

Chapter XIX-----

Foundations of Modern Jewish Christianity; Michael Alexander. first Jewish Christian Bishop of Jerusalem since a.d. 135; Palestine Place and the Beni Abraham association; Hebrew Christian Prayer Union; formation of the Hebrew Christian Alliance; Joseph Rabinowitz, the Herzl of Jewish Christianity; the Israelites of the New Covenant at Kischineff.

- HOW TO RESTABLISH A NEW MESSIANIC FAITH SINCE IT ALL BUT DISSAPPEARED 12 CENTURIES BEFORE?

There were those who wished to build on the plan of the places of exile, or the pattern of the Christian sects to which they had become attached. There were others who had lost all desire for religious repatriation, and held aloof. Others again denounced the work as contrary to Divine intention: the destruction, they claimed, was proof that a communal Jewish Christianity had been done away with, and that assimilation to the universal Church was the design of the present dispensation. ¹

A portent of the new era for Jewish Christianity was visible in the consecration to the newly-created Anglican See of Jerusalem of Bishop Michael Solomon Alexander in 1841, the first Jewish Christian Bishop of Jerusalem since A.D. 135.

Alexander was born at Schonlanke in Posen in 1799. and grew to manhood in an orthodox Jewish home. He came to England in 1820, At Colchester, where he had settled as a tutor, he happened to see a handbill notifying the annual meeting of the London Jews' Society, and this so aroused his curiosity that he obtained and read the New Testament. Later he became rabbi of the Jewish congregation at Norwich, and subsequently at Plymouth. where in 1821 he married a Miss Levy of that town. The instrument of his conversion was the Rev. B.B. Golding, curate of Stonehouse, to whom he gave lessons in Hebrew. He was eventually baptized in 1825, and it was his joy to discover that his wife quite unknown to him had been a secret inquirer. After ordination as deacon, and then as priest, he became a missionary of the London Jews' Society (1827-1841). During part of this time he held the post of Professor of Hebrew and Rabbinical Literature in King's College, London. In 1840. Professor Alexander's name appeared at the head of a list of sixty Jewish Christians who had subscribed to a formal "protest of Christian Jews in England" against the Blood Libel, that Jews used Christian blood in their Passover rites.

In 1841 King Frederic William IV of Prussia, desiring to ameliorate the condition of Protestants in the Holy Land, proposed to Great Britain, through Chevalier Bunsen the establishment of a joint episcopal representative at Jerusalem. The suggestion was cordially accepted. Parliament passed a Bill to found and endow a Bishopric, which received Queen Victoria's assent on October 5, 1841.

The offer of the Bishopric was made, in the first instance, to Dr. McCaul, who declined it on the ground that a Jewish Christian ought to occupy the position. Alexander was thereupon selected and consecrated as first Bishop of the new see on Sunday, November 7, 1841, in Lambeth Palace by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the presence of a distinguished company. The next morning the new Bishop celebrated Holy Communion in the Episcopal Jews' Chapel,

¹ (Schonfield, 1936)

and in the evening preached his last sermon before his departure from England. prophetically as it afterwards transpired from the text: “And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there.”

Jerusalem was reached on January 21, 1842, and it was a day of great rejoicing when the Jewish Bishop entered the city of his fathers. In conformity with instructions received from Constantinople, proclamation was made in the mosques that, “he who touches the Anglican Bishop will be regarded as touching the apple of Pasha’s eye.” In his last annual letter, written in 1845 just before he started on the journey to Cairo which resulted in his death, Bishop Alexander referred to that great event in his life. He spoke of that day as; much to be remembered, even when the results, which have already followed in this short period, be alone taken into consideration; but a day which we trust will yet prove one of the most remarkable in the history of the Church, when the Lord “shall bind up Zion, and appear in His glory.” and when all, who now mourn for her, seeing her desolate and trodden down, shall rejoice for joy with her; and when God’s people shall be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

His tragic death occurred in the desert at Ras-el-Wady on the road to Egypt, by the rupture of a blood vessel, on November 26, 1845, after a brief episcopate of only four years. His remains were brought back to Jerusalem and interred in the English cemetery. The highest testimony to his life and example was that contained in a letter of condolence to Mrs. Alexander, signed by thirty-one Jewish Christians of Jerusalem, who had acknowledged their Messiah through the bishop’s instrumentality. The signatories said:

Next to yourself and your dear family, we consider ourselves the chief mourners; for we feel both collectively and individually that we have lost not only a true father in Christ, but also a loving brother and a most kind friend. The suavity and benignity of his manner, which so greatly endeared him to all, and which gained him the highest and most entire filial confidence of every one of us, tend much to increase the keen sense we feel of our loss. The affectionate love he bore to Israel, which peculiarly characterized him, could not fail to render him beloved by every one who had the privilege of being acquainted with him; while his exalted piety, and most exemplary life and conversation, inspired the highest reverential esteem. He was a burning and shining light; and when he was raised to the highest dignity in the Church, he conferred the most conspicuous honor on our whole nation, but especially on the little band of Jewish believers. With him captive, Judah’s brightest earthly star has set, and the top stone has been taken away from the rising Hebrew Church.²

It was in London, in Palestine Place, for so many years an oasis for wandering Israelites, that the first exclusively Hebrew Christian Association was formed. Here in the Jews’ Chapel on September 9, 1813. a group of forty-one Jewish Christians met together to constitute themselves an association called *Beni Avraham*, Children of Abraham, who undertook to meet for prayer every Sunday morning and Friday evening: to attend divine worship at the chapel and to visit

² (Schonfield, 1936)

daily, two by two in rotation, any sick member, to pray with him and read the Bible to him; and on Sunday, all who could were to visit the sick one. In 1835 the ministry of this association was extended, and it was now known as the episcopal Jews' Chapel Abrahamic Society.

the Hebrew Christian Prayer Union, founded in 1882 by Dr. H.A. Stern. Its objects were the promotion of unity, piety and brotherly feeling amongst Jewish converts, by means of mutual prayer and religious intercourse. Prayer was offered privately by each member on Saturday, and there were general meetings for prayer in London at stated seasons. Stern was the first President. The membership rose from 143 in 1883, to 600 in 1890; and branches were formed in Germany, Norway, Romania, Russia, Palestine and the United States.³

- THE AUTHOR DOES NOT FEEL THAT THESE EARLY PRECURSORS TO THE MODERN MESSIANIC MOVEMENT WERE THE ACTUAL REVIVAL... HE CITES ANOTHER LATER DEVELOPMENT:

The first united stand of Jewish Christians, as such, was made in 1866 when Dr. C. Schwartz, minister of Trinity Chapel, Edgware Road, London, built by another Jewish Christian, Ridley Herschell, formed a Hebrew-Christian Union.⁴

- The Hebrew-Christian Union had a 3 fold vision statement:

1 To promote a social and frequent personal intercourse among Christian Israelites by meeting together at stated periods.

2 To stir up and stimulate one another in the endeavor of uniting with, and caring for, our brethren.

3 To search the Scriptures together relating to Israel and Israel's King.

- Dr. Schwartz in January 1866, created the first Jewish Christian periodical, *The Scattered Nation*.

The great forward step was taken on April 25, 1866, when the following circular letter was issued to Jewish Christians:

LETTER:

Dear Brother,

It has occurred to us that it would be desirable and profitable that as many Israelites who believe in Jesus as can be brought together should meet in London on the 23rd of May.

Our object is to become acquainted with one another, and to be built up in our holy faith. There are special ties which bind us together as descendant of Abraham. and we believe that this conference for prayer and consultation might issue in a permanent union of Jewish Christian brethren in this land.

We do not come before you with any definite plan for action, but would simply say that, as there exists an Evangelical and a Jewish, an Hebrew-Christian Alliance also

³ (Schonfield, 1936)

⁴ Ibid

might be formed.

We trust that you feel with us the desirableness and importance of such a meeting, and that we may reckon your presence and on your prayers.

An early reply, sent to the address of Dr. Schwartz, would greatly oblige.

With the prayer that the Lord may bless us all.

Dear brother, yours very sincerely,

A.D. Herschell

H. Liebstein

M. Margoiouth

T.E. Neuman

A. Pitowsky

J. Steinhardt

A. Saphir

C. Schwartz⁵

- Eighty Jewish Christians met on the day appointed, and Dr. Schwartz afterwards wrote: “We may boldly say that such a gathering of convened Jews exclusively had not been witnessed since the early days of the Christian Church.”⁶

- AT THIS MEETING/CONFERENCE A MOTION WAS MADE AND ACCORDING TO THE MINUTES IT SAID AS FOLLOWS:

Let us not sacrifice our identity. When we profess Christ, we do not cease to be Jews; Paul, after his conversion, did not cease to be a Jew: not only Saul was, but even Paul remained, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. We cannot and will not forget the land of our fathers, and it is our desire to cherish feelings of patriotism.... As Hebrews, as Christians, we feel tied together; and as Hebrew Christians, we desire to be allied more closely to one another.⁷

- OUT OF THIS CAME THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BRITISH HEBREW CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE.

on May 14, 1867, under the presidency of

Dr. Schwartz, when, among the resolutions passed was the following:

That though the members of the Alliance belong to different Churches, they all feel united in Christ, and they declare before their Jewish brethren that they have found in Jesus, the Messiah, to whom the Law and Prophets bear testimony, that they have peace in His blood, and look for His coming in glory as the Hope of Israel.⁸

⁵ (Schonfield, 1936)

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

Among the distinguished Presidents have been men like Dr. Rosedald, Aaron Bernstein, Ben-Oliel, Isaac Levinson, Samuel Schor and E. Bendor Samuel⁹

- IN 1915 THE HCA CROSSED THE POND TO THE U.S.



Figure 1 First Conference of the Hebrew Christian Alliance 1915 photo courtesy of the MJAA

Hebrew Christian Alliance of America was founded under the presidency of the Rev. S. B. Rohold.

- THESE MOVEMENTS OWE THEIR EXISTANCE

Joseph Rabinowitz in 1882 to found the first Jewish Christian communion in modern times which belonged to no definite denomination, but was rather in the nature of a synagogue of Jewish believers in Jesus.¹⁰

STORY OF RABINOWITZ:

Rabinowitz was born at Resina on the Dniester, September 23, 1837, the son of David ben Ephraim. Owing to the early death of his mother, he was taken into the family of his

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

maternal grandfather, Nathan Neta, where he remained until he was eleven years of age. At the age of six, he could repeat the Song of Solomon by heart.

His youth was spent in Chasidic circles, and he showed great promise of literary ability. At thirteen he was betrothed, though he did not marry until six years later. It was his future brother-in-law, Jehiel Hershensohn (Lichtenstein) who first introduced him to the New Testament by lending him a Hebrew copy, at the same time remarking that perhaps Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah. Rabinowitz was greatly surprised at this suggestion, but its only apparent effect on him was to cause him to leave the Chasidim and earnestly to study the Bible. He returned with his grandfather to Orgeyev and took up law as his profession so that he could practise as a solicitor among his own people. He took an active interest in communal affairs, and was a frequent contributor to the Jewish newspapers: he also gave lectures at Kischineff in which he advocated reform and progressive ideas. In 1878 he wrote an article in the Hebrew paper *Haboker Or*, in which he urged on the rabbis to improve the conditions of Russian Jewry by sponsoring agricultural training, and he himself set an example by putting his garden under cultivation. Shortly afterwards, when a wave of persecution broke out, he went to Palestine on a mission of inquiry with a view in establishing a Jewish colony there. The Hebrew New Testament given to him many years before went with him as a guide book. When he reached Jerusalem and saw the miserable state of the Jewish inhabitants, he was deeply depressed; but before he left the Holy City he ascended the Mount of Olives. Sitting there and viewing the Mosque of Omar, where formerly the Temple stood, his mind went back over the tragic history of his people. What was the meaning of the age-old tale of Israel's suffering? In a flash the answer came to him: "The key to the Holy Land is in the hands of our brother Jesus." Filled with the glory of a great vision, Rabinowitz returned to Kischineff, and with great power and enthusiasm set forth his belief. In a short time he had gathered around him numerous adherents to his doctrine not only in Kischineff, but in many other towns of Bessarabia. The faith of the movement, which called itself "Israelites of the New Covenant," was set forth in thirteen articles of faith on the model of those drawn up by Maimonides.

In 1885 Rabinowitz took the decisive step of being baptized in Berlin; and although this restricted his work to some extent, owing to Jewish prejudice against baptism, his labors continued unabated. He was invited to join the Lutheran Church and also the Russian Church. but he was wholly loyal to his people and would not attend a place of Christian worship where a crucifix was displayed. Subsequently he built a hall which became a Jewish Christian Synagogue. A Christian minister, Mr. Faber, saw his work and brought back this description:

Rabinowitz is a preacher of the Gospel in the spirit of the Jewish nationality: a preacher gifted, so versed in the Scriptures. so deeply rooted in the Divine Word of the New Covenant, as the Jewish nation has not possessed since the days of the Apostles. This is his great importance. His sermons published in Hebrew, Russian. and the jargon (Yiddish), reach. in ten thousands of copies, the masses of the Jews in Eastern Europe. They find eager readers in the most remote districts of Siberia, and in the secluded valleys of the Carpathian mountains. The writer of these lines has had personal opportunities of seeing the profound influence of Rabinowitz's pamphlets in Galicia and Lithuania.

Jewish antagonists of the movement spoke of Rabinowiiz as the Babblor, but it was noticeable that the general attitude towards the person of Jesus was much improved. A

Committee in Great Britain was formed to support the work, but there were many Christians who looked askance at this combination of Judaism and Christianity as if the hydrogen of the Old Covenant and the oxygen of the New Covenant did not naturally combine to produce the Water of Life. The old fear still persisted.

Rabinowilz died in 1899; but in Bessarabia his name and memory continue to be honored, and a steadily increasing Jewish Christian organization now incorporated as the Hebrew Christian Alliance of Bessarabia perpetuates his pioneer efforts to bridge the gulf between Church and Synagogue and to bring back the Scattered Nation to its proper allegiance.¹¹

¹¹ (Schonfield, 1936)

Chapter XX-----

Christianity within the Jewish community; P. Lichtenstein and anti-Semitism; Jewish Christians and Christian denominationalism; The “Ebionite” controversy; growth of a distinct Jewish Christian consciousness.

The same spirit which led Theodore Herzl to seek the solution of the Jewish problem in a revived Jewish State had led Joseph Rabinowitz to seek a solution in a Jewish divinely controlled Kingdom, with Jesus as the sovereign. In both cases it was the manifestation of antisemitism that was the influential cause. It must be remembered that the New Testament was a sealed book to thousands of Jews, and never having read it they judged the book by the deeds of those who claimed to be bound by its teaching. It was in desperation that they turned to it now to find the exact authority which lay behind the pogroms and blood-libels. The situation is exemplified by the experience of Rabbi I. Lichtenstein, district rabbi of Tapio-Szele in Hungary.¹²

- SEE THE BOOK ON HIM – “THE ETERNAL JEW”

In a pamphlet called *Judenspiegel* he wrote:

I used to think that Christ was the plague and curse of the Jews, the origin and promoter of our sorrow and persecution. In this conviction I grew to years of manhood, and still cherishing it I became old. I knew no difference between true, and merely nominal Christianity; of the fountain head of Christianity itself I knew nothing. Strangely enough, it was the horrible Tisza-Eszlar blood accusation which first drew me to read the New Testament. This trial brought from their lurking places all the enemies of the Jews, and once again, as in olden times, the cry reechoed, “Death to the Jew!” The frenzy was excessive, and among the ringleaders were many who used the name of Christ and his doctrine as a cloak to cover their abominable doings. These wicked practices of men, wearing the name of Christ only to further their evil dangers, aroused the indignation of the true Christians, who, with pen on fire and warning voices, denounced the lying rage of the antisemites. In articles written by the latter in defence of the Jews, I often met with passages where Christ was spoken of as he who brings joy to man, the Prince of Peace, and the Redeemer, and his Gospel was extolled as a message of love and life to all people. I was surprised, and, scarcely trusting my eyes, I took a New Testament out of its hidden corner; a book which some forty years ago I had in vexation taken from a Jewish teacher, and I began to turn over its leaves and to read. How can I express the impression which I then received? Not the half had been told me of the greatness, power, and glory of this book. formerly a sealed book to me. All seemed so new to me, and yet it did me good like the sight of an old friend, who has laid side his dusty, travelworn garments, and appears in festal attire.¹³

¹² (Schonfield, 1936)

¹³ (Schonfield, 1936)

In another pamphlet *Judenthum und Christenthum* he says:

A sudden glory, a light, flashed through my soul. I looked for thorns, and gathered roses: I discovered pearls instead of pebbles; instead of hatred, love; instead of vengeance, forgiveness; instead of bondage, freedom; instead of pride, humility; instead of enmity, conciliation; instead of death, life, salvation, resurrection, and heavenly treasure.

Rabbi Lichtenstein began to quote the New Testament from his pulpit to the scandal of some of his congregants, who accused him to the chief rabbi of Budapest of heterodoxy. The outcome was that Rabbi Lichtenstein admitted his faith in Christ, and had to resign his office. His voice could not be stilled, however, and he went on preaching the amazing truth that had been revealed to him. He would not be baptized, and remained with the Jewish community until his death at the advanced age of eighty-five, on October 16, 1909.¹⁴

- THESE TWO EXAMPLES OF RABINOWITZ AND LICHTENSTEIN WERE BY FAR NOT THE ONLY ONE – BUT THEY WERE THE FORERUNNERS OF OUR MODERN MOVEMENT..
- R’ I. LICHTENSTEIN SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH RABBI Yechiel Tzvi Lichtenstein!¹⁵
- OR PAUL LICHTENSTEIN (mentioned in the The history of the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews)¹⁶

READ ABOUT BOTH!

representative of an entirely new generation of Jewish Christians more on the pattern of the original Nazarenes¹⁷

- AS THESE GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS OF “HEBREW CHRISTIANS” BEGAN FOR FORM AND BECAME ACTIVE, THE CHURCH NOW HAD A PROBLEM ON IT’S HANDS...
- THESE BELIEVERS CLAIMED THEY WERE STILL JEWISH – AND HAD NOT GIVEN UP THEIR JUDAISM
- THEY STILL IDENTIFIED AS JEWS (NOT AS CHRISTIANS)

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ (LANCASTER, 2017)

¹⁶ (Gidney, 1908)

¹⁷ Ibid

SOME UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIANS SUPPORTED THEM, AND THEIR OWN IDEAS ABOUT ISRAEL BEING REBORN AGAIN SOMEDAY AS A NATIONAL HOMELAND FOR JEWS BEGAN TO AFFECT SOME OF THEIR THEOLOGY...

- BUT FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE CHURCH – THIS JUST DIDN'T FIT THEIR PARADIGM
- THESE MAJORITIES SOMETIMES TOOK A HARD STANCE AGAINST THE EMERGING MESSIANIC MOVEMENT IN THE 19TH AND GOING INTO THE 20TH CENTURIES...

Others, fearful that an independent reading of the New Testament by the Jews, untutored by Gentile traditional interpretations, would undermine the structure of their faith, raised a loud cry of Ebionitism. If Jewish Christianity would not submit to be poured into their peculiar denominational mould, they were determined to wreck it by branding it as a heresy.¹⁸

- THERE IS A MORE DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OPPOSITION OF THE MAJORITY OF THE GENTILE CHURCH AND THAT IS ITS ORIGINAL POSITION OF AUTHORITY.... (think about it)...

One cannot help feeling that much of Gentile Christian anxiety was now lest the tables should be turned, and that Jacob would somehow trick Laban out of his birthright of the Promised Land and leave him only the barren Mount Seir. Jewish Christianity would have both the Law and the Promises and Gentile Christianity would be relegated to the position of the poor relation accepting the spiritual charity of Israel.¹⁹

- MANY NEW JEWISH BELIEVERS FALSELY ASSUMED THAT ALL CHRISTIANS WERE AUTOMATICALLY THEIR SUPPORTIVE BROTHERS IN THE FAITH... THIS WAS NAÏVE..
- SOME EVEN FOUND THEY WERE NOT WELCOMED OR WANTED IN THE CHURCH...
- THE FIRST MODERN RIPPLES OF CHRISTIAN ANTISEMITISM WAS BEGINNING TO RE-EMERGE SINCE THE 17TH CENTURY...

Schonfield cites another problem...

“Among the mistakes of the Church in dealing with Jewish Christians has been a too ready action on the principle that all converts should of necessity become missionaries to their own people, whether they were qualified for this work or otherwise.”²⁰

¹⁸ (Schonfield, 1936)

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid

- THIS PUT MANY JEWISH BELIEVERS INTO AWKWARD AND OFTEN DOWNRIGHT DANGEROUS SITUATIONS...

FOR THE MOST PART, JUST BECOMING A BELIEVER ITSELF MEANT THE POTENTIAL LOSS OF FAMILY STATUS, MARRIAGES, AND EVEN JOBS.

THEY WERE ALREADY OUSTED FROM THEIR JEWISH COMMUNITY, NOW AS NEW BELIEVERS YOU WANT TO MAKE US “MISSIONARIES” TO THE PEOPLE WHO JUST REJECTED US?

THIS UNFORTUNATE AND ERRONOUS REACTION OF THE CHURCH ONLY FED INTO THE ACCELERATION OF THE MOVEMENT WHICH WOULD EVENTUALLY BECOME KNOWN AS MESSIANIC JUDAISM...

Schonfield says however there were some Christian Missions to Jews that were a little wiser...

“Some Missions have been wiser than to insist on the convert becoming a missionary, when he has had no vocation, and they have established trade training-schools and workshops with a view to making him self-supporting and independent. Such efforts are all to the good, but the relief is still small, having no regard to the growing numbers of Jews who are finding their spiritual peace in following their Messiah.”²¹

- THIS IS THE SAME PROBLEM TODAY FOR ORTHODOX JEWS! – WHERE DO THEY GO IF THEY ACTUALLY ACCEPT YESHUA AND LEAVE THEIR COMMUNITY WHICH IS ACTUALLY SEPARATE FROM THE REST OF SOCIETY? THEY HAVE NO JOB SKILLS!!!

THIS TOO FED MORE INTO THE MOVEMENT AS THE BELIEF OF THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR MOVEMENT TOOK HOLD...

One knows that the root cause is the Jewish fear of assimilation, which sees in the cutting off of the offending member the only means of safeguarding the integrity of the race. When this fear is removed by the superlative Jewishness attached to Jewish Christianity, then it is to be anticipated that a better state of affairs will result.²²

- THERE WAS HOWEVER ONE COMPONENT – ONE SPOKE IN THE WHEEL SO TO SAY WHICH STILL PUT THE BRAKES ON THE MESSIANIC MOVEMENT AND THAT WAS THE “PURSE STRINGS” THAT THE GENTILE CHURCH STILL HELD!

At a series of missionary conferences from the close of the nineteenth century to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914 the Ebionite theme recurred again and again and was dealt with according to the convictions of the various speakers.

²¹ (Schonfield, 1936)

²² Ibid

Mark John Levy, a sturdy advocate of the loyal Jewish Christian position and founder of the Christian Jews' Patriotic Alliance, succeeded in bringing the subject before the British Hebrew Christian Alliance in the 'nineties; but his resolution was "tabled" undoubtedly because of its supposed danger to the servants of the missionary societies. Dr. Rosedale, the president, actually confessed to Levy that "The Hebrew Christian missionaries are dependent on the Gentile Christians for support and they cannot afford in justice to their families to risk the charge of Judaizing."

Elsewhere others were raising the standard of Jewish Christian independence; in Galatia there was Christian Theodore Lucky: in Hamburg Paulus Grun through the columns of his magazine *Ephratha*, organ of the Jewish Christian Association, and again in South Africa Philip Cohen, who edited *The Messianic Jew* for the Jewish messianic Movement. Cohen gives three cogent reasons for a change of attitude on the part of Jewish Christians:

- 1 Deep love to our own nation, to its history and its traditions.
- 2 A deep conviction that we who are Hebrew Christians can best serve the cause of Christ by demonstrating to our people that we still belong to them.
- 3 The conviction that Jewish Christianity can only impress the Jewish mind by taking on a distinctively Jewish coloring.

Lucky in an impassioned speech at a Jewish Christian Conference in Stanislaw in 1903 stated:

I do not demand from my fellow-believers the complete and strict observance of all Jewish customs at any price. Here is a brother who says,

"We live in exile and are not our own masters, and though I would like to keep the entire ceremonial law, and all the more because I am a disciple of Jesus, I cannot do it. I am a soldier and must eat barrack fare. I must rest on Sunday and work on the Sabbath for the sake of my daily bread." Well, he is my brother nevertheless. I do not judge his conscience, nor is he to let me be a conscience to him in the matter of meals, or of the Sabbath, all of which are only a shadow of that of which we have the substance in Christ. On the other hand, another says, "Because I believe in Christ therefore I give up the Sabbath." Well, he is no less acceptable to God on that account, and I do not despise him for it nor condemn him. But I am sorry for him, and it hurts me to the depth of my heart because he too is a child of Israel and should help us to build up the walls of Jerusalem."²³

- IN HIS APPEAL TO THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Mark Levy, in 1907 SAID:

That the Church does not require its Jewish members to forsake their own people, but leaves them in their Christ-given liberty to have their children circumcised according to God's covenant with Abraham, should they so desire, and to observe all the other customs inherited from their fathers, provided it be clearly understood that neither Jew nor Gentile can be saved through the works of the Law, but solely

²³ (Schonfield, 1936)

through the sacrifice and atonement of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.²⁴

- HERE WAS THEIR RESPONSE:

That famous Hebraist, the late Canon B. H. Box, said at the London Missionary Conference of 1903:

I venture to beseech Jewish Christians to take this question into their prayerful consideration. I know full well that many of them are affectionately attached to Gentile Christian communities, and that it will be fairly difficult to find a common basis. But I would ask them at least to set this unity before them as their goal. And should a homogeneous Hebrew Christian Church be formed centering round a liturgy which is informed with a certain adaptation to the national and historic Jewish spirit, may those who cannot give their full and hearty allegiance to such a Church at least refrain from putting hindrances in the way of its free development.

The Rev. Th. Lindhagen at the International Jewish Missionary Conference at Stockholm in 1911 rightly stated:

It cannot be denied that up to now the relation of the Jewish Christians to their people has been far from altogether satisfactory. The reproaches which have been levelled against them and against the missionaries who work among them are unfortunately only too well grounded. It is quite true that there are Jewish Christians and missionaries to the Jews who make an altogether vicious use of Paul's word to the Galatians, "There is neither Jew nor Greek." The apostle cannot have meant these words as advocating the annihilation of their nationality It is equally true that the Gentile Church has helped to estrange Jewish Christians from their own people through calling them "proselytes." an unscriptural term in direct opposition to the pronouncements of Paul in Romans 11, where he speaks of the Jews as the natural branches, and the Gentiles as branches of a wild olive which had been grafted on to the good tree against all natural tendency. In this respect a thorough-going change of policy and practice is necessary. "I am verily a man which am a Jew, a Hebrew of the Hebrews" — there is much need for these words to be heard and spoken once more without shame among our Jewish Christian brethren. That the ideal of an autonomous Jewish Christian Church is closely connected with these aspiration regarding the right attitude of Hebrew Christians to their people is self-evident.

- THIS DIALOGUE CONTINUED ON AND ON FROM VARIOUS DENOMINATIONS, BECOMING INCREASINGLY FAVORABLE TO THE

²⁴ Ibid

CONCEPT OF A “Jewish Church” (i.e. Messianic Synagogue) – that in reality if it had continued in this fashion – it would have hastened not only the entire Messianic Jewish synagogal movement... but even perhaps the return of Yeshua Himself who said:

Matthew 23:39 Tree of Life Version (TLV)

39 For I tell you, you will never see Me again until you say, ‘Baruch ha-ba b’shem Adonai. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’”

Then came the World War, and for a time the tribulation of Jewish Christianity was submerged in the tribulation of the nations. Yet the war itself was to be linked with this strange history in the mysterious purposes of God.

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