



FORWARD TO THE BOOK **JEWISH SCIENCE - DIVINE HEALING IN JUDAISM**

By Rabbi Alfred Geiger Moses (1916) - edited.

The term "Jewish Science" will on first blush seem strange and startling to the average reader, for inevitably it will suggest the well-known phrase "Christian Science." I have purposely used the much mooted term Science, because to the religious mind it has come to connote the entire subject of Divine Healing. Yet, the Jewish student knows full well, that the word is an exact translation of the Hebrew term often found in the Jewish Scriptures. I mean the word **Chochmoh** which means "Divine Wisdom" or "Science." Therefore, the word Science in a religious sense is strictly Jewish in its origin, and the entire phrase, "Jewish Science," is thoroughly in keeping with the Faith and History of Judaism. The Jewish Bible abounds in passages dealing with the favorite theme of *Chochmoh* or Wisdom. The Book of Proverbs, for example, contains several classic texts which describe the working of this principle.

Now that I have justified the use of the term Jewish Science, let me set forth just what is meant by this expression. **Jewish Science deals with the entire subject of Divine Healing as it is unfolded in the Literature and History of the Jewish People.** Many Jews are unaware of the fact that their religion teaches healing through faith. One object in writing this book is to reach the class of Jews, who through ignorance of their faith and their literature have deserted the Synagogue. I hope to prove to them that the art or principle of Divine Healing has been known in Judaism for thousands of years, and there still exists a real Jewish Science sect, the Chasidim of Europe. The Jewish Bible contains many texts and passages teaching that power of God heals the ills that the flesh is heir to. In fact, the Jewish Scriptures contain the first and original message on Divine Healing.

The supreme expression of the God-idea, the Psalmody, is strictly Jewish in origin. The Psalms were written *by Jews for Jews*. They represent the very inner life of Israel in the Second Commonwealth, and breathe throughout the spiritual atmosphere that characterized the Hebrews of that epoch. Moreover, the Jewish Bible fairly teems with instances of healing by Faith and Prayer.

The Prayer Book of Israel, known as the **Tefillah**, was written in the conviction that God alone is the Healer of Sickness. But the belief in healing by faith is not merely a literary antique of Israel. In its zigzagging course, Judaism gave birth to a movement which was the historical expression of Jewish Science. In the eighteenth century, the Jews of Russia, Poland and Galicia initiated the Chasidic movement, and it spread like wildfire through central Europe. This movement emphasized the Divine Omnipresence of God, and prayer as the best form of communion between God and man.

Jewish Science is not to be considered a sect. It is so thoroughly Jewish that it already occupies an important place in Jewish Theology. I do not mean to derogate from the medical art, which from time immemorial has been recognized in the Jewish religion as one of the *Divine Agencies* in healing the sick. The Bible itself contains many laws of hygiene, and recognizes the use of medicines. The Talmud contains accounts of rare surgical operations. The recognition of the physician is shown in the special prayer laid down in the Jewish ritual for the sick person. In his petition to God, the invalid not only prays for Divine Help, but also asks God to inspire the attending physician with wisdom that *he may heal the sufferer*. But despite the recognition of medical science, Judaism always ascribes to the Supreme Being the chief potency in effecting a cure. In all cases regarding the healing of the sick, reliance on Divine Providence has been encouraged by the Jewish faith, and for this reason, Jewish Science is surely worth-while knowing. The Jewish people, who constantly proclaim their divine mission, should be the last to discourage the use of spiritual agencies to help the body as well as the mind and heart.

Several years ago, I realized that the modern synagogue had lost this spiritual art, and that, under the influence of radical thought which minimized emotion and sentiment, and exalted reason and logic, the average Jew of today was losing his prayerful sense. Some factor is missing in the modern synagogue, and I have concluded that it is *the art of genuine prayer and its real influence on everyday life*. Once this art is restored, through a knowledge of Jewish Science, our places of worship will again be filled with genuine believers in the power of prayer. Our people will once more turn to the "Living God" as in the days of the Psalmists, and prayer will be restored to its pristine place. May Judaism again be a living reality and an ever-present help, "*Le Shem Shomayim*" or "In the Name of God."