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A Jewish View of Jesus, 1917.

Jan. 26, 1917

1005

I. Introduction: The motive which prompts these comparative studies of religions is not intolerance nor love of polemics, nor disputations.

1) It is an honest seeking after the truth. Rabbis have said
(Hebrew - see p. 1 of mss)
, and the prophet of Nazareth is quoted as saying "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free". Our object is to discover the things which bear the seal of God - truth. Our aim is to extend the spiritual domains of man's freedom by destroying the confining walls of error.

2) Another motive which prompts these lectures is the wish to define clearly our attitude to the great religions about us. Men are approaching one another more closely today, in social and spiritual intercourse. This intercourse brings about a free exchange of views ~~XXXX~~ concerning the vital things of life. And religion, being of the most vital, is frequently the subject of such exchanges of opinions. It behooves the Jewish layman to be well posted and informed.

3) And the third motive is this: that we are firmly convinced that he who knows but one religion knows none. Religion is man's attempt to interpret the great mysteries of life and to bring himself into relation with them. Interpretations vary and he who knows his interpretation only and consciously ignores the many others is stultifying his mental and spiritual growth. No one can be a scientist who deliberately refuses to take cognizance of other people's theories or discoveries. No one can be a philosopher who knows but his own little philosophical system. So with religion. All religions have a nucleus, a kernel of truth, the seeking after God and truth. Their ways may differ, their methods may vary, but we should know them.

II. Introduction B: There was a time when a study such as ours - "The

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Jewish view of Jesus" would not have been discussed in a Jewish pulpit. There are still today sections of Jewry where such a discussion would not be countenanced. And it isn't mere bigotry and narrow-mindedness which accounts for this attitude on the part of many of our people. Let us face the facts. Jesus was, in the eyes of Jewry and of the world, the founder of Christianity and Christianity meant for the Jew the agency which oppressed and persecuted him for 16 centuries. Christianity spelt for the Jew not the message of "love your enemies", "forgive them for they know not what they do", and similar noble teachings of the gentle prophet of Nazareth, but hatred and intolerance, exiles and mob riots. Every festival commemorating the alleged birth and resurrection of the founder of Christianity was the signal for anti-Jewish demonstrations.

then
Is it any wonder that the name Jesus became anathema? Times have changed. Men have learnt ~~not~~ that devotion to one faith does not entail hatred of another. We have also learnt that the errors and sins of Christianity cannot rightly be laid at the door of its founder who least of all men would countenance them. The Jew today can without compunction and without passion study the life and teachings of Jesus as he would study the life and teachings of any other teacher of his people, of any other Jew.

III. In our study of the Jewish view of Jesus we shall divide the subject into two parts. 1) The Jewish view of the life of Jesus which view we share in common with all advanced students of history and higher Biblical critics, which view is scientific view and 2) The Jewish view of the teachings of Jesus which is more subjective and interpretative.

IV. The Jewish view of the life of Jesus.

A. Difficulty of subject: It is necessary for us, in the first place, to think in terms of the East. Quote p.56 f Delitzsch. Every fact is distorted, swathed in myth, exaggerated and miracleized.

B. Scarcity and unreliability of documents. 1) Not one historian mentions his name. Josephus does not. One passage in Josephus which is spurious and interpolative. 2) Talmud does not preserve historical data of life and death of Jesus. About 20 references which are indistinct echoes of N. T. traditions. Most references are from 3 and 4 centuries and from Babylonian sources. 3) Paul who is earliest of N.T. writers never knew Jesus and knew little of his life. 4) Modern criticism has established the fact that the four gospels are not the works of the men whose name they bear. They are not the statements of eye-witnesses. They are collections of fragments which received their present shape, at the earliest, during the opening years of the 2 century. At least two generations intervened between those who wrote down the events and those who could have been eye-witnesses to them. 5) Ignorance which gospels betray with regards to institutions and parties during national(?) life of Jewish people gives one the impression that they are the products of the latter half of the 2 century. 6) So that for a century and over the story of Jesus passed orally from mouth to mouth gaining in supernaturalism and legendary character as it went. Embellished, overlaid with the miraculous, many accounts floated about in primitive church until these four were canonized. 7) They were written by men who were not historians but whose aim was principally to prove that Jesus was the Messiah and Saviour of the World.

V. With so little authoritative evidence at our disposal, we must proceed carefully, picking the grains of truth from the chaff of legend. What can we say with any degree of certainty concerning the birth life, crucifixion and the alleged resurrection and divinity of Jesus.

VI. Birth. Miraculous concerning - 1) Jesus and Mary never make mention of it. 2) Paul does not. Galatians and Romans - "made of the seed of

David according to the flesh". 3) Mark earliest of 4 gospels and biographer, does not. ~~XXXXXX~~ 4) John (c.120) does not but speaks of him as son of Joseph. 5) Early church fathers, Clement of Rome, Polycarp of Smyrna, and Ignatius of Antioch (end 1 cent.) did not know it. 6) Up to the middle of ~~XX~~ 2 century not a single Christian writer with the exception of Matthew and Luke make mention of it. But here two discoveries of old manuscripts have proven that these references are interpolation. In 1892 Sinaitic mss. which is the Syriac translation of Matthew and which is 200 years older than the Greek, was discovered and Matthew 1:16 reads in it "Jacob begat Joseph and Joseph begat Jesus". The Greek, a later product, reads "And Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ". 7) What gave rise to the idea of virgin birth of Jesus? When Jesus came to be regarded as the Messiah, his followers, especially those who lived 100 years after him, came to find predictions ~~XX~~ in the O.T. ~~XX~~ concerning his coming. The tendency to allegorize the Scriptures was rampant. Texts were distorted and taken out of their contexts to serve their immediate purpose. Aim to find in life of Jesus fulfillment of O.T. prophecies. There is a prophecy in Isaiah 7.14,16. Ahaz King of Judah is hard pressed by Aram and Israel. Isaiah prophecies that Aram and Israel will soon be laid waste and in sign of that he says that a woman who was then with child ~~XXXX~~ shall be able to name her son Emmanuel - God is with us, since within a very few months deliverance will come. Now Isaiah would not give a sign that will come to pass 700 years later: now the ~~XXX~~ Hebrew of Isaiah's prophecy is *(Hebrew see p. 5 of mss)*

The ~~XXX~~ N.T. author depended on Greek translation which had *14-p. 5* translated as virgin. Now *14-p. 5* is not virgin but woman. *14-p. 5* is Hebrew for virgin. A Catholic scholar as early as 1778 pointed this out

at risk of his life. Since O.T said a virgin will give birth and
 to
 since this passage refers ~~XX~~ Messiah or Jesus, hence Jesus had to be born
 of a virgin. 8) This is not the only distortion of text. Had I the time
 I would show ~~XX~~ where the story of Jesus's birth in Bethlehem originated,
 where his journey to Egypt, of which all but Matthew are ignorant, ori-
 ginated but suffice it to say that honest critical research forbids us
 to accept the story of the immaculate birth of Jesus. This is exclusive
 of the scientific, physiological absurdity of it.

VII. Born in Galilee about 4 B.C., son of humble parents, car-
 penter by trade. Reared in a Jewish environment. Educated in the lore of
 the
 his people, filled with ~~X~~ love for his people. Acquainted with ~~KNE~~ old
 prophetic spirit. Reared among poor folks, fishermen. Deeply spiritual
 man. Became imbued with the ideas and aspirations common in his day.
 The hope for a Messiah which people were looking for. The Day of the
 Lord. Jesus hears John the Baptist preach in 29 A.D. The impression is
 overpowering. Unshorn hair, leather girdle. Announcing coming of Day of
 the Lord and urging repentance. Jesus is baptized. Identified himself
 with prophetic movement. When John is arrested Jesus takes up the work.
 Goes through Galilee preaching the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven and
 urging men to prepare themselves for it by repenting. (People ~~XXXXXX~~ iden-
 tified this Kingdom with the re-establishment of the Throne of David and
 the subjection of all heathen nations to the yoke of Israel.) Heals the
 sick, gathers disciples around him. Crowds follow him. In these groups
 of immediate disciples Jesus annunciates his principles of faith and con-
 duct - Sermon on the Mount. Goes to Jerusalem to preach coming of King-
 dom of Heaven. Is made to ride into city on two asses. Zech. 9.9

(Hebrew - see p. 6 of mss)

Riding upon an ass that is to say

an ass's colt. (Matt. 22*)

Enters the Temple and is disgusted with money changers and slaughter. "My house shall be called a house of prayer". Attacked sacrificial system and like Jeremāāh of old predicted destruction of the Temple. Antagonized Pharisees and Sadducees. Arrested at Gethsemane.

VIII. Trial of Jesus. Illegal according to gospels. Sanhedrin.

1) Court could not convene at night. 2) Could not condemn a person on the same day that his case was taken up. 3) Could not sit in a day before Sabbath or festival. 4) (crossed out) see mss.) 5) In case of blasphemy could not convict unless the **utternade** was a plain blasphemy 6) Did not have power over life and death. 7) Jews did not use crucifixion as form of execution. There isn't even a word for it in Hebrew. It was abhorrant to them. Four methods of death - by sword, by throttling, by lapidation and by burning.

Jesus was put to death by Pilate in true Roman fashion. The ruling priestly class which was intimate with Pilate denounced him to Pilate as a possible dangerous rebel and he had him executed. In the idea of X Messiah Pilate saw danger.

IX. Resurrection. X XX 1) Resurrection story not found in original mss. of Mark. Sinaitic mss ~~XX~~ and two earlier mss. do not have it. (Quote Schmidt, p. 393) 2) Physical science de death. Such a thing would stultify science.

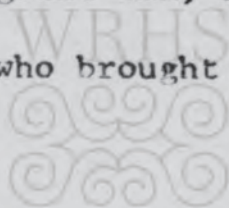
X. Teaching - Jewish. Sermon on the Mount. Jesus a loyal Jew.

- 1) Was not opposed to law. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, of the prophets. I am come not to destroy but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled". Matt. 5.1. Matt. 23.3: "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do".
- 2) His mission to Jews - "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the

into
house of Israel". "Go ~~YNE~~ not into the way of the Gentiles, and ~~XXXX~~ ~~ENE~~
any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep
of the house of Israel." 3) Did not claim that he was Messiah or divine.
1. "Why callest thou me ~~ENE~~ good, there is none good save ~~ENE~~ one, that is
God". 2. Taught men to pray to God. 3. Knew of only one way of remission
of sins i. e. by penitence and prayer. 4. Forbade disciples to call him
Messiah. 5. If he thought he was Messiah it was in human sense. 6. Never
claimed to be the physical son of God.

XI. Shortcomings of Jesus. 1) Was unmarried. 2) Without proper-
ty. Hated wealth. Could not be our guide in complete sense. 3) No prac-
tical selp for life. 4) Too much ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ engrossed in coming catas-
trophe to think of social duties, relations, etc.

XII. Was great man, Jew among Jews, one of the galaxy of great
spirits of Israel who brought men nearer to God.



ANNOUNCING

A series of Lectures on "Judaism and Other Faiths," at the
Eoff Street Temple, beginning

FRIDAY EVENING, JANUARY 26th, 1917, at 7:45 o'clock.

Jan. 26 The Jewish View of Jesus.

Feb. 2 Can Christianity ~~Support~~ ^{SUPPLANT} Judaism? Judaism and
Christianity compared.

Feb. 9 Judaism and Christian Science. Are they Com-
patible?

Feb. 16 Judaism and Ethical Culture.

You and your friends are cordially welcome.

Rabbi A. H. SILVER.

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WRHS



Jan 26

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Christianity stood against for the Jew the agency which oppressed (2) and persecuted him for sixteen centuries. Christianity spelt for the Jew not the message of "love your enemies", "forgive them for they know not what they do" and similar noble teachings of the gentle prophet of Nazareth, but hatred and intolerance, ~~and~~ exiles and mob riots. Every festival commemorating the ~~the~~ alleged birth and resurrection of the founder of Christianity was the signal for Jew-baiting and Jew anti-Jewish demonstrations. Is it any wonder then that the name Jesus became anathema? Times have changed. Men have learnt that devotion to one faith does not entail hatred of another. We have also learnt that the errors and sins of Christianity cannot rightly be laid to the door of its founder who least of all men would condemn them. The Jew to-day, can without compunction and without passions study the life and teachings of Jesus as he would study the life and teachings of any other teacher of his people, of any other Jew.

"The Jew View"

III. Introduction: Jesus was a Jew: - a faithful, loyal Jew.

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IV. The Jewish View of the life of Jesus: —

- A. ^{different subject} It is necessary for us, in the first place to think in terms of the East. Note P. 56. 7. H. H. H. Every fact is distorted, swathed in myth, exaggerated and misinterpreted.
- B. Scarcity and unreliability of documents.
1. Not one historian mentions his name. Josephus does not. One passage in Josephus which is spurious & interpolation.
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2. Paul does not. Galatians & Romans — "made of the seed of David according to the flesh" —

- 3.- Mark, earliest of 4 gospels & biographer. does not. (4)
- 4.- John (c. 120) does not. but speaks of him as son of Joseph.
- 5.- Early Church Fathers, Clement of Rome, Polycarp of Smyrna and Ignatius of Antioch (end 1 C.) did not know it.
6. Up to middle of 2nd C. not a single Ch. writer with the exception of Matthew & Luke make mention of it. But here two discoveries of old mss. have proven that these references are interpolations. In 1892 Sinaitic mss. which is the Syriac trans. of Matt. and which is 200 yrs older than the Greek, was discovered and Mat. 1. 16 reads in it Joseph begat Joseph and Joseph begat Jesus. The Greek, a late product reads "and Joseph begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ".
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since within a very few months ~~the~~ deliverance will come. Now Isaiah would not give signs that will come to pass 7 or yrs later. Now the Hebrew of Is. prophecy is

וְיָלֵד בְּתוּלָה - The N.T. authors depended on Greek translation which had translated as virgin. Now בְּתוּלָה is not virgin but woman, אַלְמָנָה is Heb. for virgin. A Catholic scholar as early as 1778 pointed this out at risk of his life. Since O.T. to aid a virgin will give birth and since this passage refers to Messiah's Jews, hence Jesus had to be born of a virgin.

8. This is not the only distorting text. Had I the time I would show where the story of the Jesus birth in Bethlehem originated, where his journey to Egypt, which all, but Matthew, are ignorant, originated but suffice it to say - that honest critical research forbids us to accept the story of the miraculous birth, & this is exclusively the scientific, physiological absurdity & it.

VII. Born in Galilee about 4 ~~or~~ B.C. Son of humble parents. A carpenter by trade. Reared in a Jewish environment. Educated in the law of his people. Filled with the love for his people. Acquainted with Old prophetic spirit. Heard among poor folk's fishermen. Deeply spiritual man. Became imbued with the ideas & aspirations common in his day. The hope for a messiah which people were looking for. The way of the Lord. Jesus hears John the Baptist preach in 29 A.D. The impression is overpowering. Unshorn hair, leather girdle.

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Repentance — Jesus is baptized. Identified him-
self with prophetic movement. When John is arrested
Jesus takes up the work. Goes through Galilee
preaching the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven and
urging men to prepare themselves for it by repenting.
(People identified this Kingdom with the establish-
ment of the Throne of David and the subjection of all
nations to God of Israel.). Heals the sick
gathers disciples round him. Always followed him.
On these groups of immediate disciples
Jesus announces his principles of faith
and conduct. Sermon on the Mount.

~~Heals Pharisees, fornicators~~
✓ Goes to Jerusalem to preach coming of Kingdom
of Heaven. Is made to ride into city on 2 asses.
Zecl. 9.9. ~~וְיָסַד עָלָיו אֶת הַיָּסוֹד~~ - riding
upon an ass that is to say an ass's colt. (Matt.
21.2-7). Enters the Temple and is disrupted with
money changers and slaughter. "My House shall be called
a house of prayer - attached sacrificial system and
like Jewish gold at predicted destruction of Temple.
Antagonizes Pharisees & Sadducees. Arrested at Bethsema-
ne. —

VIII. Trial of Jesus. Illegal ascending to Joseph's. Sanhedrin
1. Court could not convene at night.
2. Could not condemn a person on the same day that
his case was taken up.
3. Could not sit on a day before Sabbath or Festival
4. Could not convict without concurrent testimony of 2
witnesses

5. In case of blasphemy could not convict unless the utterance was a plain blasphemy.

6. Could not have power over life and death.

7. Jews did not use crucifixion as form of execution. There is not even word for it in Heb. It was detestable to them. 4 methods, death by sword, by throttling, by lapidation & by burning.

Jesus was put to death by Pilate in true Roman fashion. The ruling priestly class which was in tune with Pilate denounced him to P. as a possible dangerous rebel and he had been executed. In the idea of messiah, Pilate saw danger.

IX. Resurrection.

1. Resurrection story not found in original mss. of Mark. Synoptic mss. 7 w/ each other mss do not have it. (Quote Schmidt. p. 393)

2. Physical Science of death. Such a thing would defy science.

X. Teaching - Jewish. Sermon on Mount. J. a loyal Jew. Was not opposed to Law.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, Matt. 5:17 or the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

Matt. 23.3. "all ∴ whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: —

~~Was~~
② His mission to Jews —
"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" — "So ^{and} ~~go~~ ^{away} unto the way of the Gentiles and unto the ~~the~~ ^{any} city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

③ ~~was~~ ~~not~~ did not claim that he was Messiah or divine:

- out
- ✓ 1. Why called them the good, there is none good save one, that is, God.
 - ✓ 2. Taught men to pray to God.
 - ✓ 3. Knew of only one way of redemption & was s.c. by penitence & prayer.

4. Forbade disciples to call him Messiahs.

5. If he that he was M. it was in human sense.

6. Never claimed to be ~~physic~~ ~~man of~~ ~~God~~ ~~son of~~ ~~God~~

④ Shortcomings of J. —

1. Was unmarried

2. Without property. Hated wealth.

Could not be our guide in ~~complete~~ sense.

3. No practical help for life

4. Too much expressed in coming back to
to think of social duties, relations
etc.

XII. Was great man, Jew among Jews, one
of the galaxy, great spirits of Israel who
brought men nearer to God.

WRHS

