

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ALFRED EDERSHEIM

BY Lyn Rosen Bond

Eighth North American Coordinating Committee Meeting of  
the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism

February 28 1991

## Introduction:

### Why Study Alfred Edersheim

We do well to try and understand those people who have come before us. As Kai Kjaer-Hansen mentioned in his report from the International LQJE meeting, it is important for us to be aware and learn from the past. Although we can't completely know what is in the mind and heart of another individual it is helpful to learn what we can from their life. Alfred Edersheim is a man that is worthy of admiration. In a time when it was not popular or easy to be Jewish he let people know who he was. His work, just by the sheer volume is enough to make an impact on the Christian community. Jewish Christian theologians and missionaries today are standing on his shoulders to come to terms with a Theology that has a Jewish flavor. It is easy to agree with Jacob Gantenhaus that not enough has been written about Alfred Edersheim.

Edersheim's invaluable contributions to biblical literature are worthy of a fuller account of his life and work. Unfortunately, the sources for such a work are comparatively scanty, due to Edersheim's modesty which restrained him from recording the incidents and experiences of his life (1979:78).

Edersheim's daughter apologized for her sketchy biography of her father, in the preface to TOHU-VA-VOHU, (without form and void) "Little or no record had been kept of a life singularly full of adventure and interest, and besides, that the notion of a biography was distasteful to him was well known in his more intimate circle".

It is a sad fact that no one has written a book based on the life of Alfred Edersheim because we do have only the barest details. If we Jewish Christians were in the business of canonizing saints someone would have nominated Edersheim. But, he wouldn't have liked that at all. He wrote, "Nothing is so truly humbling as our over-estimate by others. It makes one feel as if a hypocrite." (Ella Edersheim 1890:55). So without over estimating him lets take a look at the details we do have in order that we may develop a better understanding for what he wrote. Perhaps we can benefit from his experience. It's been said "Experience is the best teacher, but if you can accept

it secondhand, the tuition is less.

We are all well aware that throughout the history of the Church there have been a number of Jewish people who have come to trust in Jesus as their own Messiah. Does it seem to you that in the past as these people were taken into the main body of believers they seemed to lose their identity as Jewish people? I think you will agree that the fact that this has happened has been an excuse used by our people for why they don't want to accept the claims of Christ. I wondered if Alfred Edersheim was one of these people who became absorbed by the church and lost a sense of his Jewish identity?

### Historical Background

Alfred Edersheim lived and wrote during a period of Church History which has been referred to by Kenneth Scott Latourette as, "the great century", (1975:1061). "Because of a combination of geographic expansion, inner vitality, and the effect upon mankind as a whole, the [the years of the 19th century] constituted the greatest century which Christianity had thus far known" (Latourette 1975:1063). It was this period in history that people were being reached for the Lord on a personal level and in large numbers. Many missions were starting. For example, The Berlin Mission society had just been formed the year before Edersheim was born. What was it like for Jewish people during this period?

The first legal act granting the Jews living in a European state the right to regard themselves as permanent residents of the country was the Edict of Tolerance issued by the Austrian Emperor Joseph II in 1782. This royal decree affected the Jews of Vienna, lower Austria, Moravia and Hungary (Katz 1980:52).

The atmosphere was somewhat better due to the improved legal status the Jewish community enjoyed. Life was still not totally free of discrimination because the Roman Catholic church continued to teach that "the Jews were destined to dispersion, oppression, suffering and degradation for the unatoned sin of having rejected Jesus" (Katz 1980:54). There arose a gulf between what was the official policy and what was the local policy. It was hard for Jewish people to overcome a prejudice that was ingrained into the people of the time. There is a contrast between

the cool tolerance which was afforded by common people and the edict which showed Joseph II's desire to include the Jewish community as part of society.

### **Who was Alfred Edersheim?**

Alfred Edersheim was born March 7, 1825 at Vienna. He was the youngest child in his family. His mother was Stephanie Berfuss Edersheim and his father was named Marcus. Mrs. Edersheim's family was from Frankfurt, Germany. Mr. Edersheim was a banker from Holland. He is described as "a man of culture and wealth" (Lee 1901:175).

Alfred was born forty three years after the decree had been made which gave Jewish people the right to be considered permanent citizens in lands effected by Emperor Joseph II. But these rights to become a citizen were restricted. This had an effect on Edersheim as "at this date the law regarding the Jews was such that but one son out of each Jewish family was allowed to reside in the city, and this only if his father enjoyed the privilege of citizenship" (Ella Edersheim 1890:ix). Miss Edersheim believed that her father chose the medical profession because it afforded the advantage of temporary residence to those attached to a hospital with the later possibility of citizenship. Jewish people who had the financial means necessary could no longer be excluded from the schools.

Having gained access to modern educational facilities, Jews began to take an active part in the intellectual life of the great cities. They became conspicuous in the professions (Katz 1960:224).

There must have been at least a modicum of tolerance because the Edersheim family were able to practice orthodox Judaism, and they were influential in their community.

### **His early years**

Wealth has it's advantages and they were afforded to young Alfred. When he was ten years old he began his secular education at what was then called the gymnasium. While at the secondary

school or gymnasium, he trained with other young people for the university. He was a bright boy and he "soon stood at the head of his class" (Meyer, 1983:53). In addition to the modern languages, mathematics, and history taught at the gymnasium, he was able to receive a Jewish education at the school which was connected to his parents' synagogue. The Jewish community was quite proud of young Alfred. He was selected to bring the welcome address when Adolphe Cremieux came to visit the Jewish community of Vienna. Cremieux, was head of the French Bar and was considered a great statesman of his time. He was so impressed by Alfred that he offered to bring him back to Paris and educate him as a lawyer. Alfred's parents declined the offer for him. He was the youngest child and one can imagine what a difficult separation that would be.

When he was about 17, in the year 1841, he was matriculated into the university of Vienna. At this point in his life he had already begun to learn English as it was one of the languages spoken by his father's family. He also learned Latin, Greek, German, French, Hebrew, Hungarian and Italian. While he was enrolled in the University he was one of the founders of the first democratic club and he was very active in political debates and discussions.

Unfortunately, Marcus Edersheim suffered a financial setback and was not able to finance Alfred's education past 1842. According to daughter Ella, Alfred changed direction from his studies of philosophy and medicine at Vienna to a new life in Budapest because he didn't want to take the last of his father's money to complete his education. One may wonder why he didn't choose to move to France and take advantage of Cremieux's offer at this point. This is mere speculation, but, it is possible that he was not ready to leave country and family behind. He was resourceful and since he had command of seven languages he offered himself as a language teacher. He achieved success and was able to finance his further education. Apparently he had a social, political conscious because "soon he became prominent among the liberal element, and was considered 'dangerous' by the public censor..." (Meyer 1983:54).

## How Alfred Edersheim Came to Faith

His response upon first reading the New Testament hints at his typically Jewish upbringing. He said, "The 'Christianity' which I knew as such hitherto was not Christianity" (Gartenhaus 1979:76). Like so many of us, he was an adult before he learned that not all Gentiles are Christians.

The story of how Edersheim was given that Bible is an interesting one. He was studying English in Budapest with a Jewish medical student named Pongos. Pongos had to be away for six months to complete his course of study so he introduced Edersheim to a Scottish missionary to the Jews by the name of Robert Wingate. Mr. Wingate was a model missionary in that he did not hide his intention to see Edersheim come to faith in Jesus. He told Pongos, "you well know that I will have to pray for his conversion" (Gartenhaus 1970:76). Robert Wingate gave Edersheim the New Testament. Edersheim was as much impressed by the man who gave him the Bible as he was by the Bible itself.

The purity and holiness of these men attracted me; their earnestness and the firmness of their convictions drove me to investigate their faith, which made them much better than myself or any people I ever knew. . . (Gartenhaus 1979:76)

There is a clue here as to how hearts can be won to the Lord. We must endeavor to maintain a firm conviction. We need to pray that we are able to maintain our own walk with the Lord and become more like him. There is a balance to be kept, we need to witness with our lives *and* with our words. We need to pray that the Holy Spirit will soften people's hearts to what they hear.

Alfred Edersheim made a commitment of faith in Jesus and publicly in April of 1843 he was baptized at the Reformed Church at Pesth. I wonder if the pastor who baptized him knew how hard it was for a Jewish person to take that step. The articles read gave no indication of the reaction this brought in the Edersheim family. Perhaps it was easier for Alfred because he was not in Vienna at the time. It would be helpful to know how he proceeded to tell his family of his new faith. I don't think that he kept it a secret because shortly after his baptism he left for Edinburgh to study theology.

In Edinburgh he was taught by Drs. Thomas Chalmers and John Duncan. He had already

made the acquaintance of Dr. John Duncan and other Presbyterian ministers, who were acting at the time as exhorters to the Scottish workmen engaged in constructing the bridge over the Firth of Forth (1841:172).

There is no reason given, but, sources agree that after studying at New College, Edinburgh Edersheim went to Berlin to study at the University. Perhaps it was so he could have the opportunity to witness to other Jewish students. While he was in Berlin he studied with several professors including Ernst Henstenberg, David Strauss and August Neander who was "among the greatest Hebrew Christians of all time" (Gartenhaus 1979:135). Neander lectured at Berlin three times a day as Professor of Church History. Neander's work must have impressed Edersheim because they both are known for their books on the life of Christ. That's not all that impressed Edersheim in Berlin. While he was there he met a young woman named Mary Broomfield who in 1848 became his wife.

### **Edersheim's career as a minister**

Dr. Edersheim studied for nearly three years until in 1846 he was ordained by the Free Church of Scotland. Edersheim did not have an easy task for his first pastorate. He was assigned to four parishes near Kelso in what is today called the Border region of Scotland. This is not a population center by any standards, "The towns are overgrown villages. The principal center of Hawick, Galashiels, Melrose, Jedburgh, Selkirk and Peebles do not muster 50,000 inhabitants among them", (Moore 1986:111). One wonders what it must have been like for a man from the city to find himself among farmers and shepherds. It was the practice of the Presbyterian church to make sure that each parish had a well educated pastor. As there were more parishes than learned men it meant that the pastors would have to travel. It was hard work as he traveled between parishes preaching in "three or four different places--barn, smithy, hay-loft, roadside", (Meyer 1983:55). The people responded to Edersheim and a congregation developed. They built a manse for him but he did not stay long.

He must have felt the tension between the mission structure and the nurture structure because "eventually Edersheim went to Jassy, Rumania, to work under the auspices of the recently established Scottish Mission" (Gartenhaus 1979:77). He made this trip because of a "deep longing to preach the Gospel to his Jewish brethren." (Meyer 1983:55). This quotation may shed some light on his reason for leaving. "Jew and Christian as I am, 'Missionary Meetings' are becoming odious to me. The benevolent pity over the poor Jew, by those who neither know nor can sympathise with him, my soul abhorreth" (Ella Edersheim 1890:107). Perhaps he was easily discouraged, or maybe he just longed to leave Rumania. In any case, he only stayed one year before returning to Scotland. But he did have this advice for us, "In all work for Christ—but especially in Jewish work—what we need most is pity from love, not love from pity" (Ella Edersheim 1890:104).

Upon his return he was called to a larger, more established parish located near Aberdeen. Aberdeen is north of Edinburgh and on the coast of the North Sea. The question why he gave up on mission to be a pastor is not one that has been answered. Perhaps he felt that he was not uniquely suited to reach Jewish people with the Gospel and that he was more suited to the pastorate. Aberdeen was not heavily populated by Jewish people.

One could imagine that Edersheim might have been active in a student movement there at the University in Aberdeen. He did take advantage of the proximity to the university and studied philosophy. This era of his life is under debate. According to the Dictionary of National Biography he remained in Aberdeen for twelve years. Meyer and Gartenhaus both record his Aberdeen stay as one of fifteen years. The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge says that he was in Old Aberdeen from 1849 until "In 1861 failing health forced him to resign and the Church of St., Andrew was built for him at Torquay," (1957:75). It's no wonder that his health failed him, in addition to his duties with the church and his studies he was engaged in the job of "translating into English several German theological works," (Lee 1901:175). In 1856 he wrote History of the Jewish Nation from the Fall Of Jerusalem to the Reign of Constantine the Great and contributed to several periodicals. The book was so helpful that it was published in a revised version in



1954 and revised, HISTORY OF THE JEWISH NATION AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM UNDER TITUS. His doctors ordered him to move to a warmer climate for his health. He followed the advice that was given him but only in part. He did spend the winter of 1860-1 in Torquay.

It was during that winter that his wife Mary passed away. Maybe he threw himself into his work to occupy his loneliness. Perhaps he was one of those over achievers who couldn't rest or he was following the lead of the Lord. Instead of resting he helped start another church, St Andrew at Torquay. He was its pastor until 1872. St Andrew was an interesting church in that those who started it did so to reach Scottish residents of Torquay.

The preface to his book, The Golden Diary, is signed December, 1865 from the Manse at Torquay. Edersheim doesn't give much opportunity for his readers to know him personally, but this preface does give a glimpse into his personality. In it he wrote;

Written in leisure hours of a more than usually busy ministry, and under peculiar personal circumstances, I am only too painfully conscious of shortcomings both in the substance and in the form of this small volume

Were the "peculiar personal circumstances" his illness, the death of his first wife, or his marriage to his second wife? We will never know, but it is interesting to read the way he downplayed his situation. This is one of his shorter works and is a collection of meditations which are meant to be read one per week. While he was pastoring St Andrew's Edersheim married Admiral John Hancock's daughter, Sophia.

Edersheim's health was failing him once more so he resigned his post with the people of Torquay and moved to Bournemouth. In Bournemouth he built a villa for his retirement and named it Herlach, "i.e. the Lord will give rest," (Meyer 1983:56). The seven volumes of Bible History were written from his home in Bournemouth. In the Preface of the first volume he gave three objectives for writing the series. The three reasons were: 1.) To show that Christians have no fears from Scientific investigation, that the more the Bible is investigated the stronger "our conviction that the 'foundation of God standeth sure'." 2.) To show people what the Bible really teaches and 3.) "to defend against the insidious attack [that Edersheim and/or the Bible were anti-Semitic] arising from misrepresentation and misunderstanding of the sacred text".

—lived at Bournemouth for four years during which time he became friends with Canon George Williams. Williams influenced Edersheim to unite with the Church of England. In 1875, at the age of fifty, he began taking orders from the Anglican Church. In How He Knows he gave his reasons for becoming an Anglican:

I am convinced of the historical Church; I believe in a national Church; I prefer a liturgical Church- and on these grounds I have joined the Church of England

Apparently his health was somewhat better because for the next fourteen years he wrote books and at the same time held a variety of positions.

There was a four year period from 1876-82 during which Edersheim was Vicar of Lodens in Dorsetshire, "besides being Warburtonian Lecturer at Lincoln's Inn 1880-84," (Jackson 1909:75). The lectures which he delivered during the years 1880-84 were published in 1901 under the title, Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah. None of the biographers have anything unkind to say about Edersheim. At the risk of being disrespectful it should be pointed out that he being human (like us all), did have faults. The dedication to this book may give us a glimpse into one of those.

To Henry Wace, D.D. Prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral, Preacher of Lincoln's Inn; Principal of King's college, London; Honorary Chaplain to the Queen; and Chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in sincere esteem and friendship.

Does this seems a little less than humble? If his lapse of humility was a fault, it stood him in good stead. The positive side to being less than humble is that such a person is often self confident to the point that he or she is able to set trends. It seems that Edersheim was such a person. What theologian before him wrote from a perspective that was both Jewish and Christian?

Oxford University presented Edersheim with the degree of Master of Arts in 1881. The office at Lincoln's Inn is usually held for four years and perhaps in anticipation of this fact Edersheim moved to Oxford in 1882. While he was at Oxford he had two different titles, Select Preacher to the University, 1884-85 and in 1886 he was appointed Grinfield Lecturer on the Septuagint. He lectured on the Septuagint from 1886-8 and was to return 1888-89. He fell ill one more time and left Oxford to rest at Mentone, France. Edersheim believed he was healthier and

he was making arrangements to return to Oxford when he passed away. He went to bed with the Lord nine days after his sixty-fourth birthday in March of 1889.

### Dr Edersheim's Writing

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Edersheim's life is the quantity of information he has written down for posterity.

He was Translator and Editor of the "History of speculative Philosophy from Kant to Hegel, from the German of Dr. Chalypaus, with introduction by Sir Wm. Hamilton", (Edinburgh); "Kurtz, History of the Old Covenant (vol 1) with condensed abstract of Kurtz's Bible and Astronomy", "Lange, Bible Commentary on St. Matthew" (2 vols.), "Kurtz, History of the Christian C. with emendations and additions" (Edinburgh, 1860) (Bernstein 1909:197).

Mention has been made of several books that he authored including, History of the Jewish Nation from the Fall Of Jerusalem to the Reign of Constantine the Great, The Golden Diary, and others including:

"Commentary on Ecclesiasticus," in "The Speaker's Commentary on the Apocrypha " (J. Murray, 18680:) Tohu-va-Vohu (Without form and void), a collection of Fragmentary Thoughts and Criticisms, edited by his daughter (Longmans, 1890), and various articles from time to time in the "Edinburgh Review." He was also editor of "Israel's Watchman" in 1877 (Bernstein 1909:198).

It was encouraging to read that he believed in "the Divine Authority, in its true sense, of the Old Testament," (Edersheim c.1885.v.6 P.7). He was not afraid to stand against some of the more current trends in theology of his day. He must have been a man of conviction and I'm sure if he were alive today he'd feel vindicated by the discoveries made at the caves near Qumran.

### Conclusion: What can we learn from Edersheim?

There are many questions which are not dealt with by the biographers. Did he continue to observe any of his Jewish traditions? Was he able to see any Jewish people come to faith? Did he influence the Church of England or the Reform Church to reach out to the Jewish people? Were either of the women he married Jewish?

What can we learn from his life? Did he loose his sense of Jewish identity? I don't think so. The lack of details to his life might lead one to believe this is the case, but it is dangerous to

argue from silence. His writing seems to have a Jewish flavor to it. The way he supplies the details to help us picture the temple reminds me a bit of RASHI's style. On the other hand, his devotional writings have such keen spiritual insight they are cross cultural as they reflect the thoughts of a man who had a deep commitment and walk with the living God.

He didn't seem to put much stock in remaining in one spot for very long. He was longest at Aberdeen but after the 15 years he spent there he did a lot of moving around. He did not compartmentalize his life. It is almost as if he was a missionary, student, writer and pastor at the same time. It is easy for me as a missionary to point to his life as a pastor and say, "Ah, if only every pastor had his heart for evangelism." Evangelism was important to him, he wrote, "**It is a terrible thought that some may fail finally and fatally for lack of our speaking plainly.**" (Edersheim 1882:108) And yet I see that as a missionary caring for people as individuals must have been important to Edersheim. I believe he had a true pastor's heart because when he moved to a new location it wasn't long before, "**Friends speedily gathered round him**" (Ella Edersheim 1890:XX)

The years he spent at Oxford suggest an affinity for work among students. He was well thought of by William Thomas Gidney. Meyer's book has a quotation from Gidney in which he describes Edersheim as having

... possessed a vigorous personality, and a most strongly marked individuality, which prevented his being lost in the crowd, and also his identifying himself with those amongst whom his lot was cast, and joining any of the historic parties in the Church, (1983:57).

Dr. Canon Driver who wrote the article in the Dictionary of National Biography about Alfred Edersheim, described Edersheim as "gentle, amiable bright, humorous genial and a ready and fluent writer" (1901:176). It is interesting that he was never described as contentious. Edersheim was a man of strong conviction and his ideas didn't always fit in the main-stream. For example, he held that Jesus was celebrating the Passover Seder at the time of the Last Supper. This was not a commonly held view according to what he wrote in THE TEMPLE--It's Ministry and Services As They Were At The Time of

Jesus Christ he was aware of higher criticism, and the scientific method but it didn't compromise his doctrine of the Divine Authority of Scripture. I'm glad I got to know him a little bit better. Now the next time a Jewish person confronts me with: "if you had a real Jewish education you wouldn't buy this Jesus stuff," I can tell them about Edersheim. I can invite them to read what this Jewish scholar has written about my Messiah.

I got the impression that Dr. Edersheim would rather that his life's work pointed us to know his Master rather than know him better. I feel challenged to live my life, the way he seems to have lived his, serving, not being served, promoting my master, not allowing others to promote me. Making every opportunity count by taking hold of life with both hands, rolling up my sleeves and getting busy. Of his own life Edersheim wrote, "I have found it most difficult of all simply to submit to God, and not to try to direct my own destinies. Yet this is the grand lesson of Jacob's life." (Elia Edersheim 1890:34). I believe he would have you know that he also wrote;

**Scripture does not give us any biography; it writes not any man's life; it writes the history of God's purposes and dealings, and man comes in so far as he is affected by them or reflects them. Scripture traces the track of light in its progress; and objects come in view as the light necessarily falls on them. Hence the immense gaps in the lives of even such men as Abraham, Moses, St. John and St. Paul, where sometimes thirty or forty years are scarcely filled by one sentence.**

He might be embarrassed of the time spent in discussion on his life but I don't think he would really disapprove if we could see God's work in his life and be encouraged to follow his humble example, always looking to the master and pointing others in that direction. I know I haven't taken the full 45 minutes allotted to me but that is because I have taken seriously what Dr. Edersheim wrote on page 20 of Tohu-Va-Vohu.

**There are people who express themselves with such elaborate distinctness as to become at last indistinct, repeating and re-repeating till they succeed in bamboozling themselves and every other person.**

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## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

### Eight works of Alfred Edersheim

notes by Lyn Rosen Bond

THE BIBLE HISTORY. 7 volumes BOSTON: Ira Bradley and Co., (no date available c 1885)

In 1949 there was an edition of these seven volumes put into two volumes. I wanted to see the original so that is what I used for this paper. The seven volumes are: #1 The World Before the Flood. #2 The Exodus and the Wanderings in the Wilderness. #3 Israel under Joshua and the Judges. #4 Israel under Samuel, Saul and David. #5 History of Israel and Judah From the Birth of Solomon to The Reign of Ahab. #6 History of Israel and Judah From the Reign of Ahab to the Decline of the Two Kingdoms. #7 History of Israel and Judah From the Decline of the Two Kingdoms to The Assyrian and Babylonian Captivity. Edersheim is writing from the perspective of the Divine Authority of Scripture and that includes the Hebrew Scriptures. This is important in view of the fact that he lived during a period when Higher Criticism was beginning to be in vogue. There is a lot of attention given to detail in these volumes. Much of it is helpful but organized in a way that makes it difficult to find. For example, volume six, chapter two deals with the analogy between Elijah and John the Baptist and the analogy between Moses and Elijah. In this chapter Edersheim also gives an explanation of the way God deals with individuals in the Old Testament as opposed to how he deals with those in the New.

ELISHA THE PROPHET: THE LESSONS OF HIS HISTORY AND TIMES. London: The Religious Tract Society, 1882.

Edersheim chose to write about Elisha because he believed that it was a topic relevant to the time in which he lived. He described Elisha's life as, "a life many centuries ago... that speaks to the men of all generations" (preface page one). This book does not have an index or a bibliography and that makes it a little difficult to browse. The 326 pages are divided into thirty chapters with fairly descriptive titles. Chapter Eleven, "Effectual Fervent Prayer" got my attention. Upon reading it I discovered that Edersheim is an effective story teller. His adjectives help the reader to envision the events which are relayed in 2 Kings 4:25-37. In the midst of this chapter, on page 108, he has written a truth which betrays his heart for evangelism. "It is a terrible thought that some may fail finally and fatally for lack of our speaking plainly." He used the text as a bridge to write about the way in which Believers should have contact with people who are spiritually dead. He ends the chapter by reminding his readers that there is power in prayer and all prayers are answered. This is a book that would be helpful if read in it's entirety, it has value as a devotional. It's not the kind of book one reads quickly to get a little background on Elisha.

THE GOLDEN DIARY OF HEART CONVERSE WITH JESUS IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS London

James Nisbet and Co. 1866

This book is not meant to be read in one sitting, as it is a collection of sermons designed to be read one each week for a year. This explains the devotional nature of the book. Care has been taken to translate the ideas from the genre of a sermon into that of a personal devotional. According to the author this book was written to be an example of how to take a passage apart verse by verse in order to meditate on it. Edersheim is successful in teaching the reader how to meditate on scripture. One does not feel he or she is being preached at while reading. Edersheim wrote that he used the commentaries of Delitsch and Hengstenberg but he doesn't cite them where he has used their ideas. This book would be an interesting devotional but the way that it is arranged makes it difficult to use as a research tool. That's a disappointment because he has a lot of interesting commentary on several of the Psalms.

HISTORY OF THE JEWISH NATION AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM UNDER TITUS

(REVISED BY HENRY A. WHITE) GRAND RAPIDS: BAKER BOOK HOUSE, 1954

The first edition of this work was published in 1856. Once again Edersheim has made use of the Appendix to give extra information. This book has seven appendices at the end of thirteen chapters. Again the author may distance some of his readers with the frequent usage of the word "dispensation". The work of Henry White has made this a very readable book. The beauty of this book is Edersheim's direct manner of arguing the fact that the Christian religion has its origins in and is connected to the Old testament. Edersheim wrote in the preface that understanding Jewish history leads to a better understanding of the spread of Christianity and the origin and development of heretical sects. There is some overlapping of information in this book with the later one on Jewish social life.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JESUS THE MESSIAH Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans 1971.

The preface to the first edition is dated September 1883. Edersheim wrote these two volumes while at Oxford. He has a six page "list of Authorities chiefly used in writing this book". Among those listed is fellow Hebrew Christian Franz Delitzsch. The two volumes are broken down into three books. The first book has seven chapters on subjects such as "The Jewish World in the Days of Christ-The Jewish Dispersion in the East". The topic of the first book is "The Preparation for the Gospel: The Jewish world in the Days of Christ." Book Two is titled, "From the Manger in Bethlehem to the Baptism in Jordan." "The Ascent: From the River Jordan to The Mount of Transfiguration" is the topic of the third book. In these volumes Edersheim worked to help the reader understand that Jesus was Jewish, and that he was very much opposed not to Jewish people but to how the Rabbis had distorted Judaism. In the preface the author defended his point that Jesus could not have been anti-Semitic and that those who love and follow him shouldn't be anti-Semitic either.



PROPHECY AND HISTORY IN RELATION TO THE MESSIAH. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901

On page ten of the preface Edersheim wrote, "Yet the main questions concerning the Old Testament and its Messianic hope have been faced, and, in some respects, viewed under a new aspect." The basic thesis of this work is that the New Testament is a fulfillment of the Old Testament. At times the reader may be a bit frustrated as the author quotes verses from the Old Testament without giving the book, chapter or verse. He is assuming a familiarity with the Old Testament. If one is patient, there is a lot to be gained from this work. Edersheim covered important issues including the "Document-Hypothesis" (198 ff). This volume is the complete lecture series that Edersheim delivered at Lincoln's Inn, while he was a lecturer there. That post spanned four years from 1880-1884. The book also includes an analysis of the five books of Moses in an appendix. Of the twelve chapters in this book the one that is most interesting to this student is number nine, "The Messianic Idea in the Later Stages of Israel's History: the Apocrypha and their relation to the Past and the Future".

SKETCHES OF JEWISH SOCIAL LIFE IN THE DAYS OF CHRIST. Boston: Bradley and Woodruff, 1876

This book is a companion volume to The Temple, Its Ministry and Services. In the earlier book he deals with the sanctuary and practices at the time of Jesus, while this later book is about the civil society and practices. The reason Edersheim explored these topics was to help him better understand who Jesus is and what he did. By reading these books the reader gains insight into how Jesus was a part of the society and how he was at the same time above it. The sketches of Jewish life are taken from a variety of social settings. For example, there is a chapter on "Upbringing of Jewish Children," and one on "Mothers, Daughters, and Wives in Israel". Most helpful are the chapters on "The Fraternity of Pharisees" and the two chapters on the Synagogue. At the end of the eighteen chapters there is an appendix on the translation of the *Mishnaic* tractate *Middoth* and an appendix on the Babylonian Talmudic tractate *Berachoth*. The first is full of details that are interesting and helpful for understanding the layout of the Temple. The second is a bit tedious as it records the Rabbis' discussions of ideas which in our religious milieu may seem trivial. For example, there is a lengthy dissertation answering the question, "From what time is the *Shema* said in the evening?" The index to Scripture References and the general index make this volume a good one to use in other research. The writing style is a little more archaic than his other works. The bias of the author is easy to observe as he extols the virtues of Jewish society.

THE TEMPLE--Its Ministry and Services As They Were At The Time of Jesus Christ. London: The Religious Tract Society, 1950.

It was interesting to learn what sources Edersheim used to research this topic. He wrote in his preface to the book that he used the writings of Josephus, Philo, the New Testament, the

Mishnah Maimonides and sources that were written by Robinson and Barclay who explored Jerusalem. It is interesting to read a theologian who makes use of the older Jewish writings. Perhaps it would have been more helpful if he documented his ideas more thoroughly. For example, he wrote about the trumpets, or alms boxes in the courtyard of the Temple. Where did he get the idea that these alms boxes were in the shape of trumpets? Is this a Biblical phrase? In its 414 pages the book has nineteen chapters. The author begins with an explanation of the origin of the name of Jerusalem and deals with issues such as the types and meanings of the sacrifices, the different holidays that were celebrated there. It is apparent from this book that Rev. Edersheim was not afraid of controversy. In the appendix of this work he deals with the question of whether or not Jesus celebrated the last supper on the night of his betrayal. At the time Edersheim was writing there were other scholars who did *not* believe that the Passover was being celebrated by Jesus and his disciples at the last supper. In this book he lines out a good argument to prove that it was. The book is written in his usual clear style and is easily read. He writes from an obvious Christian perspective but at the same time he shows a knowledge and appreciation for the classic Jewish writings.