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

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## WHY PRAY FOR ISRAEL?

REV. ERNEST A. BELL.

In reading that inexpressibly tender declaration of GOD'S love for Israel, so familiar to our hearts and so dear,

"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love,"

how many of us have observed that GOD Himself joins with His prostration of eternal love a request for prayer for Israel? In the very same utterance He exclaims:

"Publish ye, and praise ye, and say,  
O LORD, save Thy people, the remnant of Israel." Jer. 31:7.

The first and great reason for unceasing prayer for GOD'S ancient people is,

### I. GOD'S OWN REQUEST.

The infinitely tender heart of JEHOVAH, breaking over the unbelief and consequent sin and suffering of His people, asks us to pray that they may be saved. Lest we might feel unable to pray, or too ignorant to pray aright, He gives us the very words which will be most suitable and acceptable and available. A child can learn them in a minute. The dullest memory surely cannot forget them. The lips of the unlearned can utter

them readily. How easily may any praying soul literally fulfil this divine request, and say,

"Praise ye, and say, O LORD, save Thy people."

Let us only realize that it is the tender heart of GOD, melted with an infinite pity for His sinful and afflicted people, that asks us thus to pray,—and then can one of us restrain the simple, earnest entreaty? Just as JESUS, seeing that the harvest is plenteous but workers few, asks us to pray the Lord of the harvest to send workers into His harvest,—that the Lord of the harvest may do His own work, so JEHOVAH Himself asks for intercession that He may save His own people.

This is a strange and wonderful thing—GOD asking His saved people to pray for His unsaved people, that they may be saved. Doubtless there are reasons enough for such prayers, reasons deep in the divine nature and in human nature, reasons in the nature of personality, reasons in the divine-human fellowship to which as believers we are admitted. But reasonings aside, let us face this marvelous fact—GOD ASKS US TO PRAY FOR ISRAEL'S SALVATION.

When the Babylonian captivity was impending, GOD tells us that He sought for a man, an intercessor to stand like Moses in the gap,

war. Here, in time, a community grew up, mostly following the trade of boatmen, lightmen, tanners, scavengers, carriers and plyers of more questionable trades. Yet many of the settlers became wealthy and settled in the aristocratic parts of Rome.

In the middle ages the Popes treated the Jews mildly on the whole. Benjamin of Tudela found a flourishing community there. Many rose to high office in the Papal employ, especially as doctors. The Antipope Anacletus II. was of Jewish descent. He was one of the great Pierleone family who rose to great influence after their conversion, and were leaders of the Guelph faction. It was not until 1555 that Pope Paul IV. inclosed the Jews in the Ghetto. Martin V. instituted the system of badges. At first all persons of the Jewish faith were compelled to wear a flaming red overcoat in summer and winter alike for both sexes. It was Paul IV. who changed this to a cape of orange hue.—*The Maccabean.*

### VICTOR HERSCHELL.\*

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY REV. LOUIS MEYER.

Of the five Hebrew-Christian brothers who bore the honored name of Herschell, Victor Herschell is probably the least known, and we do not think that the intensely interesting story of his faithful life has ever been published before.

Victor Herschell, one of the ten sons of a Jewish Chazan, was born at Stezelro, a small Polish town not far from Thorn, in 1821. His

education was the usual education of the talmudical Jew, although it was to a certain extent influenced by the fact that his brother Haim (the celebrated Rev. Ridley Haim Herschell), had acknowledged Christ by being publicly baptized in London, April 14, 1830, and that his parents, after two years of estrangement, had become reconciled to the erring son (that is, erring in their eyes) and had been visited by him in 1833. There is no doubt that this visit of the brother, who was fourteen years his senior, made a deep impression upon Victor and caused him to think more kindly of Christ and Christianity than the orthodox Jews of that day used to do.

Ridley Haim became much attached to and deeply interested in the talented boy and after his return to England began to plan to get him away from the influence of Judaism into the purer atmosphere of Christianity. But difficulties and obstacles arose, and year after year went by without bringing the realization of the plans, until Providence, in 1844, seemed to open the way in a peculiar manner.

"The American Society for Meliorating the Condition of the Jew" invited the already well-known Ridley Haim Herschell to visit the United States and by his presence, his counsel and his speeches, give a new impetus to the work of Jewish evangelization. The invitation was accepted and Ridley wrote immediately a letter to Victor urging him to come to America, and enclosed a ticket for New York.

After brief hesitation, Victor Herschell followed the invitation of his brother and sailed in June, 1845, for New York, where he arrived in the beginning of July and was met by his brother Ridley

\*Compare, *Jewish Chronicle*, N. Y. 1846, vol. II., Coffin, *Men of Lafayette*, Boston 1891, p. 162, class of 1849; and a manuscript sketch prepared and read in July, 1866, before the annual meeting of the Alumni Association of Lafayette College (kindly furnished by Prof. Coffin).

Haim. It was a bitter disappointment to both that most important business called Ridley home to London after a few days of loving intercourse, so that he was not able to secure a position for the brother, who commanded but slender resources.

Victor was thus left a stranger in a land whose language he did not understand, acquainted slightly through his brother with Rev. John Neander, the missionary of the A. S. M. E. J. Neander brought him into the Home of the Society, where Victor Herschell thus spent his first few months in the United States in daily intercourse with Rev. John Lichtenstein, the superintendent of the Home, and Rev. John Neander, who also gave him instruction in the English language.

In the late fall of 1845, it was thought best that Victor Herschell should go to Philadelphia to look there for employment, and God so ordered it that the attention of Judge Joel Jones was called to the young Jew, who thus found a home in one of the most generous and highly intellectual Christian families of Philadelphia. Here the faithful teaching of Neander and Lichtenstein began to show its influence, and Herschell grew in knowledge and in grace. But only when Neander came to Philadelphia as the resident missionary of the A. S. M. E. J. and Herschell studied the Word of God with him every day, came the light into his soul and he gave himself to Christ. He applied to Rev. Willis Lord of the Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia for baptism, and Rev. Neander reported in the *Jewish Chronicle* II., 309, under date of March 11, 1846, that Victor Herschell was to be baptized the Sabbath following.

We quote from a letter of Her-

schell, published in the same number of the *Jewish Chronicle*, the following: "The Lord knows my inward part; let Him judge according to my uprightness. He knows how my heart is fainting for Him—for the Almighty Lord and Saviour. With rejoicing I am looking for Him who is the Mediator between me and God. I am not ashamed to confess it before the whole world, that Jesus Christ is the Messiah."

Thus Victor Herschell was baptized March, 1846, by Rev. Willis Lord in Philadelphia. He continued to live under the roof of Judge Joel Jones, where his "gentlemanly bearing and earnest spirit procured him life-long friendship." Judge Jones was one of the founders of Lafayette College, at Easton, Pa., and he persuaded the young Hebrew-Christian to enter Lafayette in 1847, as sophomore. Prof. Selden J. Coffin, Ph. D., of Lafayette College, still remembers the "swarthy, tall, sombre man of good stature," who soon gained many friends among professors and students. Herschell occupied the room No. 51 in the old college building, and, strange providence, had as his roommate Isidore Loewenthal (see *JEWISH ERA*, April 15, 1902), teacher of French and German and student in the college. Loewenthal was still unconverted and the firm faith and deep piety of his roommate exerted a great influence upon him, so that he frequently acknowledged that his conversion was partly due to the fact that Victor Herschell was his roommate.

Herschell remained only two years in Lafayette, because his brother Ridley Haim invited him to come to London and to finish his studies with his help.

What college Victor Herschell attended in London, at what time

he left the Presbyterian church and joined the Church of England, and where he studied theology, and where he was not able to discover. We only know that he was ordained priest by Bishop Courtenay in 1856, and immediately became rector of a small congregation near London, where he spent two years in faithful and successful work.

But, like his roommate Loewenthal, who had gone to India as a missionary in 1855, Victor Herschell wanted to preach the Gospel to ignorant and degraded men in foreign parts, and in 1859 he went to the West Indies, where he became island curate at Bath, St. Thomas-in-the-East, Jamaica. He soon built up a large congregation and had just completed the erection of a new church, when in October, 1865, the negroes in the neighborhood of Morant Bay, in the district of St. Thomas, arose in bloody rebellion. The magistrates, Mr. Herschell and others found shelter in the court house at Morant Bay and gained the protection of the fort. The insurgents made their final onset on Wednesday, Oct. 11, 1865, and it soon became apparent that there was no hope of escape for the brave defenders. The roof of the fort took fire and death appeared inevitable when "at the request of Mr. Herschell a prayer was offered up. In a few minutes Mr. Herschell was seized by the brutal mob, his tongue was immediately cut out, and he was beaten to death, one of the two thousand who perished in the fearful storm of human passion." (Jamaica Gleaner, 1865).

Thus Rev. Victor Herschell died, 44 years of age, leaving a youthful widow and a daughter two years old, a faithful minister of Jesus Christ unto the end. Those who new him praise his strength of haracter, his high moral tone, his

great decision, his strong affections and his fearless spirit.

Room 51 in the old college building of Lafayette College, Easton, Pa., ought to be of peculiar interest to the students of the grand old Presbyterian college. Three Hebrew-Christians have attended it since it was opened in 1832. One died a young man while attending Columbia Theological Seminary, S. C., in 1856, but the two who spent two years in closest fellowship in room 51, gave their lives while faithfully serving the Master. Isidore Loewenthal was stricken down in India in 1864 by the bullet of the cowardly assassin, and the barbarous mob in Jamaica in 1865 murdered Victor Herschell.

*Hopkinton, Iowa*

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#### HOW A DEAN BECAME INTERESTED IN THE JEWS.

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The late Dr. Howell, dean of St. David's, whose death was reported in the *Jewish Missionary Intelligence* of March, gave the following account of the awakening of his special interest in the Jews:—

"I was brought under the influence of as devout and devoted an advocate of the London Jews Society as this or any other society ever had. It was a case of the importunate widow over again. To my sorrow, I am obliged to confess that for some years my support of this society only went to the extent of a sermon on a week-day evening once a year. But I had in my late parish a Syro-Phœnician, whose faith and patience nothing could resist. In season and, as I often thought, out of season, it was the Jew, the Jew, always the Jew. I assure you it sometimes made me shudder when the servant announced my