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## Do Modernists Play Fair?

The above caption is suggested by the title of a book which appeared last year and created somewhat of a stir, namely, "Do Fundamentalists Play Fair?" by Wm. Mentzel Forrest, Professor of Biblical History and Literature, University of Virginia. The work is a vehement onslaught on the Fundamentalists, and the author's aim is to rebuke them for not playing fair in their battle with the Modernists. Although not endorsing some of the views advocated by prominent Fundamentalists, the Lutheran Church in its conservative section is in hearty accord with these people when they defend the inerrancy of the Scriptures, the deity of Christ, and the vicarious atonement. The attack of the book mentioned on the positions held by Fundamentalists is directed against all who believe that the Bible is an infallible guide; the arguments the writer advances to undermine the authority of the Scriptures are the ones the Lutheran pastor has to meet in the performance of his work. We here are challenged to reexamine and to defend our faith. It will help us in our battle for the truth when we see what methods one of the champions of the Modernists resorts to in his attempt to deliver fatal blows. Since the book is professedly written in the interest of justice and fairness in the present controversy, its writer ought not to fail to exhibit these qualities; but, strange to say, they are the very things which are conspicuously absent. Let me present proof as I go from chapter to chapter.

Mr. Forrest's first chapter has the heading: "No Fair Evolution Only." The point he wishes to make is that the person who adheres strictly to the Bible teaching has no right to brand evolution as false and at the same time to retain the great body of science, such as geology, astronomy, and biology, inasmuch as these sciences, he says, clash with the Bible as completely as the theory of evolution does. We ask, Is it fair to make such sweeping statements? Geology does not itself conflict with the Scriptures. As long as it is descriptive, it does not deny a single statement of the Bible. When it gets to be speculative and presents hypoth-

## Judaism, Masonry, and Lutheranism.

By B. M. HOLT, Fargo, N. Dak.

EDITORIAL NOTE.—Mr. Holt, once upon a time, was the secretary of Pierson Lodge, No. 149, A. F. and A. M., and hence knows whercof he speaks when he discusses Masonry.

### I.

Judaism is the international religion of the Jewish race, as we now find the Jews scattered all over the world. It is a religion that boldly *rejects* Jesus Christ and all the teachings that pertain to His sacrificial death and glorious resurrection.

The real leader in a Jewish community is the Rabbi. His scholarship alone gives him this position, without his being ordained. He is called a "spiritual guide," the "final authority," this distinction, in turn, being based on his morals.

Judaism has a great many festival days — Rosh Hashana, Succoth, Shemini Atzereth, Chanuca, Chamisha Asar, Purim, Pesach, Haggadah, Shavnoth, Yom Kippur, etc.

Its teachings are based on the Torah, the five books of Moses, or Pentateuch. (See also Mishna, Gemara, Shulchan Aruch, Respona, and the Talmudim.) To the Jew the sum and substance of all these "sacred" writings is "*the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.*"

Being accused of their sins by their conscience, the Jews, like the heathen, fear punishment and damnation. So they take an official moral balance every year, and on the tenth day of Tishri all Jews gather at Yom Kippur festivities to make peace with their god. They remain all day in the synagog, fasting from sunset to sunset in order to afflict themselves because of their moral underbalance.

While it is true that Judaism calls its shortcomings "sin," it nevertheless stresses the *prevention* of wrong more than the forgiveness of sins actually committed, and the final analysis of the Jewish religion shows it up to be nothing more than a carefully arranged system of ethical or moral philosophy.

While the Christian religion teaches that all men are by nature *dead* in sins, absolutely helpless, Judaism, like all other man-made religious cults, insists "*that we are capable of achieving all great and beautiful things through our own efforts.*" (Rabbi Leo Jung, Ph. D.) So strong is the "hope of salvation" through self-righteous attempts in Judaism that its main hope is to convert the world "by living a *life of God*!"

Legalism and formalism are the basis of Judaism, now as well

as in the days of Christ; and when it is stripped of its Sabbath observances, dietary laws, rules concerning the tefillin, etc., there is very little religion left except its faith in a millennium and its waiting for the Hebrew Messiah — their earthly king.

Of course, Judaism rejoices in immortality, Deut. 32, 19; Ps. 17, 15; Is. 26, 19; Eccl. 12, 7; but what the Jew really wants is the opportunity of *working out his own salvation* in accordance with his own aspirations and hopes.

*"Judaism teaches that nobody stands between man and his Creator; that the gates of heaven are open to us whenever we wish to enter."* (Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, 1924). And still it was a Jew who said: "I am the Door." John 10, 1—10.

England is now regarded as a center of conservative Judaism, while German Rabbis have brought with them to America the Reform Movement.

Large Jewish seminaries have been established in Cincinnati, London, Vienna, Budapest, Florence, and in many other cities, many of the teachers being pupils of Breslau, the "Reformer." Thus we have among us not only the orthodox Jew (*orthos* = right; *doxa* = opinion), but also the Reformed Jew and the modern Jew, all of whom are striving to be faithful to the ancient traditions of the Jewish religion and, at the same time, to assimilate as much of modern civilization as possible in the countries in which they live.

The Jew of to-day differs very little, if any, from the Jew of ancient times; and by comparing the self-righteous religion and treacherous politics of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, of the Herodians, Zealots, Galileans, and Assassins, with the activities of our present-day Jews, whose highest ambition is to bring home to the conscience of Jewry that Judaism is "*neither nationality nor religion, but both of these together, indissolubly united,*" we can readily conceive of a reason for the Jewish statement that "*the boundaries of Judaism are drawn very wide, and it is extremely difficult to say when a Jew is not a Jew. A Jew remains a Jew as long as he has not publicly renounced his faith.*" (Rabbi Leo Jung.)

## II.

The Jewish Rabbi tells his people that Judaism assures salvation *only to the Jew*; yet he admits that "people who *do good* in other religions will also partake of eternal joy." At this point we wish to introduce Masonry.

Masonry, as most of us know it, was organized in London about

two hundred years ago. But the fundamental religious features of Masonry — "*The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man*" — are strictly Jewish and date back to the philosophical religious sect of the Essenes. Josephus tells us that the Essenes were one of the three main, chiefly religious, societies among the Jews (Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes) and that they were bound together by oaths and secrecy to practise charity towards each other.

Masonry is strictly religious, more so, by far, than many of the Reformed church denominations. The first thing that happens to a Masonic candidate — even before he sets his foot on the "holy ground" — is that he is stripped of all his clothing, — an act of religious significance, to indicate his spiritual poverty, the hood-wink being typical of his spiritual darkness, — and he stands there and raps his "three distinct knocks," awaiting his "new birth." In fact, every step of a Masonic initiation, which usually lasts for hours, is a forward move towards (?) spiritual perfection and eternal life, a sacred drama, so to speak, in three acts, having its consummation in a resurrection from the dead.

Even a person who is not a Christian, and very unlearned, concludes from Masonic emblems, books, and magazines of the order, public funerals, etc., though he has never been inside of a lodge-room, that Masonry is deeply religious.

That there are some Christians in the Masonic lodge we do not deny. "But," says Hon. John Wright, Grand Master of the Nebraska Grand Lodge, "Masonry is too broad in its conception and too idealistic in its teachings to limit or pretend to prescribe the exact form of religious faith that its followers should have. . . . I do not think the time will ever come when all Freemasons throughout the world will of necessity have to admit that the Christian religion is the only form of salvation for the human soul." (Official letter, March 24, 1926.)

"Masonry [in spite of Christianity] is continuing its unvarying course. It joins in true friendship men of every sect and opinion. It is non-sectarian. . . . Masonry will continue its great strength by preserving its universality." (Official letter, March 30, 1926, by Hon. Ralph E. Lum, Grand Master of the New Jersey Grand Lodge.)

Masonry "allows each of its members to follow the dictates of his own conscience and work out his own salvation in whatever church, sect, or creed he thinks right and proper." (Official letter of Hon. Lamar G. Carter, Grand Master of the Florida Grand Lodge, March 20, 1926.)

“As Masons we should have a profound respect for the sincere religious beliefs of any other brother or Mason, and inasmuch as Masonry only requires its devotees to believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, I can join hands with a brother who has different views on religious matters than myself if he is sincere and honest in his beliefs and convictions. . . . In Masonry there are several passages of Scripture quoted, some from the Old Testament and some from the New Testament. These passages are quoted as they are written, but none of them name Jesus Christ. . . . I do not believe the time will ever come when Masonry will destroy its landmarks of worship and cosmopolitan religion in order to accommodate the requests of Christian Masons who believe that there is salvation only in the blood of Jesus Christ.” (Official letter of Hon. E. R. Bryan, Grand Master of the Texas Grand Lodge, March 22, 1926.)

### III.

Now it may be true that any system of faith and worship which tends to develop piety and sanctity is better both for society and the community at large than no religion at all. At any rate, we do not wish to make the impression upon our readers as though there were no advantage for society in Buddhism, Mohammedanism, Judaism, and other religions that hold out hope of a better hereafter on the basis of doing good in this life. A religious man makes a better neighbor and citizen than an ungodly person, even though his religion is not the Christian religion. But what we wish to emphasize in bold letters is this, that **the religion of Masonry is not the Christian religion.** Just as surely as Judaism, as we find it to-day, is antichristian, so surely is Masonry inimical to true Christianity. And in introducing the following authoritative document, I ask the kind attention of the two hundred or more Lutheran ministers who have bowed their knee to Baal, thus following in the wake of thousands of Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian ministers (and Rabbis) who have joined Masonry:—

*“I know there are a great many Jewish men who are prominent officials in Masonry. . . . The religious platform of Masonry is common to all faiths, which explains why Jew and Christian can both accept it.”* (Official letter of Rabbi Harry Levi, Temple Israel, Boston, Mass., September 29, 1926.)

It is with the kindest regard for those ministers who are Masons—and their office—that I once more call their attention to the following words of God: “Be ye not unequally yoked,” etc.

2 Cor. 6, 14—18; cp. 1 Cor. 5, 9—13. “Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils,” 1 Cor. 10, 21; cp. Eph. 5, 7—11; “Beware of false prophets,” Matt. 7, 15; Mark 13, 22, and *avoid* these spoilers of Christianity, Rom. 16, 17. 18; 1 Tim. 6, 3—5, and vain philosophers, Col. 2, 8, who *deny* the Lord, 2 Pet. 2. 1; Matt. 24, 11; for they represent not the true Christ, Matt. 24, 24; they have departed from the faith, 1 Tim. 4, 1; 1 John 4, 1, and have become wolves in sheep’s clothing.

In conclusion I would say (cp. Ps. 2, 12) : —

Bow down and kiss the Son,  
Lest, if His wrath awaken,  
Ye fail and fade away,  
Forevermore forsaken!

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