

ENHANCEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RIGHTS AND NORMS PRESCRIBED FOR CHILDREN: THE PROMISE OF INTERPRETATION OF RELIGIOUS LAW

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Cultural and religious conceptions shape the thoughts and behaviors of many individuals within their community and society. Sensitivity to the values, culture and religion of all individuals in the universe is very important.

Implementation of children's rights in traditional societies and countries should be based upon the significance of religious law in many countries. Enhancement of adherence to international law will be achieved through acts that can promote the legitimacy of current international law in the religious population.

Interpretation of ancient religious texts in light of new values and ethics that are the foundations of modern international norms can enhance the universal implementation of international rights and norms prescribed for children, which take into consideration "local custom". Jews, Muslims, Christians, and other believers, can and should join forces and share a common cultural and religious goal. Their new common agenda, the outcome of interpretation of their law in light of a modern outlook, can enhance the universal implementation of international rights and norms prescribed for children.

My lecture is devoted especially to one legal sphere in a religious legal system: Jewish law. The interpretation of the ancient Jewish rules of child custody, in various stages of development of the Jewish law of custody bared good fruit. The ancient rules were interpreted in a manner that has gradually enhanced, step by step, the best interest of the child.

The main focus in my lecture will be upon this final stage of interpretation of Jewish law in Israel. The new interpretation of Jewish law in the modern period is an outcome of a new agenda of religious scholars and courts. Creative interpretation of ancient law resulted in a significant improvement of the status of the Jewish child. At this stage the new interpretation of ancient Jewish texts was the foundation that enabled the enhancement of rights and norms prescribed for Jewish children in Israel. The same interpretive policy can enhance adherence of many believers in the world to international norms.