holocaust Memorial. Module 3. Portland, OR.
- *High Holiday Celebrations*. Module 3. Portland, OR.
- Attendance of Jewish Mystic courses with the Portland Kollel. Module 4.
- One-on-one kabbalist training classes (meditation sessions, etc.) with a Kollel Rabbi.

Module 4.

- Interviews and courses with individuals pursuing similar concepts. Module 3.
- Local synagogue services. Module 3/4.
- Group book study on Kitzur Shulchan Aruch with Kollel Rabbi. Module 3/4.

Description of Dissertation and Contribution of Goals and Outcomes

My dissertation will be a track two approach, which includes an artifact. The artifact is a website, including articles, blog, resources, and co-led “pod-blog” to answer theological questions via semiotic analysis, as a groundwork for a unifying theological framework. This artifact will serve as a trial model to give evidence of success and learn lessons on what to adjust, retain, etc., to enable a larger-scale rollout of a co-led “bridge ministry” that will address misunderstandings and conflicting theologies to find an amenable solution that is holistically biblical and consistent.

YidBrik
Building Jewish Bridges

