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THE WITHERED FIG TREE PUTTING FORTH FRUIT.

Matt. 21:19 and 24:32.

We sometime since made mention of the conversion of a Jewish lawyer, Joseph Rabinowitz, of Southern Russia, to faith in Christ Jesus. Fully persuaded of the Messiahship of Jesus he returned to his home in Bessarabia and began to preach "Jesus our Jewish brother the true Messiah," with great success. Shortly after it was rumored that he had been murdered, but the latest accounts contradict this and say that the movement among the Jews is spreading gradually. The following translation of a letter from the Reformer to a gentleman of London will be read with interest. The fig tree cursed to the end of the age not only has leaves of promise but now begins to bear fruit.

KISHENEY, January 2, 1885. To JOHN WILKINSON, the esteemed man:

Your valuable letter and your pamphlet, "The Work of the Lord Among Israel," were received. My heart rejoiced when I read them and perceived how great and strong the love of your heart is toward the brethren of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, according to the flesh, and how precious the salvation of the Israelitic nation is in your eyes.

I prostrate myself before Jehovah, the God of our Lord Jesus, and from the depth of my heart stream forth the words of the Sweet Singer of Israel (Psa. 35,) "Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt. Let them shout for joy and be glad that favor my righteous cause; yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant." Amen. [R751 : page 3]

Herewith I send you a pamphlet, "The First Fruits of a Fig Tree," which contains my opinions and statements in reference to those children of Israel in Southern Russia who believe in Jesus as the

Messiah. These documents have been edited by Professor Franz Delitzsch, of Leipzig. Out of them you will learn to know the origin of our faith in Jesus (our Brother bodily), the Messiah. He is the innermost desire and longing of our hearts. Our English friends and brethren in Jesus, our Saviour, may be convinced by this above-named pamphlet that after the Lord hath made bare his holy arms in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God, that now the time has come when there shall depart and go out from the midst of Israel all unclean persons, and the bearers of the vessels of the Lord shall be cleansed.

True, the salvation of the Lord cannot go out and come into (Joshua 6:1) the world with haste, nor can it walk with rapidity, but now as Jehovah, the Avant-guard and King of the Universe, has passed on before the people of Israel, the God of Israel shall come also as Rear-guard, as gatherer of the outcasts of Israel.

Beloved of the Lord! I herewith write to you that when my feet touched the holy city, *i.e.*, Jerusalem, and I beheld the place where they pierced Him (Jesus), then and there Jehovah enlightened my eyes, so that I understood the Law, the Prophets and Psalms in reference to the plan of salvation, and I tasted somewhat of the sweetness of that mystery which is, to the sorrow of my heart, still unrevealed to the majority of my brethren, the sons of Israel.

From that time on I devoted my time and name to the welfare of my stubborn and unhappy nation to testify unto them with a brazen forehead in the strength of God the gospel of promise, which our fathers had received, viz: that God hath raised this man, Jesus of Nazareth, out of the seed of David as Saviour (Liberator) of Israel.

Through the depth of the riches and wisdom of God, the highest, our Fathers, who were incumbents of the Promise, rebelled against Jesus, so that grace might be bestowed upon the heathen nations, not through any promise, but through grace in the gospel of the Messiah.

Now, after the fulness of the Gentiles hath come in, the time has arrived for us, the sons of Israel, to return to the God of Israel and his King and be his beloved children. We should accept our heritage, the heritage of Jacob, which is without limit, for we are the legitimate heirs, children of Abraham, disciples of Moses, servants of the house of David in eternity. Thus our fulness (*i.e.*, the coming of many Israelites to Christ) will be our riches and the riches of the nations, according to the words of Jehovah by St. Paul, a firstborn of Israel, and at the same time the foremost among the returning heathen.

Among my brethren and in large meetings I earnestly admonish, "Shake thyself from the dust; arise, put on my beautiful garments, my people; through the son of Jesse, Jesus of Nazareth, hath the Lord done great things with thee, O Israel, that he might also work great things among the nations of the earth, who were blessed in our fathers."

I greatly thank God that I see thousands who cheerfully listen, and I trust in Jehovah, who elected David his servant, and his seed after him, that in due time all these will be living stones built by God himself into a steadfast house and priestly sanctuary, so that acceptably sacrifices may be brought hither to the God of Israel in Jesus, the Messiah. They shall know and accept the truth, which alone can make them free children.

Many and worthy sons of Israel are waiting and long for *the* hour, the hour of grace of our God. I implore you, in the name of our brethren in Russia who seek the salvation, that the friends of our Lord Jesus Christ, wherever they be, may not be silent, but that they give counsel and speak out boldly, until Immanuel be with us also, until Jehovah show us him and his dwelling.

Then all who see us in our land, Russia, will say of us, "They are the blessed seed of the Lord."

These are humble words written from afar off by one who bows before you and seeks a more intimate acquaintance with you, a son of Israel indeed.

JOSEPH RABINOWITZ.

