

“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

Copyright © 1894

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

THE LORD’S LEADINGS IN MISSION WORK AMONG THE JEWS

THE work of Jewish conversion is *God’s work*, not *ours*; only *ours* because *His*. Every worker in soul-winning should bear in mind that the work is the Lord’s, and that we do not do God’s work for Him, but that He does His work through us.

It is necessary that the instrument be absolutely surrendered to the will of the Divine Worker. There must be prompt, cheerful, unquestioning obedience to the clearly ascertained will of Him we call Master and Lord. The Christian is not his own; he is the property of another, and can honestly dispose of what he is and has, only according to the Owner’s pleasure.

If we allow the Lord to do what He pleases with us and by us, we shall get the greatest blessing, and He will get the greatest glory; and He will bear all the expenses of His own work. If a master send a servant to a shop for a shilling’s worth of anything, he will make himself responsible for the shilling; and shall it be thought for a moment that God will not pay for all work He acknowledges as His? Assuredly He will. But if the servant should go to shop without the master’s order, it is no surprise that he goes without the master’s shilling.

Is there no work *called* God’s work that is not His but only ours? Are there no worldly, and even sinful, modes adopted in getting money for work professedly God’s, and from which a holy God is obliged to withhold His blessing? Where there is life there is growth, and the growing needs of the Lord’s work will be provided by the Lord of the work.

All doctrinal, practical and experimental religion, to be worth anything, must be based on the Holy Scriptures.

- The doctrines we believe must be taught in the Book.
- The work we do must be commanded in the Book.
- The experience we attain to must be warranted by the Book.

The Book from the Lord of the Book must be everything to us. Let us then glance at God’s Word as the warrant for God’s work among the Jews.

“Preach the Gospel to every creature.”

The Jew must have the Gospel preached to him, “**whether he will hear or whether he will forbear,**” unless we dare to be knowingly disloyal to our Lord. Some say, “Yes, that is all very well, but the Jews won’t listen, they are so hard, so blind; it seems no use preaching to them.” God says, “**There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him; for whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved**” (Romans 10:12, 13).

God says, absolutely “**there is no difference.**”

The Christian Church has made a difference and is reaping the result. A very practical lesson immediately follows:—“**How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed; and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard; and how shall they hear without a preacher; and how shall they preach except they be sent.**”

The Church must send men to preach to Jew and Gentile; that Jew and Gentile may hear; that hearing, they may believe; and that believing, they may call upon, or confess the name of the Lord to salvation. There is with God no difference. Further, the Gospel was to be preached “**to the Jew first,**” and then to the Gentile. If we accompany Paul in all his journeys we shall find he never entered town or city but he sought out the synagogue and preached the Gospel first to the Jews, although he gloried in being the apostle to the Gentiles.

In precept we have apostolic doctrine— “**first to the Jew,**” and in practice we have apostolic precedent— “**first to the Jew.**” Paul preached and practiced this Divine order. Why should not we do the same?

There is much to encourage the observance of this order.

The Jews are in all lands, have access to all people; are familiar with all languages: are acclimatized to all countries; they believe three-fourths of our Bible; they are waiting for a Messiah; they believe in the one true God; hence how much there is to encourage effort for their conversion—loving, prayerful effort, that would redress the wrongs of ages, show gratitude for the priceless blessings received from them, and secure in them glorious auxiliaries in spreading the Gospel throughout the world.

The Jews have made, by Divine grace, illustrious men of God. One Old Testament convert said, “**I will speak of Thy testimonies also before kings and will not be ashamed.**” This was not idle boasting, for on another occasion the same Jew said, “**With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Thy mouth.**”

We have not only Scripture warrant, but much to encourage work for the Lord amongst the Jews.

Some think that this work is very discouraging, if not hopeless. But is there no connection between the hostility of the Jews to Christ and the cruel treatment they have received for ages from so-called Christians?

All the Christianity the Jews have seen for ages has been idolatry; and all they have felt has been cruelty. No wonder they have been prejudiced. After centuries of cruelty with its natural results, and which has not yet ceased, we have had a few years of kindness shown to a very limited extent, but yet with most encouraging results.

Many thousands of Jews now believe in and confess Christ. Hundreds preach His Gospel. Tens of thousands of Jews are now reading the New Testament, and are becoming better acquainted with its contents than are many Gentiles. True, they may not always read it from the purest of motives; some, however, have been converted while reading it only to oppose its claim to Divine authenticity.

A few years ago, blasphemy against Christ and of His mission was largely prevalent among the Jews; now they are speaking and writing in the most respectful terms of Jesus of Nazareth.

A distinguished Jew has spoken and published the following beautiful and eloquent sentiments:—

“It has been said, and with some commendations on what was called my liberality, that I did not in this discourse, on its first delivery, term Jesus of Nazareth an impostor— I have never considered Him such. The impostor generally aims at temporal power, attempts to subsidize the rich and weak believer, and draws around him followers of influence whom he can control. Jesus was free from fanaticism: His was a quiet, subdued, retiring faith; He mingled with the poor, communed with the wretched, avoided the rich, and rebuked the vainglorious. In the calm of the evening He sought shelter in the secluded groves of Olivet, or wandered pensively on the shores of Galilee. He sincerely believed in His mission. He courted no one, flattered no one; in His political denunciations He was pointed and severe; in His religion calm and subdued. These are not characteristics of an impostor; but, admitting that we give a different interpretation to His mission, when 150,000,000 believe in His Divinity, and we see around us abundant evidences of the happiness, good faith, mild government, and liberal feelings which spring from His religion, what right has anyone to call Him an impostor? That religion which is calculated to make mankind great and happy cannot be a false one.”

Another Jew, a distinguished Rabbi, speaking of Jesus of Nazareth, says:—

“We are far from reviling His character, or deriding His precepts, which are indeed, for the most part, the precepts of Moses and the prophets. You have heard me style Him the ‘*Great Teacher of Nazareth*,’ for that designation I and the Jews take to be His due. No enlightened Jew can or will deny that the doctrines taught in His name have been the means of reclaiming the most important portions of the civilized world from gross idolatry, and of making the revealed Word of God known to nations, of whose very existence the men who sentenced Him were ignorant.”

Sympathy manifested by Christians with the suffering Jews, in Russia, has had a wonderful effect on Jewish minds, and induced numbers to listen to the Gospel.

But now let us speak of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews.

There are other missions to the Jews as the London Society; British Society; Presbyterian Societies of England, of Scotland, and of Ireland; smaller Societies in Germany, France, Sweden, Sydney, and in the United States of America. This Mildmay Mission is a Mission, not a Society. It has no Committee or travelling Secretaries. It does not advertise for funds. Its agents simply testify to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ, in obedience to Him we call Lord, looking to the Lord to move the hearts of His people to send in voluntary offerings all the money needed to carry on the Lord's work. Let me give the reader a little personal history, and then a history of the origin and growth of this mission.

Personal

I was awakened to a sense of my danger and need of salvation in the year 1838, but did not definitely trust Christ till 1839. I united with others in carrying on cottage prayer meetings; was then called to engage in lay preaching, and invited to devote myself to the Christian ministry. To this last request I gave a decided no, under a deep sense of unfitness. But I continually told the Lord that I would do anything or go anywhere at His plain call.

In 1851 a friend in conversation incidentally mentioned a mission to the Jews, and asked my thoughts about it. I simply replied, "I know nothing about the Jews, but would gladly go if God called, for I like difficulties when grace is promised to overcome them, for facing and overcoming difficulties gives strength to character, and the Jewish field must be one of the most difficult."

I parted from my friend intending to think no farther about the topic of our conversation. The impression followed, which deepened day by day, "*That's your sphere.*" I prayed much about it, but had no peace till I offered myself and was accepted as a missionary student by a Jewish Missionary Society. My three years' course of study in Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Greek, Latin, logic, and theology, together with my subsequent service in Israel's cause, have tended to confirm the above impression, "*That's your sphere.*"

After twenty-five years' connection with the Society, preaching Christ to Jews, and truth about the Jews to Christians of all evangelical denominations, travelling ten thousand miles a year during twenty-two years, I began to feel that much more ought to be done than was done in direct evangelistic work among the Jews. Not permitted to carry out the plans I proposed, the Lord appeared to be calling me to greater freedom of action, and to more simple and direct dependence on Him both for the needs of the work and for personal support. Such a mission depending directly on the Lord would furnish a powerful argument to the minds of Christians in favor of the work being God's work, and would bring down blessing from God on the Jews themselves.

In 1876 I voluntarily gave up a salary of £350 a year and threw myself and the new mission on God for support. I had frequently urged upon the late Wm. Pennefather the importance of a mission to the Jews in connection with the Conference Hall, telling him I believed the Lord would send unsolicited £1000 a year for such a mission. His reply was always to this effect, "Yes, I will gladly have a Jewish mission if you will come and conduct it."

This dear servant of God was taken home before I saw my way to take the step suggested. On the first day of June, 1876, this Mildmay Mission to the Jews was instituted, linked to the Conference Hall, and I lovingly welcomed by Mrs. Pennefather and the Hon. Capt. Moreton as its missionary and director. My personal needs were kindly guaranteed by private friends for a period of three years, so that I could not conscientiously take a salary for that period. We asked the Lord definitely for £1000 a year for three years, intending then to wait on Him for further guidance as to whether we should continue the mission or abandon it. It may be asked, what led you to commence this mission at that time?

Origin and Object

During the autumn of 1875, from notices in the papers I saw the war cloud arising between Russia and Turkey, and the Eastern question coming up again, which would bring nearer and nearer the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, and the return of our Lord.

The fact came home to my mind with heavy pressure—there are 80,000 Jews in Great Britain, about 40,000 in London, and 40,000 in provincial towns and cities (they have now—1892—increased to 150,000), and but little is done to reach them with the Gospel. Much is done in preaching about the Jews among Christians, with a view to collections and subscriptions, but little done amongst the Jews themselves to lead them to Christ: what if Jews should soon leave us for Palestine or our Lord return for His waiting ones, would there be no blood-guiltiness attaching to the conduct of Christians in our own land?

The simple object of the mission is, as far as possible, to preach Christ to all the Jews of Great Britain and Ireland, before the Jews leave us for Palestine, or the Lord returns for His people.

A printed circular was issued on the 1st of June, 1876, setting forth the way in which we proposed to mission the Jews in London, and, by an itinerant mission to visit the Jews in the towns and cities of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. Our principle in money matters has always been—Ask the Lord and tell His people.

The Lord sent to us the sum of £1,000 a year during our first three years. The £1,000 in 365 days the first year; the £1,000 in 365 days the second year; and the £1,000 in 363 days the third year. On the 364th day of the first we were between £9 and £10 short of the £1,000. No one was asked to make up the £1,000, the matter was left altogether in the Lord's hands. On the 364th day of the second year we were about £25 short of the £1,000. On the last day of the first year a check came in for £25; and on the last day of the second year there came a check to the value of £30.

The work growing and our needs increasing, we asked the Lord for £2,000 during our fourth year; and one day before the year closed the £2,000 came in. The promise by friends to supply personal needs for three years was kindly fulfilled, after which new arrangements were made. I felt the difficulty of appointing my own salary from the mission fund; so put the matter entirely in the Lord's hands, telling Him that if He would Himself supply my personal needs I would take no salary from any quarter.

I praise God, He has granted my desire and honored my trust, for although I have no private means, and have no rich friends pledged to give me one penny, and have never written a letter to ask for help, God has graciously moved the hearts of His people voluntarily to supply my need to this day, and has sometimes given me the luxury of giving back to Him the “**running over.**”

Indeed, we cultivate the habit of speaking to the Lord about every detail of the work. We not only ask Him for money, but also for workers; and although at first I thought only of another missionary besides myself, and perhaps a Bible woman to work among Jewesses, the Lord has given us about fifty-four workers—male and female—and sent from almost every evangelical denomination. About one-third of these workers are able and willing to give their services gratuitously.

Let me digress for a few minutes to give two or three facts which God used as stepping stones towards a life of absolute dependence on Him for the supply of all the needs of His work and His workers.

Over twenty years ago a Jew I met in the Midland Counties, after much prayer and effort, was brought to confess Christ. His wife opposed him and threatened to leave him. I visited and prayed with her again and again, and she confessed Christ also, and I baptized husband, wife, and children.

He seemed to possess the missionary spirit, for he won another Jew to Christ before his own baptism. I commended him to a secretary for mission work. The reply was, “We have no means, and besides, he ought to go to college for further education and discipline.”

My mind was much exercised about this case. My wife and I agreed to ask the Lord for £50 and I would then send the man to college, and trust the Lord for all further expense needed. A friend, unknown before, having heard of this case, called on me and said, “I have it on my heart to aid you with this case; how much shall I give you.”

“Excuse me, I shall name no sum, but will leave it with the Lord.”

He took out his check book at once and wrote a check for £50, saying, “Is that of any use to you.”

I burst into tears of gratitude to God; it was just the amount asked of the Lord. That case, in college and other expenses, cost me over £300, but the Lord sent it all, and a little over. The balance I gave to the man, saying, “Get your wife a new dress and your children boots.” This man afterwards told me that he had won for Christ seventy-five Gentile souls in three years.

The next thing in which the Lord signally answered prayer was in the matter of a home for aged Christian Jews. Some of these dear old folks, between seventy and eighty years of age, used to call at my house for relief. Considering that we got our Bible and our Saviour from them, it seemed ungrateful and unkind to let them go to the workhouse. Having failed to interest a committee, I went to see dear Mr. Pennefather and told him I wanted him to kneel with me and ask the Lord for £500 for a cottage home for aged Christian Jews.

We agreed, and knelt and prayed together. He rose from his knees and wrote the first check. This was on the 27th November, 1872. The £500 were sent in, the cottage bought and furnished, and soon occupied. I believed the Lord would smile upon the work though men discouraged. He seemed to say to me, "Cannot you take your orders from Me and lean on Me." Take your instructions from headquarters.

On Messrs. Moody and Sankey's visit to London a few years ago, I made an effort to arrange for one meeting a month for Jews in the north, east, south, and west of London, proposing myself to read the 53rd of Isaiah in Hebrew, Mr. Moody to preach in English. In this effort I failed. I went to Great Marlborough Street, whence papers were to be distributed from house to house, and said, "Will you have some Hebrew leaflets to distribute among the Jews?"

The reply was, "No, we cannot have sectional work."

"But your work is sectional already, for Jews will not receive your papers, but will pass you on to their Christian neighbors; but if you have leaflets in Hebrew they cannot well refuse them. I will make you a present of a few thousands."

These were accepted and I sent 5,000, and had other 10,000 distributed by volunteer ladies and gentlemen on two successive Saturdays along the streets of London.

The leaflet was just this— "Salvation for you," and a verse or two from the fifty-third of Isaiah, in Hebrew, German, and English, and an invitation to hear Mr. Moody speak and Mr. Sankey sing the Gospel of Christ.

I wrote a letter to the Christian inviting lady and gentlemen volunteers to assist in the distribution all over London. About forty met me at the Conference Hall, Mildmay, and we went forth, two and two, on two Saturdays in succession. I found letters coming to me, saying: "You are doing a blessed work among the Jews, we should like to help you."

When I came to add up the contributions sent in for this work exclusively, I found the sum to be the exact amount of the printer's bill for these 15,000 leaflets. Get your work from your Master alone on your knees; be sure it is His work, and yours because His, and needed funds will come in.

These facts awakened thought in my own mind as to whether the worker with God and for God should not take his work direct from his Lord, and do it direct to his Lord, untrammelled by men who in many cases have neither knowledge of the work, nor a heart interest in it.

None of the three efforts above stated had the slightest sympathy from the committee—indeed the first was very strongly opposed—until they by the Lord's blessing proved a success, and were then acknowledged as of God.

To return to our narrative.

We began our work in the open air on Sunday mornings in the East End of London, by reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah in Hebrew, and preaching Christ. Crowds of excited and angry Jews gathered about us and opposed. We took shelter in a place of worship till the police dispersed the crowd, then we went and preached in another part, and by-and-by found ourselves in Wellclose Square. A converted Jewess came out of her house and invited us in to converse with Jews indoors. We accepted, and went again week after week until we settled down and engaged the room for regular mission work.

We had two rooms thrown into one, then took also a back room for a night school for Jewish children. We began meetings on Saturday afternoons, from three to five o'clock, opened with silent prayer, a short prayer meeting having previously been held for power in testimony. We read a chapter in Hebrew, in German, and in English, and then showed from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. Questions were answered, difficulties met, opposition and blasphemy silenced, and many souls in those rooms have confessed their faith in Christ. We opened another room in Bethnal Green, and had similar work going on at the same hour.

We soon found that Jewesses could not be reached by male agency, so we asked the Lord for a Bible woman. We learned from our dear friend, the late Mrs. Way, how to reach the Jewesses. This led to the institution of a weekly sewing class, with a provident fund attached, and to the employment of ladies in various branches of the work. The Jewesses were poor, ignorant, and superstitious, and at first it was difficult to get any to come. We worked and prayed for twenty-five, and got them. Then for fifty, and got them. Then for seventy-five, and then for a hundred.

The rooms at Wellclose Square, including the back room will hold when packed about one hundred and twenty. We have had this number and over, again and again, with sometimes ten to twenty more outside. They are wonderfully improved; they hear Gospel addresses, sing Gospel hymns, and many have acknowledged their faith in Jesus as the Messiah, and some secretly trust in Him as Saviour.

The rooms are used as reading rooms for Jews on some afternoons and evenings. We have also two bedrooms here for the use of inquiring Jews. Prayer meetings, Bible readings, preaching on Sunday evenings, and inquirers and converts' meetings are also held at Wellclose Square.

The next thing we did was to open a Night School for Jewish children.

The first night thirty-one came. We taught them to sing "Hold the Fort," then I asked, "Would you like to sing another." and they sang "Safe in the arms of Jesus."

"Now," "said, "I have thirty-six new hymn books; if you can say or sing these two hymns tomorrow, you shall each have one of these books as your own, with your name written on it."

The books were all cleared out on the following evening. Now, let me tell you an instance of the good of this. These children are from the homes of the very poor. Our Medical Missionary one day found a family of eight—father, mother, and six hungry children, dining contentedly a dinner that cost four-pence, consisting of rice and dripping.

In these poor homes when the father returns at night weary, he asks the children, “Rachel, can’t you sing.”

“Yes, I can sing, ‘Life for a look.’”

Ben, what can you sing.”

“I can sing “Come to the Saviour.””

“Well, sing then.” The parents remark to each other, “If we let these children sing like this, they will sing us into Christians.”

Our number now on the books is over 150 boys and girls. The school is conducted four nights a week by Christian ladies, who teach and sing the Gospel. Many of these dear Jewish children have learned to love Jesus and to sing His praise. This school was opened in December, 1876.

When about 1872 or 1873, I mentioned at the Annual Mildmay Conference that I desired a Home for aged Christian Jews, before referred to, a doctor wrote to me offering his services, as medical attendant, gratuitously. As soon as the Home was opened these services were gratefully accepted, and cheerfully given for some years.

In the month of August, 1877, while in Lincolnshire, holding services in my native village, I received a letter from the same doctor with the request, “Will you and your wife join me and my wife in prayer that the Lord would direct me as to my future? I have had it laid on my heart to become a Medical Missionary.”

My reply was, “Yes, we will, and if the Lord should honor me by allowing me to establish a Medical Mission in the interest of His ancient people Israel, and that you should be the first Medical Missionary, we will rejoice together.”

On my return to London we met and had prayer together, asking the Lord for £500 as a token that we were on the line of His will. Soon £300 were sent in. Then we had special prayer at Mildmay for the £200 more. A few weeks later I had to address a meeting in the suburbs of London. While praying in my study for blessing on the meeting, it was laid on my heart that there might be some present at the meeting able to give the £200, and I prayed accordingly.

There was no collection, no freewill offerings at the door, but the announcement was made that if anyone would like to give anything they might communicate with Mildmay. My wife and I hastened to the station, but lost the train by half a minute. Two ladies waited with us for the next half-hour train, and remarked, “We have been much interested in your desire for a Medical Mission, it is so Christ-like; our Lord was a Medical Missionary. You must have it. How much do you need.”

“£500.”

“How much have you.”

“£300.”

“We will give you the rest. Our Blessed Lord is coming back again and perhaps soon, and He must not find us too heavily weighted with gold when He comes.”

A short while after a check for £200 was put into my hands with these words: “Our love token to our Lord Jesus.” One of these dear ladies has since gone in to see the King.

Subsequently to my receiving the letter above referred to from the doctor, I received another from a qualified dispenser, offering gratuitously his services as dispenser at the Medical Mission till we could get the services of a younger man. We thanked the Lord for this offer, and although nearly two years elapsed before we opened the Medical Mission, we have had this kind and now aged friend’s services from the first day until the year 1889.

This Medical Mission, opened in Hooper Square, Leman Street, in January, 1880, has grown wonderfully. Though all know the Gospel will be preached to them, yet they come in crowds, taxing heavily the time and strength of two Medical Missionaries, two Dispensers, and two trained Deaconesses who assist them. Other Christian ladies render efficient aid by singing the Gospel to the patients while waiting to see the doctors.

Railway necessities obliged us to change our Medical Mission premises in 1884; and on the 18th of June of that year we had our dedicatory service at our new rooms in Cannon Place, Whitechapel: and on the 9th of September, 1887, we dedicated our present more commodious premises in Aldgate.

Dr. Dixon, our senior Medical Missionary, and Mr. Mummery, our senior Dispenser, have been with us from the first day of the Medical Mission. We have had also valuable help from Dr. Marshall, who had part private practice. Now we have a second Medical Missionary, Dr. Rocha, wholly given up to the work. The Medical Mission has brought to the surface an amazing amount of real and deep poverty and consequent sickness, but it has opened hundreds, nay thousands of doors and ears to the Gospel message, and many have received the message to the salvation of their souls.

Our itinerant mission is a most important branch of the work, and during the existence of this mission its missionaries have visited the Jews in nearly every city, town and village where Jews are located in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Some of the places have been visited twice, and some three times over.

In our itinerant mission we carry with us the 53rd of Isaiah, in large Hebrew characters, place it in the windows of our lodgings, which soon draws the attention of all the Jews in a town, and our rooms have often been crowded till eleven o’clock at night.

After our visit to Hull, three young Jews followed us to London to give up all for Christ, and were afterwards baptized. One is now a devoted Missionary of this Mildmay Mission. Two of our Missionary staff I baptized at the Conference Hall.

A young Jew in Grimsby professed to trust in Jesus during our visit. Another, who was passing through Sunderland during our stay, professed to accept Christ in our lodgings. Another accompanied our Missionary from Liverpool and gave a clear testimony to his trust in Jesus, and preached Christ to his Jewish brethren at our Mission Room. Two others have been baptized in Glasgow, one by Dr. Andrew Bonar, and the other by myself. Others are asking for baptism Oh for a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Israel that hundreds and thousands may flock to Jesus!

The Lord has graciously manifested His approval of this itinerant work in direct conversions and also in other ways—for instance: we sent two Missionaries to Scotland to preach Christ to the Jews, and gave them £20, saying, “Spend it economically, and if you want more send to me, but do not ask anybody else.”

I told them to seek out a godly cabman, who had written to me expressing interest in the Jews.

On arriving in Edinburgh, they left their luggage at the station till they found lodgings. P. J. first found them and informed them that they had taken rooms in which prayer had been offered for about two years that God would send missionaries to the Jews in Edinburgh. When they left, the lady of the house would not charge for the lodgings.

The morning on which our brethren left Edinburgh for Glasgow, a merchant in the latter city sent me a letter to London, stating in substance, “I hear you are sending missionaries to the Jews in Glasgow; this will be attended with expense. Will you accept the enclosed bank notes, value £20.”

This was the exact amount of the check! As further expense was incurred further contributions flowed in. Indeed, we seemed to have nothing to do but to pray and praise, and then praise and pray.

The growing work and increasing usefulness of the Medical Mission suggested to the mind of Dr. Dixon the desirability of a Convalescent Home, where, shut out from Jewish influence and shut in to Christian influence, many a son of Abraham might find health for his body and salvation for his soul. We took the matter to the Lord in prayer and He graciously answered.

One Saturday evening in October, 1882, after preaching to the Jews in the East End, I called upon a delicate lady in Mildmay and prayed with her, and she quietly put into my hand an envelope which contained a check, value £500. During the next month, a lady who was present at an address I gave at the house of a nobleman in the country, wrote a letter to the Countess expressing a desire to give £1,000. The Countess sent the letter to my bedroom, and I knelt to praise God with the letter in my hand. Some property was afterwards sold by this lady which realized £1,166 6s. yd., and a check to that amount was sent to me for our Convalescent Home.

We purchased and furnished a leasehold property in Langdon Park Road, Highgate, which was dedicated to the Lord by praise and prayer on the 5th of February, 1884.

The first Jew who entered the Home was brought to Christ, and many a soul has since then received the Lord Jesus Christ as Messiah and Saviour.

In the growth and development of the work it was soon felt that a home for inquirers having no trade, or thrown out of employment because of their attending our mission services, would be a most useful institution; keeping the inquirer near us until he found Christ, and in the mean time helping him, if possible, to some suitable employment in this land, or by emigration to some work in another land.

We brought the matter before the Lord in prayer for guidance. We thought first of a shoe-making business, then of a carpenter's business, and at last decided on a printing business, in which, during inquiry, the inquirer might learn a trade by which he might after three years' instruction earn his own living.

The Lord graciously answered prayer, provided us with the necessary means, and guided us to a suitable site on Newington Green, and our printing house and inquirers' home was dedicated to the Lord by praise and prayer on the 7th of November, 1882.

An interesting incident may be mentioned here to the praise of God.

The night before the dedication of this institution I was in my study at nine o'clock asking the Lord to guide me to a suitable portion of His Word to be read at the meeting the next afternoon. My mind was directed to the 29th chapter of First Chronicles, noticing specially "**Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?**" in verse 5; and "**From Thine own hand have we given Thee,**" in verse 14.

I closed the book and went down to supper.

I was called from the table about ten o'clock that night to see a working man who wished to speak to me. I asked him in; he threw his old cap on the floor and said, "I understand you are going to dedicate to the Lord to-morrow your home for inquiring Jews; I cannot be with you except in spirit, for my time is not my own, but I have brought you an offering."

He then filled his hand for the Lord with thirty-five new bright sovereigns—every one George and Dragon—and laid them on my table.

I said, "Let us kneel down and praise the Lord together; you pray first."

He simply said, "Lord, of Thine own have I given Thee; please accept this in the name of Christ. Thanks be unto Thee for Thine unspeakable gift."

This was great encouragement to consult God about the choice of a chapter to be read in His public service. Five young Jews confessed Christ in this institution during its first year, and many others since. Many who have had the benefits of this institution are now earning their own livelihood.

For many years poor Jews have been flocking to our country from Russia, Romania, and other countries. Some have large families. They are ignorant of our language and of our ways of doing business. Neither Jews nor Christians will employ them. What are they to do? Many fathers leave wife and children for some other country, believing that somebody will look after and help them when they are gone, whilst they were sure to starve as long as the father remained with them. The mother struggles on to get bread for her six or eight children, and it is a struggle.

Under these circumstances I often felt what a blessing it would be to have a home and school for the Christian training of destitute Jewish children, whether orphans or not. On the 22nd of April, 1883, I was preaching in Kent. Between morning and evening services I walked in the grounds and sat in the summer house of my host.

In the summer house, with no one near but God, I found myself talking to the Lord about His work amongst Israel, thanking Him for allowing me to do something for His still beloved people. I mentioned to the Lord these poor children, and asked Him whether He had laid their interest on my heart, or was the thought about them simply a hobby of my own.

At once the following passage was borne home to my heart with great force, "**Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.**" I meditated for a moment and then said audibly "Lord, this is Thine own word, I take Thee at Thy word; please give me for Christ's sake, in the interest of poor Jewish children, the sum of £3,000, or at least a larger amount in one sum than you have ever yet given me."

It was impressed on my mind to ask that it might come within twelve months. I prayed the whole year for it. The 22nd of April, 1884, came round, and only two or three pounds came by the morning's post. I still waited on God, and about eleven o'clock in the forenoon a lady called and brought a note by hand from another friend in the suburbs of London. The lady who called with the note had just said, "I am going to the city to-day and shall call on Mr. Wilkinson, at Mildmay, on my way."

The friend replied, "I wish you would kindly take a note for me, it would save a penny stamp, and my servant the trouble of taking it to post."

The note simply said, "I know the Lord is guiding me, and He has laid it on my heart to give you £1,350." I was evidently guided by the Lord to purchase Cromwell Lodge, on Newington Green, for the sum of £1,200 freehold; furnished it, and dedicated it to the Lord by praise and prayer on the 20th February, 1885.

Dear little Jewish children have been coming in one by one ever since, some with us from the commencement, and others for a longer or shorter period according to the circumstances or wishes of their friends. Several of these lambs have been brought under the care and love of the Good Shepherd. Three of them are supported by private friends at the rate of £20 a year each.

When the Cottage Hospital was built at Mildmay we desired two beds for Jews for twelve months as an experiment.

The sum of £100 was needed. One friend sent £25 and we had no more sent till the time of the opening.

At one of our Monday noon prayer meetings at Mildmay we reminded the Lord that the Hospital was now ready, would He be pleased soon to send us the remaining £75 needed. We had the £75 promised the same evening by a friend who was not at the prayer meeting, and who did not know that the £75 had been prayed for that day.

I was taking tea that evening at Mr. Mathieson's, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Müller, Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Taylor, Dr. and Mrs. Burns Thompson, and others, when a friend sitting next to me said quietly, "I wish to give you £50 for a bed at the Hospital for Jews."

I thanked the Lord and the friend, and then said, "I think the Lord intends me to have two beds." "How much have you got?"

"With your £50, I have £25 over the cost of one bed, but £25 short of the cost of two."

The friend replied, "I would just as soon give you £75 as £50."

This provided two beds for one year, but we afterwards found that the sick Jews preferred the Hospital at Bethnal Green as nearer to their homes. Our mission pays at that Hospital £1 a week for adults, and half price for children. It is open to any of the Lord's stewards to provide beds for the poor sick ones, at the rate of £1 a week for one patient.

It must not be supposed for one moment that we have had no trials, for we have had them, and sharp ones too, but our gracious Father has hitherto strengthened us to bear them and then brought us safely through them, giving us an ever-enriching experience of His faithfulness.

One special instance may be given here which made a deep impression on my own mind and may be encouraging to other workers in different fields.

At one time we had no money coming in for several days, neither for the mission fund nor for personal use. I talked the matter over with my dear wife, whose suggestion was that it was a fresh call to our knees. I felt the same. When such trials are experienced, our minds are exercised to ask the Lord if there is anything displeasing to Him in the conduct of the workers or the work or is it simply a trial of faith.

I closed my study door, fell on my knees, and with feelings too deep for utterance, I put the Mildmay Mission to the Jews back again into the hands of the Lord, telling Him that I could go on no longer unless He would show His hand, and continue to own the mission as His by sending in supplies at once.

The next day a friend called and said, "God has sent me to your house, and impressed me to write a check for £50."

We knelt and praised God together. Enclosed in the envelope with the check I found the following on a separate bit of paper which lies on my desk as I write this, "By orders from the Courts above—£25 for the general work of the mission, and £25 for yourself."

On the day following, another friend drove to my door with carriage and pair asking for an immediate interview. On entering my study he said, "God has sent me here to write you a check; give me pen and ink."

He wrote a check value £10 and said, "£7 for the mission fund and £3 for your own use."

We knelt and praised the Lord together. He was an "exclusive brother" up to that day, but not since, and the Lord has graciously honored him in winning souls. He has kindly written several checks since then; and so also has the first-named friend.

To this day God has frequently tried our faith, but He has always been faithful and supplied our need these more than fifteen years. The regular mission work, support of Missionaries, rent of rooms, Medical Mission, work among Jewesses and children, Itinerant Mission, Inquirers' Home, Convalescent Home, Children's Home; besides the most blessed but necessarily expensive work of distributing the Hebrew New Testament among the Jews throughout the world, needs about £5,060 a year. The New Testament movement seems to us the most wonderful work of God in these latter days. We here give a brief account of the Hebrew New Testament movement, its origin, and its progress down to date.

Mr. Salkinson was the first Jew to translate the New Testament into Hebrew. Other translations existed, in many respects excellent, and faithful to the grammar and the lexicon, but lacking in the spirit, style, and sweet flow of the Old Testament Hebrew idiom, of which Mr. Salkinson was a master, and perhaps had not his equal in Europe. He had, a few years before, translated the Epistle to the Romans, and had also translated into beautiful Hebrew poetry Milton's "*Paradise Lost*," which has been highly eulogized by competent critics.

This was the man, a Christian Jew, whom God raised up and prompted to give as his life work to his own beloved people a translation of the new Covenant into idiomatic Hebrew.

When far on towards completion, Mr. Salkinson came over from Vienna to London in the autumn of 1882 to make arrangements for getting his work into print. He spent a day with me, and begged me to help him. I urged him to seek the aid of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

He replied, "I have already done so, and they refuse it. Wilkinson, can't you help me?" After a while I thought of the Trinitarian Bible Society, the Secretary of which Society, Dr. Bullinger, I knew well, though of the Society itself I knew little or nothing. I wrote to Dr. Bullinger at Walthamstow, and requested an interview.

Through an oversight, I received no reply to this request, though other matters were answered. The matter thus stood over till the 26th of December, 1882. This being a holiday I walked over for a constitutional, and laid the whole matter before Dr. Bullinger.

His reply was, "It seems quite providential, for we have just had a legacy, and have been praying for guidance as to its use; lay the matter in writing before our Committee and they will probably take it up."

This was done. Mr. Salkinson and the Committee came to terms. Shortly after, however, and before the translation was finished, dear Salkinson was called to rest. The Committee then secured the services of Dr. Ginsburg, a scholar of European reputation, and a fellow-student of mine and of Salkinson, 1851-1853.

Dr. Ginsburg laid aside other important work and threw himself heartily into the unfinished work of his old friend, He edited the entire work, and conducted it through the press, besides translating the last fifteen chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

The first edition of 2,000 was exhausted in a month. This was issued in 1885. Scores of Jewish Missionaries expressed their appreciation of the translation in loud praise. Three or four Gentiles and one or two Jews criticized it unfavorably. There were undoubtedly several errors, though none of a serious character. A thorough revision was called for, which engaged the attention of six Hebrew scholars during the latter months of 1885 and the former of 1886.

I had already acquainted myself with Rabinowitz and his movement in South Russia, and had formed his personal acquaintance in Berlin, where I invited him to meet me in March, 1885. His conversion was effected through the instrumentality of a Hebrew New Testament. It was again and again pressed home to me—Why not a wide and free distribution of Hebrew New Testaments amongst the Jews throughout the world?

This was thought and prayed about till the matter took the form of 100,000 copies of the revised edition for free distribution. This number at one shilling each would cost £5,000. The matter was first mentioned in public at our annual meetings for praise and prayer, held in the Conference Hall, Mildmay Park, on Monday, January 4, 1886. J. E. Mathieson, Esq., presided, and J. Denham Smith and Dr. Sinclair Paterson gave addresses.

Some friends thought we were going too fast, but we committed ourselves to nothing, we asked only for prayer for the guidance of our God in the matter.

On February 1st, at a drawing-room meeting in Highgate, a friend asked, "How soon do you expect light on this matter?"

I replied, "During this spring."

An account of the Annual Meetings, including a reference to this desire for 100,000 Hebrew New Testaments, appeared in the February number of *Service for the King*. This came under the eye of a gentleman who was led voluntarily to give a check for £3,000. This came on April 19, 1886, while I lay on a sick bed at Hastings. It was at the same time an answer to a prayer offered for three years but without any definite object beyond the general good of Israel. The same friend who gave the £3,000 gave a guarantee for all that might be short of the £5,000, in order that we might make better terms with the printers in Vienna by ordering the 100,000 at once.

The Trinitarian Bible Society ordered an edition of 110,000. 100,000 for our Mission, and 10,000 additional for themselves. When the check for £3,000 arrived we had already in hand from other friends about £630.

On the 27th of April, 1886, the friend who gave the £3000 on the 19th of the same month sent £120 more, which made the sum £3750. This was deposited in the bank in the joint names of Dr. Bullinger and my own until it should be required.

To allow the work to proceed as rapidly as possible the sum of £3,750 was paid over to the Trinitarian Bible Society early in September, 1886. On the 9th of October, 1886, I received the first presentation copy by post direct from Vienna. The friend who gave the £3,000 and also the £120 kindly sent another check for £700 in April, 1887. Other friends had voluntarily contributed to the amount of £1,180, so that the £700 made up the £5,000 as at first promised. The sum of £1,250 was appropriated to aid the distribution of these Hebrew New Testaments throughout the world.

In the autumn of 1886, Messrs. Baron and Barnett were sent out by this mission into North-East Prussia, taking one side of Pomerania on their outward journey, and the other side on their return. Full accounts of their arduous but blessed work were given in subsequent numbers of *Service for the King*.

In the spring of 1887 these same brethren were sent out, to Austria proper, Hungary, Bohemia, and Galicia, with increasing encouragement as testified by notes from their journals published in *Service for the King*, and in the *Quarterly Record* of the Trinitarian Bible Society. It was on this journey that they obtained at Leipzig the names and addresses of between two and three thousand rabbis.

Our brethren were authorized to spend the sum of £18 or £20 in postage, and 2,237 Hebrew New Testaments were sent by post to as many Jewish rabbis.

While all this was going on abroad, and our hands pretty full with the growing work at home, we were earnestly praying that the Lord would open Russia, where nearly 4,000,000 of Jews are located, or about one-third of the Jewish population of the world.

Mr. Mathieson and I had a very friendly interview with the Russian Ambassador, His Excellency Count Staal, who advised us to put ourselves in communication with our own ambassador in St. Petersburg. Dr. Bullinger, in the meantime, sent copies of the New Testament to all the leading Censorships in the Russian Empire, and obtained permission to send them into the country. Scores of initial difficulties were in our way, but the Lord led us His way, and the difficulties were overcome. Our missionary, Mr. Adler, though twenty years in this country was still a Russian subject, having never been released by that Government. We thought it better to pay arrears and renew his Russian passport, so that he might work as a Russian subject.

Dr. Althausen, a Christian Jew of St. Petersburg, a Russian subject, and wearing military honors, associated himself with Mr. Adler.

His local knowledge, social influence, religious character, and true sympathy were of the greatest service. Early in July, 1887, Mr. Adler left London for St. Petersburg, followed by hundreds of prayers for guidance and blessing. Prayer was answered, doors were opened, local governors gave their consent, and, notwithstanding many difficulties, Mr. Adler and Dr. Althausen had about three months of blessed work together.

In the course of their work they called on Pastor Courland, at Mitau. Pastor Courland is an evangelical Lutheran minister, a Christian Israelite of great experience and influence, and Primarius of the district of Gurland with its 130 Lutheran pastors. Pastor Courland was formerly a missionary to his Jewish brethren, but practical sympathy failing among his supporters he subsided into a Lutheran pastorate. When he heard from Mr. Adler how the Lord had raised up friends in England voluntarily to give means to purchase 100,000 Hebrew New Testaments to be freely distributed as love-gifts among his Jewish brethren, he seemed overwhelmed, his missionary fire and zeal were rekindled, and he longed to help in the work.

He sat down and wrote a stirring circular, and sent copies all over the Russian Empire.

We opened a depot at Wilna on March 29, 1888; crowds of Jews of all classes came for the books, so that by the 7th of April 1,250 copies were discriminatedly distributed. In a letter from our Mr. Adler, dated September 5th, 1888, he tells me that in the course of a few days nearly 3,000 copies were distributed amongst the Jews in Minsk; and that this populous town and district were all astir, crowds eager to possess and read the book. We have the consent of the local governor to open a depot at Minsk.

Besides the distribution of several thousands through the personal efforts of our missionaries in various parts of North Africa, Pomerania, Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Galicia, Romania, and Russia; we have cheerfully responded to requests coming from missionaries of the London, British, and Presbyterian Societies, and from individual workers, and from private individuals interested in Israel. Four requests were for six copies each; one for eight, one for ten, two for twelve, two for twenty, nine for twenty-five, two for thirty, one for forty, seven for fifty, eight for a hundred, one for one hundred and fifty, one for three hundred, seven for five hundred, two for one thousand, one for fifteen hundred, in three installments of five hundred each, one for two thousand, and one for three thousand. The letters of thanks and of encouragement received from missionaries, and from other friends, bear one testimony that the work is of God.

For obvious reasons we withhold the names of those who have applied for and received copies to the extent above named.

Those copies have been distributed in London, Liverpool, Leeds, Glasgow, Belfast, Dundee, Paris, Marseilles, Rome, Constantinople, Adrianople, Salonica, Philipopolis, Prague, Lemberg, Dresden, Leipzig, Hamburg, Dantzigr Kornthal, Strasburg, Cologne, Gibraltar, Altona, Kischeneff, Jerusalem, New York, Chicago, Jamaica, The Cape, Brazil, Melbourne, Singapore, and Burma.

Altogether between eighty and ninety thousand copies have been sent out into various parts of Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia.

We have a loud call for Judeo-Polish Scriptures. We have ordered twenty-five thousand copies of Gospels and Epistles. Our Mr. Adler has translated the Gospels of Matthew and John, and the Epistles to the Romans and to the Hebrews. The Trinitarian Bible Society are having them printed at Vienna, and we are already distributing them.

We ask much prayer, for we have many opponents, but God is assuredly with us.

North Africa

In the spring of 1887 our missionary, Mr. Halbmillion, was sent to North Africa, and part of Morocco. During three months, he and Mr. Mercadier, of the North African Mission, visited several towns, preached Christ to great numbers of Jews, and distributed many hundreds of New Testaments amongst them. Accounts of this most interesting mission appeared in *Service for the King*.

On Mr. Halbmillion's return home he expressed an earnest desire to return for a more lengthy period, to preach Christ to these poor sheep, in many cases without a shepherd. We prayed about it, and in a few months the Lord opened the way by inclining the heart of a Christian gentleman to consider the needs of the Jews in North Africa and Morocco, to write to us respecting those needs, and then voluntarily, the Lord enabling him, to guarantee the expenses of a mission for three years. This was evidently of the Lord, and we praised Him for this answer to prayer. Mr. and Mrs. Halbmillion left London for Tangiers early in December, 1887.

They laboured amongst the Jews in Tangiers, visited the Jews in Gibraltar and Tetuan, until August the 8th, 1888, when Mr. Halbmillion was suddenly called to his rest. We have already sent out another missionary—Mr. Dressier—and we are making further arrangements in the interest of the work in Morocco and North Africa.

Proposed Mission Hall in the East End of London

The numbers of Jews and Jewesses coming weekly under the influence of this mission, and willing to listen to the Gospel, have outgrown the capacity of our rooms. Our medical mission is crowded. Our meeting for Jewesses is most uncomfortably crowded; when packed as closely as possible we can crowd into the two rooms at Wellclose Square about 120—and have then often to shut out 20 others. We borrow a room of our kind friend, Mr. George Holland, in which to conduct our night school; and when we have gatherings of three or four hundreds for Gospel addresses with magic lantern, or at our annual tea-meetings, we find great difficulty in hiring suitable rooms near.

We have long thought how helpful it would be to our work in London if we had one central mission hall large enough to embrace all the departments of our work.

Numbers still flock to England, hear the Gospel, and carry the tidings to other parts of the world. Ask the Lord and tell His people has been our line of conduct to this day. If this project be of the Lord's prompting, as we believe it is, He will incline His stewards willingly and liberally to contribute for His sake; and if it should not be for His glory He knows we do not wish it. The Lord tells us in very plain terms how we Gentiles may bless the Jews in matters both spiritual and temporal.

“For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy” (Romans 11:30, 31).

“For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things” (Ch. 15:27).

“O ISRAEL, THOU SHALT NOT BE FORGOTTEN OF ME” (Isaiah 44:21)

Trustees of Property belonging to the Mildmay Mission to the Jews:—Sir Arthur Blackwood, K.C.B.; Henry Carr, Esq., Carlisle; Samuel Field, Esq., Walthamstow; John Griffin, Esq., Clapton; J. E. Mathieson, Esq., Mildmay; Benjamin Thomas, Esq., Bristol; Dr. Wood, J.P., Southport; John Wilkinson, Mildmay.

Beloved friends, the time is short. Israel's restoration is near. The Eastern Question hastens for settlement, and the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Has all been done that ought to have been done, in testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ? Brother, sister, let us each one tell our Lord that we are doing something, for His name's sake, in the interest of His brethren according to the flesh, and that which will be pleasing to Him.

~ end of chapter 21 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
