

THE INFLUENCE OF THE JEWS UPON CIVILIZATION

by

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CHAPTER NINE

THE CHRISTIAN JEW

In polemical Jewish literature one often comes across such statements as: "Only the poor and ignorant Jews have embraced Christianity." We do not deny that the poor and ignorant have been drawn like a magnet to the cross; that is to the credit of the Christian religion. Nevertheless, it is an undeniable fact that from its earliest days Christianity has attracted the greatest Jewish intellects as well. This is now being admitted by the Jews themselves.

In an article by Morris Goldberg under the heading, "Turncoats, an Amazing Historical Record of Church Dignitaries of Jewish Origin," which appeared in the September 11, 1931, issue of the *American Hebrew*, the author gives some startling facts concerning Jewish church dignitaries, popes, bishops, statesmen, clerics of note, scientists, poets, missionaries and philanthropists. We wish we could reproduce in full this most illuminating article which would forever put to silence any who might be inclined to minimize the glorious contribution which the Jew has made to Christianity. The writer concludes with the statement: "This powerful sketch proves undoubtedly the great weight and power which some Jews have exerted on the Christian churches. If these same Jews had devoted their energies and human qualities for the benefit of their own people, Christianity might never have attained the world power she possesses."

In every century some of the most noble and cultured Jews have accepted Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. It is generally conceded that Saul of Tarsus possessed one of the most brilliant intellects, not only of his own day, but of all time. From the first to the middle of the second centuries, according to Hegesippus, the celebrated Jewish Christian historian who wrote "Five Memorials of Ecclesiastical Affairs," and the church historian, Eusebius, there are no less than fifteen Hebrew-Christians who were the first bishops of Jerusalem: James, the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:9), martyred in the temple; Ananias, who baptized Saul of Tarsus; Symeon, 62 A.D., Justus the First, 64 A.D.; Zaccheus, 112 A.D.; Tobias, 114 A.D.; Benjamin, 116 A.D.; Justin, 118 A.D.; Levi, 128 A.D.; Ephres, 130 A.D.; Joseph, 132 A.D.; Jude, 123 A.D.; Crispus, Bishop of Aegina; Clement of Rome; Epiphanius, Bishop of Constantina, died 403 A.D.

Space does not permit us to tell of the great hosts of the celebrated Jewish followers of the cross through the centuries. And when we consider the great humiliation and suffering which they endured at the hands of professed Christians, we wonder that any Jews ever turned to the Christian religion.

“Every passion was in arms against them. The monarchs were instigated by avarice; the nobility by the war-like spirit generated by chivalry; the clergy by bigotry; the people by all these concurrent motives. Each of the great changes which were gradually taking place in the state of the world seemed to darken the condition of this unhappy people, till the outward degradation worked inward upon their own minds” (From Milman, *History of the Jews*, Vol. II, page 295).

It was not until the nineteenth century, however, when the consciousness of the followers of Christ was aroused to the great need of preaching the Gospel to the brethren of our Lord, according to the flesh, that we began to witness one of the greatest ingatherings of Jewish souls. A most careful calculation has been made by Prof. De La Roi in his book, *Judentaugen in 19 Jahrhundert* (Jewish converts in the 19th Century) which shows there has been one convert to every 156 of the Jewish people, while from all other non-Christian religions there has been one convert to every 525. At least 204,500 Jews were converted during the past century.

But the success of Jewish evangelization should not be measured merely by quantity but by the quality of the converts; not by numbers but by character. There is a galaxy of great stars of Jewish converts who have won worldwide fame as historians, scientists, musicians, philanthropists, statesmen, diplomats, theologians, etc. Let us mention a few of the most renowned:

Benjamin Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield), Prime Minister of England was indeed outstanding. “As a statesman there was none like him before and there will be none hereafter.” Such is the tribute paid him by his biographer, James Anthony Froude. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* states that Disraeli appears genuinely to have believed in Christianity as developed Judaism (Vol. IV, page 620). Of this we may well be convinced by Disraeli’s own words:

“The pupil of Moses may ask himself, whether all the princes of the house of David have done so much for the Jews as that prince who was crucified on Calvary. Had it not been for Him, the Jews would have been comparatively unknown, or known only as a high Oriental caste which had lost its country. Has not He made their history the most famous in the world? Has not He hung up their laws in every temple? Has He not vindicated all their wrongs? Has not He avenged the victory of Titus and conquered the Caesars? What successes did they anticipate from their Messiah? The wildest dreams of their rabbis have been far exceeded. Has not Jesus conquered Europe and changed its name into Christendom? All countries that refuse the cross wither, while the whole of the new world is devoted to the Semitic principle and its most glorious offspring, the Jewish faith, and the time will come when the vast communities and countless myriads of America and Australia looking upon Greece, and wondering how so small a space could have achieved such great deeds, will still find music in the sons of Zion and still seek solace in the parables of Galilee.

“These may be dreams, but there is one fact which non can contest. Christians may continue to persecute Jews, and Jews may persist in disbelieving Christians, but who can deny that Jesus of Nazareth, the Incarnate Son of the Most High God, is the eternal glory of the Jewish race?” (from Beaconsfield’s *Biography of Lord George Bentinck*, page 363).

Johan Augustus Wilhelm Neander, the “father of modern church history, child in spirit, a man in intellect, a giant in learning and a saint in piety,” as Philip Schaff characterizes him in his *History of the Christian Church*, is well known. According to the *Jewish Encyclopedia*; Vol. IX, page 198, “Neander’s works, most of which have been translated into English, have secured for him a lasting place among the greatest ecclesiastical historians.

When the Jews of Damascus were being persecuted in 1846, and the old “blood accusation” was revived, he publicly and vigorously denounced the “medieval lie.” As a young man of twenty-three years he was advanced to a professor’s chair at Heidelberg. Later he became professor of church history at the University of Berlin. He contributed more than any other scholar in Germany to the overthrow of unbelief and skepticism and saved the Lutheran Church from collapse. For forty-eight years he devoted himself to the advancement of Christianity.

Isaac Da Costa, poet laureate of the Netherlands is another outstanding Jew. “His character, no less than his genius, was respected by his contemporaries. To the end of his life he felt only reverence and love for his former co-religionists, was deeply interested in their past history, and often took their part” (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV, page 291). The following is one of his most inspiring poems.

Art Thou my King, my Lord who camest to me.
To visit me, who did not even ask?
My life in penance I would offer Thee,
Inspire my soul and bid me find love’s task.
Believing power and strength pour in my heart,
To praise Thee, Thou whom storms obey.
Of heaven’s ardor is my soul a part
With Thee the world is warmed with love’s sweet ray.

O Lord, my Saviour, full of mercy, praise.
Thou God of honor, King of Israel’s dream,
Whose Love will e’er the lowly spirit raise,
The grace and mercy doth from death redeem.
Ah! Give me strength to thank Thee as I ought,
My burning soul with joy, Thy love would meet,
And shout Thy glory to the lives untaught,
In psalms, bring heaven and earth to Jesus’ feet.

– Da Costa’s *Kompleete Dichter Werken*, Vol. II, page. 217.

The Rt. Rev. Isaac Hellmuth, D.D., D.C.L., Bishop of Huron, was the son of Jewish parents, of Warsaw, Poland. His conversion took place when he was twenty-three years of age. Like many of his religionists he was virtually cast off. In 1871, he was consecrated Bishop and “he is considered by church authorities as the most enlightened and scholarly of bishops to have presided over a Canadian bishopric.” All through his ministry he “ever evinced hearty and unbounded interest in the spiritual welfare of his Jewish brethren, and on many occasions advocated, from pulpit and platform, their claims to the Gospel.”

Bishop Samuel Isaac Joseph Shereshevsky was born in Russian Lithuania where he was educated in Jewish schools of learning; he was later sent to the University of Breslau from which he was graduated. It was through the reading of a New Testament in Hebrew that he was led to the truth of Christianity and was later baptized by a Baptist minister. After further study he applied to the Episcopal Church and was sent by that church to China. He translated the Bible into the Wenli and Mandarin dialects thereby reaching 250,000,000 heathen souls. He is described by Prof. Max Muller as one of the six most learned Orientalists of the world. He was the founder of St. John’s College, Shanghai, China.

Bishop Michael Solomon Alexander was born of Jewish parents in a small town in Posen. At the age of sixteen he became a teacher of the Talmud and the German language. He migrated to England where he served as rabbi for the congregations of Norwich and, subsequently, of Plymouth, where he was known as a man of profound rabbinic erudition. While teaching Hebrew to an English clergyman in his spare time, he was converted. He was consecrated Bishop by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and was appointed as the first bishop in Jerusalem.

Paulus Cassel was one of the most distinguished converts. He studied at the University of Berlin where at the age of thirty-four, after careful study, he was convinced of the claims of Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah. After his conversion he was appointed editor of *Deutsche Reform* by the German prime minister.

His influence for Christ among his own people is evidenced by the fact that he baptized 262 of his own people, among them doctors, authors, merchants, etc. The Jewish chronicle referred to him as “an honor to his former brethren in the faith.” High honors were showered upon him by King Frederick William IV of Prussia. Other universities conferred degrees upon him. He also became a member of the Prussian parliament.

Joseph Wolff was born at Weilersback, Bavaria, in 1795, into the home of a rabbi. He was converted in the Roman Catholic Church and studied at a monastery in Vienna. Later he lost his faith in Rome and united with the Church of England and studied at Cambridge. He volunteered as a missionary to the Orient and within a period of sixteen years he had traversed virtually all of its countries. Archbishop Whately called him a missionary Shakespeare. Among his friends were Sir Walter Scott, Dean Stanley and Alfred Tennyson. From the proceeds of his lectures, books and songs he built schools. The following amusing portrait of this most remarkable man was, some years ago, given by his attached friend and fellow-traveler, the Rev. Lewis Way:

“A man who, at Rome, calls the Pope ‘the dust of the earth,’ and tells the Jews of Jerusalem that ‘the Gemera is a lie’: who passes his days in disputation and his nights in digging the Talmud; to whom a floor of brick is a feather bed, and a box a bolster; who finds or makes a friend alike in the persecutor of his former or present faith; who can conciliate a Pasha, or confute a Patriarch; who travels without a guide, speaks without an interpreter, can live without food, and pay without money; forgiving all the insults he meets with, and forgetting all the flattery he receives; who knows little of worldly conduct, and yet accommodates himself to all men, without giving offence to any; such a man (and such and more is Wolff) must excite no ordinary degree of attention in a country and among a people whose monotony of manners has remained undisturbed for centuries . . . By such an instrument, whom no school hath taught, whom no college could hold, is the way of the Judean wilderness preparing.”

Such a striking (though somewhat hyperbolic) delineation of a man who, for laboriousness, may be classed with Wesley and Whitfield.

Sir William Herschel, whom we have already mentioned, the great English astronomer, was born in Hanover in 1738. He was brought up as a musician, in which capacity he went to England where he taught music and was organist in Bath. In his early years he became a Christian. He is known as the founder of sidereal science. From his family sprang such eminent men as Lord Farrer Herschel who was a member of Parliament and also a member of Gladstone’s cabinet. Of him *The Jewish Encyclopedia* says, “He was a strong church man.”

While on a commission to settle the Alaska boundary and other questions pending between the United States and England, he died in the United States. Another member of the family, Ridley Herschel, was baptized by the Bishop of London at the age of twenty-three.

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy was born in Hamburg in 1809. He studied music in Berlin and in his early years showed great talent. At the age of nine years he gave a public concert where he won great applause. He played before many of the crowned heads of Europe including Queen Victoria of England. His music is loved the world over. Among his works are such well known compositions as his Overture founded on *The Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Oratoria of St. Paul*, *Wedding March*, etc. "His earnestness as a Christian needs no stronger testimony than that afforded by his own delineation of the characters of St. Paul; but it is not too much to say that his heart and life were pure as those of a little child" (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. XVIII, page 124).

Frederick Julius Stahl was born in Munich in 1802. He became a Christian when eighteen years of age. He studied law at the universities of Wurzburg, Erlangen and Heidelberg. In 1840, he became professor of law at the university of Berlin. He was also a member of the Bavarian parliament. "Stahl had a more predominant influence and showed more political ability than Lord Beaconsfield," accord to Lord Acton. To list his writings would fill a page. He was a sincere member of the church and interested in everything that belonged to its life.

Moses Margoliouth was born in Poland in 1820. He studied at the University of Erlangen where he obtained his Ph.D. degree. He was editor of the *Star of Jacob*, a monthly publication, an author of many books and one of the revisers of the English version of the Old Testament.

Isidore Lowenthal, a native of Posen, was graduated from the Gymnasium at the age of seventeen. He came to America where he was converted and entered the theological seminary at Princeton, later going as a missionary to Afghanistan. In one year he learned the language of that country. In the *Encyclopedia of Missions*, page 401, we read: "Lowenthal was the translator of the New Testament into Pushtu. He wrote a number of Pushtu works and had nearly completed a dictionary of the Pushtu language when he was shot one evening in his own garden by his watchman, a Sikh, who alleged that he mistook his master for a robber." "Lowenthal was one of the most remarkable men that India has ever known," according to H. Holcomb in *Men of Might in India Missions* (page 318).

Joachim Heinrich Biesenthal was born in Posen in 1804, of pious Jewish parents. He studied under the greatest known Jewish critic and grammarian, the celebrated Heidenheim.

Later he studied German history, theology and philology in the University of Berlin, from which he received his doctor's degree. His knowledge of languages included Polish, Hebrew, Latin, Greek, Syriach, Chaldee, Arabic, Ethiopic, Samaritan, French, German, Spanish, Italian and English. His published works are too numerous to mention.

Carl Paul Caspari was born in Dessau in 1814, of orthodox Jewish parents. He was one of the preeminent witnesses for Christ in Norway during the nineteenth century. Caspari's works are many. Prof. Bang calls him "the teacher of all Scandinavia."

Ludwig Jacoby was the founder of German Methodism, which he spread throughout the European continent.

Julius Kobner was born in Denmark in 1806, He found Christ and joined the Lutheran Church, of which he became a minister, later becoming a Baptist. On his one hundredth birthday in 1906 one hundred of his choicest sermons were published in book form. Kobner, a man greatly gifted, was used of God in the conversion of large numbers in Germany, Holland and Denmark, and together with Oncken he founded Baptist churches in these countries.

Alfred Edersheim was born in Vienna. He studied at the University of Budapest, and knew Latin, Greek, German, French, Hebrew, Hungarian and Italian. He was also a voluminous writer, the most widely known of his writings being, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. Shailer Matthews of the Divinity School of Chicago University speaks of this work as “masterly and invaluable. If one were to own but one life of Jesus, it should be Edersheim’s” (*The Biblical World*, Volume VI, page 528).

Henry A Stern was born in Germany in 1820, of zealous orthodox Jewish parents. Later he moved to London where he found Christ. In 1844, we find him at his first missionary post in Bagdad, using it as a base from which his influence was felt throughout all the east. The arch-bishop of Canterbury conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He was a preacher of eloquence. Fifteen hundred Falasha were baptized, many of whom heard the Gospel through this man. His published journals and books are many.

Solomon L. Ginsburg, another hero of the cross, was born in Poland in 1867. He was a pioneer missionary under the Southern Baptist Convention to Brazil where he labored for some forty years, preaching and teaching. He baptized on an average of one thousand converts a year.

Rabbi Isaac Lichtenstein at the age of twenty years became district rabbi in Tapio Szele where he labored ceaselessly and unselfishly for nearly forty years. His conversion in the later years of his life stirred the Jewish world, and though bitterly persecuted, he remained staunch in his faith, witnessing by word of mouth and through the printed page to his people in many parts of the continent.

Joseph Rabinowitz was born in Russia in 1837. Early in life he became known as a scholar and influential lawyer. He was a man of commanding influence, a philanthropist among his people.

During the Kishineff persecution in Russia he was delegated to go to Palestine on a mission of inquiry with a view to establishing Jewish colonies there. While in that country a New Testament was given to him by his brother-in-law, which he used as a guide book to the sacred places of Jerusalem and other parts of Palestine. While at the Mount of Olives a train of reflections and questionings burdened his soul: “Why this long desolation of the city of David? Why the scattering of his people?” And in a flash, the truth entered his heart: “It is because we have neglected the true Messiah.” He cried out, “My Lord and my God.” Almost as suddenly as Saul of Tarsus he became a disciple of Jesus of Nazereth. He returned to Russia where he formulated thirteen theses, maintaining that Jesus is the only Saviour of Israel and that “the key in the Holy Land is in the hands of our brother, Jesus.”

Rabbi Abraham Jagger was formerly rabbi of Mobile, Alabama.

Through the influence of one of the Christian professors he was led to a study of the claims of Christ, resulting in his conversion, and he was baptized at St. Francis Baptist Church in Mobile. He was promptly expelled from the synagogue. Soon after his conversion he wrote his book, *The Mind and Heart in Religion*, in which he sets forth his convictions concerning Christianity.

To the aforementioned renowned Jewish Christians we would add the following prominent converts who are listed in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Volume IV, page 253:

Assing, David (1787-1842), German physician and poet
Bach, Fredrich Daniel (1756-1830), German painter
Bartholdy, Jacob (1779-1825), Prussian diplomatist
Benary, Franz Friedrich (1805-60), German philologist
Benary, Carl Albert (1807-60), German painter
Bendemann, Eduard (1811-45), German painter
Benedict, Sir Julius (1804-85), English composer
Benfey, Theodor (1809-81), German philologist
Bemays, Michael (1834-1866), Professor of Literature, Munich
Bernhard, Max Adolph (1799-1866), German professor of music
Berhardy, Gottfried (1800-75), German philologist at Halle
Block, Moritz (1815-91), Hungarian professor of ecclesiastical history
Boine, Ludwig (1786-1837), German political writer
Brahm, John (1774-1856), English composer and singer
Briedenback, Moritz Aug. Wil. (1796-1856), German lawyer
Budinger, Max (1827-1902), Professor of History at Vienna
Cerf, Karl Fr. (1782-1845), German theatrical manager at Berlin
Cohn, Ludwig (1834-71), German historian
Cohnheim, Julius (1839-84), German pathologist
Creizenach, Theodor (1818-42), German professor of literature
Csemgi, Karl (1826-99), President, Hungarian Supreme Court
David, Christian Georg Nathan (1793-1874), Professor of Jurisprudence at Copenhagen
David, Ferdinand (1810-73), German virtuoso and composer
Detmond, John (1787-1856), German statesman
Dittel, Leopold, Ritter von (1815-98), Austrian surgeon
Drach, David Paul (1791-1865), Librarian of the Propaganda in Rome
Eberti, Georg (1812-84), Professor of Jurisprudence, Breslau
Eald, F. C. (died 1874), German theologian
Feinberg, Oscar (1844), Artist at Milan, Courland
Fould, Achille (1800-67), French Minister of Finance
Fraknoi, Wilhelm (1843), Hungarian bishop; President of Hungarian Academy of Science
Friedberg, Emil Albert von (1837), German professor
Friedberg, Heinrich von (1818-95), Prussian Minister of Justice
Friedenthal, Rudolph (1827-90), German deputy
Friedlander, Ludwig (1824), German Professor of archaeology
Friedlander, Ludwig Herman (1790-1851), Professor of Medicine, Halle
Friedlander, Max (1892-72), German Austrian journalist
Gaus, Eduard (1798-1839), Professor of jurisprudence
Goldschmidt, Herman (1802-66), German astronomer
Gutterbrock, Karl E. (1830), Professor of Jurisprudence
Halin, Elkan Markus (1781-1860), Professor of Philology

Henle, Friedrich Gustav Jacob (1809-85), German anatomist
 Henschel, A. V. (1824-57), Professor of Botany, Breslau
 Herz, Henrietta (1764-1803), German authoress
 Hiller, Ferdinand von (1811-86), German musical composer
 Hirsch, Theodor (1806-81), Professor of History, Griefswald
 Jacobi, K. G. (1804-57), Professor of mathematics, Berlin
 Jacobson, Heinrich (1826-90), Professor of medicine, Berlin
 Jacobson, Ludwig (1766-1842), Professor of medicine
 Jacoby, Heinrich Otto (1815-64), Professor of Greek
 Jaffe, Philip (1819-70), Professor of History, Berlin
 Joachimstadt, Ferdinand (1816-61), Professor of Mathematics
 Josephsohn, Jacob (born 1818), Swedish musical composer
 Kalisch, David (1820-72), German dramatist
 Kalkar, Christian (1803-86), Swedish writer and divine
 Klein, J. L. (1810-76), German literature
 Kossmann, Heinrich (1813-36), Mathematician
 Gronecker, L. (1823), German mathematician
 Lebert, Herman (1813-78), Professor of medicine, Breslau
 Lehrs, Karl (1802-78), Professor of Greek
 Lehrs, Siegfried, Philologist
 Lessmann, Daniel (1794-1831), German writer
 Levin, Rahel, German social leader
 Lewald, Fanny (1811-89), German authoress
 Lopez, Sir Menasseh (1831), English judge; M.P.
 Magnus, Eduard (1799-1872), Professor of Arts, Berlin
 Magnus, Heinrich Gustav (1802-70), Professor of Chemistry
 Magnus, Ludwig Immanuel, Mathematician, Berlin
 Mayer, Solomon (1797-1862), German Professor of Law
 Meir, Moritz Her. Ed., Professor of Philosophy, Halle
 Mendelssohn, Dorothea (1769-1839), German social leader
 Monteflore, Lydia (baptized 1858), Aunt of Sir Moses Monteflore
 Neumann, Karl Fred (1793-1870), German Orientalist
 Palgrave, Sir Frances Cohen (1788-1861), Historian
 Philippi, Fr. Ad. (1809-82), Professor of mathematics
 Ponte, Lorenza da (1749-1839), Writer and composer
 Ricardo, Daniel (1772-1823), Political economist
 Rosenheim, Johann George (1816-87), Professor of Mathematics
 Rubino, Joseph Karl (born 1799), Professor of history
 Rubenstein, Anton G. (1829-89), Russian musician
 Simson, Martin Eduard von (1810), Lawyer, President of German Parliament; Leader of
 Conservative Party
 Spiegelberg, Otto (1830-81), Professor of Medicine, Breslau
 Stahl, Fried (1802-61), Professor of Jurisprudence
 Stronsberg, Bethels Henry (1823-84), German financier
 Wolfers, Jacob Philip (1803), Professor of Astronomy
 Wolf, Oscar Ludwig (1799-1851), German professor of literature
 Ximenes, Sir Moses (1762), English High Sheriff

To record the mighty works of these men several volumes would be necessary. A leading Jewish journalist in a recent article, "The Conversion Epidemic Among the Jews," confesses that these converts are not merely ordinary persons but men of prominence; it is not always the poor and ignorant who embrace Christ but very often the intelligent and wealthy class. Says he: "It must be acknowledged that in the last century so many hundreds of thousands left us, I maintain that the number of those who have been baptized, since the death of Moses Mendelssohn to the present day, is not less than 350,000 Jews."

This list is by no means complete but it is sufficient to convince the most skeptical person that the preaching of the Gospel is far from being a failure. On the contrary, whenever an honest and earnest effort has been put forth the results have been most gratifying.

In our own times their numbers increase at an astonishing speed. The Jewish papers almost daily bring reports of conversions in large numbers, all over the world. They call it an "epidemic." One paper reported, for example, that during the first half of 1920 no less than 10,000 Jews were baptized in Budapest alone. Such news comes in from all parts of the globe. A certain Jewish daily estimates the number of conversions since World War I to be 100,000.

With the Apostle Paul we would ask, "**Hath God cast away his people Israel?**" and with him we answer, "**God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? . . . For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? . . . For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved**" (Romans 11).

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