Anyone who really knows me knows that I have loved Elvis Presley since I was 10 years old. As I got older I used to think what a wonderful cantor he would make even though at that time I had no idea he was of Jewish heritage. I did not write the following article but I wanted to share it.

Orthodox Elvis impersonator Dan Hartal a.k.a. Schmelvis says Elvis IS, in fact Jewish by lineage. Hartal is the world's only Jewish Elvis impersonator. In 1998 the Wall Street Journal published an article titled "All Shook Up In The Holy Land" exposing Elvis Presley's Jewish lineage. Elvis' maternal great great grandmother Nancy Burdine was Jewish. Her daughter whose name hasn't been made public gave birth to Doll Mansell who gave birth to Gladys Smith Presley who was Elvis' mother. According to Jewish law, you are whatever your mother is. That makes him Jewish whether or not he follows the religion, he is Jewish.

Furthermore, this fact was something Elvis was aware of, and even sensitive to, because he had read the Kabbalah, and several other books on Judaism. In many of his photos you can see that he wore a large Chai around his neck. He also had a large star of David that he wore. He often would wear them along with a cross and an Egyptian ankh at the same time and would say he "didn't want to miss getting through the gates of Heaven on a technicality".

After performing for elderly Jewish patients in a hospital and nursing home Elvis Schmelvis teamed up with a documentary filmmaker Max Wallace and made a pilgrimage to Graceland to recite kaddish on the anniversary of his yahrtzeit. They brought some cameras with them and made a film out of their experience. The result was "Schmelvis Searching for the King's Jewish Roots"

As documented in the movie, the group was successful in giving Elvis the Jewish tribute that they felt was long overdue. Initially they only had 7 of the 10 Jewish males required for a minyan to recite the mourner's kaddish but miraculously three more Jewish men "came out of nowhere" and Rabbi Reuven Poupko led the group in prayer.