

# The Synagogue Journal

## 1856-2006

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Terumah

### Issue 9 Congregations Merge

#### **Brief History of the 1908 Consolidation**

Retells Rabbi Israel Goldfarb's story about the merger of Baith Israel and Anshei Emes. Includes observations by Joseph Goldfarb and Aaron Copland about the differences between the two congregations.

*By Carol Levin*

(Scroll down to article)

#### **Archival Research on Hevre Talmud Torah**

Kane Street Synagogue's archives are collected at the Ratner Center Library for the study of Conservative Judaism at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Among the seventy-six volumes in the collection, seventeen pre-date the 1908 merger of our predecessors, Congregation Baith Israel and Hevre Talmud Torah Anshei Emes. Last fall, members Carolyn and Sarah Shapiro, mother and daughter conversant in Yiddish, offered to research Yiddish records in the collection. They poured through the pages of the Hevre Talmud account book of 1903-1907 to learn more about the composition of the Degraw Street congregation. Their report, which includes many names and addresses of members, is reprinted here.

*By Carolyn Shapiro and Sarah Shapiro*

(Scroll down to article)

The following *Brooklyn Eagle* articles deal with Synagogue mergers in the nineteenth century:

**"Hebrew Consolidating. A Movement to Unite Three Congregations – Important Action Taken on the Subject"**

*Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, April 7, 1883, Page 1*

**"Consolidation of Local Hebrew Churches"**

*Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, April 7, 1883, Page 2*

**"Union of Hebrew Congregations. A Movement to Consolidate the Three Synagogues in Brooklyn – The Rev. Dr. Chapman's Passover Sermon in the Temple Israel – The Outlook of Judaism – Local Centralization a Need of the Jewish Church in Brooklyn"**

*Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, April 26, 1883, Page 1*

**"Going to Unite – Beth Elohim and Temple Israel Congregations. Harmonizing Differences which Arose Years Ago – Entering Into the Spirit of the Age – Reform in Hebrew Worship"**

*Credit: February 3, 1886, Page 4*

### **In this issue ...**

We look at synagogue mergers to commemorate the consolidation of Congregation Baith Israel and Talmud Torah Anshei Emes ninety-eight years ago this week. On March 3, 1908, the Kane Street Synagogue congregation's two predecessors organized as one, celebrating with pageantry. Baith Israel President Harris M. Copland arrived by horse-drawn carriage at 140 Degraw street and led the united congregants from the Anshei Emes Shul through the streets accompanied by a marching band. Anshei Emes leaders paraded with their Safer Torahs and placed them in the Ark on 236 Harrison Street. (it became Kane Street in 1928) This tradition of parading Torahs was not new to this community. Brooklyn witnessed Baith Israel's move in 1862 from Atlantic Street to Boerum Place, and again in 1905 from Boerum to Harrison Street.

Congregational mergers were not uncommon then. The 1908 merger was not the first attempt of Baith Israel to join with another group. The Brooklyn Daily Eagle reports several instances of meetings held among congregational leaders seeking to unite.

On Sunday March 5, 2006, Kane Street Synagogue celebrates the consolidated BIAE with a symposium and exhibit. "Keeping the Faith in Brooklyn: Beginnings of the Jewish Community in the City of Churches" brings scholars together to look at the early development of area synagogues. Our Torah portion this week, "Terumah," opens with God's instruction to Moses, "Speak to the Children of Israel...and they shall make for me a Sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them (Exodus 25:1 and 8) It is fitting that we as a community join together in this dedicated place to connect with the generations of the past, and teach the generations of the future.

Carol Levin, Editor  
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### **About the Journal ...**

The "Synagogue Journal" is a one-year online publication at [www.kanestreet.org/historical\\_journal.html](http://www.kanestreet.org/historical_journal.html), designed to highlight the three periods of the Kane Street Synagogue congregation: the first fifty years as Congregation Baith Israel at both the Atlantic Street and the Boerum Place sites; the middle years (1905-1956) with Rabbi Israel Goldfarb as spiritual leader of the consolidated Congregation Baith Israel Anshei Emes at the present location that was known as Harrison Street, and the last fifty years, as the synagogue evolved to be the Congregation that we know today.

We welcome submissions of reminiscences, letters and photographs to help shape the BIAE story. For a list of upcoming Journal themes or to read past issues, see "Archives," located under the Journal banner.

Special thanks to: Rabbi Sam Weintraub; Kane Street Synagogue webmaster Dugans; images provided by [www.PaulBernsteinPhotography.com](http://www.PaulBernsteinPhotography.com) and The Brooklyn Daily Eagle Online™, Brooklyn Public Library for providing over one hundred articles about our predecessor Congregation Baith Israel and Jewish life in nineteenth century Brooklyn at [www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/eagle](http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/eagle)

## Brief History of the 1908 Consolidation

By Carol Levin

Most people today know this venerable congregation as Kane Street Synagogue. Our official name is Congregation Baith Israel Anshei Emes, the result of a merger in 1908 of two predecessor congregations, Baith Israel and Anshei Emes. Rabbi Israel Goldfarb wrote a history of the congregation for the seventieth anniversary journal. He describes the merger as:

“In March, 1908, an amalgamation was effected between Baith Israel and Congregation Talmud Torah Anshei Emes, of Degraw Street. The new congregation was known as Baith Israel Anshei Emes. To celebrate the event fittingly, an impressive and solemn service was held in the synagogue. The Scrolls of the Law were brought in carriages from the Degraw Street Synagogue and, with great ceremony, deposited in the holy ark. Isaac Tuck presided and addresses were delivered by Professor Joseph Mayer Asher, the Rev. H. Maliansky, Samuel T. Maddox, Justice of the Supreme Court, The Rev. Henry S. Morais and Rabbi Israel Goldfarb. The new officers of the consolidated congregation were: **H[arris]. M. Copland**, president; *Philip Leibowitz*, vice-president; *Louis Summer*, treasurer; **Maurice Pelz**, secretary; **Nat N. Tuck**, superintendent of the Sunday School, and **H[erman]. Alexander**, chairman of the Talmud Torah. The trustees were: **H[erman]. Alexander**, I[saac]. Applebaum, *M. Beck*, S. Brooks, B. Brown, *S[amuel]. Brown*, Moss Cohen, **H[arris]. M. Copland**, *I[saac]. A. Goldberg*, H. Goldsmith, S.L. Gottlieb, *Adolph Kahn*, *Ludwig Lazar*, C. Levin, *Philip Leibowitz*, Maurice Pelz, Michael Salit, *Jacob Schindel*, J. Silver, Henry Sonnenstrahl, *Louis Summer*, **Nat N. Tuck** and *Adolph Weinberger*.” (emphasis added)

In an attempt to understand more about the amalgamated Congregation BIAE and its leadership, I've marked in bold the names of former Baith Israel members and used italics for former Anshei Emes members. First names were added when known. It appears that the merged congregation merged their leadership positions fairly evenly, at least for that first year. For example, Philip Leibowitz who had been Talmud Torah president, became vice-president of the new congregation.

Joseph Goldfarb, Rabbi Goldfarb's son, recalls his father telling him that generally speaking, the former members of the Talmud Torah had a difficult time fully adapting to customs at the Harrison Street Synagogue, which Baith Israel had moved to in 1905. Joseph described the Harrison Street Synagogue, as it was then called. “This shul was a merger of two congregations, Baith Israel, a reform German style, bordering on Reform. And then there was a shul of Russian emigrants who came here in the 1890s.” During services, the older men from Anshei Emes sat together in an all-men's section, “starting five or six rows back from the front on this left hand aisle.” The presence of these two traditions challenged Rabbi Goldfarb to find creative, practical solutions to ritual practice throughout his fifty-six years at the synagogue.

Aaron Copland observed in his autobiography the presence of two groups in BIAE when he was a boy. “Religious observance in the Copland family was mostly a matter of conventional participation rather than a deep commitment to other-worldly experience. Despite, this, one very solemn moment remains vivid in my memory: on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, the elder greybeards of the Congregation stretched themselves out prone in the aisles of the synagogue and prayed for forgiveness of man's evil ways.” Aaron's “greybeards” were the men from Anshei Emes.

In 2006, ninety-eight years since the merger, we celebrate 150 years with the study of our history. Congregation Baith Israel Anshei Emes continues to be diverse and vibrant. We have grown and flourished.

“Copland 1900 Through 1942” by Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, St.Martin's, 1984

## Archival Research on Hevre Talmud Torah

By Carolyn Shapiro and Sarah Shapiro

### Source: Kane Street account books 1902-1913

Balances in hand of treasurer

227 pages of names

100% English, zero knowledge of Yiddish required so we did not look at it

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### Source: Hevre Talmud Torah 1903-1907

When names are written in English and Hebrew, the Hebrew often is easier to read. Dues went up from \$1.25 a quarter to \$1.75 a quarter in 1903. Under the Hebrew names, between the Hebrew and English names, are bookkeeping notes bringing the previous account to the present volume beginning 1903. Besides dues, various other donations and fees are listed for each member. Addresses are written in English. Members' titles are not Mr. but Br., for brother, and bes-resch in Yiddish for bruder, brother. High Holiday tickets are entered as Ticket Tax 1.75. The Yiddish notes are for contributions made on holidays and other occasions. In 1906, there must have been a schism. Many members are noted as having been drummed out of the congregation, with the Yiddish word for excommunication used in the very formal legal note, "In accordance with the decree of the congregation..."

Philip Leibowitz	124 Carroll Street	1903-17
S. (Shlomo) Bruder	37 Atlantic Ave	to 1907
Harry Schaffer	292 Atlantic Ave	1903-07 (Yiddish says "balance" and the dates for the quarter 12 Aug-12 Nov.)
Adolph Weinberger	163 Columbus Ave	1903-07
Samuel Brown	17 Union Street	
p49-50		
Louis Berman	131 Columbia Street	stricken 1906 (that is, stricken from the rolls) dates in Yiddish, 12 Aug - 12 Nov Late dues for 1903 were paid up in Nov 1904. on p. 81, his title is Secretary
Moritz Sonneschein	182 Columbia Street	
A. Weinberger listed again		
Nathan Bornstein	49 Atlantic Ave	
Sigmond Berkowitz	342 Van Brunt Ave	stricken 1905
Louis Summer	189 Columbia Street	
I. Schindel	63 Union Street	
Isaac A. Goldberg	92 Hamilton Ave	
p77		
Morris Rodgers	32 Atlantic Ave	
A. Rudiche (roo-dikhe)	155 Hopkins	stricken 1905
p83		
James Morris	89 Hamilton Ave	stricken 1905
H. Rockman	162 Columbia Street	(Zvi in Hebrew, so Hersh or HershI in Yiddish and English)
p89		
Gerson Miller	169 Columbia Street	
p90	moved to 230 Smith Street	
p91		
D. (Dovid) Rofflowitz	151 Columbia Street	He made a chumash donation in an amount more than the dues - a very large donation!
p95		
S. (Shimon) Moskowitz	667 Flushing Avenue	stricken 1904 Member since 4 March 1900
p99		
Hyman Gold	109 Hamilton Avenue	
p101		
Harry Rubin	184 Columbia Street	

Ephraim Grossman 171 Columbia Street He made many additional gifts, including \$20.25  
for High Holiday tickets 1906 (or maybe he needed 12 tickets @ \$1.75)?

p107  
Isaac Livey 172 Columbia Street (not Levy - in Yiddish it is Livye)

p111  
Louis Greenwald 263 Atlantic Ave (Eliezer Yitzchok bar David Greenwald)

p115  
Max Feinberg ?72? Columbia Street stricken 1906. Joined June 17, 1900; stricken  
June 10, 1906, in accordance with the decision of the hevra.

p116  
Hyman Gold (see p. 99) was struck on Dec 8, 1907, following the decree of the congregation

p119  
S.B. Deimantstein 297 Court Street (Boruch Sholom in Yiddish)  
joined 17 Dec 1900

p121  
Adolph (Abba Moshe) Kahn 244 Harrison Street

p123  
M. (Moshe Yosef) Beck 231 Columbia Street

p127  
I. (Yisroel Shlomo) Unterman 23 Union Street in 1906, address is 204 Columbia Street  
Note dated Nov 25 1906 - he was struck in March 1906 in accordance with the decree of the congregation.

p131  
A. (Moshe) Goldenberg 638 3rd Avenue stricken 1904  
joined 4 August 1901  
I. Schappiro 169 Columbia Street joined April 14, 1901  
His High Holiday ticket was just \$1.00, no reason given.

p137  
H. (Zvi) Sindel 312 Atlantic Avenue left Oct 20, 1907

p141  
Louis Tick 1035 Fulton Street / later 163 9th Street left 22 Aug 1905 / joined 19 Aug 1902

p143  
K. (Koppel) Fink 317 Van Brunt

p145  
M. (Moshe) Block 176 Hamilton Ave

A. Bergida 19 Tompkins Place stricken March 5, 1905 / joined March 2, 1902

p151  
Theodor Rittoff 523 Court Street p152, spelled with one T - Ritoff, first name in Hebrew is Todros

p155  
W. (undoubtedly Wolf, Zev in Hebrew) Neuman 184 Columbia Street joined 9 Nov 1902

p157  
Rosenblatt (no first name in Hebrew or English) stricken 1904 / joined 9 Dec 1902

p159  
M. (Menachem Mendel) Brown 10 Union Street

More names to page 257, all in English; any names hard to decipher in English are easy to read in Hebrew. Yiddish comments are usually English words, either "balance" or "tickets", or the date the member left the congregation, some with the legal formula for being stricken by the rolls by decree of the congregation. Pages 420-456 are disbursements.

**A Movement to Unite Three Congregations—Important Action Taken on the Subject.**

For some time past there has been agitated among the Hebrew families of this city the proposition to consolidate the three leading congregations of Israel, with the view of acquiring more strength and working together and increasing the usefulness of all the active elements in enterprises which look to the promotion of intellectual, moral and religious interests in the circles most deeply concerned in congregational and social activities.

With this object in view a preliminary meeting was held in the Temple Israel, Greene avenue, on Thursday evening, Mr. H. Harrison, presiding, and Mr. Samuel Goodstein, secretary. The chairman stated the object of the meeting to be that of considering the propriety of consolidating the three congregations, Temple Israel, Beth Elohim and Baith Israel. The gentlemen present were Messrs H. Harrison, I. B. Shenfeld and S. Goodstein, from the Temple Israel, Messrs. Morris Hirsch, H. Block and L. Blumenau, from the congregation Beth Elohim, and Messrs, Lewis Jacobs, A. Croner and L. Kalish, from the congregation Baith Israel.

It was agreed to recommend, in the event of consolidation being decided upon, that American customs should be observed so far as consistent with the maintenance of the Hebrew services.

It was estimated that a building might be erected for the united congregations at a cost not to exceed \$30,000. It was decided that the services should be conducted in English, German and Hebrew, so as to accommodate all classes of worshippers.

The proceedings of Thursday night's meeting will be submitted to the trustees of the three congregations respectively, and, if approved, then a committee on consolidation will be appointed by them with instructions to take action without delay.

### **Consolidation of Local Hebrew Churches.**

In another part of to-day's EAGLE will be found a very interesting discourse by the Rev. Dr. Chapman, minister of the Temple Israel, on Greene avenue, in reference to what he calls the great festival of freedom, the Pass-over, which is now going on and then to the movement in which he and others take a great interest, the consolidation of the three Hebrew congregations in Brooklyn into a single strong one. Some of our wealthier and many of our poorer citizens belong to the Hebrew race and no apology is needed for discussing their ecclesiastical condition. Both in this city and New York indeed the Israelites have a just claim to popular regard. They are the most self supporting and independent people in the community. The Jewish Church need not fear comparison with any other denomination in works of practical philanthropy. The Mount Sinai Hospital in New York is nonsectarian although supported and managed entirely by Jews. The Hebrew Orphan Asylum in that city contains nearly three hundred children, who receive a most liberal education and, when old enough, are taught trades or provided with situations to start them in life. During the last year the outlay of this orphan asylum was nearly forty thousand dollars, derived entirely from the voluntary contributions of the Jews. The United Charities, supported in like manner, dispenses aid to all Israelites who are in need, in whatever form it may be required. There are numerous other institutions in the larger metropolis of a similar nature, working hand in hand with one another. In Brooklyn there is also a Hebrew Orphan Asylum, containing thirty-three children. The cornerstone of a new building for it will be laid in May, which will enable the asylum to receive



a greater number of orphans than the present premises can accommodate. The Hebrew Benevolent Society in Brooklyn is a similar institution to that in New York, and in both cities every congregation is continually being called upon to assist needy Israelites, so that the Jews in Brooklyn have never yet appealed for aid to the charities of the city or the State.

The local Israel, therefore, may well challenge for its good works the interest of the public, apart from the wider ground of the high rank which members of the Hebrew race have taken everywhere in every department of professional and commercial energy. The consolidation of several comparatively weak churches, as regards numbers and finances, is of interest to all denominations. We will therefore explain the three congregations of Jews that now exist in Brooklyn, and which Dr. Chapman and other influential leaders, both ministers and laymen, are anxious to unite in one strong church.

The Temple Israel, of which that accomplished scholar is the minister, may be called the radically reformed congregation. The sexes worship together, the men sit with uncovered heads, and the service is conducted partly in Hebrew and partly in English. They do not envelop themselves with the Taleth, that is, the garment in the shape of a scarf with fringes at the corners. They have done away with a great many of the ceremonies which do not agree with the spirit of the times nor with the pure teachings of Judaism. They are progressists, doing away with a great part of the ceremonial and observing the doctrinal part of the faith, pure and simple. They only observe one holy day where the orthodox Jews observe two, thus being in strict accord with the Biblical commandment. They stand on the most liberal platform consistent with fidelity to Moses and the prophets.

The other two Jewish congregations in Brooklyn are synagogues one, the Beth Elohim, in Pearl street, of which the Rev. S. Moshe is the minister. Here the service is much more orthodox than that of the Temple Israel, and two days are observed instead of one, as in the radical reformed congregation. The other synagogue, that of Beth Israel, in Boerum place, has no stated minister. This is the old orthodox congregation, where all the old laws, ceremonies and customs of the faith are observed in divine service.

The proposal to amalgamate these three congregations originated some years ago and there have been two attempts made in former years to accomplish this much desired result. Committees were appointed on each occasion, but negotiations were broken off in consequence of the inability of the three congregations to agree upon a common ritual, as well as upon the forms and ceremonies which should be ab-



**UNION OF HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
A Movement to Consolidate the Three  
Synagogues in Brooklyn—The Rev.  
Dr. Chapman's Passover Sermon in  
the Temple Israel—The Outlook of  
Judaism—Local Centralization a Need  
of the Jewish Church in Brooklyn.**

In view of the proposed consolidation of the three Hebrew congregations in Brooklyn, as well as of the celebration of the Passover, which began on Sunday, the Rev. Dr. Chapman, minister of the Temple Israel, on Greene avenue, preached the following appropriate discourse from Ezekiel, xxxvi., 16:17: "Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel, his companions; then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand."

The festival, said Dr. Chapman, which we are met to celebrate, is not only in actual point of view, but also in reference to its great moral and spiritual influence, one of the most important in the Jewish calendar. The Passover commemorates the departure from Egypt. What pious sentiments, exalted conceptions and cheering associations does the return of this festival awaken in every true Jewish heart. Nearly 3,300 years have passed away since the renowned Hebrew leader and legislator was divinely charged to call this institution into existence, and wondrous to relate it has survived the long succession of revolutions to which mankind and their ideas and ordinances have been subjected. It has withstood what no human ordinance could have braved—the destructive and almost irresistible shock of time. To-day history takes us, as it were, by the hand and conducts us over a regularly ascending chronological line; and at what point soever we halt in our ascent, from the present year to the era of Moses, we are sure to light upon proofs of the almost uninterrupted annual solemnization of the Passover. But what gives to this historical fact its crowning point of interest and in-

vests it with the character of a standing miracle, is that while the recollection of every other occurrence of remote antiquity is merely preserved by some monument or at most by some local feature in the country where it took place, the events of Passover are to this day attested by living witnesses whose religious rites and observances, aye, the very language in which most of their prayers and thanksgivings are uttered, are similar to those which prevailed among the Hebrews on the miraculous night when the first Passover was inaugurated and on the morrow, when the Israelites shook off the dust of the capital of the Pharaohs and began their memorable march for Succoth. Every Israelite assembled this morning in our several places of worship bears a strong and an unimpedable testimony to the marvelous redemption which was wrought for his ancestors in Egypt. But the worship in the temple or synagogue, however important it may be in a ritual point of view, cannot denote the full and generous spirit of the Passover, since this institution is intimately connected with grand and holy purposes which tower high above all ceremonial observances. The return of this great Festival of Freedom should awaken us to a sense of the position we occupy in the moral and intellectual world, to our important vocation and great destiny. It should arouse us from our torpor, induce us to shake off our general indifference, enlighten us with the spirit of knowledge in accord with the civilization and institutions of our age and country and emancipate our minds from all sentiments and ideas of a contracted character, and thus attach us more and more to the pure principles of our ancient faith. Let us see then what we can do in this Passover that shall remove from us the reproach of indifference which seems to have taken hold of us. The advice given by the prophet Ezekiel in the text may serve to guide us, and to understand the passage properly it must be borne in mind that after the secession of the ten tribes in the reign of Rehoboam, the son and successor of Solomon, the name of Judah was given to the smaller kingdom, which consisted of that tribe, together with Benjamin and a small portion of Dan and Simeon, which had Jerusalem for its metropolis. The other kingdom (of which Samaria was the capital) was called Israel, and also Ephraim. The scope of the language of Ezekiel, which I have quoted as the text, is then to indicate the importance of that unity which best promotes peace and concord, whereby they become the three great supports of religion, and constitute its glory, beauty and strength. The illustration of the conjoined sticks was then intended to impress on the minds of the sordid people the evils of a separation of feeling and interests, and the solid advantages, material and spiritual, which would accrue were these differences healed between them. Were they united together, how strong and vigorous would they be in their political affairs, how potent for good in all that concerned the noble duties to which they had been divinely appointed! The lesson is beautiful. It is not without present applicability. No one possessing ordinary reasoning powers can fail to perceive that in all human labor individual efforts accomplish but little indeed. This is plainly the case in the material as well as in the intellectual world;

while, as a general rule, we have abundant proof that a union of powers is productive of the grandest and most stupendous results. From the greatest work of art to the smallest object of daily use or necessity, from the most marvelous monument of architectural achievement to the minutest mechanical implement, there is not a single thing which has not required the combined industry of several. No one man has been able to produce it. For the building of the house that shelters us from the tempest's blast, consider how multitudinous have been the handierasts, the toils and the skill to rear it. The very tools necessary to the work needed a hundred laborers, whether in preparing the wood or quarrying the stone, or even in extracting the iron ore from the bowels of the earth, and then smelting, forging and fashioning it into the various implements used in all operative arts. The very bread we eat has been the product of many laborers, all working to a common end, from the moment the farmer opened the soil, which he was enabled to do by the assistance of the "lusty steers," as

"There, unrefusing, to the harness'd yoke,  
They lend their shoulder and begin their toil,  
Cheered by the simple song and soaring lark."

Conjoined labor is thus a natural and a physical necessity, and anyone would be reckoned unwise who would refuse doing anything because by himself he could not accomplish everything, and it is in this spirit we are instructed by Rabbi Tarphon; "Thou is not incumbent on thee to finish the work, yet thou art not at liberty to divert thyself entirely of its performance." And in a religious sense the lesson of the text is no less applicable. Indeed, I believe it to be most earnestly and peculiarly our duty at this time to stand firm and united to withstand the infidelity which unblushingly and boldly confronts us. You are all aware of the destructive efforts made to impair the unity of Israel by present and prospective inroads on the vital principles of our faith. The marital relations, the integrity of our Biblical hopes—nay, the very covenant itself, which is declared by our recognized authorities "as the greatest of all the positive precepts," have been assailed, nor can we conceal from ourselves that these propositions are but the stepping stones to other and further ones which are openly propounded for action. Now, this position of affairs is a serious one. These are not questions of mere ritual or formulary on which there may be legitimate differences of opinion, as there always have been, and which have resulted in what we know as *Minhagim*. Liturgies and customs have never been uniform since the post-Palestinian period, and never will be. Nor is it at all necessary that they should be so, however desirable to a certain extent, for the omission or addition of a hymn or psalm, the transposition of a prayer, or the use of the vernacular, as a part of the ritual, which to this day exists in the various agenda, is sufficient to show that these have no influence on our religious cohesion. The sticks of Judah or Ephraim have remained together as one, though our legal authorities differ, in many points, and are replete with instances of varied customs in the interpretation and practice of our ritual, laws and ceremonies. But, my hearers, all these are trivial things and sink into insignificance beside the stupendous wrongs which are continually being perpetrated around and

among us. The question arises, "How are we to counteract these evils and bring about a better state of affairs, which will redound to our credit with our God and our fellow creatures?" The symbolism used in the text supplies the answer. It is by standing firm and united. Isolation has been practiced too much among us, and hence has arisen a powerlessness in America, which contrasts to our disadvantage with the cohesion which is displayed in Europe. By the union of American congregations a great step has been taken in the right direction. It has been a renewed testimony, offered to the world at large, that we prize and uphold the idea, cherished by us in its largest national sense—"Israel is the unit nation on earth." There is a fable in Esop which may serve as an illustration of the lesson I am enforcing. A husbandman who had a quarrelsome family, after having tried in vain to reconcile them by words, thought he might more readily prevail by an example. So he called his sons and bade them lay a bundle of sticks before him. Then, having tied them into a faggot, he told the lads, one after the other, to take it up and break it. They all tried, but tried in vain. Then, untying the faggot, he gave them the sticks to break, one by one. This they did with the greatest ease. Then said the father, "Thus you, my sons, as long as you remain united, are a match for all your enemies; but differ and separate and you are undone." Union is strength. Let us, then, be earnest in our efforts for union in Israel, and be prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder and foot to foot, ready for the great and sacred work. Then shall we have accomplished much for our holy religion and for ourselves; then shall our faith be strengthened and our foes from within and without be checked in their impious assaults on Judah; then shall charity, harmony and peace receive a new impetus under the guidance of truth and justice. "Then shall depart the envy of Ephraim, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not assail Ephraim" (Is. xi: 13); and to continue the metaphorical language of Scripture, as it is used in the text: "They shall be joined one to another into one stick and they shall become one in Thy hand." Amen.

# GOING TO UNITE

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## Beth Elohim and Temple Israel Congregations.

**Harmonizing Differences which Arose  
Years Ago—Entering Into the Spirit  
of the Age—Reform in Hebrew Wor-  
ship.**

Committees appointed by the congregations of Temple Israel and Beth Elohim are making a determined effort to bring about an agreement under which the two religious organizations can unite, thus settling differences which arose years ago, and which have existed ever since. In 1808 the members of Beth Elohim worshiped in a synagogue in Pearl street. Their devotions were strictly orthodox, no departure from true Oriental style being tolerated, the members wearing their hats, and the necessity for a union of Israel in the Holy Land standing in much greater relief than any idea of present welfare. Many of the more active members of the congregation desired such modifications of the forms of worship as would bring them into greater harmony with the spirit of the age. In other words, a party of progress and reform came into existence and the church was divided against itself. The reformers started Beth Israel and the conservatives sold the Pearl street edifice and purchased the State Street synagogue. Of the latter Rabbi William Sparger now has charge. He is a well built little gentleman of 25. He has dark hair, a pale face, a deliberate delivery and an air of determination. He is at the bottom of the movement to unite the two congregations. He thinks the idea of bringing about an immediate union of Israel in the Holy Land perhaps a trifle visionary, and under his administration Beth Elohim has become quite as progressive as Temple Israel. A few days ago he wrote a letter to the officers of the temple urging the advisability of a union and saying, among other things:

The sad fact cannot be denied that there is not such a religious conformity as there might, as there ought to exist, if there were a closer union for the support of our faith, than there is discoverable among the Israelites of our city. Let me not investigate now on which side the fault lies. The fact exists and the remedy is within our reach, a remedy which cannot fail of producing the happiest results. I appeal to you, gentlemen, is this deplorable condition of the Jewish congregational life in the third city in the Union, with such beautiful material to last forever, without willing hands to scatter abroad the seeds of unity and harmony? Your religion appeals to you, will we close our ears to her appeals?

The result of this overture was a meeting of the committees already alluded to. There are now no obstacles in the way except a difference as to what should be the name of the united organizations. The committees have agreed upon Beth Elohe Israel, but it is not at all probable that the members of Beth Elohim will indorse the selection.