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COMPACT  
Rabbi Moshe Edelman, Editor

## COMPACT

### Enriching the Lives of Conservative Jews

Jews enlightening Jews.  
Jews mentoring other Jews.  
Jews spiritually enhancing their own lives.

COMPACT's mission is to aid in Jewish self-growth, which affirms the *brit mitzvah* -- covenant -- of the Torah's commandments within each Jew.

## TAMUZ 5768

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## DVAR TORAH

### CHANGING OF THE GUARD: *PARSHAT PINHAS*

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Efrat, Israel

“And the Lord said to Moses: ‘Take for yourself Joshua, the son of Nun, an individual who has spirit within him, and lay your hand upon him. Stand him up before Elazar the Priest and before the entire congregation, and command him before their eyes. And give of your glory upon him in order that the entire congregation of the children of Israel may obey him...’ ”  
(Numbers 26:18-20)

In these three verses we see “the changing of the guard” – the succession of leadership from Moses to Joshua. Embedded in the three actions which God commanded Moses to perform are profound insights into three forms of Jewish leadership.

First, Moses was to “lay his hands” on Joshua – an act which expresses a conferral of rabbinic authority, or *semicha* (literally a laying on or leaning on), from master to disciple (cf. Mishna *Sanhedrin* 1, 1). Since Moses was known as *Moshe Rabbenu*, Moses our Rabbi, and since Joshua is pictured as Moses’ devoted disciple, it is perfectly logical to assume that the first transference from Moses to Joshua was that of religio-legal authority. Moses was a prophet who conveyed the Divine word to his nation; since the scholar (*hacham*) is heir to the prophet, and since the prophet was always expected to be a great intellectual and spiritual personality, Moses was bestowing on Joshua his own authority as religious master and prophet.

Moses is then commanded to “stand Joshua up” before Elazar the Priest. The *kohen gadol* or High Priest was certainly a leader in ancient Israel, but his divine service was formalized and external, very much limited to the Temple. It was necessary for the rabbi/scholar/prophet to be recognized by the High Priest, and vice versa; but whereas the former had to constantly bring the living word of God to the people – and in the process often came into conflict with the ruling authorities and even with the majority – the latter merely had to perform the precise Temple rituals so that the Divine service could be maintained from generation to generation. Joshua therefore had to appear before the High Priest, but he was not given the High Priests’ ritual authority. Moshe and Joshua were the seat of religious, moral and ethical authority; Aaron and Elazar were the seat of ritual authority. The rabbi/scholar/prophet was expected to teach and interpret God’s word for every generation; the High Priest was expected to maintain the ritual structures.

Finally, Moses was to “give of his glory upon [Joshua] in order that the entire congregation of Israel may obey him” (Numbers 26:20). In addition to being rabbi/scholar/prophet, Moses also served as authoritative king (cf. Deut. 33:4, 5) the chief executive of the Israelite nation. This authority was the power he conferred on Joshua. The distinction between the aspects of Moses’ leadership is that of influence versus power. Moses as master prophet and religious teacher, wielded enormous influence, not only in his generation but in every generation. Moses, as King of Israel, controlled much power, and so managed to quell the rebellions of all of his detractors: Korah, Dathan and Abiram, and Zimri ben Sallu.

But influence and power are very different kinds of authority. This distinction emanates from the Midrash Rabba (Bereshit 21:5), which compares the giving of power to “a pouring out from one vessel to another,” whereas the conferral of influence is likened to “the kindling of one candle from another.”



When wine is poured from one goblet into another, the first goblet becomes emptied and devoid of its joy-yielding liquid. Similarly, when a political leader leaves office, no authority remains in the hand of the incumbent.

How different is the realm of influence! After the initial candle has kindled another, the light of the first has in no way become diminished; much the opposite, now there are two shining candles, providing double the light. Rav Joseph B. Soloveitchik, went one step further when he interpreted the text. The “laying of the hands” is usually interpreted as an inter-generational conferral of authority: the master from a former generation is “handing over” the authority of our ancient tradition (*trado* in Latin means to hand over) to the younger generation.

However, says Rav Soloveitchik, that is not the picture presented by the biblical text. The Hebrew *samoch* (*semicha*) principally means to lean on, so that the picture being conveyed is that of an elderly Moses leaning on a younger Joshua. The message seems not to be that of a young Joshua dependent on the authority of an elder Moses; it rather seems to be that of an elder Moses dependent on a younger Joshua. Rav Soloveitchik looked at his student rabbis with great expectations. “It is I who am dependent on you. Without you, my Torah and my unique teaching, indeed all the traditions, will die with me. You are my insurance policy. It is through you and your teachings that my Torah will continue to live...”

This is why Moses had to put down Korah – who wanted to usurp power for a false end – but encouraged Eldad and Medad, who were influenced by a Divine spirit. And this is the true meaning of our sages’ adage that a parent is never jealous of a child, nor is a teacher ever jealous of a disciple. Politics yield power, which disappears in the dunes of time; learning and piety breed influence, which lasts forever. The Israelite kings are scarcely remembered, while the Israelite prophets and sages are still being studied and interpreted today. Lust for power is ultimately consumed by flames, while the influence of Torah education enables the light of the menorah to illuminate the path to the Tree of Life during our return to Eden.

Pinhas, Numbers 25:10-30:1, is read on July 19, 2008.

Originally published in Jerusalem Post, June 29, 2007.



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# ***OR LA YEHUDIM TAMUZ 5768***

(A Light to Our Fellow Jews in the Month of *Tamuz*)

## **HOW A JEWISH PATRIOT SAVED AMERICA**

In 1975 the United States Postal Service issued a stamp honoring a man named Haym Salomon for his contribution to the cause of the American Revolution. This stamp was uniquely printed on the front and the back. On the glue side of the stamp, the following words were printed in pale, green ink: "Financial Hero – Businessman and broker Haym Salomon was responsible for raising most of the money needed to finance the American Revolution and later to save the new nation from collapse." I personally have one of these stamps. Historians who have studied the story of Salomon all agree that without his "contribution to the cause" there would be no America today.

Haym Salomon bought and sold financial papers to raise money for Robert Morris who was the superintendent of finance for the Continental Congress. He believed that America would be a safe haven for the Jews. But this son of a rabbi also believed that one day in the future, Jerusalem would rise from the dust, the Jews would return to their ancient homeland, and Israel and Jerusalem would once again be the home of the wandering Jew. Salomon determined to do all he could to finance the Revolution so America could survive until that future time when his people would once again fill the streets of Jerusalem.

From one crisis to the next, Robert Morris went to Haym Salomon for help, and Salomon always responded. Salomon gave his entire personal fortune of over \$800,000 to the cause of the Revolution. This debt was never repaid. He died sick and penniless at the age of 45, Jan. 6, 1785, leaving behind a young widow, Rachel, and four children all under the age of 7.

Rachel tried for months after Haym's death to collect on personal loans that he had made to Morris, to the Congress and others. She was requested to turn all her securities and certificates over to the state treasurer of Pennsylvania for evaluation. After several months, she made further inquiries and was informed that all of the papers relating to her inheritance had been lost.

Haym Salomon was buried in Mikveh Israel Cemetery in Philadelphia in a grave that is now unmarked. Since we don't know which his grave is, we cannot even pay our respects at his graveside nor erect a marker.

But the story of Haym Salomon doesn't end with an unmarked grave. There is a plaque on a brick wall bordering the cemetery that was placed by Haym's great-grandson, William Salomon, in 1917. It says, "To the Memory of Haym Salomon ... interred in this Cemetery the location of the grave being now unknown. ..."

Was it just a coincidence that the year this plaque was erected was the same year of the Balfour Declaration issued by the British, which begins, "His majesty's Government views with favor the establishing in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people"?



Was it just a coincidence that in 1975 when the Postal Service issued the stamp honoring Haym Salomon, that same year the Israeli government issued a stamp honoring Harry Truman, the American president who was the first head of state to recognize Israel?

As Salomon believed, America has been that save haven for the Jewish people, and Israel has been reborn. As we celebrate America, may we remember the great debt we owe to Haym Salomon. While we may not be able to repay him personally, we can honor him by standing firm in our support and prayers for a strong and secure Israel and a united Jerusalem under the rule of Haym's Salomon's spiritual descendants, the Jewish people.

Happy Fourth of July!

*Dr. Richard Booker is a Christian minister and the founder and president of Sounds of the Trumpet Inc. and the Institute for Hebraic-Christian Studies located in Houston, Texas. He has written 30 books and hundreds of articles on Israel and Jewish-Christian relationships. Dr. Booker and his wife, Peggy, have taken tour groups to Israel for over 20 years*



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**ACT AS A JEW TO IMPROVE THE WORLD**  
***TZEDAKAH* VERSUS *GEMILUT HASADIM***

**Mind-set**

What are some essential elements of a "good life" that you would not want to live without?

As a student: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

As an adult: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you want others to have these also? Why or why not? If you could help your friend acquire these elements, how would you do it?

If you could help a stranger acquire these elements, would you? How?

**New Information**

Translations: *Tzedakah* – righteousness

*Gemilut chasadim* – deeds of loving kindness

*Gemilut chasadim* is greater than *tzedakah* in three ways:

- *Tzedakah* can be given only with one's money; *gemilut chasadim*, both by personal service and with money.
- *Tzedakah* can be given only to the poor; *gemilut chasadim*, both to rich and poor.
- *Tzedakah* can be given only to the living; *gemilut chasadim*, both to the living and the dead.

(Sukkah 49b)

**Discussion Questions**

Which is considered more important – *gemilut chasadim* or *tzedakah*? Why?

What would the rich need?

How does one help the dead?

Are you currently involved in any on-going type of *gemilut chasadim*?

Do you know a person who has a lot of money but is very lonely?



Does money prevent one from being sick?

Here is a list of activities. To what category to they belong – *tzedakah* or *gemilut chasadim*?

	<u><i>Tzedakah or Gemilut Chasadim?</i></u>	<u><i>Why?</i></u>
Giving money to the poor		
Visiting the sick		
Burying the dead		
Supporting a student through school		
Respecting the elderly		
Feeding the hungry		
Helping to save captives		
Showing hospitality to strangers/guests		
Giving clothes to the poor		
Giving a wedding to a poor bride		

How would you explain *tzedakah* to someone who does not know what it is?

How would you explain *gemilut chasadim* to someone who does not know what it is?

### Internalizing the Concept

Ask for a volunteer to participate in a role playing situation. Have the student play the role of a student being asked to give money or agreeing to baby-sit for free to help a poor family. The student is busy after school and already baby-sits for pay. All she/he wants to do is give money. Take the part of the person doing the requesting. Make a case for free baby-sitting on the basis that it will help the family help themselves.

After the role play goes on for a few minute, stop and have the group decide which position is better.

Now ask for volunteers to replay the situation. Let different people take different roles. Ask them to select other similar situations.

Excerpted from *Tzedakah: Righteous Action* prepared by CAJE in cooperation with the Ziv Tzedakah Fund CAJE (Coalition for Alternatives in Jewish Education), 486 Park Avenue South - Room 904, New York, NY 10016.



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## LIVE THE JEWISH CALENDAR

### *SHIV'A ASAR B'TAMMUZ*

The 17<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz is observed as a fast commemorating the breaking down of the wall of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the cessation of Temple worship during the siege of Titus. It ushers in the three weeks of mourning which end with Tisha B'Av, the fast of the ninth day of Av.

The three weeks between Shiv'a Asar B'Tammuz and Tisha B'Av are referred to as "between the straits," a phrase borrowed from Lamentations 1:3. The Mishna mentions five misfortunes that befell the Jewish people on the 17<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz and five on the ninth of Av (Ta'Anit 4:6).

The three weeks are concluded with the so-called Nine Days, from the first to the ninth of Av, during which the mourning is intensified until Tisha B'Av itself – the saddest day of the Jewish year.

*This year the 17<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz falls on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008.*



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## EATING AS A JEW

### WHY KEEP KOSHER?

Rabbi Laurence A. Sebert, Town and Village Synagogue, New York, NY

If we were playing Family Feud, the number one reason given for keeping kosher would be “health,” with “cleanliness” running a close second. Many people have a very strong desire to provide a “logical” reason for keeping kosher. The notion that keeping kosher is “healthier” is found most prominently in the writings of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Jewish philosopher, Rabbi Moses Maimonides. Because of its clarity and simplicity, it is an idea that has stuck. The problem is that it hasn’t necessarily convinced us of the importance of *kashrut* (keeping kosher).

Even in Maimonides’ time, people were aware that one can live a long and healthy life on a wide variety of diets. That is especially true for today’s health conscious individual. I would be hard-pressed to justify keeping kosher if we were to cling to the idea that health is the real reason for doing so. For many Jews, then and now, Maimonides’ justification for keeping kosher has become the reason *not* to observe the dietary laws. If keeping kosher is only about staying healthy, why bother? So let me begin by stating that one may eat healthfully and keep kosher, but health is not the reason we observe the laws of *kashrut*.

Keeping kosher may not be the road to better health, but that doesn’t mean it’s not good for you. There are many positive reasons for keeping kosher, and they generally fall into several categories: respect for God’s creation, accepting God’s will, and adding holiness to our lives.

#### Respect for God’s Creation

The Torah begins with the notion that all beings are created directly by God. In Genesis, human beings are first given permission to eat only that which grows from the ground. The ideal of the the Garden of Eden is to refrain from taking the life of another living being. The compromise position, articulated in Genesis 9:3-4, allows for eating meat with the proviso, “You must not, however, eat flesh with its lifeblood in it.” The most concrete symbol of life is the blood which flows through the veins, so consuming blood is the first and most important prohibition. Although we are permitted to eat meat, the removal of the blood, together with the respectful and humane approach to ritual slaughter, help to remind us of our relationship with God and with all of God’s creation.

#### Accepting God’s Will

The rabbis teach us that there are many *mitzvot* (commandments) which simply have no explanation. They suggest we ought to accept these commandments, despite their lack of rational explanation, as a sign of our love for God and our connection to the Jewish people. Connected to this idea is the feeling of satisfaction that comes from accepting a sense of discipline within our lives. Human nature is such that we want to do (eat) what we want, when we want. It is an incredible challenge and mark of self-discipline to place restrictions on the foods we eat, but there is no better demonstration of our commitment to God’s commandments and to living a Jewish life.

#### Adding Holiness to Our Lives



Our lives are filled with the ordinary routines and required activities that are performed day in and day out. Nothing is more regular and essential to human life than eating and drinking. *Kashrut* is our way of elevating that act. The Torah does not elaborate on why we keep kosher. It simply states, "You shall sanctify yourselves and be holy, for I am holy" [Leviticus 11:44]. By regulating the instinctual act of eating, we succeed in raising it to a level of holiness. We sanctify ourselves and our lives by placing religious and moral strictures on what we put into our mouths. Keeping kosher allows us to make our daily routine sacred and purposeful, a constant reminder of God's presence in the most elemental area of our lives.

*(Reprinted from "Meat, Milk & METNY: Your Guide to Kashrut", by METNY-USCJ)*



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## LEARNING AS A JEW

### **KAVANOT: TECHNIQUES TO HEIGHTEN SPIRITUALITY**

Rabbi Hershel Matt z"l

Granted that no external device or series of devices can guarantee *kavanah* (focus, intensive spirituality), it is nevertheless true that certain steps can be taken that are likely to encourage rather than hinder *kavanah*.

Much attention has been given to such matters in *t'fillah b'tzibbur* (public, congregational prayer), such as decorum, responsive reading, chanting, unison reading, silent prayer, and musical background. These all are important. All of them can be dealt with more creatively than previously.

Not enough attention, however, has been given to the insertion, at numerous points in the service, of introductory comments to particular prayers. These introductory comments need not be explanatory, historical, didactic, informational – in a word, “adult educational” – nor even interpretive, in the sense of telling about what the prayer contains; for they would then be diversions from prayer, obstacles to prayer. These comments should rather be bridges to prayer, prayerful preparations for prayer, not directions to the traditional *kavanot*, on the order of *Hin'ni muchan um'zuman; hareni m'zamen et pi; or adonay s'faty tiftach*. The comments before a given prayer should be varied from service to service, and there should be a variant also in the choice of prayers to be commented on.

Among the advantages of such an approach are:

1. a balance created between *keva* (fixed nature of prayer) and *kavanah* (spontaneity), *keva* and *hiddush* (motivation).
2. we are focused to pause to be confronted by the meaning of the words we know.
3. the need to be creative, contemporary, and relevant is not stifled, and yet the *matbea shel t'fillah* (traditional framework of a service) is preserved.
4. we are guarded against the temptation of putting our formulations on a par with those of the tradition;
5. we are guarded against the risk of letting our fresh insight itself become routine;
6. the *sh'liach tzibbur* becomes, in a revitalized sense, the congregation's delegate. He leads *in* prayer and *to* prayer, instead of “conducting a service.”

The following selections are samples that have been used in daily, Shabbat, and Yom Tov services. Every leader of a service should try a hand at formulating *kavanot*. Yet there is a genuine need for an anthology of *kavanot* – a continuing anthology – to be drawn upon, adapted, reworked, and added to by each *sh'liach tzibbur*.



A. (Before *Bor'chu* in the MaAriv or Shacharit service)

Our Father in Heaven blesses us  
In granting us,  
At every moment,  
Benefits beyond count, beyond desert.  
But how shall we bless Him?  
By acknowledging his blessings...

B. (Before *Ma-aariv Aravim*)

Not by mere chance have we lived through another day;  
The days do not just pass.  
It is the Lord, Creator of the heavenly bodies,  
Who causes days and nights and months and years to pass,  
And allows us safely to pass through them...

C. (Before the Sh'ma in the MaAriv or Shacharit service)

1. Come now ---  
In the words of the *Sh'ma*,  
Let us take upon ourselves anew  
The blessed yoke of the Kingship of Heaven
2. How blessed we are!  
How happy is our portion,  
How sweet our lot!  
How blessed are we who  
At dawn and twilight,  
Twice each day,  
Can say in love "Sh'ma Yisrael"...
3. Touched by God's love for us,  
We can love Him in return;  
For we love with the love by which we are loved...

D. (Before *Gaal Yisrael*)

The Lord miraculously redeemed our fathers at the Red Sea in days of old,  
And renews the miracle of His redemption each day ever since...

E. (Before or After the *Amidah*)

1. Hear my prayer, O Lord,  
And turn me not away empty from Thy presence...



F. (Before *Alenu*)

1. Come,  
Let us praise the Lord  
For the greatest of His blessings;  
The blessing of being of the People of Israel.  
For it is through this blessing  
That all blessings come to us which come.
  
2. The Lord is One, of course, the *Melech*, King, over all the earth.  
And yet –  
Of what avail to be The One,  
When men go worshipping many gods?  
Of what avail to be the *Melech*,  
When men do not obey?  
But God has promised us:  
The Lord shall yet indeed be *Melech* over all the earth;  
On that day shall the Lord in truth be One, *Echad*,  
And His name one...



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## PERPETUATING JEWISH LIFE *AVINU MALKENU*

On public fast days and the Ten Days of Repentance from *Rosh Hashanah* to *Yom Kippur*, *Avinu Malkenu* is recited at morning and afternoon services. As described in the Talmud (*Ta'anit* 25b), when there had not been enough rain, a fast would be declared. The Holy Ark would be carried from the synagogue to the public square, and emergency "protest" services were held to petition God to send life-giving rain.

The origin of the prayer is attributed to the outstanding Torah scholar Rabbi Akiva, who died around 135 CE. According to the Talmud, "Rabbi Eliezer once went before the Ark (to conduct the service on such a public fast day) and recited 24 blessings (that had been especially composed to request rain) but he was not answered. Rabbi Akiva went (before the Ark) after him and said, 'Our Father, our King, we have no other king but You!'... and it then started raining" (*Ta'anit* 25b).

Rabbi Akiva's successful formula addresses two contradictory aspects of God's nature. On the one hand, God is addressed as a parent who is loving and forgiving; on the other hand, He is perceived as a sovereign who decides strictly according to the law. By appealing to both "our Father" and "our King," we express our acceptance of God's dominion, but also appeal to Him for love, understanding and favor.

Over the centuries, many additions to Rabbi Akiva's prayer have been made. In the Polish rite, which is the one most often printed to day, there are 44 petitions. The western Askenazic version has 38 or 39 petitions. The 15<sup>th</sup> through the 23<sup>rd</sup> verses are recited first by the *shaliach tzibur*, or prayer leaders, and then repeated by the congregation. These begin with *Hachazireinu b'teshuvah shleimah l'fanekha* (Bring us back in full repentance to You) and conclude with a series of five prayers that request remembrance unto life, redemption, prosperity, merit and forgiveness. The wording of these five petitions varies depending on the occasion: on fast days we ask that God "remember us"; during the Ten Days of Repentance we ask that God "inscribe us"; and at the closing *Ne'ilah* service of *Yom Kippur* we ask that God "seal us" in the books that determine our fate for the coming year. Some suggest that the five books to be inscribed or sealed refer to the Five Books of Moses.

A riddle sometimes asked on the High Holidays is, "How many *Avinu Malkenu's* are there?" The answer, of course, is that there is only one: "Our Father, our King" is unique.

(Reprinted from USCJ Art Engagement calendar, written by Rabbi Robert Binder)



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## **BUILDING A BRIDGE TO ISRAEL** **DEDICATING A *MIZRACH* AT HOME**

(Adapted from MERCAZ USA publication, "Towards the East to Zion")

### A *Mizrach*: Towards the East to Zion

Israel's national anthem, *Hatikvah*, poetically refers to the Jewish eye being turned to Zion (*U-l'fa'atey mizrach kadima, a-yin l'Tzion tzofiya*). The hope for a Jewish spiritual-national renaissance and an independent state in the Land of Israel has been nurtured for generations and in the past century has become a reality. The initial fulfillment of this hope is widely recognized as one of the miracles of our times.

MERCAZ USA, the Zionist Organization of the Conservative Movement, seeks to foster an appreciation for modern Zionism. To that end, the *Mizrach* has been designed. Based on the tradition of placing a *Mizrach* on the eastern wall, it indicates the direction of Jerusalem. It is intended to serve as a permanent reminder of Israel's presence.

The dedication ceremony, composed by Rabbi Robert Binder, is suggested in order to highlight the installation of the *Mizrach* and to emphasize the place of Zionism and Israel within your home.

The dedication of the *Mizrach* would be especially apt on *Yom Ha'atzma'ut* itself. Since ancient times, Jews have turned in prayer towards the east, particularly to the site of the Temple in Jerusalem. The earliest reference we have to this is in the Biblical book of I Kings, when Solomon dedicated the First Temple (ca. 1000 BCE) and prayed: "May You hearken to the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel when they pray towards this place..." and "When Your People...pray to the Lord towards the city that You have chosen and towards the house that I have built for Your name, then may You hear in heaven their prayer..." (I Kings 8:30, 44).

Several centuries later, the prophet Daniel is described as having "windows open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed" (Daniel 6:11).

This prayer custom was codified in the Mishnah (ca. 200 CE): "One should turn one's face [toward Jerusalem], and if one cannot turn one's face, one should direct one's heart towards the Holy of Holies [the innermost sanctum of the Temple]" (*Mishnah Berakhot* 4:5), to which the Gemara comments, quoting verses from Solomon's prayer as proof-texts: "If one is standing outside the country, one should direct one's heart to the land of Israel... If one stands in the Land of Israel, one should direct one's heart towards Jerusalem... If one is standing in Jerusalem, one should direct one's heart towards the Temple... If one is standing in the Temple, one should direct one's heart toward the Holy of Holies... Consequently, if one is in the east, one should turn his face towards the west; if in the west, one should turn towards the east; if in the south, one should turn towards the north; if in the north, one should turn towards the south. In this way, all Israel will be directing their hearts towards one place." (*Talmud Berakhot* 30a)

Seeking to apply this teaching of the Talmud, Jews have traditionally built their synagogues (or at least the wall of the Holy Ark) to face Jerusalem. A notable example of this is the Touro Synagogue (Congregation Jeshuat Israel) of Newport, Rhode Island, dedicated in 1763, which was so situated on its plot as to face the latitudinal and longitudinal point of Jerusalem on the globe. Synagogues in Israel, and especially in Jerusalem, face the Temple Mount. Thus, the student congregation of the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus turns southwest in prayer; congregations in the southern suburb of Talpiot turn northwards.

In Eastern Europe, the custom was to face east (in Hebrew, *mizrach*), where the sunrise might be seen. *Mimizrach shemesh ad m'vo-o*, "From the rising of the sun until its setting, the name of the Lord shall be praised" (Psalm 113:3), came to refer to the location of Jerusalem. This verse was often inscribed upon a sign within the house, to indicate the direction of prayer, and may have served as the inspiration to Naftali Herz Imber in writing the words *u-l'fa'atey*



*mizrach kadima* in his poem *Hatikvah*. To this day, *mizrach* signs (plural, *mizrachim*) point to Jerusalem or serve as reminders of the Holy Temple.

In the course of time, the simple *mizrach* came to be decorated with symbols of the holy city or images associated with the Holy Ark of a synagogue. Lions of Judah, Stars of David, the tablets of the Ten Commandments, the seven-branched menorah, and many other emblems of Jewish iconography are used to elaborate the *mizrach*. Often the words *Mi-tzad zeh ruach ha-hayim* ("From this direction comes the spirit of life") are included as a play on the letter *mem*, *zayin*, *resh*, *het* = *mizrach*. This tradition is said to be based on a Kabbalistic identification of *mizrach* with *kadim*, the eastern wind (*ruach*); the source of life is associated with the Temple mount, the legendary starting point – and pinnacle – of Creation.

Materials used in *mizrachim* were primarily paper and cloth, with scribes and folk artists utilizing their talents in painting, paper cuts, embroidery, collage and appliqué. Since most of these media are quite fragile, we have few surviving examples dating earlier than the eighteenth century.

Contemporary artists have revived the art of paper cuts and raised it to new heights, particularly in creating *mizrachim* for the home. New forms are constantly being devised.

#### Dedication Ceremony

To be read by all in attendance at home:

From time immemorial, the hearts and eyes of Israel have been turned to Jerusalem.

*Listen to the supplication of Your people Israel when they pray towards this place.* (1 Kings 8:30)

Zion is our meeting point, the spiritual compass of our prayer.

*They who trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion which cannot be moved, but abides forever.* (Psalm 125:1)

We are in the West, but our hearts are in the East.

*I will save My people from the east and from the west and they will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem* (Zechariah 8:7)

The source of blessing, the depths of our being derive from Jerusalem.

*From the rising of the sun to its setting, the Lord's name is to be praised.* (Psalm 113:3)

With this *Mizrach*, we seek with new eyes a message from Zion.

*For the sake of my brethren and friends, I would say, "Peace be with you."*

*For the sake of the House of the Lord our God, I would seek your good.* (Psalm 122:8-9)

May hope and deliverance, peace and security reside within her.

*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they who love you shall know security.*

*Peace be within your walls, security within your palaces.* (Psalm 122:6-7)

And spread the canopy of peace and well-being over Israel.

*May the Lord bless you out of Zion and may you see the good of Jerusalem all the days of your life. And may you see your children's children with peace over Israel.* (Psalm 128:5-6)

For this we turn ever hopeful *I'fa'atey mizrach* – to the East – to Jerusalem.

*Our hope has ne'er been lost: to be a free people in our own land, in Zion and Jerusalem.*

(From *Hatikvah*, Israel's national anthem)



(Conclude with the singing of *Hatikvah*, or a selection of *Psalms of Ascent*, especially "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Psalm 122), "Thos Who Trust in the Lord" (Psalm 125), or "The Lord Bless You Out of Zion" (Psalm 128)

### *Hatikvah*

*Kol od ba-leyvav pnimah  
Nefesh yehudi homi-yah  
U'l'fa'atey mizrach kadimah  
A-yin l'Tzion Tzofiyah.  
Od lo avada tikvateynu  
Hatikvah bat sh'not alpa-yim  
L'hiyot am hofshi b'artzeynu  
Eretz Tzion V'irushalayim.*

Translation:

As long as a Jewish soul still beats in our hearts  
And our eye is turned expectantly towards Zion,  
Our two thousand-year-old hope ha not been lost:  
To be a free people in our land, in Zion and Jerusalem.

## TIME TO GO

This is the 79th COMPACT, *Tamuz 5768*. Enrich your life as a Jew. Transformation is a step-by-step process of learning and questioning, of doing and inquiring, of participating and asking.

Rabbi Jerome M. Epstein, the USCJ Executive Vice President, welcomes your comments about COMPACT ([epstein@uscj.org](mailto:epstein@uscj.org))

Rabbi Moshe Edelman, the USCJ Director of Congregational Programming, prepares and edits COMPACT ([edelman@uscj.org](mailto:edelman@uscj.org)).

Best wishes for a Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July ...

A restful summer

A productive summer

Go to Shul ... Read Jewish books... Study Torah

