

CHRIST A GREAT JEWISH PROPHET

Rabbi Lefkovits Says Hebrews
Revere Him as Such, but
as Nothing More.

URGES CHRISTMAS SPIRIT THROUGHOUT WHOLE YEAR

Says Kindliness and Charity
Should Not Be Limited to
Great Feast Day.

In an interesting sermon at the Temple Emanuel last night Rabbi M. Lefkovits explained that while it is against his faith to celebrate the Christmas festival, the Jew believes that the peace and good will exemplifying the spirit of Yuletide should be prevalent the entire year.

"The Jew," he said, "regards and esteems the Rabbi of Nazareth as one of Israel's greatest prophets—but as nothing more." For this reason he pointed out the Jews did not distinguish the birth anniversary of the Galileean, because they do not celebrate the natal day of any of their prophets.

He said in part:

"The Jew cannot, with loyalty to his own faith, celebrate the Christmas festival. Despite its popular character as a purely humanitarian celebration, fundamentally it is a strictly Christian holiday. It commemorates the miraculous birth of Him whom our fellow-citizens of the Christian faith call the Christ, the Savior, the Son of God. The Jew regards and esteems the Rabbi of Nazareth as one of Israel's great prophets—but as nothing more. And as he distinguishes the natal day of none of his prophets, so he refrains from investing with any special distinction the birth anniversary of the Galileean prophet.

"Yet though the Jew declines to formally celebrate Christmas, his heart is none the less profoundly touched by the peace and good-will that abound on Christmas day. The only wishes that the kindly spirit of that day might become the dominant spirit of all the year round.

"The Jew believes that if people be worthy of thoughtfulness and consideration on Christmas day, they are deserving thereof every day in the

year. The poor that are fed and clothed on Christmas day are not less hungry and cold on other days of the year. The little ones that are remembered with toys and candles on Christmas are equally fond of these things on other days. The faithful employee would rejoice at a word or token of appreciation just as profoundly on his own birthday as he does on the natal day of Jesus. Nor is that the only day for comforting aching hearts and cheering the darkened souls. There are grievous wrongs, cruel injustices and shocking outrages that clamor for redress, sympathy and aid every day in the year. Like those flowers that open only when the sun shines, are human hearts to open only when Christmas dawns, and to remain tightly closed all the other days of the year?

"The Jew believes in a Christmas that shall prevail all the year round. Every day let the obligations of affection be fulfilled, the duties toward humanity be remembered. Every day let homes be brightened, hearts cheered, lives comforted; every day let wrongs be righted, justice be made to supplant inhuman selfishness, and the gloom of the earth be lifted by the glints of heavenly light. Then the Christmas day will come and go, but the Christmas spirit will remain the next day, and the day after, and every day in the year. There will then be manifested that larger spirit, that broader humanity, that deeper sense of right and justice that was manifested in the Jewish life and the Jewish teachings of the Jew of Nazareth.

"When that time will come Christmas will be celebrated alike by Christian and Jew, as the annual rejoicing that there is 'Peace on earth and good will toward men,' not in profession merely, but in every practice, not on one day only but all the year round."