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# "The Missionary Problem"

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A Reply to "The Jewish  
Comment"

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By  
Philip Sidersky

The Yiddish  
Evangelist

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Baltimore, Maryland  
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## “ The Missionary Problem.”

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A very lengthy article, occupying more than two pages in space and with large head-lines on its first page, entitled “The Missionary Problem,” appeared in a recent issue of the *Jewish Comment*, one of the leading Jewish weekly papers in America.

The very fact that a prominent Jewish paper should give so much of its valuable space to discuss such a subject—“The Missionary Problem”—is in itself a proof that some of the leaders of Judaism are realizing that the activities of Christian Missions to the Jews are making a great inroad among the Jews of this country, and that it is impossible for them to ignore it altogether. That Christianity has been and is plucking some of the flowers of Judaism is being proven without a doubt.

In reading over that lengthy and conspicuous article I notice that it does not contain any defence of Judaism against

Christ, either Biblical or National, but it merely contains many misconstrued statements about Missions to the Jews and Hebrew Christians in general.

The writer of that article seems to have spent some time to gather his careless statements at England, from where he claims to have recently hailed.

In the first place, he seems to be greatly concerned about the great activity of the Church of England in spending a great deal of money in their efforts to give the Gospel to the Jews, but leaves out the fact that the Episcopal Church has been blessed with three of its Bishops as *Hebrew Christians*, and many prominent clergymen and professors in that Church came from the Jewish fold. On the other hand, the Jewish writer of that article seems to overlook the fact that thousands of dollars are spent by wealthy Jews in this country by building very elegant Synagogues, paying very large sums to Rabbis and fine choirs (and in some instances hiring Gentile singers), and how many Jewish *men* do we find there at an ordinary service on Saturday

mornings (the Jewish Sabbaths)? No true Christian would take this up as a leading argument against the Jews, and I simply bring this up to call the attention of the *Jewish Comment* to the old saying: "He that lives in a glass house shall not throw a stone."

Secondly, that article seems to criticize some of the methods used in the efforts to reach the Jews with the Gospel. Every true Christian admits that the Christian Church is not up to perfection, but are all the methods in the modern Synagogue perfect? Are there not many Jews to-day who are not in sympathy with some of the methods in the modern Synagogue?

Thirdly, I am very sorry to see the very bitter spirit shown in that article towards those Jews who have been led to follow the dictates of their consciences by accepting and endeavoring to follow the teachings of Jesus, which were predicted in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament.

The Jewish people should be the last to allow prejudice to be a hindrance to

their religious advancement, because they have themselves suffered greatly through the prejudices of other races and religions.

The New Testament was written by Jews. This fact should make the Jews anxious to read the New Testament for themselves, and not take their information second-hand.

The writer in that lengthy article on the "Missionary Problem" says: "The Meshumed (renegade, Jewish name for a Jew who follows the dictates of his conscience by accepting the life and teachings of Jesus) is a standing disgrace, which the church militant has imposed on the Jewish people." I will call the attention of the writer of that sentence to the following item, which is taken from the New York Times of August 13th, 1909:

"Emma Goldman cast anathemas at the Police Department, at all Governments, at all religions, at militarism, at those who oppose strikes, at Philistines, and at self-satisfied members of the middle class, at Kings, and at Presidents, at

the postponed Anarchist meeting which took place at Terrace Lyceum, 206 East Broadway, last night. Seldom has this leader of the anarchistic forces expressed herself so volubly.

“It was also stated that Commissioner Baker had asked what Miss Goldman intended to say upon this occasion. This information was not vouchsafed to him, but he was assured that Miss Goldman would be perfectly willing to personally take the consequences of anything she said. So that she might live up to this she spoke in English in order that the policemen in the back of the room could have their ears easily burned, in spite of the fact that many of those present only understood Yiddish.”

The question arises: Why does not the *Jewish Comment* give some of its space to attack Emma Goldman, who is misleading many Jews, and who is the only *real* disgrace to the Jews in America? Last year Emma Goldman spoke in Baltimore to over one thousand Jews in the Yiddish language. A great portion of her audience was composed of

recently arrived Jews from Europe, into whose minds she has inculcated very dangerous ideas. The Chief of Police of Baltimore tried his best to stop that meeting, but could not find a law in existence to help him out. Then why did not the *Jewish Comment*, which is published in Baltimore, work up a petition against her speaking in Baltimore, the way it did in trying to stop me from preaching the Gospel to the Jews in the open air, by devoting a great deal of space in agitation against my preaching the Gospel of peace and love towards all men?

The very bitter attitude of some of the Jewish leaders towards us, because we have accepted Jesus, confirms us in our faith, for we find in Luke 21:17, the words of our Saviour: "And ye shall be hated for My name's sake."

But it is very blessed to realize that the Gospel is a power to every one that believes it, and it is also very blessed to realize that as we study history we find that hundreds of Hebrew Christians have notably preached, convincingly

taught and earnestly written, on behalf of the faith "once delivered to the saints" during the last one hundred years, and among some of them we may refer to the yeoman service in the cause of Christ which has been rendered by Hebrew Christians, who have dedicated their knowledge of foreign tongues to the work of translating the Scriptures into other languages, or else of opening up the treasures of the Word of God through commentaries. In this, Hebrew Christians have been zealous to use their powerful pens as ready writers, as the following names testify:

Dr. Habershon; Dr. Alfred Eder-  
sheim, Grinfield Lecturer on the LXX in  
• the University of Oxford, and author of  
works of world-wide fame, such as  
"The Temple, its Ministry and Ser-  
vices;" "The History of the Jewish  
Nation;" and "Life and Times of Jesus  
the Messiah," the latter of which has  
passed through eight editions; Dr.  
Adolph Saphir, a man like Apollos,  
"mighty in the Scriptures;" Paul Isaac  
Hershon, Dr. C. H. A. Kalker, Dr. Leit-

ner, Professor Caspari, the Danish Theologian; Professor Th. Benfey, Professor Heydemann, Dr. H. Crosby of New York, Lichtenstein of Budapest, and Rabinowitz of Kischineff, whose writings have influenced many thousands of Russian Jews; Rabbi Schwartzenburg, Dr. Veit of Austria, Dr. Capadose of Amsterdam, physician, statesman and divine; Dr. Moses Margoliouth of the British Museum, and J. H. Bienthal, the great Biblical commentator.

Various Bible Societies are indebted for the translations of the Scriptures to the labours of Hebrew Christians, such as Aaron Bernstein, G. H. Handler, Isaac Salkinson, James Adler, Marcus Bergman, Herschonshon, and C. D. Ginsburg. The last named is the author of possibly the greatest Biblical work of the age—"Massoreth ha Massorah"—in three folio volumes, a work considered so valuable that Queen Victoria allowed one of her own special messengers, as a safety, to take the MS. to the printers in Vienna. It was said of him at the time of the Revision of the Bible in 1881, that he was

the soul of the "Revisers." The Rev. Professor David Margoliouth, whose marvelous intellect has ever been used in the cause of the "faith once delivered to the saints;" his successes at Oxford University have never been approached by any other man. In 1878 he was both Hertford and Ireland scholar; the following year saw him gain the Gaisford Prize, as well as becoming Pusey and Ellerton scholar. In 1880 he won the Houghton Syriac Prize; the next year he was made Boden Sanscrit scholar; winning also the Craven scholarship. Two years later he was Kennicott Hebrew scholar and Derby scholar. In 1887 he gained the Senior Kennicott. At last the University offered him \$1,000.00 (One Thousand Dollars) as a special honor, a sum of money which he devoted to a visit to Arabia, in order to gain a knowledge of colloquial Arabic. Today he is Laudian Professor of Arabic.

Another Hebrew Christian—one of the heroes of the last century—was Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky, Bishop of Shanghai in the American Episcopal Church, who died October 15, 1906. His labors in translation work were truly "more abundant." He translated the whole Bible into Mandarin, the language of the people, which version is

used by the American and British and Foreign Bible Society. He also made a translation of the whole of the Scriptures into Wenli, the classical language of China, so that some three hundred millions of the Chinese nation have the Word of God today in a "language understood of the people."

Great Missionary heroism was exhibited by a Hebrew Christian, Rev. Albert J. Nathan, who died on the 7th of September, 1909. Mr. Nathan, the great missionary, was well known through his connection with the rescue of Ellen Stone, who was held by Macedonian bandits, at the risk of his own life.

Nor has it been only in the cause of Biblical truth that the Christian Jew has proved himself a power, as the following names show in the school of historical research:

George Ebers, whose history of Egypt was in his day the greatest work that had then appeared, and is still used as a mine for more modern writers to dip into for accurate information, Dr. Samuel A. Binnon, whose two elaborate folio volumes on "Ancient Egypt, or Mizraim," are masterpieces on the art and archaeology of that wonderful land: he was an Italian Jew, of whom it was stated that he knew over sixty languages.

Isaac de Costa, Professor P. Jaffe, and many other Hebrew Christians have also enriched the world by their historical writings.

We might also mention the name of Blowitz, the late Correspondent of the London Times in Paris, a diplomat of the first order, who averted war in 1875 between France and Germany, and later on brought about peace between the two countries, by *not* writing what he *knew* and might have done. Also Baron Reuter, the pioneer of telegraphic news agencies; and Felix Mendelssohn, the great musical composer, and many others who are an honor to the Jewish race and a blessing to the Christian Church.

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Gospel literature for the Jews in the Yiddish, Hebrew, and English, can be had from Philip Sidersky, 300 North Eden street, Baltimore, Md.

The expenses for printing this Gospel literature for the Jews is not provided by any of the Denominational Mission Boards, but by voluntary contributions from Christians of all denominations, therefore any one who is interested in helping to spread the Gospel among the Jews can have some share in helping towards the expenses of printing Gospel literature for the Jews.