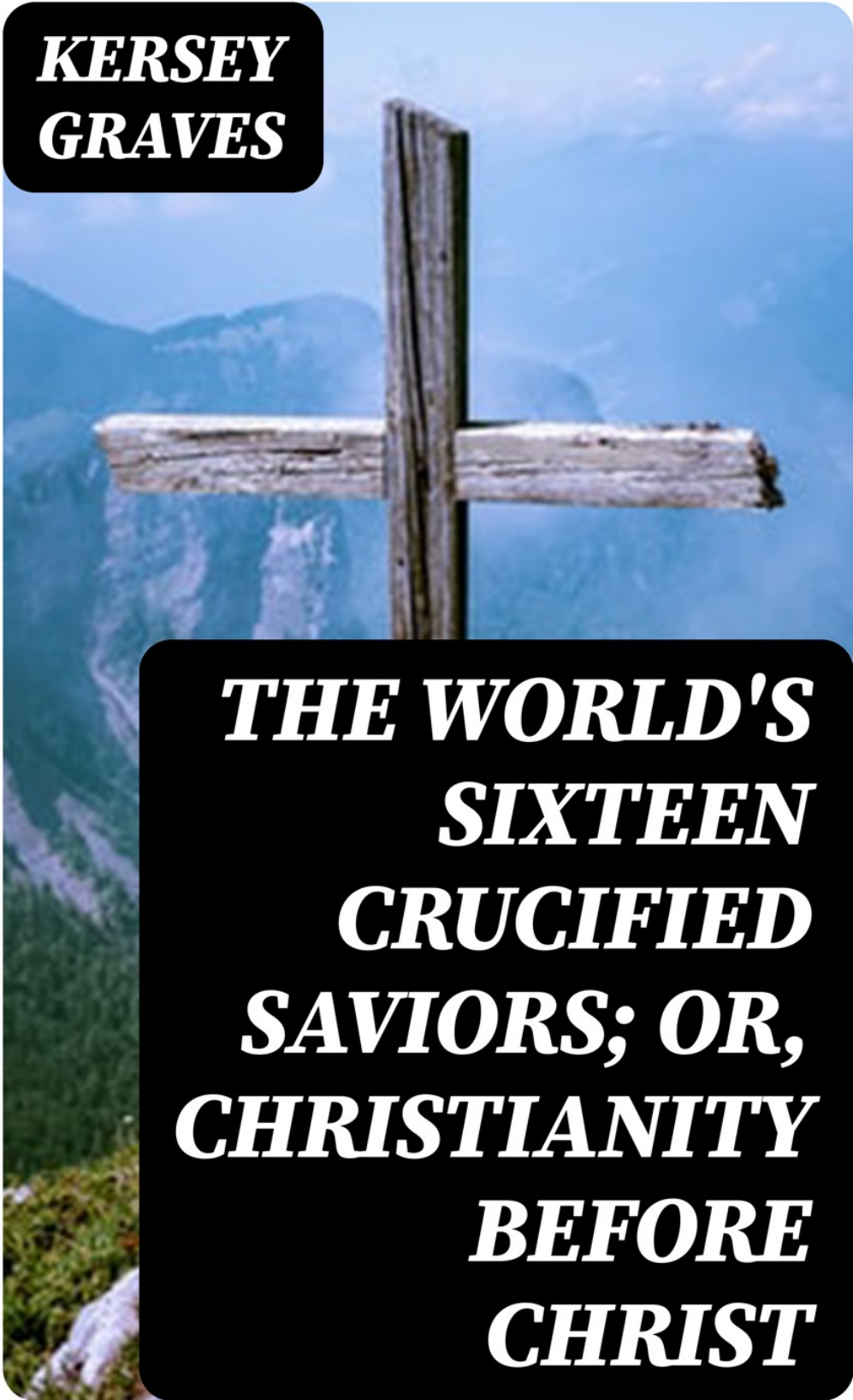


***KERSEY
GRAVES***

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

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Kersey Graves

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

EAN 8596547026198

DigiCat, 2022

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PREFACE.

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

any school-boy, at the present day, can demonstrate their falsity. Let the unbiased reader examine and compare the oriental and Christian bibles together, and he will note the following facts, viz:—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Author.



PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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

The author also desires to say here, that the many flattering letters he has received from various parts of the country, from those who have supplied themselves with the

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

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

EXPLANATION

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"The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviors." What an imposing title for a book! What startling developments of religious history it implies! Is it founded on fact or on fiction? If it has a basis of truth, where was such an extraordinary mine of sacred lore discovered? Where were such startling facts obtained as the title of the work suggests. These queries will doubtless arise as soliloquies in the minds of many readers on glancing at the title-page. And the author is disposed to gratify this natural and most probable, in some cases, excited curiosity by a brief explanation. In doing this, he deems it only necessary, to state that many of the most important facts collated in this work were derived from Sir Godfrey Higgins' Anacalypsis, a work as valuable as it is rare—a work comprising the result of twenty years' labor, devoted to the investigation of religious history. And although embodying many important historical facts which should have commanded for it a word-wide circulation, but a few copies of this invaluable treasury of

religious knowledge have ever found their way into this country. One of these copies the author of this work obtained, at no inconsiderable expense, long enough to glean from its pages such facts as he presumed would be most interesting and instructive to the general reader, some of which will be found in nearly every chapter of this volume. With the facts and materials derived from this source, and two hundred other unimpeachable historical records, the present work might have been swelled to fourfold its present size without exhausting the author's ample store of materials and would have possessed such unwieldy dimensions but for a strict conformity to the most rigid rules of eclecticism and condensation. Encouraged by the extensive demand for his former work, "The Biography of Satan," which has passed through seven editions, the author cherishes the hope that the present work will meet with a circulation commensurate with the importance of the many invaluable facts which it contains. For he possesses the sad conviction that the many religious errors and evils which it is the object of this work to expose, operate very seriously to retard the moral and intellectual growth and prosperity of all Christian countries. They have the effect to injure mentally, morally and religiously the great body of Christian professors.

Dr. Prince, of Long Island (now deceased), wrote to the author, respecting the thirty-fifth chapter of this work, entitled "The Logical View of the Incarnation," after he had seen it in the columns of a newspaper, "It is a masterly piece of logic, and will startle, if it does not revolutionize, the orthodox world. And the chapters comprising 'The

Philosophical View,' and 'The Physiological View,' were afterward pronounced specimens of profound and unanswerable logical reasoning." We thus call the reader's attention to these chapters in advance, in order to induce that thorough attention to their facts and arguments which will result in banishing from his mind the last vestiges of a belief (if he entertain any) in the doctrine of the divine incarnation.

IMPORTANT FACTS CONSTITUTING THE BASIS OF THIS WORK.

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

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

The changes and improvements in religious ideas now observant in the most intelligent portion of the community, are due in part to the rapid progress of scientific discovery and the dissemination of scientific knowledge in Christian countries. The explorer in the field of religious history, however, comes in here for his meed of praise. New stores of historic facts and data may be reckoned among the recent acquisitions of the laborious archeologist; new fountains of religious history have recently been unsealed, which have had the effect to reveal many errors and false claims set up for the current religion of Christendom—a religion long regarded as settled and stereotyped. For many

centuries subsequent to the establishment of the Christian religion, but little was known by its disciples of the character, claims and doctrines of the oriental systems of worship. These religions, in fact, were scarcely known to exist, because they had long been veiled in secrecy. They were found, in some cases, enshrined in religious books printed or written in a language so very ancient and obscure, as to bid defiance for centuries to the labors of the most indefatigable, profound and erudite archeological scholar to decipher it. That obstacle is now partially surmounted.

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

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

Bibles are thus shown to be of heathen and human origin, instead of heavenly and divine authorship, as claimed for them by their respective disciples—the Christian bible forming no exception to this statement. The latter,

being essentially like other bibles, it must, of course, have had the same or a similar origin—a fact which, though it may be new and startling to millions, will be universally accepted as truth before the lapse of many generations, and a fact which confronts with open denial the claims of two hundred millions of Christian professors, who assert with unscrupulous boldness that every doctrine, principle and precept of their bible is of divine emanation.

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

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

Thus, the two prime articles of the Christian faith—Revelation and Crucifixion—are forever established as human and heathen conceptions. And the hope might be reasonably entertained that the important historical facts disclosed in this work will have the effect to open the eyes of the professors of the Christian religion to see their serious error in putting forth such exalted claims for their bible and their religion as that of being perfect products of infinite wisdom, did not the past history of all religious countries furnish sad proof that reason and logic, and even the most cogent and convincing facts of science and history often prove powerless when arrayed against a religious

conviction, enstamped upon the mind for thousands of years in the past, and transmitted from parent to child until it has grown to a colossal stature, and become a part of the living tissues of the soul.

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

RELIGION OF NATURAL ORIGIN.

Among the numerous errors traceable in the history of every religious sect, commemorated in the annals of the world, none possesses a more serious character, or has been attended with more deplorable consequences, than that of assigning a wrong origin to religion. Every bible, every sect, every creed, every catechism, and every orthodox sermon teaches that "religion is the gift of God," that "it is infused into the soul by the spirit and power of the Lord." Never was a greater mistake ever committed. Every student of anthropology, every person who has read any of the numerous modern works on mental science, and tested their easily-demonstrated facts, knows that religion is of *natural* and not *supernatural* origin; that it is a natural element of the *human mind*, and not a "*direct gift from God*;" that it grows as spontaneously out of the soul as flowers spring out of the ground. It is as natural as eating,

sleeping or breathing. This conclusion is not the offspring of mere imagination. It is no hastily-concocted theory, but an oft-demonstrated and scientifically-established fact, which any person can test the truth of for himself.

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

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



ADDRESS TO THE CLERGY.

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

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

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

Will you not, then, give it up that your religion is merely a human production, reconstructed from heathen materials—from oriental systems several thousand years older than yours—or will you continue, in spite of the unanimous and unalterable verdict of history, science, facts and logic, to proclaim to the world the now historically demonstrated error which you have so long preached, that God is the author of your religion, and Jesus Christ a Deity-begotten

Messiah? Though you may have heretofore honestly believed these doctrines to be true, you can now no longer plead ignorance as an excuse for propagating such gigantic and serious errors, as they are now overwhelmingly demonstrated by a thousand facts of history to be untrue. You must abandon such exalted claims for your religion, or posterity will mark you as being "blind leaders of the blind." They will heap upon your honored names their unmitigated ridicule and condemnation. They will charge you as being either deplorably ignorant, or disloyal to the cause of truth. And shame and ignominy will be your portion.

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

1. There were many cases of the miraculous birth of Gods reported in history before the case of Jesus Christ.

- 2 Also many other cases of Gods being born of virgin mothers.

3. Many of these Gods, like Christ, were (reputedly) born on the 25th of December.

4. Their advent into the world, like that of Jesus Christ, is in many cases claimed to have been foretold by "inspired prophets."

5. Stars figured at the birth of several of them, as in the case of Christ.

6. Also angels, shepherds, and magi, or "wise men."

7. Many of them, like Christ, were claimed to be of royal or princely descent.

8. Their lives, like his, were also threatened in infancy by the ruler of the country.

9. Several of them, like him, gave early proof of divinity.
10. And, like him, retired from the world and fasted.
11. Also, like him, declared, "My kingdom is not of this world."
12. Some of them preached a spiritual religion, too, like his.
13. And were "anointed with oil," like him.
14. Many of them, like him, were "crucified for the sins of the world."
15. And after three days' interment "rose from the dead."
16. And, finally, like him, are reported as ascending back to heaven.
17. The same violent convulsions of nature at the crucifixion of several are reported.
18. They were nearly all called "Saviors," "Son of God," "Messiah," "Redeemer," "Lord," &c.
19. Each one was the second member of the trinity of "Father, Son and Holy Ghost."
20. The doctrines of "Original Sin," "Fall of Man," "The Atonement," "The Trinity," "The Word," "Forgiveness," "An Angry God," "Future Endless Punishment," etc., etc. (see the author's "Biography of Satan,") were a part of the religion of each of these sin-atoning Gods, as found set forth in several oriental bibles and "holy books," similar in character and spirit to the Christian's bible, and written, like it, by "inspired and holy men" before the time of either Christ or Moses (before Moses, in some cases, at least). All these doctrines and declarations, and many others not here enumerated, the historical citations of this work abundantly prove, were taught in various oriental heathen nations centuries before

the birth of Christ, or before Christianity, as a religion, was known in the world.

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

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

We will here briefly state:—

WHY ALL THE ANCIENT RELIGIONS WERE ALIKE.

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

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

analogous features observable in all the primary systems of religious faith, which have flourished in the past ages.

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

In conclusion, please note the following points:—

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

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

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

4. The singular and senseless defense of your now tottering system we have known to be attempted by members of your order, by the self-complacent soliloquy "Christianity, whether divine or human, is good enough for me." But such a subterfuge betrays both a weak mind and a weak cause. The disciples of all the oriental systems cherished a similar feeling and a similar sentiment. And the deluded followers of Brigham Young exclaimed in like manner, "I want nothing better than Mormonism." "Snakes, lizards and frogs are good enough for me," a South Sea

Islander once exclaimed to a missionary, when a reform diet was proposed. Such logic, if universally adopted, would keep the world eternally in barbarism. No progress can be made where such sentiments prevail. The truth is, no system of religion, whatever its ostensible marks of perfection, can long remain "good enough" for aspiring and progressive minds, unless occasionally improved, like other institutions. And then it should be borne in mind, that our controversy does not appertain so much to the character as to the origin of the Christian religion. Our many incontrovertible proofs, that it is of human and heathen origin, proves at the same time that it is an imperfect system, and as such, needing occasional improvement, like other institutions. And its assumed perfection and divine origin which have always guarded it from improvement, amply accounts for its present corrupt, immoral, declining and dying condition. And it will ere long die with paralysis, unless its assumption of divine perfection is soon exchanged for the principles of improvement and reconstruction. This policy alone can save it.

5. We will here notice another feeble, futile and foolish expedient we have known resorted to by persons of your order to save your sinking cause when the evidence is presented with such cogency as to admit of no disproof, that all the important doctrines of Christianity were taught by older heathen systems before the era of Christ. The plea is, that those systems were mere types, or ante-types, of the Christian religion. But this plea is of itself a borrowed subterfuge of heathenism, and is moreover devoid of evidence. The ancient Egyptians, also the Greeks, claimed

that Brahminism was a type, or ante-type, of their religious systems. And Mahomedans now claim that both Judaism and Christianity were designed by God as foreshadowing types of religion of the Koran. And the disciples of more than a thousand systems of religion which have flourished in past ages, could have made such logic equally available in showing, in each case, that every system preceding theirs was designed by Infinite Wisdom as simply a typical or ante-typical forerunner of theirs. How ridiculous and senseless, therefore, is the argument thus shown to be when critically examined in the light of history! So much so as scarcely to merit a serious notice.

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

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

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

natal influences been as well understood then as now, we presume Christ would have escaped the fate of an exaltation to the Godhead.

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

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

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

Your brother,
Kersey Graves.



THE WORLD'S SIXTEEN CRUCIFIED SAVIORS.

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CHAPTER I. RIVAL CLAIMS OF THE SAVIORS

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

But we do not find that this prophecy has ever been or is likely to be fulfilled. We do not observe that this claim to the infinite deityship of Jesus Christ has been or is likely to be universally conceded. On the contrary, it is found that by a portion, and a large portion of the people of even those

nations now called Christian, this claim has been steadily and unswervingly controverted, through the whole line of history, stretching through the nearly two thousand years which have elapsed since his advent to earth.

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

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

It is argued that, as the story of the incarnation of the Christians' Savior is of more recent date than that of these oriental and ancient religions (as is conceded by Christians

themselves), the origin of the former is thus indicated and foreshadowed as being an outgrowth from, if not a plagiarism upon the latter—a borrowed copy, of which the pagan stories furnish the original. Here, then, we observe a rivalry of claims, as to which of the remarkable personages who have figured in the world as Saviors, Messiahs, and Sons of God, in different ages and different countries, can be considered the true Savior and "sent of God" or whether all should be, or the claims of all rejected.

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

More than twenty claims of this kind—claims of beings invested with divine honor (deified)—have come forward and presented themselves at the bar of the world with their credentials, to contest the verdict of Christendom, in having proclaimed Jesus Christ, "the only son, and sent of God:" twenty Messiahs, Saviors, and Sons of God, according to history or tradition, have, in past times, descended from heaven, and taken upon themselves the form of men, clothing themselves with human flesh, and furnishing