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THE  
RUSSO-POLISH JEW



THE NARRATIVE  
OF  
ISAAC LEVINSOHN



THE  
RUSSO-POLISH JEW:

A NARRATIVE  
OF THE  
CONVERSION FROM THE DARKNESS OF  
JUDAISM,  
TO THE  
LIGHT AND LIBERTY OF THE GOSPEL  
OF CHRIST,  
OF  
ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

LONDON:  
ROBERT BANKS, RACQUET COURT, FLEET STREET.

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## PREFACE.

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“IT is our duty, and it should be our joy,” saith Tregortha, “to watch, mark, and revere the *outgoings* of THE ALMIGHTY, and to confide in the counsels of His wisdom and His power!”

Acting under the influence of these high privileges—watching, marking, revering the outgoings of the Almighty—I have consented to write a short Preface to the volume now presented (more especially) to the Christian Church, with the lively hope that the blessing of the Lord may accompany its perusal to multitudes of precious souls.

Before I had read or published one line of Mr. Isaac Levinsohn’s Narrative, I was favoured with some private, personal, and special seasons of Christian fellowship with him. During those interviews I realised a pure spiritual knitting of heart to him—in the Lord I really loved him.

## *Preface.*

and felt constrained to take him by the hand, to welcome him, with confidence, as a heaven-born disciple of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and a willing anxiety to promote his best interests in any Scriptural and consistent way in my power.

Neither on his part nor on mine was there any pre-conceived motive to render him popular by using the Press in his favour. The fact is, several months before I had seen or known Mr. Levinsohn, he had written a paper on "The Jews," which he had sent, per post, to me, as Editor of *The Earthen Vessel*; but as the paper was of considerable length, as I could not tell at all who had sent it to me, and as I was exceedingly busy, and overstocked with communications, I laid it aside, and thought no more of it.

One day, in the autumn of 1876, I met two gentlemen in St. Paul's Churchyard, one of which addressed himself to me, and then introduced Mr. Isaac Levinsohn as the friend who had forwarded to me an article on "The Jews," but of which I had never taken the slightest notice. I gave my reasons for the seeming neglect, expressing myself open to meet Mr.

Levinsohn in my study whenever he could make it convenient to call on me.

An appointment was made. We met again and again. These interviews resulted in a promise, on his part, to write out his experience; and in a promise, on my part, carefully to read and examine the same, and to give him my opinion of the same as soon as it might be convenient. No secular propositions of any kind were entertained by either of us. As far as I can judge, nothing but an anxiety to find out, and to make known, the saving grace of God, influenced either one of us.

In the course of time, as I received the manuscripts from his hands, and as I went through them, my heart was moved with increasing love towards him, with deep sympathy for him in all his terrible sorrows, and with a growing conviction that the Lord had wrought a very marvellous work in his soul, and had surely designed him for great usefulness in the proclamation of the Gospel of His well-beloved Son.

Immediately, and continuously, Mr. Isaac Levinsohn's Narrative appeared in the pages of *The Earthen Vessel* and *Christian Record*, and

many thousands of Christians have perused those pages with the most intense interest ; from all parts of the country Mr. Levinsohn has been called to preach the Gospel to multitudes of people. The Lord has wonderfully sustained and helped him. The blessings flowing from the reading of his Narrative, and the hearing his voice, the great day alone can reveal. The testimonies which I have received assure me that, instrumentally, souls have been converted, Christians have been comforted, Churches have been revived, above all, the name of the Lord has been magnified, and loving hearts have exultingly exclaimed : “The Lord hath done great things for him, whereof we are glad.”

In Mr. Isaac Levinsohn’s case, two Scriptures have been strikingly verified. The first is, that rich cluster of promises in the forty-second of Isaiah’s prophecy : “I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not ; I will lead them in paths that they have not known ; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.”

What a beautiful confirmatory illustration of this Scripture is the experience of that dear young friend, who, in the following pages, has honestly told us what the Lord has done for his soul.

Equally true is the other Scripture, which has often occurred to my mind, in Matthew xvi. 24 : "Then said Jesus, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."

I will leave the readers of this volume to judge for themselves how far the Scriptures quoted have been fulfilled in the hitherto short but interesting life of our Christian friend, Mr. Isaac Levinsohn.

With vehement inwrought supplications to the God of all grace for the preservation, growth in grace, and prosperity in the Gospel of the author of the following pages, I subscribe myself his affectionate brother in Christ, and the willing servant of the Lord,

CHARLES WATERS BANKS.

9, Banbury-road, South Hackney,  
June 1, 1878.

# LETTER TO MR. ISAAC LEVINSOHN

FROM

THE REV. H. A. STERN

(*Late Captive in Abyssinia*).

MY DEAR LEVINSOHN,—The narrative of your conversion, published in *The Earthen Vessel*, I read with much interest. It reminded me of your first visit to my house, and of the anxiety you manifested to have your religious doubts and fears allayed. Little did you then know of the struggles and conflicts the inquiring Israelite has to sustain before he can say, “I believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.” Like numbers of our believing brethren, you had to make great sacrifices, and to sever bonds of deeply-cherished affection. But, whatever your temporal loss may have been, your spiritual gain has been far greater.

I am glad to hear that you purpose publishing a brief account of the way by which a gracious Providence led you to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. The motives which prompt you no one can possibly impugn. You do not wish to gain notoriety, but to magnify the grace of God as realised in your own experience. Should you carry out your intention, I sincerely hope that your little book will prove useful in strengthening the faith and in cheering the heart of many a doubting and desponding believer.

With best wishes,

Ever yours in Christ,

HENRY A. STERN.

5, Cambridge-lodge-villas, Mare-street,  
May 31st, 1878.

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THE NARRATIVE  
OF  
ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

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CHAPTER I.

HIS BIRTHPLACE—HIS BROTHER—HIS FATHER'S DESIRE FOR HIM TO BECOME A RABBI—HIS DILIGENT STUDIES—RABBI PERSUADES HIM FROM READING THE BIBLE—HE SEARCHES ITS PAGES SECRETLY, NIGHT AND MORNING—HE IS CAREFULLY INSTRUCTED IN THE ARTICLES OF THE JEWISH FAITH—BECOMES SOLEMNLY IMPRESSED WITH A DEEP CONCERN—WHAT HE MUST DO TO BE SAVED—HE IS CALLED TO BE A RABBI—DEEP CONCERN ABOUT ETERNITY—HIS WEEPING CONFESSION TO HIS MOTHER, AND TO HIS RABBI—BITTER FEARS OF DEATH, ETC.

I AM a native of Russia, from the town of Kovno. I was born in the year 1855. My parents are very pious Jews, devoted much to glorify God under the Jewish traditions, &c. My father fasts every Monday and Thursday, for the reason of mortifying the flesh, and to justify himself before God, who has said, "Be ye holy, as I am holy;" "Be ye perfect, as I am perfect." My father's

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wish has always been to bring up his children in the fear of God, and especially that his sons might be devout Jews. My brother, who is older than myself, had no desire to follow the advice of my father, or to give himself to study the Talmud,\* or devote himself so as to become a Rabbi ; his desire was more to study the wisdom of the world in foreign languages, and science, philosophy, &c. He, therefore, entered the gymnasium college in Kovno, where he passed several examinations, and afterwards entered the University at Gradno, where he finished his study. My father, however, was not satisfied to see my brother devote so much to the world ; he, therefore, determined to bring me up a pious and devout Jew, under the teaching of a Rabbi who was an earnest minister, full of zeal and piety.

When I was five years of age, my father commenced to instruct me to read Hebrew, and then read the prayers very carefully every morning, afternoon, and evening, and he also informed me that if I would always do what my Rabbi

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\* The Oral law, written by the ancient Rabbis, or traditions handed down ever since the time of Moses, which is necessary for every male to study. No one can become a Rabbi unless he has studied the whole Talmud.

wished me to do, and obey him in all ways, and pray three times a day,\* God would be very pleased with me. The idea that "God would be very pleased with me" sank very deep into my heart, and I always did everything that my dear father and mother, and especially what my Rabbi, wished me to do. I always respected the great law in the Bible, "Honour thy father and thy mother," and also the words of the Oral law, "The fear of the Rabbi is as the fear of the Lord."

When I was eight years of age, I could read any part in the Hebrew Bible, and the Targum, and Rashi. Soon after, however, when my Rabbi found that I made much progress in reading the Bible, Targum, and Rashi, &c.,† he began to instruct me in the Talmud, and induced me gradually to give up reading the Bible, as it was more important to study the Talmud; so I followed his advice very earnestly, and devoted the whole of the days in study with him at his home, as I was

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\* To pray three times a day has reference to the Jewish law, which expects every male to pray every morning, noon, and evening. If possible, it is necessary to say the prayers in the synagogue, which is the house of prayer.

† Comments on the Bible.

the only pupil he had undertaken to bring up and instruct in the Rabbinic doctrines, &c.

On my tenth birthday my father invited a few of his learned friends, and the Rabbi who was my teacher, and three more Rabbis, to examine me, and for them to give their judgment, if they thought I had the qualifications of becoming a Rabbi. However, I passed the examination with much satisfaction. My father, being so pleased, gave a dinner to all the poor of the synagogue, and asked them all to pray to God on my behalf, that I might become a Rabbi. My father also promised to give me fifty roubles on my thirteenth birthday if I would pass another examination with satisfaction. Being so pleased with all that had taken place, I became more earnest than ever in living a holy life. Soon after, however, I began to think more and more earnestly about which was really the Word of God; and, reasoning with myself, I came to the conclusion that the Bible must be the Book given by God. I therefore asked my Rabbi if I could devote a little more time in reading the Bible. My Rabbi, however, wished me to occupy the whole of my time in the Talmudic study. I therefore willingly followed his advice. But, as I had much desire of reading the Bible, I

determined to read it for one hour every night before I went to bed, and two hours every morning before morning prayers.

Many months passed over, and I diligently followed the instructions of my beloved parents and Rabbi. When my thirteenth birthday was drawing nigh, I was instructed in the articles of the Jewish faith. My Rabbi told me that as soon as I would become thirteen years of age, I should be considered a man, and should have to be responsible for my sins before our God Jehovah. This great thought of responsibility of my sins solemnised my mind, and led me to very earnest inquiry, "What to do to be saved?"

When I was twelve years and eleven months old, my father took me to the synagogue, and informed me that all the sins I had committed till then were upon him; but all sins which I should commit from the day of my thirteenth birthday, I should be responsible and answerable before God. I asked my father if he would continue to bear my sins for two or three months longer, as I was afraid that I should very soon sin against the Holy One. My father, however, told me that it could not be done. I then cried bitterly, for I was perfectly certain that it was an utter impossibility for me to live a perfect life;

for I solemnly considered the infinite holiness and purity of the great Creator; and when I thought of the depravity of men's hearts, I was convinced that there was nothing in me but sin. However, when my father informed me that I was to undertake and be responsible for my sins before God, I undertook to do so; but I must confess, since that day I have felt the burden of sin very heavy on me. I bore the burden with much pain; but sweet were the moments when Jesus spake unto my soul, "Son, thy sins, though they are many, are all forgiven thee." When my thirteenth birthday came, my father took me to the synagogue, where he offered me to the Lord, with a prayer, according to the Jewish custom, and thanked God that he had got rid of being responsible of my sins.

On the same day, my father invited to his house several of the elders of the congregation, and my Rabbi, who examined me in what I had learned since my tenth birthday. Soon after I was examined, the Rabbi and others expressed their judgment that they believed the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had called me to the ministry of the Jewish faith,\* and

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\* I rejoice to know that the God of sovereignty and of grace had a better office and much greater honour for me—namely, to be a

my father and Rabbi then put their hands upon me, and blessed me, saying, "The Lord bless thee, as Ephraim and Manasseh," &c. My father then gave me the promised present, fifty roubles, which I wished my father to distribute to the poor in the synagogue, and asked them to pray for me, which was done.

On the next day, I went to the synagogue, with my phylacteries, to pray, and was very careful in my prayers, which lasted nearly two hours. I felt rather weary and tired ; and as I was putting my phylacteries together after prayers, unfortunately I dropped them on the floor, and I fasted all day (not eat or drink anything for twelve hours, according to Rabbinic teaching). That, however, I did with satisfaction, because I delighted to do all things to please God.

Soon after, I began to feel much concern about my justification before God. I felt that none of my good works could really justify me before the Holy One. I went home with many serious thoughts about eternity. When my beloved mother noticed me in such a serious state, she asked me what had happened to me. After which, I fell on her neck, kissed her, and

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servant of His in the vineyard, and a prince and a king of the Most High, and to reign with Him for ever.

wept bitterly for some time. I then said, "Mother, I am so afraid that God will not be satisfied with my goodness! I also feel that if death should summon me, I should be unworthy of standing before God unpardoned." My beloved mother, however, persuaded me that if I would continue to study the Talmud, obey the orders of my Rabbi, and do all that father and mother wished me to do, and pray three times a day, &c., I should then be saved. This answer did not satisfy my yearning soul.

Some weeks passed, and I still continued to study the Talmud, under the instruction of my teacher. The Rabbi, on one occasion, asked me what had happened to me. He said that he could see a very great difference in me since my thirteenth birthday. I told him that since I became responsible for my sins, I felt that I should never be justified before God, and I was often troubled with the fear of death. Most bitterly I cried, and said, "Rabbi, if I should die, where should I go to?" His reply was, "You will have to be punished for your sins first;" and he informed me that every one that sucked the milk of his mother's breast must go to hell for some time; but the good shall, after punishment, enter the Paradise, and be with

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This did not satisfy me. The fears of death still more increased, and so I went on for some time, very much downcast and lonely—not knowing what to do to be saved—till one day I asked my father if he knew any way by which I could be saved. But, unfortunately, he could not give me any better answer than that my Rabbi had told me.

## CHAPTER II.

TRIES SECULAR EMPLOYMENT—RETURNS TO RABBI—BIBLE TRUTH  
DAWNS UPON HIS MIND—IS LAID DOWN ON A SICK BED—PHY-  
SICIAN PRONOUNCES HIS CURE “DOUBTFUL”—PRONOUNCES HIM-  
SELF “LOST,” BUT IS LED TO CRY FERVENTLY UNTO GOD.

WHEN my father noticed that I was so troubled in my study, he recommended me to give up the study of the Bible and the Talmud for a few months, and enter the services of a police office, where I was for some months, and afterwards I received an offer to accept a situation in the office of a judge, where I remained a few months. But, however, I felt that my business was more in the synagogue and study, and to become a pious Jew, and a Rabbi. I left the office and went to my father and Rabbi, and told them that I would not continue in any other work but in the work of God, which pleased them very much; and I began again to read the Bible every morning and evening, and study it very carefully, and, with much surprise, I looked at the words of the Psalmist, who says, “There is not one that is righteous, no, not one!” This had a great influence on my heart, and I made perfectly sure that I should

never go to heaven, because I could not become righteous. I said, "Even the Bible informs me so." With tears in my eyes I went again to my mother, and asked her if she could tell me "what to do to be saved." My mother cried bitterly, and replied, "It will be well with you if you continue in the written and Oral laws.

Seeing that I could not get any satisfaction to my poor and hungry soul, I kept on for many months in great misery and despair, till I became very ill, and was confined to my bed in much weakness and despair for many weeks. My dear parents did all that was in their power to restore me; but the more they looked for my recovery, the more I sank into despondency.

One day, with tears rolling down my cheeks, I said to my father, "Dear father, you are very kind, and you show to me your most affectionate feelings in all your endeavours to look after my recovery. Nothing in the world could make my heart more glad than to see my dear father's love exercised so much. But O! dear father, with all that I am not satisfied. I want to feel that the God of our fathers is *my* God and Father, and want to realise His Fatherly love."

Presently, the physician visited me, and many friends and relations came to see me. My

beloved mother came in, crying very bitterly, and asked the physician if he thought I should recover, but the answer was "doubtful!" Then my dear mother, with very bitter cries and lamentation, fell upon my bed and kissed me, saying, "My dear, I remember you asked me several times what to do to be saved; you also told me you were afraid to die because of your sinnership before God. How do you feel now?" I could hardly answer then, because of my weakness; but with all my energy I replied, "I am lost! I am lost!" and then lifted up my hands and heart unto the Lord, with the sweet Psalmist of Israel, "*Gall eni Vehabitti Nefloesecha*"—"Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold the wonders in Thy law." Afterwards, being quite exhausted, I could not speak for several days and nights; and still more darkness and fears of death surrounded me.

Once more I thought of the words of David, "Open mine eyes," &c. Then my Rabbi and others came to see me, as it was thought it would be the last time. They all engaged in prayer, and repeated many Psalms of David, which is generally practised in houses of sickness. I could then speak a little. I said to them, "Pray that the Lord may open my eyes,

that I may know the God of our fathers as my God, and it shall suffice me."

The Lord heard my prayer. I got a little better; I began to recover, but very slowly. The physician visited me once more, and recommended my father to send me to the hospital. My dear father asked my mother if she thought it advisable to send me away from home to be in the hospital; but my beloved mother replied, "My house is not for myself; my property is not for myself; my life is not for myself—all is for my dear Isaac; my dear Isaac shall remain at home, and the physician shall visit him every day."

Thanks be to God that giveth the victory! The Lord, in His mercy, restored me, and gave me strength and health, that in the course of a few weeks I perfectly recovered.

## CHAPTER III.

CALLED TO LEAVE HOME, AND NATIVE LAND, ETC.—PARENTS AND FRIENDS ENTREAT HIM NOT TO GO—NOTHING COULD HOLD HIM—THE SOLEMN AND PAINFUL TEARING HIMSELF FROM HOME, PARENTS, AND FRIENDS—FEARFUL WORK IN CROSSING THE RUSSIAN FRONTIER—TRAVELS THROUGH PART OF GERMANY—THE LETTERS BETWEEN HIMSELF AND PARENTS—JOURNEYS AND LOSSES ON THE WAY—LEFT IN DESTITUTION, ETC.

As soon as I recovered, I said to my father that I should very much like to leave my native land ; and search, if I can find, for that which my soul longeth for. My father, however, would not let me go abroad ; but all his refusals were of no use.\*

One night, as I was reading my Gemara—I was very tired—I fell asleep. Suddenly I awoke, and felt the words of Genesis xii. 1—“Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.” These words sank in my heart, and I could not possibly forget them. I then said to my father, if he would not let me go abroad, I would go without permission—“If I die,

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\* It may seem very unkind of a son not to take the advice of his father, but it is impossible for me to express the feeling of determination which induced me to refuse my father’s advice.

I die! but I must go!" My dear father, seeing nothing could prevent me to leave my native country, then consented, and prayed that the God of Israel may be with me wherever I intended to go.

In July, 1871, my father invited many friends and relations at his house, to see me once more before I would leave my native land. All friends and relations being assembled, almost every one of them (with tears in their eyes) persuaded me to remain at home. This was a very trying time to me; for I knew well that by leaving my father's house, I should lose a good home, and, above all, father and mother, relations and friends; but yet I could not possibly take their advice, when I examined the feelings of my heart, which was continually in a yearning state. Being full with the desire of going away, I felt very grieved at the request of all present. I replied, "If I cannot go, I cannot, must not, live!" Then all began to comfort me, and wished me much success in my journey. I was then sixteen years of age.

The next morning came, and I was about to take my journey. Many friends and relations, and all that were interested in my parents, came to see me, and wish me farewell! In the afternoon

we started to the station, which was about five miles from home ; and about one hundred people followed me. When I wished good-bye to my beloved mother, my eyes gave very little sight, through bitter crying (for I well thought of the tenderness of a mother's love, and that I should never perhaps meet with any one in this world who would possess that love to me as my dear mother); and all my friends wept bitterly. When I wished farewell to my beloved father, I kissed him. My most beloved father then put his hands upon my head, and said, "May the God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob, our fathers, keep and preserve thee near to His Holy Word, the Bible, and to the holy writings of our holy Rabbis" (Gemara). And I replied, "Amen and Amen."

When I entered the carriage, and the train started, then the most affecting sight was witnessed: my beloved father, and friends, and my mother, with a babe in her arms, lifted up their hands ; then my mother fainted. Never shall I forget that time. I fell on the floor, fainting, and several people called me to again. Whilst sitting in the carriage, I lifted up my voice, and prayed unto the Lord to take me in His arms, and be my Father, Mother, Brother, and Friend, yea, my All in all.

Little did I think then that I should be able to say, with a heart full of satisfaction,—

“ Jesus, my Shepherd, Brother, Friend,  
My Prophet, Priest, and King,  
My Way, my Life, my All in all.”

But the Lord led me in a way which He had marked out for me to go in.

“ God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform.”

The train brought me to a small town, Verbelow, where the boundary\* of Russia is. I then had a trial to get over the boundary, for no one is permitted to cross the boundary, unless by special permission from the Government.† Unfortunately, I had no permission, and had, therefore, to do the best I possibly could. The evening came. I was very tired; and so entered the little house of a Jew, and asked if they could let me stay for the night, but, unfortunately, they had no room. I was asked if I would go upon

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\* The boundary is a wide ditch full of water, some parts of which are shallow, while others are very deep.

† It is the law of Russia, that whosoever wishes to leave for the continent, must have a special passport from the chief governor of the province; and no passports are granted to young men who are not likely to return, especially if it is probable they will be wanted for the conscription, and so enter the military service (which I had no desire to do).

the roof of the house, and sleep there all night, which I was glad to do.

In the morning, about six o'clock, I got up, and started on my way, watching carefully how to cross over the boundary, being much afraid. I cried very bitterly, knowing that soldiers who are on duty at the boundary have a right to shoot or use any weapons, if necessary, for any one who crosses the boundary without permission. Standing alone for some time, I watched the movements of the soldiers; to my happiness, they walked about; I being very quiet, and in a cornfield, they could not see me. At once, seeing they were gone a few yards, I took off my boots, so that I might run off quietly. I ran in great fear, and, by God's help, crossed the boundary. As soon as I was over, to my joy, there was a large cornfield. I went into the field, and then the soldiers, seeing me, made haste, but did not cross the boundary, which is against the law. One of the soldiers fired his gun, but, thanks to God, without hurt to me. I then ran through the cornfield, and came to a small village of Germany, where I took a train to Königsberg. As I sat in the carriage, a young man introduced himself to me, and appeared very kind. We were alone in the carriage, and as I was rather

weary—not having had such a good night's rest—I fell asleep. Presently, as the train was coming near a station, I heard the door shut, and then found that the young man had jumped out of the carriage; presently I found that he had picked my pockets, and I then supposed that that was the reason for his jumping out. When I arrived at the station, I spoke about it to the station-master, and informed him of the event. Half-a-dozen German gendarmes were immediately sent to find the young man; and as I was sitting in the station, presently I saw a gendarme riding on horse back, and the thief with him bound on the back of the horse. The young man was found sitting under a tree, counting the money of my purse. On receipt of my purse, I proceeded on my journey by the next train. I arrived at Königsberg, and stayed there a few weeks, to see a little of Germany. But my soul found no satisfaction there.

Went from Königsberg to Berlin, where I stayed a few weeks. I then wrote to my beloved parents, and my dear father replied, wishing me God's blessing, but hoping that I would never go further than Berlin. My reply was, I would gladly submit to my father's wishes, but should the Lord call me further, I would obey His voice.

I stayed in Berlin a few weeks. Having a knowledge of the German language, I got a situation as junior clerk, in an office at Berlin. But my soul had no satisfaction, especially as the Jews in Germany are not very pious, nor so particular in their rites and worship as the Jews of Russia and Poland. I then wrote to my beloved father, and informed him that I could not stay any longer in Germany, seeing I could not observe the order of the Jewish faith so well as in my native land. The reply my father sent was as follows :—

MY BELOVED ISAAC,—I received your letter, and am very sorry to hear that you are about to go away from Germany, and be very far away from us. My darling child, I cannot tell how we feel for you. Every day your mother sheds tears, and laments because our Isaac is not with us. Dear child, we would be very thankful and unspeakably happy if you would return home. Your mother says, since her dear child has gone, the joy and comfort of her heart has departed from her. Believe me this is my feeling too. Should I not be able to persuade you to come home, do remain in Germany. I would, therefore, for God's name sake, keep the commandments very strictly—the Oral and written laws. May they be the object of your life, and your near companions. Try and keep your phylacteries \* perfect. And may the God of our

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\* Phylacteries are small leathern boxes with portions of the law inscribed on them. It is necessary that every male Jew over thirteen years of age should possess them.

fathers Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob, be with you. Amen.  
Adieu, adieu, adieu.

The following is a translation of the reply to the above :—

To my most affectionate parents.

MY BELOVED FATHER,—I read your letter with much pleasure ; but I must tell you, at once, that I feel it is not the will of God that I should stop in Germany or return to Russia. Since I left home, I have not had a happy hour. Every night, when I lay my head on the pillow, I bitterly lament over all the sweet comforts I left behind me. But I must confess that I feel I must go a long journey, till the God of our fathers will satisfy my poor soul. Let me also tell you that I expect troubles and trials till I find satisfaction ; but I am satisfied to obey the voice of Him who has saved our fathers out of all their troubles. My dear and beloved parents, I am about to take my journey ; don't write to me till I get to Hamburg, and then I will write to you again. Peace be with you, once more, my beloved mother. I always dream that I see you, my dear mother, walking about the streets of Kovno, and inquiring, "Where is my darling child Isaac?" Dear mother, I shall never forget you! Yea, I cannot help thinking of you every moment, and shall do so till I close my eyes in death. Farewell.

I remain, dear parents,

Your ever-affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

After the above correspondence, I left Berlin for Hamburg. Having had a very great desire to see much about Germany, I took my journey on foot. After walking three or four hours, I met two young men—one a native of Poland, and the other

of Prussia—with whom I made acquaintance. I found that they were travelling to England ; but they would go about Germany, Austria and Saxony, Hanover and Brunswick, before they would sail for England. Having found that they were travelling to England, I asked them if they would not object to my company, as I was going to England. To my joy they agreed, and we then proceeded on our journey. I am sorry I cannot remember all the towns and villages we went through, or I could give a full account of them. All three of us travelled on for some time. Unfortunately for us, we had no passports, and were not permitted to lodge anywhere ; as it was not long after the French and German war, the inhabitants were very cautious. We, therefore, were compelled to sleep in cornfields and woods ; sometimes in cemeteries. Often we laid down weary and tired, and got up and found ourselves in much rain. However, we went on and on, and put up with all that.

One day I was very weary, and we came to a wood, and went to sleep under a large tree. As I was fast asleep, these two young men stole all the money out of my pockets, and took away my bundle of clothes which I put under my head as a pillow ; and they left me in the

wood, without money and without clothes. When I awoke from my sleep, to my great surprise, I found myself robbed; I wept bitterly; I did not know which way to turn. I lifted up my face heavenward, and cried unto the Lord to lead me—"Lead me in Thy truth," &c., was my cry.

I made up my mind to go as straight as I could; so I did for several hours. Night came, and all around me was dark, and I was now alone, weary, and hungry. No bread to eat! No water to drink! No money to buy with! No bed to sleep on! I went on in darkness, weeping and praying. Afterwards I beheld a light shining afar off, which appeared to me very little. I went straight on for about two hours, till I came to that place where the light was, and it was a farmhouse. I knocked at the door, and an old lady opened it, and asked me who I was. My reply was, "I am a poor Jew boy, going to England; I am hungry and weary; I think I am dying." The dear old lady welcomed me, gave me something to eat, and a bed to sleep on, where I rested; and the following day had to proceed on my journey.

In the morning I started on my way to the nearest village, which was about eighteen miles.

Several woods were on the road I had to go through. I had a piece of bread, and I ate it, and had nothing more to eat till I got to the village. I walked for about three hours, and then came to a large forest, where I met an old man with a small parcel. I asked him if he had a piece of bread he could give me. "With pleasure," he replied ; but as soon as he offered it me, I refused to accept it, as the bread was buttered, and, as a Jew, I would not eat butter made by Christians ; so I had to go on very hungry ; and, unfortunately, happened to lose my way, and went in the wrong road, in which I walked for about four more hours, till I came to a forest, where I laid down to rest, and went to sleep. When I awoke, I found that the darkness of the night had come, and I was alone in the forest.

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## CHAPTER IV.

ALONE IN THE WORLD—CRYING BITTERLY TO THE LORD TO TAKE HIS LIFE FROM HIM—FINDS HIMSELF IN A VILLAGE OF ROMAN CATHOLICS—HUNGRY, BUT REFUSES TO EAT AT THE HANDS OF THE GENTILES—DETERMINES TO DESTROY HIMSELF—THE LORD'S VOICE IS HEARD—DELIVERANCE FROM THE SORE TEMPTATION IS GRANTED—FINDS SOME KIND JEWS AT WITTEMBERG—RABBI BLESSES HIM, AND HE PROCEEDS—A PERILOUS JOURNEY IN RAIN AND DARKNESS—SLEEPS IN A CEMETERY—LOSES HIS COAT—HAS TO TRAVEL ON IN MISERY.

I CANNOT express the great trouble that I was in, when finding myself solitary in the woods. I then cried bitterly unto the God of my fathers, if He would be gracious unto me, and take my life from me; for I began to think that all my undertakings were only the folly of my wicked heart; especially when I thought of the sweet comforts I enjoyed at my beloved parents' home, and now to be alone in the world. I sat in the forest for about one hour, weeping, lamenting, and praying unto the Lord to be merciful unto me; but the more I prayed and lamented, the more darkness, fear, and misery came into my soul; and in that misery I fell asleep again, under the tree, in the silent forest.

Whilst asleep, I had very painful dreams. I

saw my dearly-beloved mother walking about, seeking after me ; and when I got up, I found myself again in darkness ; and through the terrors of night I was compelled to go on my journey. I walked about in the great forest for some time ; but when the light of the day began to appear, my heart then was comforted ; and I walked on for a few hours, until I came to a small village. When I got to the village, I entered a house, and inquired if any Jews lived there. I was informed that all the inhabitants of the place were Christians, most of them Roman Catholics. I told them I was a poor Jew boy, travelling to a far country, had been robbed of my money, and all the clothes I had with me, and was very hungry, as I had not eaten anything for many hours. On hearing this, the people offered me some meat and bread, which I accepted with many thanks. But as I held the provisions in my hand, I reasoned with myself, " Would I be justified in eating the meat and bread given me by Gentiles ? " Then, thinking of the instructions I received from my Rabbi and beloved parents, I determined not to eat it. I then begged of the people to pardon me for returning to them the very kind gift they had just given me. I said, " As I am a Jew, and

believe in Jehovah, the God of Abraham, I must not eat thereof." After I returned the gift of the bread and meat, the master of the house, being very grieved for me to do so, felt insulted ; he got up, and pushed me out through the door of his house.

The reader may well imagine the painful position I was in. As I left that house, I was filled with misery. I determined to put an end to my own life ; and with that determination I left that village.

As I went on my journey, I inquired the way to Wittemberg, which was ten miles. I kept walking along, being determined to put an end to my life. On the way to Wittemberg, I beheld a beautiful large tree. Seeing that tree, and looking at it from afar off, I resolved to hang myself on it ; and I went on, expecting that my life would soon be over, and that I should soon be out of my misery. Such were my inclinations ; yet I began to think again of my beloved parents ; what will become of them if they should hear that I have put an end to my own life ? Then those words in Deuteronomy came, "He that is hanged is accursed." I began to think of the awful state in which I should be if I should thus destroy my life. I lifted up my voice in prayer

unto the Lord to be gracious unto me, and to save me from all my troubles and misery. The Lord heard my cry. Those words came with power to my soul: "I will never leave you nor forsake you;" also the words of Isa. lix. 1: "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that He cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that He cannot hear." With these words I was much encouraged, and went on my way, rejoicing that my God listened to my prayers.

As I came near the town of Wittemberg, I felt that my strength was all gone, not having had anything to eat since the previous day; but, by God's help, I entered the town, and inquired where any Jews resided. Having found that there lived a good number of Jews, I visited the Rabbi. He very kindly gave me food, for which I had longed for many hours. He then sent me to several Jews, whom I visited, and they very kindly helped me. I remained in Wittemberg for a few days; and before I left the town I visited the Rabbi, asking him to bless me. I explained to him my circumstances. He asked me several questions; and on hearing my answers, he put his hands on my head and pronounced the blessing: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee," &c. Being very pleased to

receive a blessing, I then left the Rabbi, and went on my journey.

I left Wittemberg rejoicing, having the blessing from the Rabbi, and sincerely trusting that it would sure to be fulfilled. So I went on my way to a town about three days' journey. I walked a whole day, and in the evening I arrived at a small village, where I applied for a night's lodging; but as I had no passport, my application was refused. I left the village at once; the rain was pouring down the most part of the night. The whole of the night I was walking through the fields. My clothes on me were wet through. I was weary and hungry. I burst out in bitter crying and prayer unto the Lord to have mercy on me, and deliver me from my trouble, or take my life, for it was misery and woe to me. I thus went on in wretchedness the whole night; all my clothes on me were wet with the rain.

In the morning I still proceeded on my way, till I came near a cemetery, but could see no village nor town near. I went into the cemetery, and, being so weary, I laid down on a tomb, took off my coat, and hung it on a stone, next to the grave I rested on. In the pockets of the coat I had left a few thalers I had given me by the Wittem-

berg Jews and Rabbi. I then went to sleep on the tombstone. Whilst asleep, I dreamed about my beloved mother. She saw me sleeping on the stone, and, crying out, said, "My child! my child! come to me : see, I have a very good and soft bed!" I then awoke, being so excited to find that I had slept the whole day, and it was night then, and very dark. I then tried to find my coat which I had left on the stone next the grave I rested on, but could not find it ; and I walked about in the cemetery, trying to find it, but without success. I therefore laid down again on another tombstone, so that I might rest a little more, and sat on that stone the whole night. In the morning I again walked about the cemetery to find my coat, but, to my sorrow, I could only come to the conclusion that some one had stolen it while I slept in the day. I then journeyed on, having lost the only coat I had, and the little money given me by the Wittemberg Jews.

I was much ashamed to go on without a coat, and the rest of the clothes I had on were very ragged, from wearing them day and night, and in all sorts of weather. I called to mind the comforts I had when I was in my father's house ; and, looking on my ragged clothes, I brought to my remembrance the good clothes I had to wear

at home ; and now to be almost naked, also hungry, weary, yea, altogether wretched and miserable.

## CHAPTER V.

FINDS A JEW WHO KNEW HIS FATHER; HIS FATHER HAD BEEN THE MEANS OF SAVING THIS JEW'S LIFE—RECEIVES MUCH KINDNESS FROM JEWISH FAMILY—OBTAINS NEW CLOTHES—VISITS THE SYNAGOGUE—REMARKABLE LETTER FROM HIS FATHER—HIS REPLY TO THE SAME.

GOING on in that wretchedness, I was delighted to see a small town; and there I inquired after Jews, as I would have nothing to do with Christians. I was directed to a certain Jew in the town, whom I went to see, to ask for some help. On arriving at his house, the servant would not let me step into the house, because of my poverty. The master of the house came out and called me in, asking me what I wanted. I then burst out in bitter cries, for thinking of my mother and father, and that their son should be so ragged, and also a beggar. I then asked the good man if he could give me something to eat; and he said nothing to me for a few moments; then he left me for a little while, and then himself and his wife came out to see me, and when they both looked at me, he asked me if my father's name was Lion Levinsohn. I

answered, "Yes!" "Then is your mother's name *Brainah*?" "Yes." Many questions he asked me about my family, and then his wife burst out crying, and brought out their children to see me, and they all wept. He then said to me, "I know your father and mother; your father was the means of saving my life in the year 1863, when in the Polish revolution."

I then found that the whole of that family were natives of Poland, and in the time of the revolution they were persecuted and imprisoned; but my father having much acquaintance with the governors of the prisons in Kovno, and with the chief police master, and others, redeemed the whole family from prison, on bail. After which, my father induced them to leave the country at once; and after some time, when the prisoners escaped, and were wanted, my father had then a great deal of trouble; but my father did not mind all the trouble, as long as he could redeem a Jewish family. He then said to me, "You shall have good clothes on you at once, and be made as happy as my own son." Clothes were brought in the course of a very little time, and I felt very thankful.

It was on the eve of the Sabbath-day that I dressed myself in the good clothes, and went

with the whole family to the Jewish synagogue to worship. After service, we returned home, and supper was provided very nice and comfortable. I was asked to offer the prayer and thanks, which I did according to the Jewish Prayer Book. I stayed in that house a few days. I then said that I would take my journey, and Mr. A., the master of the house, wished me to stay a few days longer. Being asked by him so much, I was persuaded to do so. I then wrote a letter to my father, and informed him of all the circumstances which I had been in since I left home. The answer I received from my dear parents was as follows :—

TO MY DEAR AND SOUL-BELOVED CHILD ISAAC,—We received your letter on the eve of the Sabbath. I assure you we did not enjoy any rest on that day of rest. As we came from the synagogue, instead of sitting down at the table, and celebrating the Sabbath, we all sat down and read your letter. We all cried very bitterly; your beloved mother fainted several times as we were speaking about our beloved child. My beloved son, since you left us, all things seem to be against us. In fact, whatever your mother and I attempt to do, we fail, for our hearts are overwhelmed with trouble, to think that you should suffer so much from poverty, hunger, &c., whilst we have good houses and our servants never want anything, for which we thank the Holy One—blessed be His name; and yet our beloved Isaac is in wretchedness. My darling child, I shall be happy indeed if you would think of me, your father, and your mother, sisters, and brothers, and come back home.

Then you will make us happy, and you will be happy too. You know how I longed to have you remain in Russia, and be perfectly trained and educated, and also with a determination for you to become a Rabbi when you would be old enough ; and yet all my hopes have gone. Your sister Meitta Esther asks me to beg of you to return, and also your little brother continually cries and asks when his good and sweet brother Isaac will return. Indeed, my child, when they all cry bitterly for your return, I cry with them, and wish that you may return ; and, if not, I should like you to stay in Hamburg, when you get there ; and we will take our holidays, and visit you, and spend a few days with you. But I hope that you will have compassion on your beloved father and mother, sisters and brothers, and come home.

I remain, dear and beloved child,

Your most affectionate father,

LION LEVINSOHN.

When I received this letter my heart was filled with trouble, and I did not know what to do. I thought of the trouble that I should have to pass through in order to get to England, and also of the comforts that I could have if I returned home, yet I felt that I must go on till the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would visit me. I then wrote to my beloved parents :—

TO MY MOST BELOVED FATHER AND MOTHER,—I cannot express the gratitude of my heart for your sympathising letter, and I would also tell you that I never spend a minute without thinking of you. Since I left you, I was nearer death than life ; for once I was determined to hang myself, because of the misery and wretchedness I was in ; yet the God of our fathers

has brought me out of many troubles. I should very much like to return home, but I feel I must travel much more, till I can find that satisfaction that my soul longs for. I know that our religion is the only true religion that can save a soul, but yet I also know that the great God is too holy to look upon me, who am so great a sinner. Although I don't read the Bible very often, yet I pray every day three times, and repeat the whole of the *Tehillim* (Psalms), which I know by heart. My dear parents, I trust that the Lord will be with me, and especially that you will pray for me. I shall be glad if you kindly would ask my old Rabbi to pray for me. Dear father, please don't write to me any more till you hear from me. I am sorry I feel that I cannot take your advice and return home. I am determined, even if I travel through the whole world, that I must find satisfaction for my soul.

I remain, dear parents,

Your ever-affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN

## CHAPTER VI.

HIS SOUL-AGONISING QUESTION TO ANOTHER RABBI, WHAT HE MUST DO TO BE SAVED! AND THE RABBI'S INSTRUCTION—RESUMES HIS JOURNEY—WALKING THROUGH FORESTS, FIELDS, ETC.—STILL IN GREAT DISTRESS OF MIND—A DANGEROUS GANG OF ROUGH FELLOWS ASSAIL, THREATEN, AND ROB HIM—BITTEN BY A DOG—TEMPTED TO INFIDELITY—BITTERLY WAILING—SOLEMNLY DETERMINES TO HANG HIMSELF, AND FULLY PREPARES FOR IT.

AFTER the correspondence with my dear parents, I resolved to commence my travels again. Mr. A., who was so kind to me, asked me to stay longer. I thanked him, but refused ; seeing that a great journey was before me, I would not stay at any place too long.

Mr. A. then asked me to go with him to the Rabbi, who lived in that town, to bless me, which he did. The Rabbi asked me what inducement I had to leave my native land, and, on hearing my answer, asked me if I would stay with him for some time ; he hoped that by my doing so I would find full satisfaction to me ; but I had no desire to do so. I asked the Rabbi the same question that I asked my father and mother, and my Rabbi, when in Russia, “What must I do in order to be saved?” and also told him of the

great fears of death, hell, and judgment, that I possessed. I also told the Rabbi if he could do anything to drive away my fears I should feel happy indeed ; in fact, I should feel happier than the greatest king on the throne. In reply to what I asked, the Rabbi said, "You must obey the holy law given unto us by God, through His servant, our lord Moses ; and if I would observe all the precepts of the law, it would save me." I then said, "Dear Rabbi, all this I have done with all my heart and power ; but the more I do all that, the more fears and terrors of death I have ; and something tells me in my heart that all that will never justify me before God."

When the Rabbi found he could not persuade me to stay, he said to Mr. A., he thought that through the hard study I had in Russia, and especially as I was so young, I was getting mad. As I heard that saying, I said, "Very likely it may be so ; I will, therefore, travel all over the world until I find a cure for my soul." I had no thought then that I should find a Good Physician in Jesus Christ, whose name was an abomination to me ; or that Jesus would graciously reveal Himself unto me, and heal my leprous soul, and give me that satisfaction I longed for.

The Rabbi then put his hands on my head, and

pronounced a blessing very silently that I could not hear. I then took my departure from the Rabbi, and returned to the house of Mr. A., to wish the whole family good-bye. Mrs. A. then gave me a purse full of thalers, and Mr. A. gave a present of a few thalers. I then left the house of Mr. A., with money and good clothes. Mr. A. also requested me to write to him at any time ; if I wanted any money, he would be pleased to send to me. He also expressed that nothing would be too hard for him to do for me, whilst remembering the kindness of my beloved father towards him in years gone by.

I then left that town by rail ; and when I finished the journey, I would not spend any money in travelling, but kept it by me, so that when I got to Hamburg, I might have enough to live upon for a little time, and also have enough money to secure my passage to England. So I commenced walking again through the fields, and woods, and villages. As I had some money with me, I thought that I should not suffer so much as when in great poverty ; but I found, by bitter experience, that money is not sufficient ; for often I walked in darkness, through forests and fields, with the money in my pockets, yet could not get anything to eat.

No one can imagine the great trials I had, only those who know what it is to be in a strange land, and have passed through a similar path of trials and troubles. Several days, whilst walking on, I came into villages, but, finding no Jews there, would not stay anywhere. Oftentimes I lived whole days long upon some fruits I found on trees on my way.

One morning, being very weary of walking the whole night, I came near a village, and before I entered therein, I sat down under a nice plum-tree, which was on the side of the road I walked. Being very weary and hungry, I took off some of its fruit, and eat it; and whilst sitting under the tree, there came four very rough, great fellows, and told me I had no business there, and that the tree was their own private property; they then seized me with force, all four of them, and said that they would have me imprisoned. They asked me where I came from; and as they found that I was from a foreign land, concluded that I had some money. One of the four then took out a knife from his pocket, and said that if I would not give him all the money I had with me, he would kill me.

I then gave them all the money I had given

me by Mr. and Mrs. A., that I might save my life; and as they took away my money, they ran away, and I wept bitterly: and then began to reason with myself: Can there be a God, who sees all these my troubles and be silent? I really thought for a while, "*There is no God*, for else how could He be so far from me, and let me sink in such misery and wretchedness?"

In this state I arrived at the little village, which was not far off, where I inquired if any Jews lived there, and, to my sorrow, was informed that there were none. I then entered into a public-house, and begged of them to give me a piece of bread, which was kindly given me, and then went my way to a town which was about eight hours' walk, where I was informed I could find many Jews.

Sometimes three and four days passed and I did not see a Jew; and had it not been for the season of harvest, I am sure I could never have gone through with what I then went through. Sometimes I passed a field of potatoes; I then took a few potatoes from the field, gathered together a few sticks, straw, &c., made a fire, and baked the potatoes. This has been my food for many days. Sometimes I used to live whole days upon apples; and afterwards

I procured an earthen pot, and whenever I passed a field of potatoes, I used to take a few, sufficient for one or two meals, and then I cooked them on the road, and thanks to the German roads which have many beautiful fruit-trees. I often used to take some fruit which quite revived, strengthened, and exhilarated me.

On leaving the village, I was bitten by a dog, which frightened me very much, it also gave me much pain. I would have returned to the village again, but there were no Jews living there, and I would, therefore, rather suffer pain than ask Gentiles or Christians for aid. I then looked up heavenward, crying, and asking God if He would be merciful unto me, and take my life from me altogether, and charging God that He was too severe to me. I then walked for about three hours, bleeding through the bite of the dog, and also very hungry. I was then perfectly determined to hang myself on the first tree I came near. I tore my waistcoat in twain, so that I might bind it partly around my neck, and partly on a branch of the tree, making every preparation for destroying my life, and longing to see a tree, where I could put an end to my wretched life.

Suddenly I saw a nice large tree; looking

towards the tree, I said my prayers, as usual, in accordance to the Jewish Prayer Book, and then I was ready to destroy my life. On coming to the tree that I looked forward to hang myself on, I beheld on it beautiful apples, which was indeed a pleasant sight. I then, forgetting that I wanted to hang myself on that tree, climbed up and got some apples, which I ate, and then laid down under its shadow, and rested. I thought of the words of Solomon, who said, "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste." I slept under that tree the whole day. When I awoke, I was surprised to find that it was night. I did not feel strong enough to walk that night, for losing so much blood through the bite of the dog weakened me much. I remained under the tree the whole night.

In the morning I started; walked for some time, till I came to the town that I was told some Jews lived in, and went to the synagogue, where, being so hungry and weary, I fainted. Many Jews then came around me, who called me to life again, and asked me who I was. Being very much exhausted, I said, "Please ask me no questions, but give me something to eat, for I am starved." I was then taken

to the house of a Jew, where every comfort was granted to me. After staying at the house for some little time, I fell very ill, but the Jews, who were so kind, did all in their power to restore me to perfect health. As I was confined to a bed of affliction, I thought of my beloved mother, and I wished I had died in my native land, and been in my father's house. I cannot tell the great and painful position I was in. To be away from my native land, from father, mother, sisters, brothers, and to be in a strange land, amongst people that were strange to me in their manners and customs, was indeed a great and heavy affliction.

## CHAPTER VII.

SLEEPS IN A CORNFIELD—LOSES HIS PHYLACTERIES—ROMAN CATHOLICS ABUSE HIM—STIRRING UP HIS JEWISH ENMITY AND ANGER—GETS IMPRISONED.

By God's help, I was restored to perfect health, and after having rested a few days, I took my journey again. Although I was rather weak, yet I would persevere in proceeding on my way. I walked a few hours, and then rested for a whole night in a cornfield, where I slept very comfortably. In the morning farmers came into the field, to work. Finding me in the field, they asked me who I was ; when I explained to them the position I occupied, they very kindly offered me help ; and although I was very much in need of their assistance, and thankful to them for their kindness, yet I refused to accept, because their help was in meat, bread, butter, cheese, &c., and as a Jew I would not accept such help. I, therefore, thanked the people very much for their kindness, and wished them adieu.

When I was gone about a day's journey, I found that I had left my phylacteries in the

cornfield, where I slept the previous night. I therefore returned to the place; walked all night; and when I came to the place where I thought I lost my precious articles, I could not find them. I then asked the people who were at work in the field if they had found my phylacteries; and as they could not understand what I meant, they therefore concluded that I was mad. They were very rough and low people—I found that they were Roman Catholics—they swore and cursed at me, and said, “Run away, run away, or else we will hang you, as your mischievous brethren, the Jews, hung Jesus Christ.” They sent their dogs after me, one, in particular, who jumped at me, and frightened me, so that I fell fainting to the ground; and then the farmers came and lifted me up, and revived me, and I then determined not to go near a Christian, and whenever I should have the opportunity, to blaspheme against the Christian religion; and even if I had power to shed the blood of Christians, nothing would have given me more pleasure.

I prayed to God to deliver me out of my troubles, and bring me to a land where I could enjoy the religious liberty of the true religion of Judaism, and give me power to act against

the Christians. My hatred against Christians increased more and more. Often I had not eaten anything for twenty-eight, or thirty, or even more, hours ; and passed several villages, and, finding that there were no Jews residing, did not stop, but went on further, till the only means that I could find to subsist in such times, was, by having always with me a box of matches, and whenever I came to a field where potatoes grew, I generally dug up a few potatoes, and gathered together a few sticks, &c., and made a fire, and baked the potatoes, which was the food I had for many days during my painful travels. When I came to a place where I could find Jews, I asked for help from them. Several days I travelled on in such a spirit, till I came to a small town where many Jews resided. I made application to the Rabbi for help, and he was very kind to me, and gave me a little money, and then sent me to a rich Jew, a particular friend of his, where I stayed for a few days. I afterwards left the town, with the blessing of the good and kind Rabbi, and I was full of joy when I heard that I was not very far from Hamburg—only about three days' journey. With much diligence I made haste, in order to get to Hamburg as soon as possible. When I

reached a very small town, about twelve miles from Hamburg, about nine o'clock in the evening, rain was pouring for many hours, and I was also very hungry and tired. I entered a public-house, and inquired if any Jews lived there; but, to my sorrow, there were none. I then asked the publican if he would kindly let me sit in his house through the night, as I was so weary and hungry I could not undertake to walk any more that night; but the publican being a Roman Catholic, finding that I was a Jew, turned against me, and said that he would have no mercy upon Jews, the accursed nation, and commanded me to leave his house at once. I then went to a police-station, and asked if the police authority would be compassionate on me, and permit me to stay that night on their premises, when the inspector of the police-court commanded that I should be locked up in a cell, and have rest there. In the morning when I awoke, I found myself in a prison cell. I then tried to open the door, but found I could not. I knocked at the door for some time, but no answer was given me. At last the gaoler came, and asked me what I required. I told him that I wanted to get out; but he said, "You are imprisoned, and you must be confined in the

place you now are until the judge will give you your freedom." I asked him what I did, that I deserved to be imprisoned, but I could get no answer. Presently the gaoler brought me in some bread and gruel. I ate the bread, but not the gruel, as I could not conscientiously partake of the gruel, being made by Gentiles; and would have rather suffered hunger than break the laws of Judaism. By-and-bye prison clothes were given me to put on.

I then thought of all the happiness I had lost by leaving my beloved parents' house. But I thought, "Alas! alas! too late to repent!" When Sunday came, I was informed that I must go to church, which I refused, being a Jew; but the principal or governor, being a very rough man, smote me on my face several times, and said, "You must obey the orders you receive." I then answered him in the German language, "I shall not go to church by any one's orders; it is against my religion; I hate churches of Christians, and the Christian religion." I also informed him that I was a Russian subject, and would complain against him to the Russian ambassador in Berlin or Hamburg, and said, I was willing to suffer imprisonment if I deserved it, but as I was innocent, I did not think he had any right to

punish me. On hearing this, he said, "If you are a Jew, you are not worthy of being found in a Christian church." I was kept in the cell eight days, and then I was set at liberty. I afterwards heard that the police-inspector of that small town had done all that to me, so that he might be amused with his household through that wicked course of action. As soon as I was liberated I prayed to God that He might be merciful unto me, and bring no more trouble as He did bring; and I then began to feel more and more enmity to the Christians—in fact, I took an oath, never to speak to a Christian, and if I should ever see a Christian perish, not to be merciful unto him. Such were then my feelings toward Christians, and to their religion.

When I arrived at a small village, very near Hamburg, I met a gendarme, who stopped me, and took me with him. When he brought me to a place where I found a few gendarmes, they all asked me who I was, and where I was going to. And when I answered them that I was a Russian, and was going to England, they laughed at me; some of them were intoxicated, which made them behave very disrespectfully to me. Several times one of them drew out his sword, and said, "I will kill you! you are a Frenchman." But I gave

no answer, and suffered all the time. I left myself for them to do what they pleased ; seeing that there was no one to help me ; I even thought that my God had forgotten me, and I must perish in the hands of the cruel Gentiles. As I was standing before the gendarmes, I was in great trouble (although all of them seemed to amuse themselves for acting so unkindly to me), yea, I felt to be in great torment. I fell to the ground, and cried out very bitterly unto the Lord, "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*" (" My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me ? "), and also very fervently prayed that the Lord might be gracious unto me, and take away my life, or save me out of the hands of my enemies, and bring me out of all my troubles, and bring me to feel satisfied in my poor lost and ruined soul

## CHAPTER VIII.

REACHES HAMBURG IN SORE AFFLICTION—HAVING NO PASSPORT IS CONFOUNDED—ADDRESSES THE JEWS IN OPEN STREETS—SOLEMN DEVOTIONS IN THE SYNAGOGUE—LETTER TO HIS FATHER—REPLY FROM HIS FATHER—HERR MYERS SUPPLIES HIM WITH MONEY—BECOMES ACQUAINTED WITH A YOUNG JEW FROM KOVNO—TREATS HIM AS A BROTHER—IS ROBBED BY HIS FRIEND OF MONEY AND CLOTHES—BECOMES BOOT-CLEANER AT AN HOTEL—FINDS ANOTHER OCCUPATION—ARRESTED BY THE POLICE—LOCKED UP.

I WAS very thankful to God when the cruel gendarmes were satisfied by ill-treating me. They then turned me out of the house, and let me go. I then gladly, and in haste, went to Hamburg.

When I arrived there, looking at the large multitudes of people walking hither and thither, I felt lost, not knowing where to go, nor what to do. I then stood in the street for some time, thinking what to do. I looked at myself, and wished I had never been born. I cursed the day in which I was born, and brought to experience all this misery. I then walked about the streets of Hamburg, crying and lamenting, until I came to a railway station, which was near to a large field. I walked about in the field for some time, till I was exhausted. I laid down to rest

there, and, being very hungry, I cried bitterly, till a lady with a little child came near, and asked me what was the matter with me. I answered, "I am very hungry, madam." The good lady told me, that if I would wait a little while, she would bring me something to eat. But I answered, "As I am a Jew, I am not permitted to eat anything from Christians." The good lady then presented me with a few *marks*, and gave me an address to the Jewish hotel of Madam Hochwald.

Before I went to the hotel of Madam Hochwald, I determined to obtain a pair of phylacteries, as I had none since I lost my own in the cornfield mentioned before. I inquired the way to the Jewish synagogue, and applied to the Jews for a pair of phylacteries; and as it is a matter of great importance that every male above thirteen years of age should possess the sacred articles, my application was not in vain, and a very kind Jew presented me with a pair of phylacteries. I was then filled with gratitude for having again the sacred articles for use in my devotion. I then inquired my best way to the hotel of Madam Hochwald. When I came to the hotel, I felt quite ashamed to enter that place, because of my poverty; but I at last went in and asked if they

would permit me to lodge there. The manager asked me if I could produce any papers or passport to prove that I was a respectable lad. Unfortunately, I could not produce anything except my phylacteries and fringes. The manager then examined my phylacteries and fringes, and, finding that they were perfect, according to the law of the Jews, trusted on this ground that I was a respectable Jewish lad. I then prepaid four schillings for a night's lodging.

In the evening I went to the synagogue, in order to be in public prayer with the *minion* (a company of not less than ten men, which is very necessary for males over thirteen years of age).

When I arrived at the synagogue, I was very thankful unto God, that He had enabled me to come to Hamburg, and especially to incline my heart to go to His sanctuary. Entering the synagogue, I found that the *mincha* service was over, and there was no *minion* for me. I was very much disappointed, but I would not despair.

I went out into the open air, and addressed myself to several Jews who passed, asking if they had already prayed; and if not, I asked them kindly to come into the synagogue and conduct the service. I was successful; several Jews came in—about twenty-five—and we then had

our service. After the *mincha* service, I stayed in the synagogue, and waited till the third service (*maarive*), would be celebrated. As I was sitting in solitude, my mind was solemnised as I looked Eastward, and saw (*Hoaron Hakodesh*, the holy ark) the beautiful veil hanging over it, and on it in letters of gold, "JEHOVAH." I then washed my hands, and came near the ark, with a very earnest desire to pray. I kissed the veil, and, closing my eyes, prayed unto the Lord to be merciful unto me; and then lifted up my voice with the following prayer, in the Hebrew language:—

"Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in Thee; yea, in the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge, until my troubles be past. I will cry unto God most high, to God that performeth all things for me" (Psa. lvii.).

As I was repeating this Psalm several times very earnestly, I began to think of ver. 10: "For Thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and Thy truth unto the clouds;" and then began to pray, especially that God's mercy and truth might be revealed unto me more and more; for I could not possibly realise that mercy was exercised when I considered that I was under the law; for I always considered the language of the law, "Obey or

perish." Although I firmly believed that the Jewish religion was the only true religion, yet I felt there was something of which I was ignorant. Still I was fully convinced that God would hear my prayers, and satisfy my poor mourning soul. Presently people came to the synagogue to celebrate the third service of the day (*maarive*). I joined them; and, after service, went to my lodgings.

I had something to eat, and then retired into a small room, very nicely provided for me. Entering the room, I observed that on the door-post was no mesusah,\* which ought to be according to the Jewish law. I then requested the manager if he would kindly let me sleep in another room, where there was a mesusah, as I would by no means sleep in that room. The manager then very kindly gave me permission to sleep in another room; and I was very glad to find there was a nice mesusah, for which I thanked him very much. Afterwards, I said my prayers and kissed the mesusah several times, and thanked God for His goodness towards me.

The next morning, when I got up, I felt unwell; darkness seemed to overwhelm my soul. I then

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\* A small box or case containing a piece of parchment, on which is written some passages of the law of Moses.

wrote a letter to my father, of which the following is a copy :—

TO MY MOST-BELOVED FATHER,—I am very thankful to inform you that I have arrived in Hamburg, and am quite well. I must tell you that I never forget the happiness I used to enjoy at home; I well remember when I used to think that I was the happiest lad in the world; but all that has passed away. Since I left you, my beloved father, I have never had one hour of happiness. Sorrow and bitter trials have been my portion; and I daresay that such will be my lot till I shall be taken to the grave. I pray to God continually that He may satisfy my soul, but I never feel satisfied. The more I pray, more wretched and miserable I feel.

Beloved father, I really do not know what to think of religion. You used to tell me that our God hears the prayers of those that call unto Him, and, I must say, I continually pray, but, to my sorrow, God has turned away His ear from hearing me. One thing, my dear father, that I should like you to do for me is, to ask my old Rabbi to pray, and I hope that if you, and the Rabbi, and my beloved mother will pray for me, the Lord may hear your prayers for the sake of your good merits.

My dear father, I hope you will not be troubled in your mind about my trials, for I am determined to go all over the world till I find that which alone can satisfy me. I know you may think it strange of me to say such things, but I cannot help it. I hope to hear from you soon, for I don't expect to stay here very long.

I remain, beloved father and mother,

Your most affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

A few days passed, and I received the following note from my father in answer :—

MY SOUL-BELOVED CHILD ISAAC,—I assure you that your mother and I don't know what to do. I really cannot understand why the Lord should deal with us in so strange a way. I have had my troubles in life, but never did I think that I should have such troubles as I have now. Since you left us, to think that you, my flesh and blood, who was the comfort of my soul, whom I hoped to see happy, should suffer so much as you do. Your mother and myself have not enjoyed one complete night's sleep. Only last night, about 12 o'clock, I suddenly awoke, because of your mother crying and lamenting whilst she was dreaming in sleep about you. In a word, let me tell you that the whole of our family are continually lamenting because of your extraordinary troubles. I enclose a note, and if you take it to Herr Myers, the Gabbi\* of the synagogue, he will give you some money; I have had some correspondence with him on business, and we have arranged it for him to do so. I hope, my dear child, that the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, will guide you, and satisfy your soul. Accept your father's and mother's love; your brothers, Joshua Hessel, Jonah Abel, and sister, Meitta Esther, send their love to you; even your little sister, Golda Tzipa, often repeats, "Isaac, Isaac," and cries because you are not with us. Let me leave you in the hands of God. I hope that you will try and have always your phylacteries perfect, and also your fringes (tzizes). I remain, beloved Isaac,

Your very affectionate parent,

LION LEVINSOHN.

I propose that your mother and brothers and sisters should sign their names for you to remember them:—

Your beloved mother, BRAINAH LEVINSOHN.

Your affectionate brother, JOSHUA HESSEL LEVINSOHN.

Your affectionate sister, MEITTA ESTHER LEVINSOHN.

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\* Chief or deacon.

Your brother, Jonah Abel, as he is too young to write, makes only a sign, \_\_\_\_\_.

Your little sister, Meitta Esther, the same, \_\_\_\_\_.

When I received my father's letter, I was very grieved to hear of the trouble my dear parents had. I therefore determined not to write to them any more about my circumstances, so that they might not know how I suffered. I paid a visit to Herr Myers, of the synagogue, and produced my father's letter. He asked me how much money I should like to have; and I requested him to give me forty thalers, which he gave me. I then purchased some good clothes, and returned to the hotel of Madam Hochwald. When they observed the change of my dress, they were surprised; but when they found out my real circumstances, they then treated me with much respect, as if I was quite a different person altogether. However, I was satisfied so far; still I had not that satisfaction my soul longed for.

One day, as I took my afternoon walk, I met a young man, walking about in the street, in a very poor state. I pitied him very much, having been in poverty myself a few days ago. I commenced a conversation with him, and asked him who he was? and what countryman he was? I found that he was from Russia, the town of Kovno, the same

town I came from. His family I did not know. I was moved with very much compassion towards him, and asked him to come home with me, to the hotel where I lived. I then ordered dinner for him, and asked the manager of the hotel to let him lodge there. He informed me that he had a desire to go to England. I was very pleased to hear that, and thought he would make a companion for me. I then gave him five thalers to buy better clothes; for which he thanked me very much. I was very much attached to the poor young man, and we became quite affectionate friends. We went together to the synagogue, and I was very pleased to find him very earnest in his prayers, &c. I felt more and more attached to him, and I looked upon him as my own brother. I said to him one day, "My happiness shall be your happiness; your trouble my trouble." Being so friendly with him, I requested the manager of the hotel to let my friend and myself live together in one room, which he granted me. The more I knew this young man the more my affection seemed to increase towards him. We stayed together a few days.

One morning when I got up, about eight o'clock, when I wished to dress myself, to my surprise, I could not find any of my clothes,

even my boots were gone. I then opened my box, and found that all I had in it was gone ; and I was left in a room, robbed of all my money, and almost naked. I began to cry very bitterly, and when the manager of the hotel came up, and found me robbed so cruelly, he was so amazed he did not know what to think. He told me that my friend had left the house about seven o'clock in the morning, with a large parcel. I could hardly believe that my young friend could treat me so cruelly ; but I found it was so, by bitter experience. The manager, who was moved with much compassion towards me, then got some old clothes for me, for which I thanked him, and he promised to help me as much as he possibly could.

I then asked the manager if he would let me be a servant of his, to attend to him, and to all the gentlemen who lived there, to clean their boots, &c. I made myself very useful in the hotel ; attended to all the visitors, and served them very diligently. All this I did in order that I might earn my daily livelihood, and save a little money, to pay my passage to England ; but, unfortunately, I was not paid by any of the visitors, so that I found it very hard to live, as Madam Hochwald did not pay me ; only my lodgings were given me free for my services.

Findirg myself in such difficulties that I had not sufficient to eat, I then tried to find something else to do. I went to a railway station, and asked permission from the station-master to let me beg of passengers that arrived at the station with luggage to let me carry it for them. I was very thankful when he permitted me to do so.

The first passenger whom I asked to let me carry his luggage, spoke to me very kindly, and gave me two very heavy parcels to carry for him. I carried them about two miles, and then he entered into a public-house, and asked me if I would have a glass of beer ; but as the public-house belonged to Christians I would not partake of anything. As I refused, he took away the parcels from me, and told me to go. When I asked him to pay me for helping him to carry his goods, he said that he had paid me at the station, which was a falsehood ; and when I contradicted him, he appeared as if I insulted him, and called a policeman to give me in charge for asking him for payment a second time, and also for insulting him. The policeman arrested me, and took me to the police-station, where I was kept a few hours. I was brought before the police-master with the charge against me.

## CHAPTER IX.

IS TRIED BEFORE A JUDGE—HIS EMPLOYERS GIVE HIM A GOOD CHARACTER—HONOURABLY ACQUITTED—FINDS A BUNDLE OF PAPERS—PROVIDENCE HELPS HIM IN A TIME OF MUCH PENURY—SERVES AS A MILK BOY—UNFORTUNATE EVENT—IN GREAT WRETCHEDNESS—WANDERS ABOUT HAMBURG—WEEPING, PRAYING, BUT NO PROSPECT OF DELIVERANCE—READS HIS BIBLE—JEREMIAH SUITS HIM WELL.

I WAS very carefully examined ; afterwards my prosecutor appeared, and was asked several questions. The judge expressed his opinion that I was not guilty. He then asked me if I knew any one in Hamburg that could testify of my good character. I referred to Madam Hochwald and the manager. A policeman was at once sent for them, and when they came forward, the manager of Madam Hochwald's hotel spoke on my behalf before the judge, and said that he could testify that I was an honest and respectable youth ; he also stated that very often he tried me, by placing money in different parts of the house where I often passed, but was never found guilty of taking anything ; and very often when I found money and different articles in the house, I gave them to Madam Hochwald or himself.

When the learned judge found that I was innocent, he pronounced sentence on my accuser as guilty, and sentenced him to four months' hard labour for falsely accusing me. I then went forth thanking God for revealing the truth to the judge.

After this, I did not go any more to the railway station, but sought some other work. Unfortunately, I could find no employment for some time. I shall never forget one day, when I was walking about the streets of Hamburg, very hungry; I cried bitterly, and lifted up my heart in prayer unto God for help. As I was walking along, I saw some papers on the ground. On lifting them up, I found the papers were of some importance to those to whom they belonged. Seeing the address thereon, I went to find out the place, and returned the papers to the rightful owner, who rewarded me kindly for my trouble. I then thanked God very heartily, for I firmly believed that He had answered my earnest prayer. I returned to my lodgings rejoicing, and thanking God that I was able once more to purchase a meal.

When I went to the synagogue to pray, a Jewish gentleman, who met me near the synagogue, asked me if I was a pious Jew. I answered that

I always tried to be pious, and continually wished to be more and more. After a little conversation, he said that if I was willing to work, he would be glad to help me by giving me something to do. I was very thankful to God for that, and especially so on finding that the gentleman was a pious Jew. I entered his house as a porter, to be with him through the day, but lodge at the place where I had been. The good man gave me his address, and I left him for a little while, as I wanted to be in the synagogue first to pray. Whilst I was in prayer, my heart was overwhelmed with joy and gratitude to God for all His lovingkindness towards me in a strange land.

After service, I went to work ; he treated me kindly, so did the whole household. I was there a few days, but finding that I could not save enough money to pay my passage to England, I asked the man if he could pay me a little more. Finding he would not, I therefore left him, and tried to get something else to do. I persevered till I found a Jew who asked me if I was willing to go about selling milk from house to house. I answered that I was willing to do anything which was honourable, and earn an honest livelihood.

I then commenced as a milk-boy, and succeeded

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for a few days. One day, having left the milk in the street while I purchased some bread at a baker's shop, being very hungry, some mischievous boy threw a rat into it. When I looked into the milk, it disgusted me, and I poured out the milk in the street, and went home, and informed the master of the unfortunate event. He then angrily said I ought to have thrown the rat out of the can, and gone on selling the milk all the same; but I said I would not do such a thing, especially as it was not permitted according to the Jewish law. The milk-master said that I must pay for the milk; but as I had no money he discharged me, and did not pay me for a few days' service which he owed me.

After being treated so unkindly, I felt very downcast, and began to look out for something else to do, but failed in finding any work. I then cried unto the Lord for help, but no help came. I went to the synagogue to pray, and also prayed in solitude; but the more I devoted my time to this, the more misery and wretchedness seemed to fill my heart and soul. I went about the streets of Hamburg, my eyes filled with tears, because of my bitter circumstances.

I thought of my beloved parents, and the happiness which I had enjoyed when at home.

When I went to my lodgings, I entered my bedroom, and then took out my Hebrew Bible from my box, and read some portions. I read Gen. xii., and the words of the first verse were very familiar to me, and I thought to myself that I believed this commandment and obeyed it, and then consoled myself with the history of Abraham and his calling, and considered that Abraham had his trials and troubles till he came to Canaan. I therefore burst out in weeping and prayer to God to help me to obey His voice, and go wherever He wished me to go ; but I must confess I could hardly realise that I had truly obeyed the Divine command, although nothing in the world could induce me to return to Russia. To me it was death before going home ; and although I had to pass through painful trials, I was resolved to suffer ; but go on and on till I should find true satisfaction. I did not know the blessed truth which the Gospel reveals, that all things work together for good ; neither had I any knowledge of the sweet and melodious words which the Gospel whispers, "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the kingdom."

Whilst thinking of my unhappy condition, I adopted the language of Jeremiah, which I thought was the exact experience of my soul :

“Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger.”

## CHAPTER X.

BITTER REFLECTIONS IN HAMBURG—ALL BUT IN DESPAIR—LOOKING UPON GOD ONLY AS AN ANGRY JUDGE—A LADY FROM RUSSIA STRONGLY URGES HIM TO RETURN HOME—IS EMPLOYED BY A FLAX MERCHANT—THEN FAILS—HE COMPARES HIMSELF TO ELLIJAH WHEN HIS BROOK DRIED UP—COULD NOT REST IN GERMANY.

SEVERAL days rolled on, and I still was in this low and tried state. I then felt that my position in Hamburg was worse than in the woods and fields ; for then I had something to cheer me on my way whilst anticipating to get to Hamburg ; but when I was in that large town, to experience such bitter trials as I have already brought before the reader, and which is only a very slight description to what I really had to go through—indeed my position in Hamburg was like the position of the children of Israel before the Red Sea—back I could not go, and forward there was no passage for me. I read the history of Israel, and thought that I was still in much greater trouble, for they could cry unto Moses ; and the great commander could address the Divine Majesty of God. I read the words spoken to Israel, “Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord ;” but I thought this

did not apply to me. I said the Lord of Israel has turned away from me, and I must perish.

I was weary of praying ; I thought all was in vain ; but yet my moral responsibility to God was always before me, that I felt compelled to observe all the observances of the Jewish ritual, &c. I looked upon God no more as upon a God of love, but as a God of justice ; indeed, I looked upon Him as an executioner, instead of a God most merciful and gracious.

As I went on in such a miserable state in the streets of Hamburg, one day I met a lady,\* who recognised me as from Russia. As soon as she saw me, she began to speak to me ; and as she found my poor position in Hamburg, she requested me to return to Russia with her. She promised to pay the passage for me ; but as my feelings would not permit me to return, I thanked her very much for her great kindness, and informed her that I was determined to travel all over the world before I would return home. She then besought me, with all her power, to return home. I said that I would rather die than return home, for I had not found that which my soul longed for.

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\* The lady was well acquainted with our family.

I then left the lady, and went to the synagogue, where a gentleman addressed himself to me, asking if I was willing to work hard ; and when he found my willingness, he took me to his house, about two or three miles from Hamburg. As I entered his house, he said that I was to make myself perfectly at home ; he also informed me that he would require my services chiefly in the night. He was a flax merchant, and my work was to pack the flax. I worked several nights from eight o'clock in the evening till eight the next morning. My readers will be able to imagine how hard this was to me, if they consider that I was only a lad sixteen years of age. Notwithstanding the hard and wearying work, I was satisfied to do anything, so that I might earn an honest livelihood.

Several days passed away ; then the good man informed me that he did not require my services any longer. Again my trials became very hard. Whilst at his house at work, I felt something like the good old prophet at the brook Cherith ; I was away from all who knew me. No father ! no mother ! no sisters ! no brothers ! no friends ! Quite alone ; almost in solitude. The only comfort I had was that I could occupy my time at work, and earn my humble livelihood. But it

was very bitter to me. When I beheld even this source of comfort was gone, I could then enter into the experience of Elijah when his brook dried up; still I felt I had a greater trial than Elijah had when his brook Cherith dried up. The word of the Lord came unto him; but I thought the word of the Lord will never come unto me. With such feelings I sat quietly and wept, as no one was in the room (for I had not left then). The good man, the master, came in, and finding me in such a low state, asked me what was the matter with me. When I told him, he said that he would be glad for me to stay at his house as a house-servant, as long as I liked; and also told me that I was to be quite at home. My heart was then overwhelmed with joy. Seeing the kindness of the good man towards me, I wept for joy, and kissed his hand; and said to him in the words of Ruth, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am quite a stranger?" He answered that he always delighted to be gracious to his brethren the Jews, especially those who once were in good circumstances, and, through the providential hand of God, had become poor. I then thanked God for what He had done for me, and I was full of joy.

I thought, when the brook Cherith dries up, Zarephath is prepared. Indeed, I feel it is impossible for me to tell the feelings I possessed of gratitude unto God, and also to the good man. I stayed at this place some time; but my feelings did not let me settle in Germany.

## CHAPTER XI.

LONGS TO GET TO ENGLAND—WRITES TO HIS FATHER—TRANSLATION OF HIS FATHER'S MOST EXTRAORDINARY AND DEEPLY-AFFECTIONATE LETTER—THIS ALMOST RENDS HIS HEART IN TWAIN.

I BEGAN to think what I could do in order to get to England. I then wrote to my beloved father, and told him that I was comfortable in the house of a Jew, who was very pious, very good, and very rich. I also informed him that I wished to make haste and go to England, and also requested my beloved father to send me some money to pay for my passage, which he did very kindly, and also wrote to me a letter, of which the following is a translation:—

TO MY DEAR AND WELL-BELOVED SON ISAAC,—I received your letter, and was glad to find you do not suffer so much as you did. I am also glad that you have found favour in the sight of a good man. My beloved child Isaac, I would again intreat you to think of me, your father, who has always manifested a very affectionate, fatherly love. You know very well that I have done all in my power to bring you up and educate you as well as possible. Not every Jewish father in Kovno gives his son such privileges as I gave you. You have been taught the Hebrew, German, and Russian languages. I never felt that there was anything too hard for me to do for my dear

child Isaac; and I also possess the same fatherly love to you now, and always will, as long as you continue in the way you have been brought up; even the last drop of blood in my heart is not too precious to me but I could shed it any time for my beloved child Isaac. And now, my son, you are away, our efforts and perseverance seem to be all in vain. Once more, my dear son, allow me to say, that we shall have no rest until you return home. Whenever I look in the neighbourhood and see lads your own age who are at their homes nice and comfortable, my heart aches and my soul is cast down; for I do not know why my son, upon whom I have looked to be the joy of my old age and comfort to me in the valley of death, should be torn from me in such an extraordinary manner. No man can understand why; but I suppose the Lord has dealt with me justly, and I hope it will be an atonement for sin, for I cannot help feeling that the Lord has punished me for my sins. Believe me, my dear Isaac, this paper is wet with the tears I shed whilst writing; mine eyes are almost sightless, that I can hardly write; for my heart is overwhelmed with bitter sorrow that you should be far away from us; and God only knows if we shall ever see you alive. Dear Isaac, have mercy on me, your beloved father, and your tender-hearted mother, and grant our request, and return home. Then our souls shall rejoice and be glad all our days, and you will be happy too; but should I not be able to persuade you to come home again, then I would earnestly ask you to try and stay in Hamburg, if you possibly can; because I cannot bear the idea of my child being away even further than Germany. I send you a note, and if you take it to the bank, you will get 50 roubles, and you will be able to pay your expenses to return to Russia. All our friends wish to be very kindly remembered to you. They hope that they will soon see you again, and, now, I wish you a very happy New Year. I hope you will find a good synagogue where you will be able to worship on (*Rosh Hoshanah*) the New Year; and also on *Yom Kipur*, a great day of atonement.

May our prayers be answered on your behalf. Your Rabbi sends his kind love to you.\*

I remain, my beloved Isaac,  
Your ever-affectionate father,

LION LEVINSOHN.

September, 1871.

When I received this letter I did not know what to do. Not to take my beloved father's advice, I felt would be unkind of me; and yet to return back to Russia, I COULD NOT. Oh! I wished that the Lord would take my life before I commenced my journey back. I remained in Germany over the Feast of the New Year, and I made special matters of prayer when in the synagogue, although it was quite unusual for me to pray such prayers that were not in the Jewish Prayer Book; but yet I poured out my heart to God, and asked Him to lead me in His truth, and to teach me His ways.

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\* Leshonah Habaa Berusholaem—next year in Jerusalem.

## CHAPTER XII.

### HIS ANSWER TO HIS FATHER'S LETTER.

THE two New Year's days passed ; I yet felt that I could not return. I then wrote to my father in answer to the letter I received from him:—

TO MY DEAR FATHER,—Since I received your letter, I have spent a great deal of time in considering and examining my feelings if I could comfortably return home, but I am very sorry to inform you, my dear father, that I feel that nothing in the world can draw me back to Russia. Ever since I left home I felt, and I still feel, that there is something for me somewhere which will make me happy (of course this may be only my fancy), but yet such feelings are mine; and I also feel constrained that I must go all over the world. I intend to sail for England this week, and will try and stay in England for a little while, and then will go to America, Australia, Asia, and Africa, and then find out different parts where to go to. I must say again, dear father, that I feel sorry that I cannot return, but I hope you will pardon me. Please do not write to me until you hear from me from England; I hope to be in London next week, and spend the great day of atonement amongst our brethren, the Jews, in London, and sincerely trust that the Lord will be merciful unto me and to you.

My dear father, I hope to be in your mind on the great day of atonement, so that the Lord may hear your prayers on my behalf if my prayers should not be acceptable. I would also inform you, my beloved father, that the feeling of fear that I

used to have when at home, about my sinnership before God, and afraid for the hour of death with awful dread, is still the same. I assure you that, if I was the richest person in the world, I would not mind to sacrifice all the riches in the world in order to have a realisation that the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob, is my God, and that I am His pardoned servant; but I am afraid that there is no hope for me, unless something very extraordinary should happen, which I do not think will ever take place; but, however, as long as I have my strength I will not rest, and will go on; and even if I cannot get any satisfaction for my soul, then I will occupy my youthful days in travelling, and see something of the world and the life of men, about which the great and royal preacher said, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit."

My dear father, I hope when I get to England I will persevere, and try to make my special business to visit the foreign Rabbis, and ask them to teach me the holy law, not so much the Gemarah as the Torôh, Nobüm, and Cethabim,\* and wish that you, and my dear old Rabbi, and beloved mother, will earnestly pray that the God of our brethren Israel will enlighten my mind, and that I may learn much about His wonders unto Israel. Oh, dear father, I feel if I had satisfaction in my own soul, I would go all over the world and tell all the Gentiles of the great God JEHOVAH, who is the only true and Almighty God! I must close this letter, and hope soon to write to you again.

Accept my deepest affection to yourself, and mother, and all.

I am, my beloved father,

Your affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

Hamburg, 1871.

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\* The law, the prophets, and the Hagiographa.

## CHAPTER XIII.

PREPARES FOR SAILING TO ENGLAND—LEAVES HAMBURG—LANDS IN HULL—CANNOT MAKE ANY ONE UNDERSTAND HIM—PROVIDENCE ENABLES HIM TO PROCURE ENGLISH AND GERMAN DICTIONARIES—FINDS A PIOUS JEW—IS HELPED TO SAIL UP TO LONDON, ETC.

As soon as the Feast of the New Year was over, I began to make preparations for sailing to England. I purchased a ticket for Hull, and left Hamburg, Tuesday, Sept. 19, 1871. When I arrived in Hull on the Friday next, Sept. 22, I found myself again in a strange land, amongst a people whom I never saw, whose language I understood not.

When I arrived at Hull, I walked about on the shore, on Friday afternoon, the eve of the Sabbath-day, not knowing what to do. To speak to people I could not; write the English language I could not. Oh, what a fix to be in! I walked about the streets of the town until I came to a stationer and bookseller's shop. I entered the shop, and began to speak to the people in the German language; but finding they could not understand me, I then spoke in Hebrew, then in the Russian and the Polish

languages; but, to my sorrow, they could not understand me in either of these languages. I then tried to make myself understood by asking for a pen and ink, and said several times over, "*Gib mir a pen;*" and the people in the shop thought I begged from them a penny; and when they offered me a penny, I showed them a shilling, and tried to make myself understood that I wanted no money; and then tried to write with my fingers on the counter, so that they might give me a pen and ink; and as soon as they gave me a pen and ink, I wrote a few words in German, and they could not understand. Afterwards they called upon a gentleman that lived in the same street, who could understand the German language; he very kindly interpreted to them what I said, and then I purchased a German and English, and English and German dictionary; and whenever I wished to speak to any one, I had to find the words in the dictionary, which I carried with me, and wrote every word on paper, which I had with me continually for that purpose, and then let the people read my thoughts.

I then began to inquire in that manner where Jews lived, as I wanted to rest on the Sabbath-day, according to the Jewish law. A young

man in the shop very kindly took me to a place where a Polish Jew lived; and as soon as I entered the house of the Jew, I was welcomed very kindly, because of my being quite a stranger. The good Jew then addressed himself to me in the usual manner of the Jews in Russia, Poland, and Palestine—*shalem alochem* ("Peace be unto you"). I asked him for lodgings for some time, and he very kindly gave them me. In the evening we went to the synagogue to celebrate the Sabbath service, and then was very glad to return to the house of my Jewish brother. I was very glad to find that the good Jew was very pious, and observed every precept of the Oral law. I stayed at his house, and then he assisted me in obtaining a ticket to sail from Hull to London. I left Hull on Saturday, 23rd, in the afternoon, although it is forbidden to travel on the Sabbath, yet the Rabbi of Hull gave me permission to sail on the Sabbath, in order to be in London in time for to offer the sacrifice on the eve of the great day of atonement. I arrived in London the following morning, Sept. 24th, 1871.

## CHAPTER XIV.

ARRIVES SAFE IN LONDON DOCKS—IS ROBBED OF HIS CLOTHES BY A BOY—IS DIRECTED TO A JEWISH LODGING—GOES TO SYNAGOGUE TO OFFER ATONEMENT—WRITES HOME TO HIS FATHER.

WHEN I arrived at the London Docks, I was very weary and fatigued, and did not know where to go. I could not speak this language. I then produced again my pocket dictionary and paper, and found out a few words, which I wrote on the paper, inquiring where I could find a Jewish lodging-house. I showed the paper to a lad, and he called me with him. Being so weary, I gave him my parcel of clothes to carry. We walked for some time, until we came into a court, where there was a back door of a public-house (which I was not aware of then). The lad went in through the door, and wished me to wait, as he wanted to inquire something. I waited some time, but he never came out. I then went into the house, and found it to be a public-house. I at once began to suspect that I was robbed.

Then I noticed that there were several doors, and consequently the lad went away with my parcel through one of these doors. I stood in

the house for some time, not knowing what to do. I then made myself understood in my usual way with my dictionary and paper, and still inquired the way to a Jewish lodging-house, until a young man offered to show me. I was taken to a lodging-house in Spitalfields.

As soon as I entered the house I was very glad to find some foreign Jews, and rewarded the young man for his trouble. I then informed my Jewish friends of the robbery I just met with, and they answered, "Oh, this you must expect in England." I said, "Then I shall not stop in England long." And as that day was the eve of the great day of atonement I was very anxious to observe all the rites, according to the Jewish custom relating to that holy and solemn day. Having had some money, I asked some of my friends (the Jews) to procure for me a cock, for to be my atonement. In haste they purchased it for me. I then took it to the *shochad* (butcher). According to the Jewish custom and law, I offered certain prayers, and then offered the cock to the *shochad*,\* to kill the poor innocent creature, whose blood was to be shed for my sins. When the cock was killed, seeing its blood pouring out, and the poor creature struggling

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\*A man whose business particularly is to kill the atonements, &c.

for life for a few moments, I felt deeply moved, especially whilst I was thinking what the cause of the poor creature's death was, and wondered how can the blood of the cock cleanse me from my sins. I little thought I should ever believe and rejoice that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, is efficacious, and washes away all sin!

After all was done, I went to the synagogue, and washed my hands, took off my boots, and began to pray the prayers according to my Jewish Prayer Book, which I had in my coat-pocket with my phylacteries, when the lad stole my parcel.

I stayed in the synagogue the whole evening and night, and also the following day, which was the great day of atonement. When all was over, I gladly went to my lodgings, having fasted since the previous day, and had hungered. I had some supper, and whilst I was sitting and enjoying my meal, I could not help thinking again of the poor creature which was killed for my sin, and could not satisfy my mind how God could require the blood of a poor harmless and innocent creature for my iniquity. The next morning I wrote a letter to my father.\*

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\* The reader may be surprised how I have preserved my letters after I was robbed so many times, I therefore beg to state that I

To my most affectionate father.

MY BELOVED FATHER,—I am very thankful to inform you that I am now in London; my health is perfectly established, for which I thank God with all my heart. I would also inform you, dear father, that I worshipped on the great day of atonement in a synagogue, among our brethren, the English Jews. On the eve I procured a cock, as you always do, to be killed as an atonement for my sin; I could hardly spare the money, but, my dear father, I did not mind doing so when knowing, as you always taught me, this is the desire of JEHOVAH, our GOD. You will, I hope, my dear father, truly pardon me for troubling you. I wish to tell you all that crosses my mind; and whenever I should be in any difficulties I wish to tell you only, and then I shall be satisfied. I offered the cock to the *shochad*, and when it was killed, I was surprised and amazed; although I have witnessed it at home every year, yet I never felt that my mind has ever been more solemnised about my soul, and the atonement which is to take away my sin. I can hardly imagine, beloved father, why God expects the sacrifices of poor things as are killed for me and others who have sinned.

Indeed, my dear father, I think that God has not been pleased to manifest unto us all His truth; but I suppose all these difficulties will be made plain to us when the *Lord* (*our* Messiah) comes, and takes us unto Himself to make us happy for ever, and the Gentile nations of the earth shall perish. Dear father, I am at present doing nothing, and have but little money to live upon. I am very sorry to inform you that I was robbed of all my clothes, and have only those I

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had all the copies of my father's letters and my own preserved in my hat, which I had prepared to be suitable for that purpose, which letters I still have in my possession, with the exception of a few which are in the possession of Mr. Robert Banks, Racquet-court, Fleet-street, E.C.

have on me—not even more than one shirt. If you would be kind enough to send me a little money to buy some clothes I shall feel thankful.

I will send you another letter in a day or two; I cannot write to you much now. Give my best love to my ever-loving and affectionate mother. May she live long in joy and happiness! And my very kind and brotherly love be remembered to my brothers, Hessel and Jonah Abel, and to my beloved sisters, Meitta Esther and Golda Tzipa.

I remain, my dear father,  
Your ever-affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

London, September 26th, 1871.

## CHAPTER XV.

SEEKS AMONG THE JEWS TO GET INSTRUCTION IN THE LAW—FOR THE FIRST TIME HE ENTERS A CHRISTIAN CHURCH—IS FRIGHTENED BY HIS JEWISH FRIENDS—VISITS THAT CHURCH AGAIN AND AGAIN—A CONVERTED JEW ENTERS INTO CONVERSATION HIM.

I HAD one great object in mind—namely, to make my special business to study the law. I visited several Jews, and begged for their acquaintance, and asked them to teach me the ways of the God of Israel. My request was granted; but, alas! unsatisfactory to my inquiring soul; yet I thought that it was my own fault, and blamed myself, thinking that the depravity of my heart and the corruption of my whole soul disturbed me from enjoying the peace and consolation that my Jewish brethren enjoyed.

I then asked different people, in private conversation, several times, if they were happy in their soul; but, alas! the answer was, “No!” I could not understand it at all; but I thank God through Christ my Lord for what He has revealed unto me by the influence of the blessed Spirit—that

"None but Jesus  
Can do helpless sinners good."

After having been a few days in London, finding that my money was exhausted, I began to feel anxious to be employed, to have something to occupy my time, as well as to earn a livelihood. I went about to one place and another, but without success. I then received a letter from my father, enclosing some money, which enabled me to buy good clothes. I purchased a very nice suit of clothes. I then was successful by getting a situation in a stick manufacturer's, as an apprentice to a carver of sticks, whom I served for about two months.

One day I happened to go out to dinner; I saw a church open, when the service was conducted, and, through mere curiosity, I went into the church; and as soon as I entered I was struck and surprised by the absence of pictures and graven images, which I was accustomed to see in my native land in the Christian churches. As I listened to the service—although I could not understand a word—I felt very interested in its simplicity; in fact, I began to think that it was not a Christian church, but some sort of Jewish synagogue.

My dinner-hour having passed, I returned to

work again ; but all the time I was at work I could not help thinking of what I witnessed in the church. I asked one of my Jewish friends if he had ever been in that church? He was alarmed, and said, "What! a Christian church! I have never been in a church, and never mean to go in my life." He then said, "I hope you have not been there, have you?" I was afraid to confess, and yet I would not deny, and was therefore very slow to answer. It was then suspected that I visited a church. I confessed, and said I certainly could see no harm in the place.

My friend then began to swear and curse at me for saying such a thing in favour of a church. Having found the dangerous position I was in, I promised I would never enter into a church again.

A few days passed, and as I went to dine I again noticed the church open. I stood in the street, and did not know what to do. I would not break my promise, and yet I felt I must go in again ; so I stood in the street for about one hour, and then returned to work again, having had no dinner. The day passed away ; I felt very uncomfortable, having been sorry I did not go into the church.

For some days I was in a continual low and

melancholy spirit. I determined to visit again the church on the first opportunity I should have. I went several times, and kept it secret. I could not help admiring the solemn manner in which the service was conducted. I listened to the words proceeding from the mouth of the preacher with much fervency, and wished I could understand something of what he said.

Several times I visited the same church, and one day I noticed a gentleman in the church sitting not far from where I sat, and by his appearance very much like a Jew.\* Seeing him, I was afraid that it was some one of my Jewish friends come to find me. I almost trembled for fear that all my Jewish friends should find it out, and also afraid in case any of them should write and inform my father that I went to a church of Christians, which my father detests and abominates, and which I did also detest and hate with all my heart.

But seeing the gentleman reading the prayers, &c., convinced me that he was one of the worshippers. When the service was over, I still sat in the pew, very quietly observing what

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\* A convert agent of the Rev. H. A. Stern, Home Mission, in connection with the "London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews."

would take place next. When the gentleman was coming out, he caught sight of me, and at once made his way to me, and addressed himself to me in the Hebrew—" *Atta Jehudah achi?* " ("Are you a Jew, my brother?")—that startled me very much, and convinced me that he was a Jew; and I then was doubting if the place was a Christian church, or some new sect of Jews, known by the name of Reform Jews. When I answered him, "*Ani Jehudah,*" he shook hands with me, and then commenced a conversation with me in the German language. After conversing for some considerable time, I found that I had no more time to spare, and was obliged to wish him, Adieu. He gave me his address, but I destroyed it, having been afraid in case my Jewish friends should see it.

Several days passed, but I could not see that missionary; I then made my way to the church again, where I found him.

## CHAPTER XVI.

OPENS HIS HEART TO THE AFORESAID GENTLEMAN, AND A BLESSED ACQUAINTANCE RESULTED—INTERPRETATIONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT ARE GIVEN TO HIM—IS INVITED TO VISIT PALESTINE PLACE, AND SEE MR. STERN—HE ACCEPTS THE INVITE, AND A MOST SOLEMN, GODLY, AND GRACIOUS MEETING FOLLOWED.

AFTER the service was over, the same gentleman again opened a conversation with me. He asked what my circumstances were, where I came from, who my parents were, and other questions. I told him all about my position, and finding that he was very earnest in speaking to me, I opened my heart to him, and told him the reason I left my native land ; and stated that when I left home my soul was cast down, and I had felt ever since that I was lost. I said, "I know I want something, and do not know what." He said to me, "Are you getting mad?" I said, "If the truth is known, I am mad." He then said, "I hope you will be much worse." I was surprised at such an unkind answer. I asked him what he meant. He then said to me that a few years ago he was just in the same state ; he left his native land, Austria—left father and mother, rela-

tions and friends, and went nearly mad, and said he was very thankful for that madness, for God had given him heavenly wisdom and true and everlasting satisfaction.

“Can you tell me all about it?” said I. “Yes,” he replied. He then asked me several questions concerning the MESSIAH, which questions I often wished I could understand. He then quoted several portions from the Holy Writ, which had always been hard for me to answer; in fact, nearly all he asked me were questions that I used to ask my Rabbi and my beloved father, which were never answered according to my satisfaction. I was so surprised with all these questions; yet I was pleased; for I hoped he could explain them to me. He then asked me to interpret to him a quotation from the Talmud, where it says, Those of the school of Elijah have taught, “The world exists for six thousand years: two thousand void (*i.e.*, without law); two thousand with the law; and two thousand the days of MESSIAH.”

Now four thousand years have gone long ago, and the last two thousand years have nearly gone. Where is the MESSIAH? I was very much struck with what he said, and asked him to tell me all he knew about this mystery of the Messiah. He then called to my mind the prophecies of Isaiah

(chap. liii.), and many other passages referring to the Redeemer of Israel.

I was very much interested with all he said. He then asked me to give him my address ; but I refused, because I was afraid if he should visit me my Jewish friends would find out that I had friendship with a missionary. He then asked me if I would pay a visit to the Rev. H. A. Stern, Palestine-place, Cambridge-heath, and assured me that I would perfectly enjoy my conversation with Mr. Stern. I took his advice ; but I promised that I would go on another day. He gave me Mr. Stern's address, and I determined to visit the rev. gentleman.

The reader undoubtedly will remember the name of the Rev. H. A. Stern,\* who suffered for Christ's sake many years. Four years and a half he was imprisoned in Abyssinia, a martyr for the name of Christ. I visited Mr. Stern very early one morning, at about half-past eight o'clock. He opened the door to me, and asked me what my request was. I told him that a gentleman gave

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\* I have very much pleasure in having the opportunity of mentioning the name of Mr. Stern, for I love him for Christ's sake, the Gospel's sake, and true humanity's sake—a man upon whom the light of the Sun of Righteousness continually rests, a man eminent for his piety, zeal, devotion, and love to Christ and the cause of Christ.

me his address, and asked me to visit him, which I promised to do. Mr. Stern then invited me into his study. After some time in conversation, I felt deeply interested. The gentleman whom I met in the church on previous occasions, came, and some others of Mr. Stern's friends. They all seemed to be very good people. Mr. Stern then requested a chapter to be read from the Bible, and I was very much affected with his earnestness. But before the chapter was read, Mr. Stern and all the others knelt down; but I did not do so, this being against the Jewish customs of prayer. The prayer Mr. Stern offered was in the German language, and I was very much excited by it, because he first addressed himself to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob; and expressed in the prayer the sinfulness of the human heart, and also that it is impossible for any man to please God, and gain favour in His sight, unless it is through the only Way, that of Him who said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life!"

When the prayer was finished, I could almost repeat the whole of it by heart. The Bible then was opened, and several passages were read, and Mr. Stern made a few observations, which made a very deep impression on my mind. After the Bible was read, all present again knelt down, and

Mr. Stern again engaged in prayer and thanksgiving. My mind was much confused ; I never witnessed such a thing. Looking at Mr. Stern, and the very earnest and pious expression of his face, I looked upon him with reverence, just as I should look upon a great prophet, even as Elijah.

I began to feel a very peculiar attraction towards him ; in fact, I wished he was a friend of mine, and should like to be his son ; for I must confess, ever since I began to think of religion, and having mixed with pious people, nearly the whole of my life, yet, as a Jew, and also since by God's grace I became a Christian, I never saw one whose life proved more Christ-like than Mr. Stern.

Oh ! if all Christians lived such lives, the world could not help seeing the grand lights and the glorious reflections that the Christians have from the Sun of Righteousness, and would glorify God by the Christians' example.

## CHAPTER XVII.

VISITS TO MR. STERN REPEATED—HE REMOVES FROM HIS JEWISH FRIENDS, BUT FINDS THEY HAD TAKEN HIS CLOTHES—PASSES THROUGH SEVERE MENTAL AND SPIRITUAL CONFLICTS—COULD NOT GIVE UP THE SYNAGOGUE, ETC.

I VISITED Mr. Stern several times ; my Jewish friends found it out, and persecuted me for doing so. They made me promise that I would never go to see Mr. Stern ; but I said, "I can see no harm in doing so," for I could not help admiring the ways of the good man. When I found that my friends were so severe with me, I went and told Mr. Stern all about it, and he said that if I wanted to become an inquirer of the truth he would be very glad, and willing to help me ; he offered to supply me with a good lodging. I could not make up my mind for anything, but, however, I took Mr. Stern's advice.

He sent a young man to find apartments for me. I then went to the lodging where I lived among my Jewish friends, and informed them that I wanted to change my residence, and when I looked into my box, I found that all my clothes were not in ; and when I made inquiry, the land-

lady informed me that she had pawned my clothes because she was obliged to pay for a bill; and as she found my clothes new and good, it would answer the purpose, and she promised that she would redeem them for me again whenever she could afford to do so. I then went to Mr. Stern again, and informed him all about it. He said, "Never mind; the Lord will give you what you need."

I then had a rule to visit Mr. Stern every morning for one hour, to study the Bible with him. Although I was very interested in the instructions that I received from Mr. Stern day by day, yet I did not feel that I could go on in the practices of his, as keeping Sunday as the Sabbath, and also giving up going to the synagogue every day, and not to pray with my phylacteries, &c. I felt very much confused, for I had not then believed in Christianity; yet I said, "I feel that something extraordinary would happen;" and I was fully persuaded that Judaism was the only true religion, and no other.

Several days passed. I was greatly perplexed, low spirited, and melancholy. I could hardly eat anything for some time. I had a great deal of correspondence with my father, which I translate and present to the reader, with a sincere hope

that it may prove a blessing to those who read, and if any of the readers should be blessed, I shall never regret that I took my pen in hand to write this experience of mine. I wrote my father the following letter :—

BELOVED FATHER,—Since I wrote to you last I have very much and extraordinary news to tell you. You know how I long to do good, and merit salvation for my soul, and be saved from *Gehenn* (hell). I feel that I could do anything in my power—suffer even as Job ; but Oh ! if I could find salvation through all this. You often used to tell me, beloved father, that if I observe the law, Oral and written, with all the *Taryag Mizvess*,\* I will gain salvation, and go to heaven. Now, my dear father, a thought just passes my mind — namely, if God requires of us to observe all this, why did He not require this of our nation of old ? They had the magnificent temple and the holy articles therein, and when a brother of our nation sinned, he was commanded to bring a sin-offering, which was killed, its blood shed, &c. I cannot understand, my dear father, what all this meant, if 613 precepts are sufficient. Certainly our nation, since the Babylonian captivity, has fallen very much ; things that had been revealed unto our fathers have been taken away from us, and we are left in the dark ; but I suppose our God-Jehovah is a Sovereign—He doeth according to His own pleasure.

Dear father, I would also inform you something which will surprise you. The other day I went for a walk, and saw a church where Christians worship God. I was startled when I peeped in and saw that the church had no pictures, no graven images ; it put me in mind of our synagogue, it looked nearly the same, with the only exception that the building has a dif-

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\* 613 precepts.

ferent shape and style to what our synagogues are built. I could not see any ark nor veil ; but, however, the simplicity of the worshippers interested me very much. I would also inform you, dear father, that I met a man who knows the holy language (Hebrew), and spoke to me in it, and also in the German language. He spoke about the Bible and the expectation of Israël.

Indeed, my heart was almost melted when he spoke to me about these holy things, and could not help admiring the man for his kindness. He also spoke about the sacrifices of our ancestors, and informed me very plainly that the sacrifices were only shadows of good things to come. But, however, dear father, I am perfectly satisfied with our good old Bible, although most things are almost obscure to my mind ; but I suppose as we are finite beings, and God an infinite Being, it is not meet that we should understand His ways ; and besides we read, " My ways are not your ways ; neither My thoughts your thoughts." I will not trouble you, dear father, in writing much more in this letter ; but I will write another letter in a day or two. One thing I wish to call your attention to, my dear father, is the twenty-second chapter of the first book of Moses (Genesis), where Abraham said to Isaac, " My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering." To me it seems a mystery ; and I should very much like you to give me a little light upon that. I hope to hear from you soon. Give my best affectionate love to my beloved mother. May she live long ! And to all at home. Pray, pray, pray for me.

I remain, beloved father,

Your ever-affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

London, December, 1871.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

RECEIVES ANOTHER LETTER FROM HIS FATHER—WHEREIN HE CAUTIONS HIM AGAINST ALL APOSTATES, SO-CALLED—THE ANSWER HE RETURNS TO HIS FATHER—WHEREIN HE EXPRESSES HIS WARM AFFECTION FOR THE REV. H. A. STERN—INTERVIEWS WITH THAT GENTLEMAN—IS DRAWN TO PRAYER IN VICTORIA PARK—IS STRONGLY TEMPTED TO RETURN TO THE JEWS.

THE following letter I received from my dear father :—

To my well-beloved son, Isaac ; may he live in peace and happiness.

MY BELOVED SON,—It gave me very much pleasure when I read your letters. I am very thankful to our God for His mercies and goodness. Praise His name and bless Him for His lovingkindness, which is much better than life. I am sure, my beloved son, since you left us we continually pray for you, and now I am persuaded that our God who never slumbers nor sleeps, but who is long-suffering, most merciful, &c., has heard our continual prayers, and brought you to a land of freedom. I am also very thankful, my dear child, that you have observed the ceremonies of the services in connection with the great day of atonement, and may your transgressions be pardoned through the blood of the atonement you made. I would also express my gratitude to find you still in an inquiring state. Surely, my son, we cannot do better than inquire continually in the truth of the most Holy Book, the Bible.

I would just make mention to you, my beloved son, I would earnestly caution you against false teaching. Remember the sweet Psalmist who beautifully says, “Blessed is the man that

walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly," &c. Be careful not to be in the company of any such. There may be some people who may call themselves religious. I hear that in England are to be found people who call themselves *real Jews*, but, alas ! they are real *meshamadim*.\* They profess to believe in the same Bible we have ; but Oh ! how can they believe in the Bible and not be *Jews* like ourselves ! My dear Isaac, I need not ask you much to keep away from such people. I know you will be too glad to have nothing to do with them. I pray that you may be continually in the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge. "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother ; for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."

My beloved son, "If *sinners* (or *meshamadim*) entice thee, consent thou not. If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause : let us swallow them up alive as the grave ; and whole, as those that go down into the pit : we shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil : cast in thy lot among us ; let us all have one purse." My beloved son, "walk not thou in the way with them ; refrain thy foot from their path ; for their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood" (Prov. i.). I sincerely trust, my beloved child, that you will pray continually for me and your beloved mother, sisters, and brothers. All our friends send their best and warmest love, hoping you may soon return home ; and if not, you may become very great in England.

Every blessing and peace be with you.

I remain, my dear son,

Your ever-affectionate father,

LION LEVINSOHN.

Kovno, 1871.

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\* Apostates or impostors.

The answer which I wrote to my father was as follows :—

To my dearest father.

MY BELOVED FATHER,—As I read your last letter my heart was overwhelmed with joy, for I am certain that, by God's help, I will practise and fully exercise the fatherly advice you have given me. You may depend upon this, my beloved father, that however far I may be away from you, yet you are always in my heart and mind. The advice you give me is more precious to me than gold ; and whenever I write to you asking you Bible questions, &c., I am sure, dear father, you will answer me as you did when I was at home ; for I do not care to ask strangers, in case they may misinform me, partly through ignorance, and partly through mere misguiding a youth ; but when I ask you, I always think of your wisdom, noble discretion, and true and holy piety, and feel certain, beloved father, that an angel from heaven could not advise me better than you can.

My dear father, many things I have to inform you, but as my mind and heart are too full with the news I wish to tell you of, I feel I cannot express my thoughts on paper ; yet I must try.

I have made acquaintance with a gentleman who is a Jew by birth, who is called among the people in London, the Rev. H. A. Stern. I suppose it means, "*Rabbi* H. A. Stern." I must confess that the several conversations I have had with him were very instructive to me ; for he knows the Bible almost by heart, and he is perfectly well learned in the holy Talmud. If I quote the name of any of our great Rabbis in the Gemara, he knows all about them. I find that he is a very earnest, God-fearing man ; in fact, my dear father, I do not think that our Jewish nation has many such good and pious men as Rev. or Rabbi Stern, who resides in Palestine-

place, Cambridge-heath, London. If you only saw him, you could not help liking him, especially if you had spoken to him. I must also say that whatever he teaches it seems to be very simple and sound ; but, at the same time, I do not admire him for several reasons :—Because he does not go to any synagogue for to pray. He never wears any phylacteries. He does not observe any of the *Taryag Mizvess*.

Of what I can learn he believes is this :—That the great Messiah of Israel has already come, in the time when our fatherland, the most holy city Jerusalem, possessed its grandeur, the second temple ; and that the Messiah has obeyed the whole of the holy law of Moses, and glorified the law ; and through His obedience men are saved ; yea, much more, dear father ; he also believes that the Messiah was murdered, and His blood that was shed was efficacious to cleanse from sin ; and His death is an atonement for sin ; and now Rabbi Stern says that man has nothing to do but believe and be saved. My dear father, if you permit me to express my humble opinion, I would beg to say, that, according to the teaching of Rabbi Stern, and comparing his teaching to the Bible, it corresponds ; but, my dear father, I only wait for your opinion, as I would not enjoy mine, for I may be wrong. Knowing your sound judgment, I am ready to accept all advice and explanation of the Bible. One thing more, dear father, I would inform you of the kindness of Rabbi Stern. When he found that I resided among very poor people—which you know I am not used to from home—he offered to help me, and pay my rent at another place, on which I gladly availed myself ; for I know it cannot do me any harm ; and Rabbi Stern also gives me other presents very often, which are very useful to me, and I am very thankful the house that I live in is a Christian house. But, my dear father, I have put a *mzuzah* on the door-post,\* and

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\* A sign on the door-post, according to Rabbinic command, in remembrance of the blood of the paschal lamb, which was

have my phylacteries always, so I suppose that it is not against the law. I also generally try and go to synagogue, and always endeavour to observe the 613 precepts. Farewell, my beloved father ; the Lord God of our fathers bless you abundantly.

I remain, your ever-affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

London, September, 1871.

As I kept on my correspondence with my dear father, I still continued my visits to Mr. Stern. One morning I was in a very melancholy spirit when I visited Mr. Stern, and, when engaged reading the Bible, Mr. Stern asked the simple question, "What is the hope of a Jew?" and then explained the hope of the Christian. And those several sentences spoken have found an abiding-place in my heart. I tried to forget, but could not.

When I left Mr. Stern on that morning, I took a walk to Victoria-park, and sat down in a very quiet place, when my heart was overwhelmed with anxiety as to what to do to be saved ; and, quite unconscious of my deeds, I threw off my hat, and fell down and prayed unto God to give me true light, that I may understand the Bible ; but at that time more and more darkness seemed

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sprinkled on the door-posts of Israel's houses. Every Jew is strictly commanded to have the *mzuzah*, or sign, on the door-posts of their dwellings.

to enter my soul, and, although in the bright day, yet it was night to me. To express the state of my mind's experience then is impossible, but my Christian readers will surely trace in their own soul's experience that, although perhaps their path has been different to mine in some extent, yet they know something of the night that the yearning soul has to experience. I thought then perhaps it was having to do with Mr. Stern was the cause of my wretchedness. I went and told Mr. Stern that I did not feel well, and expressed to him my true state; and that I felt inclined to go away again to my Jewish brethren; but Mr. Stern persuaded me to continue to study the Bible, and said that God would be merciful unto me at last. But, however, after being with Mr. Stern some time, I found myself having more anxiety than ever; I really thought that I was very near mad.

## CHAPTER XIX.

RETURNS BACK TO HIS JEWISH FRIENDS—PROMISES THEM NEVER TO GO TO MR. STERN ANY MORE—SINKS INTO DEEPER SOUL TROUBLE, AND IN GREATER ALARM THAN EVER—RETURNS AGAIN TO MR. STERN—ENTERS THE WANDERERS' HOME—RECEIVES LETTER IN ANSWER TO HIS PREVIOUSLY SENT TO HIS HOME.

AFTER this, I went to see my Jewish friends, and said, "I return again, and would, therefore, go on learning the trade I commenced to learn." My friends accepted me again on the conditions that I never went to, nor had anything to do with, Mr. Stern, nor with any of his agents, which I promised to do.

I then at once changed my residence, and gave up going to Mr. Stern. But all the time wherein I left him, I was very miserable. Every now and then the words came to me, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" All the first night I had no sleep, but thinking of the awful condition of my soul, and the awful doom that awaits every sinner; fearful thoughts seemed to fill my soul with dread and alarm; every moment I spent on my bed seemed to me like an eternity, and it was impossible for me to find anything at hand to drive

away all the serious thoughts I had. I thought of the words in Job iv. 13, 14, which I considered were the very feelings of my poor soul: "In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made my bones shake." About ten days and nights I was in a wretched state. Could not sleep in the night, and in the day I often burst out crying when at work. My Jewish friends pronounced me mad.

I then left my work undone, and ran to see Mr. Stern. When I saw him, I noticed him smile; and he then asked me my request. I informed him of my feelings, and that my Jewish friends had pronounced me mad; and he very kindly said, "Never mind, the God of heaven will satisfy your soul.

I then asked Mr. Stern, "What must I do to be saved?" and the answer was, "Believe in the Messiah!" Then he said to me, "You must be born again." "What! be born again! How can I be born again?" Mr. Stern then induced me to wait, and expressed his certainty that I would be a follower of the Messiah, the Lord of life and glory. I took Mr. Stern's advice, and as he recommended me to enter the Wanderers' Home,\*

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\* A Home for Jewish inquirers after truth, where no work is

I did so, and there I sacrificed every minute of my time studying the Holy Writ. Several learned inquirers who were in the home helped me very much in answering me all objections. During my stay in the Home, I had continual correspondence with my father. The answer my father wrote to my previous letter is as the following:—

TO MY SOUL-BELOVED CHILD ISAAC,—Since I heard from you last, my soul has been full of fear that you may be influenced by the eloquence and wisdom of men which will lead you astray. Whilst I am glad you are inquiring after knowledge and truth, yet I feel that the dangerous doctrines taught by many might lead you away from the path which alone is given to men to walk in, and that is the only way of Judaism. Depend upon that, all who walk in any other way must perish. I hope, my dear child, you will not be taken up with the doctrine the Rev. Stern teaches; he is only meshamadim; he is trying to lead you astray, and to have your soul condemned for ever.

The doctrine that Mr. Stern teaches regarding that the Messiah has already come, is very absurd, and all nonsense; it is very stupid to believe such things. When you see the so-called Rabbi Stern, tell him to wash his brain first, and then teach so dreadful a doctrine. Remember, my beloved son, that the religion of our ancestors cannot be changed, even as our God cannot change.

I would especially impress upon your mind, that the coming of Messiah is not to be of humiliation, nor of repentance, but

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done, only to be engaged in the study of the Bible. Supported by Mr. Stern chiefly, and other Christian friends of Israel.

of great victory, of infinite glory and dominion ; for He shall sit on the throne of David, who shall make Israel happy for ever. He must have legal power ; be arrayed in glory and splendour ! Such, my child, must be our Messiah, who will gather together all the tribes from all parts of the earth, when the trumpet shall be blown, and when there will be a universal gathering of Jews, and return to Jerusalem, which name is dear to us even as our lives ; and Jerusalem shall be again the beauty and metropolis of the globe. Hold fast, my beloved Isaac. The religion of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob, is our religion ! JEHOVAH-TZEBAOth is our God ! and He will redeem Israel in His own time and pleasure.

The Lord bless you, my beloved child ; and may you be kept from all false teaching ! Be sure that the days of Israel's glory are near.

I remain, my beloved son,  
Your ever-affectionate father,

Zelioni Gora, Kovno, 1871.

LION LEVINSOHN.

Meditating on my distressed condition of mind, my thoughts were put down in the following lines, after which I wrote to my father :—

“ I heard a sweet, unknown voice say,  
‘ Come unto Me and rest,  
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down  
Thy head upon My breast.’ ”

To my soul-beloved father ; may he live in happiness, peace, and joy.

BELOVED FATHER,—Since I wrote to you last I have made it a particular business to study the Holy Bible ; and I try to learn more and more about the hope of Israel. I cannot help thinking, dearest father, of the thousands of prayers that are offered unto God from time to time for the salvation of Israel. I always think of the earnest cries of our nation on the day of

atonement, when, after the service, the *horn* is blown, and all our brethren of Israel cry, *Leshanah habaahberusholaem!*\* and yet it seems that God has determined not to hear the prayers of Israel; and when I observe these things I often wonder how it is. I know, dear father, that you will answer, "*Because of the sins of Israel.*" But for a moment let me observe, In the time of the first temple, we find that our nation had broken all the laws of our great, and holy, and infinite Jehovah; we read that our ancestors in that time sank in a very shocking state of idolatry and infidelity, defied death, judgment, and hell. Israel had become an adulteress; you and I would suppose that the wrath of God would have been poured out upon Israel, and God would, in His wrath, destroy Israel with eternal destruction. But yet such was not the case; for such abominable sins God punished them by letting the Babylonians take them into captivity, and they suffered under the Babylonish yoke for about seventy years, and then our God delivered them. And now, my dear father, may I refer you to the time of the second temple, in the time of the holy prophet Haggai, when we find our holy nation observing the ordinances which HK BH† has given them, and we can only see Israel observing the law, &c.; yet we find, to our sorrow, suddenly the righteous Judge pouring out His wrath upon His elect.

The splendid *Beth Hameckdath*‡ was burnt, Israel slaughtered, and the streets of Jerusalem were full with the blood and dead bodies of our precious ancestors. Why was this? why was this? My dear father, surely if Israel deserved punishment, it was in the time of the first temple, and now nearly two thousand years have passed since Israel has been scattered all over the world. The name of ours, by which we are honoured, has become a by-word in the mouth of the uncircumcised.

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° Next year in Jerusalem.

† The Holy One, blessed be His name.

‡ Holy temple.

Dear father, I cannot help wondering why God has acted so with His peculiar people. I believe that this is a mystery which is hid from us, that God has dealt so with Israel. I often think, my dear father, that Messiah will never come at all, seeing that these hundreds of years Israel has prayed for His coming, and yet He does not come.

My beloved father, since I made a special study of the Bible, and inquired into the mystery of the Messiah, several portions of the prophecy have been my special study; I think they contain the great mystery of Messiah, but if the mysteries be made plain, I believe it would become the grandeur of the Holy Bible. Allow me, beloved father, to tell you my difficulties, which I am now very fervently trying to study. The other day I was reading very carefully Gen. xxxix., and I was astonished when I read the words of our holy father Jacob, in the tenth verse: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall be the gathering of all the people." Dear father, this seems to be a mystery. If really these words were spoken by our holy father Jacob, being dictated by the spirit of prophecy, how are we to understand them? Where is the sceptre of Judah! Where is Shiloh? My dear father, indeed, if prophecy be not true, how can the Word of God be true? and if the Bible be not true, then the infidels have stronger ground than we have. But surely I believe that God is holy, and His Word must be true; but I suppose that I am ignorant of the mystery, therefore I solicit you, my beloved father, to explain to me, trusting that you will answer satisfactorily, and my soul shall be glad and rejoice. I would not trouble with writing more in this letter, but I hope in a day or two I will write more.

I remain, beloved father,

Your ever-affectionate son,

London, 1871.

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

It is impossible for me to give the reader an idea of my experience when my soul was in a longing state. Nothing around me could silence the yearnings of my heart; every hour and minute were a burden to me; the thought of my sinner-ship before God laid upon me as a very heavy burden. I could not speak to any one about it, for I was afraid people would laugh at me; but yet I could not help speaking to others about the yearnings of my heart.

I repeated my visit to Mr. Stern, and wished to express the trouble of my soul, but, unfortunately, Mr. Stern was not at home; but I was very thankful when Mrs. Stern came near to speak. Mrs. Stern informed me of the absence of her husband, but requested me to tell her anything of some importance. I then said to her, in my very ungrammatical and broken language, that I wanted to know where I could find real satisfaction. I wept very bitterly, and told her that I was a sinner, and wanted to know how to please God, and obtain pardon for my sins; to which Mrs. Stern answered, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's only Son, cleanseth from all sin;" which words I did not like, for the name of Jesus was always a name I hated, and treated with contempt. I cannot help looking back with infinite wonder that

the One whom I so hated should be so good and precious unto me. I thank God that He has given me a different song in my mouth. Never did I think that the name great in Israel (Psa. lxxvi. 1) referred to Jesus the Son of David, and that my song would ever be,—

“ Jesus, I love Thy charming name,  
 'Tis music to my ear ;  
 Fain would I sound it out so loud,  
 That earth and heaven might hear.  
 I'll speak the honours of Thy name  
 With my last labouring breath ;  
 And, dying, clasp Thee in my arms,  
 The antidote of death.”

But as we find in life we must have the bitter before we have the sweet, so I had to experience such hours of temptation, trial, and sorrow, which I cannot possibly write or tell. With feelings of overwhelming sorrow and misery, because of my sinnership before God, infinite, pure, and holy, I wrote to my father the following letter :—

To my beloved father ; may he live in joy and peace for ever!

BELOVED FATHER,—The letter I received from you a few days ago has done me much good ; it has made me very cautious in all things, but, at the same time, it made me think more, and examine myself much more than ever I did in my life. The words, dear father, in your last letter, say the day of Israel's glory is near ; but, my dear father, such were the feelings of our holy ancestors in the time when the grand

temple stood in Jerusalem in the time of our holy prophet Haggai ; undoubtedly our brethren in that generation said the glory of Israel was nigh. I remember, when you used to teach me the holy law when at school, you said the great glory of Israel was nigh, and now this is the year 1872, and you say Israel's glory is nigh. Pardon me, my beloved father, for being so critical, but as you know that I would never trouble you to read letters of mine unless I have something to write to you that is of great importance to me. I cannot help thinking that the Messiah has disappointed Israel, and venture to go so far as to say that Israel has been brought into a state not only of ignorance, but of great confusion. Do not think, dear father, that I use too strong language, but I speak thus because of the following reasons :—

Referring to your last letter, you say that which I find to correspond with the writings of many of our holy and ever-blessed Rabbis, that the coming of the Messiah is not of humiliation, nor of repentance, but of legal power, which truth I must always believe. But the great question which troubles me is, If this doctrine be true, how can the writings of the holy prophets be true ? for as I refer to the holy writings of our great and holy prophet Micah (chap. v. 2), I read of the birth of our great Messiah, and it does not appear to my mind, studying the words of the prophet, that it shows that Messiah will be great in the world, for I read the words, "*And thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel.*"

Surely, my beloved father, Messiah, who is the temporal Ruler of Israel, would not be born in that small insignificant village, Bethlehem. Why not in the glorious city Jerusalem ? And, besides, when I refer to the fifty-third chapter of our holy and sublime prophet, Isaiah, and as we read, "Who hath believed our report ? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed ? He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant.

and as a root out of a dry ground ; He hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see Him there is no beauty that we shall desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief ; and we hid as it were our faces from Him ; He was despised and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, and we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, and He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was laid upon Him."

Beloved father, what a mystery this is ! If this refers to the Messiah, surely He cannot be a King upon earth, arrayed in splendour and glory, and reign over the world. Believe me, beloved father, my mind is too full of thought about the different passages which seem to upset all my views which you used to teach me. I am afraid, my dear father, that this letter will fill your heart with fear, in case I am taken up with the teachings of Rabbi Stern. But depend upon this, that I will not take the advice of any man, but I will believe the grand truths which the God of Israel has given unto us in the holy law, and I will not fail in carrying out your advice, which is full of soul and noble judgment, and holy discretion. I have much more to write to you, but I am just now very anxious to learn a little more of the real nature of the Messiah ; I will, therefore, conclude this letter, and go on with my study for a day or two, and then I will write again.

I remain, my soul-beloved father,  
Your ever-affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

P.S.—My very affectionate love to my beloved mother, brothers, and sisters, hoping all are well.—I. L.

Palatine-place, Cambridge-heath, London, 1872.

About a week later I wrote as follows:—

TO MY VERY AFFECTIONATE FATHER,—Since the last letter I wrote to you, I have often read your short letter I received a few days ago; indeed, my dear father, its thought is very deep, and almost infinite. You remember last time I wrote to you about the birth of Messiah, and the nature by which He is to be revealed (of course according to my poor idea), you remember I said Messiah must be born in Bethlehem, and be poor and afflicted; but another thought which struck me lately, and which seems to be rather difficult to understand is when I read the words, “*I am the Lord your God, there is no other Redeemer besides Me.*” How can this be? for, according to the Bible prophecy, we see Messiah, who is to be the Redeemer, and yet God said, that “*I am,*” &c. From these words we must understand that God Himself must be the Redeemer. Surely this is a mystery, wonder of wonders! Oh, that our eyes might be opened, and that we might have revealed unto us the infinite and glorious mystery of Messiah! Oh, when will the eyes of Israel be opened? And when will Jehovah be merciful unto us, and satisfy our yearning souls with the hope our holy ancestors longed to enjoy?

Just a few words, my dear father. You caution me against the teaching of Rabbi Stern. I would, therefore, just say, candidly, in the fear of God, that I cannot help loving him for truth's sake; for every time he speaks to me my heart, as it were, melts, because of the tenderness of his teaching; for when he reads the Holy Bible in the holy language (Hebrew), and as he explains, Oh, how sweet! The other day I could not help crying when Rabbi Stern spoke about our holy master Moses, and he spoke about the holy law, and has shown that under the law we are under the curse, for the language of the law is, Obey, or perish! But he has also directed my mind to the character of Messiah, who is characteristic for *love, tenderness, mercy, sympathy, and compassion*, and repeated the words which have been spoken by Him who is believed by Christians to be the Messiah; and the words, my dear father, seem to

suit me so well. The words are, "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Surely, beloved father, this is just what you and I need; for ever since I can remember I have been weary and worn out, and long for rest, and to have a realisation of the pardon of my sins. I trust Israel will soon have a great revelation; I pray that Jehovah might condescend to visit us with salvation.

I remain, dear father,

Your ever-affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

Palestine-place, Cambridge-heath, London, 1872.

My father's answer to my previous letters I received as follows:—

TO MY BELOVED SON ISAAC,—I have received your letters, and read them with much interest. My soul has been ever since filled with much joy and with very much sorrow. I rejoice because you tell me that you will not take any one's advice nor instruction but what I tell you. My darling child Isaac, you seem to be too much concerned about the Messiah, who is to be the glory of Israel. Our eyes are often sightless of crying when I think of the Messiah, who ought to have come long ago; but, my son, it is only through the sins of Israel that He does not appear. And I am also grieved in reading your letters, for I am afraid that you have given way too much in the doctrines that the Rev. Stern teaches. Remember, my child, that whatever Rabbi Stern may say about the Messiah it cannot be true, for we know that before the Messiah comes the holy prophet Elijah must come to prepare a way for Him. If you refer to Mal. iv., you will see plainly that the law of Moses must be kept, our nation must be firm in the faith, for, my dear child, think what God says, "Remember the law of Moses My servant, which I have commanded unto

him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes of judgment." Surely, my darling child, this will convince you that no religion can be true but the religion of Israel, who have the law of Moses; and when you observe the following words you will see that the Messiah whom Rabbi Stern teaches is false, for God has promised to send Elijah as the forerunner: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Surely, my dear child, this will convince you that our Messiah has not yet come, and His coming will be known and believed by us and all Israel, for when our holy prophet Elijah comes he will prepare us, and we shall know the Messiah.

My dear child, as I referred to one of your letters I received the other day, my heart was filled with grief, for you tell me that you love the Rev. Stern, and you also tell me that you admire his teaching about the Messiah. Believe me that I would rather die in the greatest misery than believe in the one whom the Christians worship, Joshua of Nazareth, who was an illegitimate child of Mary, although He was clever and wonderful in what He did; but let not your mind be taken up with the dreadful doctrines about the Nazarene. In fact, my child, I have no desire of answering your letters in any way concerning the bastard. I would never condescend to think nor write about so great an impostor as the Rev. Stern teaches; even the Rev. Stern is an impostor. Let not your mind be taken away to such an unholy subject as the Nazarene, which is so absurd to suppose one whom our Jewish brethren have found to be unworthy of life, and he was therefore killed according to the law. Dear child, let me not hear again anything about the Nazarene, nor Rabbi Stern, Jehovah will judge them both, and all impostors like them. Hold fast, my child, the devil is always trying to lead away the good from the right way. Oh, my child, I am afraid that you have given way too much to the Rev. Stern's teaching! Remember that if you profess the same doctrines, you will be considered a *meshamadim* like himself.

And Oh, the shame that I should have to bear all my life! Dear Isaac, let it never come to pass that I should ever be troubled because of you forsaking the right way of Judaism. Remember that sorrow would bring me to the grave; but I hope, through the merits of our fathers, it shall never be said that you have indulged in believing in the impostor.

You also refer in your last letter of the tenderness of Mr. Stern's teaching, but remember, my child, that the devil always attacks in tenderness, and promises very nice things; but Oh, Isaac! Isaac! beware; your soul may be destroyed by the so-called tenderness of the *meshamadim*.

If the Author of the Christian religion was characteristic for mercy, love, and tenderness, as you referred to in your last letter, our Jewish brethren, as a nation, would not have had to suffer so much as they did. Think of the persecution of Israel in Spain, France, Italy, Russia, Germany, and England. All these are the persecutions by the Christian nations. Where is then the tenderness of Christianity? They may be tender to themselves, as all Christians are, which example we have in this country. Do not think, my darling Isaac, that whatever appears truthful is really true, for the lion can be dressed like a sheep, and the devil can and does appear like a saint. But I have not the least doubt in my mind that the knowledge and education I gave you will help you to stand firm in the faith of Israel, and defy all teaching of the Rev. Stern and all impostors like him.

I cannot write to you more in this letter, but I would say that my earnest and continual prayer to God is to keep you safe in the most holy path of Israel. Do not despair, my child, Israel's glory is near, Israel shall soon be gathered together, and the Messiah will come to reign over His people. Every heavenly blessing be with you.

I remain, my dearest child,

Your ever-affectionate father,

Zelioni Gora, Kovno, October, 1871.

LION LEVINSOHN.

On receipt of this letter I immediately answered as follows:—

To my ever-affectionate father ; may he live long and in joy.

MY BELOVED FATHER,—Since I received your letter I thought of every word you wrote in your letter, and not only the words, but its deep thought. I assure you, dear father, that I do not take the advice of Rabbi Stern, nor would I take advice from any one but from you, whom I love with all my heart and soul. The reason, dear father, I expressed my feelings towards Rabbi Stern in the expressions I gave in my last letter is because I really cannot help admiring him because of his kindness and humble spirit ; although he is a great man, he never thinks himself too great to speak to any one, no matter how poor he may be. Dear father, I often think of some of our great Rabbis and holy Pharisees who are considered pious and very good, but I must confess I have not seen *one* in our nation whose life can be proved more holy than Rabbi Stern's. It is true our great men profess much more, but, dear father, the whole of the piety of many Rabbis consists of standing in the synagogue for two or three hours, and having their phylacteries broad, &c. But Rabbi Stern seems to be a good, God-fearing, and God-honouring man, and I, therefore, cannot help loving him.

And now, dear father, I would again renew my subject about the Messiah. You said in your last letter that you would not answer any questions concerning the Nazarene whom you call impostor. My dear father, depend upon it that I do not believe in the Nazarene ; I know that He was an impostor ; far be it from me to believe in Him as my Messiah. You may rest assured that I will not believe in Him, for I have seen quite enough of that religion. Quite enough I saw in Russia. And if the Nazarene has formed such religion as they have in Russia, surely we cannot wonder that the Christians in Russia

are such impostors as we have learnt them to be, by living among them. But, my dear father, when I ask you questions concerning the Messiah, I do not mean the impostor, the Nazarene, I only mean the true Messiah, the Redeemer of Israel. And I would also inform you, that the Christian religion in England is not like the abominable Christian religion in Russia, for we can well call the Russian Christians, impostors. But the English are quite different. I cannot help noticing how quiet it is on Sunday in England; no theatres are open, no public amusements, nor anything of that kind, for the English people consider it their Sabbath, and they therefore keep it holy; but you have never known the Russian Christians to keep their Sabbath holy. No! no! on Sundays the greatest crimes are committed, and more abominations on that day than any other in the week.

You remember, my beloved father, in the last letter I wrote to you about the nativity of Israel's glory, and also of the mystery, when I mentioned a passage, "I am the Lord your Redeemer, there is no other Redeemer besides Me;" and I asked you "How then can it be?" I have since found many other passages in the Holy Bible which seem also to refer to the same Messiah; and Oh! that I could understand it. Noticing the words of our lord Moses (Gen. i. 15), we find a wonderful prophecy: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren like unto me; unto Him shall ye hearken." And again, dear father, similar words in ver. 18: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him." I have no doubt, beloved father, that these verses refer only to the Messiah. Do they not? I hope you will answer me soon, what it means and to whom it refers. My dear father, you remember a few days ago I spoke about the nature of Messiah, and asked how can it be that God Himself will be the Redeemer, knowing that Messiah will be

the Redeemer of Israel. Here I have read a passage in the seventh chapter of our holy and sublime prophet Isaiah; in the 14th verse it says, "*Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name IMMANUEL.*" Beloved father, how can these things be? how can this be fulfilled? for it does not say a woman shall conceive, but HOALMO (virgin). Surely this is a great mystery. And the name of the Child Immanuel, for *Emanu* means with us, *el* God. Can God, who reigneth from eternity to eternity, be with us poor sinful creatures? And again I refer to the eleventh chapter of the same prophecy. How great and wonderful these things are! The great prophet seems to speak by the spirit of prophecy about this same *Emmanuel* that I have mentioned to you. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord." Oh, dear father, what precious things these are! but Oh, how precious would it be if we could understand them more! And as I go on I continually find the passages which seem to impress my mind, although I used to read them when at home, but never with such influence.

Dear father, as I look into the words of the sixty-first chapter of this same prophecy, how grand! "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings to the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." You

remember, dear father, in my last letter I mentioned something of the character of the Messiah that the Rev. Stern teaches. He is eminent for love, tenderness, mercy, compassion, and sympathy. I suppose he learnt it from this passage.

Dear father, when shall we realise this prophecy? When, Oh! when, will the Messiah come? Oh! when will He set Israel free? How long, Oh! dear father, will Jehovah keep us in darkness? Oh, that the light of His countenance may again shine upon Israel! And, Oh, that our broken-hearted might be healed, and the throne of David again be exalted, and Jerusalem become the great glory and metropolis of the globe, and the garment of praise be given to Israel, then shall we be able to "shout for joy, and sing unto the Lord!" "O Lord, I will praise Thee; though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also has become my salvation." Oh, dear father, how sweet a time that will be! when we all shall say, "Sing unto the Lord, for He hath done excellent things; this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, ye inhabitants of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

Dear father, I seem to possess a hope that soon will such a time be revealed unto us, and we will enjoy that unspeakable joy that only God's Israel shall enjoy.

I remain, my loving father,  
Your ever-affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

Palestine-place, Cambridge-heath, London,  
October, 1871.

To my soul-beloved father; may he live in joy! Amen.

DEAR FATHER,—Since I wrote to you last, I have tried with all my power to find out the truth about the Messiah; but I must confess the more I search, the more I get in darkness;

and I can only cry to the God of our fathers to look down upon me with His eye of pity, and reveal the truth unto me. You remember, my beloved father, in my previous letter, I quoted many passages about the nativity and nature of Messiah, who is to fill Israel with joy and satisfaction without end, but how I have tried to study, in order to find out who is to be the Messiah, for as I have mentioned before, God Himself must be the Redeemer, and how can the eternal God Jehovah come down upon the earth?

To-day, as I was reading the book of the Proverbs of Solomon, I was surprised reading the following words, which I have often read, but never have they entered into my mind with such great influence. In chap. xxx. 4, it reads, "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in His fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is His name? and what is His Son's name if thou canst tell?" Does it not seem a mystery above all mysteries? Son's name? Has God a Son? How can this be?

Dear father, as soon as I found these words so mysterious, I went to ask Rabbi Stern to explain to me this, and he answered me that this word refers to the Messiah, who is the Son of the living God; and as I was conversing with him about the Messiah, whom he believed to be the Son of God, Rabbi Stern brought before my attention the following parts of the Holy Bible, and said all these refer to the Son of the living God Jehovah. Psalm ii. 7: "Kiss the Son lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." And, again, Rabbi Stern called my attention to the third chapter of the book of Daniel: "Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men

loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Dear father, I hope you will not think that I trouble you by writing too much upon that subject ; but you know my willingness to learn, and especially when it is for the welfare of my yearning soul. Dear father, I beg to state a few more passages of the holy prophecy which seem to be so much in favour of Rabbi Stern's teaching. Of course you and I do not believe, but still we cannot deny the fact that the argument on his side seems to be the strongest and loudest. Notice the words of Isaiah ix. 6 : " For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given ; and the government shall be upon His shoulders, and His name shall be Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Dear and beloved father, what does this mean ? He seems to have two natures of the Divine Messiah—God and man. A child born must be, as a matter of course, human. Noticing the peculiar name, Wonderful, Counsellor, of course, this refers to His nature as the great Deliverer of Israel. But Oh, dear father, He is also called the Everlasting Father, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace, which surely cannot be referring to any human being only. Oh, how mysteriously God seems to hide Himself from Israel ! Dear father, I cannot help crying unto God that He may hasten the glorious time when Messiah will come and reveal unto us these things ; but ere that time comes, I pray that you and I, and my beloved mother, and brothers, and sisters may have the light revealed unto us, and that we may rejoice.

Dear father, I will write again to you very soon. Please remember me to all my old friends ; tell them that although I am so far from them, yet I always think about them. Give my best love to my loving mother, and to my beloved brothers and sisters.

I remain, my beloved father,  
Your ever-affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

Palestine-place, London, October, 1871.

MY DEAR AND WELL-BELOVED FATHER,—The several letters I received from you lately filled me with much sorrow. You caution me against Christianity; you speak with such a prejudiced spirit as regards the Author of the Christian religion; and you also say that if you find me to believe in *Joshua*, the Author of Christianity, you will have nothing to do with me. I, therefore, beg of you, my dear father, to read this letter, and see if there is not some wonderful truth in it. Since I wrote to you last, I have determined to find out the great question—

“IS CHRISTIANITY TRUE OR NOT?”

I, therefore, studied the *Bible only*, and found that unless Christianity is the true religion, then the God of our holy fathers has not spoken His words in the Book which we call the *Holy Bible*. I must openly confess, my dear father, that it is my conviction that if Christianity be not the true religion, then the words of God cannot be true.

I was presented with a book from Rabbi Stern, which is called *the New Testament*. Dear father, it is a wonderful little book to me; it seems to be a thorough good key to the Bible; it opens the mind very wonderfully; it gives the life of Joshua the Messiah. I can truly say, if Messiah has not come yet, I do not believe that He will come now; for, referring to the words of the holy prophet Haggai, we see clearly that the Messiah must have appeared in the time of the second temple. Note the following wonderful words:—

“For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.”

As we notice the history of Joshua the Nazarene, He seemed to have appeared in the time when the second temple was

whole; and if we carefully examine the book of the generation of Joshua, the Christians' Messiah, we find it wonderful; for His descent can be traced from ever since the time of our father Abraham. The book of the generations says as follows:—

“Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; and Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; and Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; and Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; and Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias; and Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; and Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; and Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias; and Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias; and Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon: and after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; and Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; and Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; and Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.”

And when we come to notice the whole life of the Nazarene, it is most remarkable to behold the pure and holy life He lived. Beloved father, if you wish to learn a little of His nature, I will gladly send you the book called *the New Covenant or Testament*, and you will find that such life was wonderful indeed. If you do not believe in the Nazarene, what answer can you give as regards the miracles He performed? And is it not the greatest proof we have that the Christian religion

must be the religion God has established, when we only think, eighteen hundred years ago, a poor, *miserable, persecuted Jew* was put to death by the Roman soldiers, how He died in the painful death of crucifixion; our ancestors, who arrived in Jerusalem to celebrate the passover, almost all of them who went to see Him on *Gilgal* (Golgotha), and how the Nazarene died, and *was buried*, and those even that believed on Him were put to death, and almost annihilated; yet, beloved father, look abroad and see kings and princes bow their knees to the crucified Nazarene; and how many have given their lives by testifying that He is **THE TRUE MESSIAH.**

Now, dear father, is this not sufficient proof that Christianity is the religion of God? Look at the despised Joshua! He is worshipped by millions of educated and intelligent men. The true philosopher acknowledges the Messiahship of the Nazarene. Once more, I must tell you the feelings of my heart—

**I ALMOST AM A CHRISTIAN!**

My dear father, I fancy I can see you reading this letter; your heart is *filled with sorrow and anger* towards me! I think I can see you turn against me! I almost hear you say, "Away with Isaac! Away with him!" But, O my loving father, if I could only fly to Russia, and see you, and express the feelings of my heart, nothing would make me more happy.

Once more I must say that the Messiah has come; and I **BELIEVE IN HIM.** Although our Jewish brethren consider Him a disgrace, and that it is shameful to believe in Him; but, beloved father, I cannot, I must not be ashamed of Him. I have not yet made a public profession of my faith in Him; yet, in my heart, I believe in Him. Oh, dear and beloved father, please read the book I send you, and examine the Holy Bible, and see if I am not right. My prayer is, the time may soon come when the veil may be taken away from our dearly-beloved nation, and Israel may look to Him whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him as for a firstborn.

**K**

With very fervent prayers for you, and my darling mother,  
and beloved sisters and brothers,

I remain, my beloved father,

Your affectionate son even till death,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

Palestine-place, Cambridge-heath, London,

December, 1871.

P.S.—Referring to your letter of———, I would recommend you, if any one of *Goradskie Duma* ask the reason of my absence from Russia, you had better say that I left because I wished to escape the Conscription, and I think that will save all trouble at home.\*—I. L.

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\* My father wrote to me, informing me that he had received notice from the provincial office, summoning me to appear at a certain time for the Conscription, and he, therefore, wished to know what reply to give. The above is the reply I recommended him to give.

## CHAPTER XX.

MOURNING FOR ASSURANCE OF HIS OWN SALVATION—HIS BITTER SORROW AT THE THOUGHT OF BEING CUT OFF BY HIS PARENTS—HOW DELIVERED—PERSECUTED BY THE JEWS.

MY soul was perfectly satisfied in believing that JESUS was the Messiah and the Saviour of all who truly believe in Him; but I could not possibly realise that Jesus was MY SAVIOUR and my Redeemer. This filled me with much sorrow, for I was convinced that none but Jesus could save; but when I thought how I hated the name of Jesus, and how many times I cursed that dear name, I certainly did not think that mercy could be manifested unto me.

I often visited my beloved friend in Christ, Mr. Stern, who so often warmly, and with a fatherly spirit, comforted and enlightened me, by informing me the more sinful I felt, the more assured he was that Jesus would pardon my sins. Mr. Stern often kneeled and prayed when I was with him, and the prayers sank deep in my heart. At last, I expressed the feelings of my heart to Mr. Stern, and said, "If Christ will pardon my sins, I must make a public confession

of my faith in Him!" Mr. Stern then requested me to write a letter to him, and express my experience in the letter, which I did.\* Mr. Stern then appointed that I should be publicly baptized on Sunday, February 4th. Although it was my desire to make a public confession, yet my heart was full of sorrow when I thought that as soon as I would make a confession in Jesus, my beloved parents would cut me off from them. I often wept bitterly when thinking of the love of a tender mother, and from her I would be cut off because of Christianity. This, I must say, was a great temptation; I did not know what to do; but thanks be to the Almighty grace by whom the tempted shall overcome and triumph, even by God's grace I overcame this temptation, when I read the words of Jesus, "Whosoever does not forsake father and mother for My sake, is not worthy of Me." I then thought of the great love of parents; but I also thought of the love of Jesus; I thought of the manger of *Bethlehem*; I thought of the carpenter's shop at *Nazareth*; I thought of Jesus as He sat in the hall of Herod, laughed at by the Jews and Romans; I thought of the crown of thorns on that dear and eminent head; and I

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\* I asked Mr. Stern to oblige by lending me the letter for publication, but he regrets that he cannot find it, as he mislaid it.

thought of the rugged nails in His hands and feet, of the spear in His side, and of the grave where He was laid. I asked myself, "Can there be greater love than this?" The words of the poet were my continual language :—

"Alas! and did my sovereign Lord  
Bleed for such a wretch as I?"

I then realised that the love of parents was nothing like the love of Jesus, and I could not possibly deny Him, for His love drew me nearer and nearer to Him. Thanks be unto God! Mr. Stern never felt it too hard to bring before me the love of our Jesus.

On Saturday evening, February 3rd, 1872, I visited Mr. Stern, and then, kneeling down, he earnestly prayed on my behalf. On Sunday, February 4th, I renewed my visit, and Mr. Stern then engaged for a little time in devotion. We went to the Episcopal Jewish Chapel,\* where the prayers, according to the Prayer Book of the Church of England, were read in the Hebrew language. After the first part of the service, I knelt down at the font, where Mr. Stern, in a very touching and affective manner, read the service of baptism in Hebrew, and then baptized

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\* Church of England.

me in accordance with the baptism of the Established Church of England, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The chapel was attended by a large number of Jews, who came for curiosity's sake. After the service, returning to the Wanderers' Home, a large crowd of Jews ran after me, throwing stones and old slippers, and saying all manner of things. I was very glad when I arrived at the Home," and, when looking at the large number of Jews, I could only cry, "Lord have mercy upon them, for they know not what they do."

On Friday, February 19th, I entered, through Mr. Stern's recommendation, the *Operative Jewish Converts' Institution*,† where I remained 22 months, during which time I was engaged in the book-binding and book-finishing departments.

#### VISITS THE JEWS : IS CAST OUT BY THEM.

As soon as I entered the O. J. C. Institution, I determined to visit some of my Jewish friends,

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† This Institution is established for young men converted from Judaism to Christianity, who are cut off from their parents, relations, and friends. In this Home a trade is taught, as book-binder or printer. In the said Institution the inmates are provided with a home of every comfort, superintended by a clergyman of the Church of England, supported partly by the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, and also through subscriptions sent to the Superintendent.

and tell them of the glorious tidings of the Gospel. One evening, which I shall not forget, I went to see a Jewish friend, and when the door was opened, my friend shook hands with me very warmly, and then asked me where I lived, and what I was doing. I hardly knew what to answer. To confess Jesus, I knew would offend him; to deny Christ, I dared not. At last, I thought of Him who said, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, of him shall I be ashamed before My Father." I was silent for a few moments, and then I asked what he thought of the Messiah? He exclaimed, "Do you believe in the impostor?" I said, "Whom do you call impostor?" He answered, "Why, Jesus Christ!" I answered, "My friend, you may call Him impostor, but he is my blessed Saviour and Redeemer." I expressed my compassion over him, because of his darkness and ignorance, after which he spit in my face, and then commanded me to leave the house; he shut the door before my face. This I thought was great discouragement; still I prayed for grace and courage. A few days after, walking through one of the streets in London, I met a young man, a particular friend of mine, from Russia, and on meeting each other, he fell on my neck, kissing me in the middle of the

street. After a little conversation, when he found that I believed in Jesus, he then perfectly changed the conversation; and then spitting in my face, on leaving me, cried several times, "Away, you dog! Away, you wretch!"

No one has an idea what it is to pass through such trials but those who do pass through them. I received several letters from Jews, threatening me that they would kill me if I did not give up Christianity. Once I paid a visit to a Jewish family in Goulston-street, Whitechapel. Although a very poor and wretched place, the family were very pious and devout Jews. After introducing to them the subject of the Messiah, they seemed quite surprised to me, because they did not speak in any way that I should expect a prejudiced Jew, in reference to Jesus Christ; in fact they invited me to visit them again and again, which I did with the greatest possible pleasure; but somehow I suspected that something wrong would take place. One afternoon, on Saturday, which is the Jewish Sabbath, a young man who lodged in the house met me before I entered the house, and requested me to take a vow that I would not say a word to any one, which I did to him, promising that whatsoever he intended to tell me would be strictly

confidential. Afterwards he informed me that a plot had been made to poison me, by offering me a glass of wine on the Sabbath. Having promised the young man that I should not say a word to any one about it, I kept my word, but returned home thanking God for the hand of Providence which overrules all for the good of His servants and for His honour and glory. I then realised the word of Jesus, that they will turn you out of the synagogue and kill you, and think they do God's service; but I rejoice to know that by the grace of God all enemies will be overcome.

The following is a letter I received from my father in answer to the one I sent him :—

MY BELOVED ISAAC,—I received your letter. I did not answer it before, because I know you are with the missionaries. Oh, woe is me! woe is me! You have filled us with eternal shame and disgrace. Since we heard that you are a believer in the *Basturd*, we have not ceased weeping. Cursed is the hour that I went under the canopy with your mother, and was married; better would it be if I had been born a stone, and not a man. Woe is me! bitter is me! bitter is me! Will you not have mercy on us? Oh, do be mindful of us, and repent and turn away from the Christian faith! Think of your father, mother, sisters, and brothers, whose days you have darkened. Remember, my beloved Isaac, that you cannot find in the world a father or mother. I cannot rest because of my sorrow. Oh, Isaac! Isaac! Isaac! through you I shall never be able to enjoy heaven. What is my life? what is my life? Better would it be if I had never been born. Your mother, since she

has heard the dreadful intelligence, has become quite a different being. Your brothers and sisters—Oh, would it not be better if God would take their lives away than to leave us to go to the grave in old age with shame? My prayer is that the Lord may cut off the whole of our family, than for us to live in the misery that you have brought upon us; or else, would God cut you off.

What is the life of a Jew but to have good sons in remembrance in after generations? But woe is me, the remembrance that I brought up will be of shame and everlasting disgrace.

Your brother Hessel is very great in the provinces of Grodno and Kovno; and when I think of you, I wonder why the Lord has cursed me with such a curse. I always thought that I should have joy from you, seeing I did all in my power to bring you up in a way that not many fathers in Kovno bring up their children. My heart is overwhelmed with sorrow, grief, and woe. I cannot write any more.

I remain, your mourning father,

LION LEVINSOHN.

Your sister wishes me to enclose a short letter from her:—

TO MY KIND AND EVER-LOVING BROTHER ISAAC,—I salute you, beloved brother; may you live long! Dear, tender, and loving brother, have compassion on us, and see that we may not have shame and everlasting disgrace; remember we are only young children; destroy not our world. Oh! do not pour our blood in shame, for we are your little sisters and brothers, young children. Have pity on us. God bless you, loving Isaac.

I remain, your ever-affectionate sister,

Who wishes you every happiness and heavenly blessing

MEITTA ESTHER LEVINSOHN.

PAINFUL CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN FATHER AND SON.

To my dearly-beloved parents; may you live long in joy, peace, and true happiness! Amen.

MY DEAR FATHER,—I am sure that I have no language with which to express the deep sorrow of my heart and soul which I have felt since I received your letter, dated January 12, 1872. I would like to be able to let you know the feelings of my heart, but I know it is impossible for me to do so; but I pray the Most High to be very gracious unto you, and reveal unto you the glorious truth which alone satisfies the longings of every heart. I know, dear father, that you are living a holy life, and would to God that all Israel lived such lives as you and my beloved mother. You know that it has always been my desire to be very good, and honour you, my father and my mother, and obey the *Taryag Mizvess*. How I longed to do the things which you told me pleased God! Dear father, I must confess that I did all I knew that was required of me; but, to my regret, I never felt satisfied by being under the written and the Oral laws; \* you also remember, dear father, how I feared the moments of death, and my great responsibility before God. Nothing in the world seemed to satisfy my soul. Many and many letters I received from you I almost worshipped, because I considered your fatherly love and your holy counsel. I also visited many Jewish friends, asking them to teach me the way of salvation; but, alas! dear father, your letters, nor the teaching of all the friends who were kind enough to help me, could silence the yearning of my heart. But ever since I was convinced of the truth that the MESSIAH HAS COME already, and that the object of His advent was to seek and to save that which was lost, to redeem those who had

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\* The written law is the law of Moses. The Oral law consists of Rabbinic laws.

sold themselves as slaves to the passion of their hearts, to the power of sin and Satan ; that He came to comfort them that mourn ; to give them beauty for ashes, joy for sorrow, and eternal rest to the heavy laden, in Him I am satisfied.

My beloved father, I know well that you do not like me to write so favourably of the Nazarene whom you hate ; but, Oh, dear father, I remember when I hated Him ; but now, I thank the God of our fathers for bringing me out of the awful state I was in, and for revealing unto me the light of the Sun of Righteousness. The name of the Nazarene is hated by you, but you like to write of persons or of any object you admire ; I therefore write about the Nazarene, knowing what He has done for me in order to save my ruined soul ; and as I love Him with all my soul, I cannot but help to write and speak of Him.

Beloved father, believe me I do not write this letter to you merely for the sake of grieving you, as I know you are grieved ; but I write it praying that the God of our holy fathers may appear to you when you read this letter, and that you may be convinced as myself that there is no way of salvation but through *Joshua*, or JESUS, the Messiah, or Christ, who is the only Saviour through whom alone sinners can be pardoned. Believe me, dear father, that if I could possibly convince you and make you believe the same truths which I am thankful for knowing, my life would not be too much a sacrifice for me in order to be the means of bringing you to the truth of Jesus Christ.

Dear father, just one thing I would desire to impress upon your mind, that although I believe in Jesus Christ, and look to Him as the only hope of my salvation, yet I am willing and ready to give it all up if you can only prove to me that the Christian religion is not the true religion ; and as soon as you prove this to me, I will repent of all you think are errors, and make a public confession of them (of course if I am in error) ;

and will at once go to the great Dr. Adler \* and confess my sins before him, and before the whole congregation of Israel, if you can only prove to me that I am in error. I will gladly, and with much pleasure, afflict my flesh for three years by fasting every Monday and Thursday, and also go to the synagogue every day and prostrate myself at the door, and let every one tread over me ; but if you cannot prove it to me, then I must remain a believer in Him whose name I once hated, but which is now very sweet to me.

Dear father, I hope you will not forget me—I am your son. You say in your last letter such things which grieve me very much ; I hope that the fatherly love you have had towards me will still remain. I love you, my dear father ; nothing is too much for me to give up for you ; but I must say I love my JESUS more, and my life is not mine, but it is His.

Dear father, the other day I was very much interested in reading an account of the History of (*Yosifun*) Josephus in the Hebrew language. I know that you have a copy at home ; I am sure, dear father, you will gain instruction by it if you don't read it with a prejudiced spirit. If you refer to the History of Josephus, in the reign of Herod, in the time when Pontius Pilate was Governor in Jerusalem—if your book is printed in the same size and shape as mine, it will be in the eighteenth book and third chapter—you will find it reads thus :—

“There was about this time a wise Man, *if it be lawful to call Him a Man*, for He was a doer of wonderful works, a Teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to Him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] CHRIST ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned Him to the cross, those that loved Him at first did not forsake Him ; for He appeared unto them alive again on the third day, as the Divine prophets foretold. There are

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\* The chief Rabbi of England

ten thousand other wonderful things recorded concerning Him ; and the tribe of Christians, so named after Him, are not extinct to this day."

Now, dear father, is not this a great proof of the Divinity of Jesus Christ ?

Surely, which ever way we look and study, one cannot help learning that the MESSIAH has come, and Israel, alas ! is in ignorance of this blessed truth. There is a very striking prophecy by CHRIST JESUS, which proves to be fulfilled, and still is fulfilling, recorded in that little Book (the New Testament) which I sent to you. You will find when JESUS was taken by our unfortunate ancestors, and by the barbarous Romans, to *Gilgal* (Golgotha) to be put to death, several women walked with the great multitude and wept because of the affecting sight, seeing a young Man, in the vigour of His life, in the strength of His manhood, suffer so bitterly : and they wept ! Then Jesus said to the daughters of Jerusalem, " Weep not for Me, but for yourselves and for your children ; " and in another place, when our ancestors uttered the terrible words, " Crucify Him ! His blood be upon us and our children." Now, when I consider those words of Jesus and the words of our ancestors, I am not surprised when I read in history of what our nation had to suffer. When I read that in the period of the year 77, according to the Christian era, our beloved nation's blood was flowing in the streets of Jerusalem and Judea. Only think about 20,000 of our precious ancestors were massacred in the neighbourhood of Cæsarea ; about 10,000 in Damascus ; 10,000 in one night at Scythopolis ; 50,000 at Alexandria ; 8,000 at Joppa ; and in the holy city of Jerusalem about 1,100,000 perished, and about 97,000 were taken captives and made slaves.

Dear father, was not this the fulfilment of the words of Christ ?—" Weep not for Me, but for yourselves and for your children ; " also of the words of our brethren, " His blood be upon us and our children ? "

Dear father, my very earnest prayer is, that Israel may be brought to the knowledge and the truth which is in Jesus Christ ; and Oh, that the time soon may come when the Spirit of grace and of supplication may be poured out upon Israel, and Israel may look to Him whom they have pierced, and mourn as one that mourns over his firstborn, and acknowledge Jehovah as the only true God, JESUS the Messiah, and the Holy Spirit as the only Comforter and Sanctifier. I cannot write very much more in this letter ; but I hope to be able to send you another letter in a day or two. I shall be glad to send you my photograph when I write to you next time ; and will also send you some English money for curiosity's sake, as you never saw such coins. Good-bye, dear father.

I remain, my beloved father,

Your ever-affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

Palatine-place, Cambridge-heath, London,  
February 14, 1872.

### HIS FATHER'S SOLEMN REPLY.

The following is the answer my father wrote to me after four of my letters which remained unanswered :—

MY LOVELIEST AND DEAREST SON ISAAC,—All that has happened to you I know. You have turned aside out of the way of our Jewish religion, and have embraced another. Oh, my dear son Isaac, Isaac, Isaac ! have you forgotten that for seventeen years you dwelt with us, and that we your parents brought you up, and taught you to stand upon your legs ? And now you have withdrawn yourself from us ; your face is gone, and your religion is gone also.

My dearest, loveliest child Isaac, Isaac ! Remember,

remember, remember! Even before your birth you were a care to your mother. Three years she bare you an infant in her arms. For two of these years you sucked the milk of her breasts, and since then we have nurtured you. Have you forgotten all this? Four years ago, when you were dangerously ill, and I told your mother to send you to the hospital, do you remember what your mother replied?—"My house is not for myself; my life is not for myself; they are for my dear child Isaac. He shall remain at home, and the physician shall visit him every day;" and now have you forgotten all this, and turned away from me your father, from your mother, from your sisters and brothers, and from all our family, and, worst of all, from God? Remember these things, my son!

Ah! have you forgotten how, but two years ago on the day of atonement, while you were with us, we worshipped together in one synagogue, and prayed together out of one Prayer Book? Last year, on the eve before the day of atonement—it was the day on which you arrived in London—we were sitting round the table, I, your mother, sisters, and brothers, when, all at once, we began every one of us to weep, and lament, and to cry aloud: "Woe unto us, for our beloved Isaac is not with us at home, and we shall see him no more!" And then our friends and neighbours assembled in our house, and sought to comfort us; but your mother refused to be comforted.

It was on the feast of Purim that we received the bad intelligence that you had become a *meshamadim*. Imagine how we received it! Your mother became sick and sightless; I fell fainting to the ground; all our children stood about us crying, weeping, and lamenting. Then many people gathered round us, who lifted me up from the ground, and called me to life again, asking me, "What has happened?" What answer think you could I give? Your mother prays every day to God that He would put an end to her life, and

wishes every minute to be dead rather than that she should live, and know that she has a son a *meshamadim*.

My dear son, all this has taken place ; but you yet have time to repent, and then at least you will be saved in the world to come. The advice that I give you is this—Come back home and become a pious Jew, and I shall agree to your marrying your aunt Rebekah's daughter,\* and I shall procure you a situation.

The Prefect in whose office you were a writer two years ago has promised me that on your return home he will again admit you ; there is at the present time a vacancy for a young man.

For God's name sake, my dear child, do not forget what I have written to you. Often read this letter, and bear in mind the tears which we are shedding for you—I, your mother, and all the family—that you alone of all our house have become a *meshamadim*. But there is still more time for you. If you do not like to come to Russia, write and say, and ask Dr. Adler to write and say that you have become a Jew ; and then—I am again your father, and your mother is again your mother, and we shall be all to you as we were before. Then if you wish to marry, my sister Rebekah's daughter shall come to London to Dr. Adler, and you shall marry her ; then you will be happy. But if you will not do this—if you will not repent—then we will have nothing more to do with you, we want neither your money, nor photograph—nay, we will not count him ever to

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\* When at home my mother wished that I should keep company with my aunt Rebekah's daughter ; but my father did not agree to it. According to the above he seemed to have changed his mind. I would also mention that it was not my desire at all to keep company with her, nor of marrying her ; but according to manners and customs of the Jews in Eastern parts, the parents are concerned in it first. Full information on that question will be explained in my papers on the Jews, which I have promised to give (D.V.) in *The Earthen Vessel*.

be our son who has become a *meshamadim* ; but we hope that, for the sake of my own, and of your mother's pious forefathers, and also for the sake of our little children, it shall never come to pass that you should be a *meshamadim*.

If you do all this I write to you to do, we wish you great happiness, and God will bless you ; but if you do not, then Farewell ! Farewell ! Farewell ! I am not your father ; your mother is no longer yours ; your sisters and your brothers are no longer your relations, and you can no more claim at all the name of a Jew. Farewell ! Farewell ! Farewell !

On receipt of this letter I wrote about twenty-five letters, but, to my sorrow, no answer came ; and the last letter I sent, my father would not receive it from the postman, so it was returned to me. I then realised the sweet words of the Psalmist :—“ When thy father and thy mother forsake thee, then the Lord will take thee up.”

I must say that I shall never forget the anguish of heart I felt when I received this letter. I prayed to the Lord to take my life, and longed for death rather than to live ; and to know that father and mother, for whom I at all times could shed the very last drop of blood in my heart, should cut me off. But then I considered that it was necessary for me, as a follower of Christ, to take up my cross and follow Him. During the whole of my term I was in the Operative Jewish Converts' Institutions, I was as in a state of mourning. Often, when hard at work in the

bookbinding or finishing departments, I cried bitterly when I considered the state of my beloved parents who had entirely cut me off. And why? Because for the truth's sake, for righteousness' sake, and, above all, for JESUS' SAKE.

The following is my brother's letter :—

MY DEARLY-BELOVED BROTHER ISAAC,—I can assure you that never in my life have I experienced a more painful hour than that of last week, when our beloved father informed me that you had become a *meshamadim*. I have read the last letter that father wrote to you, and I can assure you that he wrote the very feelings of his heart. It is not my wish to pain you by writing to you, or repeat the same words in my letter like the words that father wrote to you ; but it is my object to call to your attention a few very important facts. You know, my dear brother Isaac, that I am not a fanatic, nor do I possess any religious fanaticism, as some of our nation possess ; but very rationally I would like to point out to you two or three things. In the first place, I earnestly ask you, Where is your reason, your judgment, yea, your common sense? Where is the affection of a child towards his parents? Only think, you have not only forsaken the ways of God, but you have turned against your own father and mother. I ask you, Can a murderer be more cruel than you? for even murderers possess love to their parents ; but you have turned away from your parents. Oh, how awful! I can understand men, who are philosophers, &c., who care not for religion, for they say that, conscientiously, they cannot believe what they cannot see, although this is foolish and absurd ; but I would pardon them much before you ; yea, there is no pardon for you ; for if you had said that you can no longer believe in God, whom you

cannot see, I could pity you, for it is quite rational to disbelieve in something which men cannot conceive. But I solemnly ask you, How can you forget the affection of our beloved father and mother? Ever since our beloved parents have received the bad news that you have become a *meshamadim*, I have been quite surprised by the change in them—they are not the same people; misery on them can be read by all who see them.

And then I would also call your attention to the great commandment given by the great God to His servant, our lord Moses—"Honour thy father and thy mother." Remember, my dear brother, that you break the laws of social and moral society, and, above all, you break the great laws of God.

One more important matter I would mention to you, is this, you still have time to repent and become a Jew again—whether pious or not I do not care—for the name of a Jew is better than the kingdoms of the earth.

Father is now making out his will, and he says, if you wish to repent and become a Jew, then you shall have your portion. The way he wishes to settle the matter is this, that the hotel and the ground around it, and also the fields at *Marriempolski Uesdi*, be given to you, and the baking department be given to me; \* and that you and I be responsible for mother and sisters, in case of his death; therefore, if you wish to take my advice, you had better return home at once; I shall be too happy for you to have even the portion allotted to me, rather than you should be a *meshamadim*.

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\* The above are the two business establishments my father has—an hotel and also a baking department, wherefrom he supplies bread to all prisons, hospitals, and other Government establishments in Kovno. I must confess that this statement was a very great temptation; only by Divine grace could I have ever overcome it. "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Consider, my dear brother, if you remain in England, you will have to work hard for a livelihood; but at home you will be happy and a man of large property. I really think that you must consider; for unless you return home and become a Jew, father and mother will never be able to bear that, for I do believe that mother will never get over such trouble. Only think, my beloved brother, the tenderness and love of a mother. With money you can buy many friends, but never a mother, never a father—especially such parents as the Lord has blessed us with. I do not think that there is any necessity for me to write to you much, for I am sure that you are old enough, and you have sufficient mind, to think over this painful matter. Dear brother, let it never come to pass that our very beloved parents should go to the grave with sorrow before their time. I do believe that beloved mother will not live long if her state of trouble be as it is. Should you consider your ways and repent, and turn to the God of Israel, I wish you joy and happiness, and may God bless you; but if you do not take our advice, if you wish to remain a *meshamadim*, then adieu, adieu. I am no longer your brother. But still, Isaac, Isaac, I do hope and trust that, for the sake of our dear and devoted parents, and for the sake of our whole pious family, it shall never come to pass that you shall remain a *meshamadim*, and leave everlasting shame and disgrace on us all.

Once more. Do turn, do repent; but if you do not, then good-bye, good-bye, for ever and ever. Never shall we know—neither do we want to know—anything about you in this world, nor in the world to come.

I am, your brother in deep trouble and lamentation,

JOSHUA HESSEL LEVINSOHN.

Kanceliaria, Novi Gorada, Kovno, March, 1872.

P.S.—Unless you repent and become a Jew, I ask you please not to write to me, for I count you as if you are dead—and would to God that it were true. I must mention to you this—

for I don't think I shall ever write to you again—our darling brother Jonah Abel is dead. We are all convinced of the fact, that if you had not sinned against the great God by turning away from Him, our house would not have been visited by the angel of death. Remember, dear Isaac, that our beloved Jonah Abel died through your sins. Oh! bitter, bitter is our life, because one has become a *meshamadim*, the other has died. What will become of us? Would to God that we all died, or else that you might be cut off by death.

The following letter I wrote in reply to my brother :—

MY DEAR AND AFFECTIONATE BROTHER HESSEL,—I have received your letter, and can assure you if ever I cried and shed tears over anything, it was over the letter I received last from our dear father, and then from you. In my previous correspondence I have expressed my ideas about my faith in Jesus Christ, in whom I believe as the promised Messiah. Dear Hessel, you know how earnest I always was in serving our God, and in living a holy life. Well, this is just my present feeling and desire. The same God I believed when at home, I believe now—JEHOVAH IS MY GOD. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and our fathers, in whose merits I rejoiced when at home, I rejoice now; but the only difference of my faith is now, that it is impossible for me, as a sinner, to be justified through Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. I believe that the MESSIAH, who was promised to come, HAS COME, and through Him alone sinners can be saved, and be made just in the sight of the great God, who is holy. My feeling toward this is, that even if I am called not only to sacrifice riches, but my own life, then I must say, "Here am I: I go!"

Dear Hessel, I can assure you that my love towards our very beloved parents will never fail; yea, it will increase the longer I live. I am always ready to make the greatest

sacrifice, even to shed the very last drop of blood in my heart for the good of our beloved father and mother. If ever a son has loved his parents, I believe I love my parents more; but I must confess that I love my Lord and my Redeemer more. All my powers and graces are His. I am His property. He bought me with the great price of His own holy, and innocent, and precious blood.

You also mention in your letter about the portion that father wishes to leave to me. To this I say, I know how good it is to have happiness—especially as I should have if father would give me my portion—but yet I feel if this our earth were not earth, but gold, and if that even had been offered to me in preference to JESUS, I would then say, “GIVE ME JESUS, and I shall be as happy as an angel in heaven!”

Dear brother, you may depend upon it, all I say are the very feelings of my heart. I know well that riches I shall never have, especially as I am looked upon as a foreigner in England. Surely English people will not have much to do with me—a poor Jew; but, yet I thank God that He has made me worthy to become poor, and be a follower of the Lord of life. I was informed that unless I return to Russia, I shall lose my Russian nationality. To this I would say, it troubles me very little, for I rejoice that this world is not my resting-place; the Lord of life has promised to give me a heavenly home.

My dear brother, although father and mother, and brothers and sisters cut me off, yet will I trust in the Lord, who will take me up. I am very thankful that I am in England; the English people, I think, are the best people I ever saw in my life, except our pious Jews. If God should permit me to live all my life in England, and even if my life is to be poor, and work for my meal till the very last hour of my life, then will I be satisfied. May God in mercy bless the Queen of England, and all the English people, where I hope to remain as long as I live; for I would much rather live in England than in Russia, Germany, Poland, Austria, or anywhere else. I must

say, dear Hessel, that having read in your letter of the death of our beloved brother, I mourn. My heart is full of sorrow; I shall always feel the loss; but I rejoice in knowing that all things are governed by the Most High, and whatever man may think or suppose, yet He will work in His own way. An English poet says the following true words:—

“God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.

In deep unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill,  
He treasures up His bright designs,  
And works His sovereign will.”

Dear brother, I do sincerely hope that it will never come to pass that you will forsake me from your memory, for I only act as I believe I ought to act, according to the Bible. I sincerely pray that the Lord may visit you and our dear parents with His salvation; and Oh! that the time may come when Israel shall be brought to the truth, and have faith in believing in the only name given unto man whereby to be saved.

I remain, dear Hessel,

Your affectionate brother,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

12, Palestine-place, Cambridge-heath, London,  
March, 1872.

I have written several letters to my dear brother after the above, but, to my sorrow, he never answered one; and thus I was left entirely alone. No more father, no more mother, no more brother, no more sisters, nor friends for me. I sometimes

wished I never was born than to be in such solitary circumstances ; but, thanks be unto the Most High, He never leaves nor forsakes those whom He calls by Divine grace.

IN THE EPISCOPAL JEWISH CHAPEL.

I remained in the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution for a period of twenty-two months. During that time I attended the Episcopal Jewish chapel. The Rev. G. W. Butler, M.A. (who was the superintendent) manifested great kindness and sympathy towards me. After some time, when I could read and understand a little of the English language, I made very particular study of the Common Prayer Book used in the Church of England, whilst I perfectly admired most parts of the prayers, because in sublime language and thought ; yet, I could not go away from the fact that some things there are far from pure doctrine. I could not possibly believe that our Lord gives power to priests and ministers to pardon and absolve ; but still I revered the book and the order of the Established Church, especially when I considered that the Church resembles much the Jewish synagogue—for instance, three services a-day, &c.

In 1873, the inmates of the Institution received

notice that his Grace the Bishop of London would visit the parish church to confirm, and the inmates were to be instructed, and be prepared. I fully objected to be confirmed by his lordship or by any other man. Most of the inmates considered that I was right; they, therefore, all refused to be confirmed that year. After some time, when I considered myself not a strict Churchman, I did not feel justified to be in an Institution supported by members of the Church of England, and yet not believe in the teaching of the Church. I then requested the superintendent to give me permission to leave the Institution; but the Rev. G. W. Butler, a wise and true Christian man, persuaded me to remain, and learn a trade first. I then said I did not like to learn a trade in the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution. The Rev. gentleman then advised me to study, and then he would help me. Several of my friends, members of the Church of England, strongly advised me to study and prepare myself for entering a theological college, and become a minister of the Gospel; but as I could not possibly agree with the teaching of the Church, I refused.

Several months had passed; I took the advice of the superintendent, and learned a trade; but, at the end of twenty-two months, I felt I could not

possibly remain. I then informed the master of the bookbinding department that I did not intend to remain long in the Institution. The master then communicated the same to the committee. I was then asked if I intended to learn a trade and remain in the Institution ; but I replied, No ; after which the order of the committee was given for me to leave the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution. During the last two or three months of my stay in the Institution, I continually went to different Nonconformist places of worship. At last, I entered a small chapel in Hackney-road, called Shalom Baptist chapel, Oval. I heard the minister, Mr. H. Myerson, with great delight ; and on my leaving the Institution, I attended for a few Sundays his ministry.

When I left the Institution, most of my friends—although very few—were very angry with me, and especially because I did not attend the church. A few days passed ; I had nothing to do. I then visited the Rev. G. W. Butler, asking for an occupation. He then assisted me in obtaining a situation, by recommending me to Dr. G. Davies, late secretary of the Religious Tract Society. I then entered into the services of that noble establishment, where I found several good friends—men of true Christian spirit, and genuine

principles, and that always gave me pleasure to have the honour of being in that noble Institution, under the superintendence of the Rev. S. Manning, LL.D., who is a man of true piety, and zeal, and of love to Christ, and to all who are around him.

The following is a translation of my beloved mother's letter to me :—

To my most affectionate and darling son Isaac.

DARLING CHILD ISAAC,—I take the pen in my hand with a sincere hope that the words which I am trying to write may not be in vain ; but that the God of our holy fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, may apply them to your conscience and inmost soul.

My dearest and loveliest child Isaac, I know that you have forsaken the holy and precious religion of Israel ; but still I am convinced that all the steps you have taken are not for the sake of doing wrong ; I have not the least doubt in my mind that you have been persuaded by the so-called Rabbi Stern. (Cursed be his name for ever and ever ! Amen.) Let me just state to you, my darling child, a very few observations, and reason with yourself and see if you are right or wrong.

In the first place, my dear child, I would call your attention to the fact that the Christian religion is an idolatrous religion. The heathen worship wood and stone images, and the Christians worship JESUS CHRIST, whose name is as hateful to us as swine's flesh,\* and much worse, whose life, when in this world, proved to be most blasphemous.

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\* There is nothing which is more hateful to the pious Jew than the flesh of swine ; therefore my mother expressed her thought as above.

I candidly ask you, darling Isaac, to think of the steps you have taken ; for remember that your soul is damned for ever. Oh, how grievous this is to me, to think that my own child, my own flesh and blood, he for whom I always sacrificed all that I could in order to secure happiness for him, yet shall be eternally damned. Woe ! Woe ! Woe ! better would it have been if the Almighty had dealt with me as He dealt with Lot's wife ; much better would it be indeed if my mother had died before she travailed with me, than for me to have been brought up, in my old age, to see my most beloved son fall into the hands of the devil and be for ever damned. Isaac ! Isaac ! Isaac ! remember that, through your perversion, our family shall also be damned ; for there will always be a curtain between the throne of God and our family. Think of me, your tender and loving mother, of your devoted father ; through you we shall be for ever cursed by God. Isaac ! Isaac ! think of the young blood of your two little sisters, how you have clothed them with everlasting shame and disgrace ; they are ashamed to go out into the open street, for the children of the neighbours run after them and cry, " These are the *meshamadim* Isaac's sisters ! " Oh ! would God be very gracious unto us, and take our lives from us, and blot our names out from the remembrance of man's mind.

Dear child, can you not have mercy upon your mother ? Can you not have mercy upon your zealous and pious father ? Can you not have compassion upon your beloved sisters and brother ? Father does not know that I am writing this letter ; in fact, he has determined not to know anything about you ; he does not wish to hear your name mentioned in his presence ; he has thrown away all things we had at home that belonged to you : all this in order to forget you from his mind ; but I thought that I should like just to write to you, with a hope that it may touch your heart and bring you to repentance.

Isaac ! I hope that you will repent and turn to the true Jehovah. Your father has just made out his will ; but if you

turn back at once, there may be still time for you to have your portion ; if you delay, then you shall not have anything. Should you like to go to America and become a Jew ? I will gladly send you from my own private purse 800 or 1000 roubles. I will send it to our friend Chaim Hessel Lewin, who is now in New York, getting on wonderfully well ; but if you refuse my advice, if you will not turn, then I am no longer your mother. Please do not write to me any more, unless you repent. If you will not repent, I do not want to think of you ; but my only prayer is, that you may repent, or else for God to take your life or ours. Amen.

Your grievous mother,

BRAINAH LEVINSOHN.

Zelioni Gara, Gorod, Kovno,  
June, 1872.

The following is the letter I wrote in reply to my mother :—

To my soul-beloved mother ; may you live long in peace and happiness ! Amen.

BELOVED MOTHER,—With unspeakable joy have I read your letter, and my heart is full of gladness to know that my darling mother still thinks of me. My dear mother, you know very well how I was always anxious to do your will, and do good to all, and observe the *Taryag Mizvess*, in order to obtain peace in my soul. You remember well how my heart thirsted after satisfaction ; and you also know very well that over and over again I came to you and cried very bitterly, because I could not possibly obtain that satisfaction for my soul.

Dearly-beloved mother, you know very well that there is nothing in the world which convinces our finite minds better than experience. Our holy nation, when in the Holy Land, often asked of Moses and his successors for signs and wonders,

and when the Holy One—blessed be His name\*—had revealed Himself unto them, and done wonders for them, then they believed. So you see that experience convinces, and makes men believe. So in relation to the steps I have taken since my arrival in England. I know and believe in things which I feel in my heart and soul to be the truth. If you only read through carefully the several letters I sent to father lately, and read the little book I sent not long since, you will see, I hope, that I am in the right way. Mother darling, I have learned by experience that by nature I am a sinner, not because I have read or been told by any one, but because I feel that I am such. I have also learned by experience that there is no one that can take away my sins save Jesus Christ, whom you hate; for I have tried to secure my happiness in various ways. I tried to silence the yearning of my soul by giving myself to the written and Oral laws, and that filled my soul with misery. I have also thought that giving myself into the service of a judge I should be satisfied. I thought by studying the German and Russian languages, I should feel satisfied; but, darling mother, I have told you before, when you saw tears on my face, that there was nothing that I could obtain to satisfy me. All this, therefore, you know, was my sorrowful experience; but, darling mother, it has also been my sweet experience to realise pardon for my soul by believing in the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth; though rejected of men, yet in Him I will trust all the days of my life; for He only can and does save me a poor Jewish sinner, and also the Gentiles. Oh! what a wonder, when considering that great love! Above all, why I believe in Jesus is because I feel that the yearning of my soul He has silenced. And I have learned that there is a heavenly home prepared for me by Him. Death, therefore, with its icy hand, shall not hurt me; for the Messiah has con-

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\* The above expression is often used among the pious Jews to prevent mentioning the name of Jehovah, which is considered too holy to be taken upon sinful lips.

quered him who had the power of death ; there is, therefore, no death for those who believe, but eternal misery to those who do not believe.

Oh ! dear mother, I feel that I would not mind giving my life if only I could convince you by making you believe in the Messiah ; yea, I feel that I would not mind to be accursed if only I could bring you and my dearly-beloved father, and brother and sisters, to believe in the same truths that I believe ; for I know that my writing to you will not convince you, unless you are convinced by the same power that convinced me.

Dear mother, in closing this letter I would say that I love you and beloved father more than any one in the world. I will do anything you like for you ; nothing shall be too hard for me ; but I feel I must obey my Lord and my Redeemer more even than you ; so that I cannot possibly give up being a believer in Him. Most beloved, darling mother, if you cannot conscientiously believe in Him, then I would ask you not to condemn me for believing. Oh ! dear mother, do not cut me off from your mind. Oh ! mother darling, forget not your Isaac who loves you with all his heart and soul ; but if you should cut me off, and entirely forsake me, then I will still love you and pray to God for my dearest and most affectionate mother. Darling, I do trust that you will be for ever a mother to me, and I shall rejoice ; but if you do not wish to have anything to do with me, then shall I trust in the great God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and in the great Messiah, the Saviour, Jesus Christ, who will never cast me off.

Good-bye, loving, darling mother, good-bye ; it is sweet to me to think of you. When shall I hear from you again ? I pray, my darling mother, that the Lord, who made me to believe in the truth which is in Jesus, may do the same to you ; and Oh ! that the time may soon come when the spirit of grace and supplication shall be poured out upon Israel, and that Israel may be gathered together, and worship the Messiah,

*The Narrative of Isaac Levinsohn.* 177

Lord of lords and King of kings. Please remember me to my  
ever-loving father, sisters, and brother.

I remain, your ever-affectionate son,

ISAAC LEVINSOHN.

7, Seawardstone-road, Victoria-park,  
London, England.

## CHAPTER XXI.

BAPTISM BY MR. MYERSON—AGAIN VISITS MR. STERN—FIRST TIME OF SPEAKING IN PRAYER AT PRAYER MEETING—ENTERS THE SUNDAY SCHOOL—VISITS THE BETHNAL GREEN UNION—CONVERSE AND PRAYER WITH A YOUNG JEW—VISITS THE SYNAGOGUES, BUT IS TURNED OUT—FINDS A POOR JEW IN GERMAN HOSPITAL, HIS CONVERSION, ETC.

AFTER I left the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution I could not find any place of worship where I could make myself at home as I could at the Baptist chapel, Oval, Hackney-road, under the ministry of Mr. Henry Myerson. Although I could not understand all Mr. Myerson said when praying and preaching (being so deficient in the English language), yet I could not help feeling touched by the earnestness of his manner; indeed, I thought that no man could be more earnest than Mr. Myerson. I was also delighted because of the humble spirit he exhibited in his private life, which, I am delighted to say, he carries with him always.

Having attended the services of the chapel for some time, I made a special business to study the Holy Bible, to see if the doctrines of the Baptist denomination were really right or wrong. I

have made that a special matter of prayer; and, for some time, I earnestly studied the subject, until I came to the conclusion, if baptism by immersion be not right, then baptism by sprinkling certainly never could be right; but as I could not get away from the fact that immersion was the only right and original manner of baptism, I determined to follow the command of the Master.

I then made application to Mr. Myerson for baptism, after which, according to the rule and order of the Strict and Particular Baptist denomination, I was brought before the Church, to whom I briefly related my experience of the work of grace in my soul, so far as I could trace it; after which the members and deacons unanimately agreed for me to become a member of the Church. On Sunday evening, February 14, 1875, I was baptized by immersion by Mr. Myerson, and I shall never regret the step I have taken.

After my baptism, I always felt it a great pleasure to talk to those of my acquaintances of the Church of England, and to converse with them on the subject of baptism. Often, it is true, I met with unpleasant replies. I then visited Mr. Stern, and informed him of the step I had taken. I was surprised with Mr. Stern's reply,

which was so charitable and noble. Mr. Stern expressed his joy to find that I did not act according to the advice of man, but according to the guidance of a clear conscience and the Word of God. I remember well Mr. Stern's words to me. He said, "I do not care what you are, so long as you are a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ." From that time I have often visited him, and I must say I look upon Mr. Stern as one of the best friends the Lord has given me in England; I always look upon him as a father to me, knowing that he was the means, in the hands of the Lord, to open my understanding and convince me of the truth which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

I attended the services of the chapel, under Mr. Myerson's ministration, very regularly—every time whenever I found the doors were open.

I shall never forget one Monday evening when Mr. Myerson called upon me to engage in prayer at the prayer meeting. This being the first time, I felt that I could not possibly open my mouth to pray at a public prayer meeting; however, I spent a few moments in prayer, and when I had finished, I felt ashamed of myself, as if I had committed the greatest crime, and I spent the

rest of the time at the prayer meeting in great misery and wretchedness of spirit; but I was very much surprised when Mr. Myerson expressed his feelings toward me in his closing prayer, and he very specially prayed on my behalf to the Most High, to prepare me to go forth preaching the everlasting Gospel, which prayer I did not believe for one moment would ever have any effect.

At the close of the prayer meeting, Mr. Myerson had a private conversation with me; he expressed to me his conviction that I was called to go forward and preach the Gospel; but being so ignorant of this language, I could not possibly feel Mr. Myerson's words were of any weight. However, months passed away, and I attended the services of the chapel the same. I then began to feel the importance of not being idle, but doing something, not for my salvation, but to occupy my time in a good work, whereby I might glorify the name of my Saviour.

I was then recommended to enter the Sunday school, by the advice of the superintendent, Mr. Mobbs, whose meek and loving spirit I always admired as a deacon and worker in Sunday schools; also, his humble, Christian spirit in private life. I occupied a position in the Sunday

school as a teacher for some time, until a friend asked me to go with him for once to the Bethnal Green workhouse, to speak to the poor infirm inmates, which I did with great pleasure. I was afterwards requested by the authorities to go there again and again. My soul was filled with joy unspeakable when I was informed that my words were not in vain—a poor old lady, who was on her dying bed, expressed the gratitude of her heart that the words I had spoken were blessed to her.

When I found that the Lord was pleased to bless my labour, I began to feel it to be my duty to go wherever I could and testify of the Saviour, in whom I believed. I went to see a Jewish family in a lodging-house in Whitechapel, with whom I opened a conversation on the promised Messiah. A very intelligent young man was there, who was very anxious to hear on that subject; he joined in conversation with us. I told him how the Lord had dealt with me ever since I had left my native country, and how I was brought to the knowledge of the truth which is in Jesus. We spent between two and three hours in arguing from the law. At last, the young man asked if I would go for a walk with him. I gladly took the opportunity, and we had a long walk,

discussing the subject of the Messiah. After we had had a long walk, we went into a coffee-room, where I asked for a private room. We had some coffee. I then proposed to the young man for both to kneel down and pray. He refused to pray on his knees, as it is against the Jewish custom. I then knelt down and prayed in the German language, after which the young man expressed the gratitude of his heart towards me; he said he would be glad for more instruction on the subject. I proposed to him to go and see the Rev. H. A. Stern. I introduced him to Mr. Stern, under whose instruction he was for a few months, and afterwards made a public profession of the Lord Jesus Christ. I was so overwhelmed with joy, that the Lord should bless me to my own brethren, that I felt I must go amongst them preaching Christ crucified and exalted, whether they will hear or refuse to hear me.

I visited several synagogues, where I quietly entered into conversation with Jews on the Messiahship of Jesus Christ; but when they heard me, and found that I was a Hebrew Christian, I was turned out of the synagogue; still I was not very much discouraged when I looked back and thought that some time ago I would have done the same thing to any believer in Christ,

and especially when I thought that the Lord had already blessed me with one soul for Christ.

When I found that my poor and blinded Jews refused to hear me, I thought that I must by no means give up speaking and testifying for the Master. I procured some nice tracts from the Religious Tract Society, and went to the London Hospital, from bed to bed, giving away a tract, and speaking quietly a word or two about the loving Master. I visited the London and German Hospitals many times. In the German Hospital, especially, I met with encouragement. A poor Jew who was on his bed for many weeks, a native of Germany, had no one to visit him, no one to say a good word to him. As soon as I introduced myself to him, he seemed to be very pleased, and as I saw his willingness to speak to me, I then made the best of my opportunity. I visited him every time the hospital was open for visitors, and took him some little presents; and every time I spoke to him about the Messiah, although at first he did not like to hear on that subject, but the Lord heard my prayers on his behalf. After an acquaintance of about two months, he expressed his firm belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he then very regularly attended the services of the chapel of the

hospital; and his conduct testified that he possessed the grace of God. At last the icy hand of death touched him, and before his death he expressed his joy in the Saviour, revealed unto him in such a marvellous manner at the hospital, and expressed gratitude towards me, firmly believing that the Lord must have sent me to speak to him, and to be the means of his conversion. My heart raised another Ebenezer, and my soul was overwhelmed with joy, that the Lord should honour me so much as to make me useful, and be the means of bringing in the outcasts of Israel into the sheepfold of Christ.

## CHAPTER XXII.

FIRST WORK IN THE MINISTRY—INWARD EMOTIONS TO BE USEFUL—DECIDES TO EMIGRATE; BUT IS PREVENTED—VISITS THE HOSPITALS—MR. MYERSON AND THE CHURCH ENCOURAGE HIM TO GO FORTH AND PREACH THE GOSPEL—HIS TRIALS IN VILLAGE PREACHING, ETC.

HAVING been much encouraged by seeing that the Lord makes use of the feeblest instrument to accomplish His purpose, and especially when I could see with great joy that I was made the means of the conversion of some of my brethren, the Jews, I then perfectly determined to exercise all my energy and proclaim the good tidings of Jesus and His love. But the first difficulty which sprang up in my mind was, "What shall I do next?" I have often made it a special matter of prayer, in the language of St. Paul, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" But still I could not determine what to do. I thought of the poor and perishing heathen, and also the Jews in the heathen countries who never hear the Gospel of Christ preached to them; I felt the importance of going abroad to tell the good tidings of salvation. But having felt very much attached to this country, I thought I should not,

however, like to leave the English shore; for I have realised something of the sweet liberty of the Britons, and especially when I thought of the blessed liberty of the Gospel which I have found here. Still, to settle myself here, and do nothing for the welfare of souls, would be wrong. I considered which was right—to remain in England because I am happy here, or go abroad and so sacrifice my happiness, in order to preach the Gospel, and be the means of bringing the outcasts of my brethren, and also the poor heathen, into the sheepfold of the good and tender Shepherd.

I at last decided to emigrate to New Zealand. I went to the emigrant office for New Zealand, at Lower Thames-street, and applied for a free passage there as an emigrant, with a hope to work, and also be able to preach to the poor natives, and especially my brethren in the flesh. I was glad when my request was granted; a free passage was promised me, and I then made every preparation for the voyage. During my preparation, I met two young men who at one time were inmates in the Operative Jewish Converts' Institution, and, in conversation, I found that they also had made preparations for emigrating to New Zealand. We then arranged to go together.

I went to see Mr. Stern, and spoke to him about the matter, as I always looked upon him as one who is a friend to me, for whom I feel that I love as I do my own father, who is still in darkness of Judaism. When Mr. Stern heard what I intended to do, he at once advised me to remain in England, and very earnestly entreated me to take his advice. I then considered it was my duty to take Mr. Stern's advice, knowing that he had been in most parts of the East, and preached the Gospel to different nations and tribes. I then made arrangements with the two young men for them to go, and I would stay in England and wait for a letter from them; and promised that on hearing from them, I would consider the matter, and decide whether I would go or not.

For some months I waited to hear from them, but in vain. I then thought that the advice Mr. Stern gave me was good, and I determined to stay in England. The country I seem to love more and more, and especially when I consider that this is the country wherein I was brought to the knowledge of the truth which is in Jesus of Nazareth.

Having felt it a privilege to be engaged in the Master's vineyard, I continued going to the London and German Hospitals, also to Bethnal

Green and St. Luke's Workhouses, where I am thankful to say the Lord has greatly blessed the Word, to the comfort and conversion of some souls. I made myself useful in every way I thought I could do, giving away tracts in the streets, visiting public-houses and leaving tracts among the people, and visiting the back slums of the East end of London. Having occupied my leisure time in visiting and distributing tracts, I became acquainted with some members of the Christian Community. Having been advised by Christian people to join the Christian Community, I followed their advice; and as I became a member of that Society, I very diligently attended all my engagements with great pleasure.

When my pastor Mr. Henry Myerson, and the deacons heard of my usefulness, they recommended me very strongly to make myself useful amongst our own people, as the Christian Community is unsectarian, and many members are quite opposed to the school of thought of the Strict and Particular Baptist denomination.

I considered the advice of Mr. Myerson, and Mr. Mobbs, senior deacon of the Church, and undertook to do all in my power in the Church and denomination I have the honour of being a member. I was then requested by the pastor

and deacons to preach before the Church and congregation meeting for worship at the Baptist chapel, Oval, Hackney-road, and for them to judge if I possessed ministerial qualifications. I must say that it was a great trial to me to stand up before an assembly to preach, of whom I was almost the youngest, and especially the youngest one in the truth. I took for my text (Rom. i. 16), "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," &c. Afterwards Mr. Myerson delivered a short address to the people assembled, and earnestly entreated them, in the name of the Lord, to say if they thought that I ought to go and preach the Gospel. I must confess that it was surprising to me when I witnessed the unanimous feeling of the congregation, signifying their approval; after which Mr. Myerson very earnestly addressed himself to me personally, in the name of the Church, and challenged me, in the name of the Lord, to go forth preaching the Gospel of the sovereign grace of God. I am thankful since that night, as I have preached every Sunday two or three times a day, and the Lord has been very gracious unto me, and supplied me with matter, although sometimes I thought the brook dried up, and that there was no more for me. Since then, I had the pleasure of making my

acquaintance with the London Strict Baptist Ministers' Association, with whom I have the honour of being a member.

I may also state that ever since I began to preach the Gospel, and travel every week to different parts of the country, I have learnt that ministerial life is a hard life, being engaged every day in secular business, and after business hours, all my leisure time being required for study and meditation; and on Saturdays, and often on Sunday, travelling many miles, and then preach two or three times. I found that to be rather hard work; but I rejoice in the faithfulness of God and in the blessed promise of the Gospel: "As thy days, so thy strength shall be."

On one occasion I went to preach at Cranfield, Bedfordshire. I left London on Saturday afternoon, and arrived at a station about six miles off; and as there was no one to meet me, I inquired the best and nearest way. Unfortunately, I was directed wrong, and went quite in a different direction. I walked several hours, but was surprised that I did not arrive at any village. I heard the ringing of a church bell, and was struck to find that it was twelve o'clock at night. I arrived at the village some time after twelve o'clock, and found that all the houses were closed;

and there was I in the open air all alone. I knocked at the doors of several houses, and asked for a lodging through the night, but, unfortunately no one could accommodate me. Presently I met a policeman, and asked him to help me in obtaining a place where I might stay for the night; but he could not get a place for me; he tried with me at several houses, and no one could accommodate me. Afterwards the policeman very kindly asked me if I would like to go into his house, and sit in an easy chair through the night, which offer I gladly availed myself of. He then very kindly made a nice large fire, so that I might spend the night comfortably. Being very tired, I went to sleep, and between five and six o'clock in the morning, I awoke, and then was very anxious to get to Cranfield as soon as possible, to be in time for the morning service; it was, however, with great regret that I left without being able to see the good policeman to thank him for his kindness. I knocked at the door a great many times, but no one replied. I afterwards left my address and a few words of gratitude on the table to the good man for his kindness. I left the village, and walked all the way to Cranfield before I could wash myself and have anything to eat. I arrived

at Cranfield when it was nearly time for morning service. I was just in time to wash myself and have some breakfast before preaching. I was weary, but I felt the presence of the Lord with me in the pulpit. I was very thankful to the Most High when I was encouraged to hear that my preaching was not in vain.

#### HIS LITTLE FAITH, AND GROWTH IN KNOWLEDGE.

It may be right of me to state, that my views then on the doctrines of the New Testament were very limited; for I had not much experience of the peculiar ways the Lord guides His people. My experience and knowledge of Christianity was only like a new-born babe; but I am very thankful that it is not man that teacheth, but the Holy Spirit. I have much cause to be thankful to my pastor, Mr. Myerson, whom I heard preach with much pleasure, and through whom I obtained a knowledge of doctrinal truths in which I rejoice, and thank God for. I particularly refer to the doctrines of predestination, election, and the final perseverance of the saints, &c.—doctrines which are some of the most important in the Word of God, in which I rejoice, and feel honoured to preach; and, by God's grace, which I hope to preach to the end of my life, whether appreciated

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by men or not. I feel, therefore, now satisfied by knowing that Christ is my Lord, my Shepherd, Brother and Friend, although sometimes through clouds of darkness, unbelief, and fear, I have to go on my way through this wilderness; yet it has been, and I rejoice that it is often, the earnest language of my soul,—

“E'er since by faith I saw the stream  
Thy flowing wounds supply,  
Redeeming love has been my theme,  
And shall be till I die.”

Having felt quite at home at Mr. Myerson's Church and congregation, I had much pleasure in making acquaintance with most who attend, who always manifested to me a very loving and true Christian spirit. I also made acquaintance with Miss Isabella Fillan Millington, to whom I felt very much attached, having found, with much pleasure, that her character was esteemed by all who knew her, and especially when I found her to be a member of the same Church, faith, and order.

At the end of about two years' acquaintance with Miss Millington, we happily entered on a new stage of life by marriage, which was celebrated on June 10th, 1876, by my particular friend, Rev. H. A. Stern. Since then, the Lord

has blessed us with a son, who was born March 23, 1877, whom I hope the Lord will bring up and call by His grace, and encourage us by seeing him to be a defender of the truth which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

REMARKS—ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD—THE PRECIOUS  
“I WILLS” OF GOD TO CHEER AND COMFORT THE SOUL—HIS  
FIRST WORK IN THE MINISTRY—HIS LABOURS AS A PREACHER  
DURING THE YEARS 1875 TO 1878—THE CHURCHES WHERE HE  
PREACHED—HIS HARDSHIPS IN THE MINISTRY—HIS MOURNING  
OVER THE DARKNESS OF HIS BELOVED PARENTS.

Thus far hath the Lord led me in a most marvelous way, and although the path through which He has brought me to the cross of Christ has been very trying and painful to me, yet I rejoice to testify that all things are ordained by the Lord, and, therefore, all things work together for good. Whenever I consider the peculiar circumstances through which I have gone through, I can only believe that the Lord was with me through all my troubles, and although I was quite ignorant of Him, and of the truth which is in Jesus Christ our Lord, still He was with me, and His everlasting arm underneath. I often wondered at myself and said, I am as a wonder unto many, when I remember those dangerous moments when I crossed the Russian frontier and a soldier having fired at me, and yet I was not hurt; and also the many days I hungered,

having travelled through rough weather, storms, and tempests, yet I have been preserved ; and even since I have been in this blessed country of freedom and liberty, I have also had many conflicts and struggles to meet ; but looking back I can trace the hand of the Lord in all things. He sits as a Refiner and Purifier of silver, and watches His people like the refiner watches the metal in the furnace, and He knows how long His tried ones can endure their fiery trials ; and as His servants are being painfully tried, yet He comforts them, and whispers a word of cheer and comfort to their peculiar wants. Oh, how sweet the words when in trouble ! “ Call upon Me and I will answer thee. I will guide thee with Mine eye. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee. I will keep thee from the hour of temptation. I will be a God unto thee. I will give you rest. I will not forget thee. I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Indeed, all these blessed promises, the sweet “ I wills ” of God, how precious to the poor anxious and yearning soul !

I shall never forget the state of my mind on Saturday, May 22, 1875, when I was making preparations for supplying the pulpit of the Baptist cause at Walthamstow. All night I could

hardly rest ; I continued in prayer, and reading the Word of God, hoping that I should be enabled to preach on the following day. On Sunday, May 23, I was full of anxiety, and when the time came I preached. I felt the Lord's presence myself, but after the service, when I was received in such a cool manner, I was afraid that the people did not hear me well, and I felt, therefore, very much discouraged to open my mouth in the sanctuary of the Lord.

On Sunday, July 25, I occupied the pulpit of a very small chapel at Tadworth, when the preacher and hearers were greatly blessed. I occupied the pulpit in the same chapel several times, and I have many times thanked God for the blessed hours I spent there. On Sunday, August 29, it was heaven upon earth with me, when I supplied the pulpit of the beautiful little chapel at Sunningdale. It was good, indeed, to be there and spend many good Lord's-days among the people of God, especially with the late Mr. Wellbelove, the deacon, with whom it was sweet to converse upon heavenly things. On Sunday, September 5, I preached at the Strict Baptist Meeting House at Harrow Weald, where I have spent several Lord's-days with the people of God. I met with several encouraging facts there. Only lately

I have received a letter from a person who expressed her gratitude to God for having heard me there, as the words spoken were made a blessing to her.

During the year 1876 I was engaged almost every Sunday occupying the following pulpits—some places I preached twice and three times a day :—Blackmore, Cranfield, Chelmsford, Hayes, Tadworth ; Shalom, Hackney ; Sunningdale, Meopham ; Zoar, Gravesend ; and Waltham Abbey. At some of these places we spent many sweet hours in the presence of the Lord.

During the year of 1877 I was also engaged every Lord's-day, and also on many occasions on week-days. The following pulpits I had the honour of occupying :—Salem, Hayes, Middlesex ; Tring ; Foots Cray, Kent ; Speldhurst-road, Hackney ; Hounslow, Croydon, Erith ; Church street, Paddington ; Milton Hall ; Silver-street, Notting-hill-gate ; Hitchin, Peckham ; Lynton-road, Bermondsey ; Rushden, Northamptonshire ; Down, Kent ; Homerton Row, Waltham Abbey, Aged Pilgrims' Asylum, Lowestoft, High Wycombe, Guildford, Reading, Lower Norwood, Lewisham ; Sharnbrook, Northamptonshire ; Soho, Upper Holloway ; Forest-road, Dalston ; Kettering, Northamptonshire ; and Chelmsford. Thus,

up till the year 1878, I found that the Lord has been pleased to bless me in various ways, and I have learned the words of the Master: "Them that honour Me, I will honour."

I commenced my labours in the name of the Lord, in 1878, by preaching at Reading, on Sunday, the 6th of January, where I have been received with gratitude, which encouraged me exceedingly. During the month of January, I preached and lectured a good many times in different places. I then began to feel deeply concerned. And asking myself as to the fruits of my labours, I began to feel very disheartened because I laboured for a considerable time and yet could not see any fruits of my labours. My great desire was to see sinners brought to Christ, but, alas! I thought there were none. Many times I have made special matters of prayer, asking the Lord to tell me if I was right in preaching the Gospel, or ought I to stay at home and give up preaching. I have often spoken to my beloved wife on the subject, asking her if she did not think that I should do better to give up preaching. At last we determined in prayer to try the Lord and see what His will was. I therefore determined to preach three or four times more, and see if I should find any fruits would appear.

On Sunday, January 20, 1878, I preached at the Baptist chapel, Carmel, Pimlico; I preached also at the same place on Sunday, February the 3rd, 6th, 17th, and 20th. During that time I was just on the verge of giving up preaching, thinking that it was not the will of the Lord that I should occupy such an important position in His Church as "a preacher." During that state of my mind I received communications from several who heard me at Carmel, Pimlico, who expressed to me their thankfulness to the Lord for having sent me to the above-named Church, as my preaching was blessed to the conversion of their souls. The first communication I had was from a lady who had heard me several times in various places, who expressed a wish for me to baptize her. Then I had a communication from a young man, the son of a deacon at Carmel, whose earnest expressions to me seemed to cheer my heart and thank God on his behalf. In the course of a short time I received a further letter from another young man, who, with joy, expressed his gratitude to God for what he had heard at Pimlico. Then I had a letter from a teacher in the Sunday School of the same Church, who informed me of a child in her class who had been deeply impressed with an address I de-

livered in the Sunday School. Having had private audiences with the three adults, I felt quite satisfied that their expressions were very earnest, and felt that the Lord had heard and answered my prayer. Since then I have taken for my motto: "Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not."

Thus, with gratitude, I followed the voice of the Lord; and trust that the doctrines I have preached in the pulpits I have mentioned are the same doctrines of Christ I shall be enabled to preach as long as I have breath. The more I go on labouring in the Lord's vineyard the more I feel my weakness and insufficiency; but I rejoice that the Lord's grace is all-sufficient, and, although I still have to meet many difficulties, yet, by God's help, I will not know anything among man except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

Some of my severe trials as a preacher which I found to be very painful—namely, the many oppositions of some aged ministers. It grieves me to state this, but I feel it my duty to do so. I remember once, at a prayer-meeting, about three years ago, the aged minister called upon me to make a few remarks at the meeting. After I had spoken, the minister closed in prayer, and in his prayer he asked of the Lord to close all

Christian pulpits against me, and to disappoint me in my engagements. But I said to him very plainly, "Sir, you need not pray to the Lord for such foolish things. You need not alarm yourself. Your prayers will not be answered." I have met many old men, ministers, too. I have no idea why they should behave so to a young man, especially as they know that themselves once were young; but I have rejoiced that most of them were only the most uneducated and ignorant, and therefore I left them alone and took no notice of them. But I have met with much encouragement from other ministers of sober-mindedness, of true Christian love, who have been to me like fathers.

The greatest trial of all that ever I had to experience is the poor, dark, and superstitious state of my beloved parents, relations, and friends, towards whom I often felt like St. Paul—that I could shed the very last drop of blood in my heart if only I could be the means of bringing them to the Lord Jesus Christ. I often felt and said, "I am ready to be accursed, if only it be the means of bringing my beloved parents out of the darkness of Judaism to the most marvellous light of the Sun of Righteousness." But I know that only the Spirit of the living God can

bring a sinner to the cross and find mercy. I, therefore, can only pray, and leave my beloved ones in the hands of the Lord, knowing that His power will be exercised to the salvation of souls, to whom He WILL be merciful.

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“I AM DETERMINED TO KNOW NOTHING AMONG MEN SAVE JESUS CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED.”

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“FOR TO ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST.”

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“I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST, FOR IT IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION TO EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH.”

*This Narrative of Isaac Levinsohn  
originally appeared in the pages  
of THE EARTHEN VESSEL AND  
CHRISTIAN RECORD. A Monthly  
Magazine, published by Robert  
Banks, Racquet Court, Fleet  
Street. Price 2d.*

LONDON ·

PRINTED BY ROBERT BANKS, RACQUET COURT, FLEET ST.

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