

# RELIGION

## Following God's Way

BY JUNIOUS RICARDO STANTON

The Husia, and African people have a saying: "Although the way of God is before all people the fool cannot find it." There's also a line in a song by Bobby "Blue" Bland that goes "there is none so blind as he who wouldn't see."

The fool in spiritual and mystic lure is one who eschews wisdom and truth. Foolishness is a choice that has grave consequences. Foolishness has nothing to do with IQ, material acquisitions or technological advancement. Foolishness is a way of thinking, perceiving and acting that runs counter to Divine Order and plain of common sense.

The leadership of this nation has chosen foolishness and the masses follow blindly along. They have chosen to follow the ways of ungodliness. They know nothing of MA'AT (Divine Order, Unity, Harmony, Truth, Justice, Righteousness and Reciprocity). They have chosen selfishness, hedonism, ruthlessness and greed, paths that inevitably lead to strife and suffering. I say inevitable because the law of cause and effect says we reap what we have sown.

It is interesting to reflect upon the fact that Europeans called us savages and heathens because we exhibited an obvious reverence for all life and creation. It is so telling that the greatest despoilers of nature on the planet, the people with an insatiable blood lust and a history of warmongering would mock us because we love life. Our people have always understood that God was not a giant man in the sky, but an all-pervading spirit that resides in everything, people, animals, and inanimate objects. When you examine African cultures for ancient Kemet to today's various tribal societies, you find they saw Divine Order in all creation. In this sense Africans and people of color worldwide did honor and respect (worship) nature.

When I speak of the ways of God I am not talking about anthropomor-

phic god(s), narrow minded dogmas, or a hypocritical veneer of morality and facade of piety. I am referring to the inward reality, the intuitive realization that we are all one with the universe, understanding that the universe is an ordered whole, inseparable from its parts. I am speaking of the innate belief that Divine Intelligence dwells in all creation. The way of God is so simple and basic. The way of God is to respect and to live in harmony with creation/nature.

People of color the world over knew and understood this reality. For time immemorial we have structured our social orders and cultures to reflect this dimple but obvious truth. That's why the circle is such a prominent symbol in societies of melanin rich people. It signifies the unity of all creation, wholeness and immortality. With the coming of Caucasian invaders this wisdom was

supplanted by a deep-seated sense of alienation. To the civilized people whose lands they invaded the Indo-Europeans were brutish fools, benighted and uninitiated in the ways of God. While a few of their more inquisitive souls sought and gained knowledge from ancient Africa and Asia, the masses remained steeped in spiritual ignorance, social backwardness, the blind leading/following the blind. That is the case even today.

The way of God is before all people. Fools cannot see it in the natural order. Fools think that all creation is the result of purely random happenstance instead of Divine Intelligence. Fools fail to see the unity in all things. Fools think there is a dichotomy between humans, animals and nature with impunity. Fools think professing morality is a substitute for living a moral life.

Fools think they and they alone possess all knowledge, that they

cannot learn from anything or anyone. Believing this, fools fail to ask the basic questions. Somehow their "best and brightest" never asked fundamental questions like what keeps all this together, what keeps the stars from crashing into each other, why is there order instead of chaos in the universe? Fools fail to learn the lessons of nature and are oblivious to the examples all about them. They have a limited idea of who they are, so they fashion ideas about gods that are just as limiting and restrictive. For example, their god is mean and jealous, their god has favorites, their god capriciously slaughters people and animals and wrecks havoc on his creation. Then the fool thinks he can go merrily on his way doing likewise without repercussion.

Open your eyes to the way of God all around you. Actively seek guidance and direction from Divine Intelligence. When harmony, sanity and righteousness are restored, it will be done by those who see the way of God and follow it.

### Grief Recovery Retreat

Beginning Experience is announcing the next grief recovery weekend retreat for the Separated, Divorced, and Widowed. The weekend consists of presentations by lay team members, periods for private personal reflection and small group dialogues. The weekend begins Friday evening and concludes Sunday afternoon.

Location: Loyola Retreat House, Portland, OR  
 Dates: October 18-20, 1996  
 Cost: \$110.00 (partial scholarships available)  
 Includes: Room, meals, resource materials  
 Registration: 503-393-1999 (Salem 503-614-9607 (Portland))  
 Write: Beginning Experience  
 P.O. Box 13422  
 Salem, OR 97309

### Jewish adult education available

Fall term Jewish Adult Education classes at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center continue with the following classes starting during the month of October.

Interfaith Workshop - Thursday, Oct 3, 7:30-9:00 p.m., No Fee. This workshop is designed to provide interfaith parents the opportunity to share their concerns and hopes with others in similar situations. Group is facilitated by Carol Chestler, LCSW, a counselor with Jewish Family & Child Services and a specialist in interfaith relationships.

Trekking Traditions - Oct. 14, 1996 - Feb. 24, 1997, 7:30-9:00 p.m.; meeting times will occur about every 2 weeks. This unique class explores the rich variety of liturgical expression within Judaism and Christianity. Participants will attend lecture/discussion sessions as well as the worship services of 12 congregations. The history and development of worship in both religions will be experienced. This is a rare opportunity to see the differences and similarities between and within the two faiths.

Three lecture and discussion sessions will be held at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center on Oct. 14 & 21, and Feb. 24. Between these sessions participants will visit worship services at Orthodox, Reform, Conservative and Havurah expressions within Judaism; and Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Mainline Protestant, Evangelical and Pentecostal/Charismatic expressions within Christianity.

Co-sponsored by the Mittleman Jewish Community Center and Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. Instructors are Jan Rabinowitch, former Director of Education at Temple Beth Israel and Mary Sicilia, Director of Christian Education at Trinity Cathedral. Fee is \$40. Pre-registration requested by Oct. 9.

An Introduction To Talmud & Its Study: - Tuesday, Oct. 15 & 29; Nov. 12, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Meyer Goldstein, resumes this class for a third year. The course provides an overview of the Talmud's structure and history, and the opportunity to study selected texts

in translation. It gives students familiarity to continue their study. Fee: \$30/MJCC members; \$45/non-members. Pre-registration requested by Oct. 10.

Words That Hurt And Words That Heal - Thursday Oct. 17 & 24, 7:30-9:00 p.m. "Whoever shames his neighbor in public, it is as if he shed his blood", says the Babylonian Talmud. Too often we gossip and smear reputations without realizing that words are like feathers; once they are scattered to the wind, they cannot be taken back. Words can also heal and bring us together. Class will explore that Lashon Hara (an evil tongue) is and how to avoid it. Instructor is Sarah Mendlovitz, Ph.D. in clinical psychology. Fee: \$25/MJCC members; \$35/non-members. Pre-registration requested by Oct. 14.

Interfaith Support Group - Thursday, Oct. 17 - Nov. 21, 7:00-9:00 p.m. A series of comfortable discussion groups for couples with one Jewish partner. Led by Carol Chestler, LCW, a counselor with

Jewish Family & Child Services, who specializes in the issues that arise in interfaith relationships. Fee: \$100/couple, MJCC members; \$135/couple, non-members.

Bake your Own Challah: A Workshop - Sunday, Oct 27, 3:00-5:00 p.m. Learn to bake sweet, fragrant loaves of Challah for Shabbat (the Sabbath) and holidays. Learn a variety of traditional shapes plus the history and traditions surrounding Challah. Bring a baking sheet and cutting board to class. Fee: \$15/MJCC members, \$18/non-members. Class size limited to eight. Pre-registration requested by Oct. 23.

Register in person at the MJCC, by telephone (503) 244-0111, or by Fax (503) 245-4233.

Telephone and Fax registrations (\$25 minimum) must be paid by Mastercard, Visa or American Express. The Mittleman Jewish Community Center is located at 6651 SW Capitol Highway, Portland. Call Eliana Temkin, (503) 452-3433 for more information about Jewish Adult Education classes.

### Shabbat With The Mittleman Community Center

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center is celebrating Shabbat during Fall and all in the community are invited to join with us in the unique presentation of these celebrations!

Friday, September 27: Shabbat and the harvest festival of Sukkot will be celebrated together. Newcomers to the Portland area are especially welcome. The celebration of Shabbat and Sukkot will include singing and crafts. Cost for MJCC members is \$7/adult, \$4/

child; for non-members: \$10/adult, \$6/child; children under 3 Free. For more information contact Eliana Temkin, (503) 452-3433.

Friday, October 11-Sunday, October 13: Family Shabbat Camp. Create Jewish family memories and spend Shabbat at B'nai B'rith Camp on beautiful Devil's Lake near Lincoln City. Leaders, Barbara Slader and Jan Rabinowitch, have planned a delightful program that includes study, hikes, songs & stories, crafts, and Shabbat

prayers. Cost for the week end is \$50/adult, \$25/child, children 2 and under are Free. Fee includes lodging, food and all activities. For more information contact Eliana Temkin, (503) 452-3433.

Friday October 18: Authentic Moroccan Five-Course Shabbat Dinner. Celebrate and enjoy Shabbat at the MJCC. Lillian Corcos, nutrition coordinator at the MJCC, is a Moroccan native who spent much of her youth in Ashkelon (Portland's Sister City), Is-

rael. The dinner and Shabbat program will have a decided Middle-Eastern and Oriental flavor. Program will include Z'merot (Moroccan and Israeli Shabbat songs), Hadlakat Nerot, Kiddush al la Jewish Moroccan and Middle-Eastern Jewish Music led by Emily Gottfried, MJCC Cultural Arts Director. Complete your meal with a traditional Nanah (mint) cup of tea. Cost is \$12.50/adult, \$7.50/child (4-7 years).

**Abdul M. Hasan**  
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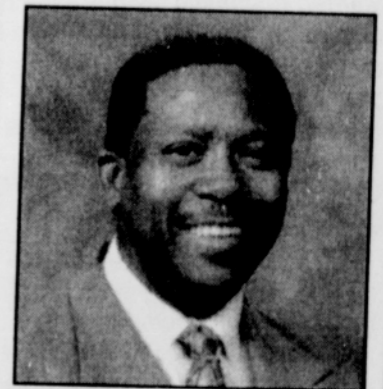
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 EVENING SESSION: 7:00 - 9:00 P.M.  
 PORTLAND ADVENTIST HEALTH VAN: 10:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.

**Special Greetings**  
 Dr. Charles A. Moose, Chief of Police - Portland, OR

**Keynote Address**  
 Reverend Lewis Anthony, pastor of the Metropolitan Wesley AME Zion Church, Washington, D.C.; National Advisor to the Anti-Drug Program of the Congress of National Black Churches and the National Crime Prevention Council's Advisory Council on Community Responses to Drug Abuse.

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