

## Zakhar Benderskiy



This is a picture of me taken on the occasion of my 60th birthday. In the 1970s a number of Jews began to move to Israel. I sympathized with those who were moving there and was happy for them. We had many relatives in Israel, but my wife and I weren't going to move there. I worked and my wife was a housewife. She said that she would stay where her daughter's grave was. Our daughter Emma died in 1969. My wife died in 1973. There were people returning from Israel in the 1970s. I had a colleague. He was a janitor here. He moved to Israel being sure that he would get everything immediately: an apartment and a good job. He realized that he had to work hard to get all the comforts he wanted and didn't like it at all. There were TV programs and articles in newspapers about him. They were saying that a Soviet person couldn't get adjusted to the capitalist world. He got his former job and received an apartment. He was hoping to get a better job in Chernovtsy and was very unhappy about it. I got married for the second time in 1978. My wife's name is Sophia Lazko; she's Jewish. She was born to an assimilated Jewish family in Chernigov in 1920. Her parents were engineers. She finished school and worked as a typist at a military unit in Chernigov. During the war she went to the front. She was a topographer at the army headquarters. After the war

Sophia decided to go to Chernovtsy. She didn't want to go back to Chernigov where all her relatives had perished during the war. Sophia was a lab assistant at the sanitary-epidemiological facility in Chernovtsy. She's a very nice and kind woman. We are very close. We have common interests and friends. I'm so happy to have met her. The Soviet power forced us to forget Jewish traditions. It's too late for me to restore them. We didn't live a Jewish life. We only celebrate holidays in Hased.