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# THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

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## REVIEW SECTION.

### I.—THE PROTESTANT CHURCH OF GERMANY.

By PROFESSOR GEORGE H. SCHODDE, PH.D., COLUMBUS, OHIO.

NUMERICALLY, and still more intellectually, the leadership of the Protestant Church of the world belongs to Germany. Of the nearly 50,000,000 inhabitants of the Fatherland reported by the latest census, fully two-thirds are credited to Protestantism. Deducting from these figures even a fair-sized percentage of merely nominal adherents, there yet remains for the land of Luther a larger contingent of Protestants than even England or the United States can claim. Yet this numerical superiority of Protestant Germany is but a comparatively unimportant ground for assigning to her the precedence in the family of the evangelical Churches of Christendom. Quantity, and number, and bulk are not the measure of influence and power. The leadership of Germany in the Protestant thought and theology of the age is undisputed. While in the sphere of practical Christian activity, such as missionary enterprises, the Anglo-Saxon Churches of England and America are more energetic and willing to labor and sacrifice, and are ordinarily more successful, too, in this sphere than the thoughtful and thinking Germans, it is nevertheless to the latter that the new movements in theological thought—which in these cosmopolitan days, when neither language nor nationality forms a boundary to the spread of new ideas and ideals, have become such powerful factors and forces in modern Church life—must be credited. The influence of German theological thought on that of Protestantism everywhere is simply marvelous, and is growing constantly. The fact that ordinarily several hundred of the brightest of graduates of American colleges and seminaries cross the waters and sit down at the feet of the savants of the famous German universities to learn the secrets of their methods and manners of research, as also the fact that the ups and downs of German theological discussions are eagerly watched by very many in the rank and file of the American ministry, is evidence enough that in

his hostility to the Elamites, but it also explains that fact which has so surprised scholars of late, the wide use of the cuneiform writing in Palestine a few centuries later, as proved by the Tel-el-Amarna tablets. The Elamites used the cuneiform script. This raid of Kudur-Lagamar was one of a large number which brought Canaan under the rule of Elam and Babylonia. Canaan had ties of blood and language and conquest with Babylonia, but not with the nearer Egypt. Its literature and writing were Babylonian, not Egyptian. We may not be surprised if we learn that its religion, and its notions of cosmogony, and all its faiths and legends were closely allied to those of Babylonia.

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## SERMONIC SECTION.

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

BY JOSEPH RABINOWITZ, LEADER OF  
THE JEWISH-CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT  
IN KISHNEFF, SOUTH RUSSIA.\*

*Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.*  
—Ps. lxxix. 7.

*And they kneeled down before him and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!*—Matt. xxvii. 29.

DEARLY beloved children of Israel, let us join in giving glory to the eter-

\* The author of this sermon is one of the most remarkable men of our times, and the movement at the head of which he has stood for nearly ten years is one of the most significant phenomena in the modern religious world. It is a spontaneous Christward agitation among the old-fashioned orthodox Jews of the East, and Rabinowitz, who is a lawyer and literary man, aims at the organization of a national Jewish-Christian Church, in which, while fully accepting Christ as the promised Messiah of the Old Testament, the new congregation shall yet retain such national characteristics of the Jews that are not in conflict with the acceptance of Christianity. Among these Rabinowitz numbers circumcision and the observance of the seventh day of the week as the day of rest and worship. Rabinowitz was baptized in Berlin by Professor Mead, of Andover, and was one of the attractions at the World's Fair Congress of Religions in Chicago. His sermons and addresses, of which he has published a large number, are delivered generally in the Jewish jargon current among Eastern Israelites. His method is to select a text from both the Old and the New Testament as parallel bases for his discourse. The sermon here given, originally preached in Russian, is a representative discourse of the reformer.

nal God of Israel, who controls the courses of time, and let us render a prayer of thanks unto Him who in His mercy has ordained the changes of time. For many years the Jews have during the present holy Passah week lived in great concern and care, as they feared through word or deed to excite the Christians against them, who were, as a rule, easily offended during this period, because the ancestors of the Jews on the day before Passah, in the sacred city of Jerusalem, delivered our Jesus Christ to be scourged and crucified. The wrath of the Christians has caused much Jewish blood to flow, and it is not surprising that the Jews, too, at the approach of the present week should show their discontent at the slightest hint at the bloody narrative of Jesus of Nazareth, whom the entire Christian world worships as the Messiah, the Son of the living God. The Jews were vexed at the thought that this affair should have become the everlasting inheritance of the nations of the earth, and thus this important week becomes deeply significant for both Jews and Christians. But, thanks be unto God, through whose grace and goodness it has also been granted unto us also, the children of Israel, to meet together in our house of worship in this great week; and just as is the case with all true Christians, we too, through His holy name, can learn from the books of the Old and the New Covenant of this eternal divine drama, of this terrible and innocent death, which the Saviour of the world, in love and humility, took

upon Himself. Yea, in truth, our gratitude toward our Heavenly Father is endless, who has given to us all, Jews and all other nationalities, the possibility now, too, in the days of the rapid development of thought and the wonderful unfolding of science and learning, to recognize and appreciate in the despised and crucified Jesus, Him whom the pious and righteous Simeon recognized as the fulfilment of prophecy in the infant on the arms of His mother Mary, as the salvation which God has prepared for *all* nations, and a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of His people Israel (Luke ii.). That which the old eyes of the righteous Simeon, through the power of the Holy Spirit, saw, neither the proud Jews nor the ignorant but bold Romans were able to see. It was an easy matter for the Jewish leader, Caiaphas, to decide on the death of Jesus by saying, "It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (John ii. 50). It could not occur to him that this Jesus would prove to be the *only* person in the world who should prove Himself to be the Saviour, not only for the sins of the Jewish people, but for those of *all* the world, in accordance with the prediction of the prophet, that He should bear the sins of many (Is. liii. 10). Again, it was not a hard thing for the leader of the heathens, the provincial Pontius Pilate, in Jerusalem, to deride Jesus and to hand Him over to the Jews with the words, "Behold the man" (John xix. 5). He could have no suspicion of the fact that human beings can become such, in the fullest and highest sense of the word, only when they keep constantly before their eyes as their highest ideal the God-man, Jesus Christ, and follow in His footprints. Only in later times the regenerated from among the Gentiles begin to understand the meaning of the words, "Behold the Man!" which were spoken by their leading representative; and, side by side with them, many of the Jews are beginning to appreciate the words: "It is expedi-

ent that one man should die for the people, and that the *whole* nation perish not."

When we this day remember the suffering and death which Jesus Christ took upon Himself, which, however, were merited by the sins of both Jew and Gentile, we must join in with all those among men who firmly believe that that precious and sacred blood of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, cleanses all of us who are sinners, Jews and Gentiles; and we should all from our heart of hearts pray unto God that He should open our eyes more and more, that we may see in Christ the salvation which has been prepared for all peoples who believe. May He give us His Holy Spirit, to enable us all, Jews and Gentiles, to understand that Jesus Christ did not come into this world as man in order to cause discord or strife among men, and enable us to understand the words of the holy apostle, St. Paul, when he says: "For He is our peace, who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of partition" (Eph. ii. 14). May He help us all to shake off the old man, with his sins and death, and put on the new and complete man through faith in Jesus Christ, of whom the Holy Ghost, through the lips of Pilate, said, "Behold the Man!"

With awe and reverence, we stand silent before this deep and unbounded mystery of the holy evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—the mystery concerning Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the son of David, the King of the Jews. We must remember that all the four gospels were written in the course of the first Christian century after the birth, life, death, and resurrection of the Saviour. Those were the times when men in the higher ranks of society treated with scorn little books of the kind of these four which spoke of a crucified Jew, Jesus. Those were the times in which every one who dared to confess his faith in Jesus as the Son of the living God, as the risen Lord, who had also ascended unto heaven, as the eternal King from the house of

David, was regarded as silly and the fit subject for ridicule and abuse. Under such circumstances it would have seemed more natural if the evangelists had confined themselves more to the parables and teachings which mark the life of Christ before he was condemned at the hands of the Jews. We see, however, that they devote more attention and space to His sufferings, and that they are careful to preserve for their descendants a comparatively complete account of the mockery which He was compelled to endure before His crucifixion and death.

If we for a moment would accept as correct the views of the Talmudists, that the evangelists were common deceivers, who tried by different kinds of fables to influence the common rabble and to gain them over for their cause, we naturally ask the question, Why did they, then, not keep silent on His disgraceful death; and why did they not prefer to boast of His courageous and heroic end? Manifestly the object of the evangelists was one of an entirely different kind. They did not exaggerate in describing the suffering of Jesus in order to cause tears to spring in the eyes of their readers and awaken sympathy in their hearts. Nor did they give expression to their sorrows and lamentations, as did Jeremiah after the destruction of the first temple. Neither groaning nor lamentations do we hear them utter at the death of the Redeemer, for they were well acquainted with His wish, that they should not weep over Him (Luke xxiii. 28). No, they wrote their gospels concerning the humiliation and sufferings of Christ with divine, heavenly smiles on their countenances—with those smiles of which the Psalmist speaks (Ps. ii. 4), "He that sitteth in the heavens laugheth;" to the end that the ignorance, the poverty, the blindness of men may become all the more apparent; that men may become convinced that their willing and doing signifies nothing; that without their consent the will of God will be accomplished; that they are only

instruments in His hands; that they only carry out His determinations, although they think they are doing their own desires.

In narrating to us in fulness of detail how Christ was mocked and scoffed, the evangelists at the same time give us a clear account of the deep significance of the great work which He has accomplished. As we now, after the course of 1800 years, read of this scoffing and scorn which was heaped upon the Saviour, we spontaneously turn to the children of the present nineteenth century with the question, Who understood more quickly the mission of Jesus of Nazareth, the thousands of Jews, the Pharisees and Scribes, Sadducees and Roman soldiery—who derided Him and cried out, "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" or those poor, insignificant fishermen, who truly believed in Jesus, that He, as the Son of the living God, the Redeemer of the world and the eternal Son of David, was also the king of the Jews? Did not the crown of thorns which was placed in mockery on His head become the most precious crown of the world? Has not the bending of the knees, done in derision by His abusers, become in truth a bending in deep devotion on the part of countless millions over the entire globe? It is now also time to recognize in its truth and significance the words, "Hail, king of the Jews!" and to hope that this, too, shall become a living truth and reality. For the Jews, too, can yet be raised, and, in accordance with the Divine will, like other people, can become a living nation by learning to believe, as do other people, in Jesus Christ, the Nazarene, as the king of the Jews.

What a warm and powerful faith, what a living and mighty confidence, fill the hearts of the evangelists, that they were able to pen all the sufferings and sorrows which were inflicted upon the Messiah by His contemporaries. Whence, we must ask, did the disciples get such a firm faith and such deep convictions that the despised and crucified Jesus was really the Lord and King of

the world? I do not speak of the manner in which the expectation of a few pious Jews were realized, but where they secured this firm conviction and certainty. It would be useless to look for the sources in historical or logical data. The riddle is solved by the evangelist himself in Luke xxiv. 25-30, where we are told that Jesus, having arisen from the dead, called two of His disciples "foolish men" because they did not understand from the Sacred Scriptures and from the prophets that it had been predicted concerning Him that He should suffer thus that He might enter upon His glory. The Scriptures, then, are the sources of faith. The constant reading of these writings, the divinely inspired, holy books, opened their eyes and enabled them to see in all the sufferings of Christ His eternal glory. These books, of which Christ says that not an iota or tittle shall be abrogated, gave them also the faith which convinced and still convinces the world.

Dearly beloved brethren, I believe that you, too, from Ps. lxxix., read in your hearing, and which the Lord without doubt also frequently read to His disciples, can gain the conviction that the rejected and crucified Jesus is the Christ, the glorified King of the Jews, who sits at the right hand of God the Father until all things in heaven and on earth shall be subject to Him. Pray, therefore, to your Heavenly Father, that He may enable you to understand the words of the Psalmist and the prophets. Remember also this, that the Lord had promised that He will help Zion, and recognize the fact that all the sufferings of Christ have the one purpose, to give life to those who seek the Lord, so that the three ideas become inseparable—God, Help, and Zion.

Jesus shows us that, for the Father's sake, He endured disgrace; but the Heavenly Father has already shown that He has already fulfilled the prayer of His Son (Ps. lxxix. 6), "Let not them that wait on Thee be ashamed through Me." Be not ashamed of the crucified Jesus.

Have the full assurance that God has given Him the power to establish the new Jerusalem, and that the prophecy shall be fulfilled: "And they that love His name shall dwell therein" (Ps. lxxix. 36). Amen.

#### THE CONCERN FOR TEMPORAL GOODS.

BY PASTOR JOHN QUANDT [EVANGELICAL], THE HAGUE, HOLLAND.

*And he said unto his disciples, therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.—*  
Luke xii. 22.

"AND he said unto his disciples." The man who speaks these words does so at all times from experience, never as a blind man would of colors, to use a popular saying. Since he here speaks of concern for earthly goods, he must by personal experience have thoroughly learned what it means to be in need of temporal things, certainly no less than the careworn men and women of the lowly classes of our own date. Jesus Christ was born in a stable; He grew up in a hut. The table of the carpenter Joseph in all probability did not groan with a wealth of good things. Mary, who soon became a widow, no doubt was compelled to practice the closest economy. When Jesus, as a young man of 30, entered upon his career and public ministry, his outward circumstances and surroundings were anything but brilliant. He was not in the possession of a fixed income, and the leading one among his disciples became embarrassed when he was called upon to pay tribute for the Master. Nor did the Saviour have a fixed place of residence—no place that he could call His own. He Himself tells us that while the foxes have holes and the birds have their nests, the Son of Man had not where He could lay His head. On the long journey from Jerusalem to Galilee He had taken no bite of bread with Him, nor a drop of water; only through the