Everyone Will Be MAX Honoring "Man of the Year"

Do You Swear to Tell the Truth?

by Sid Peilte

Sit in a courtroom during Tutt, fictionalized various the progress of a trial, and you will see each witness, before being allowed toutter one word of testimony, go through a ritual so commonplace today, that the spectators hardly give it a thought. You will hear the clerk of the court, or sometimes the judge, instruct the witness to place his left hand on the Bible and raise his right hand, and then intone the question whether the witness swears to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

This ritual is an ancient legal institution intended to impress the witness with the solemnity of the occasion and the testimony he is about to give. It is also meant to guarantee the fulfillment of the promise thus made through the religious beliefs of the witness. Yet not all persons are willing to follow this practice or be bound by its implications. There are certains sects who for religious reasons refuse to take the oath in that prescribed form, and are permitted that form of declaration they feel binding upon them, Arthur Train, onetime district attorney of New York County and creator of that lovable lawyer, Mr.

actual legal points. One of his stories centered around stitution more worthy of your an Oriental who took the oath in the prescribed form, only to give false testimony with no compunctions at all, until the attorney discovered that this witness felt bound only by an oath taken on the blood of a freshly killed shicken.

stitution more worthy of your support than your Synating support than your Synatin

rite of placing the hand on the gogue.

Book, or holding it, is that Thin it brings the witness into direct physical contact with that which is holy to him, and he feel impelled to tell the truth. The custom of raising the other hand is to be given in civil cases thought to have its origin in and criminal cases, for in an oath sworn by Abraham, the former money damages Another theory is that the were considered satisfacpractice is derived from the tory, but in the latter the Anglo-Saxon custom of accused's life and reputabranding the palm of the hand tion were at stake. Whenof the convicted felons, were ever one was sworn, the disqualified as witnesses. The raising of the hand was some sacred object, such as a demonstration to the court the Torah or his Tephillin. that the witness was eligible to testify.

In the courts of ancient Israel both parties were re- fair game for the satraps and quired to take oaths, but wit- petty princes of the ers, parnesses were not. They were ticular delight was exhibited admonished about dire things in humiliating the Jew in the to happen if the truth were not courts of the period. They told. A distinction, too, was were compelled to recite a made between the testimony humiliating oath, wearing, in

REMEMBER YOUR TEMPLE

The reason for the modern the influence of the Synacommunity would be without.

Think of these things when:

swearer was required to hold

Way back in the 13th Century, and for many years following, when the Jews was

some places, a wreath of thorns and standing ankle deep in water, In some places the Jew was required to stand on the skin of a pig while reciting the oath; in others he was made to recite the oath while trying to maintain his balance on a stool from which one leg was removed. This he did while wrapped in his Tallis and wearing his hat which Jews are obliged to wear as identification -much like the armbands and other insignia devised by the

Madman of the 20th Century. Many Jews rebel at being made to take an oath, and though acceptable now in this country, there are places notably in Israel - where subterfuges are used to avoid swearing. Examples, gleaned from court records, attest to this. One Orthodox Jew exclaimed: "My bank trusts me with thousands on my signature alone, but here I must take a solemn oath where a paltry sum is involved." Another referred to the Third Commandment and in a long discussion proved that it referred to truthful oaths, too.

Many other incidents could be related to illustrate the reluctance on the part of Jews to take an oath. It is believed, by one judge, that the fear of taking an oath has become to deeply imbedded in Jewish consciousness, because of the ancient ceremonies and the threat of fearful consequences included in them.

The modern penalty for false swearing is a term in prison for perjury. Compared to the dire consequences which were to follow for the same offense in ancient times, this punishment is a vacation at the state's exIMPORTANT NOTICE

The second General Meeting with the Temple Board of Directors will take place on Monday, January 10, 1966, at 8:00 P.M. The agenda is as follows:

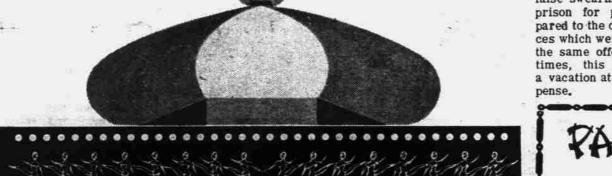
1. Report to the Congregation by Chairman of all Committees.

2. Rabbi Gold's report.

3. Introduction of Mr. Leo A. Wilner, Temple Beth Sholom's Administrative Director.

There will be a question and answer session also, and refreshments will be served.







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