

LECTURE DELIVERED BEFORE A MEETING

OF THE

LITERARY CIRCLE.

OF THE

SHANGHAI'ZIONIST ASSOCIATION

ON

SUNDAY, 18th November, 1906.

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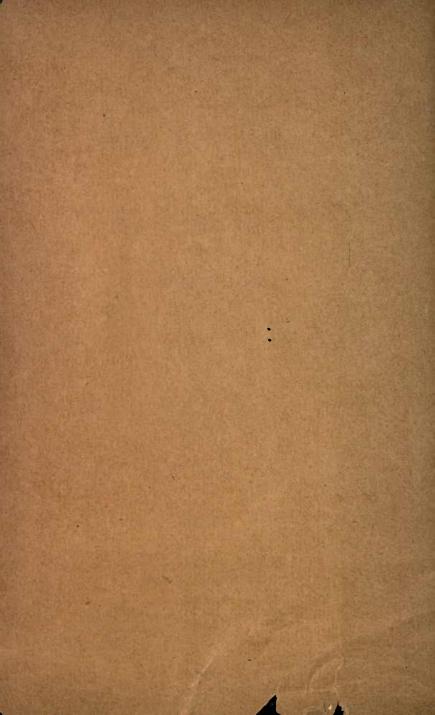
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BY N. E. B. EZRA.

RE-PRINTED FROM "ISRAEL'S MESSENGER."

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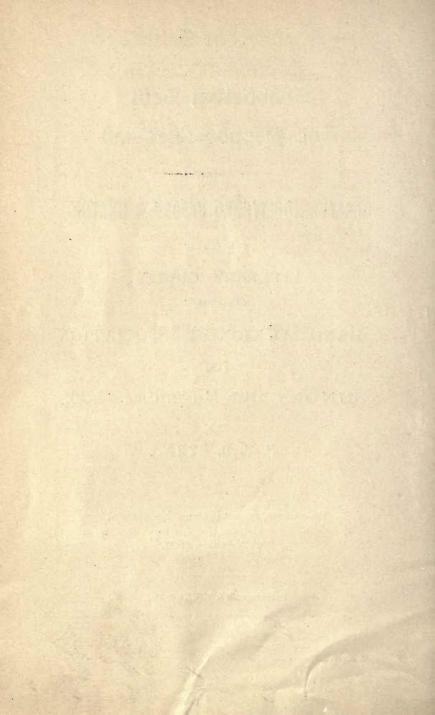
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Shabbethai Sebi The Oseudo=Messiah*

The history of the Jewish race serves to recall into one's minds, the miraculous manner in which they preserved their religion and identity unchanged from generation to generation unto this day. The records from the earliest times afford a marvellous picture to those unbiased thinkers, who wish to know, the why and wherefore, of the preservation of the race ;n the face of unspeakable horrors and persecutions. One of the chief factors, which greatly contributed to keep the race from despair into which it might otherwise have fallen, was the traditional hope of re-gaining once more their lost prestige in the eyes of the nations, through the instrumentality of one who is to be from Davidic descent and who will play the rôle of a redeemer and saviour. This cardinal hope of the Jew bred and nurtured from his boyhood, is one that is calculated to draw our attention to the great tôle that the belief in the coming of the Messiah has exercised in the minds of the followers of Judaism. It, however, clearly illustrates the deep yearning of the mind of man to free himself from the fetters of slavery and persecution, and to realise once more the restoration of the Judaic nation into her former height and glory. The idea of one coming to redeem Israel from her yoke of captivity was cherished. and continues to be cherished to this day.

I hold that every Jew who wishes to justify his existence, should study and be well conversant with the history of his race, inasmuch as it serves to enkindle in his heart of hearts a deep love of and attachment to the great ideals which permeated the minds of our ancestors, and for which many have cheerfully suffered martyrdoms. Now, this meeting of the literary circle of the Zionist Association serves in a great measure to bring us into close touch with the ideals of the past, and becomes the means of strengthening and reviving in the present and rising generation of Jews, a deeper knowledge and revelation of the grand records of our past. Yet, before I commence reading the paper which I had prepared for to-night, I cannot help expressing my deep obligations to

*Lecture delivered before a meeting of the literary circle of the Shanghai Zionist Association on Sunday, 18th November 1906, by N. E. B. EZRA.

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the now famous Jewish Encyclopedia, the great storehouse of Jewish literature and to Graetz's History of the Jews, from which I derived materials to write this essay.

The history of the Jews which though presenting excellent records of remarkable patience and perseverance in the pursuit of Messianic ideals, yet, to our great regret be it stated, has not been left without its darkest chapters. There arose many impostors in Israel who deluded the enthusiasts by playing upon their credulity in making them believe in the genuineness of their mission ; that of being the "Redeemer of Zion". Some of them hoped to realise this through penitence by fasting and prayer, and relied upon miracles to aid the consummation of their hopes ; while others sought to accomplish their mission by swords and bayonets. Curiously enough an attempt was even made to introduce innovations into the Jewish faith. claiming of course, that such actions were divinely ordained by God. The influence of these Pseudo-Messiahs were happily not of a long duration, inasmuch as their insincerity and the untruthful charge of their mission was soon betrayed; but it must be admitted that some of them had a large number of adherents and founded movements that lasted many years. It, however, cannot be gainsaid that the mischief wrought by the efforts of these impostors were of incalculable enormity. They not only failedegregiously failed-in their efforts to bring about the establishment of the promised Messianic goal but curiously enough some of them turned traitors to the cause which they ardently espoused, by turning their back on their ancestral faith. Such act of faithlessness and weakmindedness tended to deceive the people with false hopes and to create ill-will and apostasies in the rank of Judaism. It should be remembered that the rise of such impostors had its origin with the end of the Hasmonean dynasty, when Rome hit upon the scheme of annihilating Judea's independency. Josephus tells us that in the first century, before the Temple was destroyed, there arose a number of Messiahs promising relief from the Roman yoke, and enlisting ready followers. Continuing Josephus says :- "Another body of wicked men also sprung up, cleaner in their hands, but more wicked in their intentions, who destroyed the peace of the city no less than these murderers. For they were deceivers and deluders of the people, and under pretense of divine illumination, were for innovations and changes, and prevailed on the multitude to act like madmen, and went before them in the wilderness, pretending that God would there show them signs of liberty."

Prominent among these list of would-be-Messiahs was Shabbethai Sebi, 240 years ago, whose influence was widespread throughout the Jewish world. lasting in some places for about over a century. Shabbethai Sebi who was born in Smyrna, in Asia Minor on the 9th of Ab, 5426, was of Spanish descent. 'Tall, well built, with dark hair and beard as well as a magnificent voice he presented the appearance of a charming pe sonality. While still an infant he studiously avoided social intercourse with all his surroundings and gave signs of leading a recluse life. He was educated in the Hebrew lore by Joseph Eskapha, one of the best known Talmudists of Sinyrna, but subsequently he showed a great liking to and fascination in the study of Cabbalah. He believed that in order to master the secret Jewish lore, one must give himself to asceticism. To this end he devoted himself. When 20 years of age, he became the teacher of a band of followers who became deeply attached to him by his magnetic and amiable personality. With a hazy knowledge of, and intoxicated with the doctrine of Jewish mysticism, Sebi thought he could bring about the longed-for redemption so anxiously awaited by the children of Israel. However the insincerity of his mission and the mode of his life was at once recognised by the Rabbis, who, together with his teacher Joseph Eskapha excommunicated him from the followship of Israel. This ban seems to have affected him, and in 1651 he fled with his disciples from Smyrua. The enthusiasm was kept under control for fifteen years, when it was renewed with unabated hope and enthusiasm. His disciples, (amongst whom may be mentioned Moses Pinheiro, who was popular and escemed for his scientific attainments), extended to him their full support both moral and financial, which ensured his independency. Dwelling in Turkish lands, Sebi gained many followers. He made the acquaintances of some influential persons amongs: whom may be mentioned the well-known preacher, Abraham Yachini, who gave him a willing ear and even encourage 1 him to persevere in his Messianic claim. Yachini, was looked upon as a talented preacher and enjoyed the esteem and confidence of his co-religionists. Anything therefore emanating from such a source was naturally regarded with awe and reverence; and in or ler to help forward the mission of his Chief, he circul used the following testimony which corroborated Sehi's claim of Messiahship in the eyes of his followers : --

"I, Abraham, was shut up for forty years in a cave, and wondered that the time of miracles did not make its appearance. Then a voice replied to me, 'A son shall be born in the year of the world 5386 (1626). and be called Shabbethai. He shall quell the great dragon: he is the true Messiah, and shall wage war without weapons".

Needless to say, this document coming as it did from such a source created in the mind of Sebi a wild enthusiasm, which could not be quelled so easily. He became convinced of the rôle he was called upon to play, and the city of Salonica afforded him a congenial and healthy soil wherein to push forward the immense nature of his proposed undertaking. There he gained a number of followers and performed all sorts of mystics with which he was familiar, thereby playing upon the feelings of his deluded followers. The latter course of unwarranted action greatly displeased the Rabbis, who eventually succeeded in effecting his banishment from Salonica. In his state of itinerancy he found little or no encouragement from the Jewish community of Morea, who already heard of the sentence passed upon him by the Rabbis. Not deterred by this attitude, he persevered with his mission, and at last he wended his way to Cairo, where he thought the prospect awaiting him was hopeful. However, meeting with very little success he betook himself to Jerusalem, under the delusion that a miracle might take place there, in view of the approaching year 1666, indirectly foretold by the Zohar as the time for the coming of the Messiah, which event might surely bring his plan to a successful goal. Here he managed to gather round him a band of devoted followers who had blind faith in him. In view of the distress to which the community was then subjected by the Turkish officials, and the unhappy financial plight to which the former was consequently exposed, it was decided to send an envoy to a Jewish resident of Cairo, Raphael Joseph Chelebi, who was known to be in good circumstances and inclined to help his afflicted brethren in the Holy Land. Curiously enough Sebi was chosen to act in the capacity for this embassage, which task he undertook wholeheartedly; because he could foresee the help, (which he might be the means), of bringing upon his brethren and thus play the rôle of a Messiah. Needless to say his mission was a pronounced success, which fact, considerably e'ated his dignity and enthusiasm.

At this period a massacre of the Jews took place in Poland, and a Jewish orphan girl was found by some Christians, who, finding no one to look after her, took possession of her, placed her in a convent school and

gave her a Christian education. The girl was so firmly grounded in her ancient faith at her parents' house, that it was found impossible to shake her beliefs in the tenets of Judaism. Finding the surrounding circumstances not to her liking and taste, she cleverly managed to effect her escape. The Jews considered it very risky to keep her with them fearing they might be accused of abetting her, and eventually managed somehow or other to send her to Amsterdam. There she met her brother to whom she narrated all her adventures, and being of an eccentric nature excited probably by the sudden change which had taken place in her fortunes, she repeatedly made the statement that she is destined to get married to one who would deliver Israel from her captivity. After staving some years in Amsterdam, where she was known under the name of Sarah, she managed to reach Leghorn by way of Frankfort-on-the Maine Sebi heard of the inclination of this maiden and seized the opportunity of informing his disciples, that a Jewish girl is destined to be his spiritual wife. Without waiting for any further developments he sent for her, and through the influence of Chelebi, one of the wealthiest Jews of Cairo, he got married to her. This matrimonial union further tended to increase his reputation in the eves of his followers, who, continued to increase by leaps and bounds. Having achieved this almost miracullous success in Cairo, he emigrated with his beautiful wife to the Holy Land. On his way thither he came to Ghaza where he met Nathan Ghazati, a man of 20 years of age, who entered into close relationship with him. Ghazati threw himself heart and soul in the proposed scheme of his colleague, and went so far as to proclaim himself to be the long expected Elijah, as the forerunner of the Messiah. He said that he had been divinely informed on a certain day, that within over a year the Messiah would manifest himself, dethrone the Sultan even without an appeal to arms, render him captive and establish the kingdom of Judea. This wonderful era was to begin in the year 1666. This so-called revelation was widely circulated in writing by Ghazati, and the reception which it received, created wild excitement everwhere. To Chelebi, of Cairo, he informed in a letter that he was fully convinced of the genuineness of the Messianic claim of Sebi, who, within over a year would appear publicly in the rôle of a Messiah. This strange phenomena which suddenly dawned upon the mind of Israel struck the Rabbinical authorities of Jerusalem, who, viewed it with disfavour and utter repugnance, and resolved to kill it in the bud. Sebi was immediately informed to dissuade from his proposed undertakings, otherwise an independent action against him would be taken. To this mandate he refused to pay any attention or consideration, realising at the same time the power of his followers that was behind him. However, the field of opposition against him from unexpected quarters was very stern, and in order to retire from the scene of activities in a decent manner and with some show of dignity on his part, Ghazati seized the opportunity of declaring that Jerusalem had lost its importance as a sacred land, and that Ghaza had taken its place. But Sebi thought otherwise. To him his native city, Smyrna, was most important and there he believed he would achieve greater success than anywhere else. His brothers who were well off, already prepared and assured him of a good and hearty reception. But before leaving Jerusalem, Sebi sent in advance active and zealous missionaries to announce his Messianic appearance, and to fill the mind of the Jewish inhabitants with his name and fame. When the time came for Sebi to leave the Holy Land, he had already become famous and his name was regarded with awe and reverence, and on his arrival at Aleppo he was triumphantly and cordially received by the Jewish people. This spontaneous outburst of devotion to him was no where better exemplified than when he arrived in Smyrna, in 1665. Of the previous sentence passed upon him by the Rabbis everyone seems to have forgotten. The moment was certainly ripe when Sebi was to have the greatest achievements of his life publicly known and recognised by his followers, and amidst a large gathering in the Synagogue with blowing of trumpets, he proclaimed himself the Messiah, on the New Year, September 1665, and the congregation shouted to him "Long live our King, our Messiah !"

The joy with which the Jews beheld the fulfilment of their national aspirations knew no bounds. They were all prepared and realy for an exodus to the land of their ancestors. The fact that the Messiah has made his appearance in Smyrna increased the love and devotion of the Jews towards him a hundredfold. Whenever and wherever he was seen and particularly while preaching in the Synagogue he was met by the singing of Psalms; "The right hand of the Lord is exalted, the right hand of the Lord bringeth victory". The news of the coming of the Messiah soon spread like wild-fire and Samuel Primo, the private secretary of Sebi undertook the task of disseminating the happy intelligence through a proper channel. Even Christians helped to spread the news. All Europe was electrified and thunderstruck by the new phenomena, and people waited anxiously for news reaching them from Smyrna. Despite the credibility with which the appearance of the Messiah was hailed all round, there was one Rabbi who raised a loul protest, to wit, Jacob Sasportas, a sound Talmudist who, with prophetic farsightedness extended a determined opposition to the Messianic rage that was current everywhere. Nevertheless the world was prepared to accept with unanimity the Messianic claim of Sebi. It is stated that Heinrich Oldenburg, a well-known German savant in London, in a letter to Spinoza drew his attention to the striking event and wrote as follows :—

"All the world here is talking of a rumour of the return of the Israelites, who have been dispersed for more than two thousand years, to their own country. Few believe it, but many wish it.....Should the news be confirmed, it may bring about a revolution in all things."

Everywhere, be it noted, there was wild delirium and excitement. Exaggerated reports were repeated and enlarged from lip to lip. It was once announced that a ship with a consignment of silk appeared in the north of Scotland manned by sailors who were well conversant with the Hebrew language. On the flag of the ship was the inscription, "The Twelve Tribes or Families of Israel." Everyone seems to have had good hold of the excitement which prevailed. The Jews who were not well treated in some countries were prepared for an exodus to the Holy Land in the spring of the year 1666. The quick recognition of the claim of Sebi tended to raise his dignity still higher in his eyes, and Jews from all parts of the world greeted him by placing life and property at his disposal. This wanton extravagance soon asserted itself in Sebi and his deluded disciples, who, elated with the great success they had achieved, sought to introduce innovations in the Jewish religion which gave rise to bitterness in communal ranks. With the advent of the Messianic period the days of fasting in commemoration of the fall of the Jewish State was no longer considered necessary, and Samuel Primo, the private secretary of Sebi sent the following communique to the whole House of Israel :--

"The only and first-begotten son of God, Shabbethai Sebi, Messiah and Redeemer of the people of Israel, to all the sons of Israel, Peace ! Since ye have been [8]

deemed worthy to behold the great day and the fulfilment of God's word by the prophets, your lament and sorrow must be changed into joy and your fasting into merriment, for ye shall weep no more. Rejoice with song and melody, and change the duy, which was formerly spent in sadness an l sorrow, into a day of jubilee, because I have appeared."

In some communities the mandate was carried out to the letter, but those who could not be won over so easily were deep'y shockel at the thought of such an innovation. Amidst all this hustle and bustle the Cadi could no longer tolerate the wild excitement of the Jews which kept on going with feverish enthusiasm, and in or ler to shirk all responsibility he warned Sebi that he must leave for Constantinople within three days. To this command he gave immediate assent thinking thereby that a miracle was sure to take place in the land whither he was asked to go to, in order that the prophecies forefold by Ghazati might be fulfilled, so that he can easily dethrone, the ruler of Palestine and proclaim himself the true Messiah. Before leaving Smyrna, he divided the world among 26 faithful ones, and called them kings and princes. Needless to say, he lavishly bestowed princely positions upon his brothers and zealous followers. Exactly at the beginning of the year 1666 Sebi started on his journey with almost all his followers to Constantinople, fully convinced of the great possibilities lying before him. But "there is many a slip between the cup and the lip." Meeting with rough weather on the way the party was obliged to land on the coast of the Dardenelles, and there Sebi was inamediately arrested by Turkish officers who have been specially sent for that purpose and made him a prisoner. It was in order to suppress the excitement which prevailed amongst the Jews that it was thought necessary to effect his arrest, and a special command was given to bring the pretended Messiah in fetters to the capital. His other followers on hearing of his arrival immediately started to see him, but to their great astonishment found him a prisoner. However, through the influence they had over the 'Turkish officials, the prisoners' voyage was allowed to be continued until his arrival at his destination. At the moment of disemburking there was a throng of visitors both of Jews and Mohammedans who longed to see hun, but the police, however, were obliged to intervene. Sebi was at once brought before Mustapha Pasha, who ask d him to lay bare the real motive which prompted him to

arouse the Jews to such a pitch of excitement, to which he replied that he came to Jerusalem for the purpose of collecting money and therefore could not help if his brethern wished to entertain so much esteem towards him. This explanation not being satisfactory, Sebi was ordered to be imprisoned for the time being. followers were by no means daunted in consequence of his failure to achieve the desired success, but on the contrary persisted in their delusion by asserting that he was the true saviour and redeemer. They were at the same time perfectly hopeful of the speedy end of the troubles to which their Chief was exposed for their sake which were even regarded by some as necessary and inevitable in the pursuit of such a great and noble undertaking. Several crowded daily to see the prisoner even if they were privileged to see him from afar. Samuel Primo, took special care that the most fictitions and fulsome accounts should reach the Jews of Smyrna and elsewhere, of the great respect shown to the Messiah by the Turkish officials. Owing to the impending (retan war it was deemed dangerous by the government to leave Sebi in Constantinople, who might fan the ever-increasing excitement in the capital. He was, however, ordered to be removed to the Castle of the Durdenelles at Abydos, where State-prisoners where kept in custody. This change of his confinement and the milder treatment to which he was subjected, coupled with the great esteem and devotion shown to him by the Jews, aroused his courage to a high pitch. By a curious coincidence his removal to the Castle took place on the eve of Passover and he thereupon slew a Paschal lamb, and ate it with the fat, which signal was meant to mean a flat abrogation on his part of all the Mosaic and Rabbinical laws. He used the following formula before eating : - "Blessed be God, who hath restored again that which was forbilden." His followers, however, were permitted to pay him a visit provided they paid an entrance-fee to the governor of the Castle which was thirty mejediahs a head. By this means a large income went into the treasury of the government. The state of excitement, in the meantime, continued unabatedly all over Europe and even Christians were overwhelmed with the tidings of the claims of Messianship that reached them. Believing Protestants, at Hamburg, besought themselves to their Chief, and asked him what was to be done in the face of such startling news reaching them.

"We have almost certain accounts, not only from Jews, but also from our Christian correspondents at Smyma, Aleppo, Constantinople, and other places in Turkey, that the new Messiah of the Jews does many miracles, and the Jews of the whole world flock to him. What will then become of the Christian doctrine and the belief in our Messiah ?"

This had the effect of further increasing the credulity of the deluded followers of Sebi. The Turks could now hardly tolerate the wild scenes of excitement which had the effect of completely demoralising trade and left everything to the mercy of Heaven. Thus the problem facing them was by no means easy of solution, especially when they did not wish to make a martyr of the pretended redeemer, because they could foresee that. if they ordered his execution by which means putting an end to all the bother, a new sect might arise, which would furnish materials for further disturbances. A Mohammedan proselvtizing priest, however, hit upon an ingenious scheme, which sought to find a way out of the difficulty. His proposition to convert Sebi over to Islamism was met with unanimous approval and sanction. In order to quickly realise this pious ambition the Sultan's physician, a renegade Jew, was given charge of this task. The prisoner was thereupon brought before him who represented to him the dreadful punishment awaiting him, if he offered any resistance to embrace Mohammedanism. The prisoner could not see his way to withstand the ordeal neither had he the courage to hesitate; so he fell a trap to the bait offered him, On the 14th September, 1666. he was ordered to appear before the Sultan, dressed in Mohammedan style and by this act his conversion to the new faith was publicly and officially announced. The Sultan was greatly pleased in winning such a great leader of the lews to his faith which he thought might be an incentive to many of his followers to follow suit. And so it was. The Sultan could not restrain showing his public approval of the conduct of Sebi and he gave him the name of Mehmed Effendi, appointing him his door-keeper with a large monthly salary. His wife Sarah had likewise followed her husband's footsteps and thus received the name of Fauma Kadin, on whom was bestowed rich presents from the Sultana. The ex-Messiah, not content with the great harm which he brought upon his brethren by his faithlessness. had sent the following missive to his follow rs at Smyrna: -"God has made me an Ishmaelite. He commanded,

and it was done. The ninth day of my regeneration." The news of his apostasy was received with horror and consternation in every Jewish camp which tended to shake the very foundation of Julaism. The Sultan, who was made aware by Sebi of the plan which he had proposed, was greatly offended at the thought of Jews becoming rebellious, and he thereupon ordered that all children of seven years of age should be permitted to embrace the dominant faith. Two councillors and the Sultana-mother succeeded in persuading the Sultan to abandon his proposed plan. In spite of all these happenings Sebi still persisted in his belief that he was the Messiah, and that his conversion to Islamism was necessary in order to attain the aim which he had in view. He, however, played the rôle of a double-face l creature. At one time he freely associated himself with his former coreligionists; at another he denounced them and their religion with foul words of abase before the Turks In consequence of his failure to bring the Jews over to Islamism, as he may have boastfully asserted, he was no longer held in esteem and consideration by the Turks as was the case before. Owing chiefly to his intercourse with the Jews, he was banished by Kaimakam to Dulcigno, a small town in Albania, where no Jews dwelt. There he died on the day of Kipur, 1676, broken-hearted. Thus ended a career of life which was frought with ceaseless agitation and heavy turnoil on his afflicted race. It did no good ; but on the contrary left it weak and disenchanted. It tended to bring it into disrepute both within and without and the belief of Israel's cardinal hope of restoration was received with a heavy discount. This, however, brings us the question uppermost in the mind of the thinking Jew regarding the twelfth principle of Maimonides' article of faith, which reads: ---"I firmly believe in the coming of the Messiah; and although he may tarry, I daily hope for his coming.'

Now, this belief of ours is no new thing in history. From Moses to Malachi we have been told over and over again of the coming of "The Anointed of the Lord." One thing we must bear in mind and beware of the "false prophets" who vainly seek to glorify themselves by aspiring undeservel positions in the history of Israel. We must remember that the claim of the true Messiah upon us does not rest upon him to do it by force or by guile; he must possess finer and nobler qualities than these. Happily, at no period in the history of our nation has Israel failed to re-iterate her belief in the coming of the Messiah and even to this age — despite the teachings of Reform Judaism — this sublime hope is far from waning. The advent of that blessed epoch is the only raison d'être of Israel's existence.

Now what do we expect the Messiah to be? What credentials must be possess to establish his claim upon us? Shall he wage war upon the nations of the world by signalising his advent in an earnest desire for peace on earth? In the first place according to the teaching of Judaism the Messiah must and should be a scion of the royal house of David; one who would be endowed with supernatural power, ardent and zealous for the restoration of Davidic throne; re-establish firmly and surely the Law of Moses and re-gather the exiles from the four corners of the world. He must in the words of Isaiah, "Judge among the nations, and shall reprove many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." He must reconcile all the divided factions in Israel and according to the prophet Malachi. "He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers." Dr. M. Friedlander, the Principal of the Jews' College, London, and author of "The Jewish Religion" writes (page 160) as follows: -

"All the attributes of Messiah are those of a human being in his highest possible perfection. No superhuman qualities are ascribed to him; all his glory, all his success, is dependent on the will of God. He is an ideal man, and an ideal king, but not more; if miracles are to be wrought, it is not Messiah who will perform them, but God, who will act wondrously for Messiah and Israel. The advent of Messiah is not expected to change the nature of man, much less the course of the world around us. The only change we expect is, that the Unity of God will be acknowledged universally, and that justice and righteousness will flourish over all the earth. Those who believe in a superhuman nature of Messiah are guilty of idolatry. Our Sages express this principle in the words, 'There is no other difference between the present time and the days of Messiah but the restoration of Israel's independence.' "

The history of Israel testifies that there has been several claimants to the aspirant position of Messiah. But in none of them the prophecies have been fulfilled; and he who can successfully bring about in an unobtrusive manner the Messianic era according to our expecta-

tions will receive our undivided and enthusiastic allegiance. When will this blessed epoch take place we have no means of knowing. The day of our deliverance is one of the "hidden things which are the Lord our God's." The prophet Habakkuk warns us in the following words :----- "If it tarries, wait for it, for it will surely come and not later than the time fixed." We have waited in all our dark and weary days and nights for the bright rising of the light of the sun and we shall assuredly continue to wait unto the end. We are by no means disheartened or dejected in spirit, but on the contrary stand firm and immutable on the rock of conviction for the literal fulfilment of that blessed day, when all of us will "see eye to eye the return of the Lord to Zion." "Happy is he that waiteth," (Daniel 12-12) and Israel who has waited for so long will surely yet wait for the final redemption which is to come when the outcasts of Israel will march with joy and happiness to the Holy Mount and become once more a nation amongst the nations.



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