

1 INTRODUCTION TO JEWISH GENEALOGY

Temple Beth Ami – June 2020

Presented by:

I. Michael Snyder & Suzanne Fialkoff

Day 1

2 Introductions

I. Michael Snyder

- *Member of TBA since 2016*
- *Doing Genealogy over 15 years*
- *Earliest Confirmed Ancestor born about 1725*
- *When I started, I knew 14 ancestors, now I know of 89!*
- *I knew 4 generations, now 8 for many and two ancestors at 9.*
- *Why do Genealogy?*
 - It's fun, I meet new people, and it helps me understand who I am!

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3 Introductions

I. Michael Snyder

Researching: Snyder, Highstein, Gouline, Bass, Bashes, Musicant, Oks, Khait, Galon, Shenker, Kreiger, Paliukar, Zaidel, Kats, Tamshe, Altschul, and Khazan.

In Lithuania: Birzai, Pasviten, Linkova, Pasvalys, Krekenava, Kaunas, Pumpėnai, Pakruojis and Varniai.

Researching: Gouline, Galon, Oks, Gertsberg, and Shkurnik.

In Ukraine: Radyvyliv, Lutzk, Kremenets, and Zholudsk.

4 I. Michael Snyder Family Tree

5 Introductions

Suzanne Fialkoff

- *Member of TBA for about 30 years*
- *Doing Genealogy almost 25 years*
- *Earliest immigrant ancestor arrived about 1852*
- *3 of my 4 grandparents born in US*

Why do I do Genealogy?

- It's all about the stories--not just *who* you're descended from, but about *how* they lived
- Through family, learn about history, religion, social/political movements, arts, languages, health, etc.
- Find living relatives

6 ☐ Overview of Sessions: Week One

- Why Do Genealogy
- Genealogy Myths
- How to Begin
- JewishGen
- Michael's genealogy story
- Questions

7 ☐ Overview of Sessions: Week Two

- Major types of genealogical records
- Where to find the records
- Keeping track of your information
- Sharing your information
- Sue's genealogy story

8 ☐ Overview of Sessions: Week Three

- Jewish Migrations
- DNA
- Jewish Genealogy Societies and Conferences
- Wrap-up and questions

9 ☐ Why do Genealogy

- Genealogy is a curiosity for most, a hobby for many and an obsession for some.
- At its root, genealogy satisfies basic human curiosity. These needs can be summed up in three fundamental questions:
 - *The Past – Where do I come from?*
 - *The Present – Why am I here?*
 - *The Future – What is going to happen to me?*
- Interestingly enough, the three fundamental questions that underpin genealogy are also the three questions that form the basis of all the major religions of the world.

10 ☐ Jewish Teachings:

- Exodus 20:12 – Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.
- Deuteronomy 32:7 – Remember the days of old; consider the years long past. Ask your father, and he will tell you, your elders, and they will inform you.
- Isaiah 51:1-2 – It is worthy of all who seek righteousness to look to the rock from which they were hewn.
- Psalm 22:4-5 – In you our ancestors put their trust; they trusted, and you rescued them.
- Pesach Haggadah – In each generation man must regard himself as if he himself came out of Egypt, as it is said, and you should relate it to your son on that day.
- Talmud Avot 3:1 – Know from whence you came, and where you are going, and to whom you will have to give account in the future.

11 ☐ Jewish Teachings:

Tanakh is a Genealogy of the Jewish People ...

- Genealogies in Genesis: (4:17-23 Cain); (5 Noah); (10:1-36 Table of Nations); (11:10-26 Shem-Abram); (22:20-24 Nahor); (25:1-5 Qeturah); (25:12-18 Ishmael); (36 Line of Esau); (37 Line of Jacob) (46:8-27 Israel)
- Genealogy of King David in Torah (Gen 38 Judah, his sons & Tamara)
- Other Genealogies: (Deuteronomy 23:3-4 Ammonite & Moabite); (Samuel-1 1:2); (Ezra 7:1-5); (Esther 2:5); (Chronicles-1 1-9;14); and more!

An awareness of personal family history establishes a link in the chain of Jewish existence.^[4]

12 ☐ Personally, why do Family Genealogy

- As a Mitzvah for Parents, Siblings, Children, and Cousins
- To document Family Histories
- It's rewarding, meaningful, exciting, challenging, ...

13 ☐ Genealogy Myths^[9]

Many Jews believe they cannot trace their family roots because:

- My family name was changed (at Ellis Island)
- No one in my family knows about the past
- No one is left alive to tell me about my family's past
- All the records were destroyed in the Holocaust
- My town was wiped off the face of the map

14 ☐ Start with What You Know (or at least what you've been told)

- What were your family names?
- Where did your ancestors come from?
- When did they come to America? Where did they live in America?
- What did they do for a living?
- What language(s) did they speak at home?
- What family stories were you told?

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15 ☐ Gather your Documents

- Birth, marriage, death certificates
- Correspondence
- Passports & naturalization certificates
- Military papers
- Artifacts
- Photos

16 ☐ Talk to People

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- The Family Tree of the Jewish People (FTJP)
- The JewishGen Communities Database
- JewishGen Unified Search
- Research Special Interest Groups
- JewishGen KehilaLinks
- ViewMate
- JewishGen Discussion Groups

Michael's Genealogy Story

- How I got Started
- Case Study #1 – Rachel Oks – Maternal Great-Grandmother



- Case Study #2 – Lena Bass – Paternal Grandmother

Where is Lena Bass from?

Pakruojis, Lithuania - Synagogue



Questions?

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