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THE FRUIT OF HER HANDS

The STORY of SHIRA of ASHKENAZ

By Michelle Cameron

Praise for THE FRUIT OF HER HANDS:

“Readers will drink in the historical detail...”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“...a meticulously researched and immensely readable saga...”

—*Jewish Woman Magazine*

“Cameron’s clean, clear prose clings to the reader’s memory long after it’s been read, as does her heroine.”

—*RT Book Review (Top Pick!)*

In the tradition of Maggie Anton’s *Rashi’s Daughter* and Geraldine Brooks’s *People of the Book*, Michelle Cameron offers a richly dramatic and multi-generational novel based on the life of her ancestor, renowned thirteenth-century Jewish scholar Meir ben Baruch.

THE FRUIT OF HER HANDS: The Story of Shira of Ashkenaz (Pocket Books; September 2009; \$25.00) highlights the story of the wife of Rabbi Meir, who struggles to preserve her religious traditions while remaining true to herself as she witnesses the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe.

Raised by her widowed rabbi father and a Christian nursemaid in Normandy, Shira is a free-spirited girl whose love of learning shocks the community. When Shira’s father is arrested by the local baron intent on enforcing the Catholic Church’s strictures against heresy, Shira fights for his release and encounters two men who will influence her life profoundly—an inspiring Catholic priest and Meir ben Baruch, who is both a brilliant scholar and her soul mate.

Married to Meir and living in Paris, Shira enjoys her life as a wife and mother. But when pogroms break out, Shira and her family flee to Germany and prepare to set out for Israel.

Their plans change when Meir is captured and imprisoned. As Shira works to find a middle ground between warring religions and weathers life's challenges, she shows her children how to embrace the joys of life—both secular and religious.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Michelle Cameron discovered the inspiring story of Rabbi Meir ben Baruch while exploring her family tree. She lived in Israel for fourteen years and served in the Israeli Army. She currently lives in Chatham, NJ with her family. Visit her website at www.michelle-cameron.com.

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By Michelle Cameron

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