

MISHKAN

A THEOLOGICAL FORUM ON JEWISH EVANGELISM

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| JOSEF RABINOWITZ THE HERZL OF JEWISH CHRISTIANITY Kai Kjaer-Hansen..... | 1 |
| HUNGARY, THE JEWS AND THE GOSPEL: 150 A.D. TO 1950 A.D. Frederick W. Metzger..... | 15 |
| JEWISH MISSIONS IN ROMANIA Magne Solheim | 31 |
| FRANZ DELITZSCH, SCHOLAR AND MISSIONARY Sigfried Wagner and Arnulf Baumann..... | 46 |
| HERMAN STRACK'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO JEWISH MISSIONS Ludvig Wächter | 56 |
| GUSTAV DALMAN AND JEWISH MISSIONS Julia Männchen | 64 |
| HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL HEBREW CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE Harcourt Samuel..... | 74 |



MISHKAN

A Forum on the Gospel and the Jewish People

**“HISTORY OF JEWISH CHRISTIANS
AND MISSIONS”**

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General Editor: Ole Chr. M. Kvarme

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{Inside front cover} Editorial

Jewish Christians and Missions in the Western Diaspora

"Not all of us view Jewish missions as something negative," a Jewish professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem stated some years ago. He added, "We remember missionaries in Eastern Europe during the Second World War. Risking their own lives, they did everything they could to save Jewish lives." In this issue, Magne Solheim and Frederick Metzger provide some chapters from this courageous history of Jewish Christians and missionaries during the cataclysm of the Holocaust.

Today churches and Christian societies are reconsidering the relationship between the Church and the Jewish people. In this debate, however, too often the history of Jewish missions is falsely identified with the anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic trends in Western Christendom. The fact that Jewish missions in the last two hundred years have been 1) a driving force in the positive rethinking of the Jewish role in salvation history and 2) a stronghold for solidarity with and love for the people of God, is too often forgotten.

In this issue of *Mishkan*, we have the privilege of presenting important contributions to the history of Jewish Christians and Jewish missions in the western Diaspora, particularly in Europe. This heritage is essential when we consider the future of the Jewish people and of Christian-Jewish relations in the West.

In the Jewish-Christian heritage of the last two centuries there are some important names that stand out. Joseph Rabinowitz came to faith in Jesus the Messiah through reading the New Testament, and formed the congregation of "the Israelites of the New Covenant" in Kishinev, Bessarabia. Rabbi Isaac Lichtenstein remained rabbi of the Jewish community in Tapioszele, Hungary after his profession of faith in Jesus. Paul Levertoff became an Anglican minister and moved to London where, among other things, he developed a Jewish-Christian worship service based on Judeo-biblical traditions, the Meal of the Holy King.

{80} These leaders not only contributed to the growth of a significant Jewish-Christian movement in the 1800's and early 1900's but they were also harbingers of a developing expression of a combined Jewish and Christian identity, which can still be seen today.

In the field of Jewish missions, there were also prominent Gentiles who devoted their lives to Jewish studies and Jewish ministries. Franz Delitzsch masterfully translated the New Testament into Hebrew; a translation which remains a classic in Hebrew, as well as in New Testament scholarship. Hermann Strack prepared the ground for the famous *Commentary of the New Testament from Talmud and Midrash*. Despite its shortcomings, this commentary has for decades opened up the Jewish and rabbinic milieu of the New Testament to theologians around the world. Gustaf Dalman became a distinguished biblical scholar and a man with a deep practical concern for Jewish missions. As leader of Jewish Missions in Germany at the turn of the century, he

expressed a deep concern that Jewish Christians keep and develop their Jewish identity, for God desires the life and the salvation of Israel, not its annihilation.

Various mission societies and denominations developed their ministries in Europe and in the United States during the second half of the past century and the beginning of this century. During these years different kinds of congregations and fellowships of Jewish Christians emerged. The formation and development of Hebrew-Christian alliances have provided important contributions to the unity and growth of Jewish Christians.

Today we have no need to draw either a simplified or glorified picture of the history of Jewish-Christian movements and missions in the past two centuries. But we would do a tremendous injustice to this history, if we let the perceived problems and possible shortcomings overshadow the positive contributions this history has made.

This autumn the missionary organization which Delitzsch founded, the *Centralverein*, celebrates its 120th jubilee, and, for the first time in almost sixty years representatives from all parts of Germany will be able to participate. Today the practice and ideas of Delitzsch in Jewish missions are as valid as ever, particularly in the new situation in Central and Eastern Europe.

The history of Jewish Christians and Jewish missions in the past two centuries challenges the churches in Europe, the United States, and around the world; not to forget their spiritual roots in the Jewish people, and to renew a ministry of love, which has one goal: that all Israel shall be saved *en Christo*, in the Messiah Jesus.

– Ole Chr. M. Kvarme

{1} Josef Rabinowitz – The Herzl of Jewish Christianity

Kai Kjær-Hansen

Dr. Kai Kjær-Hansen has his Ph.D. from Lund University on Studies in the Name of Jesus (1982). He has written a monograph on Joseph Rabinowitz, and is presently the editor of the LCJE-Bulletin.

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Introduction

The story of Josef Rabinowitz is a fascinating one: In 1882 a Russian Jew arrives in Palestine to explore the possibilities of Jewish settlement. His Zionist expectations are frustrated. He comes to believe in Jesus on the Mount of Olives, returns to his native town of Kischinev in Bessarabia (southwestern Russia near the Romanian border) and establishes a Jewish Christian congregation, Bnei Israel Bnei Brit Hadasha, (Israelites of the New Covenant) continuing as its leader. He holds services almost every Sabbath and on the Christian and Jewish holidays. In 1899, at the age of 62, he dies and is buried in the congregational graveyard. In accordance with his own wish, his tombstone bears this inscription: "An Israelite, who believed in Jehovah and in His Anointed, Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. Josef Ben David Rabinowitz."

It is worth noticing that Jesus is referred to as *King of the Jews*. After Rabinowitz's return to Russia from Palestine he became known for the expression *Yeshua Achinu-Jesus* our brother.

Earlier Works

References to Rabinowitz can be found in any work dealing with the recent history of Jewish Christianity. The story of his conversion has always been good copy in popular books about Jewish-Christian characters, even in his own lifetime. Both Hugh J. Schonfield, in *The History of Jewish Christianity*, and Jacob Jocz, in *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, can be criticized for not having been in close encounter with primary sources.

In works on Rabinowitz the primary sources have rarely been consulted. Few questions were asked and, consequently, few answers are provided which might have been of help to Christian Jews today. I would like to draw attention to some views which were relevant to Rabinowitz and may be

{2} relevant to Messianic Jews today. Rabinowitz's enthusiasm did not exclude theological reflection; the two formed a synthesis-at least at the commencement of his public ministry. If Baruch Maoz is right when he claims that among Messianic Jews in Israel today there is a mystical, anti-intellectual and irrational belief in Jesus due to lack of serious study of the Scriptures, then I am convinced that a study of Rabinowitz, his

struggles and his theology, might be beneficial. It goes without saying that we cannot accept everything Rabinowitz stood for. He, as well as anybody else, was influenced by his time and background, including the political circumstances which then prevailed.

Not only may contemporary Christian Jews benefit from a study of Rabinowitz. Gentiles who are interested in the salvation of Israel and in Israel missions will, through their confrontation with Rabinowitz, be asked questions which are still relevant.

Background and Conversion

Josef Rabinowitz was born in 1837. He was brought up under Chassidic influence but as a teenager was influenced by Western cultural currents. In his mid-fifties he received a Hebrew New Testament from Yechiel Zebi Herschensohn (later known as Lichtenstein), his brother-in-law. During the 1870's onwards he made his own living as a legal adviser, and wrote articles for Jewish magazines in Russia, (among them the acknowledged *Hamelitz*). As a Haskala Jew, he advocated the establishment of agricultural settlements in Palestine. When these plans failed, he advocated emigration to Palestine during the pogroms in 1881-2. He was sent to Palestine as a delegate in the early summer of 1882, where he met representatives of Zionism who greatly disappointed him. At the Western Wall he saw that Jews could not pray without being met with insults from Moslems. With this in mind, he could not imagine that settlement in Palestine could be the answer to "the Jewish question" for Russian Jews.

On the Mount of Olives he remembered a verse from the New Testament which he had read fifteen years before: "For if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36). Back at his hotel, he read the New Testament he had brought along, and was struck by the words in John 15:5: "Apart from me you can do nothing." The description of his conversion continues: "In that way it came to pass by an act of God Almighty that he became enlightened by the light of the Gospel. *Yeshua Achinu* (Jesus our Brother) was from now on his watchword, with which he returned to Russia." Rabinowitz's conversion was unexpected to all concerned. But this is not to say that there were no steps leading to it. Professor Delitzsch was annoyed because Rabinowitz, in his 1887 autobiography, did not enter into details about "the emergence and breakthrough of his Christian conviction." Rabinowitz was rather sparing of words when dealing with this subject. It would also be interesting to know more of his relation to the {3} Christian faith before 1882. There is certain evidence of his having read in a Hebrew New Testament. My enquiries lead me to surmise that, some time during the 1850's, he had an existential encounter-maybe even a confrontation-with Christianity through his friendship with Herschensohn. It is odd that his autobiography does not mention that he was given a New Testament by Herschensohn (who had received it from the Lutheran pastor in Kischinev). Herschensohn was baptized and later became a missionary, still later a teacher at Institutum Judaicum in Leipzig. Rabinowitz is silent about all this. In his letters to Delitzsch in Leipzig, where Herschensohn was at the time, I have not come

across one single greeting to his brother-in-law. Apparently, when Lichtenstein became a Christian, Rabinowitz harassed and sought to harm him in every way.

It may be that Rabinowitz minimizes these relations to Herschensohn and others because, after 1882, they were of less importance to him. Or perhaps his motive was to avoid the possibility that a missionary society would claim him as its convert. In England A. Saphir wrote in *The Christian*: "No society has the slightest reason to claim him as their convert. His conversion was a sovereign act by the Holy Spirit."

This statement was clearly intended for The British Society and its secretary, J. Dunlop, who did not miss any opportunity to announce that, if Rabinowitz had not met a representative from the society in Odessa-'Josef Rabinowitz might not have been converted." The London Society has another version: one of their missionaries in Warsaw sent Rabinowitz a New Testament through which he received his first positive impression of Christianity.

Many details could be added, demonstrating the rivalry between various missionary societies wanting to take the credit for Rabinowitz's conversion. John Wilkinson, who founded The Mildmay Mission, became one of Rabinowitz's most loyal supporters, and during a visit by Rabinowitz in England and Scotland in 1887, the London Council for Rabinowitz was formed. It is greatly to Wilkinson's credit that he did not try to monopolize Rabinowitz, but introduced him to as many circles as possible. In that way many organizations became involved with the London Council for Rabinowitz.

Details concerning Rabinowitz's view of Christianity before 1882, and leading up to his conversion, are obscure. It is my opinion that his conversion was unexpected, but that it had nevertheless been prepared for in various ways. He was later to become an eager advocate for distribution of Bibles. That may indicate that he understood that even sporadic reading of the

{4} New Testament can have positive long-term effects. In 1883 he gave a New Testament to his nephew with the words: "Read it, and do not be afraid of the name of Jesus." The nephew was baptized in 1885.

The following statement made in London, in 1887, shows the importance he attached to reading the New Testament:

When a Jew asks me what to do and what way to go, I tell him to read the New Testament. And when he then says, "Now I've done that," I tell him the same thing as a doctor will say to a patient who has recovered by taking the medicine that was prescribed for him, "Take another bottle, and another, and yet another." I say the same thing to the sin-sick Jew, "Read the New Testament again and again. Eventually, it will have the desired effect."

Following Rabinowitz's Return From Palestine

Rabinowitz returned to Kischinev on 5 July 1882. On 8 July he sent an article to *Hamelitz*, in which he denied that he had been a delegate on behalf of the Jewish community in Kischinev. He had traveled out as a private individual in accordance with the wish of a few brethren and close relatives.

In this article-apparently his last in *Hamelitz*-he made no mention of the fact that he had come to believe in Jesus. On January 1884 Rabinowitz's name appeared in an article on the front page of *Hamelitz*. The editor printed a reader's letter in which Rabinowitz is accused of having connections with Lutheran missionaries. Together with the Lutheran pastor, Rabinowitz is described in the letter as laying plans to lure Jewish souls into Luther's net-a terminology reminiscent of that used in our time against Christian Jews by anti-mission organisations. Jews in Kischinev are said to meet Rabinowitz with silent contempt. The editor outlined the history of Rabinowitz's life, acknowledged him to be an important Haskala Jew and admits that, at first, he believed the rumors about Rabinowitz were unfounded. "How could we believe that such a man should have changed convictions so late in life?" he asks. Jewish sources later represented Rabinowitz as uneducated and mentally disturbed.

What happened between 5 July 1882 and January 1884? Very briefly the following: Rabinowitz carried on his practice of law. He became immersed in studies of the Old and New Testaments. He communicated with close friends and began to hint of his new convictions to those he advised; consequently fewer Jews sought his advice. In short, Rabinowitz did not straight away blurt out that he had come to believe in Jesus or that he wanted to establish a Jewish-Christian congregation.

In the autumn of 1883 Rabinowitz appeared publicly and approached the Lutheran pastor in Kischinev, Rudolf Faltin. Faltin was of a highly estimated Christian character and was known in Western Europe for his {5} work among Jews, even though he was first and foremost a pastor for the German-speaking immigrants and soldiers. A meeting was set up in a neutral place-a condition laid down by Rabinowitz and communicated by a third party. Rabinowitz did not want to arouse suspicion that his purpose was to receive Christian instruction and that he was considering baptism. Rabinowitz presented his plan, that "Israel" should come together and form a Christian congregation where they could retain their national customs. "How that was to be, they were not able to determine," Faltin says, but they were united in the faith.

During this meeting Rabinowitz handed thirteen theses to Faltin, who immediately sent them on to Delitzsch. The thirteen theses outline the beneficial effects, social as well as political, which a reception of "our brother Jesus" would have upon Russian Jews. If these theses are an adequate expression of Rabinowitz's faith at the time, something important is missing. At Christmas 1883 Rabinowitz received a letter from the Jewish Christian Georg Friedmann, who urged him to recognise that Jesus must be seen as the Son of God and as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. "Beloved

brethren," he wrote, "you are not far from the way of truth and peace, but you have not yet set foot on it."

By 1884 Rabinowitz was on solid ground. The thirteen Theses constitute an interesting contribution to an understanding of Rabinowitz's theological development. Later there were those who accorded the theses equal status with other documents from Rabinowitz's hand. But such equality gives a distorted picture of what Rabinowitz stood for as leader of the Israelites of the New Covenant. In 1885 he had this to say about his own development: "First I honored Jesus as a great human being with a compassionate heart, later as one who was concerned about my people, and finally as one who took away my sins."

Unfortunately, popular works on Rabinowitz do not show evidence of the process of such development.

The Messianic Movement Takes Form

In March 1884 three representatives from the British Society arrived in Kischinev. Quite independently, Wilhelm Faber also arrived in town. A conference was held with Rabinowitz, at which he presented various articles of faith. Through Faber, contact was established with Professor Delitzsch, which later proved important, as Delitzsch made Rabinowitz known by publishing his writing. As early as February 1885, *The Jewish Herald* announced that the movement in Bessarabia "has received attention {6} from the press all over the world...In front of us are English, German, French, Italian and American magazines - secular and religious - Jewish and Christian, for or against, but all more or less interested in the movement..." If the Scandinavian countries had been within their scope, they would have been able to add: Norwegian, Swedish and Danish magazines!

Rabinowitz had already held his first assembly on Christmas Eve 1884, i.e. on 5 January 1885 according to the Russian orthodox calendar. The Russian authorities gave him permission to deliver sermons and hold assemblies, but he was not permitted to establish a Christian congregation because he was not authorized to administer the sacraments. The Russian authorities considered his assemblies to be a synagogue.

At the first gatherings there was much commotion. A vast crowd was attracted and the police had to intervene and protect Rabinowitz. Early in 1885 it was rumored in the Western press that he had been murdered, but the report was soon found to be false.

Further Developments

Following is a brief outline of the development of Rabinowitz's work.

1. The size of the congregation

After initial curiosity had dissipated, the inrush found its level. Up to 1890 a congregation of 100-150 was not unusual, sometimes there were more. In 1890

Rabinowitz acquired a new building, the so-called Somerville Memorial Hall, predominantly financed with Scottish funds passed on by the London Council for Rabinowitz. From 1891 to 1899 average attendance was about fifty, but there were services with a considerably larger congregation.

Echoes of the work were heard in the far corners of Russia and many other places. Many became acquainted with Rabinowitz through his writings. A. Saphir was right when, in 1885, he said that the importance of the Messianic movement in Kischinev could not be measured by its numerical strength but by its inner value.

2. Activities

Rabinowitz was first and foremost a preacher. Even his critics praised him for his unusual gifts as a preacher. F. Heman of Basel wrote: "He is a preacher sent by God; they say that since the time of the apostle Paul no one has been able to preach in such a powerful way to the Jewish people as Rabinowitz."

As a rule, he did not go out to people, as did many missionaries to the Jews at that time. He invited them to his services. Through printed sermons, booklets and pamphlets he was studied in wide circles. He received many letters from people who wanted his advice.

{7} Perhaps the declining numbers of his audience in Kischinev were behind his plans to build a train for evangelization, allowing him to take the gospel to distant parts of Russia. The train was to bear the same inscription as Somerville Memorial Hall, the words from Acts 2:36: "All the people of Israel, then, are to know for sure that it is this Jesus, whom you nailed to the cross, that God has made Lord and Messiah!"

Before this project could be carried out, he had to complete another. In collaboration with others, he had been working on a revision of the New Testament in Yiddish, finally published in 1901. His death in 1899 put an end to his plans for the evangelization train.

3. Economy

From 1885 onwards, Rabinowitz received financial support from various Israel missions in Western Europe. From 1887, most of the money passed through the London Council for Rabinowitz. Much of the money came from Scotland. From Jewish quarters it was argued vigorously that he had sold himself. The original plan was that after a few years, his congregation would be self supporting. That never happened. It is impossible to say anything certain about Rabinowitz's private use of money, but he' was no ascetic.

We also know that he received sufficient money from abroad so that he was able to devote himself completely to the work. Rabinowitz never regretted his dependence on foreign funds, as some maintain. But the money that passed through the London Council for Rabinowitz-his main source of income-was given with the distinct understanding that no one would interfere with Rabinowitz's affairs in Russia.

4. Money and mission reports

Rabinowitz did not write many reports and yet enjoyed much publicity. Nothing in the sources indicates that he objected to that. On the contrary, he sought it for the sake of his work.

Lhotzky, a German who was in Kischinev for a few years from 1885 and who kept in touch with Rabinowitz, describes those who visited Rabinowitz and then hastened home to write a report: "By doing so they spoiled all that might have grown well if left alone. Oh, those wretched mission reports...." And he continues, "Mission needs reports and money. He who does not write reports cannot raise funds; he who does not raise funds cannot missionize. Mission can be carried on without spirit, but not without money," is Lhotzky's sarcastic conclusion.

There is an element of sober provocation in these words, and we should allow ourselves to be provoked by them. Lhotzky wanted to aim a blow at certain English societies, thinking that by so doing he would be defending {8} Rabinowitz. But this is a mistake. Rabinowitz sought publicity concerning his person and work.

In 1887-8 Faltin and Rabinowitz broke with each other. Faltin accused Rabinowitz of having started a dangerous practice in "teaching and living." Faltin's position was a weak one. Rabinowitz continued to receive massive support from Delitzsch, Faber and Dalman, among others. At the beginning, cooperation between Faltin and Rabinowitz was very promising. Faltin accused Rabinowitz of being an Ebionite. If Rabinowitz had continued as a preacher and had become a member of the Lutheran church, it is not likely that Faltin would have attacked him.

Outline of Rabinowitz's Theology

The time has come for a brief outline of Rabinowitz's theology and his struggle for a Jewish-Christian congregation.

1. Baptism

Rabinowitz was baptized in Berlin in March 1885. This came as a shock for Faltin in Kischinev. If Rabinowitz had been baptized by Faltin, he would have become a Lutheran, and according to existing Russian legislation he would no longer be considered a Jew. But Rabinowitz wanted to be a Jew, he wanted to retain his Jewish identity.

Rabinowitz was not forced into baptism. He had already discussed the question thoroughly with Faber in Kischinev. In the course of those conversations, Rabinowitz gradually concluded that the right form of baptism is infant baptism and that baptism is a sacrament, not just an act of confession. Later he criticized another famous Jewish believer, Isaac Lichenstein in Hungary, for his avoidance of baptism. They met in 1891 in Budapest, where the last member of Rabinowitz' family, his wife, was baptized. After her baptism, Rabinowitz wired back to their children: "Mama gerettet" (Mom saved).

Rabinowitz wrote in a letter: "If Rabbi Lichtenstein really loves his people Israel - let him be baptized."

After discussions in Leipzig with Delitzsch and John Wilkinson among others, arrangements were made for Rabinowitz to be baptized in Berlin - and under quite extraordinary circumstances: He was baptized in the Bohemian-Lutheran church by the Congregationalist (Methodist) Pastor and Professor C. M. Mead from Andover, Massachusetts, in the presence of a few invited people, and baptized on the strength of a creed written by himself in Hebrew, after having testified to being in complete agreement with the Apostles' Creed. He wanted his own Creed, seven points, for his own congregation.

Rabinowitz was thus baptized into the universal church of Christ, without becoming a member of any one denomination, and without losing his Jewish {9} identity. Delitzsch recognized this and defended Rabinowitz when he was later attacked.

Rabinowitz was never permitted to baptize or administer the sacraments. The authorities would only allow him to function as a preacher. So, when the term *Rabinowitz's congregation* is used, it should always be borne in mind that he was never given permission to establish a church proper, because he was never allowed to administer the sacraments. No wonder that Rabinowitz's movement collapsed after his death. In 1887 it looked as if this could be helped. Some members of his congregation were baptized in Rohrbach by a Hungarian Christian Jew called Venetianer. But the authorities put a stop to that, possibly due to efforts on the part of Faltin or others from the Lutheran church in Kischinev.

2. Rabinowitz's Creed and the Twenty-Four Articles of Faith

In March 1884, one year before his baptism, Rabinowitz was on solid theological ground. This becomes clear from the documents he wrote at that time. I shall concentrate on other documents, written between March 1884 and March 1885, because they express Rabinowitz's ongoing views. The two documents that express Rabinowitz's persistent convictions did not enjoy as much publicity as the first documents. His Creed and his twenty-four Articles of Faith appear in the *Tfila*, the book of prayers, which was reissued in 1892.

The Creed was intended to be a counterpart to the Apostles' Creed, and resembles stylistically Maimonides' Thirteen Articles of Faith by having the same introductory formula, "I fully believe." As to the content, the declaration has points in common with Maimonides' Thirteen articles, particularly when it comes to describe the unity of God. But Rabinowitz emphasizes that this one God created all things "by His Word and His Holy Spirit." This was his indication of belief in the Trinity, although he did not want to use the term. Altogether, it is Rabinowitz characteristically endeavoring to use biblical terms, avoiding terms taken from the dogmatic of the gentile-Christian church.

The Creed is written in Jewish style. But it is orthodox. It does not mention any of the distinctive characteristics of his congregation, such as the observance of the Sabbath, circumcision, Passover etc. The conception of Jesus by a virgin is mentioned, but again, it is the substance, not the term, that we find:

I fully believe that our Father who is in Heaven, according to His promise to our fathers, to our prophets and to our King David son of Jesse, has raised a Redeemer for Israel, Jesus; who was born of the Virgin Mary in the town of Bethlehem in Judea; who suffered, was crucified, died and was buried for our salvation. He rose from the dead and lives, and lo, he is sitting at the right hand of the Father, who is in heaven, {10} and from there he shall truly come to judge the earth, the living and the dead. He is King of the house of Jacob forever and there is no end to His kingdom.

One of the tablets that formed the altarpiece in his meeting-house is inscribed with this article. It appears in a photograph that has been preserved. The Creed also mentions baptism and the church:

I fully believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

- The Twenty-Four Doctrines

Shortly after, or perhaps at the same time as he worded this Creed, he also formulated twenty-four doctrines. The Twenty-Four Doctrines afford us a glimpse of Rabinowitz as a tactician: In 1886 a Dane wrote concerning the doctrines, that Rabinowitz "seems to have the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Anglican Church in view." In fact, not only did he have them in view, he had them in Hebrew!

In 1837, the Book of Common Prayer was translated into Hebrew. In 1841 a fully vocalized edition appeared. It is possible to demonstrate that as to construction, style and content Rabinowitz followed the Book of Common Prayer. His work is not a slavish imitation; there are omissions and particular accentuations. For example, he omits all that in his opinion is only relevant to a gentile Christian context, such as dissociation from certain heretics mentioned by name. While the Anglican Church was using the Hebrew version in Jerusalem, Rabinowitz could hardly be blamed for using analogous doctrines in Kischinev!

There is an element of Jewish coloring to the material. When trying to describe the person of Jesus, Rabinowitz avoids using the ecclesiastical Greek definitions such as "being" and "nature." Article 1 in the Book of Common Prayer refers to Jesus as the Word of the Father, born of the Father in eternity. It is notable that in the article about free will, Rabinowitz refers to Jesus as, and I quote, "The Word of our heavenly Father, born of the Father in eternity." The first four articles are:

Article 1: On the unity of God

Article 2: On Jesus, the Redeemer of Israel

Article 3: On the sin of Israel and her rebellion against Messiah. This article has no counterpart in the Book of Common Prayer, but the prominence of this article is, of course, due to the fact that these are the doctrines of the Israelites of the New Covenant. Jesus is called the Lord and it is implied that his work is for all nations.

*Article 4: On justification: the article has a more prominent position than in the Book of Common Prayer, where it appears as article 11. It states clearly that man is justified by faith alone, without any works of **{11}** the law. Galatians 3:28 is quoted, which makes it clear that at this point there is no difference between Jew and Gentile. They are one in Jesus Messiah. The article continues: "By faith in the Messiah we observe the law (The Torah), and it is a great relief to the soul and full of comfort." Rabinowitz has lifted the last sentence from the Book of Common Prayer (article 11 on justification), but in the Book of Common Prayer reference is not to observance of the law but to justification by faith.*

In Article 7, Rabinowitz vigorously dissociated himself from the Mishna, Talmud and Shulchan Aruch. It goes without saying that this article has no counterpart in the Book of Common Prayer. No doctrine can be based on these writings. The Mishna and Talmud are but an eternal monument of the greatness of that spirit of sleep that God let fall on "us." Shulchan Aruch is looked upon as a hindrance and a snare which has prevented "our eyes from seeing the ways of the living and true faith." Delitzsch thought that Rabinowitz was too severe in his criticism of the Jewish traditional literature.

Through the Creed and the twenty-four doctrines Rabinowitz expressed his orthodoxy. He was not an Ebionite, as maintained by Faltin and others.

3. Rabinowitz's Adherence to Jewish Customs

What about the law, observance of the Sabbath, circumcision, insistence on the Jewish Passover—all of which Rabinowitz was determined not to forgo. I have already emphasized Delitzsch's support of Rabinowitz. Delitzsch was so great a man that he did not proclaim Rabinowitz a heretic on account of the latter's adherence to Jewish practices, although Delitzsch voiced his disapproval of it. Delitzsch rejoiced in Rabinowitz's work. He knew that Rabinowitz's doctrine of justification was in agreement with the Bible and the Reformation fathers, and that was the crucial point for him. In this connection, it must also be mentioned that, at an early stage, Rabinowitz made Romans 10:4 one of his main themes: "Messiah is the end of the law." This is evident in his sermons; it further is testified to by a man who came to Rabinowitz's services in Kischinev in order to accumulate arguments against him but who eventually became a believer; and it is evidenced by the Torah scroll which lay in Rabinowitz's house of prayer until he acquired his new building. The scroll bore the inscription in Hebrew: "Messiah is the end of the law."

And yet Rabinowitz wanted to observe the Sabbath, circumcision, Jewish feasts, etc. In short: he wanted to retain his Jewish identity. He wanted this freedom for himself, but

did not insist that those Jews who had come to believe and who acted differently were wrong. Yet he could take no other course.

{12} In March 1884 a conference was held in Kischinev. It was the first meeting between representatives of the British Society and Faber, who was Delitzsch's representative. Some of those present voiced their misgivings about Rabinowitz. He seemed to be smuggling the law in through the back door.

Rabinowitz had indicated that he and others similarly disposed wanted to observe Jewish customs inherited from the fathers, only in so far as these did not clash with the spirit of Christianity. From a religious point of view, he and his adherents believed that the law had been fulfilled by the Messiah. But from a "patriotic" point of view, they considered themselves under obligation to observe the law, in so far as nationality and circumstances made it possible.

This gave rise to a debate about circumcision and the Sabbath. Gentile Christians were concerned that Rabinowitz might want to observe these commandments for religious reasons. They therefore asked Rabinowitz if a Christian Jew who does not circumcise his child sins. Rabinowitz answered, "He does not commit a sin, but he alienates himself from his own Jewish people." He gave a similar answer to the question concerning Christian Jews who do not observe the Sabbath.

For Rabinowitz, circumcision was a sacred sign given to Abraham and the Jewish people. There is an Abrahamic covenant, which the Mosaic law does not nullify. Rabinowitz was convinced that it was wrong for gentiles to become circumcised, and he quoted Galatians 5:20 to prove it.

The Sabbath had been given to Israel as an eternal commandment. It rests with the Israelites of the New Covenant to keep this commandment. But they are totally free concerning laws conditional on the possession of the land of Israel, the temple service, the installment of the authorities and such like, all no longer pertinent.

Rabinowitz had no scruples about turning on the samovar or lighting a cigar on Sabbath—much to the surprise of Venetianer who visited him in Kischinev.

Rabinowitz also wrote a Passover Haggada, traditional in form as concerns the four cups, which he called: Abraham's cup, Moses' cup, David's cup, and the cup of salvation-Jesus Messiah's cup. Haggada had been christianized.

{13} 4. Rabinowitz's Services

A brief sketch will have to suffice. Rabinowitz held services on the Sabbath and on Jewish and Christian holidays. On his return to Kischinev from Berlin, where he had been baptized, he wrote that on the Sabbath there was a large and attentive audience in the Hall. The following day was Easter Sunday and Rabinowitz held another service. This was the first time, Rabinowitz writes, that the mighty words, "Christ is risen," were heard in a Jewish house of prayer. The same words could be heard in Kischinev in 1903,

a few years after Rabinowitz's death, on the lips of "Christians" who proceeded to plunder, loot and kill Jews-a ghastly pogrom which made the town of Kischinev known abroad for many years to come.

The services had a liturgical structure, with a definite Jewish stamp. There was no singing as there is none in the synagogue. At first he borrowed a harmonium from the Lutheran church, but it was only used at the very first services-it was not a particularly "Jewish" element.

Rabinowitz was a long-winded speaker. His first services lasted for several hours. Faber thought in 1885 that Rabinowitz spoke "uncommonly fast," and he claims that, as a rule, his sermons would last two hours. The Scottish church leader Somerville also remarked after his visit to Kischinev that Rabinowitz spoke very fast when he preached in Yiddish, and in his diary he wrote that the sermon lasted for "one hour except four minutes!"

In 1888 he said, "Two things occupy my mind: one is the Lord Jesus Christ, the other is Israel."

In London, in 1889, he said,

My situation is to be compared with a man who goes to sea in a ship and suffers shipwreck with all on board. All the shipwrecked try to find solid ground so that they can be saved. If one, while struggling for dear life, finds a rock, he who has his feet on firm ground will try to shout to the others who are still struggling in the water. And if someone is so far away that he cannot hear his voice, the man on the rock will lift up something--a stick, a flag-in order to catch their attention and help them to reach the rock.

This is my very situation. Russia is the ocean, the Jews there are like shipwrecked people, and since, by the grace of God, my feet are on the rock-which is Jesus-I am trying to act like the man I just told you about: I am calling out and signaling to the shipwrecked to make for the rock.

Earlier, in 1884 Rabinowitz made the following statement, headed "Joseph's Misfortune." Let us heed it: {14} I have always felt very strongly about my people's misfortune. I have even tried various ways of remedying it, but everything has been in vain.

When a doctor comes to see a patient, he has to question the patient thoroughly before he can prescribe a remedy for the illness. The doctor feels his pulse, squeezes here and there all the time asking, "Does this hurt?" "Are there any pains here?" But only when the doctor touches the sore spot, does the patient give a distinct answer. The pain squeezes the words out of him: "Don't press so hard, it hurts!"

That is what I experienced when I concerned myself with the illnesses of my people. In vain did I press in various places. As I did not touch the sore spot, there was hardly an answer.

If I said, "Talmud and the whole body of rabbinical commentaries are not, as it is asserted, from Sinai, but it is the work of man, full of sense and nonsense"-then such words made little impression on my people.

If I said, "Nor does the Tanach (The Old Testament) contain anything but words of men, unproved stories and unbelievable miracles,"-that did not prevent me from remaining the esteemed Rabinowitz; nor did it distress my people.

They remained calm when I put Moses on equal footing with magicians of our time; it did not affect them that I called this Moses a fraud. I could even deny God, and my people would not let out a cry.

But when I returned from the Holy Land with the glad tidings: Jesus is our Brother, then I touched the sore spot. A scream of pain was heard and reverberated from all quarters: "Don't squeeze, don't touch, it hurts!"

Well, it does hurt. But I want you, my people, to know that this is exactly your illness; you do not need anything but your Brother Jesus. Your illness is exactly that you do not have Him. Accept Him, and you will receive healing for all your illnesses.

{15} Hungary, The Jews and the Gospel: 150 A.D. to 1950 A. D.

Frederick W. Metzger

Fredrik W Metzger ministered in Hungary until he was expelled in 1949. Presently he is Curator of the Biblical Museum of Canada.

According to the earliest documents, the Jews first came to the Carpathian basin (Pannonia) in the second century as census takers for the Roman Legions. They settled there centuries before the arrival of the Hungarians (Magyars).¹

By the 11th century there existed flourishing synagogues in the cities of Esztergom and Buda. Jewish people loved settling in small ethnic communities in the countryside where they found friendly acceptance with the native peasantry.² This openness may have had its roots in earlier contact with the Jewish Khazar kingdom, which provided the Hungarian people with military aid in their conquest of Hungary during the 10th century.³

In the middle of the 13th century, after the Tartar devastation of Hungary by the hordes of Genghis Khan, the Hungarian king Bela IV invited large groups of foreigners from the West to settle amongst the devastated population.⁴ He also invited Jews from German speaking areas to settle and to assist in the rebuilding of his four royal cities.⁵

Earlier there were numerous Jewish communities throughout the kingdom, and while England's Jewish community had been expelled from that country,⁶ in 1356 the Hungarian king Karoly IV brought in legislation granting as a privilege to county leaders the right to have Jews ("jus tenendi Judaeos") in their territories!⁷

The Beginnings of Jewish Evangelism

Towards the close of the Middle Ages, Lajos the Great, a devout Catholic Christian, was king of Hungary and Poland. He was the first in Hungarian history to take a special interest in the conversion of the Jewish population. "Mission" in those days meant

¹ Records and documents at the Jewish Museum, Budapest.

² Venetianer, Lajos: *A Magyar Zsidóság Története. Konyvertekesito Vallalat*, Budapest, 1986, pp. 18ff; 34.

³ Gilbert, Martin: *Atlas of Jewish History*. Third edition 1985. Dorset Press, USA p. 25. The Khazars were a heathen, nomad people from central Asia. In about 700 A.D. their king, Bulan, was converted to Judaism. A later king, Obadiah, greatly strengthened Judaism, inviting rabbis into his kingdom and building synagogues. The Supreme Court consisted of seven judges: 2 Jews, 2 Christians, 2 Muslims and a heathen. Religious toleration was maintained for the kingdom's 300 years (700-1016 A.D.). As they were situated North of the Black Sea region, they were in the path of the Hungarian movement toward the West in the 9th century.

⁴ Kosary, Dominic. G.: *A History of Hungary*. The Benjamin Franklin Bibliophile Society, Cleveland, 1941, p. 37. ff.

⁶ Legrand, Jacques and Burne, Jerome: *Chronicle of the World*, Longman Group UK Ltd. and Chronicle Communications Ltd., London, p. 385.

⁷ Venetianer, *ibid.* p. 35.

wholesale baptism at the bidding of the monarch, with some persuasive assistance from missionary priests or monks. This method worked well with the heathen segment of the population but proved impractical with Hungarian Jewry. Finally, in 1368, the king ordered his Jewish subjects to pack up and leave the country. All Jewish owned land was seized for the royal treasury. Record shows that, within {16} three years, the Jews not only returned but enjoyed royal protection.⁸

King Matthias (Matyas) Corvinus (1458-1490) was a true Renaissance ruler, who boasted of having one of the largest libraries of Europe, second only to those of the Vatican, and four universities.⁹ During his reign, the Christian king elevated some of his Jewish subjects to leadership, even to nobility. In fact, the king's godfather was a converted Jew, Janos Thuz, the Lord of Csaktornya. King Matthias elevated his Jewish godfather's son, Oswald Thuz, to the office of Cardinal of Zagreb.

King Matthias' sense of justice and sense of humour were legendary. A typical case was when he discovered that a converted Jew, Mihaly Kremenitzer, had been put in prison in 1483 for his indebtedness to the bishop of Gyor. The king ordered the immediate release of the prisoner, arguing that the indebtedness occurred before Mihaly's conversion: he had been born again and become a new creature in Christ and the bishop should not punish him for deeds carried out prior to his repentance.¹⁰

During the next thirty-odd years under several successive kings, the Jews of the major cities suffered maltreatment, injustice and, in 1529, burning at the stake for the first ritual murder libel. However, in the territories of landowners and amongst country people, hatred for Jews was unknown.

The Way is Prepared for the Gospel

Europe was a great mixture of nationalities, yet many chose to settle among ethnic Hungarians rather than with other elements in the region. Synagogues were built throughout the country. The Hungarian people were tolerant and good-natured. When they observed anything strange about newcomers, they reacted with good humor. Anti-Judaism and violence were usually imports from the West and originated in the cities. The relationship between the village Jew and the majority of ethnic Hungarians was characterized by a moral and cultural interdependence: Morally, the Jewish merchant had to be trustworthy to succeed. Cultural interdependence grew out of the fact that the village Jew, compelled by religious tradition, learned reading, writing and arithmetic from the age of four, while the village folk and many of the Hungarian nobility were illiterate. So many Hungarian serfs and peasants relied on the literate "village Jew" to

⁸ Venetianer, *ibid.* p. 38. ff.

⁹ Csapodi, Csaba: *Bibliotheca Corviniana*, Helikon, Budapest, 1990, p. 6.

¹⁰ Venetianer, *ibid.* p. 49. ff.

work out the taxes, write submissions to government, and compose their personal correspondence.¹¹

Hungary suffered much during its resistance to the Turkish invasion (1363-1718), the longest war in history. It lasted 355 years and Hungarian casualties were enormous. In the 15th century, the population of Hungary was 4,500,000; by 1720 the land was left with only 2,500,000.¹² This conflict weakened the Austrian Roman Catholic domination over the people. By the end of the 16th century, most of Hungary had become Protestant, resulting, among other things, in the first attempts at public education. The spread of {17} the first Bible translations and the rise of Unitarianism in Transylvania made it popular for ethnic Hungarians to give their children Jewish first names - a practice carried on to this very day.

A Counter-Reformation attempted to reverse the trend. Eventually the people were suppressed by the Roman Catholic Habsburgs of Austria. In 1848 there was a popular uprising under Louis Kossuth of the Reformed Church, widely supported by the Jews of Hungary. In 1849 Kossuth and the newly-formed National Assembly legislated for the full emancipation of the Jews of Hungary. In an army of 180,000, a total of 20,000 Jews had fought against the Austrians in 1848/49, far in excess of their proportion in the Hungarian population.¹³

The Austrians were only able to defeat the uprising with the military aid of Russia. The wrath of the Habsburgs came with vengeance, demanding 2,300,000 Forints as war reparation from the Hungarian Jewry, a horrific amount.¹⁴

Within a year, due to the rising power of Prussia under Bismarck, the Habsburg Dynasty inclined toward a more reconciliatory mood. By June 1850 the demand for reparations was reduced to 1,000,000 Forints. Three months later the whole amount was forgiven on condition that, within five years, Hungarian Jewry would pay an equal amount as an endowment fund for Jewish public education, to be administered by the State. The Hungarian Jews gladly complied.¹⁵

The Emancipation of Jewry and the Birth of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy

Austria suffered military defeat in 1866 at the hand of the Prussians under Bismarck. Austria was also squeezed out of Italy and Germany. Austrian territory had shrunk so much that Hungary had become the larger half of the Monarchy. In February 1867, following negotiations lasting more than six months, Hungary was permitted to form its

¹¹ Elias, Joseph: *Israel in Hungary*, Manuscript, Debrecen, 1990.

¹² Nekam, Louis: *The Cultural Aspirations of Hungary*, Hungaria Ltd. Budapest, 1935. pp. 167-168.

¹³ Venetianer, *ibid.* pp. 197-198. One-ninth of the army was Jewish at a time when the Jews constituted only 1/30th of the population.

¹⁴ Venetianer, *ibid.* p. 205.

¹⁵ Venetianer, *ibid.* p. 206.

own parliament and cabinet. Francis Joseph I was crowned Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary in Buda in accordance with all the ancient rites, thus affecting a reconciliation between Hungary and the Habsburg dynasty after a struggle of three and a half centuries.¹⁶

Within a few months, the Hungarian parliament adopted the 1849 decision of the National Assembly and legislated for the emancipation of all Jewish residents, giving them political and civic rights equal to those of the Christian population.¹⁷

The 18th and 19th centuries saw the renewal of wholesale killings or pogroms of Jews, especially in Russia, Ukraine, Rumania and Poland. It was in this situation that good news spread among the persecuted Jews from other countries: There is a land, Hungary, where the people are peaceful {18} and diligent, the soil is fertile, and the people don't harm anyone unless they are attacked.

Within two centuries, the Hungarian Jewish population rose from 0.5% to 5%. In 1785, there were only 75,000 Jews in Hungary; in 1840 their number had reached 241,000 - tripling within 50 years. In 1870, they numbered 550,000; in 1900, 835,000; and before the First World War, almost 1,000,000. This enormous increase was the outcome of a steady flow of immigration from the East, partly from Galicia and Russia and partly from Romania.¹⁸

The London Society for promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews reported in 1909 that "There are more Jews in Austria-Hungary than in any other European country, Russia alone excepted; namely in Austria 1,143,305, and in Hungary, 1,000,000; altogether 2,143,305."¹⁹

The Fullness of Time

"I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves," Genesis 12: 2-3.

The Sovereign Lord of history acted in faithfulness to His Word and blessed the nation which welcomed the wandering Jews of the diaspora. While the Austrian state exploited Hungary for its raw materials and mineral resources, within three decades the Jewish immigrants organized local industries which contributed significantly to the overall prosperity of Hungary. At the Paris World Exposition in 1879, eleven Jewish-Hungarian industrialists were given marks of the highest recognition, including the Great Gold

¹⁶ Kosary, *ibid.* pp. 280-281.

¹⁷ Venetianer, *ibid.* pp. 248-249.

¹⁸ Kosary, *ibid.* pp. 322-323.

¹⁹ Gidney, W.T.: *The History of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, from 1809 to 1908*, London, 1908, p. 164.

Medal of the Academie National Agricole Manufacturiere et Commerciale presented to Karoly Lajor Posner for setting up the most outstanding national display. In 1885, at the national industry exhibition in Budapest, 1155 of the 7184 individual exhibitors were Jewish Hungarians; this accomplishment needs to be seen in the light of the fact that at that time, the Jews constituted 4.8% of the total population.²⁰

Even a brief account of the enormous Jewish contributions to professional leadership in literature, public education, science, jurisprudence and culture is beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice to say that the 19th century offered a true "fullness of time" for Jewish evangelism in Hungary.

The Wind Blows Where It Wills

Here we turn to notes from a paper presented by the Rev. John Ross of CM presented at the Third European Conference on Jewish Evangelism:

By the strangest and most unplanned of circumstances, some Scottish missionaries - Dr. Alexander Keith and Dr. Alexander Black - arrived as transients from Palestine to Budapest in 1839. They had to wait for a {19} change of steamers. This gave them three days to find out what they could about the extensive Jewish community in the city. Keith's conclusion was that "of all the cities we had visited, none was to be compared to it, as the promising site of a Jewish mission."²¹

So promising in fact did it seem to them that they decided to devote more time to further investigations. Although they had paid for the next lap of their journey, they forwent their fares in order to further assess the opportunities. Everything pointed to the wisdom of commencing a mission work in the city. The Jewish community's willingness to debate the issues was something they had never witnessed before. One Rabbi threw down the gauntlet. "Send us a missionary, and we will reason with him."

Enter "Rabbi" Duncan

This was the beginning of the famous Scottish Mission in Hungary. The General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland appointed a team of workers led by Dr. John (Rabbi) Duncan,²² an outstanding Hebraist, scholar and linguist. They arrived in Hungary on August 21, 1841.

John Duncan mastered Hungarian grammar within a few months and was able to make friends with many of the key people in the Jewish and Gentile communities. These included Chief Rabbi Schwab, the Protestant Archduchess Maria Dorothea, and the Superintendent of the Hungarian Reformed Church the Rev. Torok.

²⁰ Venetianer, *ibid.* p. 380 ff.

²¹ Saphir, Adolph: *A Memoir of Adolph Saphir* p.430. as quoted by John Ross at the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism, Budapest, October 6, 1990.

²² Ross, John: *The Foundation of Jewish Missions in Hungary*, Monograph, LCJE Conference, Budapest,

A major part of Duncan's chosen missionary strategy was to hold public services each Lord's Day in English. Among the many wanting to improve their ability to understand that language were numerous Jews, a number of whom began to attend the services regularly. There they were introduced to the claims of the Messiah and the promises of the Gospel.

The Rev. and Mrs. Duncan's "house in Pesth was thrown open to the Jews; they saw all their habits and ways, and had Christianity presented without being forced upon them."²³ The list of converts grew almost daily as the Lord blessed the diligence and faithfulness of his servant, who spent whole days in receiving visitors and employing his remarkable conversational and persuasive powers. Amongst those who came to faith were Israel and Adolph Saphir, Alfred Edersheim and Alexander Tomory, to name only four.

This time of blessing reached its zenith about the middle of May 1843 when Israel Saphir, aged 63, was baptized with his family, each of whom were able to testify to what God's grace had done for them.

The presence of the Holy Spirit was so powerful and the effects of that presence were so widespread that some date the turnaround in the spiritual state of the Hungarian Reformed Church to the time of Israel Saphir's baptism. The missionaries and the new converts began to exercise a growing {20} influence on the ministers of the Reformed Church, through which they were able to strengthen them in a love for the truth and a spiritual concern for their people. This influence prepared the nation for the trials that would soon take place during the fight for independence under Kossuth in 1848-49.

In 1849, due to the war of independence, the missionaries of the Free Church of Scotland had to be evacuated. But the work did not terminate. Old Mr. Saphir continued to act on behalf of the missionaries in cooperation with Superintendent Torok. The mission school, although reduced, continued with six or eight teachers and between 300 and 400 children. Mr. Saphir conducted a service in his own room each Sunday. He died in 1864, at the age of eighty-four, "Peacefully resting in Jesus, the Messiah, the Saviour, and the King of Israel."²⁴

In 1863 the restrictions were lifted and the Rev. Andrew Moody became the leader of the work, which continued to flourish under the hand of God. The school founded by Philip Saphir became a large and respected institution. In the beginning the teaching was in German and, from 1878 on, in Hungarian. In 1869 they put up their own building at the expense of £6,000 (a large sum at that time) at Hold-u.17. This was soon extended to include a girls' home. A larger building was constructed for the school in 1910 at Vorosmartyvu.51.²⁵

²³ Saphir, *ibid.* p. 439. as quoted by John Ross.

²⁴ Ross, *ibid.* quoting Carlyle. p. 56.

²⁵ *Budapesti Skot Misszio 1841-*, Monograph, Budapest, 1985.

The Scottish Mission: A Model for Renewal

In the 19th century, the Hungarian Reformed Church lost its spiritual power to the influence of theological liberalism. A fresh return to the Scriptures and to evangelism was greatly needed. The Scottish Mission to the Jews of Hungary was now seen as a model throughout the country, although many ministers refused to learn from such a strange and far-reaching innovation.²⁶ The great name associated with the development of Home Missionary work in Hungary is Aladar Szabo. While still a theological student, on November 3, 1881, he came into contact with Dr. Andrew Moody, the leader of the Scottish Mission. They were kindred spirits. At the Mission, Szabo learned how to conduct "evening fellowship meetings" (then a new idea) and all types of evangelistic gatherings. He brought other theological students with him, and together they saw that only a really biblical faith - not the prevailing rationalism - could ever win the hearts of men.

Szabo was ordained in 1886, and began a great series of evangelistic meetings in the city of Budapest. In 1887-88, at the invitation of the Scottish Mission, the Scottish evangelist, Dr. Alexander Sommerville, visited Hungary. Unprecedented numbers crowded the churches to hear him. In the lower mainland he drew audiences of 8,000-10,000 every evening. His visit to Hungary became a great stimulus to the now rapidly-growing movement of evangelism. Ministers began to hold Bible classes, study and {21} teach the catechism, and hold their own evangelistic campaigns in parish areas.

Jesus in the Synagogue

Meanwhile, the poison of anti-Judaism gradually began to permeate the fabric of Hungarian social life. It came from the West and flourished amongst the numerous nationalities that were invited to settle in the country and fill the empty space left by the long war with the Turks. In several places in Europe, allegations of ritual murder charges were made against the Jews: 1853 in Saratov; 1878 in Kutais; 1882 in Xanten; then in the same year in Tisza-Eszlar in Hungary.²⁷

This last accusation resulted in a widely publicized court case. Twelve Jewish men and women were imprisoned and a young Jewish child was taken from his parents, tortured, and used as a false witness against his father. A number of prominent people came to the aid of the threatened community, amongst them Franz Delitzsch, Professor of Theology in Leipzig. Delitzsch's thorough statement for the defence largely contributed to the dismissal of the charges. The Jews of Tisza-Eszlar were set free.

²⁶ Revesz, Imre: *History of the Hungarian Reformed Church*, translated by George A.F. Knight, Published by The Hungarian Reformed Federation of America, Washington, D.C., 1956.

²⁷ Gilbert, *ibid.* p.64

The 60-year-old District Rabbi, Isaac Lichtenstein, studied the legal document with great interest. It contained many references to the New Testament. Thirty years earlier, Lichtenstein had angrily confiscated a Hebrew New Testament from one of his synagogue teachers and thrown it on the top of his bookcase.

Now he eagerly scanned the dust coated volume to look up the quotations in Delitzsch's defence of the Jews.²⁸"I was astonished and could hardly believe my eyes" wrote the Rabbi " as I retrieved the New Testament which about thirty years before I had grabbed out of the hands of a Jewish teacher. I flipped open its pages and began to read it. How can I describe the impact this made on me? I hadn't been told even half of the grandeur, power and glory of this book. Hitherto it had been a sealed writing for me. Now everything appeared completely new, like someone who had discarded travel-worn, dusty clothing, and appeared in festive garb, like a groom, dressed for the wedding, or like a bride adorned with jewels."²⁹

Rabbi Lichtenstein had previously formulated his opinion of Christ on the basis of the behavior of nominal Christians. Consequently, he regarded Him to be the arch-enemy. From then on he saw the person of the Messiah, unveiled as the One of Whom Moses and the Prophets spoke.

For about two years he kept this discovery to himself. Members of the Tapioszele Synagogue were amazed to see their Rabbi uncover the hidden beauty and depth of the Scriptures and the enthusiasm with which he preached about the Messiah. Finally, he could not restrain himself; he preached on Christ's simile of the whitened sepulchers. As he did so, he confessed Jesus boldly as the true Messiah and Redeemer of Israel. The {22} congregation received this news with little consternation. The Rabbi then expressed his new conviction in three pamphlets, published in rapid succession and widely noted amongst Hungarian Jewry throughout Europe. For eight years, Rabbi Lichtenstein proclaimed Jesus Christ in the Tapioszele Synagogue. The Synagogue's teacher could not agree with his Rabbi's views, so he left town. The leadership of the synagogue hired an evangelical teacher, thinking that he must know the New Testament better.

The consequences were inevitable. Lichtenstein was accused of being a traitor. When appearing before the Rabbinical Council in Budapest, they cried out: "Retract! Retract!"

"Gentlemen," he replied, "I gladly retract everything if you prove me mistaken... I found the true Judaism in the New Testament."

The Rabbinical Council demanded his resignation and, in order to rid themselves of his influence, suggested that he should be baptised and officially declared a Christian - to no avail. For twelve more years, Lichtenstein remained the District Rabbi of Tapioszele and

²⁸ Draskoczy, Laszlo: Hosok es Vertanuk, Sylvester, Budapest, 1943, pp.99- 101

²⁹ Vohmann, Peter : Az ur Csodasan Mukodik, de Utja Rejtve Van...-Izrael Fiai es a Messias, Primo Kiado, Budapest, 1989, p.24. Quotation from Judenspiegel

continued to proclaim that Jesus was the true Messiah. His wife, who also committed her life to Christ, was asked by the Jewish Ladies' Guild to lead them in regular Bible studies.

Dr. Kai Kjær-Hansen describes a remarkable encounter in the Scottish Mission between Lichtenstein, Dr. Andrew Moody, and Joseph Rabinowitz, a notable Jewish convert.³⁰ The two tried to persuade the Rabbi to be baptised. One year later, in 1889, Moody relates the following:

Our friend, the Rabbi of Tapio-Szele, whom I have happily the opportunity of seeing from time to time, still maintains the same position as he did a year ago. When in the Tyrol I addressed an earnest appeal to him, the purport of which was: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized!" He replied: "Best thanks to you, reverend sir, for remembering me when you are at a distance. Be assured that your form hovers before my eyes, and that every day I pray fervently to the Almighty for your complete recovery. As regards your pious wish, I regret that in the interest of the holy cause itself I can not fulfill it. It is high time that a Jew should take his place at the gate of the camp and cry, 'Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, 'Do homage to Jesus as the rightful heir to the Kingdom. "For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.' He is that heavenly ladder which stands on the earth, the top of which {23} touches the heaven, and the angels of God ascend and descend upon it, and the Lord Himself stands above it. My adversaries agitate without ceasing against me, but I have built upon a rock, and am therefore not moved. Saluting you in the name of God, His Anointed, and the Holy Spirit Who hath made both one, I am, yours respectfully, J. Lichtenstein, District Rabbi.

Representatives of the Pope of Rome were sent to Lichtenstein to urge him to be baptized and join the Catholic Church. The Jewish Hungarian Arnold Frank, leader of the Jewish Mission in Hamburg, offered him a position with him if he would agree to be baptized. But, not wanting to put any hindrance in the way of his testimony in the synagogue, he refused. In spite of much persecution and suffering, the Rabbi continued in his refusal. He baptized himself in the Jewish ceremonial bath (*mikve*) just before his death at the age of eighty-four.

Love Is the Key

Today there is a marble plaque on the wall of the sanctuary of the Budapest Scottish Mission Church; it reads: "We remember with eternal gratitude and veneration Miss

³⁰ Kjær-Hansen, Kai: *Budapest in October 1891 - An encounter between two key persons in Jewish Evangelism*, paper presented at the Third European Conference, Lausanne Consultation, Budapest, October 5, 1990.

Jane Haining, who died a martyr's death for her true humanity in Auschwitz in 1944 - The Jewish Congregation of Budapest:"

It was here that during the Second World War Miss Jane Haining, the Matron of the mission School, was arrested by the S.S. The 300 to 400 pupils of the school were already dispersed to safe addresses. The Nazis tried torture to get her to reveal where the Jewish children were hidden. Finally she was taken to Auschwitz where she followed her Savior who said, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," John 15:13.

Jewish evangelism succeeded in Hungary through people in whose lives the words of the Scriptures were demonstrated: "God's love has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us," Romans 5:5. To choose one of many examples:

Aladar Ungar (1905-1970)

Born in Budapest, Ungar lost his mother at the age of ten and assumed responsibility for his younger brother. Ungar chose commerce as his vocation. As a young man, like Augustine, he indulged in all the pleasures of the world. He was injured in an industrial accident and one of his kidneys had to be removed. He found the thought of death unbearable.

After a wild night of partying, it dawned on him how pointless his life was. That same week he met a young man from the Salvation Army. For the first time Ungar, a Jew of the tribe of Levi who had always tried to hide his Jewishness, was confronted with Jesus as his Messiah. And after four and a {24} half hours of struggle he yielded to Christ. A new life was started. He was rejected and cast out from his Jewish family home.

Ungar joined the Salvation Army, where he served for seven years. His spiritual development steadily lifted him to new heights. He became an extraordinarily knowledgeable Bible student, learned fluent German and English and married a young German Army officer. They never had children but the Lord gave them an ever-growing spiritual family.

Aladar opened the Evangelical Bookstore in Harsfa-utca. By that time he had become one of the "pillars" of the Open Brethren Assembly in Budapest where he was baptized. He and his wife could no longer enjoy a so called "private-life." Their small two-room apartment was open at all times to people who were hungry either for spiritual answers, material help, or just for plain human warmth.

The present writer, a young student at that time, will never forget the weekly fellowship meetings in their home, when about thirty people jammed the small room to hear Ungar's answers to their Bible questions or personal problems. Many of these people were Jewish.

In fact, the Brethren Assembly of Budapest was and still is an excellent example of fruitful Jewish evangelism. One-third of the 400-member assembly was Jewish. Eminent

professors, doctors, lawyers and teachers became active workers in this loving, warm Christian body.

The absence of a membership roll and of formal membership made it possible for Aladar Ungar to boldly declare his Jewishness before the rabbis of Budapest, never hiding his commitment to the Lord Jesus. He continued to pay his annual dues to the Synagogue.

In 1936, James A. Stewart, a Scottish Baptist evangelist, was brought to Budapest by the Hungarian Evangelical Alliance. Ungar, as one of the secretaries of the Alliance, was appointed his interpreter. This was the beginning of a spiritual revival which spread throughout the nation. Many thousands, including the writer, made their commitment to Jesus Christ at this one. Ungar became a most sought-after conference speaker and Bible teacher in all protestant churches.

Ungar's mighty spirit dwelled in a weak body. In 1943, shortly after a second kidney operation, Ungar was drafted into a forced labor camp. Some months later he was allowed to return home. His face radiated delight as he told us, "What a glorious opportunity: Imagine: there were more than ten rabbis and hundreds of Jews, and I could tell them every day all about the Lord."

In 1944 he was taken into a Nazi German camp, where he continued to help the downcast and witnessed boldly. The Love of God never ceased to express itself through him. His favorite metaphor was: "If you have a jar full of vinegar and you smash it with a rod, nothing else will result but vinegar. {25} But if the jar is full of honey, even if you break the glass, only honey will flow out of it, never vinegar."

At the end, as the Soviet army was closing in, the German Commandant said to him: "Ungar, you go home to your wife, you don't belong here!", and so he was miraculously returned home just before the siege of Budapest.

After the war he continued his fruitful nation-wide ministry. Ungar became executive secretary of the Free Churches in Hungary. In 1959 he and his wife emigrated to Germany, and took on a daily Hungarian Gospel program over Radio Luxemburg. In spite of severe illnesses and operations, Ungar never slowed down. In 1961 one of his legs had to be amputated. In 1970 he lost the other. But, even in a wheelchair, he remained a bright beacon of light, and a demonstration of the power of God triumphant over the weaknesses of the flesh. Finally, on November 23, 1970, as he was preparing for a conference, Aladar Ungar died peacefully in the Lord.

Joseph Elias, Holocaust Hero

Even in Hungary few people know that Joseph Elias was the only recipient of a special international award. The International Hebrew Christian Alliance (IHCA), which regards as one of its main duties the eradication of racial and religious prejudice, decided to award a minister who, during the Second World War, carried out the most

successful rescue work in a German occupied country. At the 1948 London Conference of the IHCA, this award was given to Joseph Elias, a Christian of Jewish descent.³¹

Elias' father was a blacksmith, his mother a seamstress. There were four children in the family which, for economic reasons, had been forced to move from Budapest to the country. Joseph himself had to commute between their village home and a high school in the capital. This was the start of the road which led to four years of study at the historically significant Academy of Reformed Theology in Papa. He graduated as a minister in 1941. After a brief period as assistant minister in a strong congregation in the city of Cegled, he became the director of a special task force set up by the Reformed Church in Hungary and which was named as the Good Shepherd (Jo Pasztor), subcommittee of the General Assembly of the Reformed Church in Hungary. Four other ministers had already declined the position. The subcommittee's main task was described by the words: "Rescue the perishing" - a commission which had a double meaning.

In order to give the work a legal basis, Pastor Elias was given permission to use a rubber stamp with the inscription: "The General Assembly of the Hungarian Reformed Church." Yet, due to the politically sensitive situation, neither office space at church headquarters, nor financial help was provided. The Presiding Bishop (Moderator) of the denomination, Dr. Laszlo Ravasz, was a member of the Upper House of Parliament, who supported anti-Jewish legislation and tried to avoid all appearance of {26} complicity. Like many others, His Excellency had learned a great deal from Queen Elizabeth I of England about how to deal with pirate captains. He had hinted to Elias that he could do a lot more than what was stated in the official aims and that, under the cover of legality, underground activities could take place. If Elias were to succeed, he and others would be given credit for it, but if bids didn't succeed, he would not be able to count on the Bishop.

Mr. Elias told the bishop that he accepted the call but that he would need at least minimal funding. The Bishop sent requests for money to the congregations, and after a short while, money started trickling in. By 1942, due to the goodwill of a Reformed Church elder, a small apartment was obtained for an independent office at 5 Lazar Street, Budapest.

The Committee moved into top gear during the winter of 1942-43, a little more than a year before the Nazi invasion of Hungary. God rallied around bids a whole network of committed Christian brothers and sisters as full and part-time staff. Together they responded to the challenges of the day.

³¹ The author of this paper was a staff member and close friend of Rev. Elias, and is able to confirm the data here submitted from Professor Randolph L. Brahm's *Studies on the Holocaust in Hungary*, Columbia University Press, 1990, pp. 1-64.

As a result of the anti-Jewish laws and the discrimination against Jews, there was a lot of unemployment. Many Jews needed legal help. But the greatest problems were connected with those sent into forced labor and their families. Jewish men between the ages of twenty and fifty were called up for forced labor. The Good Shepherd Committee had to find clothes, blankets and underwear for the needy - a matter of life and death in wintertime in Transylvania and on the Russian front. Both in the Ukraine and in Hungary, there was a high death rate among the forced laborers, resulting in many orphans and widows. The Good Shepherd Committee set up an orphanage in Noszvaj in northern Hungary, and from the beginning of 1944 provided shelter for children, soldiers and forced laborers on the run.

Rev. Elias received appeals for help from many internment camps, visited them all, and held services in which he proclaimed the Gospel and sought to encourage and comfort. He had opportunities to meet some in private. Committing their complaints to memory, he used to write reports of these at home. He with some of his staff managed to rescue 83 mostly older interns from prison.

After the German occupation on March 21, 1944, he narrowly escaped arrest by the Gestapo. About a month later, through a close Christian friend, Dr. Geza Soos, a diplomat, he received a copy of the Auschwitz Report, written by one of the two young escapees from the death camp. Rev. Elias had this report translated into German and Hungarian and sent to all the top church {27} officials in the land. Formal church leaders were not always unanimous on the Jewish question, but once active persecution of the Jews began in Hungary, the whole Church immediately closed its ranks in defense of the Jews.

When, in 1944, the terrible deportations to the gas chambers of Poland began, all the Reformed bishops of Hungary formed a united deputation to the occupying authorities to protest in the name of Christ against such traffic in human lives.

On a particular Sunday a declaration was read from many pulpits in the land calling on the people to do all they could to stop the terrible deportations. Ministers in their parishes hid Jews in the belfries of their churches for months on end, at risk of their lives; thousands of ordinary church folk kept Jews hidden in their wardrobes and closets or took Jewish children into their homes to prevent their deportation.

In the midst of these terrifying circumstances, the Rev. Elias and his staff set up thirty-two safe houses in Budapest with 235 staff members to rescue Jewish children with some of their mothers. By the end of the War over two thousand children and the limited number of adults had been safely sheltered and fed in these homes, where daily prayers and the reading of the scriptures brought many of these dear souls to the peace which

passes understanding. In spite of heavy aerial bombing and street battles, not one person in those homes was injured or killed.³²

Rev. this and his wife are now retired in the city of Debrecen.

Other Servants of the Lord

Here are a few more examples, through whom the Lord built His Church: The Rev. George A. F. Knight of the Scottish Mission won hundreds of Jews, amongst them Emil and Mary Hajos. The Hajoses were instrumental in winning many to Christ while having been involved in the rescue of thousands of children and adults through the Good Shepherd Committee. The Rev. Albert Bereczky, The Rev. Karoly Dobos, Professor Laszlo Pakozdy, The Rev. Balint Kovacs, and Deacon Jamos Hordos, all of them of the Reformed Church, were fearless protectors of the persecuted. The Rev. Gyula Nagy and Rev. Janos Papp risked arrest, daily passing the armed guards, smuggling food, medicine and gospels into the walled-up Budapest Ghetto. The Lutheran Pastor Gabor Sztéhlo brought the International Red Cross to protect the oppressed.

Then there was Mrs. Gyula Rozsa, the descendant of the famed orthodox Rabbis Solomon and Salom Ullmann. Mrs. Rozsa with her husband were baptized in the Brethren Assembly of Budapest. They functioned like magnets drawing fellow-Jews to Jesus. It was through their testimony that Mrs. Lenke Flesch and her teenage son Charles came to know the Lord. Lenke {28} was so overjoyed to have found the Lord that she offered all her wealth to build a new place of worship for the Assembly. The offer was graciously declined with the suggestion that she give her money to be distributed amongst the poor. This was done through Aladar Ungar during the Holocaust. The Rozsas' son, Bandi, a young Jewish believer, and his unbelieving uncle, were taken with thousands on the forced march to Hegyeshalom, to be shipped to Auschwitz. I got a Swedish passport for Bandi and found him with his uncle in that pathetic crowd, marching. It was a gloomy, rainy day.

"Bandi," I said, "Come, step out. I have your Swedish passport, I can take you home to your parents."

"No," he said without stopping, carrying his heavy luggage. "I can not go. My uncle does not know the Lord. I can not leave him now."

As with most of those dear Jewish believers at that time, evangelism was uppermost in Bandi's mind, and personal safety nowhere. Within a week the 18-year-old boy died of pneumonia on the way to Auschwitz.

³² By the end of the war there were over two thousand children and adults sheltered by the Good Shephard Committee in 32 café houses, two of them under Swedish protectorate, cf. the monograph: *A Magyar Evangéliumi Egyházak Jo Pasztor Misszioi Alapítvanya* (The Good Shephard Foundation of the Hungarian Evangelical Churches), Budapest, 1945, p.9.

Conclusion

After the War there came a significant development in the history of the Good Shepherd. Hundreds of people crowded into the Jewish evangelistic meetings in the Budapest YMCA. The Rev. Janos Dobos, minister of the Scottish Mission, baptized 65 Jewish believers who were received by dozens of Hungarian churches into membership. Several people approached Elias to form a Jewish Messianic congregation. The idea was flatly rejected. Elias and his co-workers believed that such a step would be tantamount to rebuilding the wall of partition, which Jesus came to destroy.

Evangelical Reformed theology is church-centered. In Elias' and Dobos' scheme of things, Jewish believers need to be integrated into the Body of Christ, so that the world may see and know that Jesus is indeed the Messiah, the Savior of the world (cf. John 17).

The process was already underway. Tens of thousands of believing Jews joined Hungarian Protestant Churches. A number of them became pastors and elders. Imre Kadar, PhD., a Jewish-Christian intellectual, was elected Senior Elder of the two-million-strong Reformed Church. Aladar Ungar became executive head of the Coalition of Hungarian Free Churches. During Lent, 1949, for the first time in history, members of all branches of the evangelical church joined in receiving Holy Communion together. In a moving act of worship, pastors Aladar Ungar (Jewish Christian, Brethren), Karoly Dobos (Reformed), Imre Somogyi (Baptist) and Ferenc Sreter (Lutheran) dispensed the elements of the Lord's Supper to the packed-out Fasar Lutheran Church, right across from the Soviet Headquarters. The united witness of Jews and Gentiles in Christ was not without effect.³³

³³ The writer of this paper was one of the three secretaries of the Hungarian Evangelical Alliance. During the Holocaust he was on the staff of the Good Shepherd Committee. In June 1949 he was ordered out of Hungary by the Communist Government as an alien. The Scottish Mission, the Good Shepherd Committee and the Evangelical Alliance were dissolved by the communist authorities. The official theological position of the Hungarian Reformed Church later shifted from Jewish evangelism to Jewish-Christian dialogue.

{31} Jewish Missions in Romania

Magne Solheim

Magne Solheim served the Norwegian Church Ministry to Israel in Romania (1938-48) and then in Israel (1949-76). He founded the Immanuel and Beit Eliyahu congregations in Jaffa and Haifa, and pastored the latter until he retired in 1976. He served as Executive of the Bible Society in Israel until 1975 and initiated the modern Hebrew translation of the New Testament. His documentary of the ministry in Romania *In the Shadow of Swastika, Hammer and Sickel* is published in German and Norwegian (the English translation still seeks a publisher).

This article is adapted from a Norwegian manuscript and translated by Anne Margrethe Lund. It is a privilege for MISHKAN to publish it close to Magne Solheim's 80th birthday, 11 June, and at the 100 year jubilee of the start of the Norwegian mission work among Jews in Romania.

In 1891 Romania became an independent kingdom. After World War I, in 1919, Greater Romania was created by the peace treaty at Trianon, with 20 million people. Of these, there were 4 million people of a minority ethnic background, including 900,000 Jews.

Until 1919 the Jews in Romania had not been allowed to possess land or to obtain citizenship. They were craftsmen, and also played an important role in commerce and industry. At the universities the Jews studied mostly medicine and law. Theoretically they were equal to other citizens, but it often proved difficult for a Jew to find employment within public sectors.

To be a Romanian and a Christian was one and the same for most Romanians, and "proper" Christians had to belong to the Orthodox Church. There were also groups of Protestants among the German and Hungarian minorities who consequently were not considered real Christians.

Supported by the country's laws, the state made a clear distinction between the historical churches and the "sectarians" (Baptists, Plymouth Brethren, Pentecostals, etc.) which had established themselves around the turn of the century. At best these dissenters were tolerated, but in no way accepted. They worked hard to make the Bible known among the common people. In the Orthodox Church, the Bible was so holy that laymen could not read it by themselves, only kiss and revere it during mass.

If a Jew wanted to be baptized in the Orthodox Church, he was given a Romanian name and became both Christian and Romanian. Before he could {31} be baptized, he had to answer a number of questions about the Jewish people, their faith and customs and he had to promise to reject all this and to curse both the people and their customs. Both questions and answers were put in his mouth by the priest, as a part of the baptismal ritual.

The Anglican Mission To The Jews

In May 1937, I was ordained as a pastor in Norway in order to go to Romania and work for The Norwegian Israel Mission (since 1987; Norwegian Church Ministry to Israel). After half a year of studies in Judaica at the Delitzsch Institute in Vienna, I arrived and was met by our missionary in Galatz, Isaac Feinstein. Galatz is a town on the outskirts of Donau, a major shipping port. First he brought me to Bucharest, where we visited Pastor J. H. Adeney. For almost 40 years he had been working in Romania for the Anglican Church Mission to the Jews.

As a young pastor, Adeney had arrived in Bucharest and had started a great ministry in building schools for young Jewish girls. The schools maintained a high standard and attracted highly qualified teachers. He employed women language teachers from England, Germany and Switzerland. Later, in Israel, I met several of these girls working in different firms.

In one of the schools, there was an apartment for the pastor and a large hall with 400 seats. Every Sunday afternoon there was a meeting in this hall, and the majority of those attending were Jewish.

Adeney was responsible for the translation and publication of several pamphlets and booklets in Romanian. These were distributed and sold by different people, mostly young Jewish Christian women. Among his coworkers were two Jewish Christian pastors. One was Hani Elison, whose father had worked with Adeney for several years. Hani had grown up in Bucharest, and later returned to this town as a pastor. For many years there was close cooperation between the Anglican Mission and the Norwegian Mission in Galatz.

The Norwegian Israel Mission in Galatz

In November 1891, a Norwegian couple, pastor Ragnvald Gjessing and his wife, Amalie, came to Galatz, sent by The Norwegian Israel Mission. After three deaths in their home, the doctor recommended that the Gjessings move out of Galatz, and they went to Bucharest, where pastor Gjessing started his ministry among the Jews.

In 1903 a young German pastor, Otto von Harling, arrived in Galatz. He was married to Ragnhild Gjessing, a relative of Ragnvald Gjessing. Von Harling wanted to establish a school for Jewish girls. Since there were few schools in Romania at the time, and many girls had no opportunity to go to school, many Jewish parents turned to von Harling and asked him to start a school for their girls. The Board of Mission in Oslo was reluctant to support this, {33} because they objected to even the appearance of tempting Jews with temporal advantages to accept the Gospel. Consequently von Harling strongly asserted that this was not the case, and that the girls' parents had asked him to accept this undertaking, whereupon the Mission consented. The school won reputation for its well-qualified teachers. The students were taught German, the common language among Jews at the time, and in the higher classes, French and Hebrew. The Sabbath was a day off.

Every Sunday afternoon the pastor held a service, primarily for the students, and arranged disputation in his home. He also became widely known as a lecturer for Jews in Galatz and in other cities throughout the country. He baptized two young Jewish men, one of whom was Bernhard Segal, who later became very active in the work for the Kingdom of Heaven. Later, in 1949, I met Bernhard Segal in London, where he lived for more than 50 years and worked for London City Mission. Since he knew several languages, he had had a special ministry among foreigners who arrived in the city, and particularly among the German Jews that had fled Nazi-Germany. Often he would accommodate these people, giving them food and a place to stay. He told me that the good atmosphere in the von Harling home had made a lasting impression upon him, and he particularly remembered Mrs. Ragnhild von Harling with joy and thankfulness.

In 1909, the von Harling family went back to Germany where Otto von Harling became director of the Delitzsch Institute. Before they left, a young Norwegian pastor, Gisle Johnson, had already been prepared to take over his ministry. Johnson was a very gifted person, and he continued working at the school, which now had 250 pupils. This school developed a high reputation and it was not difficult for the students to find work in businesses run by Jews.

During World War I, in 1916, Romania was involved in the war on the Russian and Allied side, and Galatz several times came under fire. Both the school and the students worked for the Red Cross during this time.

After the war Johnson was so worn out that it was hard to resume a regular work load. He went to France for recuperation, and on his way to Romania in 1922, he stopped in Budapest where anti-Semitic riots haunted the town. He decided to settle there and started a ministry among the Jews. The son and grandson of Isaac Lichtenstein were among the Jewish Christians who, from different congregations, gathered in his house for bible studies. He also taught Norwegian at the university. During World War II, he labored unselfishly for the Jews, believers and unbelievers alike, during the terror of the Nazi Holocaust. He died in 1946 from wounds inflicted by the fighting in Budapest between the Russians and the Germans. He had worked for The Norwegian Israel Mission for 44 years.

In 1921, Miss Antonia Aniksdal, a Norwegian teacher, arrived at Galatz. People suffered greatly after World War I from the widespread sickness {34} and epidemics. The Mission sent out two nurses to Galatz, Red Cross sister Margit Bey and deaconess Olga Olaussen. Sister Margit suffered much from malaria and returned to Norway in 1926.

Miss Aniksdal and Sister Olga realized the need for a male worker and asked the Mission to send a pastor. Since there was no one willing to go, Isaac Feinstein, a Jewish Christian from Bucharest, was appointed to the position. He was highly recommended by Pastor Adeney and Pastor von Harling. Feinstein was trained in economics, attended a Bible school in Warsaw for one year, and studied an additional six months at the

Delitzsch Institute in Leipzig. Here, he was greatly influenced by von Harling. In January 1930, he came to Galatz with his Swiss wife, Lydia, who had been teaching at an English mission school in Bucharest. They were both gifted in music. The old school building in Galatz was remodeled to accommodate not only Adeney, but also the Feinstein family and an assembly hall.

When I arrived in Galatz in 1938, their program was as follows: On Sundays, there was a morning prayer meeting and service and an evening evangelistic meeting, often filling the hall with 200 seats. During the week, there were Bible studies, women's meetings, and Mrs. Feinstein taught English in night school. Finally, there was a Sabbath school for children and a youth group.

Miss Aniksdal was matron and bookkeeper. Several Jewish girls grew up in her house. Sister Olga was often asked to come and care for people in their homes in town. For some time she worked as a nurse at the Jewish hospital, since she was instructing young Jewish girls in nursing.

In Reni, 25 kilometers from Galatz, Feinstein held meetings each Monday night in a house which the Mission had acquired. In the summer, camps for young boys were organized in a village in Transylvania. Feinstein and Sister Olga were often assisted by pastor Ellison.

Feinstein was a man who was eager to serve, and had a tremendous capacity for work. He quickly realized that teaching and preaching had a limited reach, so he started a monthly magazine called *Prietenul*, "The Friend" with the motto: For faith, ethics and literature. This magazine reached far and was widely read by both Jews and Romanians. He also published a children's magazine, *Prietenul Copiitor* "The Children's Friend". From time to time he printed tens of thousands of gospels that were sold in the city and throughout the nation. He was the only distributor of Bibles in the city. He always had Bibles from the Bible society in Bucharest, in addition to books and tracts that were translated from other languages.

The Mission had decided that I should carry on the work in Galatz along with Miss Aniksdal. In June 1938, I married Cilgia Gees from Switzerland, and she was a real blessing to me in my work. She was a language teacher and taught English, German and French in one of the British schools in Bucharest. The Mission also decided that Feinstein and his wife should {35} start a new ministry together with Sister Olga in Jassy, in the north. Jassy was a city of about 120,000 people and half of these were Jews. It was an old cultural center with Romanian nationalism and anti-Semitism, and the university in Jassy was the oldest one in the country. When Feinstein started holding evangelistic meetings, the response was overwhelming. From the first meeting, the 100-seat hall was filled to overflowing and a larger hall was needed. Soon several Jews had received the gospel.

Bessarabia

Bessarabia was an old Romanian province, which, in 1812, came under Russian rule and, in 1918, again became part of Greater Romania. In this area between the Dnjester River, the Prut River and the Danube, there were many Jews living, particularly in the provincial capital of Kishinev. Here, there was a German Lutheran church, which had been pastored by Rudolf Faltin since 1859. He had a burden for the Jewish people and after 41 years of ministry he had baptised 300 Jews. Among his converts was the genius, rabbi Rudolf Herman Gurland, who had memorized the whole Tanach in Hebrew. He was later trained as a pastor and assisted Faltin in his work.

It was not difficult for Faltin to come in contact with Jews, mainly because of the Haskalah-movement (the Jewish enlightenment movement which started in Germany in the 18th century). Many Jews contacted Faltin with their questions, but for a Jew to convert to Christianity in the Lutheran Church was rather difficult. Pastor Faltin did not have permission to baptize anyone without consent from the religious authorities in Petersburg (Leningrad) and this often took a long time. German was required for both the preparatory instruction and for the ritual, itself. In addition, a baptized Jew was met with hostility by his fellow Jews. When for example Rabbi Gurland was baptized, his wife's family forced her to divorce him. It could also be hard for them to find work. To meet the needs, pastor Faltin leased property in 1886 where seven young men founded a collective farm in order to grow their own crops. Faltin also helped young Jewish Christians to receive training in education, so they could eventually find work in the Christian schools.

Around the time of Passover in 1903, a terrible pogrom visited Kishinev. Wild mobs attacked the Jews and left 45 people dead and 1500 houses and shops raided. Many Jews came to Faltin for protection and soon both the church and the adjacent buildings were full of Jews. The mob outside demanded that Faltin give the Jews into their hands or they would burn down the church and all houses where there were Jews. Faltin refused and pleaded for God's help. As they prepared the fire outside, a terrible thunderstorm came upon them, showering down buckets of rain, so the mob fled. This made a strong impression on the Jews of Kishinev, and many were baptized by Faltin. When pastor Faltin died, the Jews of Kishinev put up

{36} black flags in their windows and in their shops. After R. H. Gurland died in 1905, there was none to continue the ministry Faltin had established.

Lev Jakovitz Averbruch

Averbruch was born in 1885 in the Ukraine. There were several rabbis in his family, so his parents wanted their son to be a learned rabbi. As a child he was trained in Hebrew and Tora, and when he was 13 years old and ready for his bar mitzvah, he went to a school to become a rabbi. Influenced by one of his teachers, he lost his faith in God and the Bible and became an atheist, and he returned home. He started studying chemistry

and became part of the intelligentsia, but was not happy with life. He then studied music at the Academy in Odessa since he had played violin as a young boy. In Grodno, a large town in Belorussia. He settled as a music teacher in Grodno, a large town in Belorussia. Although he was a free-thinker with no interest in religion, he started reading a New Testament which was given to him. From childhood, he had considered Jesus an enemy of the Jewish people and now he took upon himself the task of convincing the Christians that Jesus was a false Messiah. He started reading all the literature available to support his positions, but as a result he became convinced that Jesus was the Messiah and Savior for Jews and gentiles alike. Filled with a new joy, he started a Christian choir in Grodno. He soon gained popularity in Russia where he witnessed about Jesus in words and music.

After World War I, Bessarabia became part of Greater Romania, and from 1918 to 1937, Averbruch and his wife Maria had a fruitful ministry in Kishinev and other parts of Romania.

In 1921 Averbruch published the first Romanian songbook with music, which he later revised and enlarged. Beginning in 1924, he also published a bimonthly magazine in Romanian. This was also printed in Yiddish and Russian.

In 1928 a Jewish Christian congregation was established in Kishinev. Averbruch was a leader together with four elders. For Passover in 1931 the people working for the Norwegian Israel Mission organized a get-together in Galatz for Jewish Christians. Out of the 40 participants, 22 came from Kishinev, led by Averbruch.

In the late 1930's, Erik Gabe joined Averbruch in the work. Gabe studied music and languages in Bucharest, and the congregation flourished with music, children's clubs and other activities. The work was financially supported by The Mildmay Mission, in England. In 1937 Averbruch and his {37} wife went to London, where he died in 1941. Gabe later became an Anglican pastor.

The Second World War

In June 1940 Romania was forced to cede Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina, to the Soviet Union. In August of the same year, Romania was required to cede larger parts of Transylvania to Hungary and an area in the south to Bulgaria. By the end of the summer, Romania had lost areas with a population of 6 million people.

It was now apparent that new political currents were stirring in the country. In August 1940 a new law was enacted that denied all legal rights to Jews. The state confiscated all Jewish property. If a Jew was to live in his own house or manage his business, he had to pay rent to the state. It was legitimate for anyone to take over Jewish property and to chase the owners away. No one was permitted to have Jewish employees. No Jews were allowed to go to Romanian schools or to study at a university. In addition, all Jewish school buildings were confiscated, all Jewish publishing houses were dissolved and all

Jewish newspapers forbidden. No Jewish lawyer could practice law. This and much more resulted from this new law.

At the decree of Hitler, a German military mission was "invited" into Romania and the country had to open its borders to the German military. In the new government that was formed with Crown Prince Mihai there were many legionnaires from the previously forbidden Iron Brigade. They exacted a bloody revenge on their enemies and executed people without trial. The hatred toward Jews was intensified. The only option for many Jews was to flee to the Soviet Union. Soon 100,000 Jews had crossed the border into the Soviet Union. Just prior to Christmas, 1940, the border was closed.

In the newspapers there were harsh attacks on the Jews. "It must be obvious to anyone now, that the Jews were Bolsheviks," they said. The real reason for their departure was not given.

The legionnaires in the Iron Brigade were dissatisfied with the prime minister, General Ion Antonesen, and an attempted coup was accompanied by an attack on the Jews. In Bucharest many Jews were killed or tortured and their homes and properties were destroyed. General Antonesen put down the riot, and the Iron Brigade was dissolved, and the legionnaires were imprisoned. But, for the Jews, there was no relief. New anti-Semitic laws were added to the previous ones. No Jew was allowed to convert to another religion. Consequently, no Jews were allowed to become believers in Jesus. The punishments were hard, both for the ones who baptized a Jew and for the Jew himself. They could be sentenced to 25 years in prison.

I went to Bucharest and miraculously obtained a permit for Feinstein and myself to work among the Jews. It said: " Their task shall be to preach the {38} holy Gospel, distribute Bibles and the New Testament and religious tracts that are approved by the censor."

War Breaks Out

Both Galatz and Jassy were close to the Russian border and large cannons were placed outside Galatz, facing the Russian border. June 22, 1941 war broke out. Our firstborn was six weeks old and shivered like a leaf in the wind when the cannons boomed.

The Germans had thought they would break through the Russian front quickly as they had done on the western front, but here they did not move. People became worried, and the rumor spread that the Jews were to blame. They were secretly allied with the enemy.

A decree was pronounced that all Jews should wear the yellow star of David and all men between 18 and 60 years were arrested. Then they were interned in synagogues, schools and private homes. They slept side by side on the floor without any bedding, and food was provided by friends and family, but food was scarce in those days.

When the cannons were silent for several hours, I took the opportunity to visit the Jews that were locked up, and they were always glad to see me. I brought a radio with me and

could tell the latest news. Many wanted New Testaments, Bibles and tracts. When the front was more distant, many of these Jews became forced labor without pay.

On the front near Jassy the Germans did not break through as they had envisioned, and the rumor spread that the Jews had signaled the Russians, and that they had shot Germans in the back. These rumors did not bode well for the Jewish community. On June 29, the police, the army and the mob attacked the Jews with incredible brutality, and in two days there were around 12,000 Jews were killed and many were injured. Feinstein was among those who lost their lives. He left his wife with six young children. Feinstein was killed with hundreds of others when boiling steam for hours was blown into the sealed train cars into which they were cramped. A survivor said "He didn't die as the rest of us. He preached to us and prayed with us before he collapsed."

Romania regained all of Bessarabia and Bukovina and a large area in the Ukraine, between the Dnjester River and the Bug River. The Romanians called this area Transnistria. Neither the Germans nor the Romanians showed mercy as they progressed eastwards. They gathered the Jews into large groups. Many were shot, and thousands were burned alive after they had been sprinkled with gasoline. Others were deported to Transnistria {39} where many died from hunger and disease. Anyone who attempted to aid the Jews in Transnistria could be sentenced to four years in prison.

In Kishinev the Jewish Christians experienced two detrimental blows. When Romania in 1940 had to cede Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union, many Jewish Christians were deported to Siberia, and when the Germans came in 1941 the rest of the Jews and the Jewish Christians were deported to Transnistria. Only one person managed to hide and save his life. In Bukovina there were some smaller groups of Jewish Christians in the towns, and only one couple survived the catastrophe.

Through diplomatic interventions General Antonesen managed to interfere with German plans to annihilate the entire Jewish population of Romania, but still 400,000 Jews died in this anti-Semitic frenzy.

Our Work in This Time of Crisis

In Galatz newspapers run by Jews were forbidden, and the only remaining newspaper was Actinnea. I was asked to write a weekly Sunday article. I made popular interpretations of Scripture verses, and formed a little sermon. Often they printed this on the front page, and it was widely read by Jews and Romanians. This way I had a new "pulpit". After some weeks an article appeared by Archimandrit Scriban, a professor at the theological university in Bucharest, warmly recommending my column. (He was from Galatz and an old friend of Gisle Johnson). This recognition was worth gold to me, but in November 1942 the editor informed me that he was no longer allowed to print my articles. For exactly two years I had this privilege of speaking through the press, and

often at various places people would comment on my articles, which led to nice conversations.

Despite the many obstacles, we had a fruitful time of ministry in Galatz. Among the younger crowd that came, there were many students who were no longer permitted to continue their studies and professionals who were not allowed to work. They were happy to find a place to gather where they were welcome. I started Bible classes every week, and I made many Jewish friends. I also made contact with the teachers at the Jewish Gymnasium, who carried on the work under deprived circumstances. Physicians approached us, saying that if anyone who came to our house were in need of treatment, they would get it free on my request.

On Yom Kippur I entered a larger synagogue during the Kol Nidre service. When the rabbi saw me, he motioned to me to come and sit with him, a true honor for me.

In October 1942 Mrs. Feinstein succeeded in going home to Switzerland with her six children. The youngest was only three years old. Sister Olga was now left alone in Jassy. Many, young and old, sought refuge in her home. In Israel, many years later, I visited a man on a moshav in the Galilee, and he {40} said: "Sister Olga was just like a mother to me." He lost his own mother as a young boy in Jassy.

Towards the end of 1943, a law was passed that dissolved all non-historic churches, e.g. the "sectarians". Even if only two people read the Bible together, they risked 25 years' imprisonment. After some time, there were about 5,000 "sectarians" in jail, and many of these were women and children. The authorities could not interfere with our work in Galatz, because we were not one of the forbidden denominations. Many of the "sectarians" started coming to our meetings. This didn't make the situation easier.

Richard Wurmbrand

Feinstein was one of the tools that led Richard Wurmbrand, a Jew coming from the communist underground, to the Lord in 1937-38. Wurmbrand was subsequently appointed a worker of the Anglican Mission in Bucharest. By the end of February 1941, all the British had left the country and Wurmbrand was left leading the work in Bucharest. He later asked me to come and help out, since they were meeting in private homes, and this was a dangerous situation. So in 1943 I went to see Wurmbrand in Bucharest and we contacted our old friend Archimandrit Scriban. Together we went to the Ministry for Religious Affairs to obtain authorization for our work in Galatz and Jassy. They were negative and required official recommendation from the Orthodox Church and the Lutheran Church. This we obtained, but still the authorities refused our application. They referred to the law that prohibited any Jew to convert to any other religion (e.g. Christianity). Soon after this, the police came and closed down the church and sealed it. But the work was carried on, less visibly. We would meet alternately in different rooms in our home and have communion together.

Since Romania joined the war on the German side, all diplomatic ties with Norway were broken. Sweden was asked to look after Norwegian interests and the Swedish ambassador was like a father to us all. He protested to the Minister of Religious Affairs about how they treated us and the "sectarians". He asked me to come to Bucharest, and together with Wurmbrand and myself, he went to the Ministry of Religious Affairs and obtained a written permit giving us full freedom to carry out our work.

On March 19, 1944, we reassumed our first service in Galatz. Wurmbrand lived frugally in a small apartment on the outskirts of Bucharest without electric heating. Two rooms were made into a chapel. The first Sunday it was packed inside and out for both the morning and evening services. A mixture of people arrived: Jews, Romanians, Russian prisoners of war, German army chaplains. The whole service was held in Romanian.

Because of the extensive anti-Semitism, several Jews came and asked to be baptized in Jassy, Galatz and Bucharest. The act of baptism had to be {41} carried out secretly, for if it became known, those involved risked 25 years in prison. No one could accuse them of doing it for profit.

German Retreat

In the spring of 1944 the unsuccessful German troops moved into Romania with the Russians trailing them. "The Russians are coming, the Russians are coming!", people said, and fled in despair. The Soviet Army halted eight kilometers outside Jassy. All foreigners were asked to leave. Sister Olga took several of her "younger children" with her to Bucharest, but the Russians never came.

On August 23, 1944, the king of Romania annulled the treaty with Germany and proclaimed allegiance to the Western Allies and to the Soviet Union. As the Soviet army entered Romania, the Germans fled, but not before they had blown up most of the houses in Galatz.

Soon, the Soviets controlled the country, and we continued our work for several years without interruption. Many of the residents of Galatz, whose homes had been destroyed, had to seek shelter elsewhere. There was a small group of faithful believers that attended our meetings, but no one dared venture out at night for fear of Russian soldiers.

When the Russian army liberated concentration camps in 1944-45, many of the survivors found their way to Romania. Wurmbrand and his wife established a small transit home for these refugees in Bucharest. For the first time they met Christian love, strangely enough demonstrated in the name of Jesus by Jewish Christians. One of these survivors was Hans Walter Hirschberg, a Jewish Christian judge from Berlin that had been in Theresienstadt in Czechoslovakia. He said that ten percent of the 60.000 Jews that often filled this camp (which was built for 6.000) belonged to Christian churches. Many were only nominal Christians, but a substantial part were believers. Catholic and Protestant believers organized themselves in parallel groups with separate services and Bible studies, but lived together as Christian brethren, and had concerts and choirs

together. "We tried to teach our Jewish brethren Jesus' message of forgiveness based on texts from the Old Testament," Hirschberg said. He shared that both Jews who had been nominal Christians and Mosaic Jews had found the Messiah in Theresienstadt before they were transferred to the extermination camps.

Since the British missionaries were not coming back, Wurmbrand suggested that we make use of the Anglican properties in Bucharest. The city, with its 100,000 Jews, was a center of European Jewry. I followed up on the idea, and {42} on October 13, 1946, we had our first service in the large hall that held 400 people. It was packed, and there were representatives from all the different churches in town. This was the beginning of two of the most blessed years of my life. Wurmbrand and I alternated leading the services and preaching Sunday mornings and afternoons, and in giving lectures on Wednesday evenings. Tuesday afternoons Sabina Wurmbrand held women's meetings and on Friday nights we had prayer meetings. My wife Cilgia opened an evening school where she taught English and French. On Sunday afternoons a small group of us would go and visit at the tuberculosis hospital. Since many students came to our assembly, we invited them to "Academic Evenings" every other week in our home. After Dr. Harnich, a Jewish Christian physician became involved in this work, other professionals joined, also. We lectured on contemporary topics and then opened the floor for discussion. Several of those who came to these lectures also appeared in our meetings and services.

I have to mention the exceptional street meetings. From time to time Sabina Wurmbrand and a small group would go out in the streets and sing, and Sabina would preach. They often attracted crowds of people.

An important part of the work was publication of books, magazines and tracts. *Prietenul*, the magazine Feinstein published, was forbidden in 1940, but in September 1944 it was in circulation again. Wurmbrand, several others and I made an effort to write. Wurmbrand also wrote books. I published several booklets. We had a special room for literature production, and from there we shipped *Prietenul* and other literature all over the country. A young Jewish Christian woman was in charge of this, and a couple of other Jewish Christian women were sales contacts in Bucharest and nationwide.

The Work in Galatz and Jassy

When we went to Bucharest in 1946, Milan Haimovici and his wife continued our work together with Miss Aniksdal. When he was interned in a camp in 1941, he received a New Testament from me. When he came out of the camp, he often visited us. Whenever he had the time and opportunity, he would study theological literature in French. His training was in economics. He was "illegally" baptized and later he gave sermons and preached in meetings and regular services. The ministry flourished when we could work under more normal circumstances. Milan worked with great eagerness and gathered

many people, both Jews and Romanians. He also started a ministry in the neighbouring town of Braila.

In Jassy, Sister Olga was working at full speed. During the night of the horrible pogrom, Sister Olga hid many Jews in her basement. Among them was a young boy, Jancu Moscovici and his sister and a young girl, Malka, who was later to become Jancu's wife. He writes about this: "To me it was inconceivable that a stranger would risk her own life to save me. I could not forget her, nor the prayers she prayed, nor her willingness to serve and give {43} of herself, nor the peaceful atmosphere I had sensed. I needed to get to know this person. I went back to Sister Olga to thank her for all she had done for us. I started to read the Bible, out of curiosity at first, but soon I realized that Christianity is not a religion that encourages the murder of Jews, but the religion that sister Olga was practicing. And when the Gospel became real to me, I realized that Christianity was not only a religion, but the truth."

When we resumed the ministry in Jassy after the war, Jancu became Sister Olga's assistant. He proved to be a talented young man who studied the Bible and theological literature and knew how to make his knowledge relevant. Every Sunday afternoon the assembly room of 100 seats was filled, and 90% of these were Jews.

At the Turn of the Year 1948

An icy wind blew through the country again. The publication of the magazine *Prietenul* was frozen, once more. In fact, everything we tried to publish was stopped by the authorities. On Sunday February 29 Richard Wurmbrand was abducted and taken to jail. The authorities said he had fled the country illegally, but in June he managed to smuggle out information regarding his whereabouts. In July 1950 he was brought to court, but was too sick to stand trial. Nevertheless, he was sentenced to 20 years of hard labor. Some time later, Sabina was placed in a work camp, without trial.

A new law was passed in August 1948, which forbade all foreign churches, Christian organizations and institutions in the country, nor was any Romanian church allowed to receive economic support from abroad. The law also required all correspondence with other countries to go through the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Since there was no Romanian language Lutheran church in Romania, and the German Lutheran Church had its own problems, to sustain the rights of Christian fellowship within the framework of the new law, our people registered under the Hungarian Lutheran Church. They had to form councils, and the authorities demanded the names and addresses of these leaders and elders. To become a member, a person had to go and register at an official office, and it took a lot of courage to do this in those days.

In Galatz 40 people registered and elected a council of five representatives, led by Haimovici. Among the others were two Jewish Christians and two {44} Romanians. In Bucharest 80 people registered and there they also elected a council with Jewish Christians and Romanians alike.

In Jassy there were not enough people to form a congregation. Jancu Moscovici therefore was asked to come down to Bucharest and carry on the work there. He was to work with Felix Jacobson, a talented young Jewish Christian who had a high degree in theology from the orthodox theological faculty in Bucharest. Moscovici took his theological exams later at a newly established evangelical institute.

On October 31, 1948 I held my last service in Bucharest. In my diary I wrote: "What should I say at last but what Paul said to the elders in Ephesus: "And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). As when Paul spoke, the reaction was the same: people cried. I can still hear their mournful weeping. It was a weeping full of anxiety - "Wurmbrand is gone, and now also this pastor leaves us. What will become of us?" many asked themselves. By November 4, all the Norwegians had to be out of the country. On November 2, Miss Aniksdal, Cilgia, our three children (the youngest was only three months) and I left. Sister Olga was allowed to stay as a private person for two more years (she subsequently served in Israel until her death in 1983).

Towards the end of December 1948, Milan Haimovici, upon his return to Galatz from talks with the Hungarian bishop Argay was abducted by police in civilian clothes. He was transferred to several different jails during the next three years, and was tortured and questioned about our cooperation with other countries. He was forced to plead guilty and to sign false accusations against him. Three years later he was put on trial and convicted of stirring people to riot. He was sentenced to 8 years in jail and afterwards was sent to slave labor on the Danube channel. Many died there. He was once in a work group of 500 men, of which only five survived. Haimovici never regained his health.

What Happened to Our Congregations in Romania?

They went through many difficulties. When most of Romania's Jews immigrated to Israel (400.000 Israelis have Romanian origins), many Jewish Christians followed. When I arrived in Israel in 1949, I met several, and already in 1950 I could start church services in Romanian in Haifa and later in Tel Aviv. I have also met Jewish Christians and Romanians from our congregations in England, France, Germany, USA and other countries. There is still a small body of Romanian speaking believers left in Bucharest, in the Hungarian Lutheran Church. All properties have been confiscated by the state.

Both Milan Haimovici, Felix Jacobson and Jancu Moscovici later became pastors in Germany. Both Haimovici and Jacobson have passed away, {45} Moscovici still lives in Hamburg as a senior citizen. By the end of 1990 he had broadcast over 1000 Romanian sermons on Trans World Radio, Monte Carlo. These were greatly appreciated in Romania.

Richard Wurmbrand spent 14 years in jail, and for two years he lay in a death cell, his body full of tuberculosis. In 1965 he was ransomed for \$10,000 and brought to Norway. Shortly after he was released, he founded an organization called "Mission to the

Communist Countries", with its headquarters now in California, USA and with branches in many countries. Richard and Sabina Wurmbrand are still traveling around the world preaching.

In 1990, after Ceausescu's downfall, the Wurmbrands were given the opportunity to go to Romania twice, where he was once again able to preach. In December the same year the incredible happened: in downtown Bucharest, in one of Ceausescu's many buildings, a Christian center was started with a library, printing facilities, and a bookstore. Very soon the shelves were empty. Hopefully a good portent for the Romanian people and the 20.000 Jews which still live in the country.

{46} Franz Delitzsch, Scholar and Missionary

Siegfried Wagner and Arnulf Baumann

Arnulf Baumann is, since 1982, chairman of the Evangelical-Lutheran Central Agency for Witness and Service to Jews and Christians. Since 1974 he has served as editor of its quarterly, *Friede über Israel*. Siegfried Wagner is professor of Old Testament at the University of Leipzig and has published a biography of Franz Delitzsch.

This article is compiled from two articles, each written by one of the authors, which appeared in *Friede über Israel* I & 11/1990. It has been translated by Frank Grothe and Kathy T. Ockels.

Background

Franz Julius Delitzsch (1813-1890) was born in Leipzig, Germany, to a family of little means. A Jewish friend of the family named Levi Hirsch enabled the gifted lad to attend the Nikolai Gymnasium (High School). After graduation in 1831, young Franz Delitzsch embarked on a study of theology at Leipzig with continued financial assistance from his benefactor. It can be assumed that his patron had a lasting influence on the growing boy, having acquainted him from an early stage with Jewish ethics and customs.

In those years it was accepted practice within the intellectual climate at the Faculty of Theology to acquaint the students with the philosophy of German Idealism, thus Delitzsch thoroughly studied such philosophers as Kant, Fichte, Schilling and Hegel. Young Delitzsch grew up in the period following the wars of liberation from Napoleonic rule 1813-15 and was influenced by the ideas of the German student's movement for national unity, which in Leipzig evidenced a touch of pietism. He was lastingly influenced by the apolitical national feeling of the German citizenry, the cult of enthusiastic friendship and, perhaps, also the "blue flower" of the Romantic period in the form of the hyacinths that he liked to have in his hand during lectures.

In his first two years of study, Franz Delitzsch, by way of a conversion experience, came into a personal faith, which from this time on brought him together with like-minded students and pietistic circles. These gatherings cultivated a devotion characterized by a deliberate Lutheranism, by pietism, by a mystic spirituality and by a strong missionary fervor. In later years Delitzsch also attributed considerable influence during this turning.{47} point in his life to two missionaries among the Jews, named Goldberg and Becker, with whom he struck up an acquaintance at the Leipzig Exhibitions. As he admitted, they kindled in him a strong love for the people of the old covenant.

Something that stayed with him from this time of a growing Lutheran consciousness was the emphasis on church, ordained ministry and Lutheran confession and a hostile stance towards enlightenment and union of Lutheran and Reformed churches. His whole life long, Delitzsch remained, above all else, a representative of the Lutheran revival that he had experienced during his formative years in Leipzig.

As well as his interest in philosophy, a persistent interest in Semitic philology was evident in his studies. In the year 1835 he completed his theological studies and concurrently earned a doctorate in philosophy. The following years found the scholar perfecting his knowledge in the fields of Semitics and Judaica as well as actively researching Hebrew lexicography, semantics and the composition of concordances. His first published works appeared at this time, providing the erudite Delitzsch with scholarly recognition. Increasingly he understood all of this labor as preparation for the ministry of missionary to the Jews, toward which he was inexorably drawn.

He continually fostered contact with former friends from his student days, even when these were already active as clergymen, primarily in Muldental of Saxony. Because of his calling to Jewish missions he finally decided not to join their immigration in 1838 to St. Louis, Missouri, where they became the founders of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Even though he, like these friends, was always strongly committed to a strictly denominational Lutheranism. He came in contact with Pastor Wermelskirch of the Saxon Society for the Mission to Israel. The field of ministry that was opened to him through this contact was the decisive element that held him back from emigrating.

At the end of 1838, Delitzsch wrote that there were only three paths open to him. By this he meant emigration, an academic career or missionary work among Jews. He had been appointed to be an evangelist among the Jews by the Dresden Committee, taking over from Goldberg, who was being transferred to Frankfurt. A regular position however, was not forthcoming since the committee did not have the necessary financial means and could not arrange the desired ordination. Delitzsch was very disappointed by this, but over many years he perceived himself as being a "designated" missionary to the Jews and was engaged accordingly. The services he {48} rendered which were recorded in his daily work log were reimbursed by the Dresden Committee. Beyond this, he made his living from occasional work such as proofreading.

After an intensive inner struggle, he decided to begin an academic career. Thus in 1842 he qualified as a university lecturer in Old Testament at the Faculty of Theology in Leipzig. During those years he published several devotional books, of which some were bestsellers.

The Scholar

After qualifying for university teaching, Franz Delitzsch taught well attended classes at the Faculty of Theology, Leipzig. His appointment in 1844 as associate professor still did not provide a regular source of income. Only after being appointed in 1846 to be a professor at Rostock was he able to secure an adequate, permanent salary. He had married Clara Silber, a resident of Leipzig, the previous year. They had four sons of whom one subsequently became the noted assyriologist, Friedrich Delitzsch. Several years passed and in 1850 Franz Delitzsch followed a call to the Faculty of Theology at

the University of Erlangen, where he taught for 17 years. Both in Rostock and Erlangen he was required to lecture on the Old and New Testaments. In Erlangen he was also active in apologetics. At both faculties he came into close contact with well known representatives of the Neo-Lutheranism. In Erlangen he actively exchanged ideas with J. Ch. K. von Hofmann. Delitzsch occupied himself at length with Hofmann's views, and came to understand them. He was strongly influenced by von Hofmann, for example in the questions of *Heilsgeschichte* (Salvation History) and the unity of scripture from the viewpoint of prophecy and fulfillment.

In the latter phase of his life, Delitzsch was successfully teaching and researching at the Faculty of Theology in Leipzig where he had been offered a position in 1867. Just as in Erlangen, he attracted large groups of students among whom were many from other countries. Delitzsch was able to combine a high level of learning with a stimulating presentation. For him theology also had a spiritual-counseling dimension. Thus he developed close personal relationships with his students. He also inspired a number of his students to undertake scholarly projects, selflessly collaborating with them as the work progressed. Without actually having founded a school, he did have many students in his own right. Among these were to be found such well known names as Baudissin, Dalman, Koenig, Sellin, Strack and many more. Outside of his academic work and regular teaching engagements he also held highly regarded discourses which influenced wide reaches of the church.

In his time, Franz Delitzsch was one of the most well-known professors of theology in Germany. As early as Erlangen, though more so in Leipzig, he was one of the most popular lecturers in his specialty. Many foreigners from English-speaking and Scandinavian areas came to Leipzig to learn from {49} him. His popularity came foremost not from his academic publications, but rather from his personal charisma and the practicality of his teaching. With his vivid and realistic presentations, he captivated his listeners and brought the Bible and the circumstances of biblical times closer to them. He lived by the Bible and in its spirit, and this fact touched his students.

This versatile academic bequeathed the world with a literary achievement encompassing rigorous scholarship and extensive church writings. As a biblical exegete he distinguished himself with voluminous commentaries on books of the Old Testament. These were, in part, published in continually improved versions and also translated into the English language. He also penned a comprehensive commentary on the book of Hebrews and other works pertaining to the New Testament, as well as to rabbinical, dogmatic and historical issues. Most important were his devotional works.

In his commentaries Delitzsch was not only concerned with a careful analysis of the text but, more importantly, with the unfolding of the inner meaning, the message of the Bible. He was a master of the lovingly painted detail, but not of the large systematic overview. Countless numbers of his essays on contemporary academic, theological and

church-related problems appeared in a variety of journals. Above and beyond all of this, he also wrote encyclopedia articles. Delitzsch was preoccupied with the question of interpretation of text as well as with that of biblical translation. For the Old Testament, as well as for the New Testament, it was important to him to be as true to the original text as was possible. With this in mind, he, along with the Jewish scholar S. Baer, edited Hebrew editions of individual Old Testament books. Franz Delitzsch's published works allowed him an impressive and far-reaching sphere of influence. His books and other works were widely read. Even today, some of his most important works are often cited or made available through new printings.

Franz Delitzsch must be considered a conservative theologian. All his life he tried to come to terms with the rising historical-critical approach to Old Testament research. He saw a threat to the church and to theology in general in this cold, intellectual approach which lacked Christian piety. At the same time, as a sincere scholar, he could not ignore some of the thinking of the historical-critical scholars. He attempted to draw different conclusions from this new work than would his colleagues, but in his attempts he became isolated between the fronts. Still, it is essential and exciting to take a closer look at this interesting chapter of his work in academic research.

Among his colleagues, Delitzsch was unusual because of his excellent knowledge of rabbinical texts and of post-biblical Judaism in general. It was always obvious to him, that he should include rabbinical theology into his work and take part in spirited academic exchanges with Jewish scholars. This was less unusual in his youth than in his later years when the tide of anti-Semitism was making itself felt even in circles within the university.

{50} Mission to the Jewish People

In his role as a teacher, Delitzsch also felt closely bound to the mission among Jews, which remained the main vocation of his life. His outstanding knowledge and his competent publications in the fields of Semitic philosophy and Judaica, as well as in Jewish literary history, all brought him the respect and affection of many Jewish scholars. These factors also gave him an excellent foundation for his missionary work among Jews. He kept up-to-date with the work of rabbinical exegetes and these influenced his own biblical interpretations. He liked to prepare himself by discussing his understanding of the Old Testament with rabbis and Jewish scholars. In both Saxony and Bavaria, he actively supported all missionary attempts directed at the Jewish people. He worked to coordinate these activities in the various Lutheran churches and, in 1870, this led to the founding of the *Evangelisch-Lutherische Centralverein für die Mission unter Israel*. Its first general assembly was held in June of 1871. Delitzsch was the driving spirit behind this society and his influence continued even after his death. As time went on, this union of Saxon, Bavarian and Norwegian missionary societies was joined by additional ones from Germany and abroad.

In 1863, Professor Delitzsch, along with the Jewish missionary Becker, had been editing a journal called *Saat auf Hoffnung* (Seed of Hope), aimed at the mission of the church towards the people of Israel. From the time of Becker's death in 1874 until 1888, Delitzsch continued to edit this periodical on his own. Through this publication, which served to introduce the ideas of missionary work among Jews into the Lutheran church, he had a clear opportunity to express his theological positions. In addition, he was able to address the contemporary problems and conflicts which existed between Jews and Christian and to publish authoritative information about Judaism. In the 1880's, the last decade of his life, Delitzsch advanced the establishment of Seminars in Jewish Studies (in part, associated with academic missionary societies) which had the role of disseminating information about the Jewish people and their religion for the purpose of advancing missionary work among Jews. Especially active in this work was Delitzsch's student, Wilhelm Faber.

In order to bring the message of the New Testament closer to the Jews, Delitzsch felt that it was necessary to translate the text into Hebrew. Actually, a complete Hebrew translation had been available since 1817. This version, produced by the London Missionary Society, was continuously reprinted in new and improved editions. But this version did not strike Delitzsch as suitable for his purposes. He tried to immerse himself into the thoughts and perceptions of the contemporary Jew. He was of the opinion that the translation had to have a specific linguistic form, which would express the Gospel in a way that was correct, accurate and understandable. From 1838 on, he struggled with the translation and reflected incessantly {51} upon the principles by which he felt that he should direct his translation. The scholar in him sought to use the oldest and best certified form of the text as his foundation. His Hebrew New Testament was first published in 1877 by the London Bible Society, as no other publisher was willing to take on the project. The first edition sold out in that same year and Delitzsch set out to produce a much improved new edition. Even on his death bed, he worked untiringly on the eleventh edition, which was edited by his student, Gustaf Dalman, in 1892. From the first publication until his death, a new edition was produced almost every year.

It is notable that Delitzsch sought the help of countless Christian and Jewish scholars in correcting the translation. He appears to have consciously kept the production lots small, because he was convinced that the translation continuously needed to be improved. Also, he was of the opinion that the Holy Word should not be squandered. This was a test of a principle that he had followed even in his youth: that the success of the mission among Jews lay not in attempts at mass conversion, but in dialogue between individuals. For this reason, he wanted to give a copy of the Hebrew New Testament to only those who were interested. Much to his distress, the British Missionary Society, at about this same time, distributed large numbers of the elegant Hebrew translation by Viennese-based missionary, Isaak Salkinson, thereby effectively flooding the missionary field. Still, the Delitzsch New Testament was widely read by Jews and received great attention

from the academic world. Even today, it appears in new printings and is widely used in Israel.

The far-sightedness of Delitzsch as a scholar is shown by his view that a basic knowledge of Semitic languages, Jewish literature and religious traditions were indispensable to the competent discussion of Christian theology with Jews. As early as his years at Erlangen, he pushed for a training institute for theologians and missionaries at which seminars on these subjects could be held. After a failed first attempt to establish such seminars in Erlangen and Leipzig, Delitzsch was able to see the opening of the Institute of Jewish Studies in Leipzig. This came in 1886, very near to the end of his life. At this institute, Delitzsch himself held lectures and classes on Talmud and Mishna as well as other topics. He also recruited Jewish and Christian faculty, enabling the realization of the educational program. The program did not only tackle themes of a purely Jewish nature, but also delved into the interpretation of Old and New Testament text and their innate relationship to Judaic beliefs. Delitzsch's view of evangelism among Jews was influenced by the climate of the church in his time, especially of the Lutheran revival. He saw the Jews as limited by {52} rabbinical tradition, with their identity endangered by assimilation and liberalization. He wanted to bring them closer to the joyous message of Jesus Christ, but wanted this to be through Christian tolerance rather than through coercion of any kind.

In the last two decades of his life, Franz Delitzsch came out bravely in word and deed against the growing anti-Semitism that he saw around him. His strong attachment to the "brothers of Israel" obliged him to move to their side in the fight against anti-Semitism without regard to the consequences. On the strength of his intimate knowledge of Judaism, he took on the task of putting down accusations, suspicions and false assertions which were raised against the Jews. Though he did not shy away from receiving and enduring slander from all sides, it was especially painful for him to be abandoned by friends and colleagues. It must be said, to the shame of the Protestant church, that Delitzsch, along with his student, H. L. Strack, was one of the very few who stood courageously and adamantly for truth and justice with regard to the Jews. His stance on anti-Semitism remained unshaken even when, with sorrow, he saw increasing efforts on the part of contemporary Judaism towards secularization, liberalization and assimilation and noted a damaging polemic against Jesus on the part of the Jewish religious establishment.

If one considers Delitzsch's relationship with Judaism as a whole, it is clear that he was a missionary of unique character. He stayed away from pressure methods and depended instead on the power of personal contact. With the help of a thorough education in the foundations of Judaism, he tried to empathize with the thinking, perceptions and way of life of the Jews. In other words, "to a Jew he became as a Jew." His efforts were built on a foundation of a deep love for Jesus, which had inspired him since his conversion. He

loved to examine, along with his Jewish counterparts, the holy writings of the Old and New Testaments and thereby prove the intimate connection between the two.

In his letters to the Jewish evangelist P.E. Gottheil, from the years 1876-1883,¹ Delitzsch expresses deep concern for Jewish proselytes. Jewish families broke all ties with a baptized member, who also found himself without any job or career in the Jewish context. Delitzsch held that one should not baptize a Jew, unless he could help him find a profession and secure living, so that he could take care of his future financial needs. If not, he could easily fall back to the synagogue. Mission to the Jews is more difficult than to Gentiles! "Better to postpone the baptism until these two are sure they can live as Christians, I tremble in fear for backtracking of baptized Jews."²

The fact that Delitzsch does not fit the contemporary cliché of the "sinister" missionary is also evident in his acceptance of the efforts of Jewish-Christians to be autonomous. When Josef Rabinowitz undertook the successful experiment of establishing a Jewish-Christian congregation with {53} its own unique identity in Kischinev, Delitzsch showed interest in an enthusiastic and positive way.

He had also indicated earlier the direction in which he looked to find the solution to that which pressed hardest upon him—the problem of the proselytes. In 1882, Delitzsch wrote, "Ah, I have often thought that many would put better use to their recognition of Jesus as the Messiah by staying in the Synagogue until God himself releases the crypto-Christianity which is bound within the Synagogue and creates a Jewish-Christian Church." During the same period he wrote a Jew seeking baptism, "Test yourself to see whether for you Christianity is a matter of *lischmo* (for its own sake) or if it is just a matter of increased freedom and culture. It is so difficult to provide Jewish converts with a secure living, that I have sometimes thought that they would be better off staying in the synagogue, along with their recognition that Jesus is in reality the Messiah of Israel. Then one can be a Jew without saying *Yimmach Shmo V'zichro* (May his name and memory be blotted out)."³

Thus, Delitzsch waited for the emergence of a Jewish-Christian Church and could therefore do without pressuring towards baptism. It didn't cause him distress, when a Jew who believed in Jesus refused to be baptized, because he felt that one could be a Jew without damning Jesus. Delitzsch counted on the possibility of living among Jews as a Jew who believed in Jesus. Delitzsch expected God to facilitate the emergence, he referred to it as a birth, of a Jewish-Christian Church. He waited with eagerness for any sign of such a development. He also attempted to bring it about. On December 28, 1881,

¹ See A. Baumann, "Frans Delitzsch als Missionar," *Friede über Israel* 3/ 1990, pp. 101-108.

² *Ibid.*, pp.104-105

³ *Ibid.*, p.106

he sent 400 marks, according to the receipt, as a "Christmas donation from the Norwegian Society for Mission to Israel... for the support and promotion of the Christian movement in Bukovina." Certainly, "when Jewish missions bring a crypto-Christianity into being, there will be mysteries which defy solution." In this situation, he also saw the value of his Hebrew New Testament, about which he repeatedly spoke. He also reported about dashes hope: "My joyous support of the movement in Galicia and Bukovina has been dampened by our own experiences."⁴

Delitzsch had no premonition of the horrible calamity that would befall the Jewish people a half-century after his death. Perhaps he was too innocent for that. But he did raise his voice against the spreading ideology of destruction. The blame is not on him that his voice fell upon deaf ears. Delitzsch had, no doubt, access to the pious inner circle of the church. But the great majority of theological academicians and churchmen saw his work{54} with Jews as an eccentric hobby; a hobby that one could overlook when Delitzsch might even have Jewish blood in his veins.

Legacies

Franz Delitzsch closed his eyes for the last time on March 4, 1890. It was the anniversary of his baptism, a day in the course of the years to which he had always apportioned a special meaning. The life of an important theologian and clergyman came to an end; a life which was determined and consistent and whose work had made a definite impression on the theology and the church of his time. Many who came in contact with him said that they had him to thank for decisive changes made in their personal lives or in their careers. Even today, his theological and exegetical legacies live on in many forms.

The Institute of Jewish studies (after his death renamed Institutum Judaicum *Delitzschianum*), whose academic character became even stronger after Delitzsch's death, closed in 1935 in Leipzig in order to remain true to its mission among Jews. After great pains, the institute was reopened in Vienna by the then director Hans Kosmala. After the *Anschluss* of Austria in 1938, Kosmala tried to base the institute in London, but the attempt failed when World War II began. It wasn't until after the war ended that a new start was possible; this time in Munster. There, Karl Heinrich Rengstorf led it from its modest beginnings to become a Judaic institute of international repute. Now under the leadership of Hermann Lichtenberger, the institute has been able to re-establish itself as an academic institution in the realm of the university.

In Delitzsch's time, the *Zentralverein* achieved considerable expansion through the consolidation of Lutheran activities as far away as Denmark and Norway. Nevertheless, its sphere of influence remained confined to relatively limited circles within the church. As the Nazis came to power, the supporters of the *Zentralverein* dispersed themselves in

⁴ Ibid.

the face of increasing pressure. Only a handful of loyal followers stayed with the society, which had to discontinue its work in 1936. The last of these faithful supporters stayed in touch clandestinely with the missionary director, Otto von Harling, and with Jewish-Christians, who had come under severe oppression. It was not until the end of this government of annihilation in the autumn of 1945, that the *Zentralverein* could once again begin its work. The attempt to continue this work along with friends in the then Soviet-occupied zone soon had to be abandoned. The friends in Leipzig supported themselves and found their own niche in the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kirche und Judentum* (more recently *Judisch-christliche Arbeitsgemeinschaft*). For a number of years now, regular contact has again been possible between the two groups and these have solidified into a friendship.

Since its re-establishment in 1945, the Zentralverein hasn't chosen the path of a radical break with the past, as was often the case in the aftermath of {55} the Holocaust. There was too much of positive value in the history of the society to do this, especially as regarded the personality and influence of Delitzsch. But it was also in light of this that there was, and still is, a constant examination of the methods of the past and of the present to see if they can withstand the events of the Holocaust. This path is painful, but necessary.

Today, the emphasis of the work of the *Zentralverein* has shifted to the service of individual churches and congregations. There is still much to be done before our churches find a new and positive relationship with Jews and Judaism, without becoming unsure of their own beliefs in the process. In Delitzsch's words, the task of the Institute of Jewish Studies is to "spread a knowledge of true Judaism among Christians." These words serve as both motivation and sources of direction. But the reverse of these words is also an obligation of the *Zentralverein*: the knowledge of true Christianity among Jews. We can work together for the destruction of deep-seated fears and the building of new trust. We rejoice when Jewish people in Israel meet together in a congregation to worship Jesus the Messiah and we support them on their way as they express their Jewish-Christian identity. Even in this, Franz Delitzsch serves as an example.

The legacies of this small man with a hyacinth in his hand are many. He himself saw in each of these the work of God.

{56} Herman L. Strack's Contributions to Jewish Missions

Ludwig Wachter

Ludwig Wachter was Old Testament Professor at Humboldt-University, Berlin until his retirement in 1988. He was for several years fellow of the Lutheran European Commission on the Church and the Jewish People (LEKKJ). This article is translated from German by Kathy T. Ockels.

In 1822, the *Society for Promotion of Christianity among the Jews*, based in Berlin, was founded as the first German society for mission among the Jews. At the time when Herman L. Strack, born in Berlin in 1848, began to study theology and philosophy, his hometown, the capital of the Prussian kingdom, already had a long tradition of mission among the Jews. His course of study took him from Berlin to Leipzig, where he heard lectures by, among others, Franz Delitzsch. Strack became the mission's most important patron and initiator.

Early on, during his university years, an interest in Judaic literature was awakened in him. He later expressed repeatedly that he had already had this proposed to him in the late sixties, especially by J.H.R. Biesenthal and Franz Delitzsch, but also by the Berlin pastor F.W.S. Schwartz. The latter expressed the wish that the young student would one day hold lectures on Judaic literature at the university and influence the mission among the Jews. The basic education that was imparted by the Friedrich-Wilhelm Gymnasium in Berlin, gave Strack a good foundation from which to launch his deeper immersion into classical languages and literature during the course of his studies. Strack received his Ph.D. in 1872. The title of the dissertation is *A Critical Introduction to the Hebrew Old Testament*. The subtitles of the work allow recognition of the direction of research which later became the trademark of his academic work as a whole:

1. *On the Manuscripts, what is lost and what is still extant.*
2. *The Text of the Hebrew Bible, as used by the Talmudic writers.*

After his graduation, his Judaic work first concentrated on the utilization of sources for the interpretation and illumination of the history of Old Testament texts. A three-year stay in Russia (1873-1876) served as further training, as he utilized the existence of the Kaiser Public Library in St. Petersburg. At the same time, his stay in Russia gave him the opportunity to become better acquainted with the Jews there and with Jewish life in general.

{57 } In 1877, H. Strack was appointed professor extraordinary of Old Testament at the Freidrich-Wilhelm-Universitat in Berlin. He remained in this position until 1910. After this, he was an honorary professor until his death in 1922. A full professorship, in other words, a chair, eluded him. August Dillmann, who chaired the professorate (1869-1894), was followed by Wolf Wilhelm Graf Baudissin, a prominent representative of the

history-of religion school. Old Testament study in Germany at the turn of the century and until today, was oriented to the history of religion, looking specifically at the relationship of the religions and cultures of neighboring peoples of ancient Israel. A researcher such as H.L. Strack who occupied himself more with Judaism and the post-biblical time than with the ancient Orient, had to be content with a position on the periphery of the academic world.

The fact that he wasn't appointed to another university may be attributed to the theological faculty of the University of Berlin. Dillman, who was especially prolific in Old Testament exegesis, and Strack, whose academic emphasis was on Judaica, complimented each other and provided continuity and thoroughness in the education of theologians.

As a professor of Old Testament, Strack, of course, held lectures in this specialty, which was also not ignored in his publications. Along with O. Zockler, he edited the *Brief Commentary of the Works of the Old and New Testaments*. Of note are his achievements in the area of Semitic language grammar. His *Hebrew Grammar*, 1883 was printed in fifteen editions, and both the *Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*, 1896, and the *Introduction to the Old Testament* came out in six editions.

His real love, though, was working with Judaism, both in theory and in practice. Soon after assuming his teaching duties at the University of Berlin, he began to hold lectures on Judaic themes: select passages from the Mishna, Jewish prayer and the history of Jewish literature. The Conference of Mission among the Jews in Berlin in 1883 gave Strack the impetus, going beyond the realm of the theological faculty, to give Christian students the opportunity to gain knowledge about Jewish literature, history and religion. This meant not only looking at ancient Judaism, which was already an emphasis of biblical scholars, but also looking at contemporary Judaism. As far as Strack was concerned, the mission among the Jews could only be effective if one had knowledge about contemporary Judaism.

The method that Strack chose was the founding of an institute of Jewish studies. The *Institutum Judaicum Berolinense* was an assembly of students with the form of a theological seminar. Strack undertook the academic leadership himself but a student selected by his colleagues functioned as the senior partner; he took care of correspondence, administered the library, opened the sessions with a reading from the Bible and had to be able to lead the seminars as a substitute. As a meeting place they used the office of the Berlin Society for Mission among the Jews. As of 1891, they were granted the opportunity to operate on the grounds of the university. The overview that Strack offered in his 30 year jubilee booklet for the institute, gives insight into the diversity of themes dealt with: experiences of the mission among the Jews, Yiddish texts and parts of the Mishna, discussion of recent Jewish literature, and others.¹

¹ Das Institutum Judaicum Berolinense in der ersten 30 Jahren seines Bestehens, Leipzig 1914

From 1886 on, Strack edited *Publications of the Berlin Institute of Jewish Studies*, building upon the work of the Institute and drawing upon further speeches and writing along those same lines. Over the years, forty-five of these were published. About the goal and purpose of these works, Strack said: "In part, they should teach about Judaism, in part they should introduce the work of the evangelical church among the people of Israel."² For the second goal, he listed the works of others, e.g. G. Dalman's *Concise Handbook of the Mission among the people of Israel* and many articles by John de la Roi. For the first goal, Strack had himself contributed a whole line of works: his *Introduction to Talmud* came out in a fourth edition in 1908, and in 1920 was published in an enlarged form as *Introduction to Talmud and Midrash*, new printing 1961); a number of Mishna tractates with text and vocabulary, translation and commentary; the work *Jesus, the Heretics and the Christians according to the Oldest Jewish sources*, *The Jew and Human Sacrifice*, and others.

The *Publications of the Berlin Institute of Jewish Studies* gave important basic information to generations of theological students. Of these, the *Introduction to Talmud* can be called the most important. Together with the *Commentary of the New Testament from Talmud and Midrash*,³ whose four substantial volumes were revised by P. Billerbeck and edited by H. Strack, it long served as the most important source of information about religion and customs of Judaism of the ancient and middle-ages.

The Berlin Institute of Jewish Studies saw its function not only as the education of missionaries among Jews, but also as giving future pastors the most encompassing knowledge possible of Judaism and of the mission among the Jews. As there are not enough missionaries among Jews available, every clergyman "should be capable and willing to proclaim to the Jews in his district, in a way meaningful to the Jews, Jesus Christ as the one who was crucified and resurrected for the sins of all mankind."⁴

That goal could not be achieved, as Strack often regretted, because of the disinterest of a large part of the theology students towards this subject, but on the other hand, the institute did produce missionaries among the Jews. After 30 years of service by the institute, Strack could say that four clergymen of the Berlin Mission among the Jews, Bieling, Schaeffer, Herzka and Mahl, had received their training for this profession from the institute, completely or to a large extent, and that the missionary G.M. Loewen, also credited the institute for important encouragement. The effect of the institute was limited. Nevertheless, the influence which Strack was able to have through its continuity should not be underestimated when one {59} considers the average of a dozen members of the institute during its forty years of operation.

² Ibid, p.5.

³ *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash*, Munich 1922-23

⁴ Strack emphasized this in his essay, "Wie gewinnen wir unsere Geistlichen für die Arbeit an Israel? oder Die Erweiterung des Institutum Judaicum zu Berlin," *Nathanael* 13 (1897) 2, p. 52.

Even more effectively than through the work of the institute, Strack was able to show the interest in mission to its best advantage in the magazine *Nathanael* which he edited beginning in 1885. Its full title is *Nathanael. Magazine for the Work of the Evangelical Church with the People of Israel*. In addition, the Society for Promotion of Christianity among the Jews published *The Messenger of the Messiah: Newsletter of the Berlin Mission among the Jews*.⁵

Strack's commitment to the mission among the Jews on an international scale is most obvious in his leadership role in international conferences for mission among the Jews. *The Yearbook of the Evangelical Missions among the Jews*, which he edited, gave information about the conferences.⁶

The position which Strack along with his institute had earned in the realm of the mission among the Jews is summarized up to that point in the first volume of the Yearbook. Under *Protestant Mission to Jews*, section II is "Germany" below which, listed as number two, is *The Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews, Berlin* with its quarterly magazine *The Messenger of the Messiah* and its secretary, Pastor R. Bieling, a student of Strack. Under *German Societies Auxiliary to Jewish Missions* is named, as number nine, the *Institutum Judaicum in Berlin (Strackianum)*. It is described, though certainly not by Strack himself: "Established in 1883 by the great friend of Israel, Prof. H. L. Strack, D.D., at Berlin, this institute has helped the cause of Jewish Missions by training missionaries for the work and trying to interest students of theology in Jewish work, and especially by publishing many treatises which aroused general interest in the cause of Jewish Missions among Jews and Gentiles. Prof. Strack publishes also the bi-monthly magazine, "Nathanael" in the interest of the evangelization of the Jews, in loose connection with the Berlin Society..."⁷ By *Society* the previously mentioned *Society for Promotion of Christianity among the Jews*, is meant

A strong position of faith was Strack's precondition for every mission, and therefore also for the mission among the Jews. With this statement he opened his speech, *The Character of Judaism*, in April 1906, at the Amsterdam Conference of Mission among the Jews: "He who believes his religion to be the correct one, must have the desire that it be the religion of all. This desire should lead one to act. But one cannot act if one is unprepared or unready. What preparation do we need to spread our {60} religion? Firstly, we must know the theory of our religion and practice it. Secondly, we must also know the religion of others and know not only its laws and teachings, but also its activities and the roots from which it has grown (history, language, literature, etc.)"⁸ At

⁵ *Nathanael. Zeitschrift für die Arbeit der evangelischen Kirche an Israel und Messiasbote. Nachrichtenblatte der Berliner Judenmission*

⁶ *Jahrbuch der evangelischen Judenmission*, Vol. 1. 1906, Vol. 2 1913.

⁷ *Jahrbuch*, Vol. I, p. 108.

⁸ *Jahrbuch*, Vol. I, p. 19

the end of his speech, Strack came to inhibiting factors which face a mission among the Jews: "On the part of the Jews, it is the belief in being Chosen, the pride in the merit of their fathers (zakhuth aboth) and the lack of an acknowledgement of sins, which make it difficult for them to grasp the full extent of the general human depravity and the necessity of an extraordinary act of God as a solution for mankind, as happened through Jesus Christ. On the Christian side, it is time and again the hostility expressed towards the Jews."⁹

Strack had a good grasp of all the Jewish movements of his time. In Reform Judaism he saw the dissolution of religious principles, comparable with the liberal theology of Protestantism. The other end of the spectrum which should be taken seriously was the Orthodox Judaism. He observed that in orthodox circles there were definitely starting points for Biblical criticism, especially in the area of the books of the Prophets,¹⁰ but that they always stopped short of a critical analysis of the Pentateuch. He became convinced that a prudent criticism of the Pentateuch could be worthwhile for the mission. Strack's speech, given in 1911 at the 8th International Jewish Missionary Conference in Stockholm, "The Jews and the Old Testament," ended with the words: "Serious historic-philological criticism of the Bible, a criticism whose results are not fixed beforehand, would not fail to be fatal to traditional Judaism. I do not venture to predict. That it cannot have any lastingly bad effects upon evangelical Christianity is certain. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebr. 13: 8)."¹¹

Strack distanced himself in academic works and speeches not only from the slander of Jews by Christians, but also from Jewish polemics against Christianity. He expressly opposed those claims, which continually reappeared from Jewish scholars, that the teachings of Jesus conveyed in the Gospel were borrowed from Talmudic teaching. He pointed out that the majority of the NT sayings which supposedly had their models in the Talmud, were included there by authorities of the third and fourth centuries after Christ.

Of even greater importance than the presentation of the superiority of Christian beliefs and teachings, was Strack's work in standing up for the Jews against slander of all kinds. In a widely distributed work, *The Jew and Human Sacrifice*,¹² Strack opposed the recurring assertion that, from the {61} early Middle Ages until his time, Jews required Christian blood for the preparation of the Pessach meal and, for this reason, murder Christian children during the Pessach season. Strack took a stand on this issue for the first time in 1882 in the *Evangelischen Kirchenzeitung*. His essay, *Are the Jews*

⁹ Ibid. p. 39.

¹⁰ Das Wesen des Judentums, p. 25.

¹¹ Jahrbuch, Vol. II, Leipzig 1913, p. 45.

¹² which, from 1891 until 1900, appeared in eight continuously and improved versions- Der Blutaberglaube bei Christen (first version), Das Blut im Glauben und Aberglauben der Menschheit (from the fifth version).

*converting Religion?*¹³, was directed at other slanders, especially that Jewish butchers purposefully dirtied meat, which they wanted to sell to non-Jews.

This hostility was the obstacle against which Strack fought with all of his might. It was his conviction that Christians are obliged to practice justice and charity towards the Jews. Such behavior, he hoped, would teach the Jews to think about the Christian religion and about the Lord Jesus in a new and better way. They would more easily open themselves to Christian influence if they observed that the Christian religion made Christians into just, peaceful and affectionate people. Unfortunately, he was forced to the realization that a large part of the Christians acted completely differently, especially towards the Jews. Anti-Semitism continued to spread during his time and he was forced to observe that through its agitation, more Jews were made hostile towards Christianity.¹⁴ For this reason, he stood untiringly in word and deed against the slander and accusations that were continuously raised against the Jews. Specifically because, on the basis of his belief in Jesus Christ, he knew himself to be called to the Jews and because he felt himself committed to academic honesty, he could not tolerate it when untruths, whose fallacies were clear for the eye to see, continued to be asserted: Certainly he hoped to take the wind out of the sails of the anti-Semitic smear campaign through the evidence of the baseless ness of the accusations, repeatedly, brought against the Jews.

In the intellectual climate of those times, to put oneself in a position of protecting Jews required courage and strength of character. The study of sacrificial "superstitions" outraged anti-Semitic literary figures. They questioned Strack's knowledge of Hebrew and of rabbinical literature and suggested that he had received money from the Jewish side for his statements.¹⁵ The strongest attack came from Paulus Meyer, who in 1838, instigated by anti-Semites in Berlin, wrote the work: *Wolves in sheep's clothing. Sheep in wolf's clothing. Revelations of the Mission among the Jews and a Reckoning for Professor Strack*. This piece was so malicious that the royal district court in Leipzig sentenced Meyer to one year and ten months in prison for slanderous libel.¹⁶

In his fight against the intrigues of the anti-Semites and for the exposure of the truth about the religion and customs of the Jews, Strack not only risked his academic reputation, but also his very existence. The most acute threat came in the course of arguments about the words spoken in services on the eve of Yom Kippur: *Kol Nidre* (All Vows.) Here he had as his opponent the powerful court chaplain, Adolf Stoecker, who had the power of the {62} Christian press, which he controlled, and his own far-reaching political influence behind him.

¹³ *Sind die Juden Verbrecher von Religionswegen?*, Leipzig, 1900

¹⁴ *Das Institutum Judaicum*, p.8f.

¹⁵ *The Jew and Human Sacrifice*, fourth version, 1893.

¹⁶ *Das Blut im Glauben und Aberglauben...*,1900, p.105.

Adolf Stoecker stated in a speech under the auspices of the Christian Social Party on the 24 of April 1885, that the Kol Nidre prayer on Yom Kippur means that all oaths and vows are not valid from this Yom Kippur until the next. In this dishonest carelessness there is a great danger; one sees in it where the denigration of Judaism will lead. Strack corrected this, in an article carried in the newspaper *Neue Preussische Zeitung*, that the release from the obligation of oaths doesn't refer to oaths which were made to others, but only to self-obligation, in other words, religious vows which man has taken upon himself before God. This question had great consequences, and for this reason Strack immediately responded, because the scenario presented by Stoecker in practical terms, deprived the Jews of their legal competence with regard to contracts. Although Strack did not want at first to accept that Stoecker had intended this, the fact was that remarks came from Stoecker that dictated hostility to Jews. Stoecker introduced Dr. Simon May, who wrote an article in *Reichsbote* that opposed Strack's theory. Strack's immediate reply was not printed by the journal. The quarrel continued and Strack attempted to make possible, through hearings with Stoecker, a retreat from an indefensible position under tolerable conditions. These attempts failed. It came to a libel action by Simon May, who had been sent by Stoecker. May's complaint was not upheld. Additionally, May was fined in the hearing, on October 20, 1885, and was ordered to pay court costs.

Strack's work *Mr. Adolf Stoecker, Christian Love and Truthfulness*, offers detailed information about the disagreement with Adolf Stoecker, which soon went beyond the original cause.¹⁷ It is of note that both men started from a similar conservative fundamental attitude, had known each other before this split and had even been close. Together they were in opposition to liberalism. Out of the conservative defense of basic Christian values, which Strack defined as "positive theology," each drew a completely different conclusion. The disagreement that followed demonstrated how far apart these paths had become.

Strack fought with high stakes. If he had been dealt with unjustly by the justice system, it would have had grave consequences for his societal standing. To stand up for Christian love and honesty was a daring feat when it had a connection to Jews. It is a lasting contribution on the part of Strack and of the mission among the Jews, for whom he was the leading exponent in Prussia, to have stood up on Christian principles against racism. The mission among Jews in Germany had to swim against an ever-stronger current of anti-Semitism, which in the end, washed away everything which stood in its path. This reached its climax in the extermination camps of the National Socialists.

{63} The result of Strack's influence on the mission among the Jews can not be measured by the dimensions of the dissemination of the Gospel among the Jews. That would be extremely modest considering the intellectual atmosphere of that time. More weight should be given to the fact that he set an example that a trusting relationship

¹⁷ Herr Adolf Stoecker, christliche Liebe und Wahrhaftigkeit, Karlsruhe und Leipzig, 1885.

between Christians and Jews could be created. Of most long-lasting value was his unfailing commitment to the Jews, threatened by anti-Semitism. If there had only been many more such people who drew this conclusion from the loving message of Jesus Christ!

Das Institutum Judaicum Berolinense in den ersten 30 Jahren seines Bestehens, Leipzig 1914.

{64} Gustav Dalman and Jewish Missions

Julia Mannchen

Julia Mannchen, Ph. D., has been Lecturer at the Ernst-Moritz-Arndt University in Greifswald since 1968. Her 1985 dissertation on Gustaf Dalman's ministry (1855-1902) was published in 1988, The second part of the biography was finalized by 1990. This article is translated from German by Kathy T, Ockels.

Gustaf Dalman (1855-1941) grew up in the tradition of the Moravian Brethren. He is well-known as the first director of the German Evangelical Institute of Antiquity in Jerusalem, a position he held from 1902 until 1917, and was a pioneering scholar of the culture, customs and languages in the land of Israel at the time of Jesus.

In his youth Dalman was exposed to the ideas of the mission among the Jews by his mother, who had been in contact with Isaak da Costa and Abraham Capadose¹ in Holland and throughout her life had shown a love and special understanding for the Old Testament and the Holy Land. The Brethren pursued mission among the Jews and established prayers for the Jews in their prayers of the Church.

As a high school student, Dalman began on his own to learn Hebrew and tried to translate New Testament texts into Hebrew. In retrospect, he felt that he had already been thinking about the mission among the Jews. Pastor Axenfeld; of the Cologne mission among the Jews, arranged for him to meet Franz Delitzsch in Leipzig in 1871. Delitzsch had been working on a Hebrew translation of the New Testament since 1864 and had felt called to the mission among the Jews since his years as a university student.

In 1871, various societies for mission among the Jews merged to form the Evangelisch-lutherischen Zentralverein für Mission unter Israel. In 1879, Franz Delitzsch, who played a key role in this merger and who also was one of its three directors, tried to use this capacity as a means to win Dalman over to service in the mission among Jews. Dalman, however, felt obliged to serve the Brethren which had financed his theological education, despite his inner calling to Jewish mission. The Brethren wanted Dalman's educational costs repaid by the Zentralverein if he were to be employed by it, and stated finally that Dalman was essential to their work.

In 1881, Dalman was appointed lecturer of Old Testament and practical theology at the Theological Seminary of the Brethren in Gnadenfeld. During the six years he taught there, increasingly greater differences arose

{65} between him and the director of the seminary as well as between him and the highest authority of the Brethren.

¹ Isaak da Costa, 1798-1860, Dutch scholar, writer and church politician converted to Christianity. The physician Abraham Capadose, 1795-1874, also converted to Christianity, in 1822.

In 1887 Dalman left the service of the Moravian Brethren and accepted an offer from Franz Delitzsch at the Institute of Jewish Studies in Leipzig, which had been founded by Delitzsch one year earlier. This institute was supposed to prepare young theologians for service in mission among the Jews and was financially dependent on donations. Dalman's employment as the third full-time teacher, after Jechiel Lichtenstein and Israel Kahan, was made possible because the Norwegian Mission to Israel, under the leadership of Carl Paul Caspari, undertook to pay the cost. As Director of Seminars and Professors of Old Testament at the University of Leipzig, Franz Delitzsch gave all of his lectures free of charge. In 1891, Dalman became a lecturer, though not on the salaried staff, at the University of Leipzig. He continued his work at the Institute of Jewish Studies until he left for Jerusalem in 1902 and, after Delitzsch's death, served as its director from 1890-1893. Dalman also occasionally spoke for Jewish audiences, for example in 1897 in London.

During his first trip to Palestine (1899-1900), which in part was supported by the Scottish and English missions among the Jews, he visited the mission stations and their institutions. The foci of his work lay in the area of theory, in the education of missionaries among the Jews, and in the theological basis of the mission among the Jews. In these, he continued the work that Franz Delitzsch had begun.

With his numerous publications concerning the problems of the mission among the Jews, he turned to the Christian community as a whole, because, in his opinion, the mission among the Jews was not only the concern of specific societies, but was instead a "Task of the Church" (as one of his speeches in 1888 was entitled) and the responsibility of every Christian. In addition, Dalman put great value on the education of missionaries among the Jews and did much in this area as an instructor at the Institute of Jewish Studies. His ideas and demands in this area were based on his understanding of the character and goals of the mission among the Jews.

The mission among Jews and that among gentiles go back, equally, to Jesus' command to proselytize. But according to Dalman, the mission among the Jews has a special significance because of the common roots of Judaism and Christianity. Judaism and Christianity are bound together by the Old Testament, but are also divided by their different understandings of it. Christians acknowledge, however, the truth of Old Testament revelation for the time of the Old Testament, thus one can speak of the "foundation of true cognizance of God"² among Jews, something that is not true of any heathen people. Yet, this closeness between Jews and Christians also makes it difficult to find a means of reaching Jews. They have a conscious resistance to the message of Christ. They still sustain themselves with the {66} revelation of God prior to

²"Heidenmission und Judenmission," Discourse by Prof. G. Dalman on the General Assembly of the Zentralverein in Leipzig, Pentecost 1902 (Ap. 1, 6-9), *Saat auf Hoffnung XXXIX*, 1902, p.137.

Christianity, whose "unique basis" they once were, but they have always rejected the full revelation of Christ.³

This fact must guide the direction of the mission's message. The message to Jews should therefore begin with the known and then "follow the Jewish understanding as closely as possible."⁴ But also the basic, fundamental and crucial difference between Christianity and Judaism must be taken into account. In Dalman's opinion, this difference comes not primarily from expectations of the Messiah, but from the fact that Christianity is the religion of righteousness through faith in God, whereas Judaism is the religion of righteousness through works. For this reason, the Jew, as all of mankind, is to be spoken of, before all else, as a sinner, "who needs the solution, but doesn't believe in the need for it."⁵ At the core of the mission's message must stand Christ, then the fact that in him was found the end of the laws of ceremony and tradition of the Old Testament. Also, the claim of the Jews to be guardians of the unadulterated knowledge of God must be repudiated and the strong coherence between Old and New Testament revelations must be emphasized.

Dalman believed an equally important function of the mission among Jews was to "eliminate the deep estrangement between synagogue and church."⁶ To this end, each side had to be better acquainted with the other. For the Jews it was more important than anything else for the joyous message of the Gospel to be available in Hebrew, the language of their holy scriptures. Franz Delitzsch's Hebrew New Testament has already been mentioned. Delitzsch died while working on the revisions for the 10th edition, which was then edited by Dalman, as were the following two editions. Dalman planned, in addition, a Hebrew New Testament with explanations in Yiddish, but only completed a corresponding commentary of the Gospel of Matthew. It appeared in 1893 in the magazine that Dalman had founded, *Brith-Am*. This magazine was in Yiddish, the language spoken by half of the world's Jewish population, especially by those in Eastern Europe. In addition to the proclamation of the Gospel, this magazine also published lectures and entertainment, in order to ease the entry of Jews into Christianity.

Dalman's demands on the missionaries among the Jews were also along these lines. They should know the languages of the Jews, namely Yiddish, Hebrew and Aramaic. They should possess knowledge of the Jewish religion and, equally so, knowledge of Christianity - especially information about the Old Testament and points of tangencies

³ Ibid., p.136.

⁴ G. Dalman, *Kurzgefasstes Handbuch der Mission unter Israel*, Berlin 1893, = Schriften des Institutum Judaicum in Berlin, Nr.18, p.28.

⁵ G. Dalman, *Die Vorbildung der Missionsarbeiter und das Institutum Delitzschianum*. Protokolle der in Köln a.Rh. vom 6. bis zum 9. X. 1900 abgehaltenen allgemeinen Missions-Konferenz für die Arbeit der evangelischen Kirche an Israel, Leipzig 1901. = Schriften des Institutum Judaicum in Berlin, Nr. 29, p.98

⁶ G. Dalman, General Assembly on Jewish Missions, Leipzig vom 6. bis 8. Juni 1895, *Die Ansprachen der Referenten und Bericht fiber den Verlauf der Konferenz*, Leipzig 1986, p.59.

between the Old and New {67} Testaments and between Christianity and Judaism. They should be well informed of the character and history of the practices of mission. Dalman himself held lectures and exercises at the Institute of Jewish Studies about the history of Judaism and its literature, Jewish teaching about Messiah and messianic prophecies, Talmud and Midrash and the theory and practices of mission among the Jews.

Above all, Dalman introduced a series of publications presenting rabbinic theology concerning the Jewish expectation of the Messiah and the Jewish laws concerning non-Jews,⁷ for which materials from diverse and sometimes extremely inaccessible sources were collected. He thereby showed the Church the way to a more sophisticated and deeper understanding of Judaism.

In the last third of the 19th Century, the German mission among the Jews saw itself confronted by two phenomena, which strongly influenced sectors of the public and which forced the representatives of the mission among the Jews to take a stand. The first of these was a new wave of anti-Semitism in Germany and in Eastern Europe. The second, not least as reaction to the first, was the rise of the Zionist movement. Dalman intervened in the debate with commitment and expertise. The trigger for the attack on the Jews was the industrial-economic crisis of 1873, which was made worse after 1875 by an international agricultural crisis. In a paper written by Otto Glagau in 1876 about the "Stock and Foundation Scandal in Berlin," the Jews were held responsible for the entire industrial development and its allegedly negative consequences. The historian Heinrich von Treitschke lamented the economic power of the Jews, which was responsible for the "despicable materialism" of that time.⁸

Jews found themselves exposed to violent accusations in the religious arena as well. Above all, this dealt with the attitude of Jews towards non-Jews and apostates, or those who had left Judaism. August Rohling, a Catholic priest and professor of Hebrew studies in Prague, attempted to prove in 1871 in his book *Der Talmudjude* that the Talmud sanctions the harm of non-Jews, that non-Jews were "dogs" to the Jews and that

⁷ G. Dalman, Das Verhältnis Israels zu den Heiden und Abtrünnigen nach dem traditionellen Gesetz, *Saat auf Hofnung* XXI, 1884, 124-150.

G. Dalman, Die Tötung Ungläubiger nach talmudisch-rabbinischem Recht. Quellenmassig dargestellt. = *Schriften des Institutum Judaicum* in Leipzig Nr. 6, Leipzig 1885.

G. Dalman, Judisches Fremdenrecht, antisemitische Polemik und jüdische Apologetik. *Kritische Blätter für Antisemiten und Juden.* = *Schriften des Institutum Judaicum* in Berlin Nr. 1. Karlsruhe - Leipzig 1886.

G. Dalman, "Der leidende und der sterbende Messias des Judentums," *Nathanael* 11, 1886, 97-110, 163-188.

G. Dalman, "Messias ben David, der "leidende" Messias der Rabbinen," *Nathanael* 111, 1887, 97-170.

G. Dalman, Der Leidende und der sterbende Messias der Synagoge im ersten nachchristlichen Jahrtausend. = *Schriften des Institutum Judaicum* XXX in Berlin, Nr. 4, Berlin 1888.

⁸ H. V. Treitschke, *Unsere Aussichten*, *Preussische Jahrbücher*, Bd. 44, Berlin 1897, p.570 ff.

he who sheds the blood of a non-Jew was offering a sacrifice to God. Rohling also maintained that the Jews slaughtered Christian children from time to time because they needed their blood for ritual purposes. Along the same lines, a paper was published in 1883 by Dr. Justus, *Judenspiegel oder 100 Neuenthullte, heutzutage noch geltende, den Verkehr mit den Christen betreffende Gesetze der Juden* (Reflection on Judaism or 100 Newly Revealed, Modern and Still-Valid Jewish Laws Affecting Christians.) Despite its clearly aggressive stance of anti-talmudism and its easily recognizable intention of discrimination against Jews, it was impossible for a layman to be sure just how many of the cited examples were correct and how exactly the Jewish texts were quoted. In his works about *Die Totung Unglaubiger nach talmudisch-rabbinischem Recht* (the Killing of Unbelievers According to Talmudic and Rabbinical {68} Law) and *Judisches Fremdenrecht, antisemitische Polemik und judische Apologetik* (Jewish Law affecting Non-Jews, Anti-Semitic Polemic and Jewish Apologia), Dalman occupied himself with a thorough and detailed refutation of the accusations made by Justus.⁹ These accusations were always supported with passages which; removed from their historical context, distorted and inaccurately quoted and with corresponding commentary; appeared as evidence of fanatic hatred of Christians. However, Dalman's replies were only comprehensible to those who were competent with the material and, thus, within the mission among the Jews, little further attention was paid to them.

The thoughts of Glagau, Trietschke and others, who positioned themselves against the supposed corrupting influences of the Jews on the economy and society, had a much broader effect. As was true of the mission among the Jews as a whole, Dalman did not remain unaffected. He saw danger in the Jews and feared ultimately a conversion of Christians by Jews through the large numbers of Jewish doctors, lawyers and publishers. In 1879, he designated as the task of all Christians, the consolation of the people of Israel and saw therein the goal of the mission among the Jews. In the ensuing time, the mission among the Jews became for him more and more a means of saving Christianity and limiting or, to be more accurate, pushing aside the influence of Jews in Germany. In his view, the Jews were unstable and materially oriented. He felt that they contemplated conversion to Christianity as a business transaction and saw the mission among the Jews as a supplier. Instead of this, he wished that a new spirit would come to the people of Israel and that they would humble themselves before God, instead of complaining about the supposed and real violence of their enemies.

The denigration of Christianity, especially of the person of Jesus, from the Jewish side, from which Jesus can, under the best of circumstances, be seen as an honest, well-meaning reformer and rabbinical pupil, finally caused Dalman to say, "You (the Jews) will never give us anything new. But you can take something from us - our Christ." If

⁹ Ibid.

that were to happen, "Germany would be judaized. Because of this, you German churches, to your defenses, to your attack!"¹⁰ The Jews in Germany reacted to the anti-Semitism with declarations of loyalty to the state, with appeals to the reason and sense of their opponents and with the correction of supposed errors.

A new wave of persecution against Jews in Russia followed the murder of Alexander II in 1881. This led to an increased immigration to Palestine as the ideas of Zionism found few supporters in Germany. The first immigrants {69} to Palestine were Jews from Russia and Romania. In Palestine the mission among the Jews, which was active in these countries, again came in contact with the Zionist movement. Dalman judged Zionism solely from the standpoint of mission among the Jews and, thus, was skeptical of it. He expected little from it with regard to missionary work. His doubts were of both a theological as well as a pragmatic nature. In the consciousness of the Jews towards their nationality, he often saw only an expression of their refusal to open themselves to the message of the Redeemer of Sins and to convert to Christianity. He also accused the Jews of taking into their own hands, through their return to Palestine, something that should only be the work of God. He rejected the right of Jews to Palestine "in the sense of human legality."¹¹ He repeatedly reported about the Jewish colonization of Palestine, but didn't give it much hope for success, due to the great political and economic difficulties involved.

The question of the importance of Israel as a people, as a nationality, played a role in a completely different context. This revolved around the question of whether a baptized Jew still belongs to his people and, thus, is still held accountable for devotional obligations, for example with regard to specific legal commandments, such as Shabbat and commandments concerning food, and whether one should strive to build Jewish Christian congregations from this starting point.

This route was taken in Kischinev, where the baptized Jew, Rabinowitz, expected his congregation to remain as Jewish as possible. Dalman defended this point of view with the example of the practices of Jesus and the apostles, who never urged the Jews to give up their national aspirations or laws. The mission should link the thoughts of Jewish believers to their conversion and sharply repudiate the emphasis on national elements and superficial bodies of law. *Eduth le-Israel*, the first Christian magazine in Hebrew, was launched by Dalman with the following words, "That one must not cease to be a Jew when one becomes a Christian, that the Messianic Jew is even more a true Israelite, this is proclaimed from every page of the new magazine."¹²

¹⁰ G. Dalman., ' Die Judenmission- ein Werk der Kirche " Discourse on the General Assembly of the Zentralverein, Saat auf Hooffnung XXXVI, 1989, P10.

¹¹ G. Dalman, "Die judische Kolonisation in Palastina," Nathanael IX, 1893, XXX P.129 ff.

¹² G. Dalman, "Eduth le-Israel, die erste christliche Zeitschrift in Hebraischer Sprache," Saat auf Hoffnung XXV, 1888 XX, P. 59-64

When, however, this ideal was energetically and completely supported by the Zentralverein after Delitzsch's death in 1890, Dalman opposed it with equal energy and stated that, as in the context of the Zionist movement, the Jewish nationality is defined through an anti-Christian trend and will stand or fall with that idea. "Anyone from the people of Israel who becomes a Christian will not do so without disapproving the preceding history of his people." ¹³

{70} Quite a few of Dalman's opinions and comments about mission among Jews today seem shocking, and one cannot read them without thinking where such thoughts finally led: to the organized extermination of Jews in the Third Reich in Auschwitz. And the fact that Dalman found himself in agreement with the overwhelming majority of his contemporaries causes us to ask even more urgently about the reasons for such an attitude. The continuing emancipation of Jews in Europe in the 19th century was accompanied by increasing assimilation into the Christian culture and growing liberalization in the religious arena. This had its repercussions - not the least of which were in the press - on cultural and social life. The Church saw in this the strengthening of a trend that already existed in their own ranks and, not totally without reason, felt threatened. Dalman also recognized that these trends within Judaism were in harmony with liberal movements on the Christian side. ¹⁴

But just as the Jews can not be made responsible, as Jews, for the economic problems only because they held powerful positions in industry and finance, so they cannot be blamed for the increasing rejection of Christianity. It was much more an event unique to the time, and both Church and synagogue found themselves confronted by the phenomenon of religious liberalization after the Enlightenment. The Church, however, did not only fight for its own position, but at the same time fought for the continued existence of the Christian state. Against the backdrop of this idea, the Jews posed a real threat, which one either tried to counter with administrative measures or, as the mission among the Jews did, with the conversion of Jews-in other words, through their absorption.

In all fairness, one should not reproach Dalman for not seeing further than his contemporaries. His lasting importance within the mission to the Jews, was that he tried to create dialogue between church and synagogue, Christianity and Judaism, and named the task of working with Judaism as the duty of the whole church. With the Hebrew New Testament and the Yiddish magazine, *Brith-Am*, he brought Christianity closer to the Jews. With his work about Jewish laws concerning non-Jews and Jewish messianic ideas, he made Judaism more comprehensible to the Church. His interest was always the conversion of Jews. But he also established the precondition that Judaism be

¹³ G. Dalman, "Die Aufgabe der Judenmission," Nathanael VI, 1890, P. 71.

¹⁴ G. Dalman, "Christentum und Judentum, Nathanael XIV, 1898, P. 117.

taken seriously as a partner in dialogue, from which the church could also benefit, and that Christianity and Judaism again consider their commonalities.

Through his appointment to Jerusalem in 1902, an entirely new field of work opened to Dalman - the exploration of the Holy Land, its archaeology, its connection to the Bible and, not least, the way of life of its inhabitants, which Dalman was able to express in his most important work *Work and Traditions in Palestine*.¹⁵ His first studies in this field date from the time before 1902, when a grant from the University of Leipzig made possible his first trip to Palestine. That he was able to extend his stay there to 15 {71} months (from March 1899 until June 1900) was due to friends from the Scottish and English mission among the Jews in Constantinople, Smyrna, Safed and, above all, Aleppo. He lived in Aleppo for 7 months with the missionary of the Free Scottish Church, who had also studied at the Institutum Delitzschianum in Leipzig.¹⁶ Dalman also travelled during this time as a missionary among the Jews in the Holy Land. He visited the mission stations and reported about the distinctive features of the individual congregations, the missionary work achieved there, their successes and prospects of success and about institutions such as hospitals, schools and workshops. He also preached.

When he took on his post in Jerusalem in 1902, the theme of mission among the Jews faded in importance and did not play a role in either lectures or publications. When war broke out in the summer of 1914, Dalman was staying in Germany and, as it was for the time being impossible to continue to direct the institute in Jerusalem, he did not return to Palestine. He did follow with great attention the development of events in the Middle East. Above all, he was concerned about the present and future fate of Palestine and the role that, on the one hand, the major powers and, on the other, the Jews, would play after the end of the war. Dalman had, from the outset, viewed Zionism with scepticism and expected little benefit from it regarding missionary work. Now, he observed with growing concern the immigration of Jews to Palestine. He was critical of the fact that many of the newcomers had broken away from the Law or from the religion as a whole, while others maintained a very orthodox piety.¹⁷ Above all else, he mourned the associated invasion of European civilization that would alienate the Holy Land from its past.¹⁸ It was the duty of Palestine to be the "monument, witness and story-teller of the holy history"¹⁹ and a Jewish Palestine would have to serve this purpose, just as have all other inhabitants of this land. Dalman conceded that the Jews had a special relationship to this land, the land of their forefathers. But only when Jesus, the "only Palestinian of

¹⁵ *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*, Vol. I-VI, Gutersloh 1928-1939

¹⁶ *Die Religionswissenschaft in Selbstdarstellungen*, Vol. IV, Leipzig 1928, 12

¹⁷ "Die Juden im heitigen Palästina, was sie wollen und sollen," *Saat auf Hoffnung* 54, 1917, Pp 11.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 30.

¹⁹ "Die Juden in Palästina und die Zukunft des Landes," *Palästina-Jahrbuch* 13, 1917, 51.

world-wide importance," was accepted by them could Palestine become a true homeland and center for them.²⁰

Dalman was called to Greifswald in 1917 to direct the Institute of Palestinology. In addition to regional studies and archaeology, he endeavored to integrate Judaic studies as an essential component of theological studies for future pastors.

²⁰ Die Juden im heutigen Palastina, 31.

{74} The History of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance

Harcourt Samuel

Harcourt Samuel, O.B.E., is General Secretary of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance since 1931. Pastor of Ramsgate Baptist Church, 1934-49 and of Birchington Baptist Church, 1951-78.

The International Hebrew Christian Alliance was formed in London September 8th, 1925, at a conference attended by Jewish believers from eighteen different countries. In no sense were they delegates, nor did they come with any preconceived ideas: they simply wanted to express their unity as Christians within the Jewish people and to seek to know what God would have them do on a day of great significance and opportunity.

There had long been a desire for something like the Alliance. A Hebrew Christian Association, *Beni Abraham*, had been formed in London as early as 1813 (with forty-one members). It was followed in 1835 by the Episcopal Jews Chapel Abrahamic Society. The Hebrew Christian Alliance of Great Britain dates back to 1866. An American Hebrew Christian Association was formed in New York in 1855, but we have no record of its history. A Conference was held in Mountain Lake Park in 1903 and the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America came into existence in 1915. All these alliances had positive relations with one or another of the established churches. Quite different was the Israelites of the New Covenant, which grew up in Kishinev and surrounding Bessarabia around 1885, under the leadership of Joseph Rabinovitz. This group had no links with any of the churches, and, though not using the term, was actually the first Messianic Synagogue. None of the above groups maintained formal relations between them.

The early years of the present century saw considerable discussion as to the relationship between Jewish believers and the Christian Church. The matter was raised in a number of magazines and debated at several missionary conferences. Opinions were divided. Some, misinterpreting Paul's teaching in Galatians that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female, for all are one in Christ Jesus," maintained that Jews who accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord must be no different from fellow believers of Gentile origin. Others called for liberty to observe the Jewish customs - including circumcision - "provided that it was clearly understood that neither Jew nor Gentile can be saved through the works of the Law, but solely through the sacrifice and atonement of Jesus Christ, our {75} Lord and Savior." One distinguished Hebraist, Canon G. H. Box, went further. He urged there should be "a homogenous Hebrew Christian Church, centering round a liturgy informed with a certain adaptation to the national and historic Jewish spirit."

Then came the First World War. The abolishment of the Pale of Settlement within which some 6,000,000 Jews were virtually confined, and the opening of the ghettos, resulted in

a great turning away from traditional thought and ways. Some turned to Communism, some to nominal Christianity, and some found true faith in Christ.

The numbers of Jews turning to Christ was increasing and much thought was given to the question of how to meet the challenges afforded by the situation. Should not something be done to guide and help new believers and their witness? The thought of a Conference to which Hebrew Christians from all over the world should be invited originated in America. One of those who urged it was Mark John Levy, a Londoner by birth and a citizen of the U.S.A. by naturalization, who had long been an advocate of what were sometimes called Ebionite views. Not many in the American Alliance agreed with his views, but they asked him to travel to London and to suggest to the British Alliance that it should undertake the calling of such a Conference in London. This suggestion was warmly received and a Committee was set up to implement it. The present writer, though quite a young man, was asked to assist his father as Assistant Secretary. Preparatory work took two or three years and, in March 1925, an invitation was sent out to all known individual believers and groups. Replies were prompt and enthusiastic and, when the Conference met in September of that year, participants had come from eighteen different countries. Few had met before, but all rejoiced in the fellowship. The founding unanimous resolution stated:

That we, Hebrew Christians from different parts of the world, standing for the Evangelical Faith, now met in Conference, reaffirming our living faith in the Lord Jesus as our Messiah, and our oneness in Him, and do hereby declare that we now form ourselves into an International Hebrew Christian Alliance.

Two decisions were made immediately: The newly formed International Alliance would consist of affiliated national Alliances, and there would be no direct membership of the I.H.C.A. Only two national Alliances then existed: One in Great Britain (founded in 1866) and one in America (founded 1915), but others were quickly formed. By the time a second International Conference was held in 1928, there were twelve, and, when the Second World War broke out in 1939, there were eighteen.

Sir Leon Levison's election as President was unexpected but quite unanimous. Living far from London, he had not till then been a member of the British Alliance whose principal activities were in the capital. No better choice could have been made. Sir Leon was the son of a well-known Rabbi at Safad, {76} who, after his baptism, became Superintendent of the Edinburgh Jewish Medical Mission. After the 1914-1918 war he was knighted for political and economic services but continued faithfully with his missionary work. He had wide contacts and, for the next eleven years, worked whole-heartedly for the Alliance. His efforts largely accounted for its growth, and he was sorely missed when he died in 1936 at the early age of 55.

The early years of the new Alliance were taken up with consideration of the desirability of forming a Hebrew Christian Church. There were discussions at two International Conferences (in 1931 and 1934) and a special Committee set up to prepare a report.

Opinion was generally in favor of a united Hebrew Christian Church, though it was emphasized that care must be taken that it should not be just another denomination or sect. A possible Constitution was drawn up and shown to ecclesiologists in Anglican and Presbyterian churches, but a careful review suggested that such a step was neither practicable nor desirable. Finally, at a later Conference in Budapest it was resolved:

That this Conference requests its Executive to take no further steps for the founding of a Hebrew Christian Church, but that it extend its full and whole-hearted sympathy and encouragement to all Hebrew Christian Churches now in existence or that shall later be formed in which the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached in a manner consistent with the doctrinal basis of the Alliance, and where all things are done decently and in order, to the glory of God.

The rising tide of anti-Semitism, an ever-present anxiety throughout the years, came to a flood with Hitler's accession to power in Germany and the passing of the Nuremberg laws. Organizations were quickly set up to help Jewish sufferers. The Alliance felt a special responsibility for Hebrew Christians and, through the gifts of many Gentile friends, was able to assist scores to leave Germany and settle in Britain and in other lands. The outbreak of war put a stop to the rescue work and left the Alliance with a large family of refugees for whose maintenance it had accepted responsibility. The British Government recognized the problem, undertook to make a contribution equal to half the necessary expenditure, and continued to contribute until the war was over.

Inevitably, the war broke all communications between the Alliance Headquarters in London and Alliances on the Continent. When hostilities were over, most of these had ceased to exist. Some have since been restarted, but there are now only four in Europe, alongside a number of Alliances in other lands.

{77} Not long afterwards, a fresh concern arose: Immigration to Palestine from lands overrun by Hitler. During the war, the Alliance could do nothing to help. Nor was it free from 1945, during the troubled days that led up to the termination of the Mandate and the coming into being of the State of Israel. In the mass immigration that followed it was soon revealed that there were many Hebrew Christians glad to leave the lands of their dispersion and settle in Eretz Israel. Many of these needed help to rebuild their lives. The Alliance, assisted by interested Christian friends, provided help to the utmost of its ability.

At the termination of the Mandate there was considerable nervousness as to the effect expected hostilities would have upon Hebrew Christians. A number of expatriate missionaries were preparing to leave the country and the United Nations Commission for Refugees asked if the Alliance could receive Hebrew Christians who wished to do likewise. Application was made to the British Government for permission for any such to come to Britain, which permission was granted. About one hundred immigrated and reception arrangements were hurriedly made. When it became clear that there was no real danger, most returned.

Many Hebrew Christians among the immigrants to the newly established State of Israel were only too thankful to leave Europe. Most of these had come to faith through the Missionary Societies that had worked in the countries before the War. Where those Societies had work in Israel, immigrants naturally joined in the worship to which they were accustomed and in a language which they understood. Slowly it became possible to hold services in Hebrew. The Hebrew Christian Alliance of Palestine had ceased to exist, but the I.H.C.A. considered itself responsible to help, spiritually and materially, as far as possible. A small Advisory Committee was set up and a Dutch Hebrew Christian appointed as Secretary in Israel. He endeavored to revive a national Alliance, but in the very difficult circumstances it was not practicable, so he returned to Holland. His vacancy was filled by a succession of Hebrew Christians from other lands, two of whom were Israeli. They were asked to serve their brethren in every possible way, but to make no attempt to found a national Alliance. It was strongly felt that such an Alliance should not be initiated by the International Headquarters, but, as in every other country, be the spontaneous desire of those living in Israel. Very recently, such an Alliance has come into being, and it is hoped that it will later seek affiliation with the I.H.C.A.

{78} For the greater length of time (since 1866 in Britain and since 1915 in the USA), members of the Alliance have found their spiritual home in what we may call traditional Churches. This was inevitable because it was through *their ministry that they came to faith in Christ. Churches have thus been* reminded that, in one Church of Jesus Christ, Jew and Gentile are one and that all are Abraham's seed (Gal. 3: 28-29). In that unity, Jewish believers have contributed much. Some have made outstanding contributions, as for example, Michael Solomon Alexander, first Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem; Auguste Neander, Church historian; and Alfred Edersheim, author of *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (the first Hebrew Christian to preach in Westminster Abbey). Unhappily, all too often there has been a tendency to assimilation. Hebrew Christians and their children have often lost all relationship with the Jewish people.

During the last twenty years, increasing numbers of Jews, particularly in North America, have been finding their way to faith, while being keen to identify more closely with Jewish culture. As a result, Jewish Christian congregations, often called synagogues, have been founded. Most of these prefer the term "Messianic Jewish" to "Hebrew Christian." There are perhaps eighty or ninety such in the USA, affiliated in three unions. All are strongly Jewish, yet terminology, wearing of yarmulkas, liturgy, etc. vary greatly. Some are as much influenced by charismatic worship, as by things Jewish, others much less so. They have often attracted other than Jews, so that it is impossible to say how many Jewish believers there are, possibly as many as 20,000. Similar congregations have been set up in other countries including South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. In England there is only one congregation, in London, but small groups are beginning to meet in other parts of the country. Europe does not yet seem to have been influenced.

There has also been considerable growth in Congregations in Israel. Only a few years ago, the only churches in the country were missionary churches. Now there are approximately thirty Messianic assemblies, small and large, all worshipping in Hebrew. The older generation is passing to its rest and reward and the majority of believers were born in the land. Origins differ, as do styles of worship, for the congregations are truly independent, but they are drawing together in a real fellowship. The number of Jewish believers is growing through immigration, as families are nurtured in the faith, and through evangelistic outreach. Slowly, but surely, the population is learning to recognise them as part of the Jewish community. An entry in the standard Hebrew dictionary, *Even Shoshan* reads:

Yehudim Meshichi'im - a description in our day for a sect of Jews that have declared themselves Jewish in their nationality and in their allegiance to the State of Israel, and Christian in their religion.

Whether in Israel, America, or anywhere else in the world, Messianic Assemblies need to recognize that they are part of the one Church of Christ, {79} and find some way to work out that relationship. Some may think that there is a fundamental conflict between Hebrew Christians, who are loyal members of various Churches and those in Messianic Assemblies, but this is not so, certainly not within the Alliance. From its beginning, the Alliance has been a fellowship of individual believers. It had chosen not to establish a Hebrew Christian Church, and resolved that when individual congregations came into existence, it would encourage them. This remains the policy. The Alliance desires to be a link between all Jewish believers, however they worship and serve. All that is required is an acceptance of a simple statement of faith. Regretfully, only a small percentage of Jewish believers have become members.

At the present time there are thirteen affiliated Alliances, one in Britain, four in Europe, two in North America, three in South America, and one each in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The Iranian Alliance ceased to exist.

None of the founders of the first of the Alliances in 1866, or those who broadened it out into the International Hebrew Christian Alliance in 1925, could have foreseen the changes that lay ahead or the tasks which would confront their successors. Nor can we look ahead and see what lies before us in a rapidly changing world, but we are confident that the Alliance was raised up within God's purpose and used by Him in ways unforeseen. Whatever changes there may come in Israel and in the world, there will be work to do and strength to do it, through a body which unites Jewish believers in fellowship and witness.