



INTERFAITH STUDIES

Rabbi Irwin Cutler of Dauphin Street Synagogue this week explained Jewish ceremonial objects at an interfaith study sponsored by Mobile's Jewish-Christian Dialogue organization. The rabbi is shown at the Holy Ark, the focal point of the synagogue which recalls the Holy of Holies, the focal point in the Jerusalem Temple, destroyed in the year 70. The curtain of the ark, shown pulled back in the photo, recalls the veil of the Jerusalem Temple which "separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the sanctuary," Cutler said. The rabbi is about to remove a covered Torah scroll which is kept in the ark and regularly removed during

Sabbath services and read. The Torah, the five books of Moses written on parchment, "is the holiest of our objects in the synagogue," said Cutler. The crown on the top of the Torah "symbolically represents the kingdom of God." The breastplate attached at the front of the Torah recalls the Bible story that "the breastplates the priests wore were the 12 stones, each representing a tribe," explained the rabbi. The next interfaith session will be Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Catholic Church, when Mobilians will learn about Catholic practices and symbols. (Mobile Press Register photo by Ron Wheeler)

Christians study symbolism of Jews



Rabbi Irwin Cutler of Dauphin Street Synagogue explained in a study session sponsored by the Mobile Jewish-Christian Dialogue group that the Jewish prayerbook, pictured above, is used by worshipers in services. The book opens from the back cover. The pages are numbered from the back to the front of the book. Hebrew, the language of worship, is read on a page from right to left. "Since the language itself is from right to left, so does our prayerbook actually go from the right inside," said the rabbi. In the photo at right, Rabbi Cutler explains that Jewish men wear prayer shawls during religious services. The fringes on the corners of each shawl are a reminder of a commandment in the biblical book of Numbers. According to this book, God commanded that the Hebrews make fringes on the corners of their garments as a reminder "to fulfill all my commandments and be consecrated to your God." The next interfaith study will be Thursday at 7:30 p.m. at All Saints' Episcopal Church.



(Mobile Press Register photos by Ron Wheeler)