

## President's Message

*Shalom Aleichem,, members!*

We welcome you to this Fall 2016 gathering ejournal!

.At the eve of our 50th Jubilee year we celebrate B'nai Shalom's long life and dedication to the visions of our founders and first members in 1967—68: Harry Glick, Jerry Horowitz, Jerry Kidd, Sylvia Linford, the Molling family, Dan Rona. *We currently have over one thousand members world-wide.*

Our presidency and Board strive to continue to present speakers, entertainment in a family atmosphere for our membership. Please let us know your suggestions, your ideas, your criticisms. Our pleasure is your happiness.

We will be video recording our gatherings beginning this year, so our members can electronically experience the events of these gatherings. Those who can access YouTube will be able to see those recordings soon after the gatherings. See:

Bnai Shalom (Mormons and Jews) YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCk5H501spuwcksU-V1ncnxw/videos>

I welcome contributions from our members for this ejournal. Have a wonderful story to share? Let me know. Email me: [president@mormonsandjews.org](mailto:president@mormonsandjews.org) with your inspirational stories! This issue contains selected articles and stories I hope you will find relevant to your lives as Jews and Mormons.

Please help B'nai Shalom to grow. Tell your friends. Bring a generous food offering to share with others. Chicken, bagels and shmears always provided.

*Marlena Tanya Muchnick-Baker*

### News from our Seattle group:

Our Seattle group is growing and gaining many members who are talented in music. We are looking for a dance teacher to lead us in Hebrew dances! Anyone interested in applying, please contact: [president@mormonsandjews.org](mailto:president@mormonsandjews.org).

This October we have invited the popular speaker Dave LeFevre to address us on the topic of Jeremiah. He will examine many aspects of the early prophet's life and teachings. Our gathering will be held in the spacious Bellevue South Stake center just behind the Seattle temple in Bellevue, WA. For details: [www.mormonsandjews.org](http://www.mormonsandjews.org). We expect the gathering to be video recorded and available on YouTube at a later date.

Our singer this October will be Jim Howton. He will be accompanied by Teah and David Akrish and others. We will see you there! Tell your friends about our gatherings in Seattle

*See you all at the gatherings!! Shalom!*

**More information on gatherings, Seattle and Utah:**

<http://www.mormonsandjews.org/events/>



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### IN THIS ISSUE

2. **Elissa Molling's 1994 Trip to Russia**
3. **Gwen Bardsley 1994: "I Appreciate Joseph Smith"**
4. **Jubilee Year**
6. **WA State Jewish Heritage**
7. **A Guiding Light to Jew and Gentile: B'nai Shalom**
- 9; **What Thank They the Jews: Judah and Antisemitism**
11. **Genealogy—Cluster Research—F.A.N.**
13. **Mission Statement**





## A Page From the History of "The Shofar"

### Our Trip To Russia

By Elissa Molling, Founding member

***Reprinted from the September 1994 edition of The Shofar***

I just returned from Russia and Ukraine at the end of August. My son David 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 where there had been over 1 million Jews now there are 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). They had noticed my CTR ring 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.

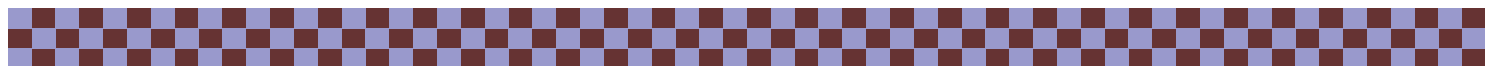
Kira is a Jewish Russian Mormon. Her mom is translating the Book of Mormon into Ukrainian for the Church. There are over 1,200 Mormons in Kiev since the mission opened in 1991. Kira's mom took me to see the synagogue there which is being remodeled; the rabbi is from Brooklyn, N.Y.

Towards the end of the cruise we had a talent show. *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 "Bobiyar." We saw the pit in which the Jews were killed and some buried alive. 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.





***Our Trip To Russia (continued)***

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. "

**END**

**I Appreciate Joseph Smith**

***By Gwen Bardsley (from the 1994 Shofar; she was secretary)***

"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!

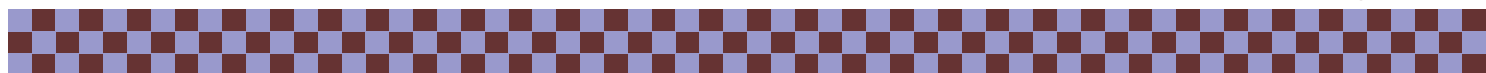
"When we returned home from our trip, I took my youngest boys to see the film "Legacy" at the Joseph Smith Building in Salt Lake City, that gives a fascinating seventy minute film account of one family and the early Saints' trek west. I would hope all of you will see it. It is free to everyone and just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

**END**

***Every man is an instrument and his life is a melody.*** Therefore, the Torah provides us good advice: Love the L-rd your G-d. The name for L-rd [YHVH] is a name of compassion, while the name for G-d [Elokim] is one of strict judgment. So the statement means that through your act of love, accepting suffering with joy, you draw close G-d's name of judgment to His name of compassion, as the body is drawn close to the soul, allowing its light to shine. **(Baal Shem Tov, Tzaddik rabbi 1760)**

Meditate on this. How delightful are the words of the wise!



### ***The Jubilee Year***

In the Book of Leviticus, a Jubilee year is mentioned to occur every fiftieth year, during which slaves and prisoners would be freed, debts would be forgiven and the mercies of God would be particularly manifest.

*Leviticus 25:10: And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you, and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.*

*11: A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which growth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.*

*12: For it is the jubilee: it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.*

*13: In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession.*

*14: And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbor, or buyest ought of thy neighbor's hand, ye shall not oppress one another.*

The fiftieth year follows the last year of seven Sabbatical cycles. During it, the land regulations of the Sabbatical year are to be observed, as is also the commandment in verse 10. This indicates a compulsory restoration of hereditary properties to the original owners or their legal heirs, and the emancipation of all Hebrew servants whose term of six years is unexpired or who refuse to leave their masters when the term of service has expired. (Gen. 18:6).

But technically the Talmud distinguishes the Sabbatical year for the release of quit-claim of loans in distinction of loans of land.

Following the end of the fiftieth year, the next 49-year cycle is again begun. The integrity of the seven-year Sabbatical cycle depends on the larger 50 year cycle. The fiftieth is really a hiatus from the 7-year cycles by declaring a rest from those obligations.

According to Rabbi Baruch S. Davidson, the Jubilee year is currently not observed or commemorated. There are several complex reasons for this.

- 1) The Jubilee year is only observed in Israel when all 12 tribes of the Jewish nation are living there.
- 2) The Jubilee year can only be observed when every tribe is living on the specific part of the land which was allotted when the Land of Israel was divided. However, some have opinions that the Jubilee is observed as long as there is a partial representation of each tribe, even if most of the tribe is not in Israel.

***The Jubilee Year*** (Continued from page 4)

- 3) In the 6th century before Christ, the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel and sent the majority of its population into exile. Those who were deported are historically known as the Ten Lost Tribes. We are certain that before that point in time the Jubilee was regularly observed. Also, with the destruction of the Second Temple and the disbandment of the Sanhedrin, the Jubilee was not marked in any form.
- 4) The last time there was a biblical requirement to observe the Jubilee was about 150 years before the destruction of the First Temple. So technically the Jubilee year is not designated or observed. Essentially, it only affected the shemittah cycle when the shemittah was established and declared the by the Sanhedrin, as opposed to today when it is automatically programmed into the perpetual Jewish calendar.
- 5) The observance of shemittah today is only a rabbinic decree, and therefore the Jubilee year does not affect its cycle. Then also, no commemoration is in order when there is no Sanhedrin, whose participation in the declaration of the Jubilee was integral. It was the sounding of the Shofar on Yom Kippur that announced the beginning of the Jubilee year.

Josephus, in his monumental work on the history of the Jewish people, discusses historical events that occurred during Jubilee years, such as Antiochus' besieging of Jerusalem's Temple. In Herod the Great's thirteenth year of rule there was famine and a corresponding pestilence, the worst since the time of King Ahab. It occurred in a Jubilee year.

In America, the Liberty Bell, initially cast in 1752 is an iconic symbol of American independence. The bell's first inscribed line quotes part of the verse found in the King James Bible version of Leviticus 13:10, which mentions the Jubilee.

Currently, the earth may be in a 70-week Jubilee year, begun on Purim on March 20, 2015 with the total Solar Eclipse—and ending on the Jewish Feast of Sukkot on October 17, 2016.

The main ideas of a Jubilee period reflect the biblical principles of liberty and blessings as well as judgment.

*Various sources contributed to this article.*

## Washington State's Jewish Heritage

by Craig Degginger

*From Jewish Genealogical Society of Washington State Archives*

Who are the Jews of Washington state? First off, there are about 40,000 of us. We say "about," because the precise numbers are a bit sketchy. The last major demographic study conducted by the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle, in 1990, showed there were an estimated 30,000 Jews in the greater Seattle area. Since then, there has been a continuing influx of newcomers, and that number is believed to have swelled to approximately 35,000. Add the estimated 5,000 Jews in the rest of the state, and we come to "about" 40,000.

But who was Jew number one? The first Jews, generally of German descent, settled in the Tacoma and Olympia area about the same time as the future State of Washington achieved territorial status in 1853.

Although Washington state has never had a Jewish governor, Washington territory did in 1870, with the appointment of Edward Salomon. The first Jewish organization, the Hebrew Benevolent Society of Puget Sound, was founded in Olympia in 1873, and the Jewish cemetery in that city dates to that time.

The first permanent Jewish settlers arrived in the village of Seattle in the 1860s, and by 1885 there were perhaps 100 Jewish families. Bailey Gatzert, the city's only Jewish mayor, was elected in 1876.

Many of Seattle's Eastern European Jews peddled wares, collected junk, worked as tailors or jewelers or owned second-hand stores. Jews had also migrated to Eastern Washington by this time. The town of Marcus, Washington was named for Jewish merchant B. Marcus Oppenheimer. The first High Holy Day services were held in Spokane in 1885. Jews from Poland and Russia made up the next wave of migration to Washington, fleeing poverty and violent anti-Semitism between 1880 and World War I. Sending for more relatives to join them in a new land, they made up the bulk of Seattle's 4,500 Jews in 1910.

The first synagogue in Seattle was Ohaveth Sholom (Lovers of Peace), begun in 1889, but internal disputes over religious practices led to its downfall in 1896.

Traditional Orthodox Jews founded Bikur Cholim Congregation, and Reform Jews founded Temple De Hirsch.

The first Sephardic Jews—those who came from Turkey and the Isle of Rhodes and who spoke a unique language called Ladino—landed in Seattle in 1902. Expelled from Spain in 1492, now they fled the Ottoman Empire. The early Sephardim peddled fish and fruit. They joined their Ashkenazi brethren in living in the Yesler Way/Cherry Street neighborhood of central Seattle.

## **A Guiding Light to the Jew and Gentile**

**2 Nephi 29:5** *"O ye Gentiles, have ye remembered the Jews, mine ancient covenant people? Nay; but ye have cursed them, and have hated them, and have not sought to recover them. But behold, I will return all these things upon your own heads; for I the Lord have not forgotten my people."*

The membership of B'nai Shalom, Children of Peace, Org. believes they are the covenant people of the present dispensation; the spiritual descendants of the Jews, God's first covenant people – and heirs to the promises through membership in the Church. They are a bridge between present and past

How does 2 Nephi 29 fit into this picture? The Lord tells us he remembers the covenants he made with the Jews; he will recover them again. We read his promise in another sacred scripture – The Book of Mormon. He reminds us of the promises made by ancient prophets foretelling the future of the House of Israel. He tells us the Gentiles will reject the Book of Mormon, but Jews are his ancient covenant people who produced the Bible. He speaks of the Gentiles who have forgotten the Jews – they have "cursed them and hated them" (verse 5). The Restored Gospel is an ensign to all nations.

The seminal part of 2 Nephi 29 is based on the Lord's words spoken through the Hebrew prophet Nephi *"... the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, that I remember one nation like unto another? ... And when the two nations shall run together the testimony of two nations shall run together also."*

He tells us the Bible does not contain all his words. He speaks to the Nephites and the Jews - they shall have each other's words. God shall gather the house of Israel (12 tribes) home to the lands of their possessions. He will remember his "seed" forever as he seals the covenant he made with Abraham.

The Bible joined with the Book of Mormon is that prophetic testimony – the bridge between the families of Israel. Jew and Gentile are brethren separated through wars and purges. They must be reunited and invited to feast at the Lord's table.

### **Similarities and Connections Between Judaism and LDS**

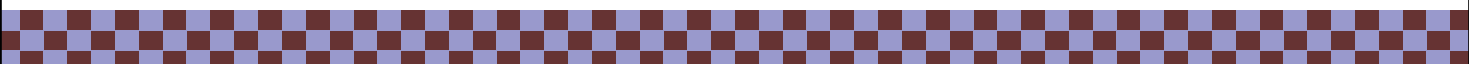
Jews and Mormons are members of the twelve families of Israel  
Both are under the Abrahamic Covenant  
Both called Covenant Israel because the blood of Israel is in their veins  
Both worship the same Heavenly Father  
Both are holders of holy ancient priesthoods  
Both believe in angels, holy and unholy visitations  
Both believe in the idea and reality of a Messianic figure  
Both believe in sacrifice as atonement for sin  
Both believe in the Ten Commandments as given to Moses  
Both believe in a kingdom of priests and a holy nation

### **Guiding Light: To the Jew and Gentile** (Continued from page 7)

Both are holders of holy ancient priesthoods  
Both believe in angels, holy and unholy visitations  
Both believe in the idea and reality of a Messianic figure  
Both believe in sacrifice as atonement for sin  
Both believe in Old Testament (Torah) prophets, revelations from God  
Both believe the Mashiah will be a descendant of Davidic line  
Both believe in temples. The synagogue is a type of temple  
Both believe in prayer, sacred religious rituals and consecrated behaviors  
Both practice a form of baptism, anointing, laying on of hands  
Both believe in giving aid, monetary assistance and other charity to those in need  
Both believe in a pre-mortal life and an afterlife  
LDS believe Elijah has returned. Jews believe he will return on the Passover  
Neither religion sees death as tragedy  
Both believe in the eventual redemption of the dead  
Both believe in eventual resurrection of the dead  
Both believe in the End Days theories that will bring peace and joy  
Both have general knowledge or interest in scripture learning, reading, quoting  
Members encouraged to study, learn and achieve in both religions  
Both cultures believe in marrying inside their religion and culture  
Both believe in an Adversary and his evil influences,  
Both believe that good overcomes evil  
Both have acknowledgement of mysteries of creation beyond human knowledge  
Both societies have undergone religious persecution, exodus, re-settlement for believers  
Both religions believe that God will personally reign upon the earth (Jews: Elohim) (LDS: Christ)

## Connections

1. Former and latter-day prophets have used the Urim and Thummim
2. The Jewish Tanakh scriptures have parallels and similarities to the LDS "quad" in subject matter, wisdom, purpose
3. LDS temple ordinances, symbols are based upon sacred Israelite rites and practices
4. Belief in revelation and prophecy available to anyone (Jews: rabbis exert powerful but limited influence)
5. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints based upon Mosaic Law as given to Moses
6. Jews know their Messiah will come. He will be a Jew. LDS know that the Savior has come and is Jesus Christ
7. Book of Mormon prophets are descendants of Hebrew prophets, although the Jewish people are unaware of it.
8. Jews pray for peace and redemption of Israel to Jerusalem





**"What Thank They The Jews"? (2 Nephi 29:4):  
A Note On The Name "Judah" and Antisemitism**

By Matthew L. Bowen

(Portion extracted from Interpreter Article: See <http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/what-thank-they-the-jews-2-nephi-294-a-note-on-the-name-judah-and-antisemitism/#sdfootnote16sym>. Citations removed)

"The Hebrew Bible explains the meaning of the personal and tribal name "*Judah*"—from which the term "*Jews*" derives—in terms of "praising" or "thanking" (\*ydy/ydh). In other words, the "*Jews*" are those who are to be "praised out of a feeling of gratitude." This has important implications for the Lord's words to Nephi regarding Gentile ingratitude and anti-Semitism: "*And what thank they the Jews for the Bible which they receive from them?*" (2 Nephi 29:4).

Gentile Christian antisemitism, like the concomitant doctrine of supersessionism, can be traced (in part) to widespread misunderstanding and misapplication of Paul's words regarding Jews and "*praise*" (Romans 2:28-29).

Moreover, the strongest scriptural warnings against antisemitism are to be found in the Book of Mormon, which also offers the reassurance that the Jews are still "mine ancient covenant people" (2 Nephi 29:4-5) and testifies of the Lord's love and special concern for them.

"Despite the horrors of World War II, the Holocaust, and the resultant deaths of tens of millions including approximately six million Jews, the last several decades have seen a resurgence of virulent antisemitism.

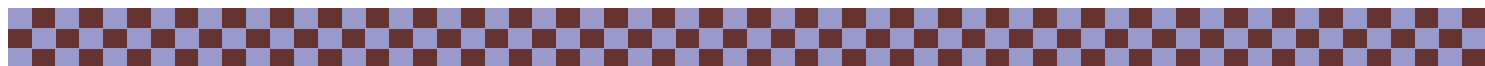
The strongest scriptural warnings against antisemitism come from the Book of Mormon.<sup>2</sup> Since the Book of Mormon "was written for our day":cf. Mormon 8:35), I do not believe this to be a coincidence.

"The Book of Mormon not only manifests the Lord's love and special concern for the Jews, but also an awareness of the traditional meaning of the name "*Judah*" ("*praise*," i.e., one who is to be "*thanked*") and the derived gentilic designation "*Jews*" as those who are to be "*praised*" or "*thanked*."

In this article I wish to examine several passages in the Book of Mormon in which the connotation of "*Judah*" and "*Jews*" as those who are to be "*praised*" or "*thanked*" appears to be relevant, including a direct wordplay on "*Jews*" in 2 Nephi 29:4, and awareness of the meaning of this term in 2 Nephi 33:14 and 3 Nephi 29:8.

To contextualize these passages, I will first examine a pair of Genesis texts which etiologize<sup>4</sup> "*Judah*" and "*Jews*" in terms of the verb \*ydy (or \*ydh, to "*praise*," "*thank*," or "*acknowledge*").

Next, I will examine Paul's wordplay on "*Jews*" in terms of *praise*," after which I will examine the relevant Book of Mormon passages.





**"What Thank They The Jews"? - Continued**

"Thy Brethren Shall *Thank* Thee"

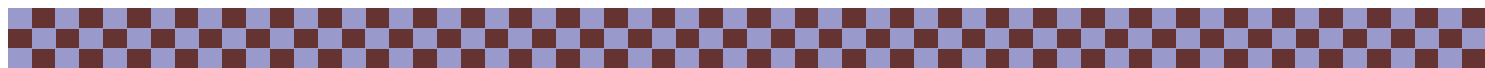
Moshe Garsiel observes that in the Hebrew Bible the name Judah (Heb., *Yěhûdâ*) is repeatedly "explained in terms of a derivation from the root *y-d-h* (יָדַח) which in its causative stem means 'to offer praise out of a feeling of gratitude.'" The aforementioned explanation for the name "Judah" occurs first in the account of the naming of Jacob's sons. Leah is said to have named her youngest son as follows: "And she conceived again, and bare a son: and she said, Now **will I praise the Lord** [*ôdeh 'et-Yhwh*]: therefore she called his name **Judah** [*Yěhûdâ*, the pun, which makes no attempt at scientific etymology, suggests the idea of *Yahô* + *ôdeh*]; and left bearing" (Genesis 29:35; emphasis in all scriptural citations added).

This passage suggests that Leah named her son "Judah," i.e., "praised out of a feeling of gratitude" because she wished to thank the Lord (*Yahweh*) for his giving her this particular son. Later when Jacob, nearing death, pronounces his final blessing on his sons and their posterity, he blesses Judah and his descendants as follows: "**Judah** [*Yěhûdâ*], thou art he whom **thy brethren shall praise** [lit., thou — thy brethren **shall thank thee**, *yôdûkâ*]; thy hand [*yādēkâ*] shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee" (Genesis 49:8). It suggests that Judah's descendants, the Jews, are those who are to be "acknowledged" or "praised out of a feeling of gratitude," especially by those of the house of Israel ("thy brethren," "thy father's children"), though the reason for that praise is not here specified...

Paul himself anticipates the potential misunderstanding and repercussions of the thoughts that he is articulating to his Roman audience. Nevertheless, Paul's rhetoric — intended for a blended community of Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus as Messiah (I will use the admittedly anachronistic term *Christians*) — has been used as a basis for supersessionism (or replacement theology), i.e., the longstanding Gentile Christian belief that the Gentiles have replaced the Jews in God's plan. He further admonishes them that it is God's intent (and in his plan) to eventually save all Israel: (Romans 11:12-26)

Although Paul wishes to "provoke" his fellow Jews who do not believe in Jesus as the Messiah to "*jealousy*" (Romans 11:11) or to "emulation," he is no supersessionist. To be sure, Paul's discussion in Romans 9-11 presupposes that ultimately salvation is in and through Jesus Christ, but as Isaiah 52:7-53:12 (cf. Luke 1:67-79; 2:25-30) and the Book of Mormon suggest, the paradigm of seeing the "*salvation of ... God*" in a person was embraced by Israelites within Israel well before the birth of Jesus. Like the prophets of old, Paul understands the "*mystery*" of how "*all Israel shall be saved*" (Romans 11:26; Jacob 4:17-18), with the Atonement of Jesus Christ gradually having its intended effect (Jacob 5, especially 75-76; D&C 138:58) through the fulfilling of God's covenant to Abraham and his descendants (Acts 3:26; 3 Nephi 20:26). covenant which has yet to be wholly fulfilled. "

Seeing that our Bible — both "Old" and "New" Testaments — was mostly written by Jews, it is truly "*the book [that] proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew*" (see 1 Nephi 13:23-24, 38; 14:23). For the composition and preservation of this book which is "*of great worth unto to the Gentiles*" (1 Nephi 13:23), as well as to the house of Israel, we all owe a great debt of "acknowledgement" and "thanks," both to the Jews and to the God of Israel. END





## **Genealogy: Cluster Research**

**By Mary Kathryn Kozy**

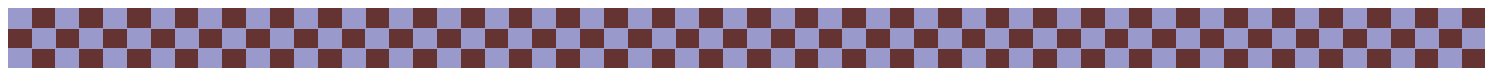
One of the common challenges in family history for those of Jewish descent (and let's face it, for pretty much everyone at some point) is the "brick wall." It might be the Holocaust, it might be slavery, or it might be burned county courthouses in the Southern US. Whatever the cause, trying to work our way over, around, or through these obstacles can be very discouraging. One of the best tools in the research toolbox is to learn more about our ancestor's F.A.N. club.

The F.A.N. principle is another name for "*cluster research*". The term was coined by Elizabeth Shown Mills, a well-known and internationally recognized professional genealogist. F.A.N. stands for "*Friends family, Associates, and neighbors*." The idea of cluster research is instead of focusing solely on your one ancestor (say the 2<sup>nd</sup>-great-grandfather who emigrated from Ukraine) you back up and look around him for others who can help you learn more about him. The tendency among researchers, both beginners and those more experienced, is to become a little myopic about our family. We are looking for *that* guy or *that* gal and we tend not to see anyone else. Family historians would do well to remember the famous words of the English poet John Donne: "No man is an island unto himself."

Rare was the time when individuals immigrated alone from one country or region to the next. If and when they did travel alone, they were usually traveling *to* someone, not just settling in a random city or neighborhood. The F.A.N. principle says that we need to learn as much as we can about our ancestor's immediate and extended family, their friends, and anyone else they frequently associated with.

In the Jewish community in particular, intermarriage amongst one's family and those of one's village was common. They married who they knew. If you can identify the folks they knew, you can weave a net around your ancestor that can uniquely identify them and their family of origin. Some questions to ask yourself when you've hit the proverbial brick wall:

- Who were my ancestor's siblings? Aunts? Uncles? Grandparents? Cousins? When and where did they live in the US?
- Who were their neighbors here in the US and where did those neighbors originate from?
- If you've found a ship's list with your ancestor on it and a village of origin identified, are there others on the same ship from that village? Where did *those* passengers end up once they were in the United States? Have you followed up on the name of the person who is listed as their US contact?
- What was your ancestor's occupation? Who did they do business with? Who were the others in the same occupation/trade organization that they knew?





## Genealogy: Cluster Research *(Continued from page 11)*

- Who were the people that signed as witnesses on marriage documents and land or business records? Who stood up for them in court? Who executed their wills and administered their estates?
- Where was your ancestor's rabbi from? Could an entire congregation or town have come together or followed one another in a series of chain migrations?

The answers to one or more of these questions could be the key to tearing down your brick wall. Let's look in more detail at just two of them.

**In our first example**, say your ancestor died prior to the advent of death records in the state she lived in. This leaves you without the opportunity to locate possible birth place information and the names of her parents.

However, it's highly possible that one or more of her youngest siblings may have lived well after when death certificates were common. Have you looked at the *sibling's* death certificate? Think of the treasure that might be waiting there!

Also consider obtaining the birth certificates of your ancestor's youngest children. These often contained more detailed information about a parent's place of birth and may be just the clue you are looking for.

The second example is that of the ship's list. For the time frame when a large number of Jews were immigrating to the US, ship's lists are available and a number are digitized and online. These records need to be combed for every detail they might reveal. We must not simply stop at the immigrant's name, age, occupation, ship, and date of arrival.

Who was the person that they claimed to be traveling to in the United States? Generally folks came to other family, even if it was extended family (e.g., a great uncle or cousin). Or they may have come to someone in the US who had already immigrated from their village. While your ancestor may have left absolutely *no* paper trail, you need to look closer at that extended family or community member.

Perhaps they were a respected businessman in the community and had an extensive obituary when they passed away. This could give information about their immigration and where they came from, especially if it was printed in a local foreign language, community, or Jewish newspaper. The obit may also contain a list of additional family members just waiting to be investigated. These types of opportunities are just too good to be missed.   End



**B'nai Shalom, Children of Peace, Org.**

*B'nai Shalom, Children of Peace, Org., is a tax-exempt entity under IRC §501(c)(3)*

**Mission Statement**

Affiliation with B'nai Shalom is open to all members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and others interested in promoting the objectives of the organization, whether or not such persons are of Jewish ancestry.

We believe in the gathering of Israel and the fulfillment of ancient covenants as described in the Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 29; that it is an ensign proclaiming the gospel of salvation.

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

- A. **To promote the faith, activity and spirituality of Jewish members, Mormons and other interested people who hold membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.**
- B. **To encourage interest in genealogical work by members of the Church of Jewish ancestry, and to develop a program to assist with the resolution of problems of research peculiar to Jewish heritage through use of genealogical research and available Church programs and organizations.**
- C. **To promote assimilation and understanding of Jewish culture, traditions and attitudes between Mormons and Jews through media, educational outreach programs, firesides and other spiritual activities.**
- D. **To engage in other spiritually based activities appropriate to carrying out all objectives of the organization.**

**Disclaimers:**

*This organization has no affiliation with the Church, does not represent the Church, receives no support from the Church, is not sanctioned by the Church in any way; therefore, its actions cannot be attributed to the Church.*

*No Officer, Director, or member shall proselytize or act in any way that may be construed as having the purpose of proselytizing of descendants of Abraham in the State of Israel.*

