

GRAVES KERSEY

THE WORLD'S SIXTEEN
CRUCIFIED SAVIORS; OR,
CHRISTIANITY BEFORE
CHRIST

Kersey Graves

**The World's Sixteen
Crucified Saviors; Or,
Christianity Before Christ**

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PREFACE

INVERSELY to the remoteness of time has been man's ascent toward the temple of knowledge. Truth has made its ingress into the human mind in the ratio by which man has attained the capacity to receive and appreciate it. Hence, as we tread back the meandering pathway of human history, every step in the receding process brings us to a lower plane of intelligence and a state of mind more thoroughly encrusted with ignorance and superstition. It is, therefore, no source of surprise to learn, when we take a survey of the world two or three thousand years in the past, that every religious writer of that era committed errors on every subject which employed his pen, involving a scientific principle. Hence, the bible, or sacred book, to which he was a contributor, is now found to bear the marks of human imperfection. For the temple of knowledge was but partially reared, and its chambers but dimly lighted up. The intellectual brain was in a dark, feeble and dormant condition. Hence, the moral and religious feelings were drifted about without a pilot on the turbulent waves of superstition, and finally stranded on the shoals of bigotry. The Christian bible, like other bibles, having been written in an age when science was but budding into life, and philosophy had attained but a feeble growth, should be expected to teach many things incompatible with the principles of modern science. And accordingly it is found to contain, like other bibles, numerous statements so obviously at war with present established scientific truths that almost any school-boy, at the present day, can demonstrate their falsity. Let the unbiased reader examine and compare the oriental and Christian bibles together, and he will note the following facts, viz: —

1. That the cardinal religious conceptions of all bibles are essentially the same – all running in parable grooves.

2. That every chapter of every bible is but a transcript of the mental chart of the writer.

3. That no bible, pagan or Christian, contains anything surpassing the natural, mental and moral capacity of the writer to originate. And hence no divine aid or inspiration was necessary for its production.

4. That the moral and religious teachings of no bible reach a higher altitude than the intelligence and mental development of the age and country which produced it.

5. That the Christian bible, in some respects, is superior to some of the other bibles, but only to the extent to which the age in which it was written was superior in intelligence and natural mental capacity to the era in which the older bibles were penned; and that this superiority consists not its more exalted religious conceptions, but only in the fact that, being of more modern origin, the progress of mind had worn away some of the legendary rubbish of the past. Being written in a later and more enlightened age, it is consequently a little less encrusted with mythological tradition and oriental imagery. Though not free from these elements, it possesses them in less degree. And by comparing Christ's history with those of the oriental Gods, it will be found: —

1. That he taught no new doctrine or moral precept.

2. That he inculcated the same religion and morality, which he elaborated, as other moral teachers, to great extremes.

3. That Christ differs so little in his character, preaching, and practical life from some of the oriental Gods, that no person whose mind is not deplorably warped and biased by early training can call one divine while he considers the other human.

4. That if Christ was a God, then all were Gods.
The Author.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The author desires to say that this work has been carefully reviewed and corrected, and some additions made, embracing two chapters from "the Bible of Bibles," and some explanatory notes, and is now able to place before the reader a greatly improved edition.

The author also desires to say here, that the many flattering letters he has received from various parts of the country, from those who have supplied themselves with the work, excites in his mind the hope it will ultimately effect something towards achieving the important end sought to be attained by its publication – the banishment of that wide-spread delusion comprehended in the belief in an incarnate, virgin-born God, called Jesus Christ, and the infallibility of his teachings, with the numerous evils growing legitimately out of this belief – among the most important of which is, its cramping effect upon the mind of the possessor, which interdicts its growth, and thus constitutes a serious obstacle to the progress both of the individual and of society. And such has been the blinding effect of this delusion upon all who have fallen victims to its influence, that the numerous errors and evils of our popular system of religious faith, which constitutes its legitimate fruits, have passed from age to age, unnoticed by all except scientific and progressive minds, who are constantly bringing these errors and evils to light. This state of things has been a source of sorrow and regret to every philanthropist desiring the welfare of the race. And if this work shall achieve anything towards arresting this great evil, the author will feel that he is amply compensated for the years of toil and mental labor spent in its preparation.

Note. – As the different works consulted have assigned different dates for the same event, the author has, in one or two cases, followed their example, accepting them as authority; as in the date of the birth and death of the Gods of Mexico. The reader will also notice that the name of the same God is found in different countries. Example – Adonis and Bacchus are found amongst the Gods of both Greece and Egypt.

EXPLANATION

"The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviors." What an imposing title for a book! What startling developments of religious history it implies! Is it founded on fact or on fiction? If it has a basis of truth, where was such an extraordinary mine of sacred lore discovered? Where were such startling facts obtained as the title of the work suggests. These queries will doubtless arise as soliloquies in the minds of many readers on glancing at the title-page. And the author is disposed to gratify this natural and most probable, in some cases, excited curiosity by a brief explanation. In doing this, he deems it only necessary, to state that many of the most important facts collated in this work were derived from Sir Godfrey Higgins' *Anacalypsis*, a work as valuable as it is rare – a work comprising the result of twenty years' labor, devoted to the investigation of religious history. And although embodying many important historical facts which should have commanded for it a word-wide circulation, but a few copies of this invaluable treasury of religious knowledge have ever found their way into this country. One of these copies the author of this work obtained, at no inconsiderable expense, long enough to glean from its pages such facts as he presumed would be most interesting and instructive to the general reader, some of which will be found in nearly every chapter of this volume. With the facts and materials derived from this source, and two hundred other unimpeachable historical records, the present work might have been swelled to fourfold its present size without exhausting the author's ample store of materials and would have possessed such unwieldy dimensions but for a strict conformity to the most rigid rules of eclecticism and condensation. Encouraged by the extensive demand for his former work, "The Biography of Satan," which has passed through seven editions, the author cherishes the hope that the present work will meet with a circulation commensurate with the importance of the many invaluable facts which it contains. For he possesses the sad conviction that the many religious errors and evils which it is the object of this work to expose, operate very seriously to retard the moral and intellectual growth and prosperity of all Christian countries. They have the effect to injure mentally, morally and religiously the great body of Christian professors.

Dr. Prince, of Long Island (now deceased), wrote to the author, respecting the thirty-fifth chapter of this work, entitled "The Logical View of the Incarnation," after he had seen it in the columns of a newspaper, "It is a masterly piece of logic, and will startle, if it does not revolutionize, the orthodox world. And the chapters comprising 'The Philosophical View,' and 'The Physiological View,' were afterward pronounced specimens of profound and unanswerable logical reasoning." We thus call the reader's attention to these chapters in advance, in order to induce that thorough attention to their facts and arguments which will result in banishing from his mind the last vestiges of a belief (if he entertain any) in the doctrine of the divine incarnation.

IMPORTANT FACTS CONSTITUTING THE BASIS OF THIS WORK.

IGNORANCE of science and ignorance of history are the two great bulwarks of religious error. There is scarcely a tenet of religious faith now propagated to the world by the professed disciples of Christ but that, if subjected to a rigid test in the ordeal of modern science would be found to contain more or less error. Vast acquisitions have been made in the fields of science and history within the last half century, the moral lessons of which have done much to undermine and unsettle our popular system of religious faith, and to bring into disrepute or effectually change many of its long-cherished dogmas. The scientific and historical facts thus brought before the intelligent public, have served as keys for explaining many of the doctrines comprised in the popular creed. They have poured a flood of light upon our whole system of religion as now taught by its popular representatives, which have had the effect to reveal many of its errors to those who have had the temerity, or the curiosity, to investigate it upon these grounds. Many of the doctrines and miraculous events which have always been assigned a divine emanation by the disciples of the Christian faith, are, by these scientific and historical disclosures, shown to be explainable upon natural grounds, and to have exclusively a

natural basis. Some of them are shown to be solvable by recently developed spiritual laws, while others are proven to be founded wholly in error. The intelligent community are now acquainted with many of these important facts, so that no man of science can be found in this enlightened age who can popularly be termed a Christian. No man can be found in any Christian country who has the established reputation of being a man of science, or who has made any proficiency in the whole curriculum of the sciences, whose creed, when examined by an orthodox committee, would not be pronounced unsound. It is true that many of the scientific class, not possessing the conviction that duty imposes the moral necessity of making living martyrs of themselves, have refrained from fully avowing or disclosing to the public their real convictions of the popular faith.

The changes and improvements in religious ideas now observant in the most intelligent portion of the community, are due in part to the rapid progress of scientific discovery and the dissemination of scientific knowledge in Christian countries. The explorer in the field of religious history, however, comes in here for his meed of praise. New stores of historic facts and data may be reckoned among the recent acquisitions of the laborious archeologist; new fountains of religious history have recently been unsealed, which have had the effect to reveal many errors and false claims set up for the current religion of Christendom – a religion long regarded as settled and stereotyped. For many centuries subsequent to the establishment of the Christian religion, but little was known by its disciples of the character, claims and doctrines of the oriental systems of worship. These religions, in fact, were scarcely known to exist, because they had long been veiled in secrecy. They were found, in some cases, enshrined in religious books printed or written in a language so very ancient and obscure, as to bid defiance for centuries to the labors of the most indefatigable, profound and erudite archeological scholar to decipher it. That obstacle is now partially surmounted.

The recent translation for the first time of the Hindoo Vedas into the English language (the oldest bible now extant or ever written) has revealed to the unwelcome gaze of the Christian reader the startling fact that "the heathen" had long been in possession of "holy books," possessing essentially the same character, and teaching essentially the same doctrines as the Christian bible – there being, as Horace Greeley expressed it, "No doctrine of Christianity but what has been anticipated by the Vedas." (See Vol. II., Chap. i, of this work.)

If, then, this heathen bible (compiled, according to the Christian missionary, Rev. D. G Allen, 1400 B. C.), contains all the doctrines of Christianity, then away goes over the dam all claim for the Christian bible as an original bible as an original revelation, or a work of divine inspiration.

Bibles are thus shown to be of heathen and human origin, instead of heavenly and divine authorship, as claimed for them by their respective disciples – the Christian bible forming no exception to this statement. The latter, being essentially like other bibles, it must, of course, have had the same or a similar origin – a fact which, though it may be new and startling to millions, will be universally accepted as truth before the lapse of many generations, and a fact which confronts with open denial the claims of two hundred millions of Christian professors, who assert with unscrupulous boldness that every doctrine, principle and precept of their bible is of divine emanation.

How utterly groundless and untenable is such a claim when arranged by the side of modern discoveries in religious history!

Equally unsupportable is the declaration that "there is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved, than that of Jesus Christ and him crucified," when viewed in the light of the modern explorations of Sir Godfrey Higgins, which have disclosed the history of nearly a score of crucified Gods and sin-atoners, who, we have equal proof, died for the sins of mankind.

Thus, the two prime articles of the Christian faith – Revelation and Crucifixion – are forever established as human and heathen conceptions. And the hope might be reasonably entertained that the important historical facts disclosed in this work will have the effect to open the eyes of the professors of the Christian religion to see their serious error in putting forth such exalted claims for their bible and their religion as that of being perfect products of infinite wisdom, did not the past

history of all religious countries furnish sad proof that reason and logic, and even the most cogent and convincing facts of science and history often prove powerless when arrayed against a religious conviction, enstamped upon the mind for thousands of years in the past, and transmitted from parent to child until it has grown to a colossal stature, and become a part of the living tissues of the soul.

No matter how glaringly absurd, how palpably erroneous, or how demonstrably false an opinion or doctrine is shown to be, they cannot see it, but will still continue to hug it to their bosoms as a divinely-revealed truth. No facts or evidence can prove an overmatch for the inherited convictions of a thousand generations. In this respect the Mahomedan, the Hindoo and the Christian all stand upon a level. It is about as easy to convince one as the other of their easily demonstrated errors.

RELIGION OF NATURAL ORIGIN.

Among the numerous errors traceable in the history of every religious sect, commemorated in the annals of the world, none possesses a more serious character, or has been attended with more deplorable consequences, than that of assigning a wrong origin to religion. Every bible, every sect, every creed, every catechism, and every orthodox sermon teaches that "religion is the gift of God," that "it is infused into the soul by the spirit and power of the Lord." Never was a greater mistake ever committed. Every student of anthropology, every person who has read any of the numerous modern works on mental science, and tested their easily-demonstrated facts, knows that religion is of *natural* and not *supernatural* origin; that it is a natural element of the *human mind*, and not a "*direct gift from God*;" that it grows as spontaneously out of the soul as flowers spring out of the ground. It is as natural as eating, sleeping or breathing. This conclusion is not the offspring of mere imagination. It is no hastily-concocted theory, but an oft-demonstrated and scientifically-established fact, which any person can test the truth of for himself.

And this modern discovery will, at no distant day, revolutionize all systems of religious faith in existence, and either dissolve and dissipate them, or modify and establish them upon a more natural and enduring basis, expurgated of their dogmatic errors.

Let us, then, labor to banish the wide-spread delusion believed and taught by a thousand systems of worship – Jew, Pagan and Christian – that "religion is of supernatural or divine origin," and the many ruinous errors; senseless dogmas and deplorable soul-crushing superstitions so thoroughly inwrought into the Christian system will vanish like fog before the morning sun, and be replaced by a religion which sensible, intelligent and scientific men and women can accept, and will delight to honor and practice.

ADDRESS TO THE CLERGY

FRIENDS and brethren – teachers of the Christian faith: Will you believe us when we tell you the divine claims of your religion are gone – all swept away by the "logic of history," and nullified by the demonstrations of science?

The recently opened fountains of historic law, many of whose potent facts will be found interspersed through the pages of this work, sweep away the last inch of ground on which can be predicated the least show for either the divine origin of the Christian religion, or the divinity of Jesus Christ.

For these facts demonstrate beyond all cavil and criticism, and with a logical force which can leave not the vestige of a doubt upon any unbiased mind, that all its doctrines are an outgrowth from older heathen systems. Several systems of religion essentially the same in character and spirit as that religion now known as Christianity, and setting forth the same doctrines, principles and precepts, and several personages filling a chapter in history almost identical with that of Jesus Christ, it is now known to those who are up with the discoveries and intelligence of the age, were venerated in the East centuries before a religion called Christian, or a personage called Jesus Christ were known to history.

Will you not, then, give it up that your religion is merely a human production, reconstructed from heathen materials – from oriental systems several thousand years older than yours – or will you continue, in spite of the unanimous and unalterable verdict of history, science, facts and logic, to proclaim to the world the now historically demonstrated error which you have so long preached, that God is the author of your religion, and Jesus Christ a Deity-begotten Messiah? Though you may have heretofore honestly believed these doctrines to be true, you can now no longer plead ignorance as an excuse for propagating such gigantic and serious errors, as they are now overwhelmingly demonstrated by a thousand facts of history to be untrue. You must abandon such exalted claims for your religion, or posterity will mark you as being "blind leaders of the blind." They will heap upon your honored names their unmitigated ridicule and condemnation. They will charge you as being either deplorably ignorant, or disloyal to the cause of truth. And shame and ignominy will be your portion.

The following propositions (fatal to your claims for Christianity) are established beyond confutation by the historical facts cited in this work, viz: —

1. There were many cases of the miraculous birth of Gods reported in history before the case of Jesus Christ.
2. Also many other cases of Gods being born of virgin mothers.
3. Many of these Gods, like Christ, were (reputedly) born on the 25th of December.
4. Their advent into the world, like that of Jesus Christ, is in many cases claimed to have been foretold by "inspired prophets."
5. Stars figured at the birth of several of them, as in the case of Christ.
6. Also angels, shepherds, and magi, or "wise men."
7. Many of them, like Christ, were claimed to be of royal or princely descent.
8. Their lives, like his, were also threatened in infancy by the ruler of the country.
9. Several of them, like him, gave early proof of divinity.
10. And, like him, retired from the world and fasted.
11. Also, like him, declared, "My kingdom is not of this world."
12. Some of them preached a spiritual religion, too, like his.
13. And were "anointed with oil," like him.
14. Many of them, like him, were "crucified for the sins of the world."
15. And after three days' interment "rose from the dead."
16. And, finally, like him, are reported as ascending back to heaven.
17. The same violent convulsions of nature at the crucifixion of several are reported.

18. They were nearly all called "Saviors," "Son of God," "Messiah," "Redeemer," "Lord," &c.

19. Each one was the second member of the trinity of "Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

20. The doctrines of "Original Sin," "Fall of Man," "The Atonement," "The Trinity," "The Word," "Forgiveness," "An Angry God," "Future Endless Punishment," etc., etc. (see the author's "Biography of Satan,") were a part of the religion of each of these sin-atoning Gods, as found set forth in several oriental bibles and "holy books," similar in character and spirit to the Christian's bible, and written, like it, by "inspired and holy men" before the time of either Christ or Moses (before Moses, in some cases, at least). All these doctrines and declarations, and many others not here enumerated, the historical citations of this work abundantly prove, were taught in various oriental heathen nations centuries before the birth of Christ, or before Christianity, as a religion, was known in the world.

Will you, then, after learning these facts, longer dare assert that Christianity is of divine emanation, or claim a special divine paternity for its author. Only the priest, who loves his *salary* more than the cause of *truth* (and I fear this class are numerous,) or who is deplorably ignorant of history, will have the effrontery or audacity to do so. For the historical facts herein set forth as clearly prove such assumptions to be false, as figures can demonstrate the truth of any mathematical problem. And no logic can overthrow, and no sophistry can set aside these facts.

They will stand till the end of time in spite of your efforts either to evade, ignore, or invalidate them.

We will here briefly state: —

WHY ALL THE ANCIENT RELIGIONS WERE ALIKE.

Two causes are obviously assignable for Christianity in all its essential features and phases, being so strikingly similar to the ancient pagan systems which preceded it, as also the close analogies of all the principal systems, whose doctrines and practical teachings have found a place on the pages of history.

1. The primary and constituent elements and properties of human nature being essentially the same in all countries and all centuries, and the feeling called Religion being a spontaneous outgrowth of the devotional elements of the human mind, the coincidence would naturally produce similar feelings, similar thoughts, similar views and similar doctrines on the subject of religion in different countries, however widely separated. This accounts in part for the analogous features observable in all the primary systems of religious faith, which have flourished in the past ages.

2. A more potent cause, however, for the proximate identity extending to such an elaborate detail, as is evinced by the foregoing schedule, is found in the historical incident which brought the disciples of the various systems of worship together, face to face, in the then grand religious emporium of the world – the royal and renowned city of Alexandria, the capital of Egypt Here, drawn together by various motives and influences, the devotee of India (the devout disciple of Buddhism), the ever-prayerful worshipper of "Mithra, the Mediator," the representatives of the crucified Quexalcoate of Mexico, the self-denying Essene, the superstitious Egyptian, the godly Chaldean, the imitative Judean founders of Christianity, and the disciples of other sin-atoning Gods, met and interchanged ideas, discussed their various dogmas, remolded their doctrines, and recast and rehabilitated their systems of religious faith by borrowing from each other, and from other systems there represented. In this way all became remarkably similar and alike in all their doctrines and details. And thus the mystery is solved, and the singular resemblance of all the ancient systems of religion satisfactorily accounted for. (For a fuller explanation of this matter, see Chapters XXX. and XXXI. of this work.)

In conclusion, please note the following points: —

1. The religious conceptions of the Old Testament are as easily traced to heathen sources as those of the New Testament. But we are compelled to exclude such an exposition from this work.

2. The comparative exhibition of the doctrines and teachings of twenty bibles which proves them to be in their leading features essentially alike (originally designed for this volume), is found to be, when completed, of sufficient magnitude to constitute a volume of itself.

3. Here I desire to impress upon the minds of my clerical brethren the important fact, that the gospel histories of Christ were written by men who had formerly been Jews (see Acts xxi. 20), and probably possessing the strong proclivity to imitate and borrow which their bible shows was characteristic of that nation; and being written many years after Christ's death, according to that standard Christian author, Dr. Lardner, it was impossible, under such circumstances, for them to separate (if they had desired to) the real facts and events of his life from the innumerable fictions and fables then afloat everywhere relative to the heathen Gods who had pre-enacted a similar history. Two reasons are thus furnished for their constructing a history of Christ almost identical with that of other Gods, as shown in chapters XXX., XXXI. and XXXII. of this work.

4. The singular and senseless defense of your now tottering system we have known to be attempted by members of your order, by the self-complacent soliloquy "Christianity, whether divine or human, is good enough for me." But such a subterfuge betrays both a weak mind and a weak cause. The disciples of all the oriental systems cherished a similar feeling and a similar sentiment. And the deluded followers of Brigham Young exclaimed in like manner, "I want nothing better than Mormonism." "Snakes, lizards and frogs are good enough for me," a South Sea Islander once exclaimed to a missionary, when a reform diet was proposed. Such logic, if universally adopted, would keep the world eternally in barbarism. No progress can be made where such sentiments prevail. The truth is, no system of religion, whatever its ostensible marks of perfection, can long remain "good enough" for aspiring and progressive minds, unless occasionally improved, like other institutions. And then it should be borne in mind, that our controversy does not appertain so much to the character as to the origin of the Christian religion. Our many incontrovertible proofs, that it is of human and heathen origin, proves at the same time that it is an imperfect system, and as such, needing occasional improvement, like other institutions. And its assumed perfection and divine origin which have always guarded it from improvement, amply accounts for its present corrupt, immoral, declining and dying condition. And it will ere long die with paralysis, unless its assumption of divine perfection is soon exchanged for the principles of improvement and reconstruction. This policy alone can save it.

5. We will here notice another feeble, futile and foolish expedient we have known resorted to by persons of your order to save your sinking cause when the evidence is presented with such cogency as to admit of no disproof, that all the important doctrines of Christianity were taught by older heathen systems before the era of Christ. The plea is, that those systems were mere types, or ante-types, of the Christian religion. But this plea is of itself a borrowed subterfuge of heathenism, and is moreover devoid of evidence. The ancient Egyptians, also the Greeks, claimed that Brahminism was a type, or ante-type, of their religious systems. And Mahomedans now claim that both Judaism and Christianity were designed by God as foreshadowing types of religion of the Koran. And the disciples of more than a thousand systems of religion which have flourished in past ages, could have made such logic equally available in showing, in each case, that every system preceding theirs was designed by Infinite Wisdom as simply a typical or ante-typical forerunner of theirs. How ridiculous and senseless, therefore, is the argument thus shown to be when critically examined in the light of history! So much so as scarcely to merit a serious notice.

6. Here permit us to say that we believe Christianity to be not only of human origin, but of natural origin also; I that is, a natural outgrowth, like other systems, of the religious elements of the human mind – a hypothesis which accounts most beautifully for the numerous human imperfections now visible in nearly every line of its teachings.

Those imperfections correspond exactly to the imperfect minds which produced it.

7. And we believe that the principle teacher of Christianity, "the man Christ Jesus," possessed a very exalted and superior mind for that age in the moral and religious departments, and in the intellectual to some extent also. But his superiority in these respects was not probably greater than that of Zera Colburn or Henry Salford in the mathematical department. And all probably derived their peculiar extraordinary traits of mind from the same causes – that of strong psychological influence

impressed upon the mind of the mothers prior to their births. Had these ante-natal influences been as well understood then as now, we presume Christ would have escaped the fate of an exaltation to the Godhead.

[The author, stating the above, demonstrates that same assumption of a *truth* which he criticises in the Christians, Mohamedens and other proponents of religions.
Ed.]

8. In conclusion, permit us to say that the numerous and overwhelming facts of this work render it utterly impossible that the exalted claims you put forth for your religion and its assumed author (that of a divine character) can be true. And posterity will so decide, whether you do or not.

Cherishing for you naught but feelings of kindness and brotherly love, and desiring to promote the truth, we will answer any question, or discuss any proposition embraced in this work you may desire.

Your brother,
Kersey Graves.

CHAPTER I. RIVAL CLAIMS OF THE SAVIORS

IT is claimed by the disciples of Jesus Christ, that he was of supernatural and divine origin; that he had a human being for a mother, and a God for his father; that, although he was woman-conceived, he was Deity-begotten, and molded in the human form, but comprehending in essence a full measure of the infinite Godhead; thus making him half human and half divine in his sublunary origin. It is claimed that he was full and perfect God, and perfect man; and while he was God, he was also the son of God, and as such was sent down by his father to save a fallen and guilty world; and that thus his mission pertained to the whole human race; and his inspired seers are made to declare that ultimately every nation, tongue, kindred, and people under heaven will acknowledge allegiance to his government, and concede his right to reign and rule the world; that "every knee must bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

But we do not find that this prophecy has ever been or is likely to be fulfilled. We do not observe that this claim to the infinite deityship of Jesus Christ has been or is likely to be universally conceded. On the contrary, it is found that by a portion, and a large portion of the people of even those nations now called Christian, this claim has been steadily and unswervingly controverted, through the whole line of history, stretching through the nearly two thousand years which have elapsed since his advent to earth.

Even some of those who are represented to have been personally acquainted with him – aye! some of his own brethren in the flesh, children in the same household, children of the same mother – had the temerity to question the tenableness of his claim to a divine emanation. And when we extend our researches to other countries, we find this claim, so far from being conceded, is denied and contested by whole nations upon other grounds. It is met and confronted by rival claims.

Upon this ground hundreds of millions of the established believers in divine revelation – hundreds of millions of believers in the divine character and origin of religion – eject the pretensions set up for Jesus Christ. They admit both a God and a Savior, but do not accept Jesus of Nazareth as being either. They admit a Messiah, but not the Messiah; these nations contend that the title is misplaced which makes "the man Christ Jesus" the Savior of the world. They claim to have been honored with the birth of the true Savior among them, and defend this claim upon the ground of priority of date. They aver that the advent of their Messiahs were long prior to that of the Christians', and that this circumstance adjudicates for them a superiority of claim as to having had the true Messiah born upon their soil.

It is argued that, as the story of the incarnation of the Christians' Savior is of more recent date than that of these oriental and ancient religions (as is conceded by Christians themselves), the origin of the former is thus indicated and foreshadowed as being an outgrowth from, if not a plagiarism upon the latter – a borrowed copy, of which the pagan stories furnish the original. Here, then, we observe a rivalry of claims, as to which of the remarkable personages who have figured in the world as Saviors, Messiahs, and Sons of God, in different ages and different countries, can be considered the true Savior and "sent of God" or whether all should be, or the claims of all rejected.

For researches into oriental history reveal the remarkable fact that stories of incarnate Gods answering to and resembling the miraculous character of Jesus Christ have been prevalent in most if not all the principal religious heathen nations of antiquity; and the accounts and narrations of some of these deific incarnations bear such a striking resemblance to that of the Christian Savior – not only in their general features, but in some cases in the most minute details, from the legend of the immaculate conception to that of the crucifixion, and subsequent ascension into heaven – that one might almost be mistaken for the other.

More than twenty claims of this kind – claims of beings invested with divine honor (deified) – have come forward and presented themselves at the bar of the world with their credentials, to contest

the verdict of Christendom, in having proclaimed Jesus Christ, "the only son, and sent of God: " twenty Messiahs, Saviors, and Sons of God, according to history or tradition, have, in past times, descended from heaven, and taken upon themselves the form of men, clothing themselves with human flesh, and furnishing incontestable evidence of a divine origin, by various miracles, marvelous works, and superlative virtues; and finally these twenty Jesus Christs (accepting their character for the name) laid the foundation for the salvation of the world, and ascended back to heaven.

1. Chrishna of Hindostan.
2. Budha Sakia of India.
3. Salivahana of Bermuda.
4. Zulis, or Zhule, also Osiris and Orus, of Egypt.
5. Odin of the Scandinavians.
6. Crite of Chaldea.
7. Zoroaster and Mithra of Persia.
8. Baal and Taut, "the only Begotten of God," of Phenicia.
9. Indra of Thibet.
10. Bali of Afghanistan.
11. Jao of Nepaul.
12. Wittoba of the Bilingonese.
13. Thammuz of Syria.
14. Atys of Phrygia.
15. Xamolxis of Thrace.
16. Zoar of the Bonzes.
17. Adad of Assyria.
18. Deva Tat, and Sammonocadam of Siam.
19. Alcides of Thebes.
20. Mikado of the Sintoos.
21. Beddru of Japan.
- 22 Hesus or Eros, and Bremrillah, of the Druids.
23. Thor, son of Odin, of the Gauls.
24. Cadmus of Greece.
25. Hil and Feta of the Mandaites.
26. Gentaut and Quexalcote of Mexico.
27. Universal Monarch of the Sibyls.
28. Ischy of the Island of Formosa.
29. Divine Teacher of Plato.
30. Holy One of Xaca.
31. Fohi and Tien of China.
32. Adonis, son of the virgin Io of Greece.
33. Ixion and Quirinus of Rome.
34. Prometheus of Caucasus.
35. Mohamud, or Mahomet, of Arabia.

These have all received divine honors, have nearly all been worshiped as Gods, or sons of God; were mostly incarnated as Christs, Saviors, Messiahs, or Mediators; not a few of them were reputedly born of virgins; some of them filling a character almost identical with that ascribed by the Christian's bible to Jesus Christ; many of them, like him, are reported to have been crucified; and all of them, taken together, furnish a prototype and parallel for nearly every important incident and wonder-inciting miracle, doctrine and precept recorded in the New Testament, of the Christian's Savior. Surely, with so many Saviors the world cannot, or should not, be lost.

We have now presented before us a two-fold ground for doubting and disputing the claims put forth by the Christian world in behalf of "Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." In the first place, allowing the question to be answered in the affirmative as to whether he was really a Savior, or supernatural being, or more than a mere man, a negative answer to which seems to have been sprung (as previously intimated) at the very hour of his birth, and that by his kindred, his own nearest relatives; as it is declared, "his own brethren did not believe on him" – a skepticism which has been growing deeper and broader from that day to this.

And now, upon the heel of this question, we find another formidable query to be met and answered, viz.: Was he (Christ) the only Savior, seeing that a multitude of similar claims are now upon our council-board to be disposed of?

We shall, however, leave the theologians of the various religious schools to adjust and settle this difficulty among themselves. We shall leave them to settle the question as best they can as to whether Jesus Christ was the only son and sent of God – "the only begotten of the Father," as John declares him to be (John i. 14) – in view of the fact that long prior to his time various personages, in different nations, were invested with the title "Son of God," and have left behind them similar proofs and credentials of the justness of their claims to such a title, if being essentially alike – as we shall prove and demonstrate them to be – can make their claims similar.

We shall present an array of facts and historical proofs, drawn from numerous histories and the Holy Scriptures and bibles appertaining to these various Saviors, and which include a history of their lives and doctrines, that will go to show that in nearly all their leading features, and mostly even in their details, they are strikingly similar.

A comparison, or parallel view, extended through their sacred histories, so as to include an exhibition presented in parallels of the teachings of their respective bibles, would make it clearly manifest that, with respect to nearly every important thought, deed, word, action, doctrine, principle, precept, tenet, ritual, ordinance or ceremony, and even the various important characters or personages, who figure in their religious dramas as Saviors, prophets, apostles, angels, devils, demons, exalted or fallen genii – in a word, nearly every miraculous or marvelous story, moral precept, or tenet of religious faith, noticed in either the Old or New Testament Scriptures of Christendom – from the Jewish cosmogony, or story of creation in Genesis, to the last legendary tale in St. John's "Arabian Nights" (alias the Apocalypse) – there is to be found an antitype for, or outline of, somewhere in the sacred records or bibles of the oriental heathen nations, making equal if not higher pretention to a divine emanation and divine inspiration, and admitted by all historians, even the most orthodox, to be of much more ancient date; for while Christians only claim, for the earthly advent of their Savior and the birth of their religion, a period less than nineteen hundred years in the past, on the contrary, most of the deific or divine incarnations of the heathen and their respective religions are, by the concurrent and united verdict of all history, assigned a date several hundred or several thousand years earlier, thus leaving the inference patent that so far as there has been any borrowing or transfer of materials from one system to another, Christianity has been the borrower.

And as nearly the whole outline and constituent parts of the Christian system are found scattered through these older systems, the query is at once sprung as to whether Christianity did not derive its materials from these sources – that is, from heathenism, instead of from high heaven – as it claims.

CHAPTER II. MESSIANIC PROPHECIES

NEARLY all religious history is prophetic of the coming of Saviors, Messiahs, Redeemers, and virgin-born Gods. Most religious countries, and more than a score of religious systems, had a standing prophecy that a divine deliverer would descend from heaven and relieve them from their depressed state, and ameliorate their condition. And in most cases that prophecy was believed to have been fulfilled by the birth of a being, who, as he approached the goal of moral and intellectual manhood exhibited such remarkable proof of superiority of mind as to be readily accepted as the promised Messiah.

We can only find room for a few citations and illustrations in proof of this statement. Many texts have been hunted out and marked in the Christian bible, by interested priests, as prophetic of the coming and mission of Christ. But a thorough, candid, and impartial investigation will convince any reader that *none of these texts* have the remotest allusion to Christ, nor were they intended to have. On the contrary, most of them refer to events already past. The others are the mere ebullitions of pent-up feelings hopefully prayerful in their anticipation of better times, but very indefinite as to the period and the agencies or means in which, or by which, the desired reformation was to be brought about. A divine man was prayed for and hopefully expected. But no such being as Jesus Christ is anticipated, or alluded to, or dreamed of, by the prophecies. And it requires the most unwarrantable distortion to make one text refer to him.

But this perversion has been wrought on many texts. We will cite one case in proof. In Isaiah's "famous prophecy" so-called, the phrase "Unto us a child is born" (Isa. ix. 6), the context clearly shows, refers to the prophet's own child, and the past tense, "is born," is an evidence the child was then born. And the title "Mighty God," found in the text, Dr. Beard shows should have been translated "the Mighty Hero," thus proving it has no reference to a God. And "the Everlasting Father" should have been rendered, according to this Christian writer, "the Father of the Everlasting Age." And other texts often quoted as prophecies by biased Christian writers, the doctor proves, are erroneously translated, and have no more reference to Christ than to Mahomet.

It is true the Jews, in common with other nations, cherished strong anticipations of the arrival of a Mighty Deliverer amongst them; and this august personage some of them supposed would be a God, or a God-man (a demi-God). Hence, such prophetic utterances as "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness" (Isa. xxxii. i), "And all nations shall flow unto Zion" (Isa. ii. 2).

The Hindoo Budhists long previously indulged similar anticipations with respect to the triumph of their religion. Hence, their seers prophesied that at the end of the Cali Yug period, a divine child (Avatar, or Savior) would be born, who would understand the divine writings (the Holy Scriptures) and the sciences, without the labor of learning them. "He will supremely understand all things." "He will relieve the earth of sin, and cause justice and truth to reign everywhere. And will bring the whole earth into the acceptance of the Hindoo religion." And the Hindoo prophet Bala also predicted that a divine Savior would "become incarnate in the house of Yadu, and issue forth to mortal birth from the womb of Devaci (a Holy Virgin), and relieve the oppressed earth of its load of sin and sorrow." Much more similar language may be found in their holy bible, the Vedas. Colonel Wilford tells us the advent of their Savior Chrishna occurred in exact fulfillment of prophecy found in their sacred books.

And the Chinese bible also contains a number of Messianic prophecies. In one of the five volumes a prophecy runs thus: "The Holy one, when he comes, will unite in himself all the virtues of heaven and earth. By his justice the world will be established in righteousness. He will labor and suffer much... and will finally offer up a sacrifice worthy of himself," i. e., worthy of a God. And a singular animal, called the Kilin (signifying the Lamb of God), was seen in the yard, with a stone in its mouth, on which was inscribed a prophecy of the event. And when the young God (Chang-ti) was

born, in fulfillment of this prophecy, heavenly music, and angels and shepherds attended the scene. (See "History of China," by Martinus; also Halde's "History of China.")

We will also give place to a Messianic prophecy of Persia. Mr. Faber, an English writer, in his "History of Idolatry," tells us that Zoroaster prophetically declared, that "A virgin should conceive and bear a son, and a star would appear blazing at midday to signalize the occurrence." "When you behold the star," said he to his followers, "follow it whithersoever it leads you. Adore the mysterious child, offering him gifts with profound humility. He is indeed the Almighty Word which created the heavens. He is indeed your Lord and everlasting King" (Faber, vol. ii. p. 92). Abulfaragius, in his "Historia Dynastiarum," and Maurice, in his "Indian Skeptics Refuted," both speak of this prophecy, fulfilled, according to Mr. Higgins, by the advent of the Persian and Chaldean God Josa. And Chalcidus (of the second century), in his "Comments on the Times of Plato," speaks of "a star which presaged neither disease nor death, but the descent of a God amongst men, and which is attested by Chaldean astronomers, who immediately hastened to adore the newborn deity, and present him gifts."

We are compelled to omit, for the want of room, the notice of numerous Messianic prophecies found in the sacred writings of Egypt, Greece, Rome, Mexico, Arabia, and other countries, all of which tend to show that the same prophetic spirit pervaded all religious countries, reliable only to the extent it might have issued from an interior spiritual vision, or have been illuminated by departed spirits. And we find as much evidence that these pagan prophecies were inspired, and also fulfilled, as those found in Jew-Christian bible, thus reducing all to a common level. The possibility of the interior vision being expanded and illuminated by spiritual beings, so as to enable the possessor to forestall the occurrence of future events, we, however, by no means deny, since we have abundant proof of it in connection with the practical history of modern spiritualism. (See Chapter XXXIV., section 2).

CHAPTER III. PROPHECIES BY THE FIGURE OF A SERPENT

The Seed of the Woman Bruising the Serpent's Head

"AND I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel." (Gen. ill. 15.) This text is often cited by Christian writers and controversialists as prefiguring the mission of the Christian Savior, viz., the destruction of the serpent, alias the devil. St. John calls "the grand adversary of souls which deceiveth the whole world," "the dragon, the serpent, the devil, and Satan." (Rev. xii. 8.) The serpent, then, is the devil; that is, the dragon, the serpent, the devil and Satan are all one. The object of this chapter is to show the origin of the singular figure set forth in the first text quoted, and to prove that those Christian writers who assume it to be a revelation from heaven were profoundly ignorant of oriental history, as the same figure is found in several heathen systems of older date, as we will now cite the facts to prove.

Some of the saviors or demigods of Egypt, India, Greece, Persia, Mexico and Etruria are represented as performing the same drama with the serpent or devil. "Osiris of Egypt (says Mr. Bryant) bruised the head of the serpent after it had bitten his heel." Descending to Greece, Mr. Faber relates that, "on the spheres Hercules is represented in the act of contending with the serpent, the head of which is placed under his foot; and this serpent guarded the tree with golden fruit in the midst of the garden Hesperides" – Eden. (Origin of Idolatry, vol. i. p. 443.) "And we may observe," says this author, "the same tradition in the Phoenician fable of Ophion or Ophiones." (Ibid.) In Genesis the serpent is the subject of two legends. But here it will be observed that they are both couched in one.

Again, it is related by more than one oriental writer that Chrishna of India is represented on some very ancient sculptures and stone monuments with his heel on the head of a serpent. Mr. Maurice, in his *Indian Antiquities*, vol. ii., speaks of "Chrishna crushing the head of a serpent with his foot," and pronounces the striking similarity of this story with that found in the Christian bible as "very mysterious." Another author tells us "The image of Chrishna is sculptured in the ancient temples of India, sometimes wreathed in the folds of a serpent which is biting his foot, and sometimes treading victoriously on the head of a serpent." (Prog. Rel. Ideas, vol. i.) In the *Mexican Antiquities*, vol. vi., we are told, "A messenger from heaven announced to the first woman created (Suchiquecul), that she should bear a son who should bruise the serpent's head, and then presented her with a rose." Here is the origin of the Genesis legend, the rose being the fruit of the tree of "the knowledge of good and evil." "The ancient Persians," says Volney, in his "Ruin of Empires," p. 169, "had the tradition of a virgin, from whom they predicted would be born, or would spring up, a shoot (a son) that would crush the serpent's head, and thus deliver the world from sin." And both the serpent and the virgin, he tells us, are represented imaginarily in the heavens, and pictured on their astronomical globes and spheres, as on those of the Romish Christian. (See Burritt's *Geography of the Heavens*.)

In the ancient Etrurian story, instead of "the seed of the woman" (the virgin), it is the woman herself who is represented as standing with one foot on the head of a serpent, which has the twig of an apple tree in its mouth to which an apple is suspended (the forbidden fruit), while its tail is twisted around a celestial globe, thus reminding us of St. John's dragon hauling down one-third of the stars with his tail. (See Rev. xii. 4.) In the ancient celestial diagram of the Etrurian, the head of the virgin is surmounted with a crown of stars – doubtless the same legend from which St. John borrowed his metaphor of a "a woman with a crown of twelve stars on her head." (Rev. xiii.) "The *Regina Stellarum*" (Queen of the Stars), spoken of in some of the ancient systems appertains to the same fable. Also the tradition of Achilles of Greece being invulnerable in the heel, as related by Homer.

The last clause of the first text quoted reads "*It shall bruise thy head*" – a very curious prophetic reference to the savior of the world, if the text refers to him, to represent him as being of the neuter gender, for the neuter pronoun *it* always refers to a thing without sex.

In the further exposition of the serpent tradition, we are now brought to notice, and will trace to its origin, the story of the original transgression and fall of man – two cardinal doctrines of the Christian religion. Like every other tenet of the Christian faith, we find these doctrines taught in heathen systems much older than Christianity, and whose antiquity antedates even the birth of Moses. We will first notice the Persian tradition. "According to the doctrine of the Persians," says the Rev. J. C. Pitrat, "Meshia and Meshiane, the first man and first woman, were pure, and submitted to Ormuzd, their maker. But Ahriman (the evil one) saw them, and envied them their happiness. He approached them under the form of a serpent, presented fruits to them, and persuaded them that he was the maker of man, of animals, of plants, and of the beautiful universe in which they dwelt. They believed it. Since that time Ahriman was their master. Their natures became corrupt, and this corruption infested their whole posterity." This story is taken from the *Vandidatsade of the Persians*, pp. 305 and 428.

The Indian or Hindoo story is furnished us by the Rev. Father Bouchat, in a letter to the bishops of Avranches, and runs thus: "Our Hindoos say the Gods tried by all means to obtain immortality. After many inquiries and trials, they conceived the idea that they would find it in the tree of life, which is the Chorcan (paradise). In fact they succeeded, and by eating once in a while of the fruits of that tree, they kept the precious treasure they so much valued. A famous snake, named Cheiden, saw that the tree of life had been found by the Gods of the second order. As probably he had been intrusted with guarding that tree, he became so angry because his vigilance had been deceived, that he immediately poured out an enormous quantity of poison, which spread over the whole earth." How much like this story is the story of St. John, "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood!" (Rev. xii. 15.)

The idea of a snake or serpent inundating the earth from its mouth, as taught in both stories is so novel, and so far removed from the sphere of natural causes and possible events, that we are compelled to the conclusion that one is borrowed from the other, or both from a common original.

And as facts cited in other chapters prove beyond dispute that the Hindoo system, containing this story, extends in antiquity far beyond the time of Moses, the question is thus settled as to which system borrowed the story from the other.

Before closing the chapter, we wish to call the attention of the reader to the important fact that three out of four of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith are taught in the two heathen mythological stories of creation just presented, viz.: —

1. Original sin.
2. The fall of man caused by a serpent
3. The consequent corruption and depravity of the human race.

These doctrines, then, it must be admitted, are of heathen origin, and not, as Christians claim, "important truths revealed from heaven." For a historical exposition of the other cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith, viz., man's restoration by the atonement achieved through the crucifixion of a God, see Chapters xvi. and xxi.

CHAPTER IV. MIRACULOUS AND IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE GODS

THE ancients very naturally concluded that an offspring of God (a son of God) should have a purer, higher and holier maternal origin than is incident to the lot of mortals, and this was to constitute one of the evidences of his emanation from the Deity – that is, of his supernatural or divine origin. He, as a matter of course, must not only have a different origin, but one in the highest degree superior and supernatural. He must not only be able to claim the highest *paternal* origin, but the highest *maternal* also. And on the part of the mother, a sexual connection with the great Potentate of heaven would evince for her offspring the very acme of superiority with respect to his origin, moral perfection and authority. That the Savior was born of a woman could not possibly be made a matter of concealment. But his paternal parentage was not so obvious and apparent to general observation, being cognizant alone to the mother. This circumstance furnished the most propitious opportunity to concoct the story that "The Most High" had condescended and descended to become both a father and a grandfather to a human being, or a being apparently human at least.

We say grandfather, because, if God (as the Christian bible itself frequently asserts, both directly and by implication) is father of the whole human family, then he was father to the maternal parent; so that her son, though deriving existence from him, would be his grandson as well as his son. Hence the corollary, *Jesus Christ was a grandson of God as well as a son of God*, and Jehovah both his father and grandfather.

Again, to make the origin and character of the God and Savior stand higher for purity, and partake in the highest degree of the miraculous, the impression must go abroad that he was born of a woman *while she was yet a maiden*– i. e., before she was contaminated by illicit association with the masculine sex. Hence, nearly all the saviors were reputedly born of virgins. And the process of birth, too, was out of the line of natural causes, in order to invest the character of the savior with the *ne plus ultra* of the miraculous.

And hence it is related of Jesus Christ (in an Apocryphal Gospel), of Krishna of India, and other saviors, that they were born through the mother's side.

It is true our present canonical gospels are silent as to the manner of Christ's birth; but one of the Apocryphal gospels, which gives the matter in fuller detail, and whose authority in the earlier ages of the Christian church was not disputed, declares that the manner of his birth was as related above. And, besides, some of the early Christian fathers fully indorsed the story. The same is related in the pagan bibles of heathen Gods. The motives which originated the reports of the immaculate conception of the Saviors, it may be further remarked, were of a two-fold character: —

1. To establish their spotless origin (as the word immaculate means spotless.)
2. To make it appear that there was a Deific power and agency concerned in their conception.

And we may observe here that it is not the Saviors alone who are reported to have been ushered into tangible existence without a human father, but it is declared of beings known and acknowledged to be men, as Plato, Pythagoras, Alexander, Augustus and a number of others. Of Plato an author remarks, "He was born of Paretonia, and begotten of Apollo, and not Ariston, his father." Both the manner, or process, and the source of the influence by which the Gods and Saviors were generated, seem to have been different in different countries, though the idea of "overshadowing with the Holy Ghost" seems to have been most current. Mr. Higgins says that "the Supreme First Cause was generally believe to overshadow, or in some other mysterious manner to impregnate, the mother of the God, or personage" (vol. i. 378). We are told that Pythais, the mother of Pythagoras, five hundred and fifty years B. C., conceived by a spectre or ghost (of course the Holy Ghost) of the God Apollo, or God Sol.

In Malcolm's "History of Persia" (vol. i. 494) the author tells us that "Zoroaster was born of an immaculate conception by a ray from the Divine Reason." The immaculate conception of Juno of Greece is thus described by the poet: —

"Juno touched the flower;
Its wondrous virtues such,
She touched it, and grew pregnant at the touch;
Then entered Thrace – the Propontic shore;
When mistress of her touch,
God Mars she bore."

This case may certainly be set down as the *ne plus ultra* of etiquette with respect to sexual commerce or purity of conception. The sweet odor of an expanded flower, we are here taught, is adequate to the conception and production of a God. Here we have "the immaculate conception" in the superlative degree, and while much more beautiful and grand it cannot be more senseless or unreasonable than the conception by a ghost. It proves at least that the doctrine of the immaculate conception is of very ancient date. And this fastidious maiden lady and immaculate virgin, Juno, not only conceived the God Mars by the touch of a flower, but she also (so the story reads) conceived Vulcan by being overshadowed by the wind – exactly a parallel case with that of the virgin Mary, as we find that ghost, in the original, means wind. Thus we observe that Vulcan, long before Jesus Christ, was "born of the Holy Ghost," i. e., both were conceived by the "Holy Wind." And the author of the "Perennial Calendar" speaks of the miraculous conception of Juno Jugulis, "the blessed virgin queen of heaven," and describes it as falling on the second of February, the very day which the early Christians celebrated with a festival, as being the date of the conception of the "ever Blessed Virgin Mary."

Of the ancient Mexicans, it is said "they had the immaculate conception, the crucifixion, and the resurrection after three days." (Mex. Antiq., vol. i.) And in an ancient work called "Codex Vaticanus," the immaculate conception is spoken of as a part of the history of Quexalcote, the Mexican Savior. "Suchiquecal," says the Mexican Antiquities, "was called the Queen of Heaven. She conceived a son without connection with a man" – a very obvious case of immaculate conception.

Alvarez Semedo, in his "History of China," page 89, speaks of a sect in that country who worshiped a Savior known as Xaca, who was reputedly conceived of his mother, Maia, by a white elephant, which she saw in her sleep, and "for greater purity, she brought him forth from one of her sides." Colonel Tod, of England, tells us in his "History of the Rajahs," page 57, that Yu, the first Chinese monarch, was conceived by his mother being struck with a star while traveling.

In the case of Christ, it will be recollected, the star did not appear till after his birth. But here the star is the author and agent of the conception.

According to Ranking's "History of the Moguls," page 178, Tamerlane's mother (of Bermuda) professedly conceived by having had sexual intercourse with "the God of Day." The mother of Ghengis Khan, of Tartary, "being too modest to claim that she was the mother of the son of God, said only that he was the *son of the sun*." (History of Mogul, page 65.)

Both Julis and Osiris of Egypt are spoken of by some authors as having been honored with a divine immaculate conception – the former being the son of the beautiful virgin Cronis Celestine, and "begotten by the Father of all Gods."

Both Budha and Chrishna, of India, are reported as having been immaculately conceived. The mother of the latter (God) was (as the Hindoo Holy Book declares) overshadowed by the Supreme God, Brahma, while the spirit-author of the conception (that is, the Holy Ghost) was Naraan. The mother of Apollonius of Cappadocia, who was cotemporary with Jesus Christ (according to his history by Philostratus) – and his (Apollonius') disciple Damis testifies to the same effect gave birth to

this God and rival Savior of Jesus Christ, by having been previously "overshadowed" by the supreme God Proteus. For the corporeal existence and earthly career of Augustus Caesar, the world has ostensibly to acknowledge itself indebted to the "overshadowing" influence and generating power of Jove, by whose divine influence he was immaculately conceived in the temple of Apollo, according to the statement of Nimrod, his biographer. The virgin mother Shing-Mon of China furnishes another case of immaculate conception. Possessing a sensibility too lofty and too refined to descend to the ordinary routine of the world, she gave birth to the God Yu from previous conception by a water lily. This case, with respect to the degree of procreative delicacy and refinement evinced, may be classed with that of Juno of Greece. Here it may be noted as a curious circumstance, that several of the virgin mothers of Gods and great men are specifically represented as going ten months between conception and delivery. The mothers of Hercules, Sakia, Guatama, Scipio, Arion, Solomon and Jesus Christ may be mentioned as samples of this character. This tradition probably grew out of the established belief in the ten sacred cycles which constitute the great prospective and portentous millennial epoch, as described in Chapter XXX. Arion, mentioned above, is represented as being both miraculously and immaculately conceived by the Gods in the citadel of Byrsa.

In view of the foregoing facts, drawn from accredited histories, the reader will readily concede that the tradition of the miraculous conceptions of Gods (sons of God), Saviors and Messiahs was very prevalent in the world at a very ancient period of time, and long before the mother of Jesus was "overshadowed by the Most High." Indeed, says Mr. Higgins, "the belief in the immaculate conception extended to every nation in the world." And Grote, referring to Greece, makes the remarkable declaration, that "the furtive pregnancy of young women, often by a God, is one of the most frequently recurring incidents in the legendary narratives of the country." And we find that both the prevalency and great antiquity of the doctrine of the immaculate conception among the heathen is conceded by Christian writers themselves (of former ages) in their attempts to find arguments and commendatory precedents to justify their own belief in the doctrine. For proof of this, we need only cite the Christian writer Mr. Bailey, who remarks, "What I have said of St. Augustine is applicable also to Origen and Lactanius, who have endeavored to persuade us of the immaculate virginity of the mother of Jesus Christ by the example of similar events stored by the heathen." Here we have several Christian authorities cited by another writer, also a Christian, for placing the doctrine of the immaculate conception among the heathen legends in ages long anterior to Christ.

With respect to the degree of credence to be attached to the story of the immaculate conception of the mother of Jesus, it need only be observed that there was no other person concerned in the transaction but herself who could possess positive, absolute knowledge of the parentage. And she, let it be noted, settles the matter forever, by virtually affirming that Joseph was his father in the declaration addressed to Jesus when she found him in the temple, "*I and thy father* have sought thee sorrowing." (Luke ii. 48.) No one will dispute that the father here spoken of was Joseph, which amounts to a positive declaration by the mother, that Joseph was Jesus' father.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND MIRACULOUS BIRTH OF THE CHRISTIAN SAVIOR.

The following considerations exhibit some of the numerous absurdities involved in the story of the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ.

1. The evangelical narratives show that Christ himself did not claim to have a miraculous birth. He did not once allude to such an event; while if, as Christians claim, it is the principal evidence of his deityship, he certainly would have done so.

2. His paternal genealogy, as made out by Matthew and Luke, completely disproves the story of his miraculous conception by a virgin. For they both trace his lineage through Joseph, which they could not do only on the assumption that Joseph was his father. This, of course, disproves his sireship by the Holy Ghost, ergo, the miraculous conception. It is the lineage and parentage of Joseph, and

not Mary, that is given in tracing back his ancestry to the royal household – a fact which completely overthrows the story of his miraculous birth.

3. And the fact that his *own disciple* (Philip) declared him to be the *son of Joseph*, and that several texts show that it was the current impression, is still further confirmation of the conclusion.

4. We find the story of the immaculate conception resting entirely upon the slender foundation comprised in the legends of an angel and a dream. We are told that Mary got it by an angel, and Joseph by a dream. And through these sources we have the whole groundwork and foundation of the story of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

5. It should be noticed that we have neither Joseph's nor Mary's report of these things, but only Matthew and Luke's version of the affair. And we are not informed that either of them ever saw or conversed with Joseph or Mary on the subject. It is probable they got it from Dame Rumor, with her thousand tongues.

6. If Christ were a miraculously born God, is it possible his mother would have reproved him for misconduct when she found him in the temple, as she must have known his character?

7. If Mary was miraculously conceived, why was the important secret kept so long from Joseph? Why did she keep the "wool drawn over his eyes" till an angel had to be sent from heaven to let him into the secret?

8. If she were a virtuously-minded woman, why did she thus attempt to deceive him?

9. Why did not God inform Joseph by "inspiration" instead of employing the roundabout way of sending an angel to do it?

10. We are told that "Mary was found with child of the Holy Ghost." But as we are not informed who found it out, or who made the discovery, or how it was made, is it not thus left in a very suspicious aspect?

11. As the whole affair seems to have been based on dreams, and was carried on through dreams, and has no better foundation than dreams, why should we consider it entitled to any better credit than similar stories found in works on heathen mythology?

12. And would it not prove that Christianity is rather a dreamy religion?

13. Should not the astounding and incredible report of the birth of a God be based on a better foundation than that of dreams and angels and the legends of oriental mythology, to entitle it to the belief of an intelligent and scientific age?

14. Or can any man of science entertain for a moment the superlative solecism of an Infinite God by any special act "overshadowing" a finite human female, especially as modern science teaches us that God is both male and female, and as much one as the other?

15. As history teaches us the ancient orientalists believed that sexual commerce is sinful and contaminating to the child thus begotten and born, and hence had their incarnate Gods sent into the world through human virgins, can any unbiased mind resist the conviction that this is the source of the origin of the story of Christ's immaculate conception?

16. And finally, if it were necessary for Christ to come into the world in such a way as to avoid the impure channel of human conception and parturition, why did he not descend directly from heaven in person? Why could he not "descend on the clouds" by his first advent, as the bible says he will do when he makes his second advent?

17. Would not this course have furnished a hundred fold more convincing proof and demonstration of his divine power and divine attributes than the ridiculous story and inscrutable mystery of the divine conception, which is not susceptible of either investigation or proof?

CHAPTER V. VIRGIN MOTHERS AND VIRGIN-BORN GODS

THE report in authentic history of a case of a virtuous woman giving birth to a child with the usual form, and possessing the usual characteristics of a human being, and who should testify she had no male partner in the conception, might in an age of miracles and ignorance of natural law, be believed with implicit credulity. But in an age of intelligence, when the keys of science have unlocked the sacred shrines and hallowed vaults of sacerdotal mysteries, and modern researches of history have laid bare the fact that most ancient religious countries abound in reports of this character, a profound and general skepticism must be the result, and a total rejection of their truth by all men of science and historic intelligence.

Many are the cases noted in history of young maidens claiming a paternity for their male offspring by a God.

In Greece it became so common that the reigning king issued an edict, decreeing the death of all young women who should offer such an insult to deity as to lay to him the charge of begetting their children. The virgin Alcmene furnishes a case of a young woman claiming God as the father of her offspring, when she brought forth the divine Redeemer Alcides, 1280 years B. C. And Ceres, the virgin mother of Osiris, claimed that he was begotten by the "father of all Gods." Mr. Kenrick tells us the likeness of this virgin mother, with the divine child in her arms, may now be seen represented in sculpture on some of the ancient, ruined temples of that ruined empire. And Mr. Higgins makes the broad declaration that "the worship of this virgin mother, with her God-begotten child, prevailed everywhere." This author also quotes Mr. Riquord as saying, this son of God "was exhibited in effigy, lying in a manger, in the same manner the infant Jesus was afterward laid in the cave at Bethlehem." Mr. Higgins further testifies that the worship of this virgin God-mother (that is, the God and the mother) is of very ancient date and universal prevalence in all the eastern countries, as is proved by sculptured figures bearing the marks of great age.

In corroboration of this statement we might cite many cases, if our space would permit, from the religious records of India, Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome, Mexico, Thibet, etc. Maia, mother of Sakia and Yasoda of Chrishna; Celestine, mother of the crucified Zulis; Chimalman, mother of Quex-alcote; Semele, mother of the Egyptian Bacchus, and Minerva, mother of the Grecian Bacchus; Prudence, mother of Hercules; Alcmene, mother of Alcides; Shing-Mon, mother-of Yu, and Mayence, mother of Hesus, were all as confidently believed to be pure, holy and chaste virgins, while giving birth to these Gods, sons of God, Saviors and sin-atoning Mediators, as was Mary, mother of Jesus, and long before her time.

Mr. Higgins remarks that the mother was still held to be a virgin, even after she had given birth to other children besides the deity-begotten bantling, which furnishes another striking parallel to the history of Mary, as she was still called a virgin after she had given birth to Jesus and his brothers James and John. And it is an incident worth noticing here, that, in the case of Mayence, virgin-mother of the God-sired Hesus of the Druids, the ancient traditions of the country, more than two thousand years old, represent her body as being enveloped in light, and a crown of twelve stars upon her head, corresponding exactly to the apocalyptic figure described by the mystagogue, St. John, in the twelfth chapter of his Revelation. She is also represented with her foot on the head of a serpent, according to Davie's "Universal Etymology." (Vide the case of the seed of the woman bruising the serpent's head, Gen. iii. 15.)

Auguste Nichols tells us, in his "Philosophical Essays on Christianity," that Io is called, in Eschylus, "the Chaste Virgin," and her son "the Son of God." (For other similar cases, see Guigne's History of the Huns.) Gonzales informs us he found on an ancient temple in India the Latin inscription

Patiuro virginis, "the virgin about to bring forth." And similar inscriptions have been found on pagan temples in the country of the ancient Gauls. (For proof, see Riquord's Theology of the Ancient Gauls, Chapter X.) "He who hath ears to hear, let him hear," and treasure up these facts. According to Chinese history there were two beings – Tien and Chang-Ti – worshiped in that country as Gods more than twenty-five hundred years ago, born of virgins "who knew no man." The mother of the mighty and the almighty God Hercules, we are told, "knew only Jove."

If history and tradition, then, are to be credited, God had many "well beloved sons," born of pious and holy virgins, besides Jesus Christ. And some of them are represented as being his "only begotten," and others his "first begotten," sons. And all these cases appear to be equally as well authenticated as the story of Jesus Christ. All stand upon a level, the same kind and the same amount of evidence being offered in each case.

Here we will note it as a curious circumstance, that several of the above-named Saviors are represented as being black, Jesus Christ included with this number.

There is as much evidence that the Christian Savior was a black man, or at least a dark man, as there is of his being the son of the Virgin Mary, or that he once lived and moved upon the earth. And that evidence is the testimony of his disciples, who had nearly as good an opportunity of knowing what his complexion was as the evangelists, who omit to say anything about it. In the pictures and portraits of Christ by the early Christians, he is uniformly represented as being black. And to make this the more certain, the red tinge is given to the lips; and the only text in the Christian bible quoted by orthodox Christians, as describing his complexion, represents it as being black. Solomon's declaration, "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem" (Sol. i. 5), is often cited as referring to Christ. According to the bible itself, then, Jesus Christ was a black man.

Let us suppose that, at some future time, he makes his second advent to the earth, as some Christians anticipate he will do, and that he comes in the character of a sable Messiah, how would he be received by our negro-hating Christians, of sensitive olfactory nerves? Would they worship a negro God? Let us imagine he enters one of our fashionable churches, with his "rough and ready" linsey-woolsey, seamless garment on, made of wild sea-grass, thus presenting a very forbidding appearance, and what would be the result? Would the sexton show him to a seat? Would he not rather point to the door, and exclaim, "Get out of here; no place here for niggers?" What a ludicrous series of ideas is thus suggested by the thought that Jesus Christ was a "darkey."

And the tradition of divine Saviors being born of undefiled and undeflowered virgins has an astronomical chapter we must not omit to notice. The virgin, with her God-begotten child, was pictured imaginarily in the heavens from time immemorial. They are represented on the Hindoo zodiac, at least three thousand years old, and on the ancient Egyptian planispheres. And if you will examine "Burritt's Geography of the Heavens," you will find the infant God-son (the sun) is represented as being born into a new year on the 25th of December (the very date assigned for Christ's birth), and may be seen rising over the eastern horizon, out of Mary, Maria, or Mare (the Latin for *sea*), with the infant God in her arms, being heralded and preceded by a bright star, which rises immediately preceding the virgin and her child, thus suggesting the text, "We have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him." (Matt. ii.8.) Such facts led the learned Alphonso to exclaim, "The adventures of Jesus Christ are all depicted among the stars."

And such facts fasten the conviction on our mind that the stories of Gods cohabiting with young maids or virgins, and begetting other Gods, is of astrological origin – the story of Jesus Christ included. A critical research shows that astronomy and religion were interblended, interwoven, and confounded together at a very early period of time, so indissolubly, that it now becomes impossible to separate them.

CHAPTER VI. STARS POINT OUT THE TIME AND THE SAVIORS' BIRTH-PLACE

PROFUSION of evidence is furnished at every step along the devious pathway of sacred history, tending to show that all the systems of worship which have existed in the past have had a dip in "the halo of the heavenly orbs," and hence shine with a light derived from that source.

We find the stars acting directly a conspicuous part at the births of several of the Saviors, besides figuring in some cases by marking important events in their subsequent history.

Mr. Higgins remarks that "Among the ancients there seems to have been a very general idea that the arrival of Gods and great personages who were expected to come, would be announced by a star." And the cases of Abraham, Caesar, Pythagoras, Yu, Chrishna, and Christ, may be cited in proof of this declaration. A star figured either before or at the birth of each, according to their respective histories.

And it is a historical fact that should be noted here that the practice of calculating nativities by the stars was in vogue in the era and country of Christ's birth, and had been for a long period previously in various countries. "We have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him." (Matt. ii. i.) Now mark, here, it was not *the star*, nor *a star*, but "*his star*;" thus disclosing its unmistakable astrological features. Mr. Faber (in his "Origin of Idolatry," vol. ii. p. 77) reports Zoroaster (600 B. C.) as prophetically announcing to "the wise men" of that country that a Savior would be born, "attended by a star at noonday." For a fuller exposition of this case see Chapter II.

In the history of the Hindoo Savior Chrishna, we are told that "as soon as Nared, who, having heard of his fame, had examined the stars, he declared him to be from God;" i. e., the Son of God' The Roman Calcidius speaks of "a wonderful star, presaging the descent of a God amongst men." (See Maurice's "Indian Skeptics Refuted," p. 62.) Quite suggestive of the star "apprising the wise men" of Christ's descent from above. And a star is said to have foretokened the birth of the Roman Julius Cæsar. The Chinese God Yu was not only heralded by a star, but conceived and brought to mortal birth by a star.

In Numbers xxiv. 17, it is declared "There shall come a star out of Jacob," etc. This is a text often quoted by Christian writers as having a prophetic reference to the Christian Messiah. But the same text declares further, "It shall destroy the children of Seth," a prediction which no rational interpretation can make apply to Jesus Christ. And then we find this star of Jacob or Judah (the same) represented on astronomical maps as a prominent star in the constellation Virgo (the Virgin), fancifully termed by the Hebrew Ephraim.

It was known in the Syrian, Arabian and Persian systems of astronomy as Messaeil (suggestive of Messiah), and was considered the ruling genius of the constellation.

The "star of Jacob," then, was simply a figure borrowed from the ancient pagan systems of astronomy, in which they fancifully represent a virgin rising with an infant Messiah (Messaeil) in her arms. Messaeil is, when analyzed, Messaeh-el (Messiah-God), and is found in the constellation Virgo, which commences rising at midnight, on the 25th of December, with this "star in the east" in her arms – the star which piloted "the wise men." The whole thing, then, is evidently an astronomical legend.

Albert the Great, in his "Book on the Universe," tells us, "The sign of the celestial virgin rises above the horizon, at the moment we find fixed for the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ." To which we will add the declaration of Sir William Drummond, who, in his "Odipus Judaicus," p. 27, most significantly remarks, "The anointed of *El* the male infant, who rises in the arms of Virgo, was called Jesus by the Hebrews... and was hailed as the anointed king or Messiah" – still further proof of the astrological origin of the story.

Dr. Hales, in his "Chronology," calls Christ "the star of our salvation, the true Apollo, the sun of righteousness" – all of which are astronomical terms.

And here we may recur to the fact that some of the early inhabitants of the earth regarded a star as a thing of life, because it appeared to move, and acted as though controlled by a living spirit. And this fetchic idea we observe lurking amongst the borrowed orientalisms of the Jewish Old Testament. The representation of the morning stars joining in a chorus and singing together (see Job xxxviii. 9), is an instance of this kind of fetchic conception.

And then we find a much stronger and more conclusive case in the New Testament, where Matthew represents a star as breaking loose from its orbit, and traveling some millions of miles, in order to stand over the young child Jesus, as he lay amongst the oxen and asses in a stable. (See Matt. ii. 7.) Wonderfully accommodating star indeed! How did its inhabitants feel while thus traveling with the velocity of lightning? This achievement would not only require life, but an active intelligence, on the part of the star, as it is represented as being an act of the planet itself.

"All nations," says Mr. Higgins, "once believed that the planetary bodies or their inhabitants controlled the affairs of men, and even their births." Hence the cant phrases, "My stars," "He is ill-starred," etc., in use then, and still in use at the present day. The good or ill luck of a person was attributed to the good or evil stars which it was believed ruled at the hour of his birth.

We find a counterpart to the story of Matthew's traveling star in Virgil's writings, who declares (60 B. C.) that a star guided Æneas in a journey westward from Troy. In the days of Pliny (see his "Natural History," Book II.), the people of Rome fancied they saw a God in a star or comet in the form of a man. The Apocryphal book of Seth relates that a star descended from heaven and lighted on a mountain, in the midst of which a divine child was seen bearing a cross. Christ betrays the same ignorance of astronomy, when he speaks of "the stars falling from heaven to the earth." (See Matt. xxiv. 29.) For if there could be any falling in the case, the falling would be in the other direction, and the earth would fall to the stars, as larger bodies always attract smaller ones.

As shown above, the stupendous orbs of night were represented by Jew, Pagan and Christian as breaking away from their orbits, and running hither and thither, like a fly on a ceiling, or a ball from a sky-rocket, being regarded as mere jack-a-lanterns, that could appear anywhere at any time creative fancy might dictate or require; while science teaches that the stars are stupendous orbs, some of them a thousand times larger than the planet on which we live, and that they could not depart one rod from their accustomed orbits without breaking up the whole planetary system, and destroying the universe.

And then observe the absurdity in Matthew's story, which teaches that the wise men followed the star in the east, when they, coming from the east, were, as a matter of course, traveling westward, which would place the star to their backs. That must be a *sui generis* pilot or guide which follows after, instead of going before. Omitting further citations from history, we will only observe further that the ancient Hindoos, Egyptians, Chaldeans, Syrians, Mexicans, etc., took great account of stars, and employed them on all important occasions, especially on long journeys and at the births of Gods and great personages – a circumstance which aids in explaining the star chapter in the gospel history of Christ.

CHAPTER VII. ANGELS, SHEPHERDS AND MAGI VISIT THE INFANT SAVIORS

IN an age when Gods and men were on the most familiar terms, and when the character of one furnished a transcript for the other, and when each consented to act a reciprocal part towards elevating, honoring and glorifying the other, the birth of a God or Messiah was, as a matter of course, regarded as an event of sufficient importance to attract the attention of the great ones of the earth, and even the denizens of heaven also.

And hence we find it related in the history of several of the God-begotten Saviors of antiquity, that as soon as they were born into the world they were visited by "wise men from a distance" (or Magi, as they were called by the Persians and Brahmins). And in some cases they were likewise waited upon and adored by the neighboring shepherds; and even celestial spirits are reported in some instances as leaving their star-gilt homes to wing their way to the humble mansion, the rude tenement, containing a new-born God, that they might honor and adore "the Savior of men, the Savior of the world."

The sacred biographies of both Confucius and Christ furnish examples of the angel host forsaking their golden pavilions in the skies to pay their devoirs to a Deity-begotten bantling, sent down by the "Father of Mercies," to save a guilt-laden world. And in both cases the Magi are reported as assembling to present their offerings to the infant God.

In the case of Confucius (born 598 B. C.), it is declared, "Five wise men from a distance came to the house, celestial music was heard in the skies, and angels attended the scene." (See the Five Volumes.) Now let us observe how strikingly similar to this ancient legend, in each of the several characteristics, is the Christian story. Matthew (ii. 1) speaks of "wise men from the east" journeying to Jerusalem to visit the infant Christ, soon after his birth, amongst the mules and oxen in a stable, though he omits to state the number of itinerant adorers who presented themselves on the occasion.

The Persian story is more specific, as it gives the number of Magi who visited the young Savior of that country as five.

Luke (ii. 13) speaks of "a multitude of the heavenly host praising God," in gratulation of the birth of the Judean Savior. Now, when we bear in mind that one method of praising God, with the orientals, was by music, as we will at once observe that this is only another mode of proclaiming, as in the case of Confucius, that "celestial music was heard in the skies."

And "angels attended the scene" of Confucius' birth. So, likewise, Luke (ii. 15) relates that the angels, after rejoicing with the shepherds on the occasion of the birth of Christ, "went away into heaven."

How complete the parallel! and, but for the digression, and monopoly of space, we might trace it much further, and show that Confucius, like Christ, had twelve chosen disciples; that he was descended from a royal house of princes, as Christ from the royal house of David; that he, in like manner, retired for a long period from the noise and bustle of society into religious contemplative seclusion; that he inculcated the same Golden Rule of doing to others as we desire them to act toward us, and other moral maxims equal in importance to anything that can be found in the Christian Scriptures, etc.

But to the line of history. Other Saviors at birth, we are told, were visited by both angels and shepherds, also "wise men," at least great men. Chrishna, the eighth avatar of India (1200 B. C.) (so it is related by the "inspired penman" of their pagan theocracy) was visited by angels, shepherds and prophets (avatars). "Immediately after his birth he was visited by a chorus of devatas (angels), and surrounded by shepherds, all of whom were impressed with the conviction of his future greatness." We are informed further that "gold, frankincense and myrrh" were presented to him as offerings.

The well-known modern traveler, Mr. Ditson, who visited India but a few years since, uses the emphatic declaration, "In fact, as soon as Chrishna was born he was saluted by a chorus of devatas, or angels." In the evangelical narrative of the Christian Savior an angel is reported to have saluted his mother thus: "Hail, thou that art highly favored; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women." (Luke, i. 28.) And in the next chapter the angel is reported as joining with "the heavenly host" in praising God. A similar report is found in the Hindoo bible (the Ramayana), appertaining to the mother of the eighth Savior, of whom it is declared "Brahma and Siva, with a host of attending spirits, came to her and sang, 'In thy delivery, O favored among women, all nations shall have cause to exult.'" And when the celestial infant (Chrishna) appeared (it is related in a subsequent chapter), "a chorus of heavenly spirits saluted him with hymns; the whole room was illuminated by his light, and the countenance of his father and mother shone with brightness and glory (by reflection), their understandings were opened so that they knew him to be the Preserver of the world, and they began to worship him." The last text here quoted brings to mind Luke xxiv. 45, which declares, "Then he (Christ) opened their (his parents) understandings."

The ninth avatar of India (Sakia) furnishes to some extent a similar parallel. According to the account of an exploration made in India, and published in the New York Correspondent of 1828, "There is on a silver plate in a cave in India an inscription stating that about the time of the advent of Budha Sakia (600 B. C.), a saint in the woods learned by inspiration that another avatar (Messiah or Savior) had appeared in the house of Rajah of Lailas. Learning which, he flew through the air to the place, and when he beheld the new-born Savior he declared him to be the great avatar (Savior or prophet), and that he was destined to establish a new religion" – the New Covenant Religion.

We next draw on the history of Greece. It is authentically related of Pythagoras (600 B.), that his fame having reached Miletas and neighboring cities, men renowned for wisdom (wise men) came to visit him. (Progress of Religious Ideas, vol. i.) In the Anacalypsis we are told that "Magi came from the East to offer gifts at Socrates' birth, bringing gold, frankincense and myrrh," the same kind of offering as that presented to the two divine infants Chrishna and Christ, according to their respective "inspired" biographers. (See Matt. ii. 4, and the Ramayana).

And the legend of Mithra, of Persia, might also be included in our category of comparison, if we had space for it. All the four Saviors last named (if Socrates may be called such) are reported as having been honored and enriched with aromatic offerings at their respective births. And we have the statement from Mr. Higgins, that the same assortment of spices (with the gold) constituted the materials offered as gifts to the sun, in Persia more than three thousand years ago; and likewise in Arabia near the same era. And it may be stated here, that an ancient historic account of Zoroaster of Persia (6,000 B. C., according to Pliny and Aristotle), speaks of his having also been visited by Magi, or "Magia," at the period of his earthly advent.

And it is, perhaps, well to note in this place, that "Magi" is the term used in the Apocryphal Gospels, to designate the "wise men" who visited Christ at birth; and that Magi, Magic and Magician are but variations of the same word, at least derivations from the same root, all suggesting a wisdom correlated to the Gods. Osiris, an incarnate deity of Egypt, we may cite as another case of an infantile God receiving signal honors and eclat at birth, as he was visited while yet in the cradle by a host of admiring adorers. "People flocked from all parts of the world to behold the heaven-born infant." Such a world-wide fame must have had the effect to attract, with the numerous crowd who thronged to see and worship him, no small number of "wise men."

At this stage of our historical exposition, we will suggest it as rather a singular circumstance that the divine Father, in his infinite wisdom, should have chosen to reveal the intelligence of the birth of his son Jesus Christ to a set of nomadic heathen idolaters hundreds of miles distant (though known as "wise men" because of their skill in astrology) before he made it known to his own "chosen people" (the Jews), who had ever regarded themselves as the recipients of his special favors. And perhaps it is still more singular that these pagan pedestrians should have been denominated "wise

men," while men of God's own election, according to the Christian bible, were often stigmatized and denounced as "fools," a "generation of vipers," etc. But it so happens that "human reason" finds many Incongruities in "Divine Revelations."

CHAPTER VIII. THE TWENTY-FIFTH OF DECEMBER THE BIRTHDAY OF THE GODS

DIVESTED of all explanation, the announcement of the fact that the time of the birth of many of the incarnated Gods and Saviors of antiquity was fixed at the same period, and this period the twenty-fifth of December, celebrated all over Christendom as the birthday of Jesus Christ, would sound marvelously strange, especially when it is noticed that this period formerly dated the birth of a new year – the birth of King Sol. And when we find that the ancient pagans were in the habit of celebrating this venerated twenty-fifth of December as the birthday of their Gods in the same manner Christians now celebrate it as the birthday of Christ, we are driven to admit that something more than mere fortuitous accident must be adduced to account for the coincidence.

According to Dr. Lightfoot, the temple of Jerusalem was employed in celebrating the birthday of a pagan God (Adonis) on the very night Christians assign for the birth of Christ. And Robert Taylor informs us that nearly all the nations of the East were once in the habit of rising at midnight to celebrate the birthday of their Gods, on the twenty-fifth of December. And to this statement Mr. Higgins adds that, "At the first moment after midnight of the twenty-fourth of December, the ancient nations celebrated the accouchement of the queen of heaven and celestial virgin, and the birth of the God Sol, the Infant Savior, and the God of Day."

Bacchus of Egypt, Bacchus of Greece, Adonis of Greece, Chishna of India, Chang-ti of China, Chris of Chaldea, Mithra of Persia, Sakia of India, Jao Wapaul (a crucified Savior of ancient Britain), were all born on the twenty-fifth of December, according to their respective histories. Chishna is represented to have been born at midnight on the twenty-fifth of the month Savarana, which answers to our December, and millions of his disciples celebrated his birthday by decorating their houses with garlands and gilt paper, and the bestowment of presents to friends. The Rev. Mr. Barret tells us, "It was once common for the women in Rome to perambulate the streets on the twenty-fifth of December, singing in a loud voice, 'Unto us a child is born this day.'"

The twenty-fifth of December, then, it will be observed, was marked as the birthday of the incarnated Gods, Saviors, and Sons of God, of many of the religious systems of antiquity, long prior to the birth of Christ. And why his birth was fixed at that date is not hard to account for. According to the celebrated Christian writer Mr. Goodrich, the Christian world had no chronology and recorded no dates for several centuries after the commencement of the Christian era. (See *History of all Nations*, p. 23.) No event of their history was marked by dates for nearly four hundred years. Hence, the time of Christ's birth is altogether a matter of conjecture, as is also every other event noticed in the Christian bible. This is proved by the fact that the ablest Christian writers and chronologists differ to the extent of thirty-five hundred years in fixing the time of every event in the bible. A Mr. Kennedy presents us with three hundred different chronological systems, by different Christian writers, all founded on the bible, and proving that the date of its various events are inextricably involved in a labyrinth of doubt, darkness and uncertainty.

Relative to the time of Christ's birth, the "Encyclopedia Britannica" says: "Christians count one hundred and thirty-three contrary opinions of different authors concerning the year the Messiah appeared on earth – many of them celebrated writers." (Art. Chron.) Mark the declaration – one hundred and thirty-three different opinions as to the year Christ was born in; one hundred and thirty-three different years fixed on by different Christian chronologists as the time of the birth of the most extraordinary and most noted being, as Christians would have us believe, that ever appeared on earth. Think of an omnipotent God descending from heaven, performing astounding miracles, and presenting other proofs of being a God, and yet not one of the three hundred writers of that era take

any notice of him, or make any note of his birth or any event of his life. This circumstance is of itself sufficient to banish and dissipate all faith in his divinity.

It is evident, from the facts just presented, that all systems of Christian chronology are founded on mere conjecture, and hence should be rejected as worthless. What event of Christ's life, then, can be accepted as certain, when no record was made of it till the time was forgotten, and none for at least half a century after the dawn of the Christian era, according to Dr. Lardner, when nearly all who witnessed it must have been dead?

We think the most reasonable conclusion in the case is, that Christ, instead of performing those Munchausen prodigies attributed to him – such as casting out devils, raising the dead, controlling the elements of nature, etc. – led such an ordinary, obscure life – excelling only in healing the sick and other noble deeds of charity and philanthropy – that he attracted but little notice by the higher classes, or by anybody but those of a similar turn of mind, till he was deified by Constantine, in the year 325 A. D. Hence, the time of his birth was not recorded, and was forgotten. Consequently, the twenty-fifth of December was selected as his birthday, because it was the birthday of other Gods, and because it was regarded by the heathen, from time immemorial, as the birthday of Sol, the glorious luminary of heaven, it being the period he is born again into a new year, and "commences again his journey and his life;" and because, also, this epoch was, as Sharon Turner informs us, in his "History of the Anglo-Saxons," the commencement of a new year up to the tenth century.

These events signalized the twenty-fifth of December, and made it a period of sufficient importance to lead the early Christians to suppose it must have been the birthday of their Messiah. Mosheim, however, confesses that the day or the year in which it happened "has not been fixed with certainty, notwithstanding the profound researches of the learned." So that it is still an open question as to when Christ was born. What day of the month, what year, or what century it took place in, is still unknown. This circumstance is, as before suggested, sufficient of itself to utterly prostrate all faith in the divine claims for Jesus Christ. What would be thought of a witness who should testify in court to the truth of an occurrence of which he did not know the year, or even the century, in which it took place, or who could come no nearer than one hundred and thirty-three years in fixing or guessing at the time. Would the court accept such testimony?

CHAPTER IX. TITLES OF THE SAVIORS

THE various deific titles applied to Jesus Christ in the New Testament are regarded by some Christian writers as presumptive evidence of his divinity. But the argument proves too much for the case; as we find the proof in history that many other beings, whom Christians regard as men, were honored and addressed by the same titles, such as God, Lord, Savior, Redeemer, Mediator, Messiah, etc.

The Hindoo Chrishna, more than two thousand years ago, was prayerfully worshiped as "God the Most High." His disciple Amarca once addressed him thus: "Thou art the Lord of all things, the God of the universe, the emblem of mercy, the bestower of salvation. Be propitious O most High God," etc. Here he is addressed both as Lord and God. He is also styled "God of Gods."

Adonis of Greece was addressed as "God Supreme," and Osiris of Egypt as "the Lord of Life." In Phrygia, it was "Lord Atys," as Christians say, "Lord Jesus Christ" Narayan of Bermuda was styled the "Holy Living God." The title "Son of God" was so common in nearly all religious countries as to excite but little awe or attention.

St. Basil says, "Every uncommonly good man was called 'the Son of God.'" The "Asiatic Researches" says, "the Tamulose adored a divine Son of God," and Thor of the Scandinavians was denominated "the first-born Son of God" and so was Chrishna of India, and other demigods.

It requires, therefore, a wide stretch of faith to believe that Jesus Christ was in any peculiar sense "the Son of God," because so denominated, or "the only begotten Son of God," when so many others are reported in history bearing that title.

The title Savior is found in the legends of every religious country. So also God, Redeemer, and Mediator. "When a Mogul or Thibetan is asked who is Chrishna," says the Christian missionary Hue, "the reply is, instantly, 'the Savior of men.'" Budha was known as "the Savior, Creator and Wisdom of God," and Mithra as both Mediator and Savior, also as "the Redeemer," and Chrishna as "the Divine Redeemer," also "the Redeemer of the World." The terms Mediator and Intercessor were also frequently applied to him by his disciples. And both he and Quexalcote were hailed as "the Messiah." In short, most ancient religious nations were honored with or expected a Messiah.

Was Jesus Christ the "Lamb of God?" (John i. 9.) So was Chrishna styled "the Holy Lamb." The Mexicans, preferring a full-grown sheep, had their "Ram of God." The Celts had their "Heifer of God," and the Egyptians their "Bull of God." All these terms are ludicrous emblems of Deity, representing him as a quadruped, as the title "Lamb of God" does Jesus Christ, a term no less ludicrous than the titles of the pagan Gods as cited above.

And was Christ "the True Light?" (John i. 9.) So was Chrishna likewise called "the True Light," also "the Giver of Light," "the Inward Light," etc. Osiris was "the Redeemer of Light," and Pythagoras was both "Light and Truth." Apollonius was styled the "True Light of the World;" while Simon Magus was called "the Light of all Men."

Several nations had also their Christs, though in many cases the word is differently spelled. Chrest, the Greek mode of spelling Christ, may be found on several of the ancient tombstones of that country. The Christian writer Elsley, in his "Annotations of the Gospels" (vol. i. p. 25), spells the word Christ in this manner, Chrest The people of Loretto had a black Savior, called Chrest, or Christ. Lucian, in his "Philopatris," admits the ancient Gentiles had the name of Christ, which shows it was a heathen title. The Chaldeans had their Chris, the Hindoos their Chrishna, the Greeks their Chrest, and the Christians their Christ, all, doubtless, derived from the same original root.

As for Jesus, it was a common name among the Jews long before the advent of Christ. Josephus refers to seven or eight persons by that name, as "Jesus, brother of Onias," "Jesus, son of Phabet," etc. Joshua in the Greek form, Jesus, was in still more common use.

Again, was Jesus Christ "the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End?" so, likewise, Chrishna proclaimed, "I am the Beginning, the Middle, and the End." Osiris and Chrishna were both proclaimed "Judge of the Dead," as Jesus was "Judge of quick and dead." Isaiah represents the Father as proclaiming, "I am Jehovah; besides me there is no Savior." (Isa. xliii. 11.) With what consistency, then, can Christ be called "*the Savior*," if there is but *one Savior*, and that is the Father?

And other divine titles besides those above named – in fact, all those applied to Christ – are found used also in reference to the older pagan gods, and hence prove nothing.

ORIGIN OF THE TERMS MEDIATOR, INTERCESSOR, ETC.

Several causes contributed to originate a belief in the offices imaginarily assigned to divine God-descended Mediators, Redeemers, and Intercessors.

1. In the first place, the Great Supreme God was believed to be too far off and too aristocratic to be on familiar terms with his subjects, or at all times accessible to their prayers. Hence, was gotten up a "Mediator," or middle God, to stand midway between the Great Supreme and the people, and transmit messages one from the other, and thus serve as agent for both parties. Confirmatory of this statement is the declaration of Mamoides, in his "Guide to the Erring," that "the ancient Sabeans conceived the principal God, on account of his great distance, to be inaccessible; and hence, in imitation of the people in their conduct toward their king, who had to address him through a person appointed for the purpose, they imaginarily employed a middle divinity, who was called a Mediator, to present their claims to the Supreme God." Here the whole secret is out, the whole thing is explained, and we now understand why Christ is called a Mediator, Intercessor, "Advocate with the Father," etc.

2. Again, the Supreme God was supposed to be frequently angry with the people, and threatening to punish if not to destroy them. "I will punish the multitude." (Jer. xlv. 25.) "I will destroy the people." (Ex. xxiii. 27). Hence, this middle divinity, this second person of the trinity, stepped in to plead and intercede on their behalf, being, as we must presume, a better-natured and more merciful being than the Father. And thus interceding, he received the titles of Intercessor and "Advocate with the Father." (1 John, ii. 1.)

3. The principal circumstance, however, which led to the conception of a divine Savior was the desire to find some way to continue in sin and wrong-doing and escape its natural and legitimate consequences; in other words, to evade the penalty. Hence, it came to be believed that people might run riot in sin, and plunge into the indulgence of their passions and their lusts, till the hour of death approached, when they would have nothing to do but to ask forgiveness, and cast the burden of their sins and sufferings on the merits of "a crucified Savior and Redeemer," who "suffered once for all, that we might escape," and thus dodge the penalty for sin. It was, as Mr. Fleurbach expresses it, "A realized wish to be free from the laws of morality, and escape the natural consequences of wrong doing."

CHAPTER X. THE SAVIORS OF ROYAL DESCENT, BUT HUMBLE BIRTH

WE have the singular coincidence presented in the histories of several of the Saviors of their lineal descent through a line of kings or princes, and yet commencing their probationary life under the most humble and adverse circumstances – being born in stables, caves, and other inauspicious situations.

The story of their royal blood was calculated to add dignity to their characters, while their humble birth in the midst of poverty, and unmarked by ostentation, would evince their humility, meekness, condescension, and absence of pride, and thus proclaim a lesson of humility and resignation to their disciples and followers.

Here, seems to be plainly indicated the motives for assigning them to such a birth, and such a character.

Christ's lineal descent, it will be remembered, is professedly traced (though in a very zig-zag, disjointed manner) from the royal house of David. And yet his royal blood did not save him from the most ignoble and ignominious birth, and obscure exordium of his earth life.

A singular story, and yet a similar story, is told of the Indian Savior Chrishna, who was, according to the Rev. Mr. Allen (India, p. 379) of the royal house of Koussa, traced back through many generations. Yet, in order to teach the world a lesson of true humility, and administer a just reprehension to pride, he submitted to be born in a cave, amid the denizens of subterranean abodes. And here let it be noted, the best and most orthodox writers concede that while Christ is said to have born in a manger, that manger was in a cave. Mr. Fleetwood (a very popular Christian writer) testifies in this matter that "the Greek fathers generally agree that the place of Christ's birth was a cave." (Life of Christ, p. 568.) Then the coincidence in this respect between Christ and Chrishna may be set down as complete.

We have no means of learning how many of the Saviors were of royal blood, as the genealogy of some of them is not given. But those whose lineal descent is furnished us are almost uniformly traced to or evinced as springing from royal parentage, and practical humility – so far as it can be taught by an unostentatious birth – is a lesson taught by nearly all. Budha Sakia of Hindostan is directly traced through a royal pedigree.

Speaking on this point, one writer remarks: "Tradition affirms that his mother was betrothed to a rajah, and of course her son belonged to the same royal caste that Chrishna did during his existence on earth." (Prog. Rel. Ideas, vol, i. 84.)

"The Great Prophet" of Arabia (Mahomet) not only commenced his earthly career in a humble situation, but resembled Christ in having "nowhere to lay his head." It is said of the Great Prophet, "A cloak spread on the ground served him for a bed, and a skin filled with date leaves was his pillow." The genealogy of the God Yu (of China) is traced through a line of princes to a very remote origin, while his whole life was a lesson of practical humility, and proclaimed at every step, "This is the way; walk ye in it."

CHAPTER XI. CHRIST'S GENEALOGY

IN order to exalt the dignity and character of the Christian Messiah still higher than a mere claim for a divine origin paternally would have the effect to do, two of his assumed to be inspired biographers have set up for him a claim to a royal lineage through the maternal line.

Hence, they tell us that he descended from and through a line of kings embracing the house of David. But in presenting the names, and the number of generations, in their attempts to make out this royal distinction, this kingly exaltation of birth, they exhibit a most egregious bungle, and the most barefaced tissue of discrepancies. For they not only differ widely with each other in this matter, but differ with the Old Testament genealogy, and differ with those texts which give the maternal ancestry of Jesus.

Indeed, though varying as wide as the poles from each other, they both miss Jesus and arrive at Joseph in tracing down the generations from Abraham (unless we assume they intended to represent Joseph as being his father).

Luke, in his gospel, names and counts off forty-one generations from David to Joseph, though he had previously represented it as being forty-two; but Matthew says that "from Abraham to David are fourteen generations," but according to his own showing, and according to his own list of names, there are but thirteen. And then he tells us there are but fourteen generations from David to the carrying away into Babylon. BUt according to the Old Testament genealogy (see i Chron. iii.) there were eighteen.

And then the names comprised in the two genealogies of Matthew and Luke are so widely different from that found in Chronicles, as to set all analogy and agreement at defiance.

In fact, in their whole list of names, from David down to Joseph, they only come together twice. Their names are all different but two, that of Salathiel and Zorobabel, which names alone are found in both lists.

Matthew tells us that the son of David, through whom Joseph descended, was Solomon, but Luke says it was Nathan. The next name in Matthew's list is that of Roboam, but the corresponding name in Luke's list is Mattatha. Matthew's next name is Abia, which Luke gives as Menan, while Chronicles differs from both, and gives it as Abijah. Matthew says Joram begat Ozias, but Chronicles virtually declares Joram had no such son, although he had a great-great-grandson Uzziah. But Luke says, in effect, there was no such person in the genealogical tree, or family line, as either Joram, Ozias or Uzziah. Matthew says again, "Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon." (Matt. i. ii.)

But Chronicles declares that Jechonias was Jehoiakim's son, and not Josiah's, and that Josiah had no such son. And, besides, we learn, from 2 Kings xiii., that Josiah was killed eleven years before the exile to Babylon, and could not well beget a son after he had been defunct a tenth of a century.

Matthew, after naming twenty-four generations as filling out the line, and making it complete between David and Jacob, concludes by saying, "and Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary."

But Luke, antecedent to spinning out his list to fourteen generations more than Matthew, i. e., making it fourteen generations longer, declares that "Joseph was the son of Heli." So that Joseph either had two fathers, Jacob and Heli; or Matthew or Luke, or both, were most egregiously mistaken, with all their "inspiration."

Again, Luke says that Salathiel was the son of Neri; but Chronicles says he was the son of Jechonias. And after Chronicles had registered Zorobabel as the son of Penniah, Matthew and Luke, assuming to become "wise above what was written," both declare that he was the son of Salathiel. They agree here in contradicting Chronicles, which is the only instance but one of their agreement in the whole list of progenitors from David to Joseph.

With this exception they contradict each other all the way through, and in many instances that of Chronicles, too.

This is a strange way, indeed, of proving Jesus Christ to have had two fathers! – to be both the son of God and son of David! And it is still stranger that they should trace his genealogy to Joseph, if they did not consider him Joseph's son. Otherwise, the genealogy of "Sinbad the Sailor," or "Harry Haulaway," would have been as apropos.

Such are the beautiful harmony and agreement in the words of "divine inspiration" which Christians prate so much about.

And all this appears to be the result of an attempt to elevate the man Christ Jesus to a level with the demigods of antiquity, nearly all of whom claimed to be of royal or princely descent. Such continual blundering, guessing, cross-firing, and clashing of names as is exhibited in the foregoing exposition, reminds us of the Hibernian's reply when asked for the number and names of his brothers:

"Well, sir, I have fourteen brothers, and they are all named Bill but Bob – his name is Tom."

Matthew and Luke's attempt to exalt and dignify the character of Christ by making out for him a pure, holy and royal lineage we find, upon a critical examination not only proved a very signal but a very singular and ludicrous failure, for all his female anchors who are brought to notice were persons of libidinous or licentious tendencies, according to their own biblical history.

"It is remarkable," says Dr. Alexander Walker, (a Christian writer, in his work on Woman, p. 330), "that in the genealogy of Christ only four women are named: Tamar, who seduced the father of her late husband, and Rachel, a common prostitute, and Ruth, who, instead of marrying one of her cousins, went to bed with another of them, and Bathsheba, an adulteress, who espoused David, the murderer of her first husband."

What a pedigree for an incarnate God – a being ostensibly of spotless origin! though his impure ancestral origin does not detract from the high moral character and distinguished moral life which marks the history of "the man Christ Jesus," many incidents of whose life show him to have been what is now known as a spiritual medium.

CHAPTER XII. THE WORLD'S SAVIORS SAVED FROM DESTRUCTION IN INFANCY

OF course such an extraordinary circumstance as the birth of a God into the world must be marked with unusual incidents and great eclat. This was first exhibited by angels, shepherds, prophets, magi or "wise men," flocking around their cradles. In the second place we observe an unusual display of divine power and providential care on the part of the great Father God, who was still left in heaven to save the young saviors through their infancy.

It is certainly a remarkable circumstance that so many of the infant Saviors should have been threatened with the most imminent danger of destruction, and yet in every case miraculously preserved, and thus were the *Saviors saved*.

A jealousy seems to have existed in several instances in the mind of the tyrant king or ruler of the country that the young Saviors and prospective spiritual rulers (who were mostly of royal descent) would ultimately acquire such favor with the people, by such a display of superior power and greatness of mind, as to endanger his retaining peaceable possession of the secular throne; to express it in brief, he feared the young God would prove a rival king, and hence took measures to destroy him.

In the case of the Christian Savior we are told that an angel, or "the angel," warned Joseph (the assumed father) to take the young Savior and God and flee with him into Egypt, because "Herod the king sought to destroy the young child's life," and had, in order to effect this end, decreed the destruction of all the children under two years old. And Joseph heeded the divine warning, and fled as directed. An angel and a dream, then, it will be observed, were the instrumentalities used to save the young Judean Savior from massacre.

And strange as it may seem, we find the same agencies had been previously employed to effect the rescue of other Saviors likewise and similarly threatened.

In the case of Chrishna of India, in particular, the similitude is very striking in nearly every feature of the whole story.

In the first place there is the angel warning. In the Christian story we are not specifically informed how the tyrant Herod first became apprised of the birth of the Judean Savior. The Hindoo story is fuller, and indicates that the angel was not only sufficiently thoughtful to warn the parents to flee from a danger which threatened to dispossess them of a divine child, and the world of a Savior, but was condescending enough to apprise the tyrant ruler (Cansa) of his danger likewise – as we are told he heard an angel voice announcing that a rival ruler was born in his kingdom.

And hence, like Herod, he set about concocting measures to destroy him without a direct attack. Why either of them should have taken such a circuitous or roundabout way of killing an infant, when the life of the strongest man, and every man in their kingdoms, was at their instant disposal, "divine inspiration" does not inform us.

But so it was. And we must not seek to "become wise above what is written" in their bibles. Herod's decree required the destruction of all infants under two years of age (see Matt. ii. 16) – first ordering, however, "Go, and search diligently for the young child." (Matt. ii. 8.) Cansa's decree ran thus: "Let active search be made for whatever young children there may be upon earth, and let every boy in whom there may be found signs of unusual greatness be slain without remorse."

Now, let it be specially noticed that there is to this day in the cave temple at Elephanta, in India, the sculptured likeness of a king represented with a drawn sword, and surrounded with slaughtered infants – admitted by all writers to be much older than Christianity. Mr Forbes, in his "Oriental Memories," vol. iii. p. 447, says, "The figures of the slaughtered infants in the cave of Elephanta represent them as being all boys, who are surrounded by groups of figures of men and women in the act, apparently, of supplicating for those children." And Mr. Higgins testifies relative to the case, that

Chrishna was carried away by night, and concealed in a region remote from his natal place, for fear of a tyrant whose destroyer it had been foretold he would become, who, for that reason, had ordered all the male children born at that time to be slain. Sculptures in Elephanta attest the story where the tyrant is represented as destroying the children. The date of this sculpture is of the most remote antiquity. "He who hath ears to hear, let him hear," and deduce the pregnant inference. Joseph and Mary fled with the young Judean God into Egypt; Chrishna's parents likewise fled with the young Hindoo Savior to Gokul.

Now, let us observe for a moment the chain or category or resemblance.

1. There was an angel warning in each case relative to the impending danger.
2. The governor or ruler was hostile in each case to the mission of the young Savior.
3. A bloody decree was issued in both cases, having for its object the destruction of these infant Messiahs.
4. The hurried flight of the parents takes place in each case.
5. And it may be remarked further, that the "Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus," once believed by the Christian world to be "inspired," and which for hundreds of years passed current as divine authority, relates that Christ and his parents sojourned for a time at a place called Matarea, or Mathura, as Sir William Jones spells it, who says it was the birth place of Chrishna.

It is further related in the case of Chrishna, that as he and his parents approached the River Jumna in their flight, the waters "parted hither and thither," so that they passed over "dry shod," like Moses and the Israelites in crossing the Red Sea. And here let it be noted that the representation of this flight, which is said to have occurred at midnight, is like that of the massacre perpetuated and attested by imperishable monuments of stone bearing evidence of being now several thousand years old.

Sir William Jones says: —

"The Indian incarnate God Chrishna, the Hindoos believe, had a virgin mother of the royal race, who was sought to be destroyed in his infancy about nine hundred years before Christ. It appears that he passed his life in working miracles, and preaching, and was so humble as to wash his friends' feet; at length, dying, but rising from the dead, he ascended into heaven in the presence of a multitude." The Cingalese relate nearly the same things of their "Budha." And several authors of Egyptian history refer to a story perpetuated in the Egyptian legends concerning the God Osiris, who was threatened with destruction by the tyrant Amulius, to save whom his parents fled and concealed him in an arm of the River Nile, as Christ was concealed in the same country, and, for aught that appears to the contrary, in the same locality. The mother of another and older Savior of Egypt fled by a timely warning to Epidamis before the birth of the divine child, and was there delivered of "our Lord and Savior," Horus. And the earthly or adopted father of the Grecian Savior, and God, Alcides, had to flee with him and his mother to Galem for protection from threatening danger.

In the ninth and tenth volumes of the "Asiatic Researches," we find the story of the "only begotten" or "first begotten son of God," Salvahana, of Cape Comorin, son of a virgin mother (as were all the other Saviors referred to), and a carpenter by the name of Taishnea. (It will be remembered that Joseph, "foster-father of Jesus," was a carpenter.) The story of this "Son of God" presents several features very similar to that relating to Jesus. Sir William Jones, Colonel Wilford, and the Rev. Mr. Maurice all confess to the antiquity of this story, as originating before the birth of Christ. Speaking of Zoroaster of Persia (another case), 600 B. C., an author remarks, "Tradition reports that his mother had alarming dreams of evil spirits seeking to destroy the child to whom she was about to give birth. But a good spirit came to rescue him, and consoled her by saying, 'Fear not; God Ormuzd will protect the infant, who has sent him as a prophet to the people and the world who are waiting for him.'"

China, too, presents us with a case of the threatened destruction of a Savior in infancy, evidently recorded more than two thousand five hundred years ago. It is the case of the God Yu, who was concealed in a manner similar to that of Moses — a commemoration of the story of which is perpetuated by an image or picture of the virgin mother with a babe upon her knee — sometimes

in her arms. Now, let it be noted that these virgin-born Gods, who, we are told, came "to save the world," could not save themselves, but had to be protected and saved by other Gods.

Without pursuing the subject further in detail, we may mention by way of recapitulation, that Chrishna, Alcides, Zoraster, Salvahana, Yu, to which list we may add Bacchus, Romulus, Moses and Cyrus, according to their reputed history, were threatened with death and destruction, but were providentially and miraculously preserved. The case of Augustus is related by Suetonius, that of Romulus by Livy, and that of Cyrus by Herodotus. It will be recollected that Pharaoh, like Herod, in order to reach the infant Moses, ordered the massacre of all the male infants (Herod making no distinction of sex), in order that he might, by this singular and circuitous method, reach the object of his jealousy and malignity without passing a direct sentence of death upon him.

The whole story of Herod's slaughter edict, with the familiar history of its execution, like nearly every other miraculous incident related in "The Holy Scriptures," which detail their histories, are traceable in the skies. Herod, we are told, literally means hero of the skin – a term applied also to Hercules, a personification of the sun – because the sun, on entering the constellation of the Zodiac in July, was supposed or assumed to invest himself with the skin of the lion, and this became "the hero of the skin," or a hero with a new skin. Now this solar Herod, passing through the astronomical twins and young infants of May, was said to destroy them, though the word destroy is in the Greek anairean, which any person, on turning to the Greek lexicon, will observe means also to take away, pass through, or withdraw from, so that Pharaoh more properly passed through the infants than destroyed them.

The text, "In Rama there was a voice heard," "Rachel weeping for her children," etc., is quoted by a writer (Strauss) as referring to the children slaughtered by Pharaoh. Let two things be noticed here: 1. Rama is the Indian and Phoenician name for the zodiac. 2. Rachel had but two children to weep for – Joseph and Benjamin – just the number found in the fifth sign, or May sign, of the zodiac. And Venus, among the ancient Assyrians and Phoenicians, was in tears when the sun, in his annual cross through the heavens, passed through or over the astronomical Twins (Gemini), doubtless fearfully apprehending their destruction.

The case of the massacre is an illustration and example of the manner in which all the miraculous stories related in the Christian Scriptures, as having been practically exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ, are traceable to older sources, frequently terminating among the stars.

SECTION II. – INCREDIBILITY OF THE STORY OF THE MASSACRE OF THE HEBREW INFANTS

1. It is a cogent and potent fact, calculated to render the story of the murder of the Hebrew children by Herod wholly incredible, that not one writer of that age, or that nation, or any other nation, makes any mention of the circumstance.

2. Even the Rabbinical writers who detail his wicked life so minutely, and who bring to his charge so many flagitious acts, fail to record any notice of this horrible and atrocious deed, which must have been published far and wide, and known to all the writers of that age and country, had it occurred.

3. And still more logically ruinous to the credit of the story is the omission of Josephus to throw out one hint that such a wholesale slaughter ever took place in Judea. And yet he not only lived in that country, but was related to Herod's wife, and regarded him as his most implacable enemy, and professes to write out the whole history of his wicked life in the most minute detail, devoting thirty-seven chapters of his large work to this subject, and apparently enumerates every evil act of his life. And yet Josephus says not a word about his inhuman and infamous butchery of the babes which Matthew charges him with (about fourteen thousand in number) – a bloody deed, unmatched in the annals of tyranny. Such facts prove the story not only incredible, but impossible. Josephus could not and would not have omitted to notice this the most notorious and nefarious act of his life, had it occurred. It, therefore, could not have occurred. And it is almost equally incredible that Roman historians, who furnish us with a particular account of Herod's character, should pass over in silence such a villainous and bloody deed.

4. And then some of our ablest and most reliable chronologists have shown that Herod was not living at the time this bloody decree should have been issued by him; that he died about three years prior to that period, and hence could have been guilty of no such villainy, and highhanded murder, and cruel infanticide.

5. And even if living, he would have been an old man (not less than sixty-eight according to Josephus). Hence, he could not have calculated on surviving long enough for the son of a village carpenter, then a babe, to oust him from his throne.

6. It is wholly incredible, also, that Herod should have adopted such a roundabout method of destroying the object of his fear and envy when he could have singled him out, and put him to death at once, and thus avoid the felonious act of breaking the hearts of thousands of parents, and his most loyal subjects, too.

7. From the foregoing considerations, we endorse the sentiment of the Rev. Edward Evanson, that it is "an incredible, borrowed fiction."

CHAPTER XIII. THE SAVIORS EXHIBIT EARLY PROOFS OF DIVINITY

OF course, all Gods must be heroes – physically or intellectually, or both. The more danger they encounter, and the earlier they manifest a precocious or preternatural smartness, the more like Gods.

And hence we find several of the Saviors in very early childhood displaying great physical prowess in meeting and conquering danger, while others exhibit their superiority mentally by vanquishing their opponents in argument. Christ first began to exhibit proof of his divine character and greatness by meeting and silencing the doctors in the temple when only about twelve years of age.

And similar proofs of divinity at or near this age is found in the history of some of the pagan Saviors.

Of Christ it is declared, "There went out a fame of him through all the region round about." (Luke iv. 14.) And of the Grecian Esculapius it is likewise declared, "The voice of fame soon published the birth of a miraculous child," and "the people flocked from all quarters to behold him." Of Confucius of China it is declared, "His extensive knowledge and great wisdom soon made him known, and kings were governed by his counsels, and the people adored him wherever he went." And it is further declared of this "Divine Man," that he seemed to arrive at reason and the perfect use of his faculties almost from infancy. It is reported of the God Chang-ti, that when questioned on the subject of government and the duties of princes and rulers while yet a child, his answers were such as to astonish the whole empire by his knowledge and wisdom.

It is related of a Grecian God that he demolished the serpents which attempted to bite or destroy him while in his cradle. "The proof of Osiris's divinity was a blaze of light shining around his cradle soon after he was born. Relative to Pythagoras of the same country, we have it upon the authority of a Christian writer, that he exhibited such a remarkable character, even in youth, as to attract the attention of all who saw and heard him speak." And the author further testifies of him that he "never was at any time overcome with anger, laughter, or perturbation of mind or precipitation of conduct." "His fame having reached Miletus and neighboring cities," it is said by another writer, "the people flocked to see and hear him, and he was revered by multitudes."

Luke declares of Christ, that the people "were astonished at his understanding and answers." (Luke ii. 47.) And the "Gospel of the Infancy" tells us that his tutor Zacheas was astonished at his learning, which reminds us of the statement found in "The Divine Word" of the Hindoos (The Mahabarat), that the parents of the Savior Krishna, in making arrangements to give him an education, sent him to a learned Brahmin as tutor, whom he instantly astonished with his vast learning, and under whose tuition he mastered the whole circle of sciences in a day and a night. "Men, seeing the wonders performed by this child, told Nanda (his adopted father) that this could not possibly be his son."

It is told of Budha Sakia of India that, "as soon as he was born, a light shone around his cradle, when he stood up and proclaimed his mission, and that the River Ganges during this time rose in a miraculous manner, which was stilled by his divine power, as Christ stilled the tempest on the sea." "He was born," says the New American Cyclopaedia (vol. iv. p. 61), "amidst great miracles, and soon as born, most solemnly proclaims his mission."

Of Narayan, "the Holy," it is declared that "mysterious words dropped from his lips on various occasions, giving hints of his divine nature and the purposes for which he had come down to the earth." (Prog. Rel. Ideas, vol. i. p. 128.) The divine power and mission of Yu of China was very early evinced by the display of great miracles.

And here let us observe that some of the Old Testament or Jewish heroes – as Moses, Solomon and Samuel – are reported as exhibiting great superiority of mind in very early life; thus proving (it

was thought) that if they were not Gods, they were at least from God – that is, endowed by him with divine power while yet mere children. Thus the histories of all Gods and divine personages run in parallel grooves.

CHAPTER XIV. THE SAVIORS; KINGDOMS NOT OF THIS WORLD

Retirement and Forty Days' Fasting

CHRIST taught, "My kingdom is not of this world."

And we find that most of the other Saviors virtually and practically taught the same doctrine.

The first practical evincement of it was exhibited by retiring from the world; that is, they retired from the noise and commotion, from the busy scenes of life, into some sequestered spot excluded from human observation. Christ is reported to have withdrawn from society, and to have spent some forty days in the wilderness fasting and being tempted by Satan – a man of straw conjured up in order to furnish the hero God something to combat with, that he might thereby exhibit practical proof of his divine power and prowess. It was simply the two kings or rulers of two hostile kingdoms (heaven and hell) contending for the mastery.

Lord Kingsborough tells us, "The ancient Mexicans had a forty days' fast in honor and memory of one of their demigods or Saviors, who was tempted forty days on a mountain. He is called 'the Morning Star'." Mr. Kingsborough (being a Christian) remarks, "These things are very curious and mysterious."

It is said of "the Son of God" and Savior Christna that "he imparted his doctrines and precepts in the silent depths of the forest." Of the Egyptian God Osiris, we are informed in his sacred legends, that "he observed both fasting and penance," while Pythagoras of Greece spent several years in meditation and retirement in a cave, and was much given to fasting, and often inculcated the doctrine of "forsaking the world" and "the things thereof." He taught these things both by precept and example, even to "the forsaking of relations." Both Confucius and the Divine Savior Chang-ti of China, "in order to attain to a more perfect state of holiness," spent several years in retirement and "divine meditation," the former in a wilderness, the latter on a mountain, and fasted, and their disciples after them often fasted in a very devout manner. The Persian Zoroaster also spent several years in retirement and "contemplation on true holiness" – partly in a wilderness and partly on a "holy mountain," "holy mountains" being the favorite places of resort of most of the holy Saviors, holy Gods, and holy men of antiquity. One of the most ancient Saviors, Thammuz, is reported to have spent "twelve years in devout and contemplative retirement from the busy world." According to the Christian bible, Moses, Elijah, and Christ, each fasted forty days, and a Mexican Savior, too (Quexalcote), spent forty days in a similar manner, and other cases are so reported.

We may institute the inquiry here, "How happens this coincidence?"

The answer is indicated by "the Hierophant," which says, "Jesus in his baptism and forty days' fast imitated the passage of the sun through the constellation Aquarius, where John, Joannes, or Janus the baptizer had his domicile, and baptized the earth with his yearly rains." Having been baptized in Jordan, he fasted forty days in the wilderness, in imitation of the passage of the sun from the constellation Aquarius through the Fishes to the Lamb or Ram of March. During the forty days when the sun is among the Fishes (in the sign of the Fish) the faithful Catholics, Episcopalians and Mahommedans abstain from meat and live upon the fishes during the season of Lent, as did the Jews and pagans, and did also Jesus, "to fulfill all righteousness."

CHAPTER XV. THE SAVIORS WERE REAL PERSONAGES

IT is unwarrantably assumed by Christian writers that the incarnated Gods and crucified Saviors of the pagan religions were all either mere fabulous characters, or ordinary human beings invested with divine titles, and divine attributes; while, on the other hand, the assumption is put forth with equal boldness that Jesus Christ was a real divine personage, "seen and believed on in the world, and finally crucified on Mount Calvary."

But we do not find the facts in history to warrant any such assumptions or any such distinctions. They all stand in these respects upon the same ground and on equal footing.

And their respective disciples point to the same kind of evidence to prove their real existence and their divine character, and to prove that they once walked and talked amongst men, as well as now sit on the eternal throne in heaven "at the right hand of the father." And we find even Christian writers admitting the once *bona fide* or personal existence on earth of most of the pagan Saviors.

As to the two chief incarnated Gods of India – Chrishna and Sakia – there is scarcely "a peg left to hang a doubt upon" as to the fact of their having descended to the earth, taken upon themselves the form of men, and having been worshiped as veritable Gods.

Indeed, we believe but few of the missionaries who have visited that country question the statement and general belief prevalent there of their once personal reality. Col. Todd, in his "History of the Rajahs" (p. 44), says: "We must discard the idea that the Mahabaret, the history of Rama, of Chrishna, and the five Padua brothers are mere allegories; colossal figures, ancient temples, and caves inscribed with characters yet unknown, confirm the reality, and their race, their cities, and their coins yet exist." To argue further the personal reality of this crucified God would be a waste of words, as it is generally admitted, both by historical writers and missionaries.

Mr. Higgins declares, "Chrishna lived at the conclusion of the brazen age, which is calculated to have been eleven hundred or twelve hundred years before Christ." Here is a very positive and specific declaration as to his tangible actuality. Col. Dow, Mr. Robinson, and others use similar language.

Relative to Bacchus, of whose history many writers have spoken as being wholly fabulous or fictitious, Diodorus Siculus says (lib. iii. p. 137), "the Libyans claim Bacchus, and say that he was the son of Ammon, a king of Libya; that he built a temple to his father, Ammon." And that world-wide famous historian (Mr. Goodrich) is still more explicit, if possible, as to his material entity. After giving it directly as his opinion that there was such a being, he says, "He planted vine-yards and fig-trees, and erected many noble cities." He moreover tells us, "His skill in legislation and agriculture is much praised" (p. 499).

With respect to Osiris of Egypt, another God-Savior, Mr. Hittle declares unqualifiedly that "Herodotus saw the tomb of Osiris, at Sais nearly five centuries before Christ" (vol. i. p. 246). Rather a strong evidence of his previous personality certainly, but not more so than that furnished by the *New York Journal of Commerce* a few years since, relative to the Egyptian Apis or Thulis, whose theophany was annually celebrated, at the rising of the Nile, with great festivities and devotion, several thousand years ago. The Paris correspondent of that journal, after speaking of Mr. Auguste Marietta's travels, "a distinguished scientific gentleman who for four years past had been employed by the French Government in making Egyptian researches," having returned home, says, "The most important of Mr. Marietta's discoveries was the tomb of Apis (Thulis), a monument excavated entirely in lime-rock." "There are (he says in conclusion) epitaphs, forming a chronological record of each of the Apis buried in the common tomb. The sculpture is of the date of the Pyramids, and the statues are in the best state of preservation; the colors are perfectly bright The execution is admirable, and they convey an exact idea of the physical character of the primitive population."

The New American Cyclopaedia (art. Apis) in speaking of this Egyptian God, tells us his lifetime was twenty-five years; in harmony with one of the theologico-astronomical cycles of the Egyptians. The same work and volume (p. 132), in speaking of the real existence of Adonis of Greece, tells us, upon the authority of the poet Panyasis, that he was a veritable son of Theias, king of Syria.

But of all the characters who figured in the mythological works or lawless rhapsodies of the ancients, and worshiped by them as crucified Gods and sin-atoners, none has, perhaps, been so indubitably, so positively, and so universally set down as mythological or fabulous as that of Prometheus of Caucasus.

And yet Mr. Lempriere, D. D., tells us in his Classical Dictionary that he was the son of Japetus. Sir Isaac Newton says he was a descendant of the famous African Sesostris; while that erudite and masterly historian (Mr. Higgins) seems to have entertained no doubt of his personal esse; nor, indeed, of many, if any, of the pagan Saviors, as the following declaration will show. He says, "Finding men in India and other countries of the same name of the inferior Gods (as it is quite common to name men for them) has led some to conclude that those deified men never existed, but are merely mythological names of the sun. True, the first supreme God of every nation (not excepting the Jews) was the sun. But more modernly the names were transferred to men." Again, he says, "Inasmuch as some of them are found to have been real bona fide human beings, there is nothing unreasonable in concluding that all were" And if we take into consideration the true and indisputable fact that the priests had everything at their disposal, and the strongest motives for concealing and suppressing, not to say garbling and destroying evidence, it is not to be wondered at that the histories of some of these Gods should be somewhat obscure and ambiguous. Further on he declares, "In every case the Savior was incarnate, and in nearly every case the place in which he was actually born was exhibited to the people." And upon the authority of the Hierophant, we will add, the memories of many of them have been consecrated and perpetuated by tombs placed beside their temples, which is perhaps the most convincing species of evidence that could be offered.

The evidence, then, is precisely of the same character as that offered in the case of Jesus Christ to prove that the pagan Saviors did really possess a substantial, earthly and bodily existence. Though it is true that it never has been universally conceded or believed by Christian themselves that Jesus Christ ever had a personal or corporeal existence on earth.

Cotilenius, in a note on Ignatius, Epistle to the Trallians, written in the third century of the Christian era, declares that "it is as absurd to deny the doctrine which taught that Jesus Christ's body was a phantom as to deny that the sun shone at midday." His physical body of course was meant, for it appears he believed in his eternal existence as a spirit in heaven.

And we find whole sects advocating similar views in the early ages of the Christian church. "One of the most primitive and learned sects," says a writer, "were the Manicheans, who denied that Jesus Christ ever existed in flesh and blood, but believed him to be a God in spirit only;" others denied him to be a God, but believed him to have been a prophet, or inspired character, like the Unitarians of the present day. Some denied his crucifixion, others asserted it. It is more than probable that this was the cause of dispute between Paul and Barnabas, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, seeing that Paul had laid such peculiar emphasis on "Jesus Christ and him crucified."

And this conclusion is corroborated by its being expressly stated in the Gospel of Barnabas that "Jesus Christ was not crucified, but was carried to heaven by four angels." "There was a long list," says the same writer, "from the earliest times, of sincere Christians who denied that Jesus Christ rose from the dead;" while, as we may remark here, there could not have been at that early date any grounds for denying these things, had he really figured in the world in the miraculous and extraordinary and public manner as that related in the Gospels.

CHAPTER XVI. SIXTEEN SAVIORS CRUCIFIED

"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." (i Cor. ii. 2.) There must have existed a very considerable amount of skepticism in the community as to the truth of the report of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in the country and era of its occurrence to make it necessary thus to erect it into an important dogma, and make it imperative to believe it. There must have been a large margin for distrusting its truth.

The determination not to know anything but the crucifixion of Jesus Christ was narrowing down his knowledge to rather a small compass.

And such a resolution would necessarily preclude him from acquainting himself with the history of any other cases of crucifixion that might have occurred before that of his own favorite Messiah. "What! Was there ever a case of crucifixion beside that of Jesus Christ?" a good Christian brother or sister sometimes exclaims, when the world's sixteen crucified Saviors are spoken of.

We meet the question with the reply, You seem to be a disciple of Paul, whose position would not allow him to know of any other cases of crucifixion but that of Jesus Christ. Hence, he may have considered it meritorious to perpetuate his ignorance on the subject. And you, perhaps, are ignorant from the same cause.

It is the nature of all religions based on fear and unchangeable dogmas, to deter and thus exclude its disciples from all knowledge adverse to their own creeds. And sometimes their own religious systems are magnified to such an exalted appreciation above all others as to lead them to destroy the evidence of the existence of the latter for fear of their ultimate rivalry.

Mr. Taylor informs us that some of the early disciples of the Christian faith demolished accessible monuments representing and memorializing the crucifixion of the ancient oriental sin-atoning Gods, so that they are now unknown in the annals of Christian history. Hence, the surprise excited in the minds of Christian professors when other cases are mentioned.

Such influences as referred to above have shut out from the minds of the disciples of several religious systems a knowledge of all crucified Gods but their own. Hence, the Hindoo rejoices in knowing only "Chrishna and him crucified." The Persian entwines around his heart the remembrance only of the atoning sufferings on the cross of Mithra the Mediator. The Mexican daily sends up his earnest, soul-breathing prayer for the return of the spirit of his crucified Savior – Quexalcote. While the Caucasian, with equal devotion, chants daily praises to his slain "Divine Intercessor" for voluntarily offering himself upon the cross for the sins of a fallen race. And the Christian disciple hugs to his bosom the bloody cross of the murdered Jesus, unhaunted by the suspicion that other Gods died for the sins of man long anterior to the advent of the immaculate Nazarene.

We will now lay before the reader a brief account of the crucifixion of more than a dozen virgin-born Gods and sin-atoning Saviors, predicated upon facts which have escaped the hands of the Christian iconoclasts determined to know only Jesus Christ crucified. We will first notice the case of the Indian God – Chrishna.

I. – CRUCIFIXION OF CHRISHNA OF INDIA, 1200 B. C.

Among the sin-atoning Gods who condescended in ancient times to forsake the throne of heaven, and descend upon the plains of India, through human birth, to suffer and die for the sins and transgressions of the human race, the eighth Avatar, or Savior, may be considered the most important and the most exalted character, as he led the most conspicuous life, and commanded the most devout and the most universal homage. And while some of the other incarnate demigods were invested with only a limited measure of the infinite deityship, Chrishna, according to the teachings of their New Testament (the Ramazand), comprehended in himself "a full measure of the God-head bodily." The evidence of his having been crucified is as conclusive as any other sacrificial or sin-atoning God,

whose name has been memorialized in history, or embalmed as a sacred idol in the memories of his devout worshipers.

Mr. Moore, an English traveler and writer, in a large collection of drawings taken from Hindoo sculptures and monuments, which he has arranged together in a work entitled "The Hindoo Pantheon," has one representing, suspended on the cross, the Hindoo crucified God and Son of God, "our Lord and Savior" Chrishna, with holes pierced in his feet, evidently intended to represent the nail-holes made by the act of crucifixion. Mr. Higgins, who examined this work, which he found in the British Museum, makes a report of a number of the transcript drawings intended to represent the crucifixion of this oriental and mediatorial God, which we will here condense. In plate ninety-eight this Savior is represented with a hole in the top of one foot, just above the toes, where the nail was inserted in the act of crucifixion.

In another drawing he is represented exactly in the form of a Romish Christian crucifix, but not fixed or fastened to a tree, though the legs and feet are arranged in the usual way, with nail-holes in the latter. There is a halo of glory over it, emanating from the heavens above, just as we have seen Jesus Christ represented in a work by a Christian writer, entitled "Quarles' Emblems," also in other Christian books. In several of the icons (drawings) there are marks of holes in both feet, and in others of holes in the hands only. In the first drawing which he consulted the marks are very faint, so as to be scarcely visible. In figures four and five of plate eleven the figures have nail-holes in both feet, while the hands are not represented. Figure six has on it the representation of a round hole in the side. To his collar or shirt hangs an emblem of a heart, represented in the same manner as those attached to the imaginary likenesses of Jesus Christ, which may now be found in some Christian countries. Figure ninety-one has a hole in one foot and a nail through the other, and a round nail or pin mark in one hand only, while the other is ornamented with a dove and a serpent (both emblems of deity in the Christian's bible).

Now, we raise the query here, and drive it into the innermost temple of the Christian's conscience, with the overwhelming force of the unconquerable logic of history — *What does all this mean?*

And if they will only let conviction have its perfect work while answering this question unhampered by the inherited prejudices of a thousand years, they can henceforth rejoice in the discovery of a glorious historical truth, calculated to disenthral their minds from the soul-cramping superstitions of crosses, crucifixions and bloody atonements on which they have been accustomed to hang the salvation of the world.

If the credibility of the relation of these incidents going to prove an astonishing coincidence in the sacred histories of the Hindoo and Christian Saviors, and demonstrating the doctrine of the crucifixion as having been practically realized, and preached to the world long anterior to the offering of a God "once for all" on Mount Calvary; if its credibility rested on mere *ex parte* testimony, mere pagan tradition, or even upon the best digested and most authentic annals of the past that have escaped the ravages of time, there might still be a forlorn hope for the stickler for the Christian faith now struggling in the agonies of a credal skepticism, that the whole thing has been plagiarized from the Christian Gospels. For paper and parchment history can be – and has been – mutilated. But the verity of this account rests upon no such a precarious basis. Its antiquity, reaching far beyond the Christian era, is corroborated and demonstrated by imperishable monuments, deep-chiseled indentures burrowed into the granite rock, which bid defiance to the fingers of time, and even the hands of the frenzied iconoclast, to destroy or deface, though impelled and spurred on to the effort by the long-cherished conviction burning in his soul, that the salvation of the human race depends upon believing that "there is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved" than his own crucified God, and that all others are but thieves, robbers and antichrists. Some of the disciples of the oriental systems cherished this conviction, and Christians and Mahommedans seem to have inherited it in magnified proportions.

Hence, we are credibly informed that some of the earlier Christian saints, having determined, like Paul, "to know only Jesus Christ and him crucified," made repeated efforts to obliterate these sacred facts (so fatally damaging to their one-sided creeds) from the page of history. Mr. Higgins suggests that if we could have persons less under the influence of sectarian prejudice to visit, examine, and report on the sculptures and monuments of India, covered over as they are with antiquated and significant figures appertaining to and illustrating their religious history, we might accumulate still more light bearing upon the history of the crucifixion of the Savior and sin-atonng Chrishna. "Most of our reports," he declares, "are fragmentary, if not one-sided, having come through the hands of Christian missionaries, bishops and priests."

He informs us that a report on the Hindoo religion, made out by a deputation from the British Parliament, sent to India for the purpose of examining their sacred books and monuments, being left in the hands of a Christian bishop at Calcutta, and with instructions to forward it to England, was found, on its arrival in London, to be so horribly mutilated and eviscerated as to be scarcely cognizable. The account of the crucifixion was gone – cancelled out. The inference is patent.

And we have it upon the authority of this same reliable and truthful writer (Sir Godfrey Higgins) that the author of the Hindoo Pantheon (Mr. Moor), after having announced his intention to publish it to the world, was visited and labored with by some of his devout Christian neighbors zealous "for the faith once delivered to the saints," who endeavored to dissuade him from publishing such facts to the world as he represented his book to contain, for fear it would have the effect to unsettle the faith of some of the weak brethren (some of the weak-kneed church members) in the soul-saving religion of Jesus Christ, by raising doubts in their minds as to the originality of the gospel story of the crucifixion of Christ, or at least of his having been crucified as a God for a sin-offering. His crucifixion is a possible event. It may be thus far a true narrative, but the adjunct of the atonement, with its efficacy to obliterate the effects of sin, connected with the idea that an infinite, omnipotent and self-existent God was put to death, when a human form was slain upon the cross – never, no, never. It is a thought too monstrous to find lodgment in an enlightened human mind.

Another case evincing the same spirit as that narrated above is found in the circumstance of a Christian missionary (a Mr. Maurice) publishing a historical account of this man-god or demigod of the Hindoos, and omitting any allusion to his crucifixion; this was entirely left out, apparently from design. His death, resurrection and ascension were spoken of, but the crucifixion skipped over. He could not have been ignorant of this chapter in his history as the writers preceding him, from whom he copied, had related it.

Among this number may be mentioned the learned French writer Monsieur Guigniant, who, in his "Religion of the Ancients," speaks so specifically of the crucifixion of this God, as to name the circumstance of his being nailed to a tree. He also states, that before his exit he made some remarkable prophecies appertaining to the crimes and miseries of the world in the approaching future, reminding us of the wars and rumors of wars predicted by the Christian Messiah. Mr. Higgins names the same circumstance.

We have it upon the authority of more than one writer on Hindoo or Indian antiquities that there is a rock temple at Mathura in the form of a cross, and facing the four cardinal points of the compass, which is admitted by all beholders as presenting the proof in bold relief of extreme age, and inside of this temple stands a statue of "the Savior of men," Chrishna of India, presenting the proof of being coeval in construction with the temple itself by the circumstance of its being cut out of the same rock and constituting a part of the temple. (Further citations of this character will be found under the head of Parallels, Chapter XXXII.)

Thus we have the proof deeply and indelibly carved in the old, time-chiseled rocks of India – that their "Lord and Savior Chrishna" atoned for the sins of a grief-stricken world by "pouring out his blood as a propitiatory offering" while stretched upon the cross. No wonder, in view of such historic bulwarks, Col. Wiseman, for ten years a Christian missionary should have exclaimed, "Can

we be surprised that the enemies of our holy religion should seize upon this legend (the crucifixion of Chrishna) as containing the original of our gospel history?"

Christian reader, please ponder over the facts of this chapter, and let conviction have its perfect work.

LIFE, CHARACTER, RELIGION, AND MIRACLES OF CHRISHNA.

The history of Chrishna Zeus (or Jeseus, as some writers spell it) is contained principally in the Baghavat Gita, the episode portion of the Mahabaret bible. The book is believed to be divinely inspired, like all other bibles; and the Hindoos claim for it an antiquity of six thousand years. Like Christ, he was of humble origin, and like him had to encounter opposition and persecution.

But he seems to have been more successful in the propagation of his doctrines; for it is declared, "he soon became surrounded by many earnest followers, and the people in vast multitudes followed him, crying aloud, 'This is indeed the Redeemer promised to our fathers.'" His pathway was thickly strewn with miracles, which consisted in healing the sick, curing lepers, restoring the dumb, deaf and the blind, raising the dead, aiding the weak, comforting the sorrow-stricken, relieving the oppressed, casting out devils, etc. He came not ostensibly to destroy the previous religion, but to purify it of its impurities, and to preach a better doctrine. He came, as he declared, "to reject evil and restore the reign of good, and redeem man from the consequences of the fall, and deliver the oppressed earth from its load of sin and suffering." His disciples believed him to be God himself, and millions worshiped him as such in the time of Alexander the Great, 330 B. C.

The hundreds of counterparts to the history of Christ, proving their histories to be almost identical, will be found enumerated in Chapter XXXII., such as – 1. His miraculous birth by a virgin. 2. The mother and child being visited by shepherds, wise men and the angelic host, who joyously sang, "In thy delivery, O favored among women, all nations shall have cause to exult." 3. The edict of the tyrant ruler Cansa, ordering all the first born to be put to death. 4. The miraculous escape of the mother and child from his bloody decree by the parting of the waves of the River Jumna to permit them to pass through on dry ground. 5. The early retirement of Chrishna to a desert. 6. His baptism or ablution in the River Ganges, corresponding to Christ's baptism in Jordan. 7. His transfiguration at Madura, where he assured his disciples that "present or absent, I will always be with you." 8. He had a favorite disciple (Arjoon), who was his bosom friend, as John was Christ's. 9. He was anointed with oil by women, like Christ. 10. A somewhat similar fish story is told of him – his disciples being enabled by him to catch large draughts of the finny prey in their nets. (For three hundred other similar parallels, see Chapter XXXII.)

Like Christ, he taught much by parables and precepts. A notable sermon preached by him is also reported, which we have not space for here.

On one occasion, having returned from a ministerial journey, as he entered Madura, the people came out in crowds to meet him, strewing the ground with the branches of cocoa-nut trees, and desiring to hear him. He addressed them in parables – the conclusion and moral of one of which, called the parable of the fishes, runs thus: "And thus it is, O people of Madura, that you ought to protect the weak and each other, and not retaliate upon an enemy the wrongs he may have done you." Here we see the peace doctrine preached in its purity. "And thus it was," says a writer, "that Chrishna spread among the people the holy doctrines of purest morality, and initiated his hearers into the exalted principles of charity, of self-denial, and self-respect at a time when the desert countries of the west were inhabited only by savage tribes;" and we will add, long before Christianity was thought of. Purity of life and spiritual insight, we are told, were distinguishing traits in the character of this oriental sin-atonement Savior, and that "he was often moved with compassion for the downtrodden and the suffering."

A Buddhist in Ceylon, who sent his son to a Christian school, once remarked to a missionary, "I respect Christianity as a help to Budhism." Thus is disclosed the fact that the motives of some of "the

heathen" in sending to Christian schools is the promotion of their own religion, which they consider superior, and in many respects most of them are. (For proof, see Chapter on Bibles.)

We have the remarkable admission of the *Christian Examiner* that "the best precepts of the (Christian) bible are contained in the Hindoo Baghavat." Then it is not true that "Christ spake as man never spake." And if his "best precepts" were previously recorded in an old heathen bible, then they afford no proof of his divinity. This suicidal concession of the *Examiner* pulls up the claims of orthodox Christianity by the roots.

And many of the precepts uttered by Chrishna display a profound wisdom and depth of thought equal to any of those attributed to Jesus Christ. In proof of the statement, we will cite a few examples out of the hundreds in our possession: —

1. Those who do not control their passions cannot act properly toward others.
2. The evils we inflict upon others follow us as our shadows follow our bodies.
3. Only the humble are beloved of God.
4. Virtue sustains the soul as the muscles sustain the body.
5. When the poor man knocks at your door, take him and administer to his wants, for the poor are the chosen of God. (Christ said, "God hath chosen the poor.")
6. Let your hand be always open to the unfortunate.
7. Look not upon a woman with unchaste desires.
8. Avoid envy, covetousness, falsehood, imposture and slander, and sexual desires.
9. Above all things, cultivate love for your neighbor.
10. When you die you leave your worldly wealth behind you, but your virtues and vices follow you.
11. Contemn riches and worldly honor.
12. Seek the company of the wicked in order to reform them.
13. Do good for its own sake, and expect not your reward for it on earth.
14. The soul is immortal, but must be pure and free from all sin and stain before it can return to Him who gave it.
15. The soul is inclined to good when it follows the inward light.
16. The soul is responsible to God for its actions, who has established rewards and punishments.
17. Cultivate that inward knowledge which teaches what is right and wrong.
18. Never take delight in another's misfortunes.
19. It is better to forgive an injury than to avenge it
20. You can accomplish by kindness what you cannot by force.
21. A noble spirit finds a cure for injustice by forgetting it.
22. Pardon the offense of others, but not your own.
23. What you blame in others do not practice yourself.
24. By forgiving an enemy you make many friends.
25. Do right from hatred of evil, and not from fear of punishment.
26. A wise man corrects his own errors by observing those of others.
27. He who rules his temper conquers his greatest enemy.
28. The wise man governs his passions, but the fool obeys them.
29. Be at war with men's vices, but at peace with their persons.
30. There should be no disagreement between your lives and your doctrine.
31. Spend every day as though it were the last.
32. Lead not one life in public and another in private.
33. Anger in trying to torture others punishes itself.
34. A disgraceful death is honorable when you die in a good cause.
35. By growing familiar with vices, we learn to tolerate them easily.
36. We must master our evil propensities, or they will master us.

37. He who has conquered his propensities rules over a kingdom.
38. Protect, love and assist others, if you would serve God.
39. From thought springs the will, and from the will action, true or false, just or unjust.
40. As the sandal tree perfumes the axe which fells it, so the good man sheds fragrance on

his enemies.

41. Spend a portion of each day in pious devotion.
42. To love the virtues of others is to brighten your own.
43. He who gives to the needy loses nothing himself.
44. A good, wise and benevolent man cannot be rich.
45. Much riches is a curse to the possessor.
46. The wounds of the soul are more important than those of the body.
47. The virtuous man is like the banyan tree, which shelters and protects all around it.
48. Money does not satisfy the love of gain, but only stimulates it.
49. Your greatest enemy is in your own bosom.
50. To flee when charged is to confess your guilt.
51. The wounds of conscience leave a scar.

Compare these fifty-one precepts of Chrishna with the forty-two precepts of Christ, and you must confess they suffer nothing by the comparison. If we had space we would like to quote also from the Vedas. We will merely cite a few examples relative to woman.

1. He who is cursed by woman is cursed by God.
2. God will punish him who laughs at woman's sufferings.
3. When woman is honored, God is honored.
4. The virtuous woman will have but one husband, and the right-minded man but one wife.
5. It is the highest crime to take advantage of the weakness of woman.
6. Woman should be loved, respected and protected by husbands, fathers and brothers, etc.

(For more, see Chapter on Bibles.)

Before we close this chapter we must anticipate and answer an objection. It will be said that the reported amours of Chrishna and his reencounter with Cansa constitute a criticism on his character. If so, we will point to Christ's fight or angry combat with the money-changers in the temple as an offset to it. And then it should be remembered that Chrishna's disciples claim that these stories are mere fable, or allegorical, and are not found in the most approved or canonical writings.

II. – CRUCIFIXION OF THE HINDOO SAKIA, 600 B. C.

How many Gods who figured in Hindoo history suffered death upon the cross as atoning offerings for the sins of mankind is a point not clearly established by their sacred books. But the death of the God above named, known as Sakia, Budha Sakia, or Sakia Muni, is distinctly referred to by several writers, both oriental and Christian, though there appears to be in Buddhist countries different accounts of the death of the famous and extensively worshiped sin-atoning Saviors.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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