

These shortcomings, painful as they are, do not, however, touch the central importance of the method which Sanders has proposed and followed and which makes his book both interesting and original.

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

PAUL M. VAN BUREN

The Art of Jewish Living: The Shabbat Seder by Ron Wolfson. A Project of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs and The University of Judaism.

This project of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs and the University of Judaism is an outstanding example of adult education at its finest. Dr. Wolfson has produced a clear, concise course designed to give adult Jews competency in a short time which will enable them to greatly increase their participation in Jewish home observance. Dr. Wolfson has masterfully constructed a six-to-eight session course of study designed to be taught by lay people to other lay people, enabling the average Jew to fully execute and conduct the Friday evening Seder at home. The ten steps of the Friday evening home ritual include: 1) Hakhanah L'Shabbat, 2) Hadlakat Nerot, 3) Shalom Aleikhem, 4) Birkat ha-Mishpahah, 5) Kiddush, 6) Netilat Yadayim, 7) Ha-Motzi, 8) Seudat Shabbat, 9) Z'mirot, and 10) Birkat ha-Mazon. All are carefully mapped out. Specifics include instructions detailing how to chant the various prayers as well as perform the rituals and learn the meanings behind each performance. The course is non-threatening and systematic. Its step-by-step approach enables the participant to quickly and easily gain competence and act out the newly learned skills with immediate success.

What is important about this material? It responds to one of the basic reasons why many Conservative Jews are not more fully involved in Jewish life and practice: Adults who are competent in their professional, social and intellectual domains feel most incompetent when it comes to things Jewish. Adults don't like to feel incompetent. Adults don't like to involve themselves in experi-

ences where they are made to feel unsuccessful. (Neither do children!) No longer under the pressures of schools and teachers who often compel children to perform beyond their limit, adults shy away from experiences with which they are not comfortable. Dr. Wolfson recognizes that adults need quick success; that they, like young children, need to move in small increments, carefully controlled, demonstrated by a modeling personality (in this case the lay teacher), and the opportunity to practice the material learned each week. The student text and tape of Shabbat melodies is accompanied by an outstanding teacher's guide which leads every teacher step-by-step through all of the necessary preparation, lesson planning, and pedagogic techniques. The course provides opportunity to deal with people's emotions and inter-personal needs. The sum total is an outstanding package.

The program further specifies a rather flexible number of sessions needed—from six to ten—depending on the group and situation. Ingeniously, it suggests that parallel groups be scheduled in a congregation so that each week the same session is offered to all the groups, with each group meeting at a different time. A participant who misses a regular weekly session can pick up the same class in another study group's program. Often, for adults, a six to eight week commitment at a specific time is most difficult to schedule. The flexible approach again adds to the possibility that adults will feel comfortable and indeed fully partake in the program.

The materials themselves are quite well prepared. The teacher's guide is one of the most outstanding short guides for a teacher I have read. Though the melodies on the cassette tape may vary from an individual synagogue's, it is a starting point for both instructor and students. The approach to Hebrew language, from the standpoint of reading and comprehension, is straightforward and simple. The interlinear translations help participants understand specifically what each word means, and then students can find value and meaning in the text as a whole.

All in all, *The Art of Jewish Living* is a

superb approach to adult education in the material it contains, the methodology for conveying it, and in the very promise of quickly delivering adult competencies which will involve Conservative Jews more successfully and readily in important home

rituals. The program should find a welcome place in synagogues, day schools, adult education institutions and Federation adult education projects.

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