



THE AUSTRALIAN

JEWISH HERALD

4 FEATURE PAGES

"BROTHER HOWARD," MEMBER OF THE MORMON CHURCH IN SALT LAKE CITY IN UTAH, IS A HEAVILY BUILT MAN, AGE AROUND 50, WITH DREAMY AND SEARCHING EYES AND A GOODLY JEWISH SMILE TO BOOT, A FACE THAT TELLS OF BYGONE AGES OF PIETY.

His original name, given to him at the ceremony of the Covenant of Abraham, is Hershel Horwitz, son of an orthodox Rabbi in the Bronx, New York.

Brother Howard became somewhat famous, among Jews and non-Jews, nine years ago, while he was brought to court by Bnai Brith in Beverly Hills, California.

AFTER HE HAD CONVERTED

The charge was a light one, namely, the fact of his being the chairman of a Bnai Brith chapter, after he had converted to Mormonism. The members asked for his resignation, and Hershel absolutely refused, arguing that he feels himself a full Jew, his belief in Jesus notwithstanding.

Naturally, the press caught

HERSHEL HORWITZ — NOW BROTHER HOWARD

America, and founded a Jewish Kingdom that existed for almost a thousand years. The Lamantis accepted Judaism in full. They joined en masse the settlements of the "Ten Lost Tribes" in America. The trouble was that the Jewish Kingdom in America did not go the right way, and when its sins multiplied it was decided in heaven that it shall be destroyed. Later, Columbus claimed the discovery of America — which was of course "untrue."

This great secret was hidden from people for hundreds of years. But in 1820 there appeared a new prophet in Sharon, New York, in the person of Joseph Smith. The last prophet of the Lamantis, Moroni by name, came to Smith in a dream and revealed the secret.

He told Smith to dig around his house, where he would find

the golden scrolls of the Lamantis, written in a mysterious language. Smith searched and indeed found them.

PROPHESIES AND INSTRUCTIONS

The prophet then came to him and taught him the language, and thus the Mormon Bible came into being. It is written like the Hebrew Bible, in chapters and stanzas, comprising many prophecies and instructions. This Joseph was really a great organiser. Many flocked to him to get instruction.

Meanwhile, the other Christian denominations observed the new religious movement and were frightened.

The Mormon Church talked of founding a NEW Zion right here in America and also, believe it or not, of helping the Jews to return to their home-

land, the Land of Israel, and that before political Zionism yet.

The Mormon Church did not recognise priests and its new Bible did not jibe with the old one. They were also for polygamy — a Mormon could marry many wives. So, persecutions of Mormons started. Some of the Mormons were brought to court. The Government tried to make them uncomfortable.

Joseph the Prophet, however, was not discouraged. He simply decreed that the faithful shall go further to seek a free territory to be settled by them. Thus a migration of Mormons started. They at long last reached Utah and settled around the Salt Lake. Here they founded their city. Here they built a new temple.

The remarkable thing about the Mormons in America is the fact that they became one of

the most respectable religious denominations in America. They do not smoke and do not drink intoxicating beverages — even coffee and tea are forbidden.

Their charity institutions are exemplary. They have special stores for the needy, wherein products are being sold with no profit. Everyone must devote some time each week to social work, including doctors, lawyers, merchants. Their moral life is much higher than the general level of society.

UP BUILDING OF ISRAEL

The Mormons believe that the Jews are God's chosen people. They are for the upbuilding of Israel. In the year 1841, forty years before "Bilu," the Mormons of America sent a delegation to Jerusalem to investigate the possibilities of helping Jews return to their homeland.

They believe that as soon as the two centres; one in the U.S. and the other in the Land of Israel, would be established, then the Messiah would come and redeem the world. They see themselves as Jews who "have seen the light." All other Christians to them are just "gentiles" (Goyim). The Mormons look at themselves as the descendants of the Tribes of Joseph.

Naturally, the press caught up with it all right. His picture appeared in many national magazines. But he lost his case. Resigning from chairmanship of the chapter, he wanted at least to retain his membership in Bnai Brith. The court accorded him that privilege.

As of today Hershel is quite an expert in the Mormon Church. Questions of great moment, pertaining to Jews, are weighed by him and decided upon, as his father was used to do when the Torah was at stake.

"SEEN THE LIGHT"

For Hershel, as you might well know, is well versed in the Mormon Bible, knows by heart all the prophecies of Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon Church in America, and is at all times ready to advance the cause. He still holds on to his Judaism, since he is "only a Jew who has seen the light," whereas other Jews are "Jews who have not seen yet the light." "The light" in question, as you might have surmised, is no other than Joshua of Nazareth. The Mormon Church counts today more than two million adherents in America and Hershel is among the upper ranks of the most faithful.

What he had found in the Mormon Bible, written by Joseph Smith, Mormon prophet, is truly amazing and we, Jews, should of course know all about it. For instance, the only discovery of America; no, Columbus only rediscovered it.

The true discoverer of America was a prophet from Jerusalem named Leigh (!) who sailed from the harbour of Eilath 2600 years, before our time, and reached the New World. It took him 40 days and 40 nights to cross the ocean.

Here he came in contact with the Lamantis, the aborigines of

A THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

THE BEST GUARANTEE

SIDRA Behar-Bechukosai

This Sabbath heralds the month of Sivan, in which the Torah was given. The Midrash relates that before G-d gave his people the Torah He required of them guarantors that they would study and observe it. First, the Jews offered their forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as guarantors, but this was rejected by G-d.

The Jews made a second offer: "Our Prophets will be our guarantors." This offer, too, was unacceptable. Finally the Israelites proposed that their children would guarantee the study and fulfilment of the Torah. This "pledge" was accepted, and the Torah was given.

This Midrash applies in our day just as it did at the time of the actual giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai. And today the same "offers" are made to G-d: "Our fathers will be the 'security' that Torah will be studied." This is reiterated in one form or another by many nowadays. "I have no time to study my religion — but I'll pay for my aged father to study Torah in an Old Age Home. He has nothing else to do anyway, so he can

use all his spare time for learning Torah, and this will keep him happy." But this is unacceptable, for it does not ensure the perpetuation of lasting and vital Torah life.

Others have a different plan: "Our prophets will be our guarantors." The Hebrew word for prophet is derived from the same root as the word "to speak." Hence "prophets" may be interpreted as "speakers."

Our speakers, i.e. our Rabbis, will study for us. I will support a congregation and let the Rabbi delve into religion while I occupy myself with business. After all, that is his profession; the Rabbis will assure the fulfilment of the Torah." How many of us express similar sentiments when we say: "Why should my son study Torah at an advanced

level? — he doesn't want to be a Rabbi!" But how incorrect is this view. Judaism is not for Rabbis alone, but for every Jew; its study and observance is mandatory upon all of us.

Finally, our children are proposed as guarantors. "Let them study their religion while they are young," say the parents. "Let them attend a Talmud Torah and even a Yeshivah in their youth. With this they will have discharged their obligation to Judaism and then they can devote themselves completely to worldly matters."

Even though this is not ideal, for Torah is not only for Children, yet this guarantee is accepted. For, if the children study Torah when they are young, they will not want to leave their studies in later years. Furthermore, the children will ultimately influence their parents to return to the study of the Torah and the observance of its precepts.

(Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, by Y. M. Kagan.)

ONE OF THEIR SONS

Presently there is a great hope among the two million Mormons in America that one of their sons, Governor George Romney of the State of Michigan, may even become sometime (1972) the president of the U.S. Romney is today a powerful man. He aspired to be the candidate of the Republican Party in the next elections in November.

Romney is a friend of the Jews and a friend of Israel. Recently he visited Israel and was received there joyfully. Of course, it is difficult to foresee the future. The Republicans have so many aspirations for the presidency. Lately, Romney retracted from being a candidate.

GREATER ROLE TO PLAY

Brother Howard is sure that the Mormons have a great role to play in America. He believes every word of the prophet, Joseph Smith, who, according to Hershel Horwitz, had foreseen and foretold many world-shaking events that came true in due time.

The Mormons are also doing missionary work among the Jews. Recently they have mailed out a pamphlet in which they used Hebrew letters and where "Israel" has been conspicuous. Hershel probably contributed much to that pamphlet, though we do not know that for certain.

After all, Hershel was ordained by the Mormon High Priest and has been found to stem from the Tribe of Judah, directly and without the least doubt. He is also proud of his origin and tells everyone that he is still a Jew, his father the orthodox Rabbi notwithstanding.

(From "The Jewish Voice.")