Rav Judah stated in the name of Rav: “What is the meaning of the Scriptural text, ‘I will dwell in Thy house forever? Is it possible for one to dwell in two worlds?’ [The explanation is that] David said to the Holy One, blessed be God: “Sovereign of the Universe, may it be Thy will that a teaching may be spoken in my name in this world”. . . for R. Jochanan stated in the name of R. Simeon b. Yochai: “When a teaching is spoken in the name of its master, their lips move in the grave.”

Y’vamot 96b/97a

What you hold in your hands is something precious—teachings from some of the great scholars of our time, teachings from some of our wisest and most creative colleagues, teachings to engage and challenge, to inspire and delight. It is a gift I present with a heavy heart, for it has been brought to life only through the death of our beloved Rabbi Aaron Panken. How much better if this gift had never come to be, if instead the gift of Aaron Panken were still fully in this world, still fully among us.

But as we approach Aaron’s first yahrzeit, perhaps it is right to seek his presence in the Torah of his friends and his students—in the pages of this very special issue of the CCAR Journal. This issue is also graced by an insightful book review and a wonderful selection of poetry by established and emerging poets whose voices demonstrate that words indeed possess the power to move us between this world and one higher.

I am grateful to those whose teachings you are about to read, who have brought honor to Aaron’s memory—and blessing to us—with their contributions. May we continue to study and to teach, to engage and to question, to delight and to learn in Aaron’s name—that he continue to dwell in both worlds, that his lips move eternally in the grave.

Elaine Rose Glickman, Editor