

Obituary notice extracted from

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Rebbe Yehiel Tzâvi Lichtenstein-Herschensohn is a IXth Century Hasidic Jewish personality born in Moldavia in 1931, who came to the conclusion that Yeshua was the Jewish Messiah of Israel. His attempt to restore a Torah Observant community of believers in Yeshua as Messiah failed and was excommunicated, and after he went in Russia and in London where he wrote many books elucidating the so-called New Testament from a Jewish perspective and became one of the founders of Messianic Judaism. He served since was founded at the Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum as a professor of rabbinics and wrote several books and commentaries including refutations of anti-missionary works, and died in Leipzig in 1912.

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About this digital edition

This articles have ben reformatted for digital publishing. It is different from the original printed text in the following areas:

- Minor editing of the text inside columns (punctuation, etc.);

health caused him to emigrate to New Zealand in 1907, where he landed in October and settled in Wellington. The number of Jews in that city, rapidly increasing, aroused the prayerful attention of local friends of Israel, whose several efforts to reach them with the Gospel had met with apparently little success. These friends, organized as the New Zealand Branch of the Prayer Union for Israel, seized on Mr. Berman's advent as an opportunity of commencing definite work in Wellington. They pleaded with him, and after two weeks of prayer and waiting upon God, Wolff Berman gave up all thought of commercial life and yielded to the plea in behalf of work among his Jewish brethren. The New Zealand Evangelical Mission to the Jews was organized, a hall was rented on Upper Adelaide Road, and it was prayerfully planned to gradually extend missionary operations to the Jews throughout the Dominion of New Zealand, now numbering about 2,000. Mr. Berman's death may hinder the realization of these plans somewhat, but the Friends of Israel in Wellington expect to continue the work and are taking steps to secure another missionary. Mr. Berman's work and life have stimulated their faith, and at his grave they have borne testimony to their love for him. They spoke of him as "quiet and unassuming, winsome and tactful," and they stated that he sounded "a full rich Gospel note" during the four short years of his earnest labors in New Zealand. Among the mourners at the graveside were twelve young Jews who thus showed their respect and love of the departed.

3. *Jechiel Herschensohn-Lichtenstein* died in Leipzig on February 12, 1912. Born in a small town of Moldavia (now a part of the king-

dom of Roumania) in 1831, Lichtenstein was the son of pious Chassidim (see above). Thus he was thoroughly trained in the Hebrew language and in the studies of the Talmud and of the Cabbala (the mystical philosophy of the mediaeval Jews). While still a young man, he met a young German farmer whom business brought to Lichtenstein's home town. The Jews of the town were astonished at the knowledge of the Bible which the young farmer, a true Christian, possessed, and they began to discuss the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament with him. Jechiel listened to these discussions, talked himself with the young man, and thus gained the first knowledge of what Christians really believe, but no lasting impression was made upon him.

By inheritance Lichtenstein became a Wonder Rabbi (see above), as the successor of an old relative in the city of Jassy. He soon became disgusted with the homage paid to him and, feeling unable to conscientiously remain in the office, he resigned the position of great honor and decided to return to his native town. Before he left Jassy he was led to buy a copy of the Hebrew New Testament because it was very cheap. After his return he read and studied it together with a number of his friends. The Gospel according to John drew these students of the Cabbala especially and Lichtenstein and a number of his friends became converted. In 1855 Lichtenstein immersed and baptized first himself, then his friends, in the waters of the river Pruth, near Jassy. His self-baptism is the more remarkable, since he was acquainted by this time with Rev. Wolkenberg, the missionary of the London Jews Society in Moldavia. It seems that by his self-baptism

outside of the Christian church Lichtenstein (like his brother-in-law, Joseph Rabinowitz, in Kischi-neff, later on) thought that he would be able to remain within the synagogue and thus start a congregation of believers in Christ within the Jewish fold. But Lichtenstein was mistaken. Soon he was ejected from the synagogue, was excommunicated, and was so bitterly persecuted that he had to leave the town. The friends, whom he had baptized were not rooted and grounded in their faith and persecution brought them back to Judaism.

Lichtenstein settled in Southern Russia and became a trader in grain, but he soon felt that he ought to use his wide knowledge of Judaism and enter upon literary work. The first fruit of his efforts was "Limmude ha-Nebiim" (the doctrines of the prophets), a most learned and peculiar work. In 1868, when he was preparing this work for publication in Berlin, he met the great Franz Delitzsch and the famous Hebrew Christian scholar, Professor Biesenthal, who took great interest in him and finally aided him to enter the missionary service. In 1872 he was regularly baptized by Missionary Stern in London, then entered the service of the British Jews Society for a short time, and finally was connected with the Berlin Jews Society. Out of its service he was called to the Institutum Judaicum in Leipzig in 1885, when Franz Delitzsch founded it. There he remained until his death, and a large number of Christian men, whom he taught while they were students of the Institutum, bear testimony to their love for him and to his faithfulness and ability as teacher. We met him only once, and we found in him an earnest and sin-

cere witness to the Lord Jesus Christ and a lover of his people in spite of persecution and hatred of those dear to him.

Lichtenstein was a profound scholar and an excellent writer. He assisted Franz Delitzsch in the preparation of the Hebrew translation of the New Testament, and his Hebrew commentaries to the New Testament, though not as deep as Biesenthal's commentaries on Luke, Acts, Romans, and Hebrews, are very good and most helpful to learned Jews in the study of the New Testament.

Lichtenstein gave to Joseph Rabinowitz the New Testament, whose study led to his conversion.

4. *Miss Jane Walker-Arnott*, the founder of the Tabeetha Mission in Jaffa, passed away in that city on May 21, 1911. For nearly fifty years this Christian disciple had labored in Jaffa, and when she died there was weeping and lamentation among the poor and the young whom her good works had blessed and some 3,000 mourners, Moslems, Jews, and Christians of different denominations, accompanied her remains to their resting-place in the little cemetery looking out across the Plain of Sharon. In 1863, after some years of service in Whately's schools in Cairo, she rented a little house in an evil-smelling street of Jaffa and founded there the Mission which she named after the disciple in whose footsteps she walked, the Tabeetha Mission. The difficulties were great, but, though other Missions came and went, she held on. The Cooks, of tourist fame, gave valued help, enabling her to secure a site and to build the premises which have been the center of the Mission for nearly forty years. Day schools were started. In addition to the boarding school, and of recent years a