

# SOLEMN QUESTIONS

Addressed to Hebrews of Culture.

BY PROF. FRANZ DELITZSCH.

Translated from the German by the Rev. Wm. C. Daland.

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## THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.


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
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# THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

A CHRISTIAN MONTHLY,

DEVOTED TO JEWISH INTERESTS.

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Founded by the late Rev. H. Friedländer and the Rev. Ch. Th. Lucky.

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"The Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself."  
Deut. 14:2.

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Vol. 9.            December, 1896.            No. 9.

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## OUR PLATFORM.

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# THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

"The Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself."—Deut. 14:2

*A Christian Monthly devoted to Jewish Interests, Political, Social,  
Literary, and Religious.*

הַבִּיטוּ אֶל־צִוֵּר חֲצַבְתֶּם  
וְאֶל־מִקְבַּת בּוֹר נִקְרָתֶם

Isa. 51: 1.

"For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good."—Psa. 122: 8, 9.

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VOL. IX.

PLAINFIELD, N. J., DECEMBER, 1896.

No. 9.

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JUDÆUS SUM; JUDAICI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

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AS THESE lines are written,\* the Czar of Russia is leaving the shores of England after a visit to the Queen which, although of a private character, may mean a great deal for the peace and tranquility of Europe. For some time past all England has been agitated over the cause of the Armenian Christians. The champions of Armenia have been holding meetings and making speeches and by other means have tried to arouse enthusiasm. Likewise Lord Salisbury has been in a more conservative and diplomatic way trying to secure the needed condition of reform in the government of the Sultan; namely, the union of the powers of Europe. This we trust may be accomplished, and all lovers of justice hope that the result may be for the peace and liberty of the oppressed and a decided reform in the administration of the Turkish empire.

WHAT influence the visit of the Emperor of Russia at Balmoral may have in this connection no one can tell, but it is certainly not without the bounds of possibility that it may result in some considerable modification of the whole course of the history of the Eastern part of Europe and perhaps of the whole of Europe. This at least seems to be the general opinion of the people. It is of course hardly possible that the Czar should spend even a short time in such

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\* October 4, 1896.

a country as England without hearing some word to influence him on behalf of the Christians of Armenia. Whatever opinion we may have of the Czar or of the enlightenment and just administration of his own empire, we surely hope that he may use the power he wields in the interest of the wronged.

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BUT there is another question of a kindred nature which to us seems to be worth considering just at this juncture. Has any one ventured to suggest to the Czar the very uncomfortable feeling aroused in most people of England and America by the position of a large number of the Russian Emperor's own subjects? While we are praying that he may be moved with sympathy toward the Armenians, might it not be pertinent to try to soften his heart toward the millions of Russo-Polish Jews who are under allegiance to the "Little Father"? Certainly now is the time to call his attention to the sufferings of the Jews in his own country, whose condition is worse than that of any other class of people in Europe, except perhaps the Christian subjects of the Sultan of Turkey. If, as we hope, he has been moved with pity for the latter and with indignation toward the cruel despotism of the Turkish government, his mind would naturally be in just the state to receive the message of some brave man who, like Nathan of old, should point out to him that he also is responsible for sufferings as flagrant as those which are now the horror of the whole civilized world.

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FOR the wrongs of the Jews in Russia are not less than those of the Armenian Christians because they are more indirectly imposed. The flagrantly unjust regulations known as the May laws, which have been often heretofore mentioned in these pages, accomplish in a slower and more distressing way the same results of pain, sufferings and death as do the scimitars of the Turkish soldiery or the infuriated rage of a fanciful populace. By the unjust

restrictions of these laws the Jews in Russia are cramped and pinched from the cradle to the grave, and their existence is miserable in the extreme. Not only do individuals suffer, but the whole race is degraded and kept in abject misery. The results of this tyrannous treatment on the part of a so-called Christian nation are seen in those of the Jewish race who flock to the more hospitable shores of western countries in great numbers to escape starvation, disease and death in the land of the emperor who is now spoken of as so humane and whose compassion is sought for an oppressed people. England and America, the countries which are compelled to receive the largest number of these fugitives, have an interest in seeing to it that the Czar's attention is very plainly called to the condition of his own subjects. We have assimilated many of these unfortunate people and often they become good citizens, but there is a limit to what we can do in this regard and the imperial visitor who has been feted and honored in his present journey over Europe has it in his power to alleviate the misery of these poor people and remove a burden from other nations which have enough of their own in misery from other causes, apart from the tyrannous and oppressive administration of imperial governments.

### THE ANCIENT SYNAGOGUE.

BY THE REV. WM. C. DALAND, D. D.

(Continued from page 178.)

#### THE ORIGIN OF SYNAGOGUES.

The origin of synagogues is a subject of great interest, but one that is involved in some little obscurity. Synagogues are evidently very ancient. Jews claim a remote antiquity for them,<sup>1</sup> and in the New Testament it is said (Acts 15:21) that "of old time" Moses had "in every city" them that preached his laws, "being read in the synagogue every Sabbath-day." How early a date is to be assigned for synagogues in this sense is not easy to de-

<sup>1</sup> See Onkelos on Gen. 25:27, and Deut. 32:10.

termine. The Biblical expression<sup>1</sup> is of course not exact, but seems to indicate that the custom of weekly worship was then ancient. Nevertheless we must distinguish between the custom of meeting together or resorting to the prophets for instruction and the establishing of special places or buildings for purposes of instruction and worship. Of the former we have cases in Scripture, and such customs may have been the forerunners of the synagogue worship. But the question of interest to us is, When and how did synagogues as we understand them originate, and what led to their establishment?

Of course the germ of public worship is almost coeval with the race. In Gen. 4: 26 it is said that "then men began to call upon the name of the Lord," (Jahveh). The use of this expression in its connection, as in Gen. 12: 8, 13: 4, 21: 33, 26: 25, and 28: 22, together with many other passages, shows that worship was a habit, so performed as to make it natural that there often should have been an assembly, at least of a tribe or family. But this is not synagogue worship.

The description in the Mosaic and Levitical legislation of the Sabbath and the annual festivals as "holy convocations" has caused many to think that apart from the tabernacle and temple service, in all places where there were people of Israel, there must have been from the time of Moses public assemblies for worship, that is to all intents and purposes synagogues. But while the expression mentioned, "holy convocation," certainly became a designation of those set times at which the people were gathered for worship at the tabernacle or temple, yet the words themselves in their primitive use do not of necessity imply the meeting together of people. The essential meaning of the expression מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ (*miqra qodhesh*) is a "proclamation of holiness," a "calling of holiness," and naturally also a "calling together of holiness," or a "holy

<sup>1</sup> Ἐκ γενεῶν ἀρχαίων, "From generations of old," Acts 15: 21, R. V.

calling together," and so an assembly. But if one studies all the places in the Bible where this expression occurs, with the explanations given in the passages themselves; and if he reads these words without the prejudice caused by the rendering "convocation," he will see that the connection requires an expression meaning the hallowing by abstinence from labor, rather than by the gathering together of numbers of people<sup>1</sup> Assuredly the people were gathered together at the tabernacle and the temple to perform the sacrifices enjoined at those set times, but the expression "proclamation of holiness," connected invariably with the idea of rest in the dwellings of Israel rather than of meeting together in a public place, cannot be fairly adduced as proving that there must have existed places of worship at all answering to the synagogues of later times. Rather the contrary. But even allowing to the word all the meaning that could be intended by the word "convocation," its application in this sense is certainly to the assembly at the tabernacle or temple for sacrificial worship.

The gathering together of the congregation of Israel at Mizpeh (Judges 20: 1) cannot be adduced as a proof that there was a habit of congregational worship like that of the synagogue. That assembly, although said to be "unto the Lord at Mizpeh," was for judicial deliberation rather than for worship, and was an occasion of so special a nature that to use it as indicative of places of

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<sup>1</sup> The phrase is found in Ex. 12: 16, Lev. 23: 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 21, 24, 35, 36, 37, Num. 28: 18, 25, 26; 29: 1, 7, 12, and always in connection with the command to rest and "do no servile work." The latter expression seems given as a definition of the phrase "holy convocation." In Ex. 12: 16 and in many of the passages no reference is made to a gathering of people but clearly to rest in the home. Besides these places the word מִקְרָא, in them translated "convocation," is elsewhere found only in Num. 10: 2, Neh. 8: 8, Isa. 1: 13 and 4: 5. In Num. 10: 2 it is translated "calling," the word for "congregation" following being, עֵרָה. In Neh. 8: 8 it is translated "reading." In Isa. 1: 13 it is translated "assemblies," though in the singular number. Cheyne in his commentary renders it the "calling of a convocation." In Isa. 4: 5 it is in the plural and rendered "assemblies." In the latter case it surely refers to the temple service as will be seen from the context, and when in the Pentateuch it indicates an assembly the tabernacle service must be what is meant. There is no indication of other assemblies.



worship other than the central one, at that time Shiloh, is to force the application of the text. Further, the historical books, as Kings and Chronicles, are wholly silent on the subject of synagogues, although there are mentioned "companies" of prophets or "sons of the prophets," like that over which Samuel was head (1 Sam. 10: 5, 19: 20, 2 Kings 2: 3 and 5: 38, etc.), which may have been the germ of the later schools connected with the synagogues in subsequent times. But these bands of prophets, called by later writers "schools of the prophets," and their life and meetings together do not answer to the synagogue. Nor is the fact that people were accustomed to resort to prophets on Sabbaths and festivals for instruction (2 Kings 4: 23) or that elders sat before the prophets for instruction (Ezek. 8: 1, 14: 1 and 20: 1) a proof that there was then anything like the synagogues of later days. The book of Lamentations, which speaks in the minutest detail of all the deprivations of the people at the time of the captivity, does not once mention that they were deprived of meeting places for worship other than the temple. Lam. 1: 10 refers of course to the temple, as do also Lam. 2: 6 and 7. For Lam 2: 6, which in the common version seems to refer to "places of assembly," should read, as in the Revised Version, "He hath destroyed his place of assembly," which clearly is the temple as is shown by the parallelism of verses. If synagogues were known in Israel at the time of the Captivity, it would seem that the deprivation of the people in this respect would have been at least once mentioned. From the time of Rehoboam the people fell into gross idolatry and places of worship multiplied, but they were idolatrous places of worship. The "high places" so often mentioned were surely not synagogues. These customs are inconsistent with a general synagogue worship. When Jehoshaphat instituted his reforms, he sent his princes and Levites to go throughout all the cities of Judah and teach the people. "They taught in Judah and had the book of

the law of the Lord with them, and went about through all the cities of Judah and taught the people." 2 Chron. 17: 9. These men did just the work which the synagogues afterwards accomplished. Had such been in existence previously or at that time, there would have been some indication of it in this passage. The fact that these teachers took the Book of the Law with them proves that there were no synagogues as in later times. The rabbis say, "Where there is no Book of the Law there can be no synagogue."<sup>1</sup> If such an institution had been in existence, the work which Jehoshaphat set forward would not have been needed to the extent or in the manner in which he prosecuted it. Josiah's finding of the Book of the Law and his establishment of ancient customs is described with no reference to any institution corresponding to the synagogue. Had there been synagogues during this period, surely there would have been some trace of them and some other copies of the Book of the Law preserved in them. Had there been such places of worship during the Captivity, some trace would naturally have been found in a book like that of Esther. A careful examination of the whole history of Israel from the beginning down to the time of the Captivity reveals no trace of anything answering in the least to the synagogue as known in the later history of Judaism. Its origin must then be sought in the period after the Exile.

<sup>1</sup> *Midrash Esther 123, 1, Tanchuma 54, 2.*

<sup>2</sup> It might seem that Psa. 74: 8 settles the matter and proves that there were synagogues before the Exile. But in the first place it is wrong to translate the rather ambiguous expression מִעֲרִיָּאֵל, using so technical a word as "synagogue." For מִעֲרִיָּאֵל means a "set time" or a "set feast," and is almost always used of the great feasts and of the temple worship. It is oftenest translated "feasts," as in Lev. 23: 2, 4, 37, 44, 2 Chron. 30: 22, Zech. 8: 19, etc. It is rendered "time" in Ex. 34: 18, 1 Sam. 9: 34, and notably in the strange expression "time, times and a half," in Dan. 12: 7. In Lam. 2: 6 it is translated once by "set feast," and once by "assembly." In Lam. 1: 15 and Ezek. 44: 24 it is surely used in the sense of "assembly." But it is an anachronism to employ the word "synagogue" in this passage. Even though in the plural, the expression is in connection with a description of the destruction of the temple and can be so understood. Further, the conditions of the Psalm can only be satisfied by regarding it as composed either at the time of the Exile or at the Maccabean period, perhaps preferably the latter. But the whole tenor of the context indicates the destruction of the temple, and the parallelism of

We may find the germ of the Post-exilic synagogue in the labors of Ezra when he assembled the people (Neh. 8: 1-12) and strove to teach them the Law. For it is quite probable that Ezra's reading the Law to the people stimulated their zeal for its principles and a thirst for further knowledge, showing them the necessity there was of having it read among them for instruction, and so giving rise to the holding of other similar assemblies. But the establishment of distinct houses for such purposes and for worship would seem to appear first as the fruit of the zeal awakened by the Maccabees among their fellow countrymen and companions in religion during their strife against the attempt of Antiochus Epiphanes to destroy the Mosaic religion. For the Books of the Maccabees (1 Macc. 3: 46, etc.,) cannot be said to mention synagogues as already existing. Now we know what a patriotic zeal was then awakened; and during the next two centuries, as the New Testament and the writings of Philo and others show, synagogues appear to have become very numerous. Further, it appears from the general manner in which synagogues are mentioned that instruction in the laws and customs of Israel and discussion of the same was the principal object of the synagogue. Josephus shows this plainly when he refers to Moses himself the custom of hearing the law read every week and considers that the great lawgiver of Israel commanded it. He says: "Not once, or twice, or many times, but every week our lawgiver commanded us to put aside other work and come together to hear the law and diligently learn it."<sup>1</sup> While Josephus is of course wrong in attributing this to Moses,

verses shows that the word "all" and the use of the plural might easily be a poetic expression to show the complete destruction of the temple with all its feasts and assemblies. At best the expression is somewhat ambiguous and should not be rendered "synagogues."

1 Οὐκ εἰς ἅπαντες ἀκροασιμένους οὐδὲ δις ἢ πολλάκις, ἀλλ' ἐκάστης ἐβδομάδος τῶν ἄλλων ἔργων ἀφεμένους ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκρόασιν τοῦ νόμου ἐκέλευσε συλλέγεσθαι καὶ τοῦτον ἀκριβῶς ἑκμανθάνειν.—*Contra Apion, II, 17.* Compare Matt. 4: 23, Mark 1: 21; 6: 2, Luke 4: 15; 6: 6; 13: 10, John 6: 59; 18: 20. Note also the Judgment in John 7: 49.

such a statement nevertheless shows plainly that in his day the weekly hearing of the law had for a long time been a matter of supreme importance, and weekly assemblies for that purpose must have existed long before his time. Putting this together with the changes wrought by the heroes of the Maccabean age, we see that there then arose a condition such as had not arisen before and which furnished an adequate cause and motive for an earnest attempt for the preservation of the national unity of the people, at least in faith, and doctrine, and life. To accomplish this end assemblies appear to have been instituted on certain days in the different places where Jews lived and where learned men expounded the law. Thus it seems were formed the synagogues, places for hearing and learning the law, and in connection therewith for worship, which afterwards became the only centres of national unity and religious faith and activity. As has been said, it is hard to point out the exact time when synagogues were first established. They certainly did not arise till after the Exile. It is probable that the interest in the law which began in the time of Ezra together with, and intensified by, the patriotic zeal of the Maccabean age called them into existence.

(To be continued.)

PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.—Most interesting discoveries have been made by Dr. Bliss and Mr. Diebie. "Their interest lies in the fact that the excavators have been digging up portions of the old wall around Jerusalem and have come across pieces of masonry belonging to the actual wall which Titus besieged in A. D. 70." Dr. Bliss' reasons for assuming that the lower parts of the double wall, which he has unearthed, is Jewish and therefore belonging to the period anterior to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, are these: Firstly, the debris separating it from the upper wall indicates a time when no city wall ran along the line, and points to an interruption in the city's history like that which occurred after the destruction by Titus. The upper wall would then be Roman or Christian. Secondly, the pottery found along the base of the lower wall is almost exclusively Jewish, while that at the higher lines is Roman.—*The Jewish Era*.

## GALILEE.

How pleasant to me thy deep blue wave,  
O Sea of Galilee!  
For the glorious One who came to save  
Hath often stood by thee.

Graceful around thee the mountains meet,  
Thou calm reposing sea ;  
But ah ! far more, the beautiful feet  
Of Jesus walkèd o'er thee.

Tell me, ye mouldering fragments, tell,  
Was the Saviour's city here ?  
Lifted to heaven, has it sunk to hell,  
With none to shed a tear ?

And was it beside this very sea  
The new-risen Saviour said,  
Three times to Simon, " Lovest thou me ?  
My lambs and sheep then feed."

O Saviour, gone to God's right hand,  
But the same Saviour still,  
Graved on thy heart is this lovely strand  
And every fragrant hill.

Oh ! give me, Lord, by this sacred wave,  
Threefold thy love divine,  
That I may feed, till I find my grave,  
Thy flock—both thine and mine.

—*McCheyne.*

## THE ROYAL FAMILY OF CHRIST.

BY MRS. F. G. DE FONTAINE.

The late Rev. Charles F. Deems, pastor of the Church of the Strangers in New York, once said from his pulpit while preaching upon the Nativity of Christ, "I never pass a Jew on the street that I do not feel like lifting my hat to him."

Henry Ward Beecher, while discoursing upon the same subject, remarked: "You cannot find in America another people among whom the social virtues are more rigorously observed than among the Israelites."

In an ethnological sense, the Semitic race occupies a unique place in history. To no other race under heaven has God manifested Himself in a similar manner. To no other nation was He ever so nigh. "Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire and live?" Did ever God essay "to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation," as He did the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage?

It was to this people amid the thunders of Sinai that God gave the first written Constitution that ever was given to man—a Constitution which taught the great truth that "God is One." For forty days and nights Moses, their great lawgiver, held communion with God, and at last received from Him the two tablets of stone on which are founded all the laws of Christendom. And then, as we have it from the Scriptures, "Moses, the servant of Jehovah, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of Jehovah, and he buried him in a ravine in the land of Moab, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." In the words of Matthew Arnold, this Decalogue is "the pith of the Old Testament."

The race has "seen the Pharaohs pass away and the empires of Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Macedonia and Rome perish." It has witnessed the rise and fall of Greek civilization. It was present at the cradle and the grave of the Cæsars and Ptolemies, and although surviv-

ing nearly four thousand years, it still holds its traditions and to-day remains what it was when its great lawgiver received his commands from the hands of the Almighty. The history of the Jews opens in the twentieth century B. C., with the coming of Abraham from Chaldea into Canaan, where he and his descendants dwelt in the tents among their flocks and herds. Their first appearance as a nation was when Moses led them out of Egyptian bondage and delivered to them a code of laws for their religious, moral and sanitary benefit.

To their race, the Christian world is indebted for its Christ who descended from their royal family. So completely identified, however, is Christ with the world at large, that we often forget this fact. National limitations seem too narrow for such a grand personality, yet we know that a Jewish mother gave Him birth and that His grave was made in Jewish soil. Judaism has given us our Bible; the Scriptures, Old and New, with one or two exceptions being written by men of Jewish birth. The books of Job and the Prophets and the Psalms of David have given to mankind poetry that will live as long as the world moves in its orbit.

The observance of the Sabbath, the very name of which means "rest," is an institution which the Jew has made coeval with the work of creation. Wherever he went, his reverence for that day was the most visible badge of his nationality and religion. And Jew and Gentile the world over alike obey the injunction, "Remember the Sabbath-day and keep it holy,"—a command that still has as much significance as it had under the Mosaic code.

The first church was at Jerusalem and from this source we trace institutional Christianity. Schlegel says that "Judaism is the chief corner-stone of Christianity." Another writer declares that "that corner-stone was laid at Alexandria and that Alexandria, not Bethlehem, was the birth-place of Christianity, for it was in the Alexandrian

Library that the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek and became the property of all nations." We read from the Jewish Psalter and Proverbs; we sing the psalms of "David, of the tribe of Judah," and we pray in phraseology taken from Jewish Scriptures. We read the Epistles of the Jewish Apostle Paul. Our Holy Communion has for its origin "the Paschal Supper" of which our Lord partook. Our own Holy Week and Easter stand as the anniversary of the great events commemorated by the Passover. We celebrate the feast of the Pentecost which is the Jewish "Harvest-home," and Christians try to make their lives conform to the Decalogue.

Montesquieu says: "The Jew is an old trunk which has produced two branches that have covered all the earth; I mean Mohammedanism and Christianity. Or rather, she is a mother who has brought two daughters into the world, who have overwhelmed her with a thousand wounds, because in matters of religion the nearest are the greatest enemies; but, however badly she has been treated she cannot cease to boast of having given them birth. She uses the one and the other to embrace the entire world, whilst on the other hand, her venerable old age embraces all time."

Learning was held in high esteem by this ancient people. Every boy was compelled to learn some trade. Even the greatest scholars and statesmen had some regular occupation. Indolence was calendared as a crime. Coming down from the period of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to more modern times, we find that Jews caused Vasco da Gama to sail around the Cape of Good Hope and were thus instrumental in revolutionizing commerce. Jewish scientists predicted the success of the first voyage of Columbus, with whom two Jewish sailors came—the first of the race to set foot on American soil. Jewish merchants were the authors of the "bill of exchange." It was a Jewish commodore, Uriah Levy, to whom we are indebted for the abolition of whipping in the navy, and the fact



that he is the "father of the law" is inscribed on his tomb.

When Robert Morris undertook to raise funds for carrying on the war for our national independence, he found Isaac Moses, David Franks and Hyam Salomon among his ablest and most generous coadjutors. During the war of 1812, when Congress called for a loan of \$16,000,000, Uriah Hendricks of New York was a subscriber to the amount of \$40,000. Judah Touro of New Orleans, who served under "Old Hickory" in the second war with Great Britain, gave \$10,000 toward the erection of Bunker Hill Monument. When Sir Walter Scott desired for his famous novel, "Ivanhoe," a heroine in whom all the womanly graces might be typified, he selected Rebecca Gratz, a Jewish belle of Philadelphia, as his ideal.

Forty years ago, England excluded a Jew from her Parliament. Since then, Benjamin Disraeli, Benjamin of Israel, has been at the head of the British government, and he is remembered as one of the greatest statesmen of modern times. In addition to this honored name may be mentioned, Judah P. Benjamin, an ex-Senator of the United States and subsequently a Queen's Counsel of England; Jessell on the British Bench, Goldsmid, Simon, Rothschilds and Isaacs in the British Parliament; Gambetta, Cremieux and Simon in France; Lasker a leader of the Liberal party in Germany; Artom holding high positions of government trust in Italy; and Hamburger dictating to the Foreign Office even in Russia.

Added brightness has been given to literature by such writers as Heine, Auerbach, Aguliar, Goldsmid, Kompert, Rothschilds, Spinoza, Farjeon and others. Rachel, Patti, Bernhardt, Modjeska, Lavinski and scores of others have delighted the world by their artistic and intellectual rendering of dramatic roles, while Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, Halevi, Offenbach, Strauss, Joachim, Rubinstein, Wieniawski, Remenyi, Josephi, Strakosch and Paderewski have spoken and still speak in the universal language that finds an echo in all hearts in which the better instincts of nature are not dead. Jewish genius is further illustrated by works of art in the Royal Academy, the Louvre and Luxembourg and in the famous galleries of Vienna, Munich, Berlin and Rome.

In the hour of calamity, the Jew vies with the Chris-

tian in affording relief. In his kinship with humanity he knows no limitations of race or creed.

Baron Hirsch sends his persecuted people to our shores in order that they may find homes in a country whose constitution recognizes no distinction between Jews and Christians, while Sir Moses Montefiore, one of the world's greatest benefactors, emphasized, in his long and useful life, the truth that strict adhesion to the Jewish law is not antagonistic to the highest type of manhood.

Many additional names and incidents might be recalled in the present connection, but their mention is unnecessary for the purposes of this article.

Although not of the Jewish race or creed, the writer believes with Matthew Arnold that "Christianity cannot be packed in any set of commandments," and that dogmatism and creeds put more stumbling blocks in the way to Heaven than they remove. She has, therefore, in a spirit of broad liberality fulfilled a long cherished desire to do honor to a historic people who have left so visible an impress on civilization and to pay tribute to a race whose faults are oftener censured than their virtues praised—a race from whose royal family came our Christ.—*The Menorah Monthly*.

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For the PECULIAR PEOPLE.

OUR ADVOCATE.

BY MARY A. LACKEY.

"For God so loved the world,  
His only Son He gave,  
That they who will believe in Him  
Eternal life shall have.  
Leaving His throne above  
To earth the Saviour came,  
And, that He might for sin atone,  
Suffered a death of shame.

Himself of Israel's race,  
"Go ye," was His command,  
"To Israel's lost sheep proclaim,  
Heaven's kingdom is at hand."  
"I am not sent," said He,  
To one who sought His aid,  
"But to the house of Israel  
Whose sheep have from me strayed."

Now risen from the dead,  
With God again He reigns,  
And pleads the blood He shed, to cleanse  
Each penitent's guilt stains.  
Then let us boldly come  
Unto His throne, and plead,  
That we may mercy find and grace  
To help in time of need.

חדשות הנעשות—NEWS—במחנה ישראל.

FIFTY Jewish young men in Baltimore, graduates of Johns Hopkins University, have formed an organization for the carrying on of charitable work among the Russian and Polish Jews of that city.

In the city of Chicago, Sept. 29, 30 and Oct. 1, 1896, a conference was held by friends of Israel for prayer and Bible study in behalf of the Jewish people. We hope soon to present our readers with some of the good things of the conference.

THE distinguished author and lecturer from England, Mr. Joseph Jacobs, began a course of lectures on the "Philosophy of Jewish History" in Philadelphia, Nov. 5. Mr. Jacobs has written many books, having given special attention to studies in folk-lore. He has come to this country upon the invitation of Gratz College.

A JEW has been elected Lord Mayor of London, Alderman George Faudel Philips, son of the late Sir Benjamin S. Philips. He was elected with great unanimity. Just thirty-one years ago his father occupied the same position. The mayor-elect has filled many important offices of trust. He worships at the Berkeley Street synagogue.

IN Lemberg it was intended to form a society under the name of *Ahavat Zion* for the purpose of "cultivating the study of Hebrew language, history and literature, improving the moral and intellectual condition of the Jews in Galicia, and assisting poor Jews in Palestine and Syria." The formation of the society was prohibited by the provincial authorities. An appeal to the Supreme Court was fruitless.

IN London, Oct. 25, there died Sir Albert Sassoun, a distinguished and wealthy Jew. Born in Bagdad he settled with his father in Bombay and engaged in banking. In 1873, the Queen conferred the honor of knighthood upon him, and in November of the same year the corporation of London presented him with the freedom of the city. He was the first Anglo-Indian to receive this distinction. When the late Shah of Persia visited England Sir Albert Sassoun distinguished himself by the magnificence of the entertainment he offered him.

### SKETCHES IN EARLY JEWISH HISTORY.

#### V.

דעלך סני לחברך לא תעביר וו היא כל התורה כולה ואיך פירוש הוא וייל  
גמר. הלל. 1.

No classic name from the Orient is better known among the Jews everywhere than the name of the city of Tiberias. The city is situated on a beautiful lake bearing the same name and was once very beautiful, the capital of the dominions of King Herod Antipas. The Lake of Tiberias, Gennesaret, is accompanied by many historical associations. Not far to the northward from the city of Tiberias lies the far-famed tract or plain of Gennesaret, which Josephus describes in glowing language as the home of the greatest and most opposite varieties of fruits and trees.<sup>1</sup> In the south-western corner of the plain there descends from the high mountain lands above a valley which the Arabs have called the Valley of Pigeons. At the entrance of the valley into the plain is quite an open space where anciently was situated a city, Arbel being its Jewish name but Grecianized into that of Arbela. The site now bears the name of Irbid. Opposite the site in the steep face of the cliffs of the mountain sides of the valley there are caves once famous in the wars of Herod the Great, for the acquisition of his kingdom, where many of the Zealot party

<sup>1</sup> "What is hateful unto thee, do not unto thy neighbor; this is the Law and the rest is mere commentary."—*Hillel*.

<sup>2</sup> *B. J.* 3, 10, 8.

resorted, whom Josephus unjustly designates as robbers. They were nationalist patriots fighting in an unequal contest with the king.

In Arbela lived Nittai, or Nathan, one of the immediate successors of Jose, the son of Joezer, and of Jose, the son of Jochanan. His associate and superior in office was Joshua, the son of Perachiah. These teachers undoubtedly must have lived in the later period of the rule of John Hyrcanus I.<sup>1</sup> The following beautiful saying is attributed to Joshua, the son of Perachiah,

עשה לך רב וקנה לך חבר והיה דן אתי כליהאדם לכף זכות,

“Acquire for thyself a teacher, win for thyself an associate and judge every man according to the scale of merit.” This saying is in strict accord with the early teaching of the scribes, when the thought of the *חבר* or associate in religious study was earnestly followed out. The idea lies at the very foundation of the fraternity or association of the Pharisees, who so associated themselves together for the more perfect observance of God’s holy Law. The saying attributed to Nittai, the Arbelite, is the following: “Remove thee away from a wicked neighbor, and associate not thyself with a wicked man, and do not think thyself exempt from punishment.” The last of these three precepts teaches that God is no respecter of persons.

From the city of Arbela and its vicinity could be obtained a delightful view of the plain of Gennesaret with the sparkling waters of the lake beyond. The city was situated upon one of the great commercial thoroughfares of Palestine. Down through the Valley of Pigeons from the south the road came and threaded the plain amidst fertile fields and trees in great variety, straight to Capernaum, situated—with great probability—at the north-eastern corner of the plain. There, from afar, could be

<sup>1</sup> The statement was inadvertently made in the PECULIAR PEOPLE, Vol. 7, No. 3, page 52, that the time in which these lived was when the Ptolemies ruled over Palestine. That could not have been, for the immediate successors of Joshua and Nathan, well known in Jewish history, lived during the reigns of Alexander Jannæus and Queen Alexandra.

seen the high citidel of Capernaum, occupying from a military point of view an important position, for it overlooked the whole plain. In that city, in days succeeding those of Nittai, the Arbelite, there resided the greatest teacher who ever lived among men. Capernaum was the residence of Jesus, after He had left Nazareth, so long as He remained in Galilee. There He performed many miracles, there by the side of the bright, beautiful waters of the lake He often taught and in the citidel overlooking the city and plain, in all probability, the good centurion held command whose servant Jesus healed by the word of His authority. However wise are the utterances of all the sages of Israel they can none of them take the place of the divine teachings of the divine Son of Man. Before passing an adverse judgment upon Jesus and His sublime and saving utterances, rather, let the whole house of Israel judge Him *לכף וכות*. "according to the scale of merit." Let not His just judgment be taken away; for, if any person will impartially investigate His teachings and weigh in the scale of merit His claims to dominion over the hearts of men, such investigation must necessarily give place to humble and earnest discipleship and to complete and adoring love.

John Hyrcanus was succeeded by his son, Aristolulus. The reign of Aristolulus was brief, but a year long. After his death Alexandra Salome, his widow, became the wife of his next oldest brother, Alexander Jannæus, who succeeded to the kingdom. The reign of Alexander extended from 104 to 78, B. C., and may be conveniently divided into three periods. It is an interesting fact that these periods are indicated by the coins of his reign: the first period extending through eight or ten years in which the king was engaged in foreign conquest, his coins bearing the inscription, "Jonathan, the High-priest and the eldership of the Jews; the second period, one of bitter civil contest with his people, the coins bearing on one side in Hebrew the inscription, "Jonathan, the king," and on the

other in Greek, "Alexander, the king;" and the third period, one of reconciliation with his people and foreign military successes, the coins bearing the inscription, "Jonathan, the High-priest and the Jews."

The theological successors to Joshua, the son of Perachiah and Nittai, the Abelite, were Jehudah, son of Tabbai and Simon ben Shetach. It is said that the latter was brother to the queen. He had much to do with the political affairs of his times. Jehudah ben Tabbai was the superior of his associate in learning and judgment. During the first period of the king's reign the queen seems to have had the management of internal affairs, and Simon ben Shetach, together with the whole party of Pharisees, was high in influence. At the beginning of the second period the king joined the party of the Sadducees and it became necessary for Simon ben Shetach to flee away to a place of safety. The conflict of the period began after the occurrence of a fearful tragedy that took place in the temple. The king, as High-priest, was officiating during the season of the Feast of Tabernacles. When he came to the ceremony of the rejoicing for the pouring out of the water of Siloam he departed from the practice of the Pharisees in the performance of his part of the ceremony and introduced a Sadducean innovation. Custom required that he should pour out the water from the golden pitcher upon the altar. The king, instead, poured it upon the ground. The feelings of the worshipers, at once, became excited to the highest degree, and they vented their feelings by pelting him with the festive *ethrogs*<sup>1</sup> which they held in their hands. Thereupon the king called in his foreign mercenaries and not less than 6,000 of the people were slain. Thenceforward there were many insurrections through the land, and it is said that 50,000 of the people fell in these contests. On a certain occasion not less than 800 of them were nailed to crosses. The period ended with a

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<sup>1</sup> Citrons.

general flight of the Pharisees. In the third period of the kind's reign Simon ben Shetach and many of his friends were recalled; and at the time of the death of the monarch, he, plainly discerning that peace in the kingdom was to be secured by means of friendship with the Pharisees, counseled his wife, to whom he bequeathed the kingdom, to seek their friendship.

Queen Alexandra seems to have been quite ready to follow the policy indicated by her husband. Her reign was regarded in after years as a sort of golden age by the Jewish people. The influence of Simon ben Shetach was supreme. In the Talmud it is said,<sup>1</sup> "In the days of Simon ben Shetach the rains came down in the nights of fourth days and on those of the Sabbaths, so that the grains of wheat became like kidneys, those of barley like stones of olives, and lentiles like gold dinars, and they preserved a specimen of them for future generations to show what disastrous results may follow upon sin," *i. e.*, by the pursuing of an opposite course from that pursued in the reign of Queen Alexandra. The nights of fourth days were nights in which it was superstitiously believed that it was dangerous to go out because the air was said to be haunted on those nights by innumerable demons. Thus a comparison was instituted between the reign of Queen Alexandra and the time of the rebuilding of the Temple by King Herod. Alike in the one as at the other time rain was said to have fallen at night so as not to interfere with what might be done during the days.

The sayings attributed to Jehudah ben Tabbai and Simon ben Shetach are in harmony with what we know of the political ascendancy of their order during the times when they lived. They show that judicial functions were in the possession of the rabbis. They are these: Jehudah said, "Make not thyself an arranger of the law; and when litigants stand before thee, let them be in thine eyes as if

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<sup>1</sup> Taan. 23 a.



they were guilty; but when they have been dismissed from thy presence, let them be in thine eyes as innocent when they have received upon them the sentence." Simon ben Shetach said, "Be very careful to examine witnesses and be cautious in thy words lest from them they learn to falsify."

Shemaiah and Abtalion are recorded in Jewish tradition as the successors of the preceding. These names bring us into the times of Herod the Great. The men who bore them were not of the Jewish race but were proselytes of righteousness. Nevertheless they were two of the greatest rabbis. They are supposed to be the same as the Pollio and Sameas of Josephus,<sup>1</sup> who gave their passive support to Herod, who, in turn, bestowed upon them his favor. It was the policy of the rabbis during Herod's reign to have very little to do with the public affairs of government, else they were in danger of paying the penalty with their lives. The recorded utterances of these two teachers show this condition of affairs. Shemaiah said, "Love work, hate rabbiship (or dominion), and make not thyself known to the government." It was the glory of many rabbis to work at a trade. They said, "He that teaches not his son a trade is like bringing him up to stealing." Abtalion said, "Ye sages, be on your guard with respect to your words, lest ye become amenable to captivity, and be exiled to a place of evil water, and the disciples who come after you may drink of the same and die, whereby the name of God may be blasphemed."

Hillel and Shammai were the successors of Shemaiah and Abtalion. They also flourished during the reign of Herod the Great. The name of Hillel, the truly wise and great, is justly famed in all Israel through all succeeding times. He came to Jerusalem from Babylonia and at first worked as a day laborer. "With part of his small earnings he maintained his family, and with the remainder he

<sup>1</sup> Antiq. 14, 9, 4, *et al.*

paid his entrance fee into the theological academy where Shemaiah and Abtalion were teaching, the then most famous teachers of their times. By self-denying devotion Hillel evinced his love for the study of the Law, and soon acquired name and fame. The sayings of Hillel which have been preserved are interesting in the extreme. A number of them are strikingly similar to some of the teachings of Jesus. 'Be of the disciples of Aaron. He loved peace, and pursued peace; he loved mankind and brought them into proximity to the Law.' 'Whoever strives for a name of eminence loses his name; he who increases not decreases, and he who learns not is worthy of death.' Parallel with the sentiment in the last clause is the sentence from Seneca's epistles: '*Otium sine litteris mors est et hominis vivi sepultura.*' 'Leisure without letters is death and the sepulchre of a living man.' Others of Hillel's maxims are these: 'Judge not thy fellow man until thou art placed in his position.' 'He who increases his knowledge of the Law increases life.' The most celebrated of the sentences of Hillel is that which is the counterpart of our Saviour's Golden Rule, 'What is hateful to thee do not unto thy neighbor.'

"All of these maxims, and many more, were taught by Hillel in Jerusalem in the generation just preceding that of Jesus. Because of the striking similarity of a part of them to some of the teachings of Jesus it has been said, from some quarters in modern times, that Jesus derived all His teachings from Hillel. Any unprejudiced study of the teachings of Jesus reveals, however, the unrivaled originality of our Lord; nevertheless, there is a lesson for us in all such parallelisms, viz., that the New Testament, on its human side, is a product of its times, and an important source for the best understanding of its sacred teachings is a study of all its varied Jewish surroundings."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the PECULIAR PEOPLE, Vol. 7, No. 6, page 123.

The Golden Rule as given by Hillel was not original with him in Jewish teachings. It occurs in precisely the same form as given by him in the Greek Apocryphal literature, where either in the Greek or Hebrew original Hillel undoubtedly saw it. *Καὶ ὃ μισεῖς μηδενὶ ποιήσης*, Tobit 4: 15. "And what thou hatest do not to another," are the exact words. Hillel's teaching was, "What is hateful unto thee, do not unto thy neighbor; this is the Law and the rest is mere commentary."

This article will be closed with a pleasing sentence from Shammai, "Speak little, but do much, and receive every one with a cheerful expression of face."

S. S. P.

NOVEMBER 3, 1896.

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 SCRIPTURE READINGS.

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TEBETH 28, JAN. 2. Ex. 6: 2—9: 35; Ezek. 28: 25—29: 21; Psa. 45—47; Mark 2: 1—3: 19; Rom. 3: 9—5.

SHEBAT 6, JAN. 9. Ex. 10—13: 16; Jer. 46: 13—27; Psa. 48—50; Mark 3: 20—4: 34; Rom. 6—8.

SHEBAT 13, JAN. 16. Ex. 13: 17—17; Judges 4: 1—5: 31; Psa. 51—53; Mark 4, 35—6; Rom. 9—11.

SHEBAT 20, JAN. 23. Ex. 18—20; Isa. 6: 1—7; 6, 9: 5, 6; Psa. 54—56; Mark 7—9: 1; Rom. 12—14: 12.

SHEBAT 27, JAN. 30. Ex. 21—24; Jer. 34: 8—22, 33: 25, 26; Psa. 57—59; Mark 9: 2—10: 31; Rom. 14: 13—16: 27.

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M. CLEMENCEAU, the radical politician, who, since his retirement from Parliament, has devoted himself chiefly to literature, has left Paris for Galicia in order to study the situation of the Jews in that country.

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THE Under Secretary of the *Alliance Israelite*, Silvain Benedict, is at present in Turkey on a tour of inspection of the Jewish schools founded there by that Society.

## OUR VIEW OF MISSION WORK.

Missions to the Jews rest upon the same ground as missions to any other people. A "mission" is a "sending out." Missionaries are men sent out to preach to people the glad tidings of salvation which God has provided for mankind. Missionaries to the Jews are men sent out to preach this good news to Jewish people. If men are sent out to do anything else, they are not properly Christian missionaries. We should send missionaries to the Jews because it is in our nature, if we possess any idea we think of value, to desire that every one should accept it. Especially is this so if we think we have in view a lofty and excellent ideal. If we do not this, it is a confession that we have no proper ideal worth the name. Another reason why we should send our missionaries to the Jews is that we have charity and love towards them. We believe that the one sure and certain way to enter the kingdom of God is through Christ. We are not disposed to say what may be the lot of those who have lived godly lives and who have not worshiped Jesus Christ. We are not disposed to limit the operations of divine grace. But we believe that Christ is Life Eternal. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We are sad when God's children are astray and do not accept the safe and sure way. A third reason why we should send missionaries to the Jews is our Lord's great command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Our Leader and Master has bidden us. The loyal follower of Christ considers no alternative. "If a man love me he will keep my words," says our Master. As disciples of that Master, as servants of that Lord, what can we do but send forth those to proclaim these glad tidings "to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile?" Jesus asks us to do no wrong—to cheat, to deceive, or to bribe,—but to teach, to make known His message, to declare His counsel in love, to speak what we believe to be the truth.