

Student reflections:

- ❖ *Before I read the article by Rabbi Norman Lamm, I was not aware of how many different types of faith there were. The article opened my eyes, and I now understand that there are many different types of faith and that faith, for many people, is not just something you have or do not have. For instance those with cognitive faith with substantive doubt, feel the need to rationalize and truly have proofs for them to truly believe. Contrastingly, someone with cognitive faith methodological doubt has questions and researches them, however but their doubt does not inhibit their belief. I gained a large appreciation for people with functional faith, because I believe it is admirable to follow G-d even if you are not sure about Him.*
- ❖ *Before I read the article by Rabbi Norman Lamm, I was not aware of how many different types of faith there were. I was baffled, angered, and saddened by people who expressed serious doubts about G-d. I thought that faith was either something you had or did not have. After learning about the many different types of faith, I have a different outlook on faith. I now understand that there are many different types of faith and all of them are valuable. I myself realized that I most identify with affective faith, yet as a very analytic learner I definitely have always appreciated and maybe occasionally rationalized my belief through cognitive faith and I do entertain methodological doubt (to a certain extent). I innately have very strong feelings about Judaism and faith. I don't experience doubt of G-d. However, in moments that are hard for me I experience a sense of anger or frustration towards G-d. Yet, these emotions do not disrupt the nature of my relationship with G-d.*
- ❖ *"You're crazy for believing in a G-d! You really think that there is something more and greater than simple science?! We're all made up of atoms, which make up*

our cells, our bodies, our world. There is nothing else and you're crazy for thinking more." After having this conversation with one of my friends, I thought about my own answer to this question. Why was I Jewish and why did I believe in a supernatural being? I knew I did, but I wasn't able to put into words what exactly drove me to believe. After diving deeper into the discussion of faith; reading different perspectives and hearing an individual's account of his religious journey, I realized why I believe so strongly in Judaism and Hashem.

- ❖ *Before this class, I thought there was only one type of faith. An all encompassing, all inclusive, all or nothing faith. My mind opened after reading Rabbi Lamm's article discussing the three different types of faith, allowing me to question and expand even more than I thought I could. Differentiating between the different types of faith has helped me realize that my connection to Judaism can be made individual, and I don't have to follow the crowd.*
- ❖ *After reading a lot of the articles in this class, particularly Rabbi Lamm and Jay Lefkowitz's, I don't feel alone in my questioning and know that I at least fall under some category of people, and am not just floating in between. It's hard at this age to know what you want out of your Judaism and how you would want to raise a family, but I do know that the moral and ethical values of Modern Orthodoxy are something I want to instill in my children.*
- ❖ *...He explains that it may be enough for him to know that there is an answer, even if he doesn't understand it. I don't understand this type of thinking because for me, the answer has always been as important, if not more important, than the question. My level of trust in G-d is unsteady at this point in time precisely because I have not found satisfying answers to my questions. Hopefully, our class will give me the answers I am looking for later in the year.*

- ❖ *Throughout my high school years, as I started to learn more about life and the world, I also started developing questions towards God. I developed a cognitive and affective mix of faith in the sense that I believe in God but struggle with his existence. I also believe I have an aspect of functional faith. I do all of God's actions but do not know exactly what or why I am doing them.*
- ❖ *My faith is far from perfect and I still have my doubts. I realize that it's okay to question and that there really is no such thing as complete faith. If you don't question then you are just floating through life, and I don't think that's fulfilling.*
- ❖ *I learned from the articles we've read along with the interview I conducted, which I kind of already knew, but it cemented it into words, that people do not have the same faith journeys. People do not have the same educational backgrounds, and religious experiences. And people for sure do not have the same family dynamics. All of these factors play out into people's faith journeys, and I learned that I need to take a step back and appreciate all, the different approaches to faith, because Hashem created this world with different types of people. And who am I to judge someone's faith when, it could possibly be purer than mine, but they just don't show it outwardly. This gave me a new appreciation for people who are different, and think differently.*
- ❖ *I would categorize my faith as a mixture of Functional Faith and Cognitive Faith. This class really pushed me to explore my faith and the beliefs on which it rests. It has also made me examine my relationship with God and explore ways in which I can improve this relationship.*
- ❖ *After the completion of these four steps I have realized a lot about myself. Never yet, in my 14 years of Jewish education has a teacher assigned us to reflect on our own faith, faith of other famous Jews, and the faith of our peers/parents. This*

project and class has allowed me to open up, write down, discuss, and challenge things I have only thought of. Through this I have learned more about my peers, my religion and myself. Overall, this project, and the class itself, has made me step out of my comfort zone and realize the true definition of faith and where I lie amongst that.