

# SIDOR BELARSKY

SINGS A SALUTE TO

# ISRAEL'S ANNIVERSARY

LPB-120



Produced by  
**ARTISTIC ENTERPRISES**  
in cooperation with  
**FARBAND LABOR**  
**ZIONIST ORDER**



# SIDOR BELARSKY SINGS A SALUTE TO israel's 20th anniversary

סידור בעלארסקי

ARTISTIC ENTERPRISES, INC.

LPB-120



## ISRAEL REBORN

The reestablishment of the State of Israel and its magnificent achievements in its first two decades are the product not of twenty years but of twenty centuries. For 2,000 years, Jews everywhere dreamt of the restoration of Zion and the return of the people to its land.

This was expressed in prayer, in the daily practices, in the holiday celebrations, and in the songs the Jews sang throughout the ages.

It achieved its greatest crescendo when, under the impact of oppression and persecution in the lands of the dispersion, the dream of the return to Zion became the active objective of the Zionist Movement. It was translated into an immediate personal responsibility by the *halutzim* who actually went up to the land to reclaim its waste places and by their own labor to lay the foundations of the reborn Jewish State.

It is this yearning, these hopes, these ideals, that are the soul of the songs comprising this musical tribute to Israel's 20th Anniversary. Coupled with them is also the spirit of those who have had to fight for Israel's independence, who have had to constantly defend her security, and who achieved such a singular victory in the Six-Day War of last June.

These songs are presented through the magnificent voice of one who has been the troubadour of this rebirth for the length of Israel's life. His concerts in Israel and throughout the Jewish diaspora—in America, Europe and South America—his twenty albums of recordings, have warmed homes and concert halls with a blend of robustness and delicacy that are a perfect expression of the tender and heroic spirit that is Israel. From folklore to art song, in Yiddish and in Hebrew, Sidor Belarsky has brought the discipline of an opera singer and the soul of a Hassid to each sacred moment.

For these songs are not random selections; each one reflects a different facet of the sparkling brilliance of Israel's achievement. And they are recreated here, in new arrangements, by a man whose voice made many of these songs the living accompaniment of Israel's struggle.

MUSIC DIRECTOR: VLADIMIR HEIFETZ

VIOLINIST: OSCAR RAVINA

CELLIST: BERNARDO ALTMANN

NOTES BY AVRAHAM SOLTES

## SIDE ONE

### 1. V'liYerushalayim Ircha (ולירושלים עירך) Alter

The dream of a return to Zion saturated the traditional prayers of generations: "Return to Jerusalem, Thy city, Oh God, and may Thy presence dwell therein as Thou hast promised, in a city eternally rebuilt."

### 2. Uri Tzion (אורי ציון) Vilensky

Ki Mitzion (כי מציון) Amiran

David established Jerusalem as the capital of Israel; but it was Isaiah who graced it with special character: the

fountainhead of the Jewish ideals of learning and of peace. "Go up, go up to Jerusalem, for out of Zion cometh forth Torah and word of life."

### 3. Yam Lid (ים ליד) Yehuda Halevi—arr. Bonime

Babylonians and Romans drove the Jews out of Jerusalem; they could never drive Jerusalem out of the heart of the Jew. Through nineteen centuries of exile, Jews have continually been moved to leave all their earthly goods, their professional achievements, their friends and their homes and turn their eyes and their feet towards Zion. The most gifted of these medieval *Olim* was Yehudah Halevi, prominent Spanish physician, poet and philosopher. Amid the turbulent waves of the Mediterranean, he meditates on the meaning of what he has done. Hayim Nahman Bialik, a master of Hebrew and Yiddish, fired the imagination of the East European masses by rendering Halevi's vivid verses into the spoken tongue.

### 4. Sachki Sachki (סחקי סחקי) Tchernichovsky—Folklore

In the awakening national consciousness of the turn of the century; the prayers and dreams of graybeards became the vision of idealistic youth. "Laugh at all my dreams, but I still believe in the spirit of man; I have not sold my soul to the golden calf of doubt." So, in 1892 wrote Saul Tchernichovsky, a 17 year old student, in passionate Hebrew verses. "In that day, shall my own people revive; a new generation will arise, cast off its chains and see the light." The Hebrew rhythms are those of the Diaspora, but the vision was fulfilled and Israel Reborn.

### 5. Havu Leveynim (הבו לבנים) Pen—Zeira

Many sweet dreams, like flimsy ships, have been shattered on the hard rock of reality. The Land of Israel was not a paradise of milk and honey. It turned out to be a treeless morass of swamp and sand, plagued by insect and disease. Only by joining shoulder to shoulder in the practical idealism of collective effort could homes be built and farms established: "Pass up the bricks, there isn't a moment to lose. Labor without tiring, for every wall we erect, builds our nation!"

### 6. Veulai (ואולי) Rachel—Sharet

Wonder of wonders—it worked! As the longest journey begins with a single step, the renaissance of Israel was born in the day-to-day chores of selfless young people, who rediscovered themselves in pitting their intelligence and determination against the gritty problems of irrigation and drainage, of planting and harvest.

"Is it really I, who arose here at dawn to work in the heat of the garden? Is it really I who lifted my voice in song, atop a wagon laden with sheaves? Is it all real, or only a dream?"

## SIDE TWO

### 7. Olim (עולים) Shenberg—Postolsky

The builders knew that they built not for themselves alone. As the crooked cross spread its straggling tentacles across

Europe and the refugees of the holocaust pounded desperately on the doors of the Jewish National Home, the *Yishuv* organized itself to land and absorb its brothers in the face of the opposition of the Mandatory Power. Through raging seas, in the black of moonless nights, they waded out in wintry water to bring their battered brothers home.

### 8. Shir HaChamisha (שיר החמשה) Shalom—Zeira

As in every pioneering land, life gave quick rise to legends. When the numbers are few and the needs are great, every man must be a hero, if the dream is to survive. So men who had converted rocks to gardens left their well-earned homes and families to prepare the ground for others. Many never returned. But, says the legend, if you pass by the hill they were readying for settlement, you can hear their hammers pounding, pounding all through the night.

### 9. Sadot ShebaEmek (סדות שבועמק) Ben Chaim

As each challenge was met, new ones cried out for attention. The swamps of the Emek and the Sharon plain yielded their bogs to orchards and gardens. Laughing children replaced buzzing mosquitoes in the Huleh, and wheat fields and fish ponds covered the cold quicksand of fear and disease with a joyous quilt of fruitfulness.

### 10. El HaNegev (אל הנגב) Rimon—Mindlin

The swamps rejuvenated, the *Negev* awaited its redeemers—the dry barren southland where random Bedouin pitched their primitive goat-hair tents. Almost half of the new state's area, the *Negev* once supported a semi-urban civilization. With the skills of science and the art of love it could be made to blossom again; and the rose and the peach would replace the thorn and the briar; the shovel and the mine would dig copper and glass out of the rocky hills.

### 11. Dash MeAba (דיש מאבא) Tzuri—Wald

The rebuilding of the ruined dignity of a land and its inhabitants was task enough for any people. But as in the days of Nehemiah, they built with only one hand; the other was forced to wield the sword. Yet the descendants of a dreamer who saw the day when "Men would beat their swords into ploughshares," refused to be debased to a people of militarists. They did not lullaby their sons to sleep with dreams of wartime glory; their songs long for the quick return to peace.

### 12. Yerushalayim Shel Zahav (ירושלים של זהב) Shemer

The breathtaking climax of Israel's 20th year was, unquestionably, the restoration of Jerusalem as the undivided capital of the Jewish state. This city, which had become a symbol of the power of a dream to conquer time and space and oppression, was suddenly, unbelievably ours. A simple song, composed but a month before the reunion, became the wings upon which the souls of the Jewish people soared in awe, in wonderment and in thanksgiving. It swept out from the throats of the soldiers at the Wall to the lips of the children in the streets, to the hearts of Jews the world over: Jerusalem, would that we were harps, worthy of your song!