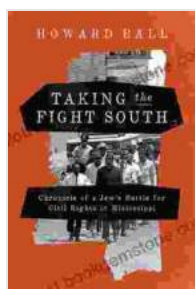


# A Chronicle of the Jewish Battle for Civil Rights in Mississippi: The Story of the Touro Synagogue

In the heart of downtown Jackson, Mississippi, stands a stately brick building that has witnessed some of the most pivotal moments in the American civil rights movement. The Touro Synagogue, founded in 1859, is the oldest synagogue in Mississippi and has played a central role in the fight for racial equality in the state.



## Taking the Fight South: Chronicle of a Jew's Battle for Civil Rights in Mississippi by Howard Ball

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 11527 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 284 pages



The synagogue was built by a small group of Jewish immigrants from Germany who had come to Mississippi to seek new opportunities. The congregation was small and struggled financially, but it was determined to create a place of worship where all Jews would be welcome.

In the early 20th century, the Touro Synagogue became a haven for African Americans who were seeking to escape the Jim Crow laws that enforced

racial segregation in the South. The synagogue's rabbi, Rabbi Morris Lichtenstein, was a strong supporter of civil rights and often spoke out against racial discrimination.

In 1954, the Touro Synagogue was one of the first synagogues in the South to desegregate its membership. This decision was met with resistance from some members of the congregation, but Rabbi Lichtenstein and the synagogue's board of trustees stood firm.

In the years that followed, the Touro Synagogue continued to be a center of activism for civil rights. The synagogue hosted meetings of the NAACP and other civil rights organizations, and its members participated in marches and protests against racial injustice.

In 1963, the Touro Synagogue was bombed by white supremacists. The bombing caused extensive damage to the building, but it did not deter the congregation from its commitment to civil rights.

The Touro Synagogue has been designated a National Historic Landmark and is now a museum that tells the story of the Jewish community in Mississippi and its role in the civil rights movement. The synagogue is a reminder of the courage and determination of those who fought for racial equality in the American South.

### **The Role of the Touro Synagogue in the Civil Rights Movement**

The Touro Synagogue played a vital role in the civil rights movement in Mississippi in several ways:

- It provided a safe haven for African Americans who were seeking to escape the Jim Crow laws.
- It was one of the first synagogues in the South to desegregate its membership.
- It hosted meetings of the NAACP and other civil rights organizations.
- Its members participated in marches and protests against racial injustice.
- It was bombed by white supremacists in 1963.

The Touro Synagogue's commitment to civil rights was a reflection of the Jewish community's values of social justice and equality. The synagogue's members believed that all people were created equal and that they had a responsibility to fight against racial discrimination.

The Touro Synagogue's legacy is one of courage, determination, and hope. It is a reminder of the power of ordinary people to make a difference in the world.

The Touro Synagogue is a symbol of the Jewish community's long and courageous struggle for civil rights in Mississippi. The synagogue's members have fought against racial discrimination and injustice for over a century, and their commitment to equality is an inspiration to us all.

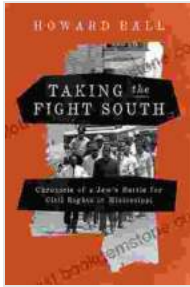
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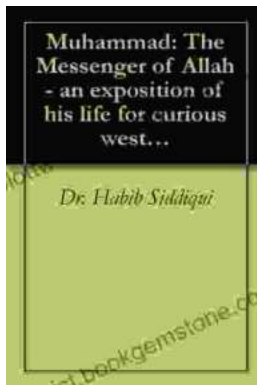
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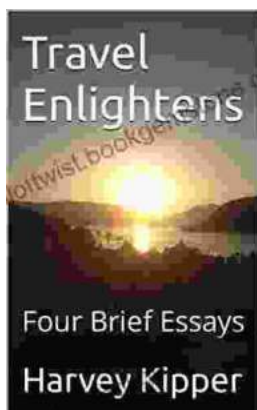


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