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

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IS JESUS THE MESSIAH?

BY PRESIDENT CHARLES A. BLANCHARD, OF WHEATON COLLEGE.

DEAR FRIENDS—

I think it pleasant, always, to begin with the things about which we are agreed. Let us do so to-day. We are certainly all agreed that every one should get all the light he can, and believe everything for the truth of which he has evidence. I am sure we can stand together on this proposition.

In the next place, we are agreed that the Old Testament is the word of God. You believe it. I believe it. There is no difference here.

Still further, you believe, as I do, that the Old Testament predicts the coming of the Messiah. You do not believe that He has come; you look for Him yet to come. I believe that He has come. But we are all agreed that the Old Testament prophesies His coming. I believe that the Old Testament prophesies two comings; the one to suffer, Isaiah 53; the other to reign, Daniel 7. I believe that the first of these comings has already been realized; that the second is yet future. You believe that He has not come at all; but you look for

Him, and you look for Him to come and reign.

Still, once more, we are agreed that one of your nationality claiming to be the Messiah did come. I know that there was more than one such person—but One came Who was highly distinguished from all others. Your fathers crucified Him; they said he was not Messias. I believe He was. But I mention this not to emphasize our difference, but to emphasize our agreement. We all know that such a person did come into the world; that He did live a certain number of years; and that finally He was crucified.

And finally, we are agreed that at the present time there are in the world about ten millions of Jews, and about five hundred million people who in one way or another believe in Messiah. Of course, I am not saying that there are five hundred millions of Christians, but five hundred millions of people who in some way believe in the Messiahship of Jesus. They call themselves Christians, and are so reckoned by statisticians.

Now, let us come to the question which is before us. Was Jesus the Messiah? As the woman at Sychar said: "Is not this the Christ?" That is the question which is before us this evening. We want to know the truth. Let us see if we

*Address at the Reading Room of the Hebrew Mission, Chicago, Sunday Evening, Feb. 25, 1906.

We come, Lord, to Thee, in astonishment sore,

Thy help and deliverance to crave!
Thou, who in Thy wisdom and power
didst "create,"

From this ruin and chaos canst "save."

Come and restore order and harmony,
Lord!

Bid the self-will of men to cease!
May willing obedience extend o'er the
earth,

To the rule of the "Prince of Peace."

The freedom we beg is a freedom from
sin,

A subjection to truth and right;
Surrender of intellect, body and soul,
"To the Lord," who can end the strife.

Oh! Come, restore all things, Thou
blessed Redeemer!

Come, bring in Thy glorious reign,
For God's perfect remedy for the earth's
ruin

Is found in "Thy coming again."

Fairbury, Neb.

SPAIN AND THE JEWS.*

BY REV. LOUIS MEYER.

While the Jewish claim that their ancestors settled in Spain at the time of King Solomon cannot be proved, Paul's words to the Romans (15:28), "I will come by you into Spain," leave no doubt that many Jews were found there at that time. When Jerusalem had been destroyed, many of the unhappy fugitives, with the help of their brethren had settled already in North Africa, joining the colony of Jews in Spain, which soon became numerous and prosperous. Its members engaged in trade and succeeded in acquiring large wealth, living in peace and friendly relations with their Christian neighbors, until the *Council of Elvira* (303) interfered and attempted to make the line of severance between

Jew and Gentile more complete. A chasm was by it created between Church and Synagogue. Yet after a brief struggle the Jews were permitted to dwell again in safety and peace until King *Recared, the Goth*, embraced the Catholic faith (in 589). He began to persecute Arians and Jews, declaring that all Jews must become Christians and be baptized. Life was made exceedingly hard for the Jew. He "might neither be born nor be married, neither love nor work nor play, without penalties and restrictions. He might have the children he had begotten, or the servants he had bought, taken from him at any moment, without excuse or possibility of redress. He could be forced into a church and made to listen unwillingly to bad sermons, and if he resisted he might be scourged. Would he be converted or would he have his property taken from him? was a common form of question to the Jews."

When *King Sisebut* ascended the throne, matters became still worse, for baptism or exile was the only alternative presented to his Jewish subjects by the fanatic king. Many Jews fled to France, but, it is said, more than ninety thousand of them were baptized. Milman, in *History III*, 164, remarks well concerning these forced converts, "How far their hearts renounced their creed, or how soon they relapsed, must remain uncertain."

It is refreshing to know that the conduct of the king was highly censured by *Isidore, bishop of Seville*, a Hebrew Christian himself (?), and condemned by the Catholic clergy in Spain. In the fourth council of Toledo (633), in which Isidore presided, it was declared un-Christian and unlawful to use compulsory measures in religion. The reasons assigned were: "That

*Part of an address delivered at the sixth annual conference of the Chicago Hebrew Mission, Nov. 7 to 9, 1905.

God hardens and has compassion on whom He pleases, and that none can be saved without their own consent." (Hannah A. Iams, *History of the Jews*, I, 192.) The council, however, showed less wisdom in adding "that those whom persecution had induced to receive baptism should be compelled, for the honor of the Church, to persevere in conforming to the external rites of the Christian religion, or be given away as slaves."

A few years later *King Chintila* ascended the throne. He treated the Jews with greatest rigor. All his subjects were commanded to profess the Christian religion and an edict was passed for the total expulsion of the Jews. Then the king managed to have the fifth and sixth council of Toledo (both in 638) confirm his cruel edicts. Isidore of Seville had died, and the assembled divines highly commended the king's zeal against the Jews. "They solemnly ratified the edict he had enacted for the banishment of this miserable people, and declared that no prince for the future should ascend the Spanish throne till he had taken an oath to observe all the laws against them; and he who violated this sacred engagement was to be anathematized." From that time on the persecution of the Jews in Spain was authorized by law, and it was ordained that every Jew who refused to receive baptism should suffer a severe corporal punishment, be exiled from the kingdom and lose all his possessions by confiscation. Many Jews were baptized, only to apostatize as soon as opportunity offered itself. To remedy this evil, new laws were given and renewed persecutions ensued, until at last the king of Spain discovered that the Jews could not be converted to Christianity by coercive measures. Then, in 686, he

ordered *Julian, archbishop of Toledo*, himself a *Hebrew Christian*, to write against Judaism. In obedience to the royal command, Julian wrote his famous and learned treatise, about the Sixth Millennium, in which he proved from the writings of the prophets that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah.

The long years of persecution had produced great hatred of their enemies among the Jews, who therefore exulted in the victories of the Mohammedans over the Visigoths, and even attempted to help them in their subdual of Spain. Finally, in 711, the Omniad califs took possession of Spain, and for the four centuries during which they ruled, life was to the Spanish Jews "like a dream in the night." Schools of learning sprang up, and the Jews led the van in culture and knowledge, though here and there persecutions ensued. The Church was powerless and the relation between her and the Synagogue was one of neutrality. But as soon as the power of the Mohammedans began to wane, in 1212, the Church renewed her efforts to bring the Jews to an acknowledgment of Christ. Persecutions arose again, especially from the Crusaders who assembled near Toledo, but the voices of many Christian leaders were lifted up against such un-Christian conduct. We will quote only the words of Pope Innocent III, who declared: "It is our will that no Christian shall force a Jew to come to the baptismal font. If a Jew flees to Christ and joins His followers for his belief's sake, and makes plainly known his purpose, he shall be permitted to become a Christian without an evil report. It is not possible to consider a Christian the man who has not come voluntarily, but through force, to be baptized."

But the first step towards real missionary work among the Jews was undoubtedly done when, about 1230, *Raymond de Penneforte*, general of the Dominicans, confessor to the king and minister to the pope, began to espouse the cause of the unhappy Jews. He opposed violent persecution and persuaded the king that mildness and instruction were the most effectual means to induce the brethren of the Lord according to the flesh to embrace Christianity. Accordingly a college for the instruction of missionaries for Jewish work was founded in Murcia. Several of the Dominican friars were chosen to learn the Hebrew and Arabic languages, and directed to study the Bible especially, that they might be able to dispute with Jewish rabbis and convince them of the error of their ways. One of the disciples of Raymond was *Pablo (Paul) Christiano of Montpellier*, who became the first real missionary preacher to the Jews since the days of the primitive Church. He traveled through southern France and Spain, arguing with the Jewish rabbis everywhere about the Messiahship of Jesus. In 1273 he held a debate in the royal palace at Barcelona with Moses Nachmani, a famous cabballistical Jew. The most prominent Jewish and Christian scholars were present at the debate, and the questions discussed were: "Is the Messiah yet to come or has He already appeared?" "Is the Messiah to be divine?" "Is Judaism or Christianity the true religion?" Both sides claimed the victory. Nachmani, however, left Spain, we know not whether as voluntary exile or forced by the king's command, and went to Jerusalem, while Paul obtained a royal edict whereby he was appointed missionary to the Jews, and the Jews were enjoined to open

their houses, synagogues, books and ears to him whenever he desired to dispute with them.

Another disciple of Raymond and of the missionary college at Murcia was *Raymond Martin*. He wrote a treatise against the Jews, "*Pugio Fidei contra Mauros et Judaeos*" (the dagger of faith against Moors and Jews), which is a learned and powerful defense of the Christian religion against the arguments of the Jews. For centuries the work was the great armory of the missionaries against Jewish unbelief, and even today it is valuable on account of the quotations from rabbinical writers.

Toward the end of the 13th century the missionary spirit spread among the monks in Spain and France, and many of them began to preach in churches and synagogues to the Jews, who were forced to attend the services. The conversions during those years were numerous, but we must not forget that persecution still accompanied the preaching. "Death or baptism" was the choice given to the Jews, and many a Jew purchased a momentary escape from persecution by submitting to the rite of baptism. But at the same time, there is no doubt that numbers of Jews were truly converted. Even the Jewish historian, Graetz, must confess that "Judaism was deprived of much talent in the transition of learned and cultured men to Christianity, many of whom were possessed of proselyting zeal, as though they were born Dominicans." Of these Hebrew Christians we name only the celebrated John the Convert, or John of Valladolid, and the famous physician, Abner or Alfonso.

The 14th century again brought persecution after persecution upon the Jews in Spain. "Death or bap-

tism" remained the cry of their enemies, and the inquisition was watching jealously those Jews who tried to escape the persecution and went to the baptismal font. We shall mention but two men who were prominent among the missionaries to the Jews of this period: *Vincent Ferrer, or Ferrer*, was a Dominican, and traveled through Spain, France, Germany and Italy, everywhere preaching to the Jews. Monkish historians report that 25,000 Jews were converted under his preaching and were baptized, while Jewish accounts state that 35,000 deserted the synagogues. But, as Hannah Adam rightly says, "Whatever was their number, it appears that the greatest part of them renounced their former religion merely to avoid severe and cruel treatment. They secretly circumcised their children, observed the passover and neglected none of the Jewish rites and ceremonies." Ferrer died in 1419, and was canonized forty years later for the miracles he performed and for his zeal for converting the Jews.

The other prominent missionary of this period of whom we desire to speak is *Jerome de Sancta Fide*. He was a Hebrew Christian, and before baptism had been renowned as a Hebrew scholar and a physician under his Jewish name, Joseph Hallorki, or Joshua Lorqui.

Jerome became a favorite of the anti-pope, Benedict XIII, who was full of zeal for the conversion of the Jews, and it was Jerome who persuaded the pope to summon the most celebrated rabbis of Spain to attend a conference which he appointed for religious discussions between them and the Jews. This conference was the famous CONFERENCE OF TORTOSA, Feb. 7th, 1413, to Nov. 12th, 1414, of which

the Jews say that it was conducted rather on the model of the famous argument between the wolf and the lamb in Aesop's Fables. Jerome was the principal Christian conductor of the dispute, while Vidal, Ben Veniste and others defended the Jewish religion. After sixty-eight meetings had been held, Benedict ordered the conference closed, adding that the Jews should resist the truth no longer. Finally, all rabbis but two asked to be baptized, and many Jews joined them in this request.

Of celebrated Hebrew Christians of the 14th century we name Paul of Burgos (Solomon Halleri as Jew), who rose to high office in the Church and was praised on account of his sincerity and honesty even by the Jews; Nicolas de Lyra, who in his treatises adduced more cogent arguments against the Jewish faith than any other writer and who has rightly been called a precursor of the Reformation; Paul of Haredia, a famous scholar and author; and the celebrated physician, John Baptist.

With the beginning of the 15th century increased persecution of the Spanish Jews commenced. "Kill them like sheep if they will not be baptized," said one famous knight of the period. It would lead us too far, were we to consider the barbarous persecutions, the cruel atrocities committed upon the Jews by the nominal followers of Christ. We cannot enter upon a discussion of the "Marannos," Jews who let the water of baptism touch their heads, but remained faithful to Judaism in their hearts. We cannot look into the objects and functions of the Inquisition, although over 10,000 Jews were burned at the stake and over 97,000 underwent varying degrees of punishment during 18

years of Torquemada's Inquisitorship. Let us only state that all these efforts of the Romish Church to convert the Jews by means of persecution and violence failed to attain the desired end. Then, "in hate or in fear, or in desperate foolishness, she resolved upon another method of rooting out the Jews" in the most Catholic of all lands, Spain. On March 31st, 1492, King Ferdinand of Spain published a royal edict that all Jews, men, women and children, must leave Spain within four months. All efforts to soften the heart of the king were in vain, and on July 30th, 1492, to the disgrace of the king, nobles and priests, and to the ruin of the country, the whole body of Spanish Jews, some 300,000, were turned out of Spain. Let us not suppose, however, that the immediate results of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain were disastrous either to the commerce or to the power of that kingdom. Spain rose to its greatest height of power and influence in the century succeeding the expulsion. Yet it cannot be denied that afterwards Spain learned to know the truth of God's word, "Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." The Spanish edict of expulsion of the Jews was not repealed until Spain became a republic in 1858, but very few Jews have availed themselves of the permission to dwell in that beautiful country. According to some authorities, one Jew is found in every 10,000 Spanish inhabitants; according to others, one in every 45,000.

The Spanish efforts to force Christianity upon the Jews by spoliation, oppression and bloody persecution still live in the memories of the Jewish people and have created a tremendous prejudice against the Gospel.

IN THE LAND OF MOAB.

HISTORIC TREASURE STONE FOUND
BEYOND THE DEAD SEA.

BY REV. WM. E. BARTON, D. D.

On July 19, 1868, Rev. F. A. Klein, a missionary, found beyond Jordan, in the ancient land of Moab, near Diban, opposite the middle of the Red Sea, a stone whose broken fragments are now in the Louvre in Paris. It was about a yard and a half in height, two feet in breadth and a foot in thickness. It sloped toward the top, which was rounded, and the edges were smooth and well shaped. The stone when discovered lay fully exposed, and face up, and upon it were found thirty-four lines in a language not very different from the Hebrew, and in an alphabet more like to the Samaritan, which is an older form of Hebrew.

Mr. Klein was the only European who ever saw the stone entire. He copied its inscription, and on returning to Jerusalem showed his papers to scholars who confirmed his opinion of the value of the find. Squeezes were made by a dragoman sent out from Jerusalem, and overtures began for the purchase of the stone. But such negotiations proceed slowly in the Orient, and it was months before they were completed.

When the superstitious Arabs found that the stone was so highly prized, they made a fire under it and poured water on it, breaking it into fragments, which they distributed among themselves as charms. These fragments, for the most part, were later collected, and were put together in a plaster setting, as it now is displayed in the Louvre, in Paris. The squeezes,