FESTSCHRIFT IN HONOR OF DR. SHIMON BAKON ON HIS 90th BIRTHDAY

Dr. Shimon Bakon began his association with *The Jewish Bible Quarterly* in 1975 with Volume IV:2, when he joined the Editorial Board of the journal then known as *Dor leDor*. He was appointed Assistant Editor in 1976, starting with Volume IV:3, and Associate Editor in 1978, starting with Volume VII:1. He was appointed Editor in 1987, starting with Volume XVI:2, and has now been Editor for more than 18 years.

Born in Czechoslovakia, he attended the Jewish high school in Brno, received private tutoring in Talmud from his father, and in 1939 earned a Ph.D. in philosophy at Masaryk University. After reaching the United States, he studied for three years at Yeshiva Torah Vodaath in Brooklyn. In January 1942, he joined the U.S. Army, served with distinction in North Africa and Italy, and received an Honorable Discharge in 1945. Thereafter, he took a post-doctoral fellowship in philosophy at Columbia University in New York, and went on to be director of Jewish education first in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and then in Springfield, Massachusetts. In Springfield, he was instrumental in establishing a branch of Boston Hebrew College, and for more than 10 years served as its administrator and lecturer in Jewish Philosophy. In 1974, he made *aliya* to Israel with his wife and children, and soon after began his association with this journal.

The directors of the Jewish Bible Association and the Editorial Board of *The Jewish Bible Quarterly* extend to Dr. Shimon Bakon their greetings and blessings for continued leadership in the activities of the Association.

After the death of Dr. Louis Katzoff, Founding Editor of *The Jewish Bible Quarterly,* Dr. Shimon Bakon assumed the editorship and together with his colleagues – all unsalaried volunteers – he transformed *The Jewish Bible Quarterly* into a prestigious journal with a worldwide distribution and many distinguished contributors. "The older true scholars become, the more fully their mind is composed" states the Mishnah (Kinnim 3:6). Who would even begin to imagine that Shimon Bakon, a man of such physical and intellectual vigor, has just turned 90? *With him is wisdom and might; he hath counsel and understanding* (Job 12:13). Age cannot wither him, nor custom stale his infinite vitality. We know that he would be glad if someone else took over his responsibilities, but we also know that his wisdom and experience are always available to us. May the strength of his eye and the power of his intellect remain undiminished. I can only liken Dr. Shimon Bakon to those righteous elders of whom it is said: *They are still fruitful in old age, vigorous and fresh they continue to be* (Ps. 92:15).

Dr. Gavriel Sivan
Chairman, Jewish Bible Association

Shimon Bakon is a gentleman and a scholar in the finest meaning of the words. He is a gentleman of courtesy and consideration, staunch integrity, and resolute bearing of responsibility. He is a scholar with profound knowledge of both Judaica and the humanities, and keen intellectual insight. Shimon Bakon – my wise mentor and my beloved friend, it is a pleasure and a privilege to know you.
Patricia Berlyn

I came to the voluntary editorial staff of *JBQ* with an adult lifetime of teaching and writing about great literature. Here I met Dr. Shimon Bakon, a man of vast biblical and Judaic knowledge, who has shared his knowledge in numbers of articles and with me personally. But more: He became an exemplar of insight and energy at an age when the prospect of rest and ease overwhelms desire and intention.

He emphatically belies Tennyson's lines about Ulysses as a senior citizen: "We are not now the strength which in old days/ Moved earth and heaven. That which we are, we are,/ Made weak by time and fate –." No, not Shimon! Rather, fulfilling Tennyson's final accolade: he goes on – God grant him many more years: "Strong in will/ To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

Professor Dan Vogel

As an associate editor of JBQ for the past decade, I've had the pleasure to work with Shimon, and to share friendship with him. I think of Shimon as being like what the Torah said of Joshua in a recent Sabbath portion: Joshua, chosen to be Moses' successor, was laconically depicted as *a man in whom there is spirit* (Num. 27:18). Our Shimon, as we have come to know and cherish him, also is a man of spirit. Rabbi Yosef Hertz, in his well-known commentary, defined "spirit" as the qualities of wisdom, piety, courage and capacity. Those of us have worked with Shimon would agree that all of these characteristics are reflected in Shimon's spirit and personality. I would add one more – his energy and vitality: Shimon takes long walks daily, swims regularly, and generously invests much of his time and vigor into the Jewish Bible Quarterly. A mountain climber tried to explain his passion for climbing the Alps. "It's an unstoppable, unquenchable desire to dominate the mountains," he said. "One must cherish and love these peaks." Editing a magazine about the Bible and bringing it to a height of excellence has been Shimon's unstoppable and unquenchable dream. With much love and labor, Shimon's dream has fared well. May his years continue to shine with many blessings, much good health, joy and *smachot*, events of gladness.

Rabbi Dr. Theodore Steinberg

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