

An Initiation Process for Entrance into the Jewish Community

by
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Approved by the Faculty Committee
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I. Concept of Initiation

Societies today, both primitive and western, have established "rites of passage" whereby initiates undergo certain rites and will, upon completion of these rites, attain status as a full and participating member.

Ritual and inclusive rites have been by definition, historically, the process by which mores have been developed and established in society. The sum total of a person's actions in primitive and modern society is governed by ritualism. Current habits as hours of work, family life, amusements, holidays, etc., fall under the category of ritualism. Initiation governs the ability of youth to assume the responsibility of ritualism and thus become active adults. The age of such attainment is maturity.

Amongst the Jews, the Bar Mitzvah has served as this ritual for the passage of the youth into the role of a full and participating member of Judaism.

II. The History of Bar Mitzvah

The "Bar Mitzvah" or son of the commandment is relatively new as a custom as compared with the total history of the Jewish people.

"The Pirke Ovas, or in any other books in that period, do not say anything about a special ceremony public or private when a boy became a son of the commandment."¹

"The name Bar Mitzvah as it first appears in the Talmudic literature refers to every grown Israelite. This term, which was used interchangeably with that of godol or Bar Onshin implied an adult person, thirteen years of age or older, who carried the obligation of fulfilling all religious commandments."²

The term Bar Mitzvah as it is known today appears for the first time in the writings of Mordecai Ben Hillel, a German Halachist of the Thirteenth

Century. The first to speak of his own Bar Mitzvah was Solomon Steiward, a pupil of Jacob Halevi. It would appear then that the Institution of Bar Mitzvah begins around the Thirteenth Century.³

The Bar Mitzvah ceremony in Judaism served to motivate a period of training which led up to an acceptance of responsibility as a member of the Jewish religious group.⁴

The entire ceremony is more custom than law and probably dates back only seven hundred years. "It was probably the sense for self-preservation that prompted American Jewry in particular, to invest the ceremony with great religious importance".⁵ It is accompanied by even a greater social glamour. Relatives usually travel a great distance to hear the chanting of the haftorah and the speech on loyalty and its traditions.

The elements of the modern Bar Mitzvah ceremony as we know them are:

- a) the calling up of the Bar Mitzvah to the Torah and the reading of the Haftorah
- b) the saying of the Blessing Sheptarani by the father.
The father being released from being responsible for the young man's conduct.
- c) the delivery of the Bar Mitzvah speech
- d) the dinner
- e) the presentation of the presents.

The idea of responsibility being assumed by the youth became known during the Roman period when the reaching of puberty would be the time at which responsibility would be assumed. The age thirteen was an arbitrary age set for a Religious sense.

The elements of the Bar Mitzvah are varied. The Bar Mitzvah speech comes from the Sixteenth Century where sermons where learned discussions given by the Bar Mitzvah Boy. Today the speech is usually nothing more than the

child's making relevant comparisons between his Haftorah portion and the problems that face us as Jews. The boy will make statements concerning his assuming the responsibilities of adulthood and thanking his parents for having assisted him to achieve this end.

The feast or dinner stems from the Jews in Germany.

"Ezekiel Landau placed the Bar Mitzvah meal in the same category as a Siyyum (a religious meal which was participated in after the study of a tractate of the Mishnah or Talmud had been completed) where the meal does nothing more than the setting for the Sermon. The dinner began to take on a semi-religious character."⁶

At the beginning of the Twentieth Century in America, preparation for Bar Mitzvah became the ultimate in Jewish Education achievement for the majority of American Jews. The carrying out of the rite did not require the joining of any knowledge of Jewish religious habits, customs and attitudes. Parents, therefore, became indifferent as to when they enrolled their children. Schools also became indifferent as to how they trained for Bar Mitzvah, so long as the child was prepared for the ritual. The concern then arose as to the need for the strengthening of the pre-Bar Mitzvah educational requirements and curriculum to offset the waning of interest, especially within the last twenty to twenty-five years.

There have been and are presently plans which were and are formulated to serve as guidelines for the education of the youth before they reach the age of Bar Mitzvah. The plans that have been formulated are the following:

Some congregations require three years attendance in the Sunday-Hebrew (midweek) schools, others two years and some one year.

Some congregations require attendance in Sunday-Hebrew school for three years and to attend either Friday night or Saturday morning services during the year prior to the Bar Mitzvah. In addition to this, others require that

the child register in a Bar Mitzvah club.

Rabbi Moses Sachs published a book which has in it different tests to administer to children to establish if they are prepared for the Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony. The different topics were:

- a) The Mezuza
- b) The Tefillin
- c) The Sabbath
- d) The Jewish Calendar
- e) The Holidays
- f) The Dietary Laws
- g) Israel?

The children were instructed to read about the meaning of Bar Mitzvah in "A Treasure Hunt in Judaism" by Rabbi Harold P. Smith to help supplement their knowledge received during their religious training.

The fact that the congregations have different requirements makes it a greater need for communal regulations. Communal regulations of Bar Mitzvah may, if it hasn't become, one of the most powerful means for raising standards of the religious and educational activities of American Jewry. Commissions are established in different areas and extensively research the problems of education before Bar Mitzvah. Curriculums are revised and strengthened as well as the required training of the educational staffs in the schools. These findings are usually adhered to. Books and other educational materials are formulated which aid in this process of raising the standards of education.

"Most Communities, where the regulations and educational processes were properly administered report that there has been an increased enrollment, a lower age at registration, less elimination and a longer stay after Bar Mitzvah."⁸

There seems to be a need in addition to regulations and attempted strengthening of the format of education before Bar Mitzvah, a greater awareness

as to the reasons why the students do not remain longer in religious education after Bar Mitzvah resulting in a loss of the knowledge, habits, customs and general awareness of Judaism in later life. This leads to a greater estrangement of the youth and Judaism. The question remains as to what will occur in the next generation. Therefore, there is a need to establish the reasons for the loss of attendance after the Bar Mitzvah and a program which will strengthen the possibilities for continuation after Bar Mitzvah.

With the ever lessening attention paid by the Jews to the study of Hebrew, a boy, who becomes a Bar Mitzvah, frequently does no more than recite the benedictions over a subsection of the law read to him by the precentor of the Synagogue. In those communities where the Bar Mitzvah ceremony has either disappeared altogether or has been modified, the Confirmation to which both boys and girls are admitted takes the place of the Bar Mitzvah. In America "Shabouth" is generally selected because of the existing tradition that on the sixth day of Sivan, the third month the law was given to Israel. This time is, therefore, best suited to impress the Confirmants their religious responsibility. The age of Confirmation is about the same as Bar Mitzvah, although an effort has been made to raise the age to a higher level to increase the Religious education of the child.⁹

"Kaufman Kohler was the first to suggest that the ceremony be delayed until the sixteenth or seventeenth year. The editors of the American Hebrew earnestly supported this suggestion and gave it wide publicity."¹⁰

The confirmation ceremony though relevant and one which extends the educational system still does not stem the flow of youth away from the fold. There is a need for a ceremonial at a later age and the steps to which would be quite beneficial for youth.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Your Bar Mitzvah by Benjamin Efron and Alvan D. Rubin.
Union of American Hebrew Congregations. New York 1963 p. 2
- 2 The Educational Requirements for Bar Mitzvah by Uriah Zevi Engelman.
American Association for Jewish Education. New York December 1951 p. 1
- 3 The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia Volume II Isaac Landman Editor.
Universal Jewish Encyclopedia Company Inc. New York 1948 p. 7
- 4 Ibid Landman p. 75
- 5 Communal Regulations of Bar Mitzvah by Isaac Levitas.
Conference on Jewish Relations. Reprinted from Jewish Social Studies.
Volume XI No. 2. New York 1949 p. 153
- 6 Op Cit. Landman p. 75
- 7 Preparation for Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah by Rabbi Moses B. Sachs.
Congregation Am Echod. Waukegan, Illinois, 1953 pp. 2-37
- 8 Op Cit. Levitats, p. 162
- 9 Jewish Ceremonial Institutions and Customs by William Rosenau.
Block Publishing Co. New York 1929 pp. 149-150
- 10 Emergence of Conservative Judaism by Moshe Davis.
Jewish Publications Society. Philadelphia 1963 p. 244

III. Problems of Ritualism in America

Throughout history, youth have, upon the fulfillment of certain rituals, been initiated into adulthood. In our society today, because of a generation gap between adults and youth, there is an increasing amount of difficulty in the rites of passage by the youth into adulthood. The adult generation has become increasingly conscious of the attainment of affluence in our society and are thus accused of spending less time in understanding the needs and desires of the youth and their becoming active and conscious adults.

In two recent articles in the New York Times magazine section illustrations of the need for initiation processes of the youth into adulthood were cited. In one of the articles entitled "Whose Country is America" by Eric Hoffer, puberty rites today were stated as becoming increasingly more difficult to achieve. He quotes as follows: "The young today account for an ever increasing percentage of crime against person and property...Even under ideal conditions, the integration of the young into the adult world is beset with strains and difficulties. We feel ill at ease when we have to adjust ourselves to fit in. The impulse is to change the world to fit us rather than the other way around. Only where there are as in primitive societies, long established rites of passage or where the opportunities for individual self assertion are fabulous does growing up proceed without excessive growing pains".

"Can a modern affluent society", he continues, "institute some form of puberty rites to ease the passage from boyhood to manhood. Could not a ritual of work be introduced whereby a youth could spend two years earning a living at good pay in work both inside and outside the city."

"The youth were throughout history more productive in the economic, political and social affairs of civilization, until the middle of the

nineteenth century when the middle class became dominant in the affairs of nations."

"The youth, radical in nature, know nothing about their identities but strive to complain about the plight of the less fortunate and yet do very little about their own identities and also do not learn to truly assist others."

In another article entitled "Getting the Kids We Deserve" by Dr. E. James Anthony, New York Times magazine, January 22, 1967, a new stereotype of adolescence is the view that he is helpless, innocent, gullible, powerless and yet also cruel, sinister, amoral, and ruthlessly stalking. Primitives have the same fear of their pubertal children, but develop rituals to deal with the danger. Adolescents are isolated and insulated from the rest of the tribe as much in concern for their safety as in the safety of the elders. Western cultures rely on "controls from within" but unfortunately many youngsters reach adolescence with the voice of conscience still almost inaudible. The important sense of limitation, of knowing when and where to stop is undeveloped.

IV. Ideas for Initiation Ceremonies

The problem as it seems is where can we as a Jewish community draw examples from to establish such a ritual where Jewish youth will be able to become active and participating youth in the Jewish community.

There are examples of such initiation rituals amongst the primitive tribes today and amongst fraternal institutions in our country. Their examples can serve as a focal point for the establishment of such an initiation ceremony and ritual process in Jewish life today.

Amongst the primitive tribes such as the Pygmies, Poro, Mende, Sierra Leone, Sairde and Fulani, acts of courage are the initiation youth must

achieve to become adults. Boys through initiation, learn about the duties of a grown man, building techniques, songs, customs, and agricultural techniques. They gain a feeling of participation in a national institution and feelings of self-identity and self-esteem.

Modern day examples of initiation rituals and subsequent terminating ceremonies are found in the process of Naturalization, the Scouting Movement and the Masonic Organization. Each of the examples mentioned consist of certain rituals and obligations a person must follow and adhere to in becoming a member and in maintaining this status of membership.

The ideals a person strives for in the process of Naturalization are:

- a) Loyalty to the Democratic way of life
- b) A social sensitivity in respect for others, their opinions and personalities irrespective of race, religion, color or social and economic status
- c) Ability and will to help solve social problems
- d) Appreciation of the democratic values
- e) Opportunity for advancement

The person lives in the country for five years and then must take an oath to defend and support the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic.

The Free and the Accepted Masons are another example whereby a person undergoes certain initiation processes. The unit of organization is the lodge ranging in size from a few dozen to several hundred members. Masonry has been developed so as to become a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. It teaches its members to be honest, maintain secrecy and practice charity. It seeks to promote the welfare and dignity of mankind through constructive brotherhood.

The supreme principles a person seeking membership must strive to achieve are:

- a) Belief in a Supreme Being
- b) Belief in the immortality of the soul
- c) Use of the Bible
- d) Secrecy

The main allegories and symbols are contained in three degrees or admission ceremonies of the lodge:

- a) Entered Apprentice
- b) Fellow Craft
- c) Master Mason

A petitioner or candidate who is accepted by ballot is brought to light in these degrees and becomes a Master Mason.

The reasons underlying a person's seeking of membership are:

- a) Self-esteem
- b) Promotion of friendship and the welfare of people
- c) The feeling of accomplishment and belonging

The third example of a modern institution which institutes rituals is the Girl Scout Organization. The initiation or investiture, is to invest each girl who has never been a member of the Girl Scout Movement.

The ceremony is held indoors or outdoors. Troops create their own ceremonies, adding quotations to illuminate the laws. The whole troop is present with members of families, friends and troop committee members being invited.

The properties necessary for such a ceremony are:

- a) Tables
- b) Candles (three large, ten small)

The advisor or a Senior speaks about the promise new members are going to make. A Senior lights each of the large candles, representing the three parts of the promise. The advisor requests that candidates receive their pins and are welcomed by the advisor giving the Girl Scout sign and the handshake. The candidates then affirm the Eight Indispensables:

- a) To uphold the ideals of womanhood
- b) To be thoughtful and considerate
- c) To be a better citizen and to prepare for adult citizenship
- d) To volunteer service wherever and whenever needed
- e) To stay healthy
- f) To seek new knowledge
- g) To increase understanding of people
- h) To prepare oneself for Senior Scout

After meriting Senior Scouting and serving through good duties and performing specified duties of charity and support for others, the Scout graduates.

Graduation from Senior Scouting merits a real ceremony, giving recognition to the graduates for their services and achievements as Girl Scouts.

The Graduates dramatize the contributions their years in scouting have made to their lives. A farewell ceremony is usually followed by a farewell party. The reasons for seeking membership in the Girl Scout Organization are twofold:

- a) To broaden their friendships with others
- b) The assistance of the less fortunate and needy

The above examples demonstrate the idea that persons who participate in initiation procedures in organized manner gain probable feelings of self-esteem and accomplishment for having undertaken these tasks.

The bibliography used to clarify certain thoughts and ideas about the various forms and initiation were:

- a) Senior Girl Scout Handbook - Girl Scouts of America
- b) Cultures and Societies of Africa by Simon Ottenberg
- c) Volume 15 - Colliers Encyclopedia - Collier Publishing Co.
- d) Folkways by William Sumner
- e) Society and Cultures by H. Wentworth Eldridge
- f) The Masonic Handbook - Masonic Organization

Jewish youth today are questioning the relevancy of information taught to them and what they desire to learn. The youth seek to become humanitarians and assist the less fortunate. The Jewish youth are making accusations in regard to the social stagnation of Judaism, as a community and Religion.

There is, therefore, a need to satisfy the yearnings of youth to meet their needs of humanitarianism and spirit of social involvement and by the same means answer their challenge concerning the relevant and workings of Jewish Institutions towards the less fortunate Jew and non-Jew.

The need I feel can be satisfied through the establishment of an initiation process which would serve as a passage from childhood to adulthood. The Jewish Community today contains no such initiation process. The success of such an initiation procedure with a terminating ceremony has been proven, in my previous illustrations of primitive and modern societal institutions.

The Jewish Community is also seeking an Initiation Ceremony which would satisfy the needs of the youth to become active and participating members.

Organizations such as: Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress and B'nai B'rith responded quite favorably when I sent to them letters which questioned whether or not such an initiation process and ceremony would be successful from their studies of Jewish youth.

In the following letters you can see that their responses were quite favorable.

As an addendum to Mr. Windmueller's letter, he and Dr. Gladys Rosen responded quite favorably to such an idea and stated that when such an idea would be placed into practice, the American Jewish Committee would assist the project.

The youth response was quite favorable. The students in the high school department of Avenue R Temple in Brooklyn were presented with the aims and objectives of the project of the "Initiation Ceremony into the Jewish Community" and were asked to formulate certain views and questions concerning the feasibility of such a project.

Their attitudes towards their willingness to participate were varied. Some expressed their willingness to participate were they asked. Other students implied that they were indifferent to the project possibly because of the remoteness of the idea becoming a reality.

The students also assisted me in the formulation of the project. They gave me suggestions as to how it should take place, when they feel it should take place, varieties of service to be performed and the structure of a supervising committee, as well as examples of questions to be used in gaining the participation of youth.

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Julius Schatz, *Director*

December 31, 1970

Mr. Mark Shpall
2060 East 19th Street
Brooklyn, N. Y. 11229

Dear Mr. Shpall:

Your study of new ceremonies to initiate youth into the Jewish community is an interesting and exciting project.

I will circulate the proposal among the members of New York National Commission in Jewish Affairs and ask for comments, criticisms and suggestions.

Thank you.

Cordially,

Julius Schatz
Julius Schatz

JS/dp

cc: Dr. Hyman Chanover

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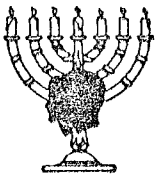
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January 6, 1971

Mr. Mark Shpall
2060 East 19 Street
Brooklyn, N. Y. 11229

Dear Mr. Shpall:

Your letter of December 10th has been directed to my attention for reply.

I have long been in sympathy with the goals of your project. However, the B'nai B'rith Youth Organization at the present time does not conduct any ceremony which serves as an initiation of youth after their service or study is completed. We would certainly be interested in the results of your project.

Sorry we cannot be of more help to you.

Sincerely yours,

Edwin Simon (p.c.f.)
EDWIN SIMON
District Director

ES:gu

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January 7th, 1971

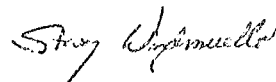
Mr. Mark Shpall
2060 E. 19th Street
Brooklyn 11229, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Shpall:

This is in reply to your letter of December 10th, 1970.

I suggest that you call me and set an appointment so that we can meet and discuss any questions you may have.

Sincerely yours,



Steven Windmueller
Program Specialist
Jewish Communal Affairs Dept.

SW:ss

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V. Initiation Ceremony

The structure and format of the Initiation Ceremony into the Jewish Community was formulated with the advice and suggestions of youth and professional Jewish educators.

The suggestions to be used by Jewish communities throughout the nation are concise and easy to facilitate. They are suggestions which can be modified, changed, and structured based upon the needs of Jewish communities, the responsiveness and willingness of youth to participate and the cooperation of participating members of the community.

A. Structure

The need in the structuring of the Initiation procedures: its aims, standards, requirements would be to establish a Committee of Supervision. The Committee should decide about the best procedures and format of the ritual process.

1. Committee Establishment

- a) The interested participants should contact the Local Federation and Agencies for their approval of the guidelines and their interest to participate.
- b) Questionnaires should be formulated with a letter of introduction to be sent to Temple educators and Rabbis to seek their cooperation and participation.

2. Format of Questionnaire

- a) Questionnaires should be concise and brief allowing for immediate response by Rabbis and Temple educators.
- b) Types of questions should be both the closed and open-ended. The primary goal being their willingness to participate.

c) Questions should deal with:

1. Type of service they feel the youth would benefit most from taking part in.
2. The length and scope of service they feel would best suit the youth.
3. The scope of the ceremony as to where it should take place, when it should take place, and the structure of the ceremony.
4. Their recommendations should be sought as to the most practical way the service of youth could be used after the ceremony
5. Their willingness to participate in the framework of such a process.
6. Questionnaires should then be formulated to determine the interest of youth to participate in the process.

3. Questionnaires to students

- a) The questions should be of an open and closed-ended type.
- b) The primary purpose is to determine the number of youth willing to participate in the project.
- c) The type of service should be elicited in which the youth would be most willing to participate.
- d) Their desirability to be called upon after the completion of such an Initiation to render further service should also be determined.

The following is an example of a questionnaire which was formulated by the youth at Avenue R Temple to be used for the purpose of eliciting the response of youth.

Dear Student,

Today as you read newspapers, listen to news and hear talk amongst friends, you are aware of the growing concern that the youth of your age and older have towards changing society in some way to make it a better place to live. The major concerns have been the restoration of a healthy environment and in the assistance of and enlightening of the less fortunate and poor to bring them up to a status of equality in our society. You also have heard mentioned that the Religions are also not doing their share to assist the poor and less fortunate. Judaism, is found to be by Jewish youth, stagnant, and not changing with the times in social assistance.

In this questionnaire, you will be asked if you would like to participate in a program that will allow each of you as individuals and Jews to assist the people of Jewish and non-Jewish descent who are less fortunate. This assistance will be voluntary (or possibly a small amount of money will be paid) and under the auspices of a Jewish Philanthropic (charitable) Organization. The service will take place for a certain length of time and a "Youth of the Year" ceremony will take place at which time your service will be honored by the leaders of the poor communities (Jewish and non-Jewish) as well as by the Rabbis and heads of the Organizations.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated in the answering of these questions. You need not sign your name in that the information will be kept secret.

Yours truly,

Questionnaire to Students

1. At what age do you think you will be most mature and responsible to take on the responsibility of helping others less fortunate than yourself? Check one.

-13	-18	-at any age
-14	-19	
-15	-20	
-16	-21	
-17	-22	

2. Why did you make this choice?

3. What job do you feel would best satisfy your need for assisting others?

--tutorial	--agency assistance
--baby-sitting	--playground assistance
--clean up neighborhoods	--handicapped people assistance
--big brother, big sister	--study
--ecology	--mother's aid
--organizing plays and shows	--fund raising
--politics	--civil rights
--employment aid	--creative workshops
--hospital assistance	--community free nurseries

4. Why or why not would you want to do this service?

5. When would you perform this service? Time? Day? Season?

6. How long do you feel service should take place?

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| --one month | --one year |
| --two months | --two years |
| --six months | --longer |
| --never | |

7. Would you desire that the ceremony take place at a:

- Temple
- General Auditorium
- At the community or at the Organization at which you worked.

8. Who would you like to have present at the ceremony when you are presented with the merit award?

- parent
- relatives
- friends

9. What areas would you like to use creativity to develop new techniques to make that area more relevant?

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| --art workshop | --camping |
| --dance workshop | --service restructuring |
| --Prayerbook development | --curriculum development |

10. What would you like to do within the area chosen?

11. Would you be willing to participate in later life if again called upon to serve your fellow man?

12. Do you have any further suggestions or ideas?

4. Selection of Committee Members

The different Temples should select, through democratic elections amongst the youth, a select individual who would represent them in the formation of a Committee composed of youth representatives (Preferably aged 16 immediately after Confirmation -- still being interested) at the Federation Organization under the leadership of a member of the Organization.

5. Function of the Committee

The function of the Committee would be to formulate the standards of the Initiation process and for its maintenance as a well structured procedure.

The Committee would have to focus attention on the following:

a) Aims and desired goals of the project should be:

1. High moral and ethical involvement.
2. Conscientious and hard work.
3. Feeling of accomplishment.
4. Feeling of humanitarianism.
5. Feeling of self-esteem.
6. Pride in one's religion.
7. Gaining of self-identity.
8. Gaining of a belief in a cause.
9. Equality of all men.
10. Understanding of Jewish present and historical undertakings of social involvement.

b) Standards

The standards maintained should be those of a high ethical and moral nature. Responsibility, courtesy, understanding, and

compassion should be the characteristics to be upheld in the participants.

c) Age

The suitability of an age at which time the youth would best benefit from such service would I feel be 16 years (although determined by Committee)

The age of 16 is the year immediately following the Confirmation. The youth are still interested in Judaism and are quite mature. Youth who left the "fold" immediately after Bar Mitzvah could be invited back to participate in this venture.

d) Length of Service

The length of service would be the suitability and desired time at which youth themselves would feel as if they had accomplished some of the desired goals. The suggested length of service should be from 1 - 2 years, 2 hours every 2 weeks which I have discovered would be sufficient time as to not overburden the child and cause a possible conflict with Secular School work.

e) Type of Service

Suggested types of service elicited from the youth questioned were:

1. Tutorial assistance to Jewish and non-Jewish youth.
2. Assistance in problem solving of needy families.
3. Fund raising for charities.
4. Hospital work.
5. Assisting in Homes for the Blind or Old-Aged Homes.

6. Ecology -- petition signings for a cleaner atmosphere, collecting of cans, etc.
7. Block rehabilitation.
8. Big Brother - Big Sister concept of assistance to young.
9. Participation in peaceful demonstrations, parades.
10. Creativity

The work in this area could be the development of new techniques to add to the relevancy of Judaism. Such techniques could be:

- (a) New paintings of Jewish topics to be used for fund-raising or textbook illustration.
- (b) New dance (Israeli) techniques.
- (c) Prayerbook development -- development of new prayers, thereby making the service more relevant.
- (d) Service reorganization.

11. Study

An intensive study of historical and philosophical books with an emphasis on the social involvements of Judaism.

f) Review of Study

The suggested method is whereby the Committee would be able to follow the completed service by youth by the use of a "spot check" in various agencies. This would serve as a possible means of accepting youth into the ceremony.

g). Ceremony

Determination should be made by the Committee as to the following categories to foster a meaningful ceremony of completion of service.

1. Where held

The factors involved in determining the meeting places should be separate from the Temple in that the Ceremony serves as an Initiation into the general community.

2. When Held

A consideration should be made based upon the giving of oneself to charitable service to the less fortunate. The holiday of Purim is the holiday that best describes this ideal in the Shalach Manot concept of sending charitable portions to the poor.

3. What should be presented to the Initiates

A merit certificate though not emphasized by the youth participants as being the basis for their service is felt to still be of significance in building up the self-esteem of the individual.

The context of the certificate can read in part:

"Be it known that _____ has satisfactorily completed service to humanity in a Gracious and meritorious manner. He, therefore, has Upheld the greatest mitzvah of Judaism in the charitable service of humanity".

The heads of the Organization and Youth Leaders

of the Committee should sign the Certificate.

4. Who Should Preside at the Ceremony

The committee and head of the Organization should preside. Speeches of praise could be delivered by the heads of the Committee and Organization praising each individual's (based upon number) accomplishment. Prayer service utilizing prayers of Thanksgiving could be organized.

h) Post Ceremony

In questioning the youth in the formulation of the process, the indication was made that they seemed to feel that the Ceremony would be an "end-all" and their services would never be called upon again.

This assumption made it clear that the important factor involved was to develop a system whereby the youth, after their initiation, would be asked to assist the Organizations in whatever social problems arise. My suggestions are, therefore, that:

1. The Organizations be asked to form an active Department of Youth within the Organization. This department should consist of members who are willing to spend time organizing a list of young adults (High School and College) who, when asked to render service, would do so with enthusiasm.
2. The successful organization of such a department could then lead to a possible Leadership Training Program whereby these youth who are interested could be trained as future leaders of organizations.

VI. Conclusion

I have tried to present an outline of a program of Initiation of youth into the Jewish Community. Hopefully this information will enable any Jewish Community, that desires to do so, to set up such a program.

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