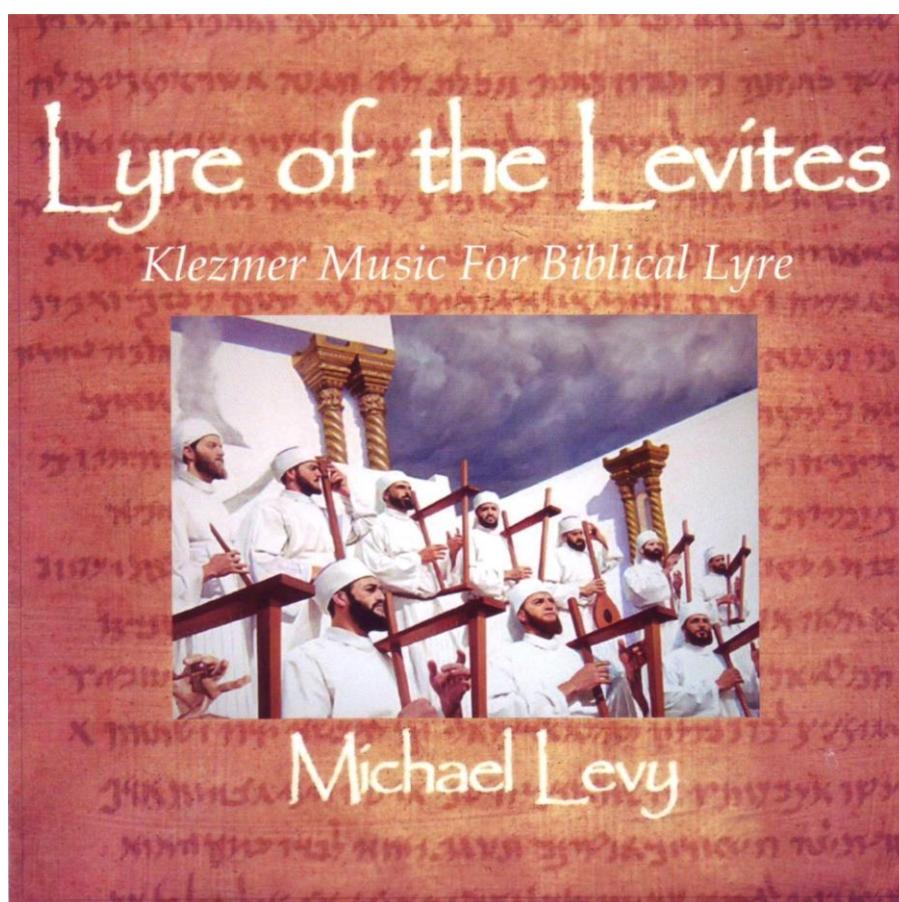


LYRE OF THE LEVITES: KLEZMER MUSIC FOR BIBLICAL LYRE

"*Lyre of the Levites: Klezmer Music for Biblical Lyre*" is the sequel album to "[King David's Lyre; Echoes of Ancient Israel](#)". Both of these albums are dedicated to recreating again, for the first time in almost 2000 years, the mystical, ancient sounds of the "[Kinnor](#)"; the Hebrew Temple Lyre, once played by my very own, very ancient Levite ancestors in the Courtyard of the Temple of Jerusalem, to accompany [the singing of the Levitical Choir](#) (II Chronicles 5:12)...



THE CHOICE OF REPERTOIRE FOR THE ALBUM

"Lyre of the Levites" uniquely features arrangements of primarily traditional melodies [from the Jewish Klezmer repertoire](#) arranged for solo Levitical Lyre - the concept of the musical performances on this album, are meant to be *evocations*, not *reconstructions*, of the sounds & playing techniques that were possible on the ten-stringed Kinnor of the Bible; there are sadly too few

unambiguously notated melodies from antiquity to make an album of "note for note" reconstructions of ancient instrumental solo lyre music a feasible reality.

However, the traditional Jewish scales/modes in which these pieces are actually written *may well have roots which stretch deeply back to these distant, mystically remote Biblical times, [according to the fascinating research of the late Suzanne Haik Vantoura, in attempting to reconstruct the original 3000 year old music of the Hebrew Bible.](#)*

THE TWELVE TRACKS

There are 12 tracks to the album [- corresponding to the 12 Gems which once adorned the Breastplate of the Levitical Priests of the Temple of Jerusalem.](#)

These 12 Gems represented the 12 Tribes of Israel. These 12 tracks consist of my arrangements for solo Levitical Lyre, of many "Musical Gems" from the traditional Klezmer repertoire.

Indeed, in this album, I have attempted to link the timeless connection Klezmer music once had at the traditional Jewish wedding in the lost Shtetls of old Eastern Europe *and the ancient Biblical association of celebrating the arrival of the Sabbath as the Bride of the Jewish people*, an association preserved to the present day in every Sabbath Service:

"On Friday nights in the synagogue, we sing from the siddur, "Lecha dodi likras kallah..." "Come my Beloved to greet the bride..." Our Beloved is G-d and the kallah/bride is the Sabbath, the bride of the Jewish People. This idea is based on a Midrash that points out that all the days of the week were given "mates" (Sunday has Monday, Tuesday has Wednesday, Thursday has Friday), but the 7th day seemed like the odd one out. Therefore, it complained to God, who responded that the Jewish People would be its "groom". (Based on Midrash Bereishis Rabbah 11:8; see also Talmud, Tractate Bava Kama 32a-b.)"
<http://www.jewishanswers.org/ask-the-rabbi-date/2011/03/?p=2913>

For example, I have arranged for solo lyre, in the track 3, entitled "*The Sabbath Bride*", the famous timeless Jewish Wedding song "*Chusen Kalah Mazeltov*" (Congratulations, Bride & Groom), track 4, "*Firn Di Mekhutonim Aheym*" (Escorting the Parents of the Bride & Bridegroom), track 5, "*Sherele*" (Wedding Dance), track 7, "*Dobriden*" (Greeting the Wedding Guests). I have also

arranged for Biblical Lyre, a selection of sacred Jewish melodies which are associated with Jerusalem, for example track 6, "Artza Alinu" ("We Ascended to the Land") & track 12, [Naomi Shemer's](#) timeless song "Yerushalayim Shel Zahav" (Jerusalem of Gold).

1. Lyres of the Levites – this is my arrangement for solo Kinnor, of the dramatic Klezmer melody, traditionally known as "Unzer Toyrele"

2. The Temple of Jerusalem – this is my arrangement of an evocative Klezmer melody, usually known by the name "Noch Havdallah".

3. The Sabbath Bride – my arrangement for Biblical Kinnor, of the timeless Jewish wedding song, "Chusen Kalah Mazeltov" (Congratulations, Bride & Groom).

4. Firn Di Mekhutonim Aheym (Escorting the Parents of the Bride & Bridegroom) – this classic of the Klezmer repertoire, was made famous by the vintage recordings featuring the vibrant klezmer clarinet of [Naftule Brandwein](#)

5. Sherele (Wedding Dance) – [as explained in Wikipedia](#), "The sherele or sher is a set dance in 4/4 march-like tempo. The set is made up of four couples in a square formation, similar to a quadrille or square dance formation. There are many figures used, such as couples advancing, retiring, changing places, couples visiting, circling, threading the needle, etc. The "sher" figure involves two opposite men advancing towards each other and then crossing past each other turning as they pass. "Sher" means "scissors" (and "sherele" is "small scissors") in Yiddish, and the name of the dance may come from the sher figure that is thought to imitate the cutting action of scissors"

6. Yikhes (Tradition) – my arrangement for solo lyre of a very early Klezmer recording of this melody, which I first heard on the album "[Early Klezmer Recordings 1911-1939](#)" from the collection of [Prof. Martin Schwartz](#).

7. Dobriden (Greeting the Wedding Guests) – a beautiful Klezmer classic, in the timeless "[Ahava Raba](#)" Mode

8. Baym Rebin's Sude (At the Rabbi's Feast) – another Klezmer classic in the "Ahava Raba" mode, magically transformed by the sound of the Biblical Kinnor.

9. Ale Brider (We Are Brothers) – the words of this traditional song of the Klezmer repertoire, arranged here for solo Biblical Lyre, are:

*“We are all brothers
And sing happy songs
We stick together
Like nobody else does!*

*We are all united
Whether we are many or few
And we love each other
Like bride and groom!*

*We're happy and cheerful
Singing songs, tapping our feet
And we are all sisters
Like Rachel, Ruth, and Esther”*

10. Artza Alinu (We Shall Ascend to the Land) - This song [was a favourite of the Israeli pioneers who returned to live in the land of Israel](#). As they planted crops and brought the land back to cultivation, they sang and danced in the hope that the land of Israel would be rebuilt.

11. The Jew in Jerusalem – my arrangement for solo Biblical Kinnor, of the Klezmer classic, commonly known as *“Der yid in Yerusholaim”*

12. Yerushalayim Shel Zahav (Jerusalem of Gold) – this is my arrangement for Biblical lyre, of , [Naomi Shemer's](#) timeless song, made forever immortal, by the legendary singing of it by the late great [Ofra Haza](#). This song has since become known as [“Israel's Second National Anthem”](#).

Prepare to embark with me, on an actual "Musical Adventure in Time Travel"! On this incredible journey, I will take you back over 3500 years ago, to the

mystically remote, Biblical times of the ancient Hebrews & to hear once more,
the Lyre of the Levites...

