

**CHRISTIANITY AND
JUDAISM:
AN ESSAY**

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Christianity and Judaism: An Essay by Gustaf H. Dalman

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BY

GUSTAF H. DALMAN, D.D., Ph.D.

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LEIPZIG

Translated from the German

BY

THE REV. G. H. BOX, M.A.

HEBREW MASTER AT MERCHANT TAYLORS' SCHOOL, LONDON

*And specially revised for the English Edition
by the Author*

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE following pamphlet, which was published in German for the first time about two years ago, comes from the pen of a Christian scholar who possesses the rare qualification of being able to do justice to a faith that, in many vital points, is in sharp conflict with his own, without in the smallest degree abating or understating his personal conviction of the truth and superiority of the religion he himself professes. The best evidence of the truth of this statement that I can quote is an avowal from the other side. In a long and interesting

notice of Dr. Dalman's little book—which he calls a 'most remarkable pamphlet'—Mr. C. G. Montefiore says:—

"Dr. Dalman is not merely acquainted with Talmud and Midrash, but he is also familiar with modern Jewish literature. He knows the feelings and opinions of modern Jews, both of the orthodox and reform divisions. And yet this enlightened, unprejudiced, and well-informed man is an earnest evangelical Christian, convinced of the superiority and truth of his own creed, and while quite fair to the other side, an uncompromising exponent of what he believes to be its weakness and deficiencies. A truly remarkable combination."*

So competent did Dr. Dalman's insight into matters Jewish appear, even in Jewish eyes, that he was openly spoken of in the pages of *The Jewish Chronicle* (Sept. 21st, 1900) as a 'scholarly convert' (from Judaism to Christianity). This mistaken inference was corrected

* *Jewish Quarterly Review*, xii. p. 736 (July 1900).

by Dr. Dalman himself in a later issue of the same paper (Oct. 5th, 1900). Dr. Dalman there says: "Please allow me to state that no drop of Jewish blood is running in my veins. Interest in Rabbinical literature and in the welfare of the Jewish nation ought to be common to all Christian theologians."

It is the earnest hope of the translator that the publication of Dr. Dalman's pamphlet in an English form may help—in however small a degree—to promote on the part of both Christian and Jewish readers a deeper and more intelligent apprehension of the real positions maintained by their respective religions, in moral and theological as well as practical points; for only so can that mutual understanding be attained for which Dr. Dalman makes so forcible a plea.

It is not to be expected that all the positions maintained in the following pages

will be equally acceptable to all who may read them. Some will naturally form a much higher and more favourable estimate of Zionism than is here given.* Others, again, especially those whose ecclesiastical circumstances have given them the opportunity of seeing what vitality and power of persistence for good have been actually realized by the idea of a national Church such as that with which we in England are familiar, will find it hard to believe that the ideal of a Hebrew-Christian national Church is so undesirable, and, in fact, so unlikely a consummation as Dr. Dalman thinks. But whatever view may, or may not, be taken on these points, Dr. Dalman's criticism will always be found stimulating, suggestive, and valuable.

* On this remark Dr. Dalman makes the following comment: "I like Zionism as a national movement; its Palestinian aims, however, are—in this century at least—hopeless."