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Abe and Sam Bernstein

MESSRS. SAM AND ABE BERNSTEIN

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1973. THE BERNSTEIN IS ALSO PRESENT. THE OBSERVANCE IS HELD IN THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE SHAARE TZEDEK CONGREGATION OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF SALT LAKE CITY.

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MR: ... this?

AB: ... that taught me my bar mitzvah. After that I do not have any recollection of where the meetings took place after long afterwards the congregation was built, unless Sam knows.

MR: ... do you think this was the impetus, the foundation of the Shaare Tzedek?

AB: ... about it.

MR: ... meeting about it.

MR: ... did your parents want you to go there in preference to the Montefiore?

AB: ... in the Montefiore?

MR: ... yes.

THIS IS AN INTERVIEW WITH SAM AND ABE BERNSTEIN ON NOVEMBER 4, 1973. MRS. JACKIE BERNSTEIN IS ALSO PRESENT. THE INTERVIEWER IS HYNDA RUDD. THE SUBJECT IS THE **SHAARE TZEDEK** CONGREGATION OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF SALT LAKE CITY.

HR: Gentlemen, what are your earliest recollections of this congregation?

AB: Well, the earliest recollection I have is going to **Seder**, at the **rabbi** or teacher's house on State Street and Eighth South where services were being held on Saturdays. The **rabbi** lived in this house. The reason my recollection is good is that I was **bar mitzvah** in this house. My mother was sick in bed at the time with the flu. There was quite a flu epidemic going around and that was back in early 1921 or 1920. Let's see, I was twenty-seven--early 1920. Shortly afterward this **rabbi**--.

HR: What **rabbi** was this?

AB: The one that taught me my **bar mitzvah**. After that I do not have any recollection of where the meetings took place or how long afterwards the congregation was built, unless Sam knows.

HR: Let me ask you, do you think this was the impetus, the foundation of the **Shaare Tzedek**?

SB: No question about it.

AB: No question about it.

HR: Why did your parents want you to go there in preference to the Congregation?

SB: In preference to the Montefiore?

HR: Yes.

- AB: Well, they had pulled away from the Montefiore.
- SB: There was some dissatisfaction with the way Montefiore was being operated. There must have been thirty, forty, fifty Jewish individuals that dropped their membership in Montefiore and founded Congregation **Shaare Tzedek**, headed by Mr. Morris Garelick. They purchased this tract of ground on Second East between Eighth and Ninth South because that seemed to be the center of a lot of Jewish people in that area. The **kosher** butcher shop was on Eighth South between State and Second East.
- HR: Was this Kaplan?
- SB: Kaplan, yes. Ruben Kaplan.
- AB: He was a **shoichet**.
- SB: He was a **cantor** too.
- AB: He was not a rabbi.
- SB: So I do not think they purchased this house on the northeast corner of Eighth South and Second East. It was rented. I remember going to **Seder** myself.
- AB: Eighth South and State.
- SB: I mean Eighth South and State. Then after they built the **Shaare Tzedek**, they appointed a **cantor** by the name of Strinkowsky. He and his wife and children lived right next door to the synagogue, on the south side.
- HR: Next door to **Shaare Tzedek**?
- SB: Yes. I remember playing with one of the daughters,

- HR: Edith. I do not remember the rest of the family. There was one boy. He is the one that taught me my **bar mitzvah**.
- HR: I see. Why did the families decide to break away from Congregation Montefiore?
- SB: Off the record?
- HR: No, on the record.
- AB: I think it was because the Montefiore had become a little bit more Conservative. This group was all immigrants and they wanted to remain strictly Orthodox.
- HR: They were later immigrants from Russia?
- SB: Oh yes. Then they segregated the women from the men. In other words, we had a balcony and the women sat upstairs in the balcony. They had a **bimah** in the center of the synagogue.
- AB: It just was not Orthodox enough for these families that had come into this area in the early 1900s, in 1904, 1905.
- HR: Do you remember some of the names of the people who pulled away from Montefiore and moved into this new congregation?
- SB: There would be Morris Garelick, Sam Garelick, Allan Mednick, Harry Mednick, Joe Bernstein, Joe Doctorman, and Ben Doctorman.
- HR: Was Joe married at that time?
- SB: Oh, I think so.

HR: Yes, I guess he would have been.

SB: And Mr. Bettman. And Abe Rue.

HR: Which Bettman?

SB: F. Bettman.

HR: F. Bettman, okay.

SB: There was a Joe Guss.

AB: Schaeffers?

SB: Yes, the Schaeffers.

HR: The Sussmans?

SB: The Sussmans.

HR: Were not the Haydens part of the--

SB: I think the Haydens came later.

AB: Mr. Wagner.

SB: Mr. Wagner from Wagner Bag Company. And Miller.

AB: What was his first name?

SB: Abe Miller. He was a teacher too.

AB: He also taught at **Shaare Tzedek**, fellow by the name of Miller.

SB: Unico. Remember Unico that lived on Eighth South, that had twin boys?

AB: What was the name of the butcher shop? Kaplans.

SB: And Goldstein, L. Goldstein. He was a hide buyer and his wife had a cleaning shop on State Street between Fifth and Sixth South. There was the old man Rosenthal who had the grocery store on State Street.

AB: That is right.

HR: Well, did the Gusses or the Peppers have anything to do with this?

AB: No.

SB: I do not think so.

AB: Originally, Harry Guss pulled away, but then had second thoughts and went back to Congregation Montefiore. But the Pepper family never did.

HR: What about Axelrads?

AB: No. This Mr. and Mrs. Schaeffer were relatives of the Axelrads. What the relationship was, I never did know.

SB: Fehlman. Remember Mr. Fehlman? He had a store on State Street and about Tenth South.

AB: What was the name of that woman that had that feed store next to--.

SB: Kaslovitz?

AB: Mrs. Kaslovitz.

HR: Did most of these people eventually either die out or move away? Do you know?

AB: Then when the Depression hit?

SB: That is when we had the problems.

AB: That is when the problems began.

SB: I think Hayden was the president about that time.

AB: So then it made sense to go back to Congregation Montefiore.

SB: They sold the building. They had their own cemetery, **Shaare Tzedek** Cemetery on Wasatch Drive. I guess they are still receiving monies from the payment of the sale of the building and these monies are being used to maintain the cemetery.

HR: Yes, you said--who else was involved in this?

AB: Charles Grossman and the two Evdasin brothers.

HR: What were their names?

SB: One was Phillip Evdasin. That was Art's father. I do not remember his first name.

HR: Okay. You mentioned something about this Mr. Miller being a teacher. In what respect was he a teacher?

AB: He taught Hebrew school, and I do not believe he ever acted as a **chazan**.

SB: Oh, no, no. He was simply a teacher, and he was a good one.

AB: He was a good one.

SB: We met in the basement of the **Shaare Tzedek**. He had quite a class there. Remember, we had two classes. I can remember in the summertime where the older fellows went at nine o'clock. The younger students came at ten. Then we all met at eleven and twelve, and he told the story about the Jews, you know, starting from Abraham and all the way through. I remember. It was real interesting. That was our Sunday School. We never did go to Sunday

School at **Shaare Tzedek**.

HR: Okay, but you mentioned.

AB: Just went to **seder**.

HR: Okay. How often did you go?

SB: Every day.

HR: Every day?

SB: That is Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. We did not go Friday. That is during the school days and in the summer.

HR: This was after school?

SB: After school we would go from about four to six. In the summer we would go from nine to twelve. Then most of us attended the Saturday morning services.

HR: They did have Saturday morning services?

SB: Oh yes.

HR: What about Friday night services?

AB: Friday night--

SB: Well, they would not have a late Friday night.

JB: Friday night was not a Jewish--

SB: It was kind of late. They would have a regular Friday night service at sundown.

HR: I mean, it is not like it is today?

AB: Oh, no, no.

HR: How did they feel about, I mean, they must have been very pious Jews, right?

SB: Oh yes. Because most of them maintained--my parents maintained a **kosher** home. Most of the members did too. They bought their meats from Mr. Kaplan. It was very easy to keep a **kosher** home.

JB: Yes. As a matter of fact, when my mother passed away, I kept a **kosher** for some years.

AB: Our father never did work on Saturday. When he was out in the country, he always made sure he got back on Friday so he would be home for Friday and Saturday.

HR: Most of the people, you say, lived in the immediate area?

AB: They all kept their stores closed on Saturday.

HR: Who officiated then at a **bar mitzvah**? Was it Kaplan or was it this--

SB: It depends on who was in charge. I can remember a Mr. Barenson. Do you remember Mr. Barenson, a great big--

HR: Jacob Barenson. He is listed in the directory.

SB: Remember him?

AB: No.

SB: I remember him. He was a **cantor** and also a teacher. Strinkowsky was a **cantor** and a teacher. I do not think Mr. Kaplan ever taught, but he was a **cantor** at times. Oh, the old man Eisenberg. I forgot him. He was down there.

HR: This was Pearl's father-in-law? Pearl Eisenberg? You remember her?

AB: Yes.

SB: No, this was Ben Mishkin's. The Mishkins were also members.

JB: That is Pearl Eisenberg.

HR: She was a school teacher, I believe.

AB: Was she the one that was married to Ben Mishkin?

JB: No, no.

SB: Of course, that was the pretty one.

JB: Her name was Frieda?

AB: No, Frieda was the oldest one.

JB: Ann?

AB: There were two brothers Mishkin, were not there?

SB: No, there were three brothers. There was Abe, there was Ben, and the one that we played with.

AB: No, I mean the older--their father's. There were two brothers.

SB: I do not remember.

AB: Their father was the thin Mishkin. Then, there was the heavy-set one that lived on Eighth South between Main and West Temple.

SB: I do not remember that.

HR: All right. Do you remember, do you recall, your mother ever being involved in anything like a sisterhood?

SB: No.

AB: Just **Talmud Torah**.

JB: Talmud Torah?

SB: I do not even think there was a **Talmud Torah** organization, was there?

AB: I doubt it. But if they were involved in anything, it would be **Talmud Torah**.

SB: I can remember at my **bar mitzvah**, we had a kind of little party in the afternoon at our house. We lived at 844 South Third East. The synagogue was just a block west from the house. I can remember a few people dropping in and bringing presents, you know, as they did at **bar mitzvah**. Nothing at the synagogue.

HR: All right. What about like **Rosh Hashanah** and **Yom Kippur**? Were they much different there, say, from what you have at Montefiore today? The services?

SB: Well, no English at the services. No sermon.

AB: The long prayer session with the women upstairs and the men downstairs.

HR: Okay, who would blow the **shofar**?

AB: Well, I guess whoever was the **cantor** at the time.

SB: Whoever was employed by the synagogue at the time probably blew the **shofar**.

AB: They all could blow it.

HR: Well you know, for such a religious institution--now, I do not know, I am just speaking from my own feelings--you would think that they would go out of their way to hire

SB: a rabbi.

SB: They could not afford one.

HR: Is this it? Okay.

AB: The most important thing at the time was to teach the children and to have a **cantor**. So they always hired a good **cantor** that was capable of teaching the children.

SB: They had that one man who was jack-of-all-trades. He could **daven** and he could teach.

AB: And usually he had to be a **mohel**, too.

HR: Okay.

AB: So we always had a **mohel** in the community.

SB: Kaplan was a **mohel** too.

AB: We always had a **shoichet**.

HR: He was a man of all trades, was not he?

SB: Oh yes.

AB: We also had a **shoichet** so that chickens were killed for **kosher**.

SB: Kaplan used to kill them in the back.

AB: Oh, I remember when someone used to come to our home and kill the chickens and mother used to take the feathers off.

HR: Oh really?

JB: Right to your house?

AB: Yes.

JB: In the back yard?

SB: Right in the back. Yes. Nothing to it.

JB: I thought everyone went to Sussman's. I mean to Kaplan's.

AB: Well, they did that too.

SB: Well, I think sometimes Kaplan kind of vacillated. Sometimes he was up at Montefiore. Then sometimes he would be--.

HR: What do you mean by that?

JB: Changed allegiance?

SB: Well, they might have had a **cantor** so that Kaplan was not needed. So under those circumstances he would not come to the synagogue at **Shaare Tzedek**. He would go to Third East.

HR: What was he like?

SB: Oh, kind of short. I remember him as a man about five-- foot six inches, or seven inches, with a white beard.

AB: White hair, heavy-set.

SB: Mild voice.

AB: Tender voice.

SB: I can remember his wife.

AB: Very peaceful.

SB: And Bertha Rappaport was a daughter.

HR: Do you remember the building, the actual building of the building and anything interesting about it?

AB: The only thing I can remember about it is, they had not quite enough money. So one Sunday they were laying

bricks, and they would sell a brick so somebody could come up and put the brick on the mortar, which was quite an affair.

JB: That is an idea.

SB: I just do not quite remember that at all. All I can remember is that they had the cornerstone ceremony and Governor Simon Bamberger was there. I do not remember anyone else that was there. There was an old man Ruthbard. I forgot about him.

AB: That is right.

HR: Who?

AB: Ruthbard.

SB: It was a father and a son. He was a cattle buyer when I remember him. Did not have a family. So of course they used every gimmick they could to raise money. I thought they had sold two cornerstones, and Mr. Ruthbard agreed to pay \$500 for one. They decided Governor Simon Bamberger should have the other one. That is when they had the cornerstone laid, when it was dedicated, and when the stone was laid.

HR: The stone was laid March 28, 1920?

SB: That is about correct. Because you see, that would have been the last term of Governor Bamberger when he was governor.

HR: Do you think if I went up to the State Capital and got

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his papers there would be anything mentioned of this at this date?

SB: Could be. It is a possibility.

AB: It says something here about the Temple.

HR: Yes, it mentioned a great deal about Montefiore and the Temple, but so little about--.

SB: About **Shaare Tzedek**. It says we had 100 members; I do not think they had a hundred members.

JB: Maybe that was including the women and the children.

SB: Yes.

JB: I am looking at this old book trying to look at these old names. Some of them I do not recognize.

HR: I am sure of it. I heard this, and I hate to use the word fanatic. I do not think that is really fair to them. Emotionally bent may be a better word. During their meetings and during their get-togethers, they tended to be a bit pugnacious.

SB: Well, at times, but I think that was much later. I think that was when they were having difficulties, and there was some talk about turning everything over to Montefiore and things like that. Of course, there were some who were dedicated to the preservation of the synagogue, you know. There were never any fights. This was the kind of fight there would be: I can remember in somebody's home, Sam Hayden saying, "Hold me, I am going to fight." That

is the kind of fights they had. Most of them were just verbal, you know.

AB: But I think what you have reference to is, after **Shaare Tzedek** split up, they went back to Congregation Montefiore. Then there was a group that still tried to keep Congregation Montefiore on an Orthodox plane. We remember when our father passed away in 1934, we were going to Montefiore then. We were not very active then until--- except you were secretary at the time, were not you? As early as 1934?

SB: No, I became secretary after that.

AB: Anyway, we went every morning to a **minyan**. On Sunday morning if you sleep an hour later, it would have been nice. These men were very adamant that they had a **minyan** before we showed up to say **Kaddish**, and they were going to have a **minyan** afterwards, and if we did not want to come at the time they set, it was just too bad. Holidays, same old story. We start **davening** at 7:30 in the morning. Then it was 6:30 in the morning, because they wanted to go to work. They had to work a twelve-hour day or else they could not make any money. This was at the end of the Depression. So during those Depression years, even at Montefiore, Sam, it was tough-going, keeping the Jewish community together.

SB: Oh, sure. When I was secretary, recording secretary,

SB: financial secretary, we had Rabbi Krichstein. We had his father who was the **shoichet** or the **b'al klay**, whatever you want to call him.

AB: A **mohel**.

SB: And when we first got Rabbi Krichstein I think his salary was either four or five hundred dollars a month. Then as the Depression came in, his salary was reduced to two hundred a month, when we paid him. I mean, things were that bad.

HR: Well, how is it that the congregation, the **Shaare Tezdek** remained in existence until 1949? Could not they sell it?

SB: Probably not.

HR: It just was there dormant?

AB: There was nothing. There were no services or anything.

HR: When do you suppose the services there ended and these people started coming back to the Montefiore?

SB: Are you sure the building was not sold until 1949?

HR: That is when it was sold. That is when the Veterans of Foreign Wars bought it.

SB: I wonder if they did not rent it for some other use prior to that.

HR: In the directory, the Salt Lake directory, it is listed until 1948 as belonging to **Shaare Tzedek**.

AB: It had to close up in the late 1920s.

SB: Or do you mean the early 1930s?

AB: The early 1930s.

SB: Because once we started to go, our father died on July 26, 1934. We, the three of us, Abe, Herm, and myself, went to morning **minyans** to say **Kaddish** for about a year.

AB: I was married early in 1930, and when we lived in Salt Lake City, we went to Congregation Montefiore, my wife and I.

HR: When you got married, where did you get married?

AB: In Los Angeles.

HR: Oh, that was not fair.

SB: Wait a minute. I guess **Shaare Tzedek** did exist for awhile, because Jackie's sister, Augusta, was married there, and Morris Goldberg was married in **Shaare Tzedek**.

AB: They were married before I was.

HR: Do you remember any of the weddings there?

AB: At **Shaare Tzedek**?

HR: Yes.

AB: Oh, yes.

HR: Were they more religious or were they--?

AB: No, they were the same thing.

JB: They were more Orthodox. They had the **bimah** in the middle.

AB: Well they had the **bimah** in the middle, but in real, true Orthodoxy, the bride usually circles the groom seven

times.

HR: How lovely.

AB: That was not done at the Congregation **Shaare Tzedek**. I saw it done in Mexico City when I went to a cousin's wedding.

JB: Yes, we all marched around with them.

AB: But we marched with them. But they were--the food was **kosher** and the wedding was according to ritual. The Rabbi married them.

SB: Matter of fact, Henry Pullman and Helen Doctorman were married there, but they can't remember who married them.

HR: Where? At **Shaare Tzedek**?

SB: Yes.

HR: You are kidding?

SB: Yes.

HR: Well, let me ask you. With the **bimah** in the middle, were there seats all around?

SB: All around. They had a little **bimah** in the front, say where the **Torahs** were kept, but it was a small one. The big **bimah** was in the center; that is where they read the **Torah**.

AB: That is where the **chazan** davened.

SB: Where the **chazan** chanted.

HR: What do you remember of the social life, per se? I mean, these people worshipped together, but was there social

SB: activity at the synagogue too?

SB: I am sure there was. I can remember either **Purim** or a **Chanukah** party. There was a program. I remember I was part of it and recited a poem. That I faintly remember. That was all at **Shaare Tzedek**. I am sure they had the, you know, parties and religious services.

JB: One place we used to go to was some other building, all the Jewish kids, to dance. It was not at the **shule**, but it was that group, some organizational place, and they had a building. I remember going because every time they had a dance, I was there.

HR: Did the teenagers associate with the Jewish kids from Congregation Montefiore? I mean, were there any feelings of differences, you might say, as sometimes there were between the Reformed and the Conservative?

SB: I do not think so. You see, the Peppers, they lived closer to **Shaare Tzedek** than they did to Montefiore. I am talking about Sam Pepper. I am talking about Milt and Dan and Morris and their parents. They continued to go to Montefiore.

HR: Did Fred Pepper also go to Montefiore?

SB: Yes, he also went to Montefiore.

AB: I remember.

SB: We all played together.

AB: I remember in 1924, that there was a Rabbi Burstein here.

SB: That was at Montefiore.

AB: At Montefiore. And what about the Goldbergs? Where did the Goldbergs belong?

SB: Which Goldbergs?

AB: Harry and Bill's father. Folks.

SB: Oh, they belonged to Montefiore.

AB: They are related to Ziniks. This is not the Ziniks you know from Ziniks Sporting Goods. So that Rabbi Burstein and Harry Goldberg asked me, (and I do not remember who else), to come to a meeting. They formed a young adults' group, so that my folks belonged to **Shaare Tzedek** at that time, but I was involved in this young adults' group. That is where a lot of the young people in the community met their respective--.

HR: Was this Maimonides?

JB: Yes.

HR: Okay, and where did you meet?

AB: **Shaare Tzedek** was just--we met at the vestry rooms in Montefiore.

JB: That was **the** elite association in the intermountain country. I remember people coming from Denver here, saying they had heard so much about it, and they wished they had something like that in Denver. Everybody. The Axelrads, I remember, were there, and they were from the Temple.

AB: So this encompassed all the young people, all the young men and women in the community regardless of whether they came from the Temple, or from Montefiore or from **Shaare Tzedek**.

SB: I went to university from 1925 to 1931, and during that period of time I have no recollection of going to any services or social events at **Shaare Tzedek**. Not any.

JB: From 1925 to 1939?

HR: That was just in the midst of the Depression?

AB: Yes.

SB: Well no, the Depression did not hit here until about the 1930s.

AB: That was during Prohibition time, and we were working for a living. So we were on our own. If our kids did today what we did in the mid-1920s.

HR: Are you trying to tell me that possibly religion was not at the forefront as it had been for your parents?

AB: Not with the teenagers. The one that brought us back into a group was Rabbi Burstein, into this teenage group.

JB: And it was not necessarily religious?

AB: It was not religious, but it was social.

JB: And it kept the Jewish kids together.

AB: It kept the Jewish kids together.

HR: Well, do you suppose in time, if the Depression had not come along and other things, that this other congregation

would have just died out?

SB: I do not think so. I think if people had money like they have today, I think there were enough families to have maintained **Shaare Tzedek**. I mean, people who were more traditional, you know, and believed in the old Orthodox way of living.

AB: When things got tough, it really got tough for the ones that lived down on--.

JB: The new guys.

AB: The poor ones. Because there was a time when they really had some money. But they were sending a lot of their money to their own parents, you know, that were still living over in Europe, and were not keeping any for a rainy day. There was never going to be a rainy day. Once that day hit, it was tough. They were having a rough time.

HR: Did these people ever try to help to bring their parents or bring other siblings to this country?

SB: Yes. Dad's bringing over his brother and nephew, cost him a lot of money.

AB: Everyone was trying to bring over someone.

SB: In fact, he even brought his brother over for a six-month visit. Remember that, in Salt Lake City?

AB: Yes.

HR: Did they have a **kosher** kitchen? Did they have a kitchen

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at all?

SB: No.

AB: Where?

SB: At **Shaare Tzedek**?

AB: Oh sure.

SB: I do not remember that.

AB: Oh, sure. Downstairs.

JB: They had to have something.

AB: Sure, they had a kitchen.

SB: Oh.

HR: Then did they, you know, have a dinner or something like that?

AB: Oh sure. Do not forget, there was no TV at this time.

HR: Yes, that is right. This was a means of sociability. Could they raise money other than, say, this bootlegging deal?

AB: Well, if the bootlegging--.

SB: They had memberships.

AB: Bootlegging deal, you know. When they hired a man like Strinkowsky, they had to pay him quite a bit of money. That meant this small group that belonged there could not afford him without an outside source of income.

HR: One other thing that is very important. Did they own that tract of land, or did they rent it and build on it?

AB: No, they owned it. I do not know why I say that.

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HR: Because--.

SB: In those days there was no such thing as leasing ground and building on it.

AB: No. I do not remember anybody ever doing it.

SB: Because the records would show a contract. A person who will help you on that is Nate Gallenson. There were three trustees, as I remember, and Nate Gallenson was one.

JB: Sam, did not they rent it at one time instead of selling it?

AB: I think they did.

SB: But I am talking about the actual sale. And if the Veterans of Foreign Wars had not paid for it yet, there would not be a Deed Conveyance. There would not be a Deed of Conveyance yet to put on record. You know what I am referring to? Nate Gallenson's grand old office? Talk to Nate.

AB: Talk to my wife.

HR: All right, let me ask you something. In 1929, it lists the cemetery as being on Eleventh Avenue and, it says, on "P". So, I imagine it must mean "P" Street.

SB: Yes.

HR: Every issue after that, it puts it down at Fourth Avenue and "Q". This is where Montefiore, or B'nai Israel--

SB: That is where the cemeteries are, belonging to B'nai Israel and Congregation Montefiore, and now owned by

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Congregation Kol Ami. Jackie's mother is buried there and her father is buried there.

HR: Where? At **Shaare Tzedek**?

SB: At **Shaare Tzedek**.

HR: Well, I can't understand this. Do you know what **Shaare Tzedek** means? Do you have any idea?

JB: **Tzedek** means "scribe."

HR: **Tzedek** means like, "scribe", "priest"?

JB: D-O-K would be "the scribe", and that is probably from the word.

HR: I will have to find out. Maybe Doctor Zucker can--.

SB: Well, maybe Rabbi can at the time, on Ninth South and Third East.

HR: Yes. To just go over this once more, Sam, can you tell me about the fact of, before **Shaare Tzedek** was built, where exactly did you meet for your Hebrew school lessons?

SB: I remember attending **Seders** at a home on the northeast corner of State Street and Eighth South. I distinctly remember going there to **Seder**. There was a man, I think his last name was Barenson. He was a big, heavy-set fellow. He had converted his front room into the classroom, the Hebrew school. There was a long table where maybe twelve to fifteen of us could be seated. He was at one end with a big yardstick where, if you did not pay attention, he could reach over and pop you with that

yardstick.

HR: Tell me, do you remember anyone else in the class?

SB: I can remember my brother, Abe, besides myself, and Ben Garelick and Frank Garelick, and the Mednick boys, Izzie and Phil Mednick and Morris Mednick. I do not think the Peppers went here. I can not remember if the Hayden boys went over here or not. I can remember them going to **Shaare Tzedek**. There had to be at least between twelve and fifteen students-- usually no girls, all boys. Yes, Nate Kaplan was one.

HR: Was this the gentleman who **bar mitzvah** you, this Barenson?

SB: No, I was **bar mitzvah** by a man named Strinkowsky. But that was over at **Shaare Tzedek** synagogue.

HR: Okay. When was this that you met? Can you recall the year? About when were you meeting over at this Barenson's house?

SB: Let's see. I was born in 1909, so I was **bar mitzvah** in 1925. I was born in 1909. I remember starting in Hebrew school and being taught by Dave Alder's father, but that was before there was a **Shaare Tzedek**. So, I was going to Hebrew school since I was about seven.

HR: Okay. Something else is very important. Where did your families get together? Where did they congregate before the building was an actuality, like for the High Holy

Days?

SB: They may have been at a hall. But if they did, I just do not remember.

HR: Do you remember doing anything for **Yom Kippur** and **Rosh Hashanah**?

SB: No, I do not. I just do not have any recollection of that.

HR: Well you know, maybe if you happen to find out in discussing with someone just about this idea about where the families did meet. If you do hear anything, I would appreciate it if you would let me know, because it is interesting. It is at least a way of telling how people observed religious holidays then as compared to today. Maybe they did it more in their home.

SB: Well, they would have assembled for a **minyan** someplace.

JB: In somebody's house.

SB: And you know, I would think that at least for the **Rosh Hoshanah** services and **Yom Kippur** services the women would have attended, before the construction of the synagogue.

[END INTERVIEW, SIDE A]