

The Religion of Jesus and The Traditional Christianity

*Some Chapters from the
"Sources of Christianity"*

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THE RELIGION OF JESUS

JESUS is the Lord but not the founder of the church which bears his name. He gave his people a Sermon but not a Sacrament. He was a Rabbi, and a teacher of Judaism. He was so regarded by the people of his time: "Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, where dwellest thou?"¹ "The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God."² Jesus did not make any departure from the church of Moses; he himself was an ardent upholder and teacher of the commandments. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the Prophets, but to fulfil." Such utterances could not come from the founder of a new church or of a new dispensation, but from one who came to respect the Prophets and to follow them. He did not come to take anything from the law of Moses, nor did he come to add anything to it. "Fulfil the law," he said when a young man asked him: "Master, what must I do in order to live eternally?" All this shows an implicit obedience to the Mosaic law on the part of Jesus, and not any departure from it. But the people of his time were more addicted to the

¹ John i. 38.

² Ibid. iii. 2.

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ceremonials than to its essentials. They worshipped the letter of the law, and not its spirit. They were more interested in polishing their pots and cleaning "the outsides of the cup, while within they were full of extortion and excess." They made long prayers, but devoured widows' houses. They would "pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin," but would omit the weightier matters of the law—judgment, mercy and faith. They strained at a gnat, but swallowed a camel. They appeared "like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful without, but are, within, full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness." Such "serpents and generation of vipers," as Jesus called them, he came to reform and warn. They were "fools and blind," and he came to open their eyes. The house of God had become "a den of thieves," and he came to cleanse it. The temple of God had money-changers and sellers of doves in it, and he came to make it the "house of prayer." This was his mission, the life-mission of a Prophet and a reformer, or, say, a Rabbi, but not of one who came with a new dispensation or to build a new religion unknown to his people. He would not allow his disciples to call themselves Rabbis, as he himself was a Rabbi of the day: "Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, and all ye are brethren." His race observed the law of retaliation to its very letter, and it had hardened their hearts. He came to inspire feelings of love and charity and kindness. He would not allow the doctrine of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Rather would he teach them to submit to evil and love their enemies. He showed the folly of the Pharisees and

the Scribes, and exposed their hypocrisy, but he gave them due respect all the same, regarding them as the teachers of the law. He would speak to the multitude, and to his disciples, saying: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." Thus Jesus tried to reform the then church of Moses, but in the capacity of an ardent upholder of the old teachings, and not as a renegade from, or abrogator of, the law. He wanted to see more purity of heart and righteousness in practice. "For I say unto you," Jesus would say, "except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Does all this make him a Prophet and a true teacher and commentator on the old dispensation, or the bringer of a new dispensation? Is he a teacher of a Sermon, or a founder of a Sacrament, the well-established rite of the Pagan world? Dean Inge has very rightly said that the church named after him was never founded by Jesus. If the Pharisees and Scribes came, or sent their followers to him, they always did so to test his knowledge in the Mosaic religion, and never looked to him as one who came to found a new faith. I fail to find anything contrary to the above in any of his subsequent utterances throughout his life. Decidedly he brought no new covenant. He did not preach the religion of "Atonement through Blood," but the religion of "Obedience to Commandments." With him the law was a

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blessing, and not a curse, as St. Paul would make it. The Sermon on the Mount teaches a creed of faith that meant actions, and not a faith without actions, as Luther thought. In a word, Jesus taught Islam, and not traditional Christianity. He was a thorough Muslim and a scrupulous doer of all that Islam teaches—that is to say, implicit submission to the Divine laws and complete obedience to the Commandments of God. Jesus could not reveal the whole truth. He had many things to say unto his disciples, but they were unable to hear them. He, however, gave them the good tidings of another great Prophet coming after him; the Spirit of Truth, he says, “will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.” Muhammad came and taught Islam¹ in its perfect form, and that was the religion of Jesus.

In short, Jesus gave his religion in his Sermon on the Mount in the following words: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” “The scribe asked Jesus: ‘Which is the First Commandment of all?’ And Jesus answered him: ‘The

¹ See Appendix No. 1.

First of all the Commandments is, Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength: this is the First Commandment. And the second is like unto it—Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other Commandment greater than these.’ And the scribe said unto him: ‘Well master thou hast said the truth, for there is one God, and there is none other but He. And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.’ And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, ‘Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.’ ”¹

If entry into the kingdom of heaven is the main object of following religion, we can easily find out the religion of Jesus. A scribe who said, “there is one God, and there is none other than He,” could be near the kingdom of God in the judgment of Jesus. The reply of Jesus to the Tempter was the same: “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.” It discloses the true Muslim belief, and a true Muslim heart.

JESUS DISOWNS GODHOOD.—Jesus never claimed Godhood himself. I have read the Synoptic writings many a time with all the reverence that Jesus can claim from a Muslim for a prophet. With all the liberal interpretation I can put on his words, I can find

¹ Mark xii. 28-33.

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nothing in them which suggests that he is a deity. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."¹ "Why callest thou me good, none is good save one, that is, God." "This is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." "The Lord our God is one Lord."² "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani—O God, O God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Utterances like these cannot come from God's mouth. They do not befit Divine lips. If Muslims are unable to find any trace of Godhood in Jesus, they have reason. Our conception of God is very sublime. "Allah is He besides Whom there is no God, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting, by Whom all subsist; slumber does not overtake Him nor sleep; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend out of His knowledge except what He pleases; His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them tires Him not, and He is the Most High."³ Contrary to it, Jesus admits the limit of his knowledge and power. He also says: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." "Of myself I can do nothing"; "of that day and that hour knoweth no man . . . neither the son." "If any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not; for I come not to judge the world."

¹Matt. iv. 10.

²Mark xii. 29.

³Qur-ān ii. 255.

MIRACLES OF JESUS.—We read of some of his miracles. They can hardly substantiate his claim to Godhood, for he says he performs them by the help of God. If he raised Lazarus to life, as the report goes, he had first to pray to God and then to thank Him on being heard. He would admit his inability to do anything without the help of God. Whenever he worked a miracle he would say: "I cast out devils by the finger of God;"¹ "I thank thee, O Father, that Thou hast heard me, and I know that Thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it that they may believe that Thou hast sent me."² "I do nothing of myself."³

Besides, there is no miracle in his record the equal of which cannot be found in Hebrew literature. A dead child was brought to life by Elisha⁴ in a way that explains the secret of the phenomenon. The same applies to some similar miracles of Jesus. The soul of the dead child "came unto him by the words of Elijah."⁵ Naaman was cured of leprosy by Elisha,⁶ and Jacob got his eyesight when Joseph put his hand on his eyes.⁷ "A handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse" was increased by Elijah to feed a family for many days.⁸ Elisha did the same wonder: the contents of a small pot of oil were made to fill all the vessels borrowed abroad of the neighbours.⁹ Jesus walked on the sea, but the

¹ Luke xi. 20.

² John xi. 42.

³ John viii. 28.

⁴ 2 Kings iv. 36.

⁵ 1 Kings xvii. 23.

⁶ 2 Kings v. 3.

⁷ Gen. xlv. 4, 30.

⁸ 1 Kings xvii. 15.

⁹ 2 Kings iv. 2, 4.

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elements also obeyed the orders of others. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and made it dry land, and the waters were divided.¹ The bearers of the Ark of the Lord, at the instance of Joshua, found the water of Jordan "cut off from the waters that come down from above," though it "overflowed all its banks all the time of harvest."² Elisha took the mantle of Elijah...and smote the waters and they were divided.³ Besides, false prophets and the other sons of the Israelites could work miracles like Jesus. As he himself says, his disciples could work wonders if they had in them faith as a grain of mustard seed.

HIS SONSHIP.—Certain of the Christian Fathers from the convent of Najran (Arabia) went to Medina in the days of the Prophet to discuss with him the merits of the two faiths, and on their inquiry as to his opinion on the sonship of Jesus, he remarked: "Jesus was a mortal to all intents and purposes, and shared his origin in common with the other Prophets. He was as much a son of God as other Prophets." No student of the Bible can honestly deny the truth of the remark. Jesus ate and drank and was subject to all the physical consequences of eating and drinking. He evinced human infirmities and could not overcome the various demands of nature. The Qur-ān refers to it when arguing that Jesus and his mother were ordinary human beings. "The Messiah, son of Mary, is but an apostle; apostles before him have indeed passed away; and his mother was a truthful woman; they both used to eat food."⁴ In this respect he was

¹ Exod. xiv. 21.

³ 2 Kings ii. 8.

² Josh. iii. 10, 16.

⁴ Holy Qur-ān, v. 75; Matt. ii. 19.

as much a son of man as other Prophets. No doubt, he called himself the son of God, but he also called himself the son of man.¹ The words "son of God" in Judaic terminology meant nearness to God only. The God of the house of Jacob used the same language: "Israel is my son, even my first born," said God through Moses;² so He called David and Solomon.³ The judges were called even "God" by David,⁴ and fatherless children were given the consolation to take God as their father. If the judges were the children of the Most High, the wicked were also the same through rebellion.⁵ With literature pregnant with such phraseology, under which God has been addressed as Heavenly Father by all Christians, one fails to understand how anyone can claim a special kind of Divinity as has been done for the son of Mary, simply because he was also called "Son of God." "My Father and your Father"; "Our Father in heaven"; "my God and your God" are expressions that would rather establish the Brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God, than any claim of divinity for Jesus.

HIS BIRTH.—His birth, even if accepted to have occurred as the popular Christian belief has it, is, again, not peculiar to him. I will not refer here to what we read in the Mystery cult. If Jupiter in the Pagan world could be the father of "parcel of sons" through virgin birth, God could be born at least once through a virgin birth. In such words Justin Martyr meets

¹ Matt. ii. 19.

² Exod. iv. 22.

³ Ps. lxxxix. 27; 1 Chron. xxii. 10

⁴ Ps. lxxxii. 6.

⁵ Isa. xxx. 1.

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the taunt of the Pagans as to the birth of God in Jesus. In the Bible I read of other births without parents. Adam was from God, and has been styled "Son of God" by Luke; Jesus had a mother, but Adam was without any parent. And the same may be said of Melchisedec: "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."¹ "For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham . . . and blessed him. To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God."²

Jesus, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, is only a priest after the order of Melchisedec, who was "made like unto the Son of God." Jesus had a mother, had descent, had beginning of days and end of life, but Melchisedec had none. Apart from Pauline literature, the Jesus of the Synoptic writings is not virgin-born. Jesus has been called the son of David. He could not be a descendant of David unless he comes from the loins of Joseph the carpenter. The genealogy given in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke says the same thing. The descent of Jesus to Abraham is through the husband of Mary. At least St. Luke is very clear on the point: "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph which was

¹ Heb. vi. 20.

² Ibid. vii. 1—3.

the son of Heli." The parenthetical clause is admittedly a subsequent addition. Jesus is believed to have fulfilled in himself some of the prophecies which were made in respect of a descendant of David. If he does not spring from the loins of Joseph, how can those prophecies be fulfilled in him ?

HIS EXPRESSIONS.—No doubt some of his expressions have caused difficulty to many in appreciating the true mission of Jesus. In interpreting them, we should not forget that Jesus was from the East. We Easterners think in metaphors and speak in similes, when we wish to become emphatic. An intelligent study of the other Prophets from the East will show that Jesus did not speak of some exclusive possession; he spoke as other Prophets had spoken in different accents and stresses. Any person who believed that man was created after the image of God would use, as Jesus did, the expression "the Father sent me." Every man possesses divine elements in him, so the Qur-ān says. All that is noble and good in us is of God, and so God is in us. In the same way the Father was in Jesus. "No man cometh to the Father but by me," is another expression which Jesus has used, and so have the others. Prophets always make their appearance at a time when humanity is at its lowest ebb morally and spiritually. They come to reclaim it. They find man estranged from God, and they come to bring him back to his Lord. People are groping in the dark wilderness of wickedness, and Prophets hold the torch of light to righteousness and virtue. They walk humbly with God, and one who cares to approach his Creator must follow them.

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Is not, then, the Prophet of the moment justified in saying, just as Jesus said: "No man cometh to the Father but by me"? Every prophet in his own time can say so if he, and only he, has been raised in his time by God to bring others to Him. The same has been spoken of the Prophet Muhammad in the Qur-ān: "Say, if you love God, then follow me. God will love you and forgive your faults."

ATONEMENT.—The doctrine of Atonement is another Pagan legacy to the religion called after the name of Jesus. Had he come to wash away man's sin with his blood, his conduct would have been quite other than that of which we read on the occasion of his crucifixion. We find a change in all his movements after he hears of his arrest as contemplated by the Jews. He avoids public notice, whereas one who came to redeem the fallen should have given himself up into the hands of his enemies willingly; and Judas Iscariot would thereby have been saved the ignominy of betraying his master. If the scene at Calvary was a Divine Dispensation, and the Grace of Blood had been ordained to give revelation to a New Epiphany, the betrayer should have been blessed rather than cursed. If the Son came with full divine knowledge to work out a scheme of regeneration, he must have approached the task with joyful heart; but we read the following: "Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; *nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.* And he cometh unto

the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."

The italics in the above show rather a forced consent than a willing one—a heart compelled to resign itself to fate, when no alternative is left, rather than a heart that welcomes the work which the "Father hath given him to finish."

On occasions like that the mythical conceptions cut a better figure. They would have gone to the Cross willingly.

The teachings of Jesus give the lie also to the theory of atonement. The cross came to absolve us, if St. Paul is to be accepted, from the demands of the Law which "entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound."¹ If Jesus came to make us "free from sin," and we became the servants of righteousness, why should he enjoin every person to teach the law and observe the commandments? To the young man who came to him and asked how could he have eternal life Jesus speaks of the Ten Commandments and orders him to observe them. In the same way he refers his own disciples to the Scribes, for they "are in the seat of Moses." In all his utterances there is not a single word which

¹ Rom. v. 20.

may give countenance to the theory of atonement. Much had been made of some of his words at his last Passover—"for this is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins." The words are simple, and do not carry any meanings to an Eastern mind which favour the new dispensation of the "blood." Jesus came like the other "begotten sons of God" to reclaim a fallen race which had once been redeemed through Moses. Like other Prophets, he came to reclaim humanity at a time when it had turned aside from God. Jesus met the same opposition that awaits every reformer in his own days. He met the same persecution which comes to the fate of every martyr to truth. His tribe had gone astray from the path of righteousness, and he came to reclaim it. His teachings were naturally distasteful to the wicked, and unpalatable to the unrighteous. The Rabbis were exposed, and the hollowness of the Pharisees shown. He thus incurred hatred of his own people, who began to plot his death, and this brought him to the cross. The fate of Jesus is the fate of every martyr to the right cause. He taught what he thought could reconcile a sinful man to the Creator. People had become accustomed "to clean the outside of the cup or platter," but he exhorted them to think more of cleaning their hearts. This was something new to everybody, and a *new testament for the remission of sins*. But the establishment of this seemingly new teaching demanded a very great sacrifice. He could not establish those principles of righteousness and godliness without his blood. Reformation has never

been worked out without the persecution of its advocates. The plant of human regeneration has always been watered to fruition with human blood. The killing of evil and the martyrdom of those who work against it, go hand in hand. Those who come to eradicate unrighteousness and iniquity from the world meet persecution. They die in the struggle, but they leave a new order of things behind them which achieves the deliverance of the coming generations after them. In short, mankind has been delivered from sin, from time to time, through the sufferings of the various Prophets of of God, and Jesus was one of them. To make his followers righteous was his sole aim, and he gave his life to the cause. He died, therefore, for sinners, but in the sense here explained; and the "remission of sins" come, through his blood, to those who obey his teachings, but not through belief in his blood. Great teachers die for humanity. They show light to the benighted world, but at the expense of their own life. Mankind is redeemed and its sins washed away by acting upon the principle, so dearly established and taught by teachers, and not by the belief that the great martyr gave his life for washing away its sins.

RESURRECTION.—The resurrection is another myth forced upon the otherwise simple and human life of Jesus. We read it in the New Testament, but one should not forget that the Evangelists relate their own impressions of the case rather than what actually occurred. "Miracles never happen," says Renan, "but in times and countries in which they are believed and before persons disposed to believe them." Excepting

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St. Matthew, the other Evangelists were not eye-witnesses of the scene. Their first authority were men whose low intellect and want of common sense often earned rebuke from their Master, who was often compelled to explain his meanings in parables and similes. "The sailor-like simplicity of the Apostles, their quarrels for precedence at court, their childish superstitions, their bewilderment under the flood of the Master's eloquent metaphors," their credulous nature, their strong faith in the establishment in a material kingdom in which they would be rewarded for their sacrifices, and consequently their readiness to clothe every event of the Master's life with miraculous garb—all go a long way to show that they were not the narrators of actualities but story-tellers of what they themselves thought of the case. The miracle of the resurrection has aroused suspicion even in the minds of many a dignitary in the Church, which from time to time found its expression in somewhat unequivocal language. "It is quite possible that Our Lord's resurrection," says Archbishop Temple, "may be found hereafter to be no miracle at all in the scientific sense, but the natural issue of the physical as law always at work." Another Bishop of the Anglican Church argues that St. Paul clearly did not believe in a carnal and literal resurrection, but only in a spiritual one. A little more courage on the part of these two responsible custodians of the Church conscience would have enabled them to speak in equal terms with the Rev. A. J. Waldron, who raised a storm of criticism by announcing on Easter Sunday, 1914, that he did not believe in the physical resurrection of Jesus.

Whatever may be the views of these teachers of the Church religion, they cannot come to a right conclusion so long as they believe in the death of Jesus on the cross. Archbishop Temple, perhaps, was nearing the truth, but he could not explain his mind in words free from the graceful trappings of the ecclesiastic. This "natural" issue of physical laws always at work was resuscitation, and not the resurrection of Jesus. He did not die on the cross. Death-like swoon overtook him, from which he recovered and went to Galilee in the guise of a gardener.

In the light of present-day learning, one should not be carried away by the illusions of the fishermen Apostles. They might be honest, but this does not prove the validity of their inferences. Did Jesus die on the cross? Or did he come down alive; and was he nursed back to health? These are the problems which every intelligent person should solve for himself in the light of the following facts:—

1. In the Syriac version we read, "he sighed with his breath," instead of, "he gave up the ghost". Even if there were no variant, the sentence "he gave up the ghost" may be taken to express the minds of a deluded eye only and not reality.

2. He remained hanging on the cross only for three hours, instead of three days, and his legs were not broken, which could have caused his death otherwise; while those of the two thieves who were crucified along with him were broken to be assured of their death.

3. Blood and water flowed when a spear was plunged into his side, which showed that the vivifying

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principle which causes circulation of blood in the body did still exist.

4. The Roman centurion also doubted.

No pains have been spared to explain away the above-mentioned facts, which prove swoon rather than death. But supposing Jesus did die, and afterwards rose again from the dead. It was a miracle and a sign worked out for "an evil and adulterous generation," as Jesus styles the Pharisees, "that seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonah."¹ The unbelieving "generation of vipers" also knew it, for they "came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again."² The sign of rising from the dead was decidedly for the "adulterous generation," and not for the disciples. But why strenuous efforts were made to conceal it from those to whom the sign of the Prophet Jonah was to be given is a mystery still to be explained by the believers in the Resurrection. Jesus appears in the clothes of a gardener when he comes out of the tomb, the disguise being so complete that he is not recognized even by his own intimate friends, Mary Magdalene and others. On the way to Emmaus he meets the two disciples. He speaks and goes along with them the whole of the journey, and still he remains unidentified until some peculiar actions and words on the breaking of the bread disclose him. If he rose from the dead and the wonderful event was, to quote Jesus, "to bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me,"³ the world would have been at his feet

¹ Matt. xii. 39.

² Ibid. xxvii. 62-63.

³ John v. 36.

and borne testimony to his divinity, had he appeared to the Romans and the Jews. I, for one, fail to appreciate the Divine polity which prompted him to conceal the sign from the very persons for whose benefit it was designed. But the reason is not far to seek. He certainly did not come out of the sepulchre as conqueror of death, but like one who escaped the penalty of the law and was afraid of being caught. His conduct subsequent to the events at Calvary is consistent with this hypothesis.

Moreover, if Jesus came out of the tomb in compliance with the words he uttered a few days before the event at Calvary, the words remain unfulfilled if he died on the cross. "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly ; so shall the Son of Man be three days and nights in the heart of the earth." Jonah did not die before he was swallowed by the whale. He was alive when swallowed ; he remained so in the belly three days and three nights ; he came out of it alive. Jesus had to enter into the heart of the earth like Jonah. He might have become senseless like Jonah, but he should not have died on the cross, otherwise the sign of Jonah's was not given. He must descend alive from the cross to enter into the grave in a living condition and leave it alive, but if he died, the prophecy remains unfulfilled.

One should not wonder at his sudden disappearance in clouds. The place of the supposed ascension was on the top of the hill, as I was shown, when I went there. To those who have been to hill stations, it is an everyday experience. People walk in clouds and sometimes become shrouded into them when the clouds

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are of sufficient density. They seem to disappear into clouds, or so it seems to those at a distance. This I say from my own experience. I have walked in clouds on hills. Jesus could not stay any longer in Jerusalem. He desired to save himself from the further persecution of his enemies, so he disappeared from the scene and hastened to an Essenic monastery by the brook Kareth, as the legend published by George Moore shows. The legend can be traced to the second or third century. Jesus had spent his younger days in the same monastery.

His mission was for the "lost sheep of the house of Israel". In Judea there were two of the lost tribes, and when they became his enemies, Jesus left them to search for the other ten and disappeared from Judea, and the religion he began to promulgate on the lines of Mosaic dispensation remained incomplete, which, however, became perfected some six centuries after him and only through the ministry of Muhammad.¹

¹ See *Al-Islam*, Chap. VII.

THE RELIGION OF THE CHURCH AND THE CHURCH MYSTERIES

THE Religion of the Church is entirely distinct from the Religion of Jesus. The difference between the two, in a way, is the same as exists between the Jesus of the Gospels and the Jesus of the Pauline literature; the former is a miracle-working and sermon-giving Hebrew Prophet, who lays stress on the fulfilment of the law and the Prophets, the latter is a deity of the ancient world crucified for the sins of the human race, rose from the dead and held a last Supper. One gives us the Religion of Sermon and the other the Cult of Sacrament, which is more ancient than the worship of the sun. It is said that St. Paul is the first witness of Christianity, and that consequently his writings must bear a true testimony to the Faith of the Master. No doubt we read of St. Paul in the Acts of the Apostles, but the author of the Epistles could not be the same man. St. Paul was in constant touch with the Elders at Jerusalem, but the writer of the Epistles seems to have learnt nothing from them about the miracles, deeds and words of Jesus. He speaks constantly of the Crucifixion and Resurrection—the two characteristic features of every pagan deity in the Mystery Cult. But “he never appeals to any

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distinctive act of the Lord, he never quotes the things of Jesus in the Gospels as such, and never applies them where the words and conduct of Jesus would be most useful for strengthening his own views and deductions."¹ He appears to be a Greek ; he speaks and writes like a Greek. He seems to know very little of Hebrew literature. He quotes the Greek text, even where such text differs from the Hebrew text. But even if Saul of Tarsus—the Paul of the Acts—is the author of the Pauline literature, he has no business to go beyond the Master. Traditional Christianity got its superstructure from the said Epistles, but as it is only a replica of the Mystery Cult and resembles it in all its features, and therefore taken from it, as the subsequent pages will show, it cannot be taken as the Religion of Jesus. He came to demolish Paganism and not to reproduce it under his name, as the Church after his name did.

I make here a humble attempt to trace the origin of the Church religion. I demand from my readers a patient and thoughtful perusal of these pages. I request my Christian friends to survey the whole situation, and consider the facts here stated. If they do find that most of the received doctrines, practices and sacred Christian festivals did originally belong to the Pagan world in their very form and shape centuries before Jesus appeared, while he himself seems to have no concern whatsoever with them, is it not time for his true followers to revise their belief, and see religious verities eye to

¹ Drews.

eye with others, who are not of their persuasion ? Religion, after all, is an individual concern— a matter of conscience ; it should not be affected by any vulgar or mundane consideration. The world, as it stands, is at a critical juncture ; ours are the days of reason and culture. Blind faith, blissful as it may be, should not be our guide, especially when the world is inclining towards universalism ; the good of the human race depends chiefly upon unification, while religious differences are the chief factor of separation and discord. Undoubtedly it is their love for Jesus which till now has so tenaciously attached the Christians to the teachings of the Church ; but if the perusal of these pages moves their honest judgment to see that their doctrinal beliefs go contrary to Jesus, and divest him of all the beauty and glory to which he is rightly entitled, should they not discard them, simply out of respect and regard for that noble Personality, if not for other reasons ? We Muslims are in no way behind others in our love for the great Nazarene, and the same love actuates me to write these pages in order to create a sort of reconciliation between his two sects of followers, the Muslims and the Christians.

Man in the whole creation has happened to be a worshipping animal. His advanced consciousness creates in him hope and fear to an extent unknown to other animals. These two passions make him bow before many man-made gods, if the true consciousness of religion has not dawned upon his nascent mind. Animism, Spiritism and then element-worship played a great rôle in this direction in ancient days, afterwards

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becoming merged in star-worship or sun-worship. This great luminary is, to the superficial eye, the primeval source of all life, the origin of all manifestation in the universe, the vivifier and resurrector of dead nature, the upbringer of all vegetation, the mover of all activities, and, in short, the bestower of all blessings. Would it, then, be a matter of surprise if the ancient world, with a mind not sufficiently developed to appreciate the true Deity, bowed down to the Supreme Luminary, and became deeply affected by the various phases he underwent, making them occasions of their sorrows and rejoicings in the form of various festivals? Would they not be filled with fear and apprehension when this source of all life, through his light and warmth, began to decline—as it begins to do after the Autumnal Equinox—as if fallen within the clutches of the demon of darkness? He could not show his face as long as man wished or wanted him to show it, the night becoming longer and longer. His decline continued until it reached a climax on a certain day—the Winter Solstice. The God had gone to the lowest abyss of the underworld. But the change occurred, and the young God again came to the horizon to ascend, as if born again in the underground chamber. December 25th was thus taken in the sky-scripture to be the date of the birth of the Sun. Their joy would know no limit, as after that the God of Light would no longer be declining but would increase in his power, giving more heat and light each day. So he continued, but on a sudden he came to a standstill again. Till that day he was growing strong, and seemed to recover the whole loss; days were increased until they became

of equal length with night—the time of the Vernal Equinox. But now the Sun seems to be impeded in his progress. The demon of darkness will not allow him to go further ; a great struggle ensues between the two deities, and the Lord of Light has perhaps succumbed to the Prince of Darkness. But lo ! the fight ended, the God of Light comes victorious out of the fatal struggle, and Satan is defeated. A day of great rejoicing, the day of the victory of God over the Forces of Darkness. Is it, therefore, a matter of wonder and surprise if the days immediately following the Winter Solstice and Vernal Equinox—the Christmas and Easter of our days—became the days of great festivities, the day of the birth of the Sun-God and the day of his victory over the Prince of Darkness, in the whole pre-Christian world ? It should not be forgotten that, in the language of the Zodiac, the Sun enters the sign of the Scorpion on September 23rd, when darkness prevails, and he is in the sign of the Ram at the time of the Spring Equinox, after which he is in his ascension. It was quite natural, then, if the Scorpion, with “his barbed tail,” in the terms of mythology, stood for the Prince of Darkness, and the Lamb—the Ram—for the God of Light, even before the birth of Jesus.

Sun-worship, unfortunately, was the most popular creed at the advent of Jesus in almost all the countries into which his religion was introduced later on. The tree, when it was tender, was planted in a most uncongenial soil, and the propagation of the faith fell into hands unworthy of it ; and that at a time when its true adherents had hardly become strong and competent

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in the truths inculcated by the Holy Teacher. Saul of Tarsus—the self-made apostle of the Gentiles—who was an implacable enemy to the Master and a persecutor of his followers in the lifetime of Jesus, had no chance to learn anything from him. A renegade from Judaism, the hatred of his own people left Saul, afterwards Paul, no chance to work among the lost tribes, to reclaim whom only, Jesus had come. Paul was driven to the Gentiles, the people beyond the pale of the Hebraic law. He had no other resource, therefore, but to ignore the law when he had to work with those outside the law, and to observe it when with the people of the law, as he himself says: “To them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, that I might gain them that are without the law.”¹

The door of innovation, once opened, remained ajar for ever. A thoughtful study of the whole Pauline literature shows that his inspiration came from sources other than those of the real Christianity. The subsequent builders of the new Church so founded, found the Pauline method of incorporation from the current creed a most efficacious instrument to win favour for the new faith, and make it popular among the others. Within a few centuries the faith of the Master lost all its pristine beauty, and became one with the current cult. Is it, therefore, a matter of surprise if the Cambridge Conference of the Modernists in 1917 was of opinion that the Church of Christ, as it stands, was never founded by Jesus?

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 20, 21.

The Mediterranean Sea was in those days a sort of lake, surrounded by countries under Roman rule, all of which had the same religion practically. Though different parts of the then known world were far asunder and separated from each other by natural barriers, yet they believed in the same faith, observed the same rites and celebrated the same festivals, more or less on the same dates. Curiously enough, they had the same traditions and the same mythology, the difference, as a matter of course, being in names. Asia, Europe and Africa being contiguous to each other, could not fail to assimilate rites, rituals and beliefs from each other. But to his great surprise, Cortez, the first Spaniard to penetrate Mexico, found the same religion there in all its features. In Peru and among the American Indians, north and south of the Equator, similar legends are, and were, to be found. This similarity has excited the wonderment of many a writer in the West. But the reason is obvious. The sun presents the same phenomenon everywhere in the Northern Hemisphere; its phases are the same, and occur on the same date in each country. Its rise and decline create the same effect; its appearance and disappearance, its weakness and its strength, must lead to the same phenomena and inspire the human imagination with the same ideas. Hence religions were the same everywhere. At the appearance of Jesus there were temples without end dedicated to gods like Apollo or Dionysus among the Greeks, Hercules among the Romans, Mithra among the Persians, Adonis and Attis in Syria and Phrygia; Osiris, Isis and Horus in Egypt; Baal and Astarte

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among the Babylonians and Carthaginians, and so forth.

All these deities were sun-gods, and of all or nearly all of them, as Edward Carpenter says, it was believed that—

(1) They were born on or very near Christmas Day.

(2) They were born of a Virgin Mother.

(3) And in a cave or underground chamber.

(4) They led a life of toil for mankind.

(5) They were called by the names of Light-Bringer, Healer, Mediator, Saviour and Deliverer.

(6) They were, however, vanquished by the Powers of Darkness.

(7) They descended into Hell or the Underworld.

(8) They rose again from the dead, and became the pioneers of mankind to the Heavenly World.

(9) They founded Communions of Saints and Churches, to which disciples were received by baptism.

(10) They were commemorated by Eucharistic meals.

To elucidate the subject, I think I shall be justified if I sketch briefly an account of some of these deities.

MITHRA.—Mithraism came from Persia, where it seems to have been flourishing for about six hundred years, the cult reaching Rome about 70 B.C. It spread through the Empire, and extended to Great Britain. Remains of Mithraic monuments have been discovered at York, Chester and other places. Mithra was believed to be a great *Mediator between God and man*. *His birth took place in a cave on December 25th. He*

*was born of a virgin. He travelled far and wide; he had twelve disciples; he died in the service of humanity. He was buried, but rose again from the tomb. His resurrection was celebrated with great rejoicing.*¹ His great festivals were the Winter Solstice and the Vernal Equinox—Christmas and Easter. He was called *Saviour*, and sometimes figured as a *Lamb*. People were initiated into his cult through *baptism*. *Sacramental feasts* were held in his remembrance. These statements may excite surprise in the mind of the reader of to-day; he may be disposed to doubt their genuineness, as while on one side he reads the story of the Jesus of the Church, of the legend of Mithra on the other, Mithraism has left no traces in the world, though it was so powerful in the third century A.D. that, had it not been suppressed in Rome and Alexandria by the Christians with physical force, as has been admitted by St. Jerome, it would have left no chance for the flourishing of Christianity; and that it died only when most of its legends became incorporated in the simple faith of Jesus,² and the Church lore fully saturated with Mithraic colours, so much so that Tertullian had to admit the fact, though in a way befitting his position. He says that the learned in his days considered Mithraism and Christianity identical in all but name. St. Jerome and other Early Fathers became puzzled at the similarity existing between the two faiths, but their ingenuity ascribed it to the machinations of the Devil to mock their faith.

¹ Robertson, *Pagan Christs*, p. 338.

² *Ibid.* p. 350.

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It will not be out of place if I quote certain of the observations made by these Early Fathers on the subject. They leave no room for any doubt or conjecture; they, on the other hand, conclusively prove the case. The following is from Tertullian:—

“The Devil, whose business is to prevent the truth, mimicks the exact circumstances of the Divine Sacraments in the Mysteries of Idols. He himself *baptizes some*, that is to say, his believers and followers; he promises *forgiveness of sins from the sacred fount*, and *thereby initiates them* into the religion of Mithra. Thus he marks the forehead of his own soldiers, thus he celebrates the *oblation of bread*; he brings in the symbol of *resurrection*, and wins the crown with the sword. He limits his chief priest to a single marriage, he even has his virgins and ascetics.”¹

Justin Martyr says:—

“The apostles, in the commentaries written by themselves which we call Gospels, have delivered down to us how that Jesus thus commanded them: ‘He having taken bread, after that he had given thanks, said: Do this in commemoration of Me; this is My body; also having taken the cup and returned thanks, He said: This is My blood, and delivered it unto them alone;’ which things the evil spirit have taught to be done out of memory in the mysteries and ministrations of Mithra. For that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated,

¹ *Our Sun-God*, p. 179. Italics are mine.

you either know or can learn."¹

Cortez, the explorer of Mexico, also complained that the Devil had positively taught to the Mexicans the same things which God taught to the Christians.

St. Jerome admits that Mithra and Baal were the same, and called sons of the Lord. He says: "The Sun whom the heathen worship under the names of Lord Sun (Baal Samus) and Son of the Lord (Bor Belus)."

In this connection I am tempted to say a few words as to the supposed date of the birth of Jesus.

Dean Farrar, in his *Life of Christ*, has very rightly remarked that there are no satisfactory proofs to locate the birth of Jesus on December 25th. The Bible is silent on the subject, though it makes mention of the shepherds being that night with their flocks in the fields of Bethlehem.² It makes it more difficult to accept December 25th as the real date of the Nativity, December being the height of the rainy season in Judæa, when neither flocks nor shepherds could have been by night in the fields of Bethlehem. Uesener says that the Feast of the Nativity was held originally on January 6th (the Epiphany), but in A.D. 353-4 the Pope Liberius altered it to December 25th, but there is no evidence of a Feast of the Nativity taking place at all before the fourth century A.D. It was not until A.D. 534 that Christmas Day and Epiphany were reckoned by the law-courts as "Dies Non."³

¹ Justin Martyr, *Apol. II.*

² Hastings, *Ency. of Rel. and Ethics*, art. "Christmas."

³ *Ibid.*

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The Greek Church, even to-day, does not observe Christmas on December 25th, but on January 7th. It was, however, not until the year A.D. 530 or thereabouts that a Scythian monk, Dionysius Exiguus, an abbot and astronomer, of Rome, was commissioned to fix the date and the year of the birth of Jesus.¹ He it was who assigned the day and the date and the month now accepted in Christendom. The said monk does not give the data that authorized him to fix December 25th as the day of the Nativity, but the very date, within a day or two, is the date of the supposed birth of many of the sun-gods.

According to the Julian Calendar, *this date is the date of the Nativity of the Sun*. Mithra, as I have said elsewhere, was born on the same date. Osiris, the Egyptian sun-god, according to Plutarch, was born on the 27th, and Horus, another sun-god, on the 28th of the same month, and Apollo as well on the same date, all these being various conceptions of the Sun-god in different countries where the worship of the sun was the popular creed, and the dates follow the Winter Solstice, when the sun, after reaching the lowest declension, begins to ascend again, being appropriate for his birth.

There are some other dates as well, in the Catholic Calendar, that give rise to the same presumption, that sky-scriptures, and not the Sacred Scriptures, are to be searched for their origin. Such are the Assumption of the Virgin, her Nativity, Annunciation and Purification, the birthday of John

¹ *Pagan and Christian Creeds*, p. 26.

the Baptist, Candlemas and Lent. The Assumption of the Virgin—the Festival in honour of the miraculous ascent of Mary to heaven—occurs on August 15th, the date of the total disappearance of the Zodiacal sign Virgo into the rays of the Sun, as if taken away to heaven and disappearing from the human eye. The Nativity of the Virgin, again, takes place on September 7th, the very day when the same cluster, Virgo, reappears on the horizon. As to the connection between the Zodiacal sign and the Virgin, I will speak later. The word “Lent,” that comes from the German *Lenz*, meaning “Spring,” clearly shows why the festival in the Christian Calendar comes in the days of spring. The Annunciation of the Virgin—the Angel’s salutation to the Virgin—occurs on March 25th, the day after the Spring Equinox. The day was to be fixed as a consequence of the day of Nativity being assigned to December 25th. Candlemas is the Festival of the Purification of the Virgin, which takes place on February 2nd, corresponding to the similar pagan festival of *Juno Februata* (Purified). It took place in the same month in Roman days, and included candle processions. The day allotted for the birth of John the Baptist is the day of the Summer Solstice. If Jesus had to represent the Sun in ascension, and his cousin the Sun in declension, the dates of their respective births could not better be chosen. After Christmas the Sun increases in his light and warmth, and after June 23rd, the birthday of John the Baptist, he decreases. The force of these remarks becomes much more strengthened when we consider the following

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words, which the writer of John iii. 30 attributes to the Baptist: "He (Jesus) must increase, but I must decrease."

The Protestant Church does not recognize these ceremonies, but the religion reached them through hands that had to grapple with sunworship, and they saw their victory in incorporating most of the current cults into their own faith in order to *make* it a popular religion.

The rebirth of the sun on December 25th from a Virgin womb—and in like manner the birth of all Sun-gods, Mithra, Osiris, Horus, Bacchus—is the theme of many a legend of the olden days. The Greeks, in the worship of Mithra at Rome, used to celebrate the birth of the luminary by a midnight service, coming out of the inner shrine and crying: "The Virgin has brought forth, the light is waxing."¹

At the commencement of the Christian Era the Zodiacal constellation upon the eastern horizon was the sign Virgo. The constellation has always been represented by a woman with a sheaf of corn in her hand. On the Globe of Abuzar, the famous Arabian astronomer, the Virgin with the child has been portrayed with the same cluster. The figures of the infant Saviour Horus and his Virgin Mother were also found on the margin of the Alexandrian Calendar, close to the same sign. The interior of the dome of the Temple of Denderah exhibited a map of the northern hemisphere of the sky and Zodiac, where again on the margin, close by the said constellation, stands a figure of Isis with Horus in her arms. This

¹ Dr. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, ii. p. 4.

all goes to show that the Egyptians, as well as the other ancient astronomers, did recognize some connection between Virgo and the Virgin. The Virgo cluster being on the eastern horizon at the birth of the Sun, led to the idea of the birth of the deity from the Virgin Mother.

I saw the figure of Isis with her Sacred Infant in the Municipal Museum of Alexandria, and there I also found the figure of the Madonna and the Child, the only difference between the two being that Horus was on the knees of Isis, while the Child was in the arms of the Virgin. The temples of the two Mother goddesses stood side by side in Alexandria in the fourth century of the Christian Era. The two ladies, though rivals to each other, received almost equal homage from the Christians and the Pagans of the day, their temples being equally frequented by the votaries of the two faiths.

The Emperor Hadrian, in a letter to Servianus concerning the inhabitants of Alexandria, remarks that "those who worship Serapis are likewise Christians; even those who style themselves the bishops of the Christ are devoted to Serapis (*Vosipiacus Vit. Saturninus*). Serapis was another conception of the Sun-God, as Macrobius tells us in the following words: "The city of Alexandria pays almost frantic worship to Serapis and Isis; nevertheless, they show that all this veneration is merely offered to the Sun." We read nothing of the Madonna and the Child, either in the evangelical record or in the writings of Paul and other apostles. The conception most assuredly came from Alexandria to the Western world, where the Mother

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Goddess with the Child Redeemer Horus had been honoured centuries before the Christian Era, and worshipped under the names of "Our Lady," "Queen of Heaven," "Mother Goddess" and so forth—words that were afterwards used in reference to Mary, the Mother Goddess.

Isis was not the only Virgin Mother worshipped in the olden days. Osiris had also been believed to be born of Neith, the Virgin of the World, as the Egyptians called her, before Isis came to take her place. The sacred groves of Germany exhibited the image of the Goddess Hertha, a Virgin with a child in her arms, in the old Teutonic days. She also gave birth to a child that was of Immaculate Conception. She was impregnated by the Heavenly Spirit.

Frigga conceived of the All-Father, Odin, bore a son, Balder of Scandinavia, called the Healer and Saviour of Mankind.¹

The force of Cortez's remark quoted elsewhere becomes significant when we read the following in Kingsborough's famous book, *Antiquities of Mexico* :—

An ambassador was sent from heaven on an embassy to a Virgin of Tulan, called Chimalman . . . announcing that it was the will of God that she should conceive a son without connection with man, and having delivered her the message, he rose and left the house; and as soon as he had left it, she conceived a son, without connection with man, who was called Quetzalcoatl, who, they say, is the god of air. Further, it is explained that Quetzalcoatl sacrificed himself, drawing forth his own blood with thorns, and that the word Quetzalcoatl means "our well beloved son."²

¹ R. P. Knight, *Ancient Art and Mythology*, p. 22.

² *Antiquities of Mexico*, vol. vi. p. 176.

I think I have said enough to enable my readers to understand that the conception of the virgin-born god and the other features of the Christian mysteries cannot safely be ascribed to Divine origin. Pagan literature is so full of it as to leave no doubt of itself being the origin of the Church mysteries. The Virgin Mother suckling her child is a common figure on the Mithraic monuments. So are other legends of these gods being born in a cave, which have been reported from Guatemala, the Antilles and other places in Central America.¹

The Chinese had also a Mother Goddess Virgin, with a child in her arms.² The ancient Etruscans had the same.³ In this connection Justin Martyr again comes with the same interesting apology when writing to the Emperor Adrian, the Devil being the only prop on which he could lay hands to strengthen him in his belief. He says :—

It having reached the Devil's ears that the prophets had foretold the coming of Christ (the Son of God), he set the heathen poets to bring forward a great many who should be called the sons of Jove. The Devil laying his scheme in this, to get men to imagine that the true history of Christ was of the same character as the prodigious fables related of the sons of Jove By declaring the Logos, the first begotten of God, Our Master Jesus, to be born of a virgin, without any human mixture, we (Christians) say no more in this than what you (Pagans) say of those whom you style the sons of Jove. For you need not be told what a parcel of sons the writers most in vogue among you assign to Jove As to the Son of God called Jesus, should we allow him to be no more than man, yet the title of the son of God is very justifiable,

¹ *Ethnograph. Amerika*, Leipzig, 1867, vol. i, p. 758.

² Rev. J. B. Gross, *Heathen Religion*, p. 60.

³ Inman, *Pagan and Christian Symbolism*, p. 27.

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upon account of his wisdom, considering that you (Pagans) have your Mercury in worship under the title of the Word, a messenger of God As to his (Jesus) being born of a virgin, you have your Perseus to balance that if Jupiter could send a parcel of sons out of virgin mothers ; the father in heaven assuredly could do the same at least in our case.¹

The ancient literature of India also speaks of Virgin Mothers and their sons being worshipped.

The Gospel of St. Matthew no doubt makes the birth of Jesus a fulfilment of a prophecy by Isaiah,² which it quotes in the following words : “ Behold a *virgin* shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”³ But the oldest manuscripts of Isaiah do not read “ virgin,” but “ young woman.” And the original is not “ shall conceive,” but “ is with child”—*i. e.*, had already conceived. Moreover, it does not state that “ they shall call” his name Emmanuel or Immanuel, but “ thou shalt,” it being a command to King Ahaz so to call a child about to be born ; which child, as an encouragement to the King, Isaiah prophesied would be a boy, and therefore a sign of good luck. And the Child was called—Jesus.

“ The fact that in the later versions of the Hebrew, such as the Septuagint and Vulgate, the word used for ‘ young woman ’ has been altered into ‘ virgin ’ is very significant. The misrepresentation of Isaiah’s reference to a young woman, who, at the time the prophet spoke, was about to bear a child . . . is clear

¹ Adol, I. Ch. xxii.

² Isa. vii. 14.

³ Matt. i. 23.

evidence of an attempt to connect a presumably real Jesus with the Sun-God," all of whose other incarnations came from a Virgin Mother. The other circumstances mentioned in connection with the birth of Jesus lead to the same conclusion.

In other Gospels, Jesus is represented as being born in a stable, that stable being, according to some, in a cave. This is a reference to the fact that at the time of the birth of the Sun, the constellation directly under the earth was that of Capricornis, which was also called the stable of Augeas. Hence the saying of the Fathers that the Christ came as a second Hercules to clear out the stables of Augeas.¹

We are told that the Magi came from the east in search of a king whose star they had seen in the east, and that star went before them and stood over where the young child was. Christians say that these Magi were three kings.

Now if, on a clear evening, about the commencement of a new year, we look eastward, we see the most glorious of all the constellations mounting the sky. And the three stars so conspicuously set together in Orion's belt are pointing downwards to the east from which they came, as if signifying the advent of a marvel. "And the marvel comes. For in a direct line with those three stars, Sirius, the brightest of all the Host of Heaven, is soon seen rising in the East."²

The Egyptians used to set their Calendar by the heliacal rising of Sirius, and the Dog Star was accordingly known as the Herald of the Sun. And the

¹ *Our Sun-God*, p. 148.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 149, 150.

old name given to the three stars in the belt of Orion was that of *the three Kings*. It was therefore true that the three Kings had "seen His star in the East," the herald proclaiming the advent of the "King of Kings." In the face of these facts of sky-scriptures—and they are facts, and not mere theories and conjectures—the birth of the Sun on December 25th from the Virgin Mother—the appearance of the Virgo—Virgin—at that time on the eastern horizon (the constellation under the earth being Capricorn, called the stable of Augeas), and the rising of Sirius with three stars in Orion's belt called three kings;—could there be any doubt that the writers of the Synoptic Gospels received their inspiration more from the Mithraic cult than from the Holy Ghost, when they gave us the story of the birth of Jesus? The inference becomes conclusive when we find the phraseology of the Church in the West to be derived altogether from the same source.

I need not give here a detailed account of the other Sun-Gods, but I will mention some of the distinctive features in their stories which have a special bearing on certain of the Church beliefs. Osiris was born on December 29th. He was a *great traveller*. He tamed people *by gentleness* and not by force. He discovered corn *and wine*. He was *betrayed by Typhon, slain and dismembered*. He was *interred, but came again to life*. In the Mysteries of Osiris, his Image was placed in a box and brought forth before the worshippers with cries of "*Osiris is risen!*"

Adonis, the Syrian God, born of a Virgin, was killed

and rose again in the spring. Every year *the maidens wept for Adonis* (Ezekiel viii. 14), *and then rejoiced over his resurrection*. Attis, the Phrygian God, was also born of a Virgin named Nana. He was bled to death at the foot of a pine-tree. *His blood renewed the fertility of the earth, and thus brought a new life to humanity*. He also rose from the dead.....In celebrating his death and resurrection, his image was fastened to a pine-tree on March 24th, and the day was called the "*Day of Blood*," since on that day the deity was bled to death. The Image was then laid in a tomb with wailing and mourning, but the coming night changed sorrow to joy. The tomb was *found to be empty on the next day, when the festival of the resurrection was celebrated*. These mysteries seem to have included a sacramental meal and a baptism of blood.¹

Quetzalcoatlé, the Mexican Saviour, was born of a Virgin, Chimalman. The Virgin Mother received the message of being the Mother of a Son, without any connection with man, through an embassy from heaven. She conceived. Quetzalcoatlé—the word in that language means "our beloved son"—also fasted forty days and was tempted. He was crucified, when the sun was darkened and withheld its light. His second coming was looked for so eagerly that when Cortez appeared the Mexicans greeted him as the returning God.²

Bacchus, sometimes called Dionysius, was born of a virgin named Demeter on December 25th. Her

¹ Dr. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, iv. p. 229.

² Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*, vol. i. p. 60.

other name was Semele.

Evil having spread over the earth, the God of gods was begged to save mankind. Jupiter hearkened to the prayer, and declared that *his son will redeem the world from its misery*. He promised a *Liberator* to the earth, and Bacchus came as *the Saviour*. He was called *the only begotten son*. "It is I," so says the Lord Bacchus to mankind, "who guide you; it is I who protect you, and who save you; I who am the Alpha and Omega."¹ He was also a great traveller, and brought the gift of wine to mankind. It will remind the reader of the first miracle of Jesus when he converted water into wine. "Suffering was common to all the sons of Jove," as Justin Martyr says, and for this reason they were called "The Slain Ones," "Saviours" and "Redeemers." Bacchus was also slain for redeeming humanity, and was therefore called "The Slain One," "The Sin Bearer," "The Redeemer." His death, followed by resurrection, was celebrated with festivities of a horrible nature. Then was celebrated the representation of *the passion of Bacchus, dead, descended into hell and re-arisen*. Years ago, I could not understand why the birthday of the Prince of Righteousness and an ascetic, as Jesus was, could be celebrated in the mode in which it has been celebrated in Christendom from mediæval times. But if the story of Bacchus—like those of other Sun-Gods—be indeed the genesis of the story of Jesus, it is not improbable that a portion of the Bacchanalian orgies found its way into the Christmas festivities in certain quarters.

¹ See Beausobre, also Higgin's *Anacalypsis*, vol. i. p. 322.

If these stories existed in the various cults of the Sun-Gods,—a fact not only discovered but admitted by Tertullian, St. Jerome, Justin Martyr and others—at the very time when the Mithraic and other sister religions of the sun-worship were at their prime in countries where Christianity had been introduced first, one might be excused for inclining towards scepticism and confessing inability to accept the genuineness of the Gospel story of Jesus. History, no doubt, repeats events; coincidence may occur in some instances, in the actions and words of great men (as in the case of Jesus and Buddha); but the repetition, or coincidence of almost all the distinctive points of Christ's life with those in the lives of the Sun-Gods are too numerous and curious to admit of such explanation. I have already said that the similarity between the various cults of star and nature-worship is natural enough. The various phenomena and phases of nature, including the sun, are, and will be, the same; and they occur on the same dates everywhere in the Northern Hemisphere. The various founders of the Pagan mysteries may be distinctly located—one in Mexico and Peru, and the other in Persia and Ireland—with no means of communication and transmission between them; they may be separated by the impassable barriers of the olden days, but their hearts will throb with the same impulse. They will feel and imagine in the same manner, and formulate their impressions in the same terms. Had Jesus been one of the Sun-Gods, as he has been most unfortunately portrayed by some of his zealous followers—the builders of the Church in the early days—the position is quite tenable.

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But this great Messenger of Allah came to demolish Paganism, as the Qur-ān says. His Church says the same. His story should be quite different and distinct from that of the deities of the ancient days. Let St. Augustine speak: "We hold this (Christmas) day holy, not like the Pagans, because of the birth of the Sun, but because of the birth of Him who made it." And there are many other animadversions of the early Fathers, cursing the Devil for introducing into his cult almost all the Church myteries, as shown above. This does not explain the case. On the other hand, it points to the real genesis of the Church mysteries. In some of the Gospels, Jesus is reported to have born in a stable, and the others say that the stable was in a cave. The stable of Augeas was also said to be in a cave—a poetic representaion of the dome of heaven. In those days the constellation directly under the earth at the Winter Solstice was that of Capricorn, which was also called the Stable of Augeas. The fact has been admitted, in a way, by Justin Martyr when he says that the birth of Jesus in the stable was foreshadowed by the birth of Mithra in the cave of Zoroastrianism. But others see the reverse of his proposition when they read the two events in the light of chronology. It may befit him to say that Christ was born when the sun takes its birth in the Augean stable, coming as a second Hercules to cleanse a foul world. Yet Hercules, after all, was not an historical personality, but a mythical conception of the Sun-worship cult. Moreover, the other points of resemblance of the Christian mysteries with those of the sky-scriptures are too conspicuous to admit of the

explanation with which the Early Fathers satisfied scepticism. The birth of almost all the Sun-Gods—Apollo, Bacchus, Hercules, Mithra, Adonis, Attis, Osiris, Horus, Baal, Quetzalcoatl—from Virgin Mothers, and on the same date, or within a day or two thereof; the massacre of the innocents at that time and the flight into a distant country (the same we read of the Indian God Krishna); the death through crucifixion or otherwise, but always by the enemies of light and for the benefit of humanity; the coming of the weeping virgins to the grave; the empty grave; the resurrection; almost all of the gods accepted as redeemers of mankind and mediators between man and God; the number of their disciples or of their works—twelve—the number of the Zodiacal signs or of months the same; the betrayal by one of the twelve—the sign at the entry into which the declination of the sun reaches its climax; the figure of the serpent, or scorpion as symbol of their enemy—the scorpion being the Zodiacal sign—the entry of the sun into which causes its declination. Again, some of the Church festivals strengthen the presumption likely to arise from the above coincidences—Candlemas, Lent, the Nativity of the Virgin, her Assumption and Annunciation, all these festivals of the Catholic Calendar being celebrated on the same date and in nearly the same manner as in the olden days.

I have arrayed all these facts for thoughtful perusal and considered judgment; but before a Christian friend tries to come to any conclusion, I may be allowed to refer him to the recent discoveries made from the Babylonian ruins, which throw a flood of

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light on the Passion story of the Lord of Christianity and its genesis. My indebtedness in this respect goes to my friend, Mr. Mead, the learned editor of the *Quest*—the well-known London quarterly journal—who has most ably dealt with this subject in his usual lucid manner.

The Dying God has been the popular theme of many an ancient legend, where a God-man gives his life and blood for the people. Man likes to shift his burden to other's shoulders, and the suffering God, suffering for the human race, has always appealed to his imagination. The Holy Qur-ān exposed the error, which seriously affects human activities. The Book says :—

And a burdened soul cannot bear the burden of another : and if one weighed down by burden should cry for (another to carry) its burden, not aught of it shall be carried, even though he be near of kin. *You warn* only those who fear their Lord in secret and keep up prayer ; and whoever purifies himself, he purifies himself only for (the good of) his own soul ; and to Allah is the eventual coming.¹

The story of the Lord of Christianity is not the first of its kind. The passion play of Baal, the Babylonian Sun-God, was in existence centuries before the birth of Jesus. It was acted as a popular mystery drama. The Jews were taken as prisoners by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon, where they remained for generations. They saw the mystery drama acted every year in the beginning of spring on Easter Day. The captives, on their return, brought with them many traditions of sun-worship, which one can easily trace in Jewish literature. They could not fail to have

¹ The Holy Qur-ān, xxxv. 18.

vivid memories and impressions of the passion play of Baal. The main features of the play have recently been deciphered from some tablets discovered from the Babylonian ruins. There are two Babylonian tablets, says the *Quest*, belonging to the cuneiform documents which were discovered by the German excavators in 1903-1904 at Kalah Shargat, the site of the ancient Assur. They belonged to the library of Assur, formed in the ninth century B. C. or even earlier. They are, however, copies of still earlier Babylonian tablets.

The tablets disclose astounding facts, perturbing thousands of honest minds in Christendom. It is not the similarity of some of the features between the two stories, the story of Jesus and the story of Baal, that excites their astonishment. The two are one and the same. It therefore not only deprives the evangelical records of the claim to be genuine; it makes them complete plagiarism. Let my readers decide the point for themselves. I quote the following from the January 1922 issue of the *Quest* :—

THE BABYLONIAN PASSION
PLAY.

Bēl is taken prisoner.
Bēl is tried in the House on
the Mount (the Hall of Justice.)

Bēl is smitten (wounded).
Bēl is led away to the mount.

Together with Bēl a male-
factor is led away and put to
death. Another, who is also

THE CHRISTIAN PASSION
STORY

Jesus is taken prisoner.
Jesus is tried in the House of
the High Priest and the Hall of
Pilate.

Jesus is scourged.
Jesus is led away to crucifi-
xion on Golgotha.

Together with Jesus, two
malefactors are led away and put
to death. Another (Barabbas)

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charged as a malefactor, is let go, thus not taken away with Bēl.

After Bēl had gone to the Mount, the city breaks out into tumult, and fighting takes place in it.

Bēl's clothes are carried away.

A woman wipes away the heart's blood of Bēl flowing from a drawn-out weapon (? spear).

Bēl goes down into the Mount away from sun and light disappears from life, and is held fast in the Mount as in a prison.

Guards watch Bēl imprisoned in the stronghold of the Mount.

A goddess sits with Bēl: she comes to tend him.

They seek for Bēl where he is held fast. In particular a weeping woman seeks for him at the "Gate of Burial." When he is being carried away the same lamented: "O, my brother! O, my brother!"

is released to the people, and thus not taken away with Jesus.

At the death of Jesus, the veil in the temple is rent (Synopt.), the earth quakes, the rocks are rent asunder, the graves are opened, and the dead come forth into the holy city (Matt.).

Jesus' robe is divided among the soldiers (Synopt., John, cp. Ps. xxii. 18).

The lance-thrust in Jesus' side and outflow of water and blood (John). Mary Magdalene and two other women busy themselves with the (washing, and) embalming of the body (Mark, Luke).

Jesus, in the grave, in the rock tomb (Synopt.), goes down into the realm of the dead (1 Pet. iii. 19, Matt. xii. 40, Acts ii. 24, Rom. x. 17, "descent into hell" dogma).

Guards are set over the tomb of Jesus (Matt.).

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary sit before the tomb (Matt., Mark).

Women, in particular Mary Magdalene, came to the tomb to seek Jesus where he is behind the door of the tomb. Mary stands weeping before the empty tomb because they have taken her Lord away (John).

Bēl is again brought back to life (as the sun of spring): he comes again out of the Mount. Jesus' restoration to life, his rising from the grave (on a Sunday morning).

His chief feast, the Babylonian New Year's festival in March at the time of the spring equinox, is celebrated also as his triumph over the powers of darkness (cp. the creation hymn "Once when on high" as the New Year's festival hymn.) His festival, approximately at the spring equinox, is also celebrated as his triumph over the powers of darkness (cp. *e.g.* Col. ii. 15).

Is not the Biblical story a recast of the story of Bēl? Apart from the similarity of the details, the very occurrence of the crucifixion in the way narrated in the Bible seems now to be fictitious. The Qur-án denies the event in the clearest terms. It would, indeed, seem to lack independent evidence. We owe all our knowledge of Jesus to the Bible, before the revelation of the Holy Qur-án. There are, however, two other pieces of evidence: first, a reference to the crucifixion in the history of Josephus, a contemporary of Jesus; and, secondly, a letter alleged to have been written by Pilate to the Roman Emperor, speaking of the crucifixion. This letter exists in the archives of the Vatican, but both these testimonies seem to be inadmissible. The original MS. of Josephus does not contain the page referring to Jesus, which is admitted to be a subsequent insertion; the letter of Pilate, with the signature on it as well, is now considered a pious fraud. Thus we are left no other course than to rely on the Bible and the Holy Qur-án. The last Book of God totally denies the event, and the Bible story is only a remoulding of the Babylonian legend, which is

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decidedly a myth of the Sun-worship. Apart from the verdict of the Holy Qur-ān, could any person accept the Gospel story as original, in the name of honesty and truth, after reading the contents of the said tablets? Besides, the multiplicity of the various events recorded to complete the Gospel story makes it a physical impossibility. From the Last Supper up to the Crucifixion, all events have been recorded as taking place in one night—the agony in the Garden, the betrayal by Judas, Jesus brought before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim, and then led to the Hall of Judgment, the intermediate visit to Herod and coming again to Pilate, who speaks and washes his hands; the scourging, the mocking of Jesus arrayed in purple, and the crown of thorns, the preparation of a cross, and the painful journey to Golgotha.

Events, with characters coming out of the “green room” or on the film, may receive their full development within a few hours, but when they actually occur they must take some reasonable time; and it is a matter of surprise, as Edward Carpenter thinks, to find the trial of Jesus in the middle of the night, as courts do not generally sit to try malefactors at that hour of the night. But if the story was taken from the Babylonian mystery play, the multiplicity of the events within the short space of a night, and the time of night chosen for their occurrence, afford us an explanation. The date of the crucifixion is another stumbling-block in the way of a seeker after truth, because he finds the date of Good Friday to correspond closely with the date of the Passions of the various deities, and so it is with the time of the resurrection.

No doubt we find its mention in the Gospel as occurring near the date of the Passover Feast. But it was a time-honoured date in the Pagan world.

The movable nature of the Church Easter, occurring as it does in March or April, according to the moon phases, makes it still more doubtful. The date, had it any connection with such a remarkable event as the Resurrection, must have been fixed. But if the festival arose from the rise of the vegetation depending upon certain phases and seasons of the luminaries—as both the Sun and the Moon play a great part in this phenomenon—the reasons for the festival occurring on changing dates is obvious. It must occur after the full Moon.

Easter (Anglo-Saxon, Eostre, O.H.G. Ostera) was the goddess of Light and Spring, in whose honour the festival was celebrated everywhere at the said dates. Hot cross-buns and eggs were distributed and eaten in Egypt and Ireland, in the same way as is done now in Christendom, at the time of Easter. This, again, shows the descent of the Church Easter from the olden days. The whole of Nature is risen again at Easter time, and a new life is coming to humanity. Do we not find the same story in the Church-covering—Easter Sunday being the day of the resurrection of the Lord that brought new life to the human race? Some of the Western writers are of opinion that the Passover Feast of the Jews, besides being held to commemorate the crossing of the Red Sea, was taken from the Sun-worship festival celebrated on the day when the sun crosses the Equator.

The presumption becomes stronger, when many

other things in the Jewish traditions are traced to Sun-worship.

The Sun was the Dying God of the ancient world. After his birth on December 25th the young deity increases every day in his power and strength, and defies the demon of darkness in the struggle, till the final week in March comes, when his progress is retarded and he becomes stationary. The struggle between the two seems to have come to a climax, and the devil appears to be going to have the better of the conflict. Therefore it is a time of great anxiety and apprehension—a day of mourning and weeping for the maidens of Adonis; the suffering God undergoing his last ordeal; Hercules gone into Hades; Attis nailed down to a pine-trunk—in short, the dead God is interred in the tomb, but, two days after, all sorrow and weeping change into merriment, the Sun-God overcoming the forces of darkness (the Rubicon, *i.e.*, the Equator, passed); Hercules ascending from the underworld; Adonis, Attis, Dionysius and Baal risen from their respective tombs. The date of the Dying God and that of the Rising God, therefore, become great events, and are attended respectively with mourning and rejoicing—just as we find on Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

I do not write in a poetical vein. These are historical realities. India, for centuries the home of star-worship, sun and moon-worship being conspicuous in it, still furnishes a good illustration to substantiate these remarks. Even to-day the eclipses of the sun and moon stir the Hindu mind with the same anxieties and apprehensions as those experienced in olden days

in countries of the Sun-worship from Persia to Mexico and Peru. Let the Arya Samaj—the Modernist movement in Hinduism—explain the phenomenon in any way it chooses, the fact remains as it did in pre-Islamic India. Millions of Hindus leave their houses and go to the river-sides when the eclipses begin. The Hindu mendicants and Brahmins cry for alms and receive it from door to door; the gods of light are, as the Brahmins say, in the clutches of the Demon of Darkness; hence the anxiety. Alms and prayers are requisitioned to help the deities in their struggle with the demon, until the eclipse is finished and rejoicing begins. Here is a remnant of ancient India, but a standing illustration of the cause of sorrow and rejoicing attending the two dates—the beginning and the ending times of the Vernal Equinox of the ancients, the Good Friday and Easter Sunday of the moderns.

The sign of the Cross also is not of Christian origin. It does not date from the crucifixion. Clement, in his list of Christian symbols, does not make mention of it. Constantine saw the Cross in his vision, as he says, and took it as a symbol of the faith. But what he saw in the vision he must have seen also in normal condition with his waking eye, for the Cross was the sign of life in the Pagan symbolism. I saw an ancient Egyptian cross in July last when I visited Alexandria, in the Municipal Museum in the town. Curiously enough, the cross in Christendom signifies the same thing as did the Egyptian cross—the sign of new life brought by the crucifixion. In Ireland a similar cross has been discovered, with a crucified effigy, but it is the effigy

of a Persian prince and not that of the Nazarene, as the head of the crucified bears a Parthian coronet and not the crown of thorns; which identifies it with the Mithraic cult, originally from Persia. It left many other signs in Ireland and Cheshire.

The first royal convert may have chosen to put forward his adoption of the Cross as the sign of his new religion, but the fact remains that Apollo was his patron deity, and remained so throughout his life, as the seal and coinage of Constantine shows. Till his death he kept the inscription on both, in honour of the Sun-God. It is Sun-worship and his Sun-worship predilections, therefore, that were more responsible for the adoption of the Cross than his vision.

The Vernal Equinox occurs at a time when the sun in its ecliptic revolution, as it passes the Equator, cuts the shape of a cross. It has also been ascertained that, owing to the precession of the Equinoxes, the crossing point of the ecliptic was different from what it is now. Some three thousand years ago, the point where the ecliptic crossed the Equator was, as a matter of fact, in the region of the constellation Aries, or the He-Lamb.

The triumph of the Sun-God was, therefore, and quite naturally, ascribed to the influence of *Aries*. *The Lamb became the symbol of the Rising Saviour, and of his passage from the underworld into the height of heaven.*¹

The adoption of the Cross and the Lamb in the ancient cult does not, therefore, lack explanation.

¹*Pagan and Christian Creed*, p. 39.

Justin Martyr could not deny the fact. It descended to the Christian Church, which came to replace the old faith in all its distinctive features. Read the history of the Early Fathers, and you will be more and more convinced that while the Church was using sword and fire in destroying every trace and memory of Sun-worship in its original form—as in the burning of the Alexandrian Library and the killing of Hypatia—the great teacher of the Sun-worship cult—it was taking everything and anything of the heathen days into its own teachings and traditions in order to make the new faith popular. Fish was taken as a Christian symbol before the introduction of the Cross. This fish represented Jesus, and the ancient tomb inscriptions of the mediæval days bore the Fish, and not the Cross. The Gospel cannot explain the why and how of the Fish symbol, excepting that Jesus often ate fish. But the sun-scripture is the real explanation. The sun passes the Zodiacal sign Pisces—the Fish—in February, and if the date of the Epiphany is in February, Christ, as a Sun-God, must be symbolized by the Fish.

The evidence that the Church, as built by the priests of the dark mediæval days, owes everything to the Pagan world, and not to the sacred name under which it passes, is so overwhelmingly preponderating in nature that one becomes compelled to say with full justification, in the words of the Archbishop of York, that the Church repels. If the laity has realized that in their worship in the Church they are worshipping only the Sun-God, and keeping up the tradition of the Pagan cult, will they not resent it? No wonder the

pews have become empty, and the clergy have no chance but to address empty benches. The situation has become serious; the Church-religion is at its lowest ebb, and the Archbishop of Canterbury is thinking of means to keep "the strayed flock within the pale"—a very laudable object. A conference was held in June last at Canterbury to this end, and the Archbishop took part in it. His Grace was of opinion that unity between the various sections of the Church would solve the problem. But such unity, if secured, will not lure the people from the cricket and football fields, nor yet from the golf links, to the House of God. The trouble lies elsewhere. How are they to explain those Church mysteries? People have become anxious as to the how and why of the striking resemblance, or rather sameness, existing between the religion of Jesus and the cults of Sun-worship. Are they worshipping the Sun or Jesus? His Grace cannot afford to refer the modern mind to the explanation given by the Early Fathers, quoted elsewhere in these pages. Everything seems to descend from Sun-worship. But if we accept the explanation of Tertullian and Justin Martyr, why do we call the old creeds Pagan? In the received significance of the word should not Christianity receive the same name? Religion, after all, consists of doctrine, tenets, traditions and beliefs. If the necessary ingredients of the two religions are the same, as shown in these pages, why curse one and bless the other? If the mystic part of Christianity is necessary to uplift humanity, especially the Sacrament—the institution of the Holy Communion—it was so in the ancient cult. Are we not, then,

justified in paying the same reverence to the ancient religions, and in respecting the Pagan Baptism and Eucharist ceremony, as people in Christendom are bidden by the Church to do in order to be good Christians? If these were the essentials of religion from God, then they existed before the advent of Jesus.

Those who were the wardens of the Church in those days never failed to do two things, until Christianity fully triumphed over the existing creed. If, on one side, they incorporated almost all of the popular cult into their faith, on the other they did, in fact, take particular pains to destroy and burn the Pagan records and libraries—amongst others that of Alexandria some fifty years after the death of Constantine—in order to obliterate the origin of the faith so alien to that of Jesus. Copernicus could not do better service in this direction to this Christo-Pagan Church, to which he belonged, than to introduce his solar system, and substitute it for the Ptolemaic, a mere reference to which system would easily show the origin of most of the Christian mysteries, and the dates of the Church festivals. There were several treatises setting forth the religion of Mithra, but “every one of these has been destroyed,” says Robertson¹ by the care of the Church, and it is remarkable that even the treatise of Firmicus is mutilated at a passage (V) where he seems to be accusing Christians of following Mithraic usage. In this respect, Professor Murray says, “the polemic

¹*Pagan Christs*, p. 325.

literature of Christianity is everywhere triumphant, the books of the Pagans have been *destroyed*."

Is this the grand object which is engaging the attention of the Archbishop? It should also be remembered that the policy of incorporating the views and beliefs of renegades from the Church will not prove useful in the long run—as, for example, the introduction of spiritualistic phenomena. Indirect efforts have been made by some of the clergy in this direction. It is only a repetition of the old tactics. But our's are different days. The task is not only cumbersome, but thankless too. The number of the newly arisen creeds is increasing. In the beginning of mediaeval days there was only one cult. Besides, the new platforms differ—some of them diametrically—from each other. They have almost lost their faith in the Godhood and Atonement of Christ. The best way is to brush aside all these mysteries and philosophies, which were never taught by Jesus, but did exist in the heathen world before him. Jesus, redeemed from all that Paul, Constantine and the Early Fathers fathered on him, is still, and will for ever be, a beautiful and lovable personality, as the Holy Quran describes him:—

He [Jesus] said : Surely I am a servant of Allah ; He has given me the Book and made me a prophet : and He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and He has enjoined on me prayer and poor-rate so long as I live : and dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me insolent, unblessed : and peace on me, on the day I was born, and on the day I die, and on the day I am raised to life.

Such is Jesus son of Mary ; (this is) the saying of truth about which they dispute. It beseems not Allah that He should take

to Himself a son, glory be to Him ; when He has decreed a matter He only says to it "Be," and it is. And surely Allah is my Lord and your Lord, therefore serve Him ; this is the right path.¹

He [Jesus] was naught but a servant on whom We bestowed favour, and We made him an example for the children of Israel.²

Now I come to the Church's Sabbath. The Sabbath of Jesus was the Sabbath of the Jews. He was a Jewish Rabbi and Teacher among them, as admitted by Dean Inge in the paper read to the Modernist Conference at Cambridge in 1917. Jesus would refer his disciple to the scribes for the religious lore. He was averse to any schism or innovation in the faith. He would have heaven and earth pass away but not allow a jot or tittle of change in the faith and its observances. Saturday was the day of Sabbath, and not Sunday, which was the day of the worship of Apollo, the Sun-God. How and why the sacred day of the God of the Israelites, to be observed as one of the Ten Commandments, gave way to the day of the Pagan God—perhaps through St. Paul's or Constantine's instrumentality—is a mystery, but open enough to admit of easy explanation in the light of the multitude of facts, some of which have been already dealt with.

The Romans respected almost every faith under their rule, and contributed to the building of temples of all creeds, a wise policy to hold the mind of the subject race. The British Government, though proud to consider itself as resembling the Roman Empire, lacks, however, much of its wisdom. This was one

¹Holy Qur-ān, xix. 30—36.

²Ibid. xliii. 59.

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of the many wise policies of the Romans. The Emperor Hadrian intended to build a temple to Christ, and to rank him in the number of the gods (Lampridius I. 43). This intention was carried out by his successor, Constantine, whose patron God was Apollo. He retained Apollo's figure upon his seal, even after establishing Christianity as the State religion—a representation of the sun, with the inscription "To the Invincible Sun, my Companion." The conversion of Constantine to Christianity was more a political adventure than a search after truth. His murder of his nephew, and his despotic disposition as a ruler, could not find favour with his equals, the senators. He had to go to the plebeians, most of whom were Christians. But he could not go against the popular faith to which he himself was so tenaciously attached. He, however, solved the problem in a most diplomatic way. He took the name of Jesus as a figure-head, and recognized the title "Christ" as but another name for the Sun-God; in all other respects he kept the Pagan Church intact in all its traditions, ritual and mode of worship. Sunday was the day of the worship of the Sun—the Roman Dies Soli. To respect the religious susceptibilities of the Roman Sun-worshippers, Constantine could not do better than to keep the same day as the day of the Christian Sabbath. An average Roman Catholic cathedral, with its altar facing towards the east, the monks and nuns with the tonsure, the acolytes, the choir and the rest of the paraphernalia, carries us at once to the temples of the Pagan world. Why must the altar in the

church, whether built on the east or the west side of Judæa, the place of Jesus, or north or south of it, face to the east? The Christian churches erected in the first few centuries were erected indifferently as to whether the altar was at the east or the west end. Paulinus Nolanus speaks of a Christian church the altar of which was in the west, and the church at Antioch was also thus built. But when the simplicity of the religion of Jesus became marred, and gave way to the popular cult, the altar had to face the east. It tickled the curiosity of the people in those days, and St. Ambrose had to explain it in the following words: "When you entered into the baptistry, and viewed your enemy whom you were to renounce, you then turned about to the East for he that renounces the devil is turned unto the Christ." Cyril of Jerusalem says to the initiates: "You were first brought into the ante-room of the baptistry and placed towards the West, in a standing posture, then commanded to renounce Satan..... The West is the place of Darkness, and his strength is in Darkness. For this reason ye symbolically look towards the West when ye renounce the Prince of Darkness."

It was all very well if the Sun-worship creed was not at its prime very near the days when these words were uttered. It may be said in a way of apology that Jesus was called the Sun of Righteousness, and hence the whole metaphor. But it is not so, nor is it the language of metaphor. It is, or was, the language of fact, and of realities in the Sun creed. The east brings the sun to the horizon, and the west

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is the place of the Prince of Darkness where the sun himself disappears.

The Devil has been given the name of serpent in church phraseology. But the serpent has got no barbed tail, while the church painting makes the barbed tail an essential appendix of the Devil. Even his overcoat, in which the Devil conceals himself, cannot cover his barbed tail, which exposes his disguise. Whence came the idea of the barbed tail, if the serpent originated in the story of the Fall of Adam? Again, we find the Scorpion as a substitute for the Serpent, which undoubtedly has got a barbed tail. Read this all in the light of the sky-scriptures, and everything becomes clear. The Scorpion which stings the Sun-god with its tail is in the Zodiac the symbol of his adversary.

The institution of monks and nuns can also be traced to the same origin. Jesus neither advocated nor recommended celibacy. The single life of Jesus—though his first miracle took place on an occasion of marriage, and his participation in it gave sanctity to the marital institution—might encourage monasticism, but how are we to explain the tonsure? Even Paul, with all his tendency to use most of the older cult as material for the church he built, is silent on the question. Sun-worship alone can explain it. Mithraism had its monks and nuns, as Tertullian admits, with the tonsure in honour of the disc of the Sun. To be shorn of hair is, doubtless, a sign of asceticism; but it is the form of the tonsure—the round bare place on the head of the Romish priests and monks, formed by shaving hair, that bears resemblance to the disc

of the Sun. Does it not show that, as Apollo came to supplant Mithra, so the place of the former was given to Christ, while everything of their religion was kept intact with all its legends, festivals and forms of worship?

The Holy Communion also represents the ancient Eucharistic Ceremony, which was observed from Persia to Peru, in every Sun-worship country. The idea of Sin and Expiation is also an ancient idea. The sacrificed animal represented the Dying Deity. as the Lord Krishna says in the Bhagwat Gita, "I am the oblation, I am the sacrifice, I am the ancestral offering." "In the truly orthodox conception of sacrifice," says Elie Reclus, "the consecrated offering, be it man, woman or virgin, lamb or heifer, cock or dove, represents the deity himself."¹

The person whose sacrifice was represented was believed to be actually present at the time of the sacrifice, and his flesh, eaten by the worshippers, made the latter at one with the former. The flesh of the god entering into the body of man created a sort of holy communion between the deity and the votary. It is not I who make this assertion; the Early Fathers have said the same. Do they not say that the Mithraic Eucharist was identified with the Lord's Supper? Ponder over the words of the Lord Krishna quoted above. The same idea had been working in the minds of the ancients everywhere—the atoning personality becoming God, and the belief that to eat anything taken out of the sacrifice,

¹*Primitive Folk*, chap. vi.

or from meals prepared in celebrating the ceremony, purifies the body of the eater and brings him into union with God. I admit that Jesus has been represented as saying something on this point, but it scarcely seems to convey the ideas and beliefs that underlie the Church conception of the Communion—the *At-one-ment* of the votary with the Lord by his participation in the supper. The idea is pagan, pure and simple, in its origin as well as in its conception.

That the writers of the Gospels were writing under the influence of the Sun-worship cult appears throughout their whole record; the similes and the metaphors are taken from the Sun-worship language all through. "He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in that light;" "I am the Light of the world;" "I must work the works of Him that sent me *while it is day*; the night cometh when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world;" "Yet a little while is the light with you; walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you. While ye have the light, believe in the light."

It may be said that Jesus was the Sun of Righteousness, and hence the language and the metaphors; but there are certain reported utterances of Jesus which do not admit of such explanations. "And no man hath ascended upto heaven, save the son of Man, who is in heaven." Jesus, as a Jew, did believe that at least two men, Enoch and Elijah, had ascended into heaven, and therefore he could not say that no man has ascended into heaven. Jesus at the time of this utterance was

not in heaven ; he was on the earth. The utterance does not befit the real Jesus while on the earth, but accords well enough with the Sun-God who comes down from heaven at his birth, and ascends into heaven again, and yet remains all the time in heaven.

The Good Shepherd in the Church is the beautiful shepherd. The Greek word for the "good" in the English translation does not mean good, but "beautiful," and it is certain that Apollo, the Beautiful, was also called shepherd long before the Christian God.

Be the memory of Muhammad glorified and remain ever green ! To keep his religion free from all pagan ideas and ritual, he would not allow his followers to say any prayer at the time when the sun assumes a conspicuous phase in his diurnal course. We Muslims have been enjoined to say our prayers five times a day. But we have been clearly forbidden to say any prayer just exactly at the time when the sun rises, or at the time when it sets, or at the time when it passes the meridian, so that the Muslim Prayer may not become identified with Sun-worship. Islam is the only religion which did not need any incorporation of the existing ideas. It stood rather against them, if they were wrong, and tried to demolish them ; yet the religion prevailed and purged the world of its polytheistic rituals and practices—those of Sun-worship among them—while the religion of Jesus, through hands unworthy of the name of the Master, became absolutely metamorphosed into the pagan cult. They retained the name of Jesus, no doubt, but so did the

worshippers of Apollo when he became the favourite deity after Mithra. The Mithraic cult flourished centuries before the Apollo-worship, but the two faiths are one and the same, the difference being in name. Apollo had to represent Mithra in the whole cult, and so Jesus was taken as a substitute for Apollo in Rome, but the cult was in all other respects the same—the same birthday, the same Virgin-birth and Immaculate conception, the same baptism, the same Eucharist, the same Passion Story, the same descent into hell, the same resurrection and ascension into heaven, the same Easter-day merriments, the same sign of the Lamb, the same hot cross-buns, the same eggs, the same Sunday—the Roman Dies Solis—the Day of the Sun, the Lord's Day, and the same phraseology and philosophy, as I will show in the ensuing chapter, apart from several festivals of the Catholic Calendar, which have been traced to the sky-scriptures.

I have confined my remarks to the Sun-worship cult which was in vogue in countries surrounding the cradle of Christianity at its birth, but almost all ancient religions in the East have very similar legends and traditions, similar beliefs and tenets, to those that were introduced into Christianity by the Early Fathers.

In these pages, while seeking to trace the origin of many of the Christian traditions and doctrines, I have confined myself principally to the Sun-worship cult, as it was the popular creed. But no country or creed of the ancient world has been without such legends and teachings. The scholar may

attempt to explain away the palpable similitude, as suggested by the Early Fathers, but the Pagans had their Christ everywhere, including India. The miraculous birth, the immaculate conception,¹ the birthplace,² the star, the song of the heavenly host at the birth, the child God presented with gifts, the slaughter of the innocent, the temptations, the fast of forty days, the Crucifixion and the death to redeem mankind, the descent into Hell³ and ascension; the Second Coming, the anointed as Judge of the dead, the Alpha and Omega, the Trinity, in different accents and stress, are the same.

¹ No country in the ancient world was without its virgin-born deities, including India and China. Here I give the name of some from amongst "the parcels of sons," as Justin Martyr says of Jupiter, from Virgin Mothers: Bacchus by Semele; Amphion by Antiope; Perseus by Danaë; Mercury—the Good Shepherd who carried the lamb on his shoulders as Jesus was subsequently represented—by Maia; Æolus by Acosta; Apollo by Latona; Æthlius by Protogenia.

² In his *Life of Christ*, p. 38, Dean Farrar says "That the actual place of Christ's birth was a cave is a very old tradition, and this cave used to be shown as the scene of the event so early as the time of Justin Martyr (150 A.D.)." The ceremonies in the Church of the Nativity at Bathlehem are celebrated to this day in a cave, but in the time of Tertullian and Jerome (375) the cave, though believed by the Fathers, as their writings show, to be the birthplace of Jesus, was used by the heathen to celebrate ceremonies in honour of Adonis. Like him, all preceding religions had gods and virgin-born deities born in a cave—Krishna (India), Bacchus, Apollo, Mithra (Persia), Hermes, Allys (Phrygia).

³ Zoroaster (the Persian), Osiris and Horus the Egyptian Saviour, Adonis, Bacchus, Hercules, Mercury, Baldur Quetzalcoatl, descended into Hell; they remained in Hell for the space of two or three days and three nights, and on the third day rose again.

The learned author of *Bible Myths* lucidly draws some analogies between Jesus and Buddha. It should not be forgotten that not only does there exist remarkable similarity in the teachings of the two, but some of the parables and precepts that we find in the Gospels had been given, word by word, by Buddha, some five hundred years before Jesus. The records of Buddha are not entirely unapocryphal, or altogether consistent, but the main features are the same everywhere. Every hero or divinity in the ancient world lives the same life and possesses the same features. He must be born of a virgin; Buddha, like Jesus, though known to be born in the house of his mother's husband, is still believed to be born of the Virgin Maya, which is the same name as Mary. He must be of royal descent, but at the time of his birth he must have humble surroundings. These and many other things already noted, present a striking similitude between the narrative of Jesus and that of other gods-in-man. They suggest rather the mind and psychology of the olden days, that demanded the incarnate deities clothed with certain essentials, than the actualities of the case.

The mythological portions of the histories of Buddha and Jesus are, as already stated, nearer in resemblance than that of any two characters of antiquity. Mr. T. W. Doane gives the following comparison of the analogies:—

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Buddha was born of the Virgin Maya, who conceived him without carnal intercourse. | 1. Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, who conceived him without carnal intercourse. |
| 2. The incarnation of Buddha is recorded to have been brought about by the descent of the divine power called the " <i>Holy</i> | 2. The incarnation of Jesus is recorded to have been brought about by the descent of the divine power called the " <i>Holy Ghost,</i> " |

Ghost," upon the Virgin Maya.

3. When Buddha descended from the regions of the souls, and entered the body of the Virgin Maya, her womb assumed the appearance of clear transparent crystal, in which Buddha appeared, beautiful as a flower.

4. The birth of Buddha was announced in the heavens by an *asterim* which was seen rising on the horizon. It is called the "Messianic Star."

5. "The son of the Virgin Maya, on whom, according to the tradition, the 'Holy Ghost' had descended, was said to have been born on Christmas day."

6. Demonstrations of celestial delight were manifest at the birth of Buddha. The *Devas* in heaven and earth sang praises to the "Blessed One," and said: "To-day *Bodhisatwa* is born on earth, to give joy and peace to men and *Devas*, to shed light in the dark places, and to give sight to the blind."

7. "Buddha was visited by wise men who recognized in this marvellous infant all the characters of the divinity, and he had scarcely seen the day before he was hailed God of Gods."

8. The infant Buddha was presented with "costly jewels

upon the Virgin Mary.

3. When Jesus descended from his heavenly seat, and entered the body of the Virgin Mary, her womb assumed the appearance of clear transparent crystal, in which Jesus appeared, beautiful as a flower.

4. The birth of Jesus was announced in the heavens by "his star," which was seen rising on the horizon. It might properly be called the "Messianic Star."

5. The Son of the Virgin Mary, on whom, according to the tradition, the "Holy Ghost" had descended, was said to have been born on Christmas day.

6. Demonstrations of celestial delight were manifest at the birth of Jesus. The angels in heaven and earth sang praises to the "Blessed One," saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

7. Jesus was visited by wise men who recognized in this marvellous infant all the characters of the divinity, and he had scarcely seen the day before he was hailed God of Gods.

8. The infant Jesus was presented with gifts of gold, frankincense,

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and precious substances.”

9. When Buddha was an infant, just born, he spoke to his mother, and said: “I am the greatest among men.”

10. Buddha was a “dangerous child.” His life was threatened by King Bimbisara, who was advised to destroy the child, as he was liable to overthrow him.

11. When sent to school, the young Buddha surprised his masters. Without having ever studied, he completely worsted all his competitors, not only in writing, but in arithmetic, mathematics, metaphysics, astrology, geometry, etc.

12. “When *twelve* years old the child Buddha is presented in the temple. He explains and asks learned questions; he excels all those who enter into competition with him.”

13. Buddha entered a temple, on which occasion forthwith all the statues rose and threw themselves at his feet, in act of worship.

14. The ancestry of Gautama Buddha is traced from his father, *Sodhodana*, through various individuals and races, all of

and myrrh.

9. When Jesus was an infant, in his cradle, he spoke to his mother, and said: “I am Jesus, the Son of God.”

10. Jesus was a “dangerous child.” His life was threatened by King Herod, who attempted to destroy the child, as he was liable to overthrow him.

11. When sent to school, Jesus surprised his master, Zaccheus, who, turning to Joseph, said: “Thou hast brought a boy to me to be taught, who is more learned than any master.”

12. “And when he was *twelve* years old, they brought him to (the temple at) Jerusalem . . . While in the temple among the doctors and elders, and learned men of Israel, he proposed several questions of learning, and also gave them answers.”

13. “And as Jesus was going in by the ensigns, who carried the standards, the tops of them bowed down and worshipped Jesus.”

14. The ancestry of Jesus is traced from his father, Joseph, through various individuals, nearly all of whom were of royal

royal dignity, to *Maha Sammata*, the first monarch of the world. Several of the names and some of the events are met with in the Puranas of the Brahmins, but it is not possible to reconcile one order of statement with the other; and it would appear that the Buddhist historians have introduced races, and invented names, that they may invest their venerated Sage with all the honours of heraldry, in addition to the attributes of divinity.

15. When Buddha was about to go forth "to adopt a religious life," *Mara* appeared before him, to tempt him.

16. *Mara* said unto Buddha: "Go not forth to adopt a religious life, and in seven days thou shalt become an emperor of the world."

17. Buddha would not heed the words of the Evil One, and said to him: "Get thee away from me."

18. After *Mara* had left Buddha, "the skies rained flowers, and delicious odours pervaded the air."

19. Buddha fasted for a long period.

20. Buddha, the Saviour, was baptized, and at this recorded water-baptism the Spirit

dignity, to Adam, the first monarch of the world. Several of the names, and some of the events, are met with in the sacred Scriptures of the Hebrews, but it is not possible to reconcile one order of statement with the other; and it would appear that the Christian historians have invented and introduced names, that they may invest their venerated Sage with all the honours of heraldry, in addition to the attributes of divinity.

15. When Jesus was about "beginning to preach," the *devil* appeared before him, to tempt him.

16. The *devil* said to Jesus: "If thou wilt fall down and worship me, I will give thee all the kingdoms of the world."

17. Jesus would not heed the words of the Evil One, and said to him: "Get thee behind me, Satan."

18. After the *devil* had left Jesus, "angels came and ministered unto him."

19. Jesus fasted forty days and nights.

20. Jesus was baptized by John in the river Jordan, at which time the spirit of God was present;

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of God was present; that is, not only the highest God but also the "Holy Ghost" through whom the incarnation of Gautama Buddha is recorded to have been brought about by the descent of that divine power upon the Virgin Maya.

21. "On one occasion toward the end of his life on earth, Gautama Buddha is reported to have been *transfigured*. When *on a mountain* in Ceylon, suddenly a flame of light descended upon him and encircled the crown of his head with a circle of light. The mount is called *Pandava*, or yellow-white colour. It is said that 'the glory of his person shone forth with double power,' that his body was glorious as a 'bright golden image,' that he 'shone as the brightness of the sun and moon,' that bystanders expressed their opinion, that he could not be 'an every-day person,' or 'a mortal man, and that his body was divided into *three* parts, from each of which a ray of light issued forth."

22. "Buddha performed great miracles for the good of mankind, and the legends concerning him are full of the greatest prodigies and wonders."

23. By prayers in the name

that is, not only the highest God, but also the "Holy Ghost," through whom the incarnation of Jesus is recorded to have been brought about, by the descent of that divine power upon the Virgin Mary.

21. On one occasion during his career on earth, Jesus is reported to have been transfigured: "Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a *high mountain* apart. And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the Sun, and his raiment white as the light.

22. Jesus performed great miracles for the good of mankind, and the legends concerning him are full of the greatest prodigies and wonders.

23. By prayers in the name

of Buddha, his followers expect to receive the rewards of paradise.

24. When Buddha died and was buried, "the coverings of the body unrolled themselves, and the lid of his coffin was opened by supernatural powers."

25. Buddha ascended bodily to the celestial regions, when his mission on earth was fulfilled.

26. Buddha is to come upon the earth again in the latter days, his mission being to restore the world to order and happiness.

27. Buddha is to be judge of the dead.

28. Buddha is Alpha and Omega, without beginning or end, "the Supreme Being, the Eternal One."

29. Buddha is represented as saying: "Let all the sins that were committed in this world fall on me, that the world may be delivered."

30. Buddha said: "Hide your good deeds, and confess before the world the sins you have committed.

31. "Buddha was described as a superhuman organ of light, to whom a superhuman organ of darkness, Mar or Naga, the Evil Serpent, was opposed."

of Jesus, his followers expect to receive the rewards of paradise.

24. When Jesus died and was buried, the coverings of his body were unrolled from off him, and his tomb was opened by supernatural powers.

25. Jesus ascended bodily to the celestial regions, when his mission on earth was fulfilled.

26. Jesus is to come upon the earth again in the latter days, his mission being to restore the world to order and happiness.

27. Jesus is to be the judge of the dead.

28. Jesus is Alpha and Omega, without beginning or end, the Supreme Being, the Eternal One.

29. Jesus is represented as the Saviour of mankind, and all sins that are committed in this world may fall on him, that the world may be delivered.

30. Jesus taught men to hide their good deeds, and to confess before the world the sins they had committed.

31. Jesus was described as a superhuman organ of light—"the Sun of Righteousness"—opposed by "the old Serpent," the Satan, hinderer, or adversary.

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32. Buddha came, not to destroy, but to fulfil, the law. He delighted in "representing himself as a *mere link* in a long chain of enlightened teachers."

33. "One day Ananda, the disciple of Buddha, after a long walk in the country, meets with Matangi, a woman of the low caste of the Kandalas, near a well, and asks her for some water. She tells him what she is, and that she must not come near him. But he replies: 'My sister, I ask not for thy caste or thy family, I ask only for a draught of water.' She afterwards became a disciple of Buddha."

34. "According to Buddha, the motive of all our actions should be *pity* or *love* for our neighbour."

35. During the early part of his career as a teacher, "Buddha went to the city of Benares, and there delivered a discourse, by which Kondanya, and afterwards *four* others, were induced to become his disciples. From that period, whenever he preached, multitudes of men and women embraced his doctrines."

36. Those who became disciples of Buddha were told that they must "renounce the world," give up all their riches,

32. Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."

33. One day Jesus, after a long walk, cometh to the city of Samaria, and being wearied with his journey, sat on a well. While there, a woman of Samaria came to draw water, and Jesus said unto her: "Give me to drink." "Then said the woman unto him: How is it that thou, being a Jew, asketh drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

34. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you."

35. During the early part of his career as a teacher, Jesus went to the city of Capernaum, and there delivered a discourse. It was at this time that *four* fishermen were induced to become his disciples. From that period, whenever he preached, multitudes of men and women embraced his doctrines.

36. Those who became disciples of Jesus were told that they must renounce the world, give up all their riches, and

and avow poverty.

37. It is recorded in the "Sacred Canon" of the Buddhists that the multitudes "required a sign" from Buddha "that they might believe."

38. When Buddha's time on earth was about coming to a close, he, "foreseeing the things that would happen in future times," said to his disciple Ananda: "Ananda, when I am gone, you must not think there is no Buddha; the discourses I have delivered, and the precepts I have enjoined, must be my successors, or representatives and be to you as Buddha.

39. In the Buddhist *Soma-deva* is to be found the following: "To give away our riches is considered the most difficult virtue in the world; he who gives away his riches is like a man who gives away his life: for our very life seems to cling to our riches. But Buddha, when his mind was moved by pity, gave his life, like grass, for the sake of others; why should we think of miserable riches! By this exalted virtue, Buddha, when he was freed from all desires, and had obtained divine knowledge, attained unto Buddhahood. Therefore, let a wise man, after he has turned away

avow poverty.

37. It is recorded in the "Sacred Canon" of the Christians that the multitudes required a sign from Jesus that they might believe.

38. When Jesus' time on earth was about coming to a close, he told of the things that would happen in future times, and said unto his disciples: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

39. "And behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? . . . Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

his desires from all pleasures, do good to all beings, even unto sacrificing his own life, that thus he may attain to true knowledge."

40. Buddha's aim was to establish a "Religious Kingdom," a "*Kingdom of Heaven*."

41. Buddha said: "I now desire to turn the wheel of the excellent law. For this purpose am I going to the city of Benares, to give light to those enshrouded in darkness, and to open the gate of Immortality to man."

42. Buddha said:—
"Though the heaven were to fall to earth, and the great world be swallowed up and pass away: though Mount Sumera were to crack to pieces, and the great ocean be dried up, yet, Ananda, be assured, the words of Buddha are true."

43. Buddha said:—
"There is no passion more violent than voluptuousness. Happily there is but one such passion. If there were two, not a man in the whole universe could follow the truth." "Beware of fixing your eyes upon women. If you find yourself in their company, let it be as though you

40. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say Repent: for the *Kingdom of Heaven* is at hand.

41. Jesus, after his temptation by the devil, began to establish the dominion of his religion, and he went for this purpose to the city of Capernaum. "The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up."

42. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and *truth* came by Jesus Christ."

"*Verily* I say unto you . . . heaven and earth shall pass away, *but my words shall not pass away*."

43. Jesus said: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

were not present. If you speak with them, guard well your hearts."

44. Buddha said: "A wise man should avoid married life as if it were a burning pit of live coals. One who is not able to live in a state of celibacy should not commit adultery."

45. "Buddhism is convinced that if a man reaps sorrow, disappointment, pain, he himself, and no other, must at some time have sown folly, error, sin; and if not in this life then in some former birth."

46. Buddha knew the thoughts of others: "By directing his mind to the thoughts of others, he can know the thoughts of all beings."

47. In the *Somadeva* a story is related of a Buddhist ascetic whose eye offended him; he therefore plucked it out, and cast it away.

48. When Buddha was about to become an ascetic, and when riding on the horse "Kantako," his path was strewn with flowers, thrown there by *Devas*.

44. "It is good for a man not to touch a woman," "but if they cannot contain let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn." "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife and let every woman have her own husband."

45. "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was *blind from his birth*. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?"

46. Jesus knew the thoughts of others. By directing his mind to the thoughts of others he knew the thoughts of all beings.

47. It is related in the New Testament that Jesus said: "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee."

48. When Jesus was entering Jerusalem, riding on an ass, his path was strewn with palm branches, thrown there by the multitude.

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