

**JCI CURRICULUM: UNIT 1: CHAPTER 7 – UNIVERSALISM &
PARTICULARISM
LESSON 3: SERVICE AS A RITE OF PASSAGE**

LESSON 3: SERVICE AS A RITE OF PASSAGE (45 mins – 1 hour)

Goals

For students to:

- Evaluate the idea of service as a part of Jewish ritual tradition.
- Apply their discussions of Jewish particularism and universalism to a specific contemporary scenario.
- Assess the Jewish values that support funding a Jewish charity versus a non-Jewish charity to provide international humanitarian aid.

Materials:

- Poster board
- Markers
- Pens
- Paper / journals
- Text handouts
 - Ruth Messinger speech
 - Rite of Passage Chart
 - Main Activity scenario
 - Instructions for groups 1-6

Procedure

1) Framing exercise #1 (7 mins)

- a) Ask students to recall their bar/bat mitzvah. Ask them to share a meaningful ritual in which they participated (5 mins)
- b) Elicit definitions of the term “rite of passage”. Read or summarize the following explanation:

All cultures have prescribed ways for an individual and society to deal with emotionally charged situations. They have ritual ceremonies intended to mark the transition from one phase of life to another. These ceremonies are **rites of passage**. In North America today, typical rites of passage are circumcisions, baptisms, bar mitzvahs and confirmations, school graduation ceremonies, weddings, retirement parties, and funerals. These intentionally ritualized ceremonies help the individuals making the transition, as well their relatives and friends, pass through an emotionally charged, tense time. Most rites of passage are religious ceremonies. They not only mark the transition between an individual's life stages but they reinforce the dominant religious views and values of a culture.

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Adapted from: http://anthro.palomar.edu/social/soc_4.htm

2) Framing exercise #2 (15 mins)

- c) Hand out the text below to students.

Ruth Messinger is the President and Executive Director of the American Jewish World Service (AJWS). The following paragraph is an excerpt from a speech she gave on “What is Religion For?” at the Jewish Public Forum Seminar on November 19, 2001 sponsored by CLAL:

“We are at a new point in our lives as American Jews. We enjoy new affluence and security. At the same time, there is immense need in the world. Millions of people are victims of poverty, hunger, disease and oppression. American Jewry will be significantly shaped by our ability to respond not only to Israel and to Jews in need but to all people in need around the world. A new model of Jewish service needs to be articulated that is informed both by Jewish sources and by the radical new challenges of our time.

My vision is of a place and time when service by Jews, in a Jewish context, has become a rite of passage in and for the Jewish community, something that Jews are expected to do. People will be taken outside of themselves to work for social justice in a place or with people who are ‘the other’, in some ways different from themselves, doing this in a Jewish context and, in the process, transforming the participants.

- d) Read it aloud. Explain that Messinger is advocating for a new Jewish rite of passage as part of the Jewish life cycle, like a bar/ bat mitzvah, which would be an act of social justice.
- e) Ask students: Can you imagine a Jewish “rite of passage” that is an act of social justice in the non-Jewish world?
- f) Ask students to get into groups of three and create a Jewish Social Justice rite of passage. They should use the chart below.
- g) Share with the group and discuss briefly.

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A SOCIAL JUSTICE RITE OF PASSAGE:

Name of rite:	
Age of participant:	
No of participants:	
Description of social justice action:	
Who is involved?	
Location:	
Special clothes?	
Special prayers?	
Special songs?	
Other information?	

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Main Activity (20 – 30 mins)

a) Divide students into groups of four. Give them the scenario below.

You are on the board of a Jewish social action organization. There has been an earthquake in India and hundreds of thousands of people need help. Your organization will be holding a fundraiser for the victims of the earthquake, but the board must decide which aid organization to donate the money to. The United Jewish Communities has set up an emergency fund, AJWS is already in India assisting locals with their economic and hunger needs, Magen David Adom from Israel is sending out assistance, the Red Cross, the United Nations and Catholic Relief Services have all already set up emergency campaigns.

Which organization do you raise money for?

b) Hand out **one** of the following instruction handouts to each group. (If there are fewer students, do not include the Magen David Adom and Catholic Relief Services or place fewer students in each group.)

c) Allow 5 minutes for preparation of arguments.

d) Conduct a board meeting. Set up the room so that the students are all sitting around a table. Allocate a student to be the chair of the board who will conduct the meeting. Tell the board chair that they will call on representatives from each of the groups. The board chair can then allow some questions or discussion between the board members and then call on the board to vote.

Group 1

You are about to participate in a board meeting. Your mission is to persuade the rest of the board to vote for fundraising for the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC - part of UJC – United Jewish Communities). Prepare a presentation that will convince the rest of the board of your argument. You will have 3 minutes to present your case. At the end of the board meeting the chair of the board will call for a vote.

Here is some information about JDC:

The December 26, 2004 underwater earthquake and tsunamis that struck approximately 100 miles off the west coast of Indonesia's Sumatra Island are believed to be responsible

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for the deaths of approximately 228,000 people. Coastal areas of 11 countries in the Indian Ocean were affected, displacing five million people. JDC collected \$18.5 million for immediate relief and longer-term assistance programs. Staff are working in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and India -- the four most severely affected countries. Planning is underway for projects that will help rebuild physical infrastructure, such as clinics, schools and community centers. JDC is working with its long-time partner, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), in hard-hit Aceh Province of Indonesia. JDC assistance is enabling IRC to carry out its child protection and psychosocial support program. Child protection staff trained local midwives and nurses, who can identify protection issues through their frequent contact with community members.

http://www.ujc.org/content_display.html?ArticleID=154444

Group 2

You are about to participate in a board meeting. Your mission is to persuade the rest of the board to vote for fundraising for The Red Cross. Prepare a presentation that will convince the rest of the board of your argument. You will have 3 minutes to present your case. At the end of the board meeting the chair of the board will call for a vote.

Here is some information about the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC):

On 8 October 2005, a massive earthquake killed more than 73,000 people in Kashmir, flattening entire villages and causing enormous damage to roads and water systems. In partnership with the Pakistan Red Crescent and other participating National Societies, the ICRC responded to the urgent needs of earthquake victims, and will continue its support to repair infrastructure and restore livelihoods well into 2007. From 13 October, ICRC helicopters evacuated about 1,000 injured people from remote areas to Islamabad and the ICRC field hospital in Muzaffarabad. ICRC medical teams were also involved in performing on-the-spot first aid and wound care in villages where distribution of relief items took place. Following the earthquake, the ICRC immediately mobilized a medical team to establish a field hospital in Muzaffarabad. The hospital – provided jointly by the Finnish and Norwegian Red Cross Societies – opened on 21 October. By the time of its closure on 28 February 2006, there had been 816 admissions, 812 operations, and 757 outpatient consultations. There had been 80 births in the hospital, 20 of them by caesarean section. The tents and equipment for the hospital have been handed over to the Ministry of Health of Pakistan-administered Kashmir following the successful completion by 67 Pakistani medical personnel of an intensive two-week training course to enable the

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participants to operate the field hospital on their own should another natural disaster hit the area or other emergencies occur.

<http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/asia-update-051006>

Group 3

You are about to participate in a board meeting. Your mission is to persuade the rest of the board to vote for fundraising for AJWS. Prepare a presentation that will convince the rest of the board of your argument. You will have 3 minutes to present your case. At the end of the board meeting the chair of the board will call for a vote.

Here is some information about AJWS:

A major earthquake of 6.2 magnitude struck the densely populated city of Yogyakarta at 5:45 a.m. on Saturday, May 27. Current death estimates are now at 6,000 and rising. An additional 40,000 people are injured and 200,000 people are now homeless. This is the third big tremor to strike the country in the past 17 months.

American Jewish World Service (AJWS) is working in conjunction with our 14 local non-governmental partner organizations and with several larger international relief organizations to give immediate aid to the victims and then to help develop more long-term planning to create sustainable mechanisms for survival and reconstruction. AJWS is currently accepting donations for the relief effort.

AJWS supports approximately 60 organizations in Southeast Asia that have been rebuilding since the tsunami. We have designated grants to several of our partners in the region in order to respond to the Yogyakarta quake, for example: WALHI, a nation-wide Indonesian environmental NGO with a branch in Yogyakarta, is conducting a needs assessment and survey, supporting quake victims with medical assistance and providing basic needs for survivors in 1,000 households.

http://www.ajws.org/index.cfm?section_id=15&sub_section_id=0&page_id=621

UNDAC

Group 4

You are about to participate in a board meeting. Your mission is to persuade the rest of the board to vote for fundraising for The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination

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(UNDAC). Prepare a presentation that will convince the rest of the board of your argument. You will have 3 minutes to present your case. At the end of the board meeting the chair of the board will call for a vote.

Here is some information about UNDAC:

The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team is a stand-by team of disaster management professionals who are nominated and funded by member governments, OCHA, UNDP and operational humanitarian United Nations Agencies such as WFP, UNICEF and WHO.

Upon request of a disaster-stricken country, the UNDAC team can be deployed within hours to carry out rapid assessment of priority needs and to support national Authorities and the United Nations Resident Coordinator to coordinate international relief on-site. Members of the UNDAC team are permanently on stand-by to deploy to relief missions following disasters and humanitarian emergencies anywhere in the world. Particularly after earthquakes the UNDAC team has to be mobilized rapidly in order to effectively coordinate the search and rescue (SAR) operation of international SAR teams together with the national authorities of the affected country.

<http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?MenuID=2893&Page=552>

Group 5

You are about to participate in a board meeting. Your mission is to persuade the rest of the board to vote for fundraising for Magen David Adom. Prepare a presentation that will convince the rest of the board of your argument. You will have 3 minutes to present your case. At the end of the board meeting the chair of the board will call for a vote.

Here is some information about Magen David Adom:

Established in 1930, MDA is the national emergency medical society of Israel. MDA's objectives and its legal status are defined in section 3 of the Magen David Adom Law passed by the Knesset (Israel's Parliament) on July 12, 1950:

- *to carry out the functions of a national society, to be for this purpose an auxiliary service of the Medical Service of the Israeli Defense Forces in time of war and to prepare for this in time of peace;*
- *to maintain general first aid services;*
- *to maintain a storage service of blood, plasma and their by-products;*
- *to carry out any additional functions determined by the Society's By-Laws;*

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- *instruction in first aid and pre-hospital emergency medicine;*
- *maintaining a volunteer infrastructure and training them in first aid, basic and advanced life support including Mobile Intensive Care Units;*
- *transportation of patients, women in labor, and evacuation of those wounded and killed in road accidents;*
- *transportation of doctors, nurses and medical auxiliary forces;*

MDA cooperates with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

<http://www.mdais.org/main/siteNew/index.php?langId=1&page=1>

Group 6

You are about to participate in a board meeting. Your mission is to persuade the rest of the board to vote for fundraising for Catholic Relief Services. Prepare a presentation that will convince the rest of the board of your argument. You will have 3 minutes to present your case. At the end of the board meeting the chair of the board will call for a vote.

Here is some information about Catholic Relief Services:

Catholic Relief Services reaches out to people in more than 99 countries and territories around the world to alleviate human suffering and promote peace for poor and disadvantaged people. As the official relief and development agency of the Catholic Church, CRS works through an extensive network of partners around the globe, providing humanitarian relief and development assistance in the fields of health and HIV/AIDS, peace and justice, education, agriculture, microfinance and emergency response. The combination of conflict in Afghanistan, earthquake emergency relief, post-earthquake rebuilding, and the recent floods in the province of Sindh in southern Pakistan has left hundreds of thousands of people displaced and in need of building back their infrastructure and lives.

In the year following the October 2005 Kashmir earthquake, CRS' emergency relief and post-earthquake rebuilding programs in Pakistan have benefited more than 160,000 individuals in the North-West Frontier Province, Jammu and Azad Kashmir. CRS Pakistan continues to work in the western province of Balochistan, providing humanitarian and livelihood assistance to thousands of displaced Afghan refugees and Pakistanis who are having difficulty getting an education and making a living. CRS Pakistan has responded to the recent floods that have affected the southern part of the country by distributing mosquito nets and potable water, and by working with local partner organizations to meet the needs of affected populations.

http://www.crs.org/our_work/where_we_work/overseas/Asia/pakistan/index.cfm

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3) Conclusion (15 mins)

- a) After the board meeting is finished, ask students to move back to a circle/ desks and away from the board room table to demonstrate that the simulation activity is over.
- b) Conduct a discussion about the activity based on the following questions:
- In this emergency tzedakah situation, which of the organizations would you give to as an individual and why?
 - In this emergency tzedakah situation, which of the organizations would you give to as a Jewish organization and why?
 - Are your answers the same for both questions?
 - **Concluding question – Make sure you leave time for this:** Which Jewish values support funding the Jewish charities and which values support funding the non-Jewish charities?

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Texts:

Ruth Messinger Speech

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Rite of Passage Chart:

A SOCIAL JUSTICE RITE OF PASSAGE:	
Name of rite:	
Age of participant:	
No of participants:	
Description of social justice action:	
Who is involved?	
Location:	
Special clothes?	
Special prayers?	
Special songs?	

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Main activity scenario

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Which organization do you raise money for?

Group instructions for Main Activity

Group 1

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JDC is working with its long-time partner, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), in hard-hit Aceh Province of Indonesia. JDC assistance is enabling IRC to carry out its child protection and psychosocial support program. Child protection staff trained local midwives and nurses, who can identify protection issues through their frequent contact with community members.

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<http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/asia-update-051006>

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Group 3

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AJWS supports approximately 60 organizations in Southeast Asia that have been rebuilding since the tsunami. We have designated grants to several of our partners in the region in order to respond to the Yogyakarta quake, for example: WALHI, a nation-wide Indonesian environmental NGO with a branch in Yogyakarta, is conducting a needs assessment and survey, supporting quake victims with medical assistance and providing basic needs for survivors in 1,000 households.

http://www.ajws.org/index.cfm?section_id=15&sub_section_id=0&page_id=621

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UNDAC

Group 4

You are about to participate in a board meeting. Your mission is to persuade the rest of the board to vote for fundraising for The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC). Prepare a presentation that will convince the rest of the board of your argument. You will have 3 minutes to present your case. At the end of the board meeting the chair of the board will call for a vote.

Here is some information about UNDAC:

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Group 5

You are about to participate in a board meeting. Your mission is to persuade the rest of the board to vote for fundraising for Magen David Adom. Prepare a presentation that will convince the rest of the board of your argument. You will have 3 minutes to present your case. At the end of the board meeting the chair of the board will call for a vote.

Here is some information about Magen David Adom:

Established in 1930, MDA is the national emergency medical society of Israel. MDA's objectives and its legal status are defined in section 3 of the Magen David Adom Law passed by the Knesset (Israel's Parliament) on July 12, 1950:

- *to carry out the functions of a national society, to be for this purpose an auxiliary service of the Medical Service of the Israeli Defense Forces in time of war and to prepare for this in time of peace;*
- *to maintain general first aid services;*
- *to maintain a storage service of blood, plasma and their by-products;*
- *to carry out any additional functions determined by the Society's By-Laws;*
- *instruction in first aid and pre-hospital emergency medicine;*
- *maintaining a volunteer infrastructure and training them in first aid, basic and advanced life support including Mobile Intensive Care Units;*
- *transportation of patients, women in labor, and evacuation of those wounded and killed in road accidents;*
- *transportation of doctors, nurses and medical auxiliary forces;*

MDA cooperates with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

<http://www.mdais.org/main/siteNew/index.php?langId=1&page=1>

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Group 6

You are about to participate in a board meeting. Your mission is to persuade the rest of the board to vote for fundraising for Catholic Relief Services. Prepare a presentation that will convince the rest of the board of your argument. You will have 3 minutes to present your case. At the end of the board meeting the chair of the board will call for a vote.

Here is some information about Catholic Relief Services:

Catholic Relief Services reaches out to people in more than 99 countries and territories around the world to alleviate human suffering and promote peace for poor and disadvantaged people. As the official relief and development agency of the Catholic Church, CRS works through an extensive network of partners around the globe, providing humanitarian relief and development assistance in the fields of health and HIV/AIDS, peace and justice, education, agriculture, microfinance and emergency response. The combination of conflict in Afghanistan, earthquake emergency relief, post-earthquake rebuilding, and the recent floods in the province of Sindh in southern Pakistan has left hundreds of thousands of people displaced and in need of building back their infrastructure and lives.

In the year following the October 2005 Kashmir earthquake, CRS' emergency relief and post-earthquake rebuilding programs in Pakistan have benefited more than 160,000 individuals in the North-West Frontier Province, Jammu and Azad Kashmir. CRS Pakistan continues to work in the western province of Balochistan, providing humanitarian and livelihood assistance to thousands of displaced Afghan refugees and Pakistanis who are having difficulty getting an education and making a living. CRS Pakistan has responded to the recent floods that have affected the southern part of the country by distributing mosquito nets and potable water, and by working with local partner organizations to meet the needs of affected populations.

http://www.crs.org/our_work/where_we_work/overseas/Asia/pakistan/index.cfm