***‘Why the Genizah Documents are Important for Jewish History’***

Presented by

**Professor Stefan Reif**

**Chair: Prof Philip Alexander**

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**Thursday 1 November 2018**

**7:30 pm**

**Sephardi Synagogue, 24 Wicker Lane, Hale Barns, Cheshire WA15 0QH**

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In 1897 Professor Schechter brought over 140,000 fragmentary Jewish documents, from the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo to Cambridge University Library, and ushered in a new age of learning about Jews and Judaism as they existed in the Mediterranean 1000 years ago. The texts that he and others found, in what has become famous as the Cairo Genizah,, have shed light not only on what Jewish scholars wrote then in the Biblical Rabbinic fields, but also in the daily lives and relations of Jews, Christians and Muslims. Those very important documents, some of which are in Manchester now at The John Rylands Library, uncover the secrets of the past and the contents are at least as important as the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Professor Stefan Reif will talk about the exciting discovery of the Genizah texts and reveal the motivations and personalities of those involved in bringing them to famous research libraries, which have revolutionised the knowledge of Jewish history and literature.

Professor Stefan Reif (BA, PhD London; MA LittD Cambridge; Hon. PhD Haifa) is Emeritus Professor of Medieval Hebrew Studies and Fellow of St John’s College at the University of Cambridge. He also holds senior research posts at the Universities of Haifa and Tel Aviv. He was the Founding Director of the Genizah Research Unit at Cambridge University Library (1973-2006) and oversaw the conservation, research, digitization and publication of most of the 200,000 Genizah fragments held there. He is the author of over 400 articles and numerous books and he has lectured widely in Europe, Israel, Canada and the USA.

Last time we invited Professor Reif to come to Manchester, the event was hugely oversubscribed and I can promise you a fascinating evening. His talk will be accompanied by a Powerpoint presentation. Definitely not one to be missed!

*Light refreshments will be provided.*

If you wish to attend please reply by **Email:**

**Synagogue Office: shaarehayim@clara.co.uk** or

**Joe Dwek: penjcdwek@aol.com**