

**THE IDEAL IN JUDAISM:
AND OTHER
SERMONS; PREACHED
DURING 1890-91-92**

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The Ideal in Judaism: And Other Sermons; Preached During 1890-91-92 by Morris Joseph

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MORRIS JOSEPH

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IDEAL IN JUDAISM
AND OTHER SERMONS BY
THE REV. MORRIS JOSEPH
PREACHED DURING
1890-91-92



LONDON :
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in the STRAND
1893

TO MY WIFE
AND TO THE
CONGREGATION WHO HAVE
WORSHIPPED AT THE HAMPSTEAD
SABBATH AFTERNOON
SERVICES.

PREFACE

THE present volume is published at the request of several of my friends, who have signified their desire to possess, in a permanent form, a selection from the discourses which I delivered at the Hampstead Sabbath Afternoon Services. The diffidence with which I comply with that request would be even greater than it is, but for the thought that Anglo-Jewish homiletical literature is of the scantiest proportions, and that any addition to it has at least a *primâ facie* claim to justification. Whether the following pages are a desirable addition, it is for the public to decide.

The title of the book, though borrowed, in conformity with familiar usage, from the initial discourse, has not been selected at haphazard. It indicates the one uniform purpose with which these sermons were written, and which, despite the diversity of

their subject-matter, establishes a fundamental likeness between them all. They were preached with the paramount object of elucidating, however inadequately, the Ideal in Judaism, of expounding those spiritual teachings of the religion which render it an effective inspiration in our day, seeing that while they at least equal in grandeur, they surpass in simplicity, those embodied in any of the other great theistic systems. Such an exposition, I venture to think, is the urgent need of an age which is fraught with peril, not merely for Judaism, but for Religion.

In determining the contents of the book—a task in which I have received most valuable assistance from my friends, Mr. Israel Abrahams and Mr. Oswald John Simon—my chief aim has been to select those discourses which promised to be useful to the largest number of my readers. At the same time, I have kept in mind the desirability of making such a selection as should be fairly representative of the entire range of doctrine taught at the Hampstead Services. Contrary to what appears to be the general impression, that doctrine was rarely polemical. The words

spoken from my pulpit were far more frequently words of hope and encouragement, such as are especially needed in these times by the many who feel their Judaism melting away under the solvent of modern criticism, and by the many more who are losing their hold on faith and duty in presence of life's grim problems. Thus, there will be found in the following pages little about those minor religious questions which divide and subdivide our community, much about the larger and infinitely more momentous difficulties which vex the conscience and disquiet the soul. Fully aware, though I am, of the many imperfections of these sermons, I would fain hope that they may prove helpful to some of the larger congregation to whom they are now addressed, and that here and there they may succeed in gaining a wavering heart for the ancestral faith and for the higher life.

