

# Lazaron, Morris S. (Morris Samuel), 1888-

Alternative names

<b>Dates:</b>	<b>Authority Source:</b> harvard, LC, lc
birth 1888	<b>Nationality:</b>
death 1979	<b>Language:</b>
<b>Gender:</b>	

## Biographical notes:

Morris Samuel Lazaron was born in Savannah, Georgia, on April 16, 1888 to Samuel L. and Alice (deCastro) Lazaron. He spent his childhood in Savannah, attending public schools and the Savannah Preparatory School.

Lazaron went north to Cincinnati, Ohio, to attend the Union College and the University of Cincinnati. In 1909 he received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University and, in 1911, received a Master of Arts degree. He was ordained a rabbi by Hebrew Union College in 1914.

Soon after his ordination Lazaron accepted a call to become rabbi at the Congregation Leshem Shomayim in Wheeling, West Virginia. He remained there until the next year, 1915, when he moved to Baltimore, Maryland to accept the pulpit at the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation.

While in Wheeling, Lazaron met and married Pauline Horkheimer. They had three children: Morris, Jr., Harold Victor, and Clementine. Pauline died in 1933 and, in 1945, Lazaron married Hilda Rothschild Rosenblatt.

During World War I Lazaron served as a chaplain in the U.S. Army Officers' Reserve Corps. In 1918 he obtained the rank of major and remained in the Officers' Reserve Corps until 1953. In 1921 Lazaron was one of four officiating chaplains, representing the Jews of America, at the burial of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. Also, in 1925 Lazaron was one of twenty founders of the Military Chaplains Association, an interfaith chaplains association.

While in Baltimore, in addition to his rabbinical duties, Lazaron became involved in and emerged as one of the leaders of a national effort to improve Jewish-Christian relations as well as becoming one of the most prominent spokesmen for the non-Zionist movement.

In 1933 and 1935, Lazaron, at the invitation of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, toured the United States with a Catholic priest and a Protestant minister, addressing meetings and conducting seminars in an effort to encourage inter-faith dialogue and support. In 1941, again at the invitation of the NCCJ, Lazaron toured England and Ireland with Dr. Everett R. Clinchy, president of the Conference, and Father Vincent Donovan in order to further study inter-faith relations. While in England, Lazaron gave a blessing in Hebrew to then prime minister, Winston Churchill.

Lazaron's efforts in the non-Zionist movement brought him into conflict with many pro-Zionist leaders, such as Stephen S. Wise, and led to his assisting in the founding of the American Council for Judaism, an organization dedicated to supporting the efforts and goals on the non-Zionist movement. But Lazaron's effort in support of non-Zionism also brought him into conflict with his congregation in Baltimore. Following his resignation as rabbi in 1946 after 31 years of service and his subsequent election as Rabbi Emeritus,

Lazaron was asked by the Board of Trustees not to speak on Zionism in his High Holiday sermons to the congregation. Lazaron refused to agree to this and resigned as Emeritus in 1949. In 1957 Lazaron and the congregation settled their differences and Lazaron returned many times thereafter to speak to the congregation.

Lazaron was a member of numerous community organizations and civic groups including the American Merchant Marine Library Association, the Masons, The Order of the Scottish Rite, 33<sup>o</sup>, and the League of Nations Association, Maryland branch. In 1934 Lazaron was awarded the Gottheil Medal by Zeta Beta Tau for the greatest contribution to the welfare of American Jewry in 1933. In 1936 he was awarded an honorary Litt. D. degree from Rutgers University and in 1963 he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

Lazaron authored many books, including: *Common Ground: A Plea for Intelligent Americanism* (1938); *Seed of Abraham: Ten Jews of the Ages* (1930); and *Olive Trees in Storm* (1955). Lazaron was the author of many articles, poems, and numerous other writings.

After his retirement Lazaron lived in New York and Florida, where he taught for a time at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida and North Carolina. He took up painting and his works were displayed in one-man shows in Paris, London, New York, and Boston.

Morris S. Lazaron died on June 5, 1979 in London, England at the age of 91.

From the guide to the Morris S. Lazaron Papers., 1851-1979, 1930-1950, (The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives)

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