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# the Shofar

השופר

September 1994

**FALL MEETING.** We have a very special evening planned for our next meeting, which will be held September 30 at the Salt Lake 12th ward meetinghouse (630 East 100 South, Salt Lake City), at 7:30 p.m. George Pace will be the speaker, talking about "The Lord's promises to the Jews." David Rona will sing and teach us Israeli folk songs. Afterwards there will be potluck refreshments; bring your favorite treats! We hope you all can make it, but for those who can't, Brother Pace's talk will be recorded, and tapes will be available at cost from Elissa Molling (224-5355). If you need, or are willing to provide, transportation, feel free to call Ed Motola at 322-2544 (if you're in Salt Lake).

**HEBREW LESSONS.** If you're interested in learning Hebrew, classes are being offered in both the Salt Lake and Utah valleys. If you live in Salt Lake, call Ed Motola at 322-2544; if you live in Utah Valley, call Elissa Molling at 224-5355.

Barbara Shpack will soon be moving. She has been very enthusiastic about Jewish genealogical research, and we thank her for all the good she's done. We will miss her.

Our new genealogy person will be Charles Smith. Brother Smith is of Polish-Jewish descent and has had success getting several members of his ward excited about doing Jewish genealogical work. We welcome him and wish him success in getting us to do our genealogy!

**BOOKS.** Elissa has only one more box of Cleon Skousen's Days of the Living Christ. Brother Skousen has agreed to let her sell them for \$10 instead of the usual \$18, so if

you're interested, give her a call at [ph.].

Lynne Motola has told us about a book by Margaret Zimmerman called Celebrate the Feasts. Ms. Zimmerman is a Jewish convert to Christianity who wanted her family to remember their special heritage. Her book tells about the Jewish feasts, how they point to Christ, and how properly to celebrate them. If you would like to know more, call Lynne at 322-2544.

**OUR TRIP TO RUSSIA.** I just returned from Russia and Ukraine at the end of August. David, my son, and I were there for twenty-two days touring, traveling by plane, train, and ship. We also visited Amsterdam, in the Netherlands. It was the most fascinating trip I've ever taken and very different than I had expected. We got to interact with the Russian people, young and old, aboard the ship and met many families in their homes. We had interpreters, but many spoke English and we learned some Russian.

The highlight for me was (visiting a synagogue in Odessa there were over 1 million Jews now there is about 40,000. Many went to the U.S. or Israel.) one evening three young girls came up to me (they heard me say I was from Utah, at one of our "getting to know you" sessions on the ship) that evening they noticed my CTR ring and came up to me and asked if I was a Mormon. They showed me their CTR rings. Kira, who spoke English, introduced herself and the other two girls from Kiev. We had a great time talking in my cabin for a long time.

Kira is a Jewish Russian Mormon. Her mom is translating the Book of Mormon into Ukrainian for the Church. There are over 1,200

Mormons in Kiev since the mission opened in 1991. Kira's mom took me to see the synagogue there, that's being remodeled, and the rabbi is from Brooklyn, N.Y.

Towards the end of the cruise we had a talent show, and Kira and the other members sang "I am a child of God" in Russian. A few of us members sang it in English, and we had a Spanish member sing it in his language. What a beautiful spirit was felt by the non-members who came from all over the U.S. and Russia.

Many of the members had Russian Book of Mormons to give out and they were very well-accepted wherever we went (one young man I gave a Book of Mormon to said, "Wait" and went to his car and gave me a beautiful pin with Jesus on it and said "Present for you!").

We visited the site in Kiev where over 100,000 Jews died by the Nazi's "Bobiyaar." We saw the pit the Jews were killed, and some buried alive, in. There is now a plaque in Hebrew as well as Russian and Ukrainian and a large menorah and statue in remembrance of them.

One village was expecting us to come, and served us all types of Russian food. They must have cooked all day, and each family took fifteen to twenty people for an exquisite meal--there were over one hundred of us. We gave gifts from the U.S. and cheered up little children at a hospital; some of us brought medical supplies for the hospital.

In Amsterdam I visited Ann Frank's home and saw how she lived for two years in hiding.

David and I will never forget this adventure we've had. I can't say enough on how wonderful the Russian people were to us; I've come to know and love my Russian and Ukrainian brothers and sisters.

See you all at our meeting in Salt Lake City. We are all children of our Heavenly Father.

Love, Elissa.

#### OUR TRIP TO HISTORICAL CHURCH SITES

Our family just visited Nauvoo, Carthage, the Sacred Grove, the Hill Cumorah, and Kirtland,

Ohio. We became aware of the beginnings of the Restored Church to the earth, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We were humbled by the great sacrifices our early members of the Church went through to build the Kingdom of God here upon the earth.

When Jesus was in Jerusalem, he established his own Church, the Church of Jesus Christ. He was the chief cornerstone and the twelve apostles were the foundation. I appreciate knowing Christ established His true Church on the earth.

Because of the wickedness of the people, our Savior was crucified and also his apostles were killed one by one. His church was taken from the earth. I feel grateful to know that after over 1,200 years of darkness, our Savior saw fit to establish his true Church through the Prophet Joseph Smith. At fourteen years of age, Joseph Smith sought out the Lord and asked Him which church to join. He was confused because every church he went to could never really answer his questions of where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going. When our Father in Heaven and the Savior came to our dear prophet, Joseph Smith, he found out all the answers to his questions. I felt a sacredness in the Sacred Grove (where Joseph first prayed), and felt a calm, serene spirit while watching the sun come through trees and while listening to the rustling of the wind and hearing the birds singing. I hope you can all visit there at least once in your lifetime!

I appreciated seeing the Hill Cumorah, where Joseph Smith received the golden plates from which he later translated the Book of Mormon. When my dad was alive, he told me that in 1922 he had the opportunity of participating in the first Hill Cumorah Conference-Pageant and [of being] the first Elder missionary to speak at it. He thrilled at that opportunity. Elvie Hyde Yancey was his name. Of course I was thrilled to see the place where my dad once talked.

I appreciate Joseph Smith loving the Lord and us so much that he lived every day for His Cause, usually daily experiencing great trials for what he had seen. I love the Prophet Joseph Smith for not being afraid of persecution for the Lord's and our sake. I love Hyrum Smith also for always being there for Joseph and helping him endure his trials--from the time Joseph's leg had to be operated on until he died with Joseph in the Carthage jail. I love Lucy Mack Smith (Joseph's mother), who stood by him and patiently endured the persecutions that happened to her family. What faith she had. I admire Emma's faith (Joseph's wife) and Mary Fielding Smith (Hyrum's wife), who pushed forward with strength and courage amidst great adversity. What a wonderful legacy we members of the Church have through these people! We should be the happiest people on earth because of what has been done for us by our early members and prophets!

When we returned home from our trip, I took my youngest boys to see the film "Legacy" at the Joseph Smith Building in Salt Lake City, that gives a fascinating seventy-minute film account of one family and the early Saints' trek west. I would hope all of you will see it. It is free to everyone and just ask for "Standby tickets" when you arrive there. Bring tissues.

After the experiences I had, I have a more humble and grateful heart for what our prophets and early Saints went through and my testimony has increased. I felt the spirits of Joseph and Hyrum Smith while visiting Carthage Jail. Instead of feeling a lot of sadness, I felt happy that they were men of highest character, who had become triumphant over this worldly world, and they were ready to enter Heaven and meet our Savior. I pray each of us will have the Spirit with us as Joseph and Hyrum did to be ready to meet our Savior. As we read the Book of Mormon daily, like Ezra Taft Benson has asked, and become temple worthy, as our present prophet

Howard W. Hunter has asked, we will have the spirit with us daily to support us through our trials and make us ready to meet our Lord.

Gwen Bardsley, Secretary.

#### MUSIC

Dear B'Nai Shalom,

Another six months have passed. Have you acquainted yourselves with some of the hymns you did not know before? Have you taken time to listen to some good music lately? Have you enjoyed watching some of the international championships in figure skating and ice dancing? Have you seen an opera, concert, or musical on PBS? Music is part of every aspect of our lives. It enriches our existence now, in the pre-existence, and after our resurrections. Like all truth and knowledge, music is eternal. Let us use it to praise our Heavenly Father forever.

Christina Heath

#### GENEALOGY

In the June 1994 issue of the Ensign, on page 75, was an announcement concerning a change in the name extraction program of the Church. Instead of only the stakes doing extraction work, the responsibility has now passed to the wards, to be done under the supervision of a "Ward Family Record Extraction Director." The records would then be transferred into FamilySearch. FamilySearch is the database into which the world looks when searching for their ancestors at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City or any of its branches throughout the world. The Jews are using FamilySearch as well.

Taking advantage of being the Family History Representative and being the descendent of a Polish Jew, I thought I would see if anyone in my own ward would be interested in extracting names from Polish-Jewish records. Nine people came forward. I was excited! Barbara Shpack then held a class for me in our Relief Society Room and showed us how to set up our own extraction program.

It was fun to watch the excitement on the faces of my ward members as they came to see that extracting names from Polish records was not that hard. "The names seem to jump off the page at you." So what appeared to completely unfathomable at first glance, became clear and "a piece of cake." The success they felt became infectious and they wanted to get started right away!

But I know this is only a beginning. It will take a long time for my ward to do a single roll and there are many, many rolls of Jewish records in the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. In fact, the Polish-Jewish records alone amount to over 1,000 rolls! In addition to this, the Church is photographing records in Russia and other parts of Eastern Europe that contain large amounts of Jewish records.

Let us get our own wards started in extracting Jewish records! Think what a great blessing it would be in helping Jews the world over to put together their own ancestral records. I know it would not take much imagination to visualize the effect we would have on the Jewish community, as we made these extracted records available to them. And more importantly, the influence we would have on the Jews would grow as they came to see, we also have a common bond of being descendants of Father Abraham.

Charles Curtis Smith

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