

**Friday, December 6**

**Term Projects**

**Digital Copy  $\leq$  Midnight Friday  
Turn in Printed Hard Copy Before  
10 AM Saturday**

**Monday**

**Assignment 23  
Course Response Forms  
Take Home Exam Distributed**

**Wednesday**

**In Class Final Exam: 9 to Noon  
Take Home Exam Due by Noon**

# Game Theory, The Bible And Opera



# Game Theory

*Game Theory* is the branch of mathematics concerned with the analysis of strategies for dealing with competitive situations where the outcome of a participant's choice of action depends critically on the actions of other participants.

*Game theory* is the study of mathematical models of conflict and cooperation between intelligent rational decision-makers.

# **Some Applications of Game Theory**

**Economics**

**Political Science**

**Psychology**

**Biology**

**History**

**Literature**

**Religion**

**Games**

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 TRENDING



See Metallica's Reality-Bending, War-Torn 'Confusion'...



Watch 'South Park' Parody Donald Trump's Election Win



How the Electoral College Rigged the Election for Donald...

# What Game Theory Tells Us About Donald Trump



John Von Neumann  
1903 - 1957

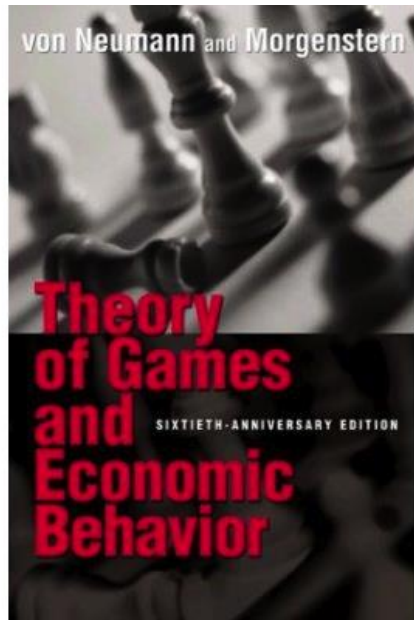




*Oskar Morgenstern*

Oscar Morgenstern  
1902 - 1977





## *Oskar Morgenstern*

Game theory is a new discipline that has aroused much interest because of its novel mathematical properties and its many applications to social, economic, and political problems. The theory is in a state of active development. It has begun to affect the social sciences over a broad spectrum. The reason that applications are becoming more numerous and are dealing with highly significant problems encountered by social scientists is due to the fact that the mathematical structure of the theory differs profoundly from previous attempts to provide mathematical foundations of social phenomena. These earlier efforts were oriented on the physical sciences and inspired by the tremendous success these have had over the centuries. Yet social phenomena are different: people are acting sometimes against each other, sometimes cooperatively with each other; they have different degrees of information about each other, their aspirations lead them to conflict or cooperation. Inanimate nature shows none of these traits. Atoms, molecules, stars may coagulate, collide, and explode but they do not fight each other; nor do they collaborate. Consequently, it was dubious that the methods and concepts developed for the physical sciences would succeed in being applied to social problems.

The foundations of game theory were laid by John von Neumann, who in 1928 proved the basic minimax theorem, and with the publication in 1944 of the *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* the field was established. It was shown that social events can best be described by models taken from suitable games of strategy. These games in turn are amenable to thorough mathematical analysis.

# CLASSIFICATION OF GAMES

## 1) NUMBER OF PLAYERS

**1-Person** “Games Against Nature”

Decision Analysis

**2-Person**

***n*-Person** 3 or more decision makers

Coalitions

## 2) “ZERO-SUM” vs “NONZERO-SUM”

## 3) PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF *CHANCE* MOVES

## 4) KIND AND AMOUNT OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO EACH PLAYER CONCERNING MOVES OF THE OTHER PLAYER.

**Perfect Information:** Chess, Tic-Tac-Toe,  
Go

**Imperfect Information:** Gin Rummy



## 5) NUMBER OF AVAILABLE STRATEGIES

A **Strategy** is a complete set of principles which determine a player's moves for all situations which may arise in the course of a game.

### MOVE vs STRATEGY

<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>
<i>G</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>I</i>

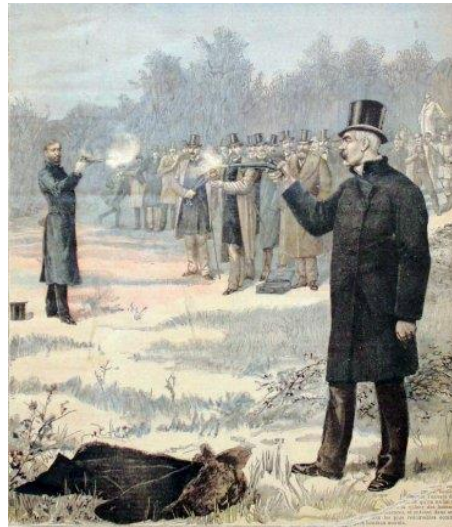
**MOVE:** Place "X" in Box *F*

**STRATEGY:** Occupy alphabetically smallest open cell

## Classification by Number of Strategies

**Infinite:** At least one player has infinitely many possible strategies

### *DUELS*



**Finite:** Each player has a finite number of strategies from which to choose:

*m* by *n* Game

One player has *m* available  
Other player has *n* available

# Duels

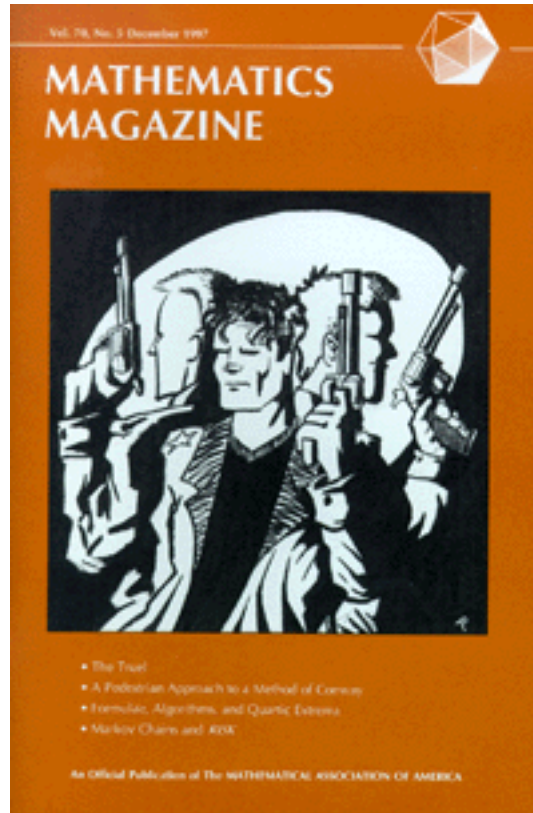


Hamilton – Burr Duel

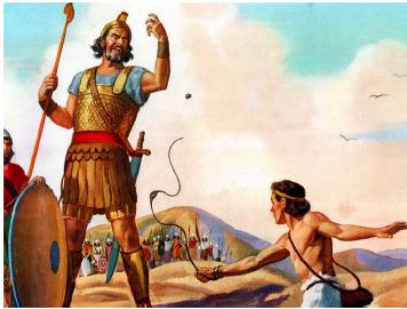




# *Truels: 3 – Person Duels*



# Mathematical Models, The Bible and Opera



## Case Studies

- Should David Take Up The Challenge To Fight Goliath?
- Should Abraham Sacrifice His Son Isaac As God Demands?
- Should Tosca and Scarpia Double Cross Each Other?



# BIBLICAL GAMES

Game Theory and the Hebrew Bible

Steven J. Brams



1940 –

Department of Politics  
New York University

YouTube: Game Theory and the Humanities  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFP7fZri4QQ>

א ויהי אחר הדברים האלה והאלהים נסה את־אברהם  
 ב ויאמר אליו אברהם ויאמר הנני: ויאמר קח־נָא את־  
 בנך את־יחידך אשר־אהבת את־יצחק ולך־לך אל־ארץ  
 המרה והעל־ו שם לעלה על אחר הרים אשר אמר  
 ג אלקי: וישכם אברהם בבקר ויחבש את־חמרו ויקח  
 את־שני נעריו אתו ואת יצחק בנו ויבקע עצי עלה ויקם  
 ד וילך אל־המקום אשר־אמר־לו האלהים: ביום השלישי  
 ה וישא אברהם את־עיניו וירא את־המקום מרחק: ויאמר  
 אברהם אל־נעריו שבו־לכם פה עם־חמור ואני והנער  
 ונקח ערבה ונשתחוה ונשובה אליכם: ויקח אברהם  
 את־עצי העלה וישם על־יצחק בנו ויקח בנו את־האש  
 ז ואת־המאכלת וילכו שניהם יחדו: ויאמר יצחק אל־  
 אברהם אביו ויאמר אבי ויאמר הנני בני ויאמר הנה  
 ח האש והעצים ואיה השה לעלה: ויאמר אברהם אלהים  
 ט וראו־לו השה לעלה בני וילכו שניהם יחדו: ויבאו  
 אל־המקום אשר אמר־לו האלהים ויבן שם אברהם  
 את־המזבח ויערף את־העצים ויעקד את־יצחק בנו וישם  
 י אתו על־המזבח ממשל לעצים: וישלח אברהם את־  
 יא ידו ויקח את־המאכלת לשחט את־בנו: ויקרא אליו  
 מלאך יהוה מדהשמים ויאמר אברהם ויאמר  
 יב הנני: ויאמר אליה־שלח דך אל־הנער ואל־תעש לו  
 מאומה כיון עתה ידעתי כיו־רא אלהים אתה ולא חשבת  
 יג את־בנך את־יחידך ממני: וישא אברהם את־עיניו וירא  
 והנה־איל אתר נאחו בסבך בקרניו וילך אברהם ויקח  
 יד את־האיל והעל־ו לעלה תחת בנו: ויקרא אברהם שם  
 המקום ההוא ידוה ויראה אשר יאמר היום בחר יהוה

יראה: ויקרא מלאך יהוה אל־אברהם שנית מדהשמים: 10  
 ויאמר בני נשבעתי נאם־יהוה כי יען אשר עשית אתי 16  
 הדבר הזה ולא חשבת את־בנך את־יחידך: פירבךך 17  
 אברהם ותרבה ארבה את־זרעך ככוכבי השמים וכחול  
 אשר על־שפת הים וירש זרעך את שער אִביו: והתברכו 18  
 בזרעך כל בני הארץ עקב אשר שמעת בקלי: וישב 19  
 אברהם אל־נעריו ויקמו וילכו יחדו אל־באר שבע  
 וישב אברהם בבאר שבע: פ  
 ויהי אחר הדברים האלה ויגד לאברהם לאמר הנה כ  
 ילדה מלכה נס־הוא בנים לנחור אחיך: את־עמך בטרן 21  
 ואת־בית אחיו ואת־קמואל אבי ארם: ואת־פישד ואת־חוז 22  
 ואת־פלדש ואת־דלת ואת־בתואל: ובתואל ילד את 23  
 רבקה שמנה אלה ילדה מלכה לנחור אתו אברהם:

בתולדות העממה באומות העולם ויהוה יתברך...

## Chapter 22 of *Genesis*

Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!”

“Here I am,” he replied.

<sup>2</sup> Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

<sup>3</sup> Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. <sup>4</sup> On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. <sup>5</sup> He said to his servants, “Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.”

<sup>6</sup> Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, <sup>7</sup> Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, “Father?”

“Yes, my son?” Abraham replied.

“The fire and wood are here,” Isaac said, “but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”

<sup>8</sup> Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them went on together.

<sup>9</sup> When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.

<sup>10</sup> Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. <sup>11</sup> But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!”

“Here I am,” he replied.

<sup>12</sup> “Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.”

<sup>13</sup> Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. <sup>14</sup> So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, “On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided.”

<sup>15</sup> The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time <sup>16</sup> and said, “I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup> I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, <sup>18</sup> and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed because you have obeyed me.”

## Qur'ân verses 37:99 to verse 37:109



99. He said: "I will go to my Lord! He will surely guide me

100. "O my Lord! Grant me a righteous (son)!"

101. So We gave him the good news of a forbearing son.

102. Then, when (the son) reached (the age of) (serious) work with him, he said: "O my son! I have seen in a vision that I offer thee in sacrifice: now see what is thy view!" (The son) said: "O my father! Do as thou art commanded: thou will find me, if Allah so wills, one of the steadfast!"

103. So when they had both submitted (to Allah), and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead (for sacrifice),

104. We called out to him "O Abraham! ...

105. "Thou hast already fulfilled the vision!" - thus indeed do We reward those who do right.

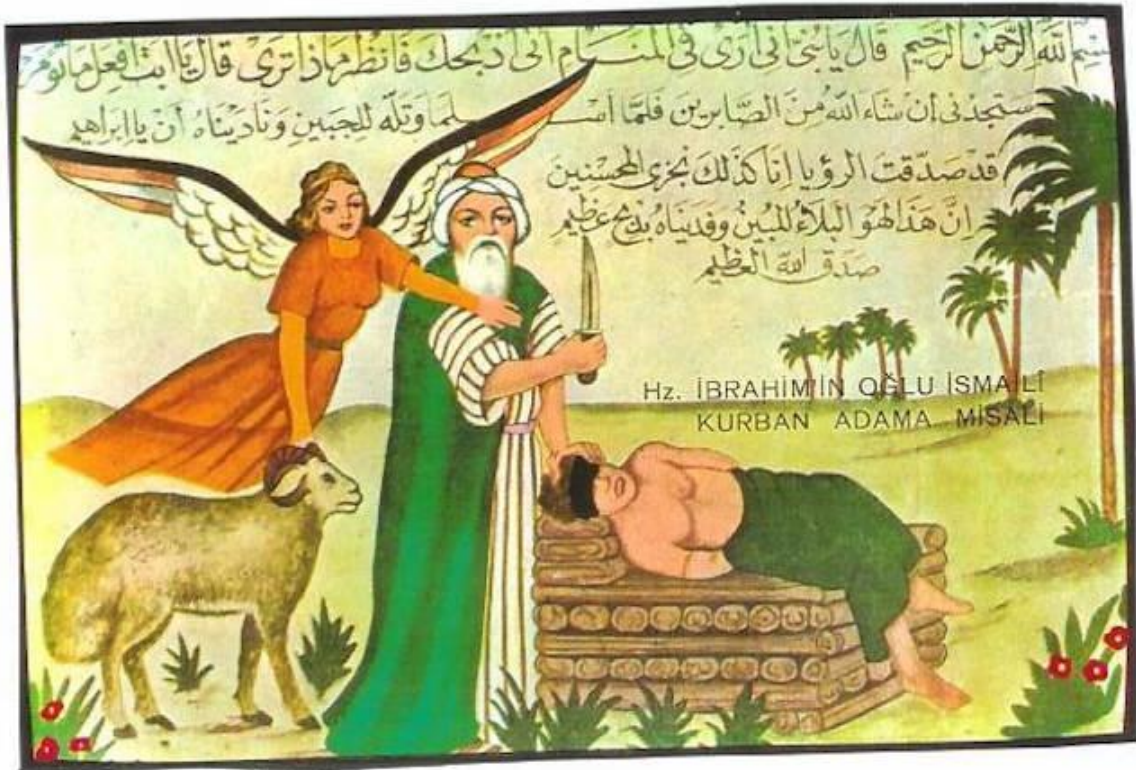
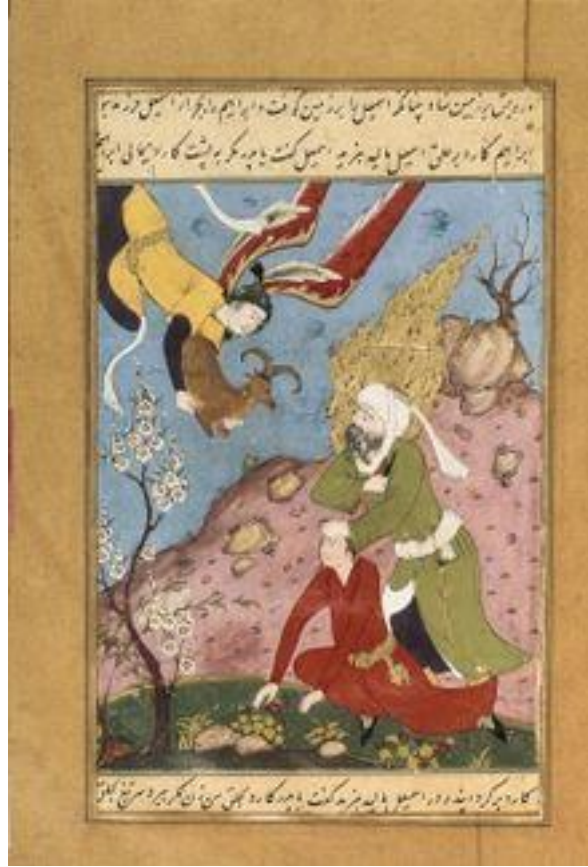




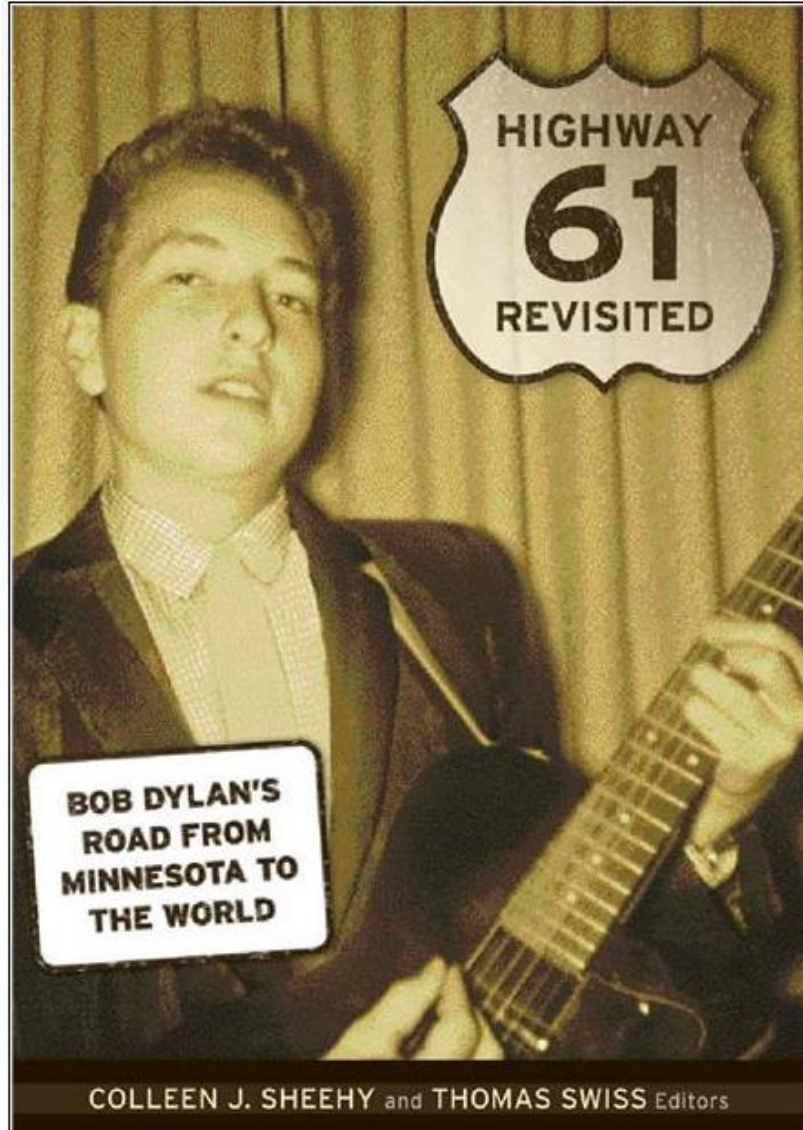












HIGHWAY

61

REVISITED

BOB DYLAN'S  
ROAD FROM  
MINNESOTA TO  
THE WORLD

COLLEEN J. SHEEHY and THOMAS SWISS Editors

Oh God said to Abraham, "Kill me a son"  
Abe says, "Man, you must be puttin' me on"  
God say, "No." Abe say, "What ?"  
God say, "You can do what you want Abe, but  
The next time you see me comin' you better run"  
Well Abe says, "Where do you want this killin' done?"  
God says. "Out on Highway 61".

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDgefX2sZRU>

Tom Ayres and Le Strange perform Highway 61, Bob Dylan '66. Live at Planet Gemini  
April 15, 2011

# Game Theory and The Bible

Steven Brams, *Biblical Games: Strategic Analysis of Old Testament Stories*,  
Cambridge: MIT Press, 1980

- I. *Game Theory: What Is It?*
- II. *A Classification of Games*
  - A. *Number of Players*
  - B. *Zero-sum vs Nonzero-sum*
  - C. *Chance*
  - D. *Information*
  - E. *Number of Strategies*
- III. *One Person Games = Games Against Nature*  
*(Decision Making Under Uncertainty)*  
*Example: David's Decision To Fight Goliath*
- IV. *Biblical Games*
  - A. *God as a Player*
  - B. *The Binding of Isaac*
  - C. *Abraham's Choices and God's Choices*
  - D. *The Outcome Matrix*
  - E. *God's Preferences*
  - F. *Abraham's Preferences*
    1. *Abraham Faithful Regardless*
    2. *Abraham Wavers Somewhat*
    3. *Abraham Wavers Seriously*
  - G. *The Strategies*
  - H. *The Payoff Matrix*
  - I. *The Concept of a Dominating Strategy*
  - J. *Strategic Calculations*



## Abraham's Choices

**O :** Offer Isaac

**O\*:** Don't Offer Isaac

## God's Choices:

**R :** Renege if Isaac offered; relent if  
not [ *merciful* ]

**R\*:** Don't renege/relent [ *adamant* ]

### Outcome Matrix

#### **GOD**

		<b>R</b>	<b>R*</b>
<b>A</b>		Abraham faithful	Abraham faithful
<b>B</b>	<b>O</b>	God merciful	God Adamant
<b>R</b>		Isaac saved	Isaac sacrificed
<b>A</b>			
<b>H</b>		Abraham resistant	Abraham resistant
<b>A</b>	<b>O*</b>	God merciful	God Adamant
<b>M</b>		Isaac saved	Isaac's fate uncertain

Outcome Matrix

**GOD**

		<b>R</b>	<b>R*</b>
<b>A</b>		Abraham faithful	Abraham faithful
<b>B</b>	<b>O</b>	God merciful	God Adamant
<b>R</b>		Isaac saved	Isaac sacrificed
<b>A</b>			
<b>H</b>		Abraham resistant	Abraham resistant
<b>A</b>	<b>O*</b>	God merciful	God Adamant
<b>M</b>		Isaac saved	Isaac's fate uncertain

**How Does God Rank The Outcomes?**

**GOD**

		<b>R</b>	<b>R*</b>
<b>A</b>			
<b>B</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>R</b>			
<b>A</b>			
<b>H</b>			
<b>A</b>	<b>O*</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>M</b>			

## What About Abraham's Preferences?

**(a) Abraham faithful regardless**

$$\begin{array}{cc} & R \quad R^* \\ \begin{array}{c} O \\ O^* \end{array} & \left( \begin{array}{cc} 4 & 3 \\ 2 & 1 \end{array} \right) \end{array}$$

## What About Abraham's Preferences?

**(a) Abraham faithful regardless**

$$\begin{array}{cc} & R & R^* \\ O & \left( \begin{array}{cc} 4 & 3 \end{array} \right) \\ O^* & \left( \begin{array}{cc} 2 & 1 \end{array} \right) \end{array}$$

**(b) Abraham wavers somewhat**

$$\begin{array}{cc} & R & R^* \\ O & \left( \begin{array}{cc} 4 & 2 \end{array} \right) \\ O^* & \left( \begin{array}{cc} 3 & 1 \end{array} \right) \end{array}$$

\

## What About Abraham's Preferences?

**(a) Abraham faithful regardless**

$$\begin{array}{cc} & R \quad R^* \\ O & \left( \begin{array}{cc} 4 & 3 \end{array} \right) \\ O^* & \left( \begin{array}{cc} 2 & 1 \end{array} \right) \end{array}$$

**(b) Abraham wavers somewhat**

$$\begin{array}{cc} & R \quad R^* \\ O & \left( \begin{array}{cc} 4 & 2 \end{array} \right) \\ O^* & \left( \begin{array}{cc} 3 & 1 \end{array} \right) \end{array}$$

**(c) Abraham wavers seriously**

$$\begin{array}{cc} & R \quad R^* \\ O & \left( \begin{array}{cc} 4 & 1 \end{array} \right) \\ O^* & \left( \begin{array}{cc} 3 & 2 \end{array} \right) \end{array}$$

	R	R*		R	R*		R	R*
O	(4,4)	(3,3)	O	(4,4)	(2,3)	O	(4,4)	(1,3)
O*	(2,1)	(1,2)	O*	(3,1)	(1,2)	O*	(3,1)	(2,2)
	(a)			(b)			(c)	

## The Strategies

**Abraham: O or O\***

**God:**

**R /R be merciful regardless**

**R\*/R\* be adamant regardless**

**R /R\* tit-for-tat**

**R\*/R tat-for-tit**

The notation  $A/B$  for a strategy for God means:

do  $A$  if Abraham does  $O$ ,

do  $B$  if Abraham does  $O^*$

**Abraham: O or O\***

**God:**

**R /R be merciful regardless**

**R\*/R\* be adamant regardless**

**R /R\* tit-for-tat**

**R\*/R tat-for-tit**

The Payoff Matrix For

**(a): Abraham Faithful Regardless**

	R	R*	R/R	R*/R*	R/R*	R*/R
O	(4,4)	(3,3)	(4,4)	(3,3)	(4,4)	(3,3)
O*	(2,1)	(1,2)	(2,1)	(1,2)	(1,2)	(2,1)

**What Should Abraham Do?**

**Abraham: O or O\***

**God:**

**R /R be merciful regardless**

**R\*/R\* be adamant regardless**

**R /R\* tit-for-tat**

**R\*/R tat-for-tit**

The Payoff Matrix For

**(a): Abraham Faithful Regardless**

	R	R*	R/R	R*/R*	R/R*	R*/R
O	(4,4)	(3,3)	(4,4)	(3,3)	(4,4)	(3,3)
O*	(2,1)	(1,2)	(2,1)	(1,2)	(1,2)	(2,1)

**What Should Abraham Do?**

**Abraham Has A Dominant Strategy**



**Abraham: O or O\***

**God:**

**R /R be merciful regardless**

**R\*/R\* be adamant regardless**

**R /R\* tit-for-tat**

**R\*/R tat-for-tit**

The Payoff Matrix For

**(a): Abraham Faithful Regardless**

	R	R*	R/R	R*/R*	R/R*	R*/R
O	(4,4)	(3,3)	(4,4)	(3,3)	(4,4)	(3,3)
O*	(2,1)	(1,2)	(2,1)	(1,2)	(1,2)	(2,1)

**What Should Abraham Do?**

**Abraham Has A Dominant Strategy**

**Abraham Should Play O Strategy**

**What Will God Do?**

**Abraham: O or O\***

**God:**

**R /R be merciful regardless**

**R\*/R\* be adamant regardless**

**R /R\* tit-for-tat**

**R\*/R tat-for-tit**

The Payoff Matrix For

**(a): Abraham Faithful Regardless**

	R	R*	R/R	R*/R*	R/R*	R*/R
O	(4,4)	(3,3)	(4,4)	(3,3)	(4,4)	(3,3)
O*	(2,1)	(1,2)	(2,1)	(1,2)	(1,2)	(2,1)

**What Should Abraham Do?**

**Abraham Has A Dominant Strategy**

**Abraham Should Play O Strategy**

**What Will God Do?**

**God will play R/R\***

**Outcome is (4,4)**

**Abraham: O or O\***

**God:**

**R /R be merciful regardless**

**R\*/R\* be adamant regardless**

**R /R\* tit-for-tat**

**R\*/R tat-for-tit**

The Payoff Matrix For

**(b): Abraham Wavers Somewhat**

	R	R*	R/R	R*/R*	R/R*	R*/R
O	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)
O*	(3,1)	(1,2)	(3,1)	(1,2)	(1,2)	(3,1)

**What Should Abraham Do?**

**Abraham: O or O\***

**God:**

**R /R be merciful regardless**

**R\*/R\* be adamant regardless**

**R /R\* tit-for-tat**

**R\*/R tat-for-tit**

The Payoff Matrix For

**(b): Abraham Wavers Somewhat**

	R	R*	R/R	R*/R*	R/R*	R*/R
O	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)
O*	(3,1)	(1,2)	(3,1)	(1,2)	(1,2)	(3,1)

**What Should Abraham Do?**  
**Abraham Has No Dominant Strategy**

**Abraham: O or O\***

**God:**

**R /R be merciful regardless**

**R\*/R\* be adamant regardless**

**R /R\* tit-for-tat**

**R\*/R tat-for-tit**

The Payoff Matrix For

**(b): Abraham Wavers Somewhat**

	R	R*	R/R	R*/R*	R/R*	R*/R
O	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)
O*	(3,1)	(1,2)	(3,1)	(1,2)	(1,2)	(3,1)

**What Should Abraham Do?  
Abraham Has No Dominant Strategy  
Consider What God Will Do.**

**Abraham: O or O\***

**God:**

**R /R be merciful regardless**

**R\*/R\* be adamant regardless**

**R /R\* tit-for-tat**

**R\*/R tat-for-tit**

The Payoff Matrix For

**(b): Abraham Wavers Somewhat**

	R	R*	R/R	R*/R*	R/R*	R*/R
O	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)
O*	(3,1)	(1,2)	(3,1)	(1,2)	(1,2)	(3,1)

**What Should Abraham Do?**  
**Abraham Has No Dominant Strategy**  
**Consider What God Will Do.**  
**God has a Dominant Strategy: **R/R\*****

**Abraham: O or O\***

**God:**

**R /R be merciful regardless**

**R\*/R\* be adamant regardless**

**R /R\* tit-for-tat**

**R\*/R tat-for-tit**

The Payoff Matrix For

**(b): Abraham Wavers Somewhat**

	R	R*	R/R	R*/R*	R/R*	R*/R
O	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)
O*	(3,1)	(1,2)	(3,1)	(1,2)	(1,2)	(3,1)

**What Should Abraham Do?**

**Abraham Has No Dominant Strategy**

**Consider What God Will Do.**

**God has a Dominant Strategy: R/R\***

**God Will Play R/R\***

**Abe's Best Response:**

The Payoff Matrix For  
**(b): Abraham Wavers Somewhat**

	R	R*	R/R	R*/R*	R/R*	R*/R
<b>O</b>	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)	(4,4)	(2,3)
<b>O*</b>	(3,1)	(1,2)	(3,1)	(1,2)	(1,2)	(3,1)

**What Should Abraham Do?**  
**Abraham Has No Dominant Strategy**  
**Consider What God Will Do.**  
**God has a Dominant Strategy: R/R\***  
**God Will Play R/R\***  
**Abe's Best Response: O**  
**Outcome is (4,4)**





*Schizophrenic Abraham.*

**Abraham: O or O\***

**God:**

**R /R be merciful regardless**

**R\*/R\* be adamant regardless**

**R /R\* tit-for-tat**

**R\*/R tat-for-tit**

The Payoff Matrix For

**(c): Abraham Wavers Seriously**

	R	R*	R/R	R*/R*	R/R*	R*/R
O	(4,4)	(1,3)	(4,4)	(1,3)	(4,4)	(1,3)
O*	(3,1)	(2,2)	(3,1)	(2,2)	(2,2)	(3,1)