

# The Shofar

spring 1997

A Journal of Jewish Culture, History and Genealogy from a Latter-day Saint Prospective

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*The Shofar* is a publication of the B'nai Shalom.

The B'nai Shalom is an organization of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) of Jewish ancestry and others devoted to learning about their ancestors and cousins, the wonderful Jewish people, their culture, history and genealogy.

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## Announcements:

### April meeting:

Time again for our April Conference get-together which starts at 7:30 pm on Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup>. It will be held in Lehi in the chapel located at 200 North Center St. Please bring your families favorite pot-luck dish for sharing time.

Our speaker will be John Welch. He is the Co-Director of the Masada and Dead Sea Scroll Exhibition currently on display at Brigham Young University. He is also the founding director of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS).

[www.inconnect.com/chas/b'nai\\_shalom](http://www.inconnect.com/chas/b'nai_shalom)

B'nai Shalom is now on the World Wide Web! See page 4 of details.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I believe most of us have had the experience of making a phone call only to receive a busy signal. This can be of great concern in time of emergency. However, there is a call we can make where the other party is happy to receive our call at any time. This is our Father in Heaven. More important, He can help us.

This is especially true as we have been referred to Him by His son, Jesus Christ. This line is open and clear for our use at anytime. There are no charges for these long distance calls. Rather we may receive a credit. Our Father wants us to call frequently so He can help us. That is why His son gave His very life so that we could receive help, infinitely! The use of these calls makes for a happier as well as healthier life.

One call we need to make is in behalf of our love ones who have proceeded us and helped us get here. Another call is to help us locate other Jewish member who may find B'nai Shalom of help in brotherhood.

This conference we are most fortunate and grateful to have John W. Welch who is responsible for us having the Masada and Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit from Israel come here to speak to us.

Alfred Ostraff

# The Masada and Dead Scrolls Exhibit

John Welch was traveling in Israel two years ago when he first saw the Masada exhibit and was immediately convinced that it should come to BYU.

The good relations between the Hebrew University and the BYU Jerusalem Center was a major factor in allowing the exhibit to travel to the United States. This is the first time it has ever left Israel.

Take the opportunity to gain a personal dimension of learning about this ancient time. Visiting the exhibition will help patrons become a part of this ancient experience and gain a new empathy and understanding for these people of long ago.

Try to determine for yourselves who these people were. These people have been described as zealots, sicarii robbers, cowards and bandits. One man's robber is another man's hero. And don't discount the religious dimensions of these people's lives. These people generally served only one master and lived at Masada and believed in the survival of the soul over the flesh.

The artifacts at the exhibition

teach us about the daily life in the New Testament times. Looking at the wine jars may suggest to you the words of Christ speaking of not putting new wine into old containers. Keys will be on display which will help viewers to understand what Peter may have thought about when Jesus gave him the keys of the kingdom.

Brother Welch has posed for us a couple of questions we should think about before and during our visit to the exhibition. First: What kind of person was Herod? Herod had the reputation as a brutal man who killed many of his family members and political opponents, however he was also a incredible architect and politician who great enhanced the environment in ancient Israel. But Herod learned that no success in Rome could compensate for failure in the home!

Second: Where did Herod get the money to fund architectural expeditions? Revenues, taxes, rents, and monopolies helped to provide Herod with the massive funds required to execute his grand building expedition. Photographs of synagogues will be on display which can help patrons to imagine where Christ taught.

Accompanying the exhibit will be replications of some of the Dead Sea Scrolls. They are similar to the

replications which are on display at the Shrine of the Book at the Israeli Museum.

Brother Welch has produced the English edition of the Masada catalog which will have beautiful pictures and descriptive text explaining some of the artifacts more completely. A second manuscript, published by BYU Studies will detail artifacts found at Masada and how they relate to the world of the New Testament.

Tickets for the exhibition are on sale at the Marriott Center ticket office. Prices are \$6 for adults and \$4 for BYU students, employees and MOA members. The exhibition runs through September 30<sup>th</sup>

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A little background on our speaker Brother Welch: After studying history, the classics, philosophy, and law at BYU, Oxford and Duke University, he practiced law in Los Angeles.

The author of many books and articles about scriptural topics, he is now the Robert K. Thomas Professor of Law at the BYU law school.

He is married and has four children. He likes to ski, play racquetball, and says he thinks best when he is mowing the lawn.

## B,nai Shalom

LDS contacts with Judaism have led to an exchange of converts. Salt Lake's synagogue Kol Ami has been attended by some ex-Mormons. Perhaps a few hundred Jews have become Latter-day Saints. Like Evangelical Jews, most have continued to emphasize their Jewishness, and fellow Mormons have welcomed them and considered them "of Judah." Convert memoirs have appeared; for honesty and literary quality probably none surpasses Herbert Rona's Peace to a Jew. Jewish Mormons formed B'nai Shalom in 1967 to function as a support group and to facilitate genealogical research .Encyclopedia of Mormonism, Vol.4, WORLD RELIGIONS

## Time Line of History

If your curious about what happened to the Jews after Masada, study this historical time line from Adam down through history to the establishment of the State of Israel:

- 1700-1600....Patriarchal period: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his 12 sons.
- 1500-1400....Egyptian slavery.  
1300....Moses; Exodus; Entry into Canaan.
- 1200-1020....Judges.
- 1020- 928....United monarchy: Sual, David, Solomon.  
928- 721....Northern Kingdom, Israel.  
732....Israelites exiled for the first time.  
721....Fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.  
928- 586....Southern Kingdom, Judah.  
800- 600....Great prophets: Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.  
586....The fall of the Southern Kingdom of Judah; Destruction of the First Temple of Jerusalem; Babylonian Exile; the beginning of the Egyptian Diaspora.  
538....Edict of Cyrus; first group of exiles returns to Jerusalem.  
516....Completion of the Second Temple.  
458....Ezra arrives in Jerusalem.  
445....Nehemia arrives in Jerusalem.  
332....Palestine conquered by Alexander the Great. The beginnings of Jewish Hellenism and of the Diaspora in the Hellenistic world. Jews settle in Alexandria.
- 300- 200.... Translation of Bible into Greek (Septuagint).  
200....Jews settle in Italy  
165....Maccabean revolt in Palestine and rededication of the Temple. Hanukkah. The Hasmonean period. Emergence of the Pharisees. Sadducees and Essenes. The Sanhedrin
- 54-40 AD....The Jewish Temple in Leontopolis in Lower Egypt.  
40- 4 AD....Herod king of the Jews, vassal of Rome.  
20 BC-50 AD....Philo of Alexandria. Hellenistic Jewish philosopher
- 30- 33....Ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. The beginning of worship in synagogues
- 100- 200....Diaspora communities established in Asia Minor (area between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean), Parthia, Cyrenaica, Numidia, and Mauretania.  
66....Outbreak of the revolt against Rome, **Masada**  
70....Titus destroys Jerusalem and the Second Temple. Traditional date of the beginning of the second exile.
- 37- 103....Josephus Falvius, Hellenistic Jewish historian.  
132- 135....The revolt of Bar Kokhba.  
200....Rabbi Judah HaNasi compiles the Mishna.  
Abt. 425....Palestine (Jerusalem) Talmud completed.  
Abt. 500....The Babylonian Talmud completed.  
500- 600....Jewish kingdom in Himyar, Southern Arabia  
589-1038....Babylonian Gaonate and Talmudic academies of Sure and Pumbedita.  
635....Eastern Diaspora come under Muslim Arab rule.  
740- 965....The Jewish Khazar kingdom.  
Abt. 760....The Karaite schism.  
800....Earliest mention of Jews in the Caucasus; Possible arrival of Jews in India  
892- 942....Saadia Gaon, translated Bible into Arabic.  
900-1200....Golden Age in Muslim Spain.  
Abt. 1000....Rabbenu Gershomís synod in Mayence outlaws polygyny.  
1013-1103....Rabbi Isaac Alfasi, first codifier of Jewish law.  
1040-1105....Rashi of Troyes, greatest commentor of Bible and the Talmud.  
1096-1189....Crusaders massacre Jews.  
1135-1204....Maimonides, greatest of medieval Jewish philosophers, second codifier of Jewish law.  
1166-1171....Benjamin of Tudelaís travels in the Diaspora.  
1200....First references of Jews in Ethiopia.  
1194-1270....Nahmanides.  
1275-1286....Moses de Leon writes *Zohar* in Castile Spain.  
1290....Expulsion of the Jews from England.

- 1270-1340....Jacob ben Asher, third codifier of Jewish law.
- 1400s....The age of terror for West and Central European Jewry. The Jews are several times expelled from France and invited back again. They are expelled from German towns and then invited back. Intensification of Jewish migration to Eastern Europe.
- 1500s....Spanish Inquisition burns Jews on the stake.
- 1492....Expulsion of the Jews from Spain. The Sephardim begin to settle in Turkey, Greece, North Africa, Italy, Holland. Several Jews are among the crew of Columbus on his first voyage to America.
- 1525....David Reubeni, the pseudo-Messiah from Arabia appears in Italy.
- 1540....Jews expelled from Naples, Italy.
- 1569....Jews banished from the Papal States.
- 1600s....The Safed Kabbalists.
- 1488-1575....Rabbi Joseph Karo, mystic fourth and last codifier of Jewish law (the *Shulhan Arukh*).
- 1520-1572....Rabbi Moses Isserles of Cracow, annotator of the *Shulhan Arukh*.
- 1548....First Jews settle in America (Brazil).
- 1600-1800....The East European Talmudic academies (Yeshivot). The *Kahal* and the Jewish regional councils in Poland.
- 1648-1658....The Chmielnicki massacres in Poland.
- 1604-1657....Manasseh ben Israel, leader of Dutch Jewry.
- 1654....First Jewish group arrives in New Amsterdam (later New York).
- 1655....Jews are allowed to return to England.
- 1632-1677....Baruch (Benedictus) Spinoza.
- 1625-1675....Sabbatai Zvi, the pseudo-Messiah of Smyrna.
- 1740....Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov (1700-1760) begins to teach Hasidism.
- 1720-1797....Elijah, the Gaon of Vilna, opponent of Hasidism.
- 1729-1786....Moses Mendelssohn.
- late 1800s - 1900s....*Haskala*, the Jewish Enlightenment.
- 1806....Napoleon's Sanhedrin.
- 19th Century....Emancipation of the Jews in Europe.
- 1810....Beginnings of Reform Judaism.
- 1819....Beginnings of the Science of Judaism.
- 1794-1886....Leopold Zunz.
- 1870....The Cremieux Decree confers French citizenship upon Algerian Jews.
- 1882....Beginnings of the Hoveve Zion movement and the First Aliya to Palentine.
- 1891....Baron Maurice de Hirsch (1831-1896) establishes the Jewish Colonization Assoc.
- 1894-95....The Dreyfus Affair in Paris.
- 1896....Theodor Herzl (1860-1904) launches the Zionist movement.
- 1903....The Kishinev pogrom.
- 1904-14....Second Aliya to Palestine.
- 1917....Balfour Declaration.
- 1881-1943....3,500,000 Jews leave Europe, 2,550,000 them go to the United States of America.
- 1939-1945....The Nazi genocide: six million Jews die.
- 1948....Israel becomes independent.
- 1948-1966....1,231,023 Jews immigrate to Israel.

## [www.inconnect.com/chas/b'nai\\_shalom](http://www.inconnect.com/chas/b'nai_shalom)

Webmaster - Charles Smith

### B'nai Shalom now has a site on the Internet's World Wide Web.

Sometimes referred to the World Wide Wait, our URL number is written above. You can visit any time day or night. The site is still "under construction" but should be up and running by the middle of April.

You friendly "webmaster", has tried to have a selection of "links" to such Jewish sites that you might find interesting.

There are also links to LDS sites as well. I have also included sites that deal with Jewish Genealogy as well. You will be surprised at how many there are.

Out site will also included a date

base of writings by LDS church leaders on the Jewish people and prophecies about their future.

The site will be always undergoing changes and additions, so we hope you will visit often.

If you would like to contact to make comments or suggestions, you can contact B'nai Shalom at our E-mail address "chas@inconnect.com".

# There is a great affinity for the Jews by the Mormons

Statements by Ezra Taft Benson

There is a great affinity for the Jews by the Mormons. The Jews have endured great persecution and suffering. This we understand, for our people have also undergone severe persecution and extermination.

Indeed, the man we revere as a modern prophet, Joseph Smith, was martyred for his testimony in 1844. In 1846 our people had to leave the United States in exodus because of the threat of annihilation. We settled in a desert region similar to the topography around the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee. There we developed our "land of promise." Yes, we can empathize with the suffering of the Jews, for we have co-suffered with them. But our affinity toward modern Judah is not prompted out of mutual suffering; it is prompted out of a knowledge of our peculiar heritage. Jeremiah has prophesied that in the latter times, "the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together" (Jeremiah 3:18). (*This Nation Shall Endure*, p. 131.)

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From the very inception of this latter-day work, which claims to be a restoration of the covenants given by God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Church has had a deep interest in the remnant of the house of Israel, the descendants of Judah.

In 1836, the Saints completed their first temple at Kirtland, Ohio. In the dedicatory prayer offered on that occasion, Joseph Smith petitioned the "Lord God of Israel":

O Lord . . . thou knowest that thou hast a great love for the children of Jacob, who have been scattered upon the mountains for a long time. .

We therefore ask thee to have mercy upon the children of Jacob, that Jerusalem, from this hour, may begin to be redeemed.

And the yoke of bondage may begin to be broken off from the house of David.

And the children of Judah may begin to return to the lands which thou didst give to Abraham, their father. (D&C 109:60-64.) This was said during the Passover Season, 27 March 1836.

Before the Prophet was killed, he dispatched an Apostle by the name of Orson Hyde to dedicate the land of Palestine for the return of the Jews. This concern for a homeless people and the sending of this Apostle were done at a time when the Mormons themselves were virtually homeless, having been dispossessed of their lands and possessions in Missouri. Orson Hyde left on his assignment in the fall of 1840 and arrived in Palestine in October 1841. (*This Nation Shall Endure*, pp. 132-33.)

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The Prophet Joseph and the leaders of the Church sent Orson Hyde and John E. Page to dedicate the land of Palestine for the return of the Jews. Elder Page did not complete the journey but Elder Hyde went on and in 1841 he went atop the Mount of Olives and dedicated that land for the return of the Jews. It had been

predicted ten years before in a blessing upon his head that he would go. He was told that in due time he would go to Jerusalem the land of his fathers, because he was of Jewish extraction, and be a watchman on the tower in helping to bring about the gathering of dispersed Judah. The land was again dedicated by President George A. Smith in 1873. And so, we have been looking forward as Latter-day Saints for a hundred years, confidently expecting that in the Lord's own due time these prophecies made in the dedicatory prayers as well as in the scriptures would be fulfilled; and the promises made that this land would again become a fruitful land, that the sterility would be removed and the springs of living water would burst forth; that these too would be fulfilled. We knew that kings of the earth would be inspired to look with a friendly eye, as Brother Hyde prayed on that visit to the Holy Land, that the powers of the earth would look with a friendly eye upon the gathering of Judah. It was even mentioned that the nation of Great Britain would play a very important part in the gathering of Judah.

It was shortly after this dedication that the first organization sprang up, dedicated to the promotion of the return of the Jews to Palestine. And about this time also President Wilford Woodruff made his remarkable prophecy and statement regarding Judah when he said:

*The Lord has decreed that the Jews should be gathered from all the Gentile nations where they have been driven, into their own land . . . and this is the will of your great Elohim, O house of Judah, and whenever you*

shall be called upon to perform this work, the God of Israel will help you. You have a great future and destiny before you and you cannot avoid fulfilling it; you are the royal chosen seed, and the God of your father's house has kept you distinct as a nation for eighteen hundred years, under all the oppression of the whole Gentile world. You may not wait until you believe on Jesus of Nazareth but when you meet with Shiloh your king, you will know him; your destiny is marked out, you cannot avoid it.

Then he concludes by saying the time is not far distant when the rich men of the Jews will be called upon to use their abundant wealth to gather the dispersed of Judah and purchase the ancient dwelling places of their fathers in and about Jerusalem and rebuild the holy city and temple. ("The Jews Return to Palestine in Fulfillment of Prophecy," Washington D.C. Stake Conference, 3 March 1957.)

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Ben-Gurion and I discussed the Old Testament prophecies. I told him about some of the references to the reestablishment of the Jews in our book of Doctrine and Covenants (see D&C 77:15; 109:61-64). I mentioned that many years ago in Elder Hyde's prayer of dedication on the Mount of Olives, he prayed that the barrenness and sterility of the land would be removed, that springs of water would burst forth, that the land would become fruitful again, that the Lord would subdue their unbelief and "incline them to gather in upon this land." He also prayed that God would inspire the kings of the earth to help bring about the promises made to Judah.

Ben-Gurion was most interested in this account; he knew something about it already. I left, convinced that

he is a noble soul with a deep love for his people and a determination to give them faithful and courageous leadership.

In Israel I met hundreds of government officials, farmers, business and trade people and leaders in the professions. We drove by auto into rural and urban areas and flew in a small plane at low elevations over much of the country. We viewed such historic places (outside Jerusalem, which we covered thoroughly) as Nazareth, Jaffa, Cana, Mount Hermon, Mount Tabor, the Sea of Galilee, and Tiberias.

Obviously, great progress was being made in Israel -- more than in any country of the Middle East. Capital was flowing in, the population was growing rapidly both from the influx of people and from natural increase. This nation, in spite of its political problems, was rapidly becoming the leading industrial center of this entire politically unstable area.

The greatest advancements of all were being made in agriculture. The deserts and hills were blossoming, becoming green and productive again. (See Isaiah 35:1.) Hills on either side of Galilee, for generations denuded and eroded, were being covered with forest trees and citrus and olive groves. Already, Israel was exporting millions of boxes of citrus to northern Europe. Swampy areas were being converted into fish farms as a principal source of protein. A wide variety of crops adapted to dry and irrigation farming were producing abundantly. Israel was on the move. (*Crossfire: The Eight Years with Eisenhower*, pp. 368-70.)

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We need to know more about the Jews, and the Jews ought to know more about the Mormons. When we understand one another, perhaps we will understand why David

Ben-Gurion said to me on one of my visits to Tel Aviv, "There are no people in the world who understand the Jews like the Mormons."

Among the kindred doctrines of the Mormons and the Jews is our mutual belief in Jehovah, a God of revelation. We share a common belief in prophets. We hold a common commitment to the return of the Jews to the "land of Jerusalem," in fulfillment of the words of the ancient prophets. There are many other doctrinal and social similarities. (*This Nation Shall Endure*, p. 131.)

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The prophecies of so-called experts, of economists, of statesmen, of military people, have failed in the face of the prophecies which the Lord has made through His prophets regarding the future of the descendants of Judah and the future of that great nation, the great little country of Palestine. And a very interesting observation is the fact that these people, these Jewish people in Palestine, are virtually unanimous, I am told, in their feeling that the victory, the military victory of 1949, cannot be explained in any other terms except that it was a miracle.

May I refer to some of these prophecies briefly. There are many of them, not only regarding the dispersion of Judah and Israel but also the gathering. Jeremiah said: "Thus, saith the Lord of hosts; Behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil." Then he tells how they will be persecuted and driven, how they will become a hiss and a reproach "among all the nations whither I have driven them: Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the Lord, which I sent unto them by my servants, the prophets." (Jeremiah

29:17-19.) You remember the words recorded in Luke when the Lord predicted the fall of Jerusalem: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24.) This time of the Gentiles is being fulfilled and the prophecies regarding the reestablishment of Judah and Israel are likewise coming to pass. (*"The Jews Return to Palestine in Fulfillment of Prophecy," Washington D.C. Stake Conference, 3 March 1957.*)

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There is great conflict yet to come before the millennial reign, before the Christ comes. If you want to get some indication of just what this conflict will be, you may wish to turn to the fourteenth chapter of Zechariah and the eleventh chapter of the book of Revelation, which make it very clear that nations will be pitted against Judah; that there will be great wars, great conflict; that at least two prophets will be raised up among them; that they will make predictions before Christ comes. I have no doubt but what these prophets will be assigned by the leadership of the priesthood, because the Lord's house is a house of order. The gospel will be carried to the Jews and many of them will accept it. (*"The Jews Return to Palestine in Fulfillment of Prophecy," Washington D.C. Stake Conference, 3 March 1957.*)

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I was in Czechoslovakia just last Sunday (29 September 1946), meeting with a group of Saints. In speaking with President Wallace F. Toronto of that mission, he told me of some of the Jews leaving their former homelands. To some of them he said: "Why don't you stay here or stay in some other country? Why do you want to be moving to Palestine?" The answer he received was: "We don't know, except we have in our hearts an urge to go to the Holy Land." And they are going there by the thousands.

Elder Orson Hyde dedicated the land of Palestine for the return of the Jews and made great promises concerning their going there. The British nation is playing a great part in making these promises come true. General Allenby of the British forces, helped open that land for the return of the Jews in 1918. We know that the leaders of the nations do not fully realize why they are doing this, but we as Latter-day Saints know. It has been one of the missions that this great nation has had -- the bringing about of the return of the Jews to Palestine in fulfillment of the Bible prophecies that are very clearly made concerning this event. We know they will gather there. They will become a strong nation. They will have their wars with outside nations. They will have their prophets (Revelation 11). Christ will appear to them and the Mount of Olives will cleave in twain (Zechariah 14:4-5). The enemies of the Jews will be overcome as Christ appears to them and then they will

recognize for the first time that He is in very deed the long-looked-for King. Then they shall say, "What are these wounds in your hands and in your feet?" And He will answer: "These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." Then, for the first time, they will realize that He is Jesus the Christ whom they crucified. That is all revealed to us. Read the forty-fifth section of the Doctrine and Covenants. (*"I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go," Church News [23 September 1946]: 8.*)

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We look forward to the day of fulfillment of God's promise when "the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel" (Jeremiah 3:18). As one who, by special assignment, has been given authority in the house of Israel, I ask the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to bless my brethren of Judah and have mercy on them; that the land to which Judah has returned after a long night of dispersion shall be fruitful, prosperous, and become the envy of her neighbors; that the nation Israel shall be delivered from all her oppressors and enemies; that Judah will "draw water out of the wells of salvation" and fulfill all those prophecies that God declared through His prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah; and that "the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again." (Zechariah 2:12.) (*This Nation Shall Endure, pp. 141-42.*)

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## How many times has Palestine been dedicated to the return of the Jews?

The Prophet Joseph Smith sent Orson Hyde, an apostle, to Jerusalem, where in October 1841 he dedicated the land and prayed "for the gathering together of Judah's scattered remnants" (HC 4:456). Yet Palestine was subsequently rededicated for the Jews' return by several apostles in the Church: George A. Smith (1873), Francis M. Lyman (1902), James E. Talmage (1921), David O. McKay (1930), and John A. Widtsoe (1933).  
Encyclopedia of Mormonism, Vol.4, WORLD RELIGIONS

## Jewish Genealogy Research

The following paragraphs describe what Jewish records are known to exist in various countries and which ones are in the possession of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

### Austria

Before the 1918 boundary changes at the end of the First World War, the Austrian Empire included areas now located in the Czech Republic, Poland, Ukraine, Romania, Slovenia, Croatia, Italy and the Republic of Austria. Austrian Jews were required to keep vital records beginning in 1788, but few records exist before the 1830s and 1840s.

The Family History Library has only a few Jewish records from the area of Austrian Galicia (which is now part of Poland). However, the library has detailed maps and gazetteers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire on microfilm. They can help you locate the exact place in Austria from which your ancestors came and determine what country it is in now.

Some Jewish records and documents from Austria may have been deposited in institutions in Israel.

### Czech Republic and Slovakia

Czechoslovakia was created in 1918 from parts of Austro-Hungary, including the Czech speaking provinces of Bohemia and Moravia from Austria and the Slovak speaking northern counties of Hungary. In these areas, most records of Jewish births, marriages, and deaths date only from the early 1800s. During

the Second World War (1939-1945), Jewish records from throughout Bohemia and Moravia were centralized in the city of Prague. The Czech records have not been microfilmed by the Family History Library. Jewish records in Slovakia are presently being microfilmed along with church records. These records will be listed in the Family History Library Catalog as they become available. The records of both the Czech Republic and Slovakia are also readily accessible by correspondence.

If your ancestor was from the area formerly governed by Austria (Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia), write:  
*Czech Ministry of Interior and Environment*  
*Archivna Sprava*  
*Dr. Milday Horakove 133*  
*166 21 Praha 6*  
*Czech Republic*

If your ancestor was from the area formerly ruled by Hungary (Slovakia), write to:  
*Slovak Ministry of Interior and Environment*  
*Archivna Sprava*  
*Krizkova 7*  
*811 04 Bratislava*  
*Slovakia*

### Germany

The former German Empire is now divided between the Federal Republic of Germany, Poland, France, Denmark, Lithuania, and Russia. Civil registration of Jewish births, deaths and marriages began at various times in different parts of the empire. Many places began keeping records on Jews in the early and mid-nineteenth century, and some areas even before 1800. But registration was not consistent throughout Germany until 1874.

The Family History Library has

microfilmed many German Jewish records in Germany and in Poland, and is continually adding to the collection. For those areas not yet microfilmed, you may write to the local civil registration office. Further information about genealogical research in Germany is provided in the library is *German Research Outline* (Item #34061). Jewish documents and congregational records from some German communities may be available in institutions in Israel and the United States.

For Bavarian Jewish Records not available at the Family History Library, you can write to:  
*Landesverband der Israelitischen Kultus-gemeinden in Bayern*  
*Effnerstrasse 68*  
*D-81925 Muenchen 81*  
*Federal Republic of German*  
Jewish records of Wurttemberg contact:

*Israelitisches Religious*  
*Gemeinschaft Wurttemberg*  
*Hospitalstrasse 36*  
*D-70174 Stuttgart*  
*Federal Republic of Germany*

The German government conducted a census in 1938. Information on Non-Aryans (principally Jews) was extracted from the cities and put into a special supplement to the census. The Family History Library has acquired this census supplement on microfilm. See FHL fiche 6001716.

### Hungary

Modern Hungary is much smaller now than it was before the end of the First World War in 1918. The former kingdom of Hungary included areas now in Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Croatia, Yugoslavia (Serbia), and Austria. The Family History Library has filmed all

available Jewish vital records up to 1895 for localities now within the borders of modern Hungary. These include birth, marriage, and deaths records of individual Jewish communities. For records after 1895, contact the consulate of the Hungarian Republic. There are consulates in New York City and in Los Angeles.

Records up to 1910 are presently being microfilmed, but most are not yet available on microfilm. The Family History Library has also acquired the 1848 Jewish Census for several old Hungarian counties (FHL film 719823-719828), some of which are now in Slovakia and Poland.

#### **Poland**

Before 1918, Poland was divided among Austria, Russia, and German Prussia. After 1945 areas of eastern Poland became part of the Soviet Union. These areas are now part of Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania.

The earliest registration of Polish Jews was in the former Austrian territory of Galicia in 1787, but it was not enforced until the mid-nineteenth century.

The Duchy of Warsaw, which later constituted the Russian territory of Poland, began civil registration in 1808. At first, Jews were included in Catholic civil registers. After 1826, separate civil registers were kept for Jews.

In areas under Prussian rule, Jews were required to prepare transcripts of vital records beginning in the early 1800s.

The Family History Library has an extensive microfilm collection of Jewish vital records from Poland especially from the former Prussian and German areas of Poland, making it a significant resource for Jews with ancestry in these areas. The library

has microfilmed very few Jewish records from areas formerly ruled by Austria.

Polish records that have been microfilmed are generally available to 1875. You can obtain information regarding records not filmed and still in Poland by writing to the headquarters of the Polish State Archives:

*Naczelna Dyrekcja  
Archiwów Państwowych  
ul. Długa 6 s.p. 1005  
Warszawa, Poland*

#### **Russian Empire**

Many Jews trace some ancestral lines to areas which became part of the Soviet Union. The former Soviet Union included most of the historical Russian empire as well as about half of the former Austrian Galicia (which is now in Ukraine). A large part of the Russian empire with extensive Jewish population became part of the Republic of Poland in 1918, but in 1945 the eastern parts of Poland were ceded to the former Soviet republics of Ukraine and Byelorussia (Belarus). The Baltic republics of Lithuania and Latvia also include territory which was heavily populated by Jews.

The record keeping of Jews in Russia was inconsistent: in some areas, Jewish birth, marriages, and deaths were recorded as early as the first decades of the 1800s; other areas started much later or not at all. In many cases, Jews avoided keeping records that might later be used against them. The records kept were not always accurate or complete. Prior to 1918, the Russian Empire had not clearly established government offices to keep vital records. After the 1918 Russian revolution, births, marriages, and deaths were registered in local offices of the USSR Ministry of Internal

Affairs. The vital records that were kept have been preserved in Soviet archives and, until only recently, were totally inaccessible.

The Family History Library is now acquiring records from the republics of Russia, Belarus (Byelorussia), Ukraine, Lithuania, Estonia, Moldova, and Armenia. The intent is to acquire record of all religious and ethnic groups, but it may be several years before substantial number of Jewish vital records are available. To determine whether the records of any specific place have been microfilmed, use the Family History Library Catalog. Records are NOT available until they appear there!

The records of the Republics of Russia, Byelorussia (Belarus), and Ukraine are now accessible through the services of the Russian-American Genealogical Archive Service (RAGAS):

*Russian-American Genealogical  
Archive Service  
1929 18th Street, NW Suite 1112  
Washington, DC 20009*

Several other groups offer genealogical services in the former Soviet Union. Several of these groups are discussed or advertise their services on the pages of Jewish genealogical society newsletters and *Avotaynu: the International Review of Jewish Genealogy*. Their address is PO Box 900 Teaneck, NJ 07666.

Some Jewish researchers have reported success in getting information on their ancestors by writing directly to various local archives in the republic which now controls the area their ancestor came from.

More countries will be discussed in the next issue of *The Shofar*.

# MUSIC AND CELEBRATION

by Christina Heath

Over the millennia, the organ, the harp, as well as the timbrel, took on more sophisticated forms, with the help of the developing technology.

However, from the Scriptures, we can see that these instruments have always been. We are so fortunate as Latter-day Saints to have the Scriptures! They teach us all the things we need to know about Heavenly Father, His Son, and the Holy Ghost. They also teach us many other subjects that are important to us, among them, music.

Early in the Bible, in Genesis 4:21, it takes about Jubal; he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. In Genesis 31:27, we read about Jacob, who stole away secretly from Laban, who wanted to send him off with mirth, and with songs, with the tablet, and with the harp. Exodus 15:20 says: *And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.* There are

many, many more references to music in the Scriptures, used both in religious ways and in secular ways.

In just these three verses, there are several instruments mentioned: the harp, the organ, the tabret, and the timbrel. The earliest form of the harp may have been suggested by the stretched string of the bow. The addition of several strings would be analogous to binding several reeds or whistles together to form a syrinx, or early form of the organ, or Panis flute. Originally, each string and each pipe produced only one tone, depending on the length of the string or the pipe.

Later, holes were made in the pipes, enabling one pipe to form several tones, and one string could be made to sound different tones by the shortening to different lengths by the finger. The tabret is an old word for the drum or tambourine, as is the timbrel. It consists of a shallow ring of wood covered on one side with skin and struck with the fingers or the hand. Since the origin of the instrument, sometimes little bells or metal discs, called jingles were attached, or a cord of catgut was stretched across the parchment head

to produce different sounds. Under the Hebrew name Tof it was presumably the instrument used by Miriam and her maidens to celebrate Israel's triumph over the Egyptian foe.

Important in the celebrating of special occasions, such as the farewell Laban had wanted to give Jacob, and the victory over the enemies of the church. Today, we celebrate the opening and the closing of our meetings by joining in hymns, and the sacrament is celebrated by a hymn specially written to help us remind ourselves of its meaning, and the covenants we take upon ourselves. We sing special hymns for Christmas, the birth of the Messiah, our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, and for Easter, remembering His sacrifice for us, so we can return to our Heavenly Father. At Thanksgiving, we think of the many blessings He has given us, by singing hymns. At baptisms, and in Primary, we sing songs. We teach our children about the Gospel through the words of songs, and at funeral we sing o remember what is in store for us in the next life, and to send off our dear relatives and friends whom we will meet again at a later time.

## Did You Hear the One About.....

Dr. Albert Einstein, the most eminent physicist and mathematician the world has ever know, was on the podium explaining the rudiments of time-space calculations to an audience of graduating students and guest.

In the back row, setting next to their son who had just received his

diploma, were Mr. and Mrs. Meyers, ten years removed from their tiny *shtetl* in Russia. They watched with rapt if uncomprehending attention as Dr. Einstein illustrated his comments on a huge backboard.

"The theory has been advanced," said the great scientist, "that the neatest habitable star is four light

years from Earth."

"So what is four years?" whispered Mr. Meyers, *sotto voce*.

His embarrassed son silenced his with a fierce, "shhh!"

Dr. Einstein continued: "There are 60 seconds in a minute and 60 minutes in an hour."

"This guy Einstein get paid for

such information?", demanded Mr. Meyers.

His wife gave him a wifely elbow to his ribs. "Sharrop already, you're disturbing the people."

"In a 24-hour day there are 86,400 seconds," Einstein went on, chalk-marking the blackboard with figures. "Multiply that by 365, the number of days in 12 months, and we arrive at a total of 31,536,000 seconds in a year."

"Big deal!" muttered Mr. Meyers.

"Now then, we enter the realm of astronomy," the scientist further explained. "Light travels at a speed of 186,000 miles per second. If we multiply that figure by 31,536,000, the number of seconds in a year, we find that the resultant number of miles, 5,865,676,000, represents one light year. And as the nearest habitable star is four lights away, we know it would take us 23,462,704,000 seconds to get there, providing we are traveling at a speed of 186,000 miles a second."

"Who has gas for such a trip?" asked Mrs. Meyers.

Mr. Meyers nodded. "The fare alone would set me back a whole

year's wages."

Dr. Einstein now concluded his address:

"In other words, ladies and gentlemen, relating those four light years to our own measurement of item, it would take us 744 years to reach another planet on which human beings could survive."

"I should live so long," commented Mr. Meyers.

"Maybe this Einstein doesn't like it in this country," surmised Mrs. Meyers, "so he's thinking *efsher* he'll emigrate."

Their son, who had been shushing them throughout the scientist's discourse, could no longer contain his irritation.

"What's the matter with you two? Have you got something against the great Einstein?"

His mother stared at him in surprise.

"Why should I have anything against him? He did me something? Personally, I think he writes very good on the blackboards"

"Well, I have something against him!" snapped Mr. Meyers. "Here he's standing up on the stage and he's directing us like he's a traffic cop to a

place that's a billion-shmillion miles away. But only an hour ago your great Einstein stopped me in the hall and asked me direction to the men's room!

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An outstanding Jewish hero of the American Revolutionary War was Benjamin Nones. He emigrated to the New World from France in 1776, and immediately enlisted in the Colonial Army. Cited for gallant action by General Washington, Nones became a major and commanded a company of 400 men, many of whom were also Jewish.

But we are concerned here with Major Nones' piquant sense of humor. During the time of the French Revolution, when the months in France were named Thermidor, Floreal, Novise and so forth, Nones decided that it would not be a bad idea to make a few such changes in America as well. He suggested the *Chanukah* and Christmas be consolidated *Chanukmas*; *Yom Kippur* and Thanksgiving Day be united as *Yomthanks*; and Passover and Waterloo be known as *Passwater*.

## B'nai Shalom Mission Statement

MEMBERSHIP IN B'NAI SHALOM is open to all members of the Church of JESUS CHRIST of Latter-day Saints interested in promoting the objectives of the Organization, whether or not such persons are of Jewish ancestry.

Objectives of this organization shall be carried on within the framework of existing LDS. programs and as follows:

- A. To promote the faith and activity of Jewish members in the Church
- B. To encourage, assist and promote Jewish genealogical research and Temple work among the House of Israel.
- C. To promote greater understanding of Jewish culture, language, traditions and attitudes through an

organized educational program

- D. To offer assistance in all authorized LDS Church programs oriented towards Jewish peoples.
- E. To engage in other activities deemed appropriate in carrying out the objectives of the organization

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