

# THE JEWISH ERA

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*"A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel."*

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## THE JEW IN EPHESIANS.

BY REV. C. W. OYER.\*

Before we outline Ephesians 2 let us look at Romans 3:9, 10, 21-24. Here Paul says that "both Jews and Gentiles" are alike "under sin," and also says that both alike must be saved from sin by the atoning blood of Christ. Verse 22 tells us "there is no difference" between Jew and Gentile. We would say "no difference" (1) as to *sin*, (2) as to *salvation* (3) and as to *standing*. And this threefold thought we wish to emphasize in Ephesians the second chapter. The letter to the Ephesians is written to Gentile believers, and the Jew comes in only incidentally; but without the Jew the picture here given would not be complete.

Thesecond chapter of Ephesians has three great pivotal points which we would indicate, as follows, showing that Jews and Gentiles are (1) both *dead* without Christ, (2) both *quicken*ed through Christ, and (3) both *united* in Christ:

I. *Dead; or the condition by nature.*

See verse 1, "and you"—the Gentile, "dead in trespasses and sins;" and verse 3, "also we"—the Jew, "dead in trespasses and sins." Notice, again, Paul says "we all"—Jews, "as others"—Gentiles, "were

by nature the children of wrath." The words "even as" puts both classes on one common level—"under sin," "dead" and doomed to "wrath." The whole New Testament gives us but one common message for both classes, viz., that of "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," for now "God commandeth men everywhere to repent."

Take an illustration from Scripture. Ezekiel 37: is a prophecy relating to the national restoration of Israel, yet future, but it also serves as an illustration of the Jewish mission field today and the conversion of the individual. Verses 1 and 2 give us the *field*—"the valley which was full of bones...very many...and...very dry;" and verse 11, "these bones are the whole house of Israel."

In verse 4 we have the *message*, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." We have no other message today than to "preach the word."

Verse 3 presents a test question to which the preacher should find an answer—"Son of man, can these bones live?" Judging from sight we might doubt it, but turning in faith to the Word of God we find the answer. Hence, in verses 4 and 9 we have a double message unto a double *restoration*.

First, "Prophecy unto these dry bones." As a result we have first the skeleton, the coming together

\*An address delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Chicago Hebrew Mission at the Moody Church, January 12, 1910.

## BACA'S VALLEY.

BY MRS. E. M. EXTON.

"Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." Psalms 84:5, 6, 7.

Passing on through Baca's valley,  
Blessed, helpful pilgrims they,  
Who, with patient, loving service,  
Dig the wells along the way—

Wells which God Himself hath filled  
With rich comfort from above  
For the weary, fainting travelers  
Needing thus His constant love.

Passing through this vale of weeping  
They a blessing leave behind,  
So that those who follow after  
Sweet refreshment there may find.

Oh, 'tis good to see their waymarks  
As from strength to strength they go,  
Till in Zion each appeareth,  
Where the "living waters" flow.

Passing through this vale of tears, Lord,  
May we thus a blessing prove!  
Helping others on life's journey  
Till we reach Thy courts above.

*Camas, Wash.*

## A WORD IN REGARD TO JEWISH BAPTISMS.

BY REV. LOUIS MEYER.

We are frequently asked, "How many Jews are annually baptized?" Our answer has been always that at least 5,000 Jews are baptized in Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Greek Churches every year, and we have never attempted to make the distinction between the baptism of truly converted Jews and baptisms which practically have no deeper meaning. Thus our answer simply means that at least 5,000 Jews throughout the world make a public change of religion every year and become, nominally at least, members of some Christian body. This change of relig-

ion may be caused by outward circumstances, by a desire to escape persecution, to join the majority, to reach higher official or social position, or by a sincere belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not attempt to judge, though we are conscious that less than one-half of these baptisms is probably caused by a sincere belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. We simply watch the records of baptisms of Jews everywhere and add the figures without any attempt at discerning the reasons for these baptisms.

Our figures have never been contradicted by Jewish statisticians, but here and there Christians have doubted if the figures were not too high. These doubters should read the Jewish papers, and they would find quickly that our figures are too low. We quote an item from the *American Israelite* of March 10th. It is written by Professor G. Deutsch, the great authority on Jewish History and the opponent of all Jewish missionary effort, and reads, "The total number of apostasies from Judaism in Vienna during the year 1909 was 616, and so shows that the number of desertions for the last ten years has remained stationary. In a community which numbers about 180,000 souls the proportion of apostasies cannot be considered very great, although it is by no means insignificant. The former pretext that in this number there are included many outsiders who come to Vienna for the sake of conversion, in order to avoid notoriety at home, will not hold good any more, since the names of the apostates are published by the Jewish press. One would think that it might be rather the reverse. The lists show that losses are found at both ends, amongst the most prominent and amongst the lowest

strata of society. We find laborers and seamstresses by the side of lawyers and actresses and the representatives of high finance."

Thus the official record of one Jewish community of about 180,000 souls shows 600 baptisms in Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches annually for the last ten years! Truly our estimate of 5,000 baptisms among the twelve millions of Jews throughout the world is very conservative. *But baptism does not mean conversion*, though often it leads to it by the grace of God.

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#### WILD WHEAT IN ARID PALESTINE.

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The Department of Agriculture at Washington is much interested in a recent discovery made by Dr. A. Aronsohn, chief arganome of the experimental station at Haifa. Dr. Aronsohn, who has this week gone to Montana for the purpose of addressing there a dry farming congress, has discovered in Palestine that wild wheat grows upon the rocky and hilly soil of that country without cultivation and practically without water. Dr. Aronsohn has photographs of the wheat that he has discovered, and says that there are tens of thousands of acres over which it grows more or less thickly. Strangely enough, this wheat, which has been thus growing for hundreds of years, had always escaped observation, it being taken for granted that the growth was a mere weed, not worthy of attention. Dr. Fairchild of the department at Washington, is deeply interested in Dr. Aronsohn's discovery, and is of the opinion that its verification will prove of the utmost interest to the United States government in the development of our arid lands, particularly in

Arizona and New Mexico, without the necessity of irrigation. The United States government has for years been experimenting to develop and improve our wheat stock, and Dr. Fairchild therefore regards this discovery as of capital importance. If Dr. Aronsohn's views are correct, this discovery may be of the greatest value, both in Palestine and Mesopotamia.

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#### FINDS OLDEST PROOF OF DELUGE.

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PROF. H. V. HILPRECHT OF PHILADELPIA TELLS OF TABLETS BURIED AT NIPPUR.

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PHILADELPHIA, PA., March 19.—Prof. Herman V. Hilprecht of the department of archæology of the University of Pennsylvania, has found among the tablets from the "Temple library" of Nippur a remarkable fragment containing a portion of the "Babylonian deluge story," this being the oldest written reference extant to that catastrophe, antedating the Bible narrative by at least 1,000 years.

As translated by Prof. Hilprecht, the tablets read:

"[I declare unto] thee that confines of heaven I will loosen, a deluge I will make, and I shall sweep away all men together; but thou [the Babylonian Noah] seek life before the deluge cometh forth; for to all living beings, as many as there are, I will bring overthrow, destruction, annihilation... Build a great ship and... total height shall be its structure. It shall be a houseboat carrying what has been saved of life... With a strong deck cover it. The ship which thou shalt make, into it bring the beasts of the field, the birds of heaven, and the creeping things, two of everything instead of a number... and the family..."