

An Open Letter.

Dear Jewish Friend,—

As a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, a Gentile by earthly birth, I love Israel, and desire to remember the words of Psalm 122. 6, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." But I would not only look forward and think of the **blessed** time when the remnant of Jacob will return to the Mighty God (Isa. 10. 21 with 9. 6), and when they shall look upon Him Whom they have pierced (Zech. 12. 10), but I should rejoice if you, an individual Israelite, were **here and now**, brought to a personal joy in God's wonderful salvation. You have been taught, it may be, that Christendom is Christian, and you look on the faith in the Lord Jesus as a kind of Gentile "religion." These are all mistakes. No one is a Christian because born in any land miscalled "Christian." There is actually **no** Christian country, though Christians are found in all countries. The idea of different "religions" and Christianity among them is quite a mistake. "Religions" are man-made. When God called Abraham, He led him to a living faith, and Abraham knew God. A believer to-day has a like blessing, and as Abraham looked forward to the Lamb God would provide for Himself (Gen. 22. 8, notice the future still in verse 14), so we look backward to the work "He hath done" (Ps. 22. 31). If you read the Hebrew Scriptures carefully, you will see that, when Adam sinned, God's first action was to make "coats of skin," and the difference between Cain and Abel (the first one who is mentioned as approved of God) was that the latter had a sacrifice. And there was **exactly** the same difference between the Egyptians and Israel in Exodus 12. God Himself said, "When I see the blood, I will pass (pause) over you, and the plague shall not be upon you" (Ex. 12. 13). God meant what He said. The fact of it is the wages of sin is **death**, and our need is the life of Another, given **for us**. But such an One must be perfect, as the living pictures of Him were "without blemish" (Ex. 12. 5, etc.). And your prophet, Isaiah, wrote clearly, "He bare the sin of many" (Isa. 53. 12). It is so important to **believe** all this. But all men are sinners, and cannot die for other sinners; angels have no body, and if one became man, it would not be right for a created being to bear such judgment for others.

Moreover, if he could, he would do more for us than God, and such a thought would be wicked. So it is plain that if God Himself emphasizes a **Sacrifice**, none but Himself could become **this**, and thus all your difficulty about God becoming **Man**, and the Lord Jesus being God and yet taking a body prepared for Him, is really a grievance you have against the Hebrew Scriptures themselves, and the whole plan of salvation. There is **nothing** impossible to God. He **could** come thus. And, further, He said He would do this. The Mighty God in Isaiah 9. 6 (5) is the Child born, and Exodus 34. 7 puts it so simply that the Lord's very Name is "One **Bearing** iniquity and transgression and sin," and thus the prophet cried out "Who is a God like unto Thee, bearing iniquity?" (Mic. 7. 18).

Far from being a "Gentile religion," this faith in the True Messiah was once found only among some of Israel. The apostles of the Lord Jesus and the writers of the New Testament (except Luke) were of Israel. There was a great crisis 40 years before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, as Jewish tradition suggests, when, alluding to Isaiah 1. 18, it says that the scarlet thread did not turn white for **the last 40** years of the temple. The "crisis" therefore was just the time the Nation of Israel was divided, the smaller part believing Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, and the larger part saying "No." Were the 10 spies right, or the 2, in Numbers 13? When the larger part of Israel deserted David, were they right? The history of Israel, according to Deuteronomy 30. 1-6 and Hosea 3. 4, 5, proves that the larger part of the nation **have** long missed the way. What if the few who followed the Lord Jesus were the **true** remnant of Israel, and if the others are still withholding worship from One Who was God, manifested in the flesh, to bear the sin of many, and if they are thus denying God's salvation by **the** Sacrifice? And what if you are among these? Dear Jewish reader, in love to such, I would still plead with you. Do not think you can remove one of your own sins. But Messiah **has** come, and been "cut off" (Dan. 9. 26): He will soon come again from His seat in heaven (Ps. 110. 1), but will you be ready for Him? He, the Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110. 4), has made one sacrifice for sins for ever, but do you believe in Him, or not?

Yours very sincerely,
Percy W. Heward.