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THE PRESENT DISPENSATION AND OUR PRESENT DUTY WITH REGARD TO ISRAEL.

REV. SAMUEL H. WILKINSON.

THE PRESENT DISPENSATION.

It is striking that this conference almost synchronizes with the Jewish New Year. Already the Jewish citizens of this city have engaged halls and rooms, and are training choirs in preparation for the succession of festivals which commence on Saturday next, the 10th inst., with Rosh Hashona, the 1st of Tishri, the commencement of the Jewish civil year, as Nisan is of the sacred year.

In the 23d chapter of Leviticus we have the seven great festivals of the Jewish calendar, each of which has a special bearing, the whole seven foreshadowing the world's history, they are called "feasts of Jehovah" and "holy convocations," and their grouping together surely implies a relationship between each in that which they set forth.

THE FIRST IS THE SABBATH, a weekly feast truly, but here included by design to set forth God as creator. The sanctified seventh day was the seal of completeness

and perfection to the handiwork of God. It extols Him as God, invests Him with all the attributes of God, and by contrast reveals the fallen and helpless state of man. The Sabbath therefore speaks of creation.

THE SECOND IS PASSOVER. The two elements therein were a slain lamb for atonement, and a feast of unleavened bread for separation, deliverance from outward judgment and from inward corruption. The lamb was "taken" on the 10th day of Nisan, kept till the 14th, on the evening of which it was slain. At the fall of our first parents the redemption promise was given (Gen. 3:15), the lamb set apart, but only 4,000 years after on the evening of the fourth day, taking 1,000 years as a day, was He slain (Psalm 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8). The unleavened bread speaks of His separation from sinners, His spotless humanity, as does the lamb without blemish His acceptableness to God. Passover, therefore, sets forth the redemption.

THE THIRD IS THE WAVING OF THE BARLEY SHEAF (Leviticus 23:9-11). This took place on the morrow after the Passover Sabbath (or, as Bonar says, the 3d day or later after Passover). As barley harvest in Palestine comes before wheat harvest, it was the very first of the first fruits. Thus on the third day our Lord arose from the

*An address delivered Thursday morning, Sept. 8th, at the Fifth Conference of the Chicago Hebrew Mission, Grace M. E. Ch., Chicago.

Oh come, desire of nations, come!
 To Salem, now descend!
 When Thou in glory reignest there,
 Creation's groan must end.
Fairbury, Neb.

THE RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF THE JEWS.*

BY REV. LOUIS MEYER.

All the believers in Judaism agree on the following articles, which are found in K. Kohler, *Guide for Instruction in Judaism*, p. 47.

1. We believe that there is one God, an only Being, eternal, spiritual and most holy, who created heaven and earth and ruleth the world with perfect wisdom, with infinite justice and everlasting love. He is our God and none besides Him. Him we are bidden to love with all our heart, and all our soul, and all our might; exclaiming: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."

2. We believe that all men are children of God, endowed with an immortal spirit, destined to share in the eternal happiness by following His ways of righteousness.

3. We also believe that Israel, having been the first to recognize God, hath received a special revelation of His will with the mission of being His chosen priest among the nations to lead them to truth and salvation.

4. We believe that God ruleth and judgeth all men and nations in righteousness and love. By reward and punishments, by joys and sufferings He educateth and leadeth them to ever higher aims until at last they shall arrive at the

*Part of an address on The Social, Political and Religious Condition of the Jews throughout the World, delivered at the Fifth Conference of the Chicago Hebrew Mission.—The treatises of Kroenig, A. Ben-Oliel, Whyte, Banning, Ayerst, McCormick and others have been freely used.

end of all time, when truth, justice and peace shall unite mankind in the life of divine love and eternal salvation, and God will be King and Father of all.

It has been well said that Judaism today consists of two great sections, viz., the Orthodox and the Reform, and that these two sections divide between them the divine injunction, "Thou shalt neither add nor diminish"; the Orthodox Jew by adding to, the Reform by diminishing from the word of God.

Reform Judaism of today has no common creed. In general it does not believe that a personal Messiah was ever promised, but simply a golden age. All its followers are agreed to dissent from Orthodoxy, but are divided in principle. One section ignores the divinity of the Bible, another only accepts so much of it as divine as suits their own tastes, and another retains a little of both Scripture and rabbinical tradition. Thus Reform Judaism may be said to be "a mixture of Unitarianism and of Intellectual Rationalism, elevating philosophy above religion." Its followers are found in America, Great Britain, and in Germany.

THE KARAITES.

We ought to mention here the Karaites, which are often called the Protestants of Judaism. When in the eighth century the legislative portion of talmudic and rabbinic literature rapidly increased and the rabbinical enactments began to be burdensome, a number of Jews living in the Crimea rebelled. Under the leadership of Rabbi Anani, a sect was formed which professed to return to the Pentateuch as the sole rule of Jewish faith and doctrine. They received the name Karaites or Karaim, literally, Readers, *i. e.*, of Scripture,

and were greatly strengthened by the Chazars joining them. These Chazars were a Tartar tribe, dwelling in the Crimea, and exercising rule over most of South Russia, which in the eighth century became converted to Judaism, and kept it as the official religion of the tribe for two centuries. Many of these new converts joined the ranks of the Karaites and thus gave new impetus to the movement. The Crimea is still the chief seat of the Karaites, colonies of whom are found in Jerusalem, Egypt, Turkey and Hungary. Their total number is about three thousand. "Their form of Judaism is recognized by the Russian state as a tolerated creed, chiefly in order to emphasize the Russian attitude toward the rest of the Jews." It is interesting to note that Joseph Jacobs accuses the Karaites of having after all an Oral Law of their own, which was mainly borrowed from rabbinical sources.

ORTHODOX JUDAISM is by no means the religion of the Old Testament, but it is Rabbinism pure and simple. The traditions of the fathers and the enactments of the rabbis have taken the place of the Word of God. The followers of Orthodox Judaism I would, like Kroenig, divide into three groups. In *the first group* I would place the Jews of North Africa, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, the European Turkey, parts of Austria, Hungary, Poland and Russia, or with other words, the great majority of all Jews throughout the world. These Jews, in general, show few elements of general culture, but possess a most extensive knowledge of traditional literature, to which they cling tenaciously, and have considerable acquaintance with the Old Testament. To this class belongs the sect of the *Chassidim*. Founded

by Israel Baal Shem at the beginning of the eighteenth century as a protest against the overgrown formalism into which rabbinism had then fallen, this sect lays stress upon the more mystic and the emotional sides of religion. The Chassidim are quite numerous and influential in Galicia, Roumania, Russia and Hungary. They are under the government of rabbis, whom they call Zadik (righteous). These are regarded as temporary Messiahs. Great homage is paid to them, and pilgrimages are made and offerings brought to them to obtain their benediction. In *the second group* I would place the great majority of the American Jews and of those living in the western half of Europe. They are rapidly acquiring general culture and with that culture are adopting the manners and customs of the countries in which they dwell. Their knowledge of Rabbinism and the Old Testament is good, but they are being alienated from both as they become naturalized in their respective countries. While they themselves border on Reform, their children become little acquainted with the religion of their fathers and become either rationalistic Reform Jews or even Infidels. In *the third group* I would place the Jews in the interior of Africa, in Arabia, East India, China, Persia, Turkestan, and Bokhara. This group represents a population in a low grade of civilization, who have preserved but scanty relics of the religion of their fathers. But the little that they have preserved is of a Rabbinic tint. In this group belong *the Falashas of Abyssinia*. They are about 50,000 in number and, according to their name, which means emigrants or exiles, were not originally natives of Abyssinia. The Jews generally hold that the Falashas are "descendants of the

old Jewish Himyarite kingdom of South Arabia. They are not Jews in race, but their ritual is distinctly Jewish, though written in the Gezz language." Another view of the origin of the Falashas and one which seems to be quite plausible to me, is that at the time of the Babylonian Captivity some Jews fled into Egypt. They sailed up the Nile and established themselves in the province of Kwara, subsequently extending into other provinces round the northern shore of Lake Dembea. The fact that the Falashas still principally reside in that very part of Abyssinia makes this view of their origin quite probable. The religious classes among the Falashas are, as a rule, acquainted only with the Pentateuch, and especially its ceremonial laws. Their places of worship are constructed after the plan of the Tabernacle, and in their worship an altar and sacrifices are chief features. The services consist of prayers and psalms, music, dancing, incense and sacrifices. Their fasts and feasts are numerous, but alas! Sanbat, the goddess of the Sabbath (probably Ashtoreth), receives especial honor. The language used in the services is a mixture of Amharic and Ethiopic. The few *Jews dwelling in the oases of the Sahara* might be counted here, although they are retaining scarcely anything of the religion of their fathers. The *Riff Jews*, found at the back of the Atlas mountains in Morocco, might also be mentioned. They are wandering tribes of warlike habits and great independence.

Living near Yeddah and Hodeida in Arabia are numerous Jews who claim to be the descendants of the *Rechabites* (Jer. 35:5-11). They are called Beni-Khabr or Beni-Arhab, are in possession of the Arabic Bible only, and live

quite strictly in conformity to the law of Moses.

The Beni Israel and the black Jews of East India must not be forgotten. Numbering about 18,000, these white and black Jews, though racially distinct, are religiously much the same. The Beni-Israel came to India about 490 A. D., when their prince, Joseph Rabban, conducted them, a band of refugees, from Persia to Kranganor. The black Jews are the descendants of the converts made by these refugees. Both classes do not intermarry. The Beni-Israel and the black Jews are quite ignorant of the religion of their fathers, although European Jews have made great efforts during the last fifty years to instruct them in the tenets of Judaism. However, they have retained the Jewish Sabbath, are observing Jewish fasts and festivals (though in their own peculiar way), and in a rough and ready manner deal with the question of clean and unclean meats.

We lastly would add to this group the *Chinese Jews*, or, as the Chinese call them, the Taou-Kin-Kiaow (Extracting Sinew Sect). Living at Kae-Fung-Foo, on the Ho-Hang-Ho, in the province of Ho-Nan, these Jews are the descendants of seven clans which, according to their own account, arrived in China from Persia about 200 A. D. They number now about 200 individuals in all, and six of the original clans have intermarried with the surrounding Chinese. They cannot read Hebrew and have been without a rabbi almost one hundred years. The expectation of a Messiah has been lost, and the rite of circumcision has been abandoned. Their synagogue is in ruins, and there is danger of the amalgamation of the remnant with the surrounding Chi-

nese. The Jewish Society for the Rescue of the Chinese Jews, with its headquarters in Shanghai, is just now making a final attempt to rescue, with the help of Dr. Berthold Lanfer, the remnant of the Chinese Jews in China.—There is another sect in China at Hong Kong. They are called *Wi-Du* (probably a corruption of the Hebrew *Ybrū*), and belong to the Arab type. Their language amongst themselves is the Spanish, but their children are instructed in Chinese and Persian as well. They know little or no Hebrew at all. Jewish rites and ceremonies are, with the exception of the blowing of the Shofar on the New Year and on the Feast of Tabernacles, entirely unknown amongst them. On the Sabbath they dress in festive garments, but do not abstain from work. Polygamy and divorce are unknown among them, and each father acts as teacher to his children. They are a virtuous and handsome people and are noted for industry and cleanliness. These *Wi-Du* are probably descendants of Spanish Jews who were expelled from Spain in 1492 and came to China via Turkey and Persia.

ORTHODOX JUDAISM.

All adherents of Orthodox Judaism accept as creed the thirteen articles of faith which the great Jewish philosopher, Maimonides, formulated at the close of the twelfth century.

These articles teach God's existence, unity, incorporeality, and eternity. They acknowledge that He is the sole object of men's worship; that prophecy is true, but Moses is supreme authority; that the Law of Moses is of divine origin and immutable; that a divine judgment and retribution is to come; that the Messiah is to ap-

pear, and that the dead shall be raised again. But, alas! when Orthodox Judaism acknowledges the divine origin and the immutability of the Law of Moses, it adds, "both the written and oral one." For it believes that Moses on Mount Sinai received two revelations; that one found body in the written law and the other was handed down orally from generation to generation, until at last it was reduced to writing and now constitutes what is known as the Talmud. The interpretation of this oral law was left to the rabbis, who were recognized as divinely instituted teachers and keepers of mystery. The enactments of the rabbis gradually took the place of the Word of God, until now Orthodox Judaism regards the oral law as superseding written revelation.

The clearest light upon Orthodox Judaism, however, throws the Jewish Liturgy. Let me simply quote the words of Kroenig concerning it: "This is a voluminous compilation, a literature in itself, the product of many ages and varied talents. It is a compendium of ritual in which symbol and ceremony are blended, types and shadows substituted for Scripture realities. Fasting and prayer are substituted for sacrifices. A lamb-bone and a consecrated passover cake are the substitution for the Paschal Lamb, and wherever Scripture puts repentance the word fasting is substituted, and for the word righteousness, almsgiving is substituted. In this Liturgy, every usage both for the social, domestic and religious circles is provided for, and most of the ten thousand rabbinic ordinances regulating Judaism find an echo in this Liturgy. The Psalms are classified as charms and amu-

lets for all the events and vicissitudes of life; the angelic host is invoked and a mystic name assigned to each angel. Dreams are elevated to the position of divine revelation, for which a repertoire of interpretation exists, and a very pathetic prayer for dreams is inserted in the solemn service of the synagogue on high festivals. In the Liturgy the Jew has his directorium from the cradle to the grave; it is his oracle and guide to the numerous superstitions by which the doctrines of purgatory, prayers for the dead, resurrection, eternal life, etc., are hemmed in. In short, Orthodox Judaism does not ask, 'What saith the Lord?' but 'What say the Sages?' (The Religious Condition of the Jews, by the Rev. J. C. S. Kroenig; London, 1882; p. 9.)

The coming of the Messiah and the final restoration through Him is very prominent in the Liturgy; yea, in the whole life of the Orthodox Jews. But it is a conquering hero that they look for, not the Messiah of the Scriptures; for that is the radical error of Orthodox Judaism, that it believes not in the need of an atoning, sin-bearing Saviour.

The Text Book of the Jewish Religion, by M. Friedlander, contains nothing about sin, or wickedness, or iniquity. Under "Day of Atonement" we discover, "it is a day of fasting, praying and repenting. We confess our sins before the Almighty, and pray to Him for forgiveness," and "we can only fully obtain it after having honestly sought reconciliation with our fellow-men and with ourselves." The confession of sins as contained in the Liturgy is made collectively, and its form is "*We* have been guilty."

According to Banning, in a catechism prepared for the Jewish

Parochial Schools in Paris, we find the following questions and answers, after sin has been defined as "disobedience to the law of God," and we have been assured that sinners incur God's punishment either in this world or in the world to come:

Question. "By what means can the sinner be absolved from his sins and obtain pardon from God?"

Answer. "By penitence." Question. "What do you mean by penitence?" Answer. "The expression of a sincere repentance for the sin committed, regret in having offended God, and a firm resolution to avoid committing sin and to confess our errors before the Eternal. Penitence is the most important favor from the God of Mercy, who, knowing our weakness, has given us the means of obtaining pardon for our sins, and to regain divine grace."

Is not the teaching of Orthodox Judaism simply that all that is necessary for obtaining forgiveness of our sins is confession of them to God and atonement for them to our fellow-men? Thus the Orthodox Jew is directly taught that "no priest or any other mediator is necessary to work atonement for man's sin; he himself can make himself at one with his Maker by casting his sinful past into the sea, to begin a new life of virtue, goodness and rectitude." Thus he is taught to believe in the sacrifice of fasting and prayers and in the efficacy of good works. There is no reference to blood atonement in the Jewish religious books, and thus the atonement of the Jew is human, not divine; of the sinner, not of the Saviour.

Of the six hundred and thirteen commandments of the Talmud, which are meant to regulate the life of every one of its followers, those referring to the visitation of

the sick, the comforting of the mourner, the interment of the dead, the help to be extended to the traveler, are considered more binding than others. The highest place, however, is given to almsgiving or charity. The very word for righteousness in Hebrew (*zedaka*) is interpreted as meaning charity, as Joseph Jacobs adds, "perhaps to indicate that the truest justice consists in charity, or that the truest charity consists in justice. But, alas! this charity is extended chiefly and mainly to Jews, and a helping hand can be extended to an idolater—which term includes all other men, heathen and Christian—for the sake of the ways of peace only."

We might further mention here that Talmudism, strictly enforced, painfully degrades woman. While it pays great attention to the religious education of the males, that of the females is utterly neglected. The fond father imagines that it is reckoned unto him a merit toward the day of judgment if he teaches his boy the Hebrew Scriptures and the Talmud. But daughters are not required to learn the revealed will of their Creator. The females are excluded from the public worship of God, and in any matter of dispute female evidence has no weight.

We might also add a few words concerning the doctrine of human merit, which is a fatal error of Orthodox Judaism. Whyte has well said, "The first thing taught by the oral law on this subject is, that he whose merits outnumber his sins is accounted a righteous man; the second, that in estimating the state of one individual as compared with that of another, respect is to be had not only to the number but to the quality of the actions; that is, there are merits which outweigh many sins, while there are sins the

commission of which may neutralize a great amount of merit. The last ingredient in human merit is, that transgression or obedience may turn the scale; in other words, that the whole world may be quivering between salvation and destruction, where the performance of one commandment, or the commission of a single sin by a Jew, may give the preponderance one way or another. 'The rabbinical Jew,' says McCaul, 'fulfils a commandment, and consequently lays up a certain portion of merit, by the mode of putting on his shirt, tying his shoes, washing his hands before and after meals, and by walking fast to the synagogue, and coming slowly away. The wearing of certain fringes on his garment, putting on his phylacteries, saying the prescribed prayers, and lighting the candles for the feast of dedication, are all meritorious acts. The Sabbath has a whole host of such meritorious observances, so has every festival and every feast; so that by the end of the year every rabbinical Jew must think that he has a pretty tolerable stock of observances, and consequently of merit, laid up, to stand against whatever sins he has committed.' By such unhallowed mode of computation the Talmudical Jew would traffic for salvation with his God."

But enough has been said to convey to you an idea of the religious condition of the Jews throughout the world. A pitiful picture it is, indeed. On the one side the Reform Jews, reforming and changing until their religion has become a strange "mixture of Unitarianism, Indifferentism, and Socialistic Neology." On the other side the Orthodox Jews, putting tradition above divine revelation.

Alas! alas! It is but too true. "My people have committed two

evils; they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns; broken cisterns that can hold no water." Verily the gold has become very dim. But thanks be to God, who through His prophet's mouth has told us, "He that scattereth Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock."

Hopkinton, Iowa.

THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD POWERS.

BY PROF. JAMES M. GRAY, D. D.

Daniel was a captive in Babylon. His mission as a prophet differs materially from that of any of the others. They deal chiefly with Israel or Judah as the case may be, treating of the Gentile nations only incidentally, so to speak, and when they may be said to come in contact with the chosen people. But Daniel reverses this order. He deals more at length with the Gentile nations, and as it were only incidentally with the Jews. He gives us an outline, the whole history of what might be called Gentile dominion from its origin at the time God gave it into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, till the time it passes away with the restoration of Israel at the end of the present age and the coming of Christ to introduce the millennium. The whole of this period is that commonly known as "The Times of the Gentiles," and its governmental control will be found to be comprehended within four world-

empires, the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek and Roman.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM.

We may confidently omit the consideration of chapter 1, which presents nothing of difficulty, giving the account merely of the captivity and early training of the prophet at the court of Babylon. The prophetic portion of the book begins really with the interpretation of the king's dream, 2:36. We have seen in the earlier prophets intimations of the fact that God had committed the dominion of the world into the hands of the king of Babylon, but in Daniel 2:36-38 it is plainly stated. Just why God did this is not plainly revealed in so many words, but an inductive study of the scriptures shows that it was, in part, a judgment on Israel to which nation the dominion belonged according to the original promise, but which had forfeited it through unbelief and sin. Paradoxical as it may seem, it was too, a judgment on the Gentiles. It was, so to speak, allowing them to have their own way in the earth in order to demonstrate their equal and utter unfitness to possess it. Both these lines of providence were intended to converge at a certain point; they were intended to convince men of their own inability and unworthiness to govern, and in so far quicken within them a desire and prepare them for the manifested kingdom God on earth. I do not say that any other thought was excluded. For example, the culmination of the world's wickedness at the end of the age, making absolutely necessary the direct interference of God Himself to deliver it, will be a demonstration for all time of His justice and holiness, as well as goodness and love, in punishing no less than blessing. His name will

[We begin with this number a series of papers by Rev. James M. Gray, D. D., being the substance of his addresses on the Book of Daniel, delivered at the fifth annual conference. The whole of his treatment of this book, as well as the other prophets of the Old Testament, will be found in his work, "Synthetic Bible Studies," (F. M. Barton, Cleveland), obtainable through any book store.—Ed.]