

The World's Crucified Saviors

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Theosophy, the present centennial effort to re-teach and re-establish the Wisdom Religion upon the Earth, advances many teachings, broad, sweeping and comprehensive in their philosophic generalizations. One of these is Evolution, conceived of in so wide, deep and universal an aspect that that taught by modern science only describes a small arc of its infinite and perfect circle. Another is Karma, or that the law of Cause and Effect holds sway on every plane, physical, mental, moral, or spiritual, throughout the Universe. A third is Reincarnation, or the eternal re-clothing of the inner, immutable, spiritual Essence in mutable, material form; and, in a more restricted sense, the repeated rebirth of the same human soul in successive bodies. A fourth is that all religions proceed from a common source; have their origin in an old, universal Wisdom Religion, to which we have referred. To offer a few proofs of the truth of this last-mentioned teaching this lecture is given tonight.

To understand how and why all religions arise from a common source a brief preliminary examination of the theosophic concept of evolution is necessary. This is that spirit, or consciousness, eternally descends into matter and as eternally re-ascends out of it in grand cycles of evolutionary activity, known as Great Breaths. The proof of this is drawn from the fact that all existence on the material or phenomenal plane proceeds in cycles, or recurring periods, of objective existence in material form, connected by subjective arcs, maintaining by this method the continuity of life unbroken. Thus in the heavens we see worlds in every stage of a material life cycle, from the nebulous, down through the fiery sun stage, into the cool habitable one such as obtains upon this earth at present; then dead and dissipating their vitality in the space about them, as in the case of the moon, or finally becoming so ethereal and tenuous that they can no longer be seen by physical means, as is said to have happened with one or two intra-Mercurial planets. As the process of the birth, growth and decay of continents is written in their geological strata, so is the objective life cycle of worlds thus written in the strata of the heavens making up the abysses of visible space about us.

If we descend from the cosmos to this world, the law of cyclic life is absolutely unbroken. We see it in the life and death of man; in the recurrence of night and day, and of the seasons; in everything. Then, as this material plane must be a reflection of the Absolute, and proceed out of the Causeless Cause, it logically follows that this universally imposed limitation to cycles is a law of the very Absolute unto itself, and as such must be imposed upon all its emanations.

But this almost infinite cycle, called the Great Breath, is composed of an almost equally infinite number of lesser cycles, just as the universal mind is the product of the sum of the minds or ideating entities in the Universe. So it must happen that within this great period there will always be found worlds in every stage of evolutionary activity. In our own system we have the sun and moon representing uninhabitable stages — at least for such beings as we are — while the Earth, and Venus and Mars, probably, are in a habitable stage but at differing arcs of the evolution of their humanities. Therefore, it follows that there are and have always been other humanities than ours, matured and perfected upon other and now dead planets. There are now upon the earth no two individuals at exactly the same stage of their intellectual, moral, and spiritual development, and the same divergence, only in greater degrees, marks the different humanities, for, as stated in the *Secret Doctrine*, every entity in the Universe either is, was, or prepares to [Page 14] become a man. These Humanities, therefore, which have passed beyond our condition, have their egos at varying stages of attainment, and the later ones are enabled to interchain their intelligence with that of advanced earth egos. That is to say, that nature never proceeds by leaps nor breaks; that there is always possible that inter-blending and intercommunication between egos of different world periods which enables past humanities to teach those of worlds coming after them. Humanities are necessarily in the relation and correspond to the ordinary human family. Upon the accumulated wisdom and experience of the parents, the children have a lawful lien, and in like manner it is the duty of the parents and elder brothers of the race to teach and instruct it.

Therefore we hold that this Wisdom Religion, which we are endeavouring to teach, comes from and is, the heirloom of our humanity from a humanity which has passed through all these material stages and which has transmitted to us as our heritage their knowledge thus acquired; and, further, that this Wisdom Religion, acquired directly from divine beings of those humanities, has been taught to ours in ancient times, when it was in the same comparative condition of innocence and ignorance as children of three or four years are compared to adults.

The religious instinct is innate and universal, for each ego at the beginning of its human experience has had impressed upon it this Primal Wisdom. Besides this, we retain a certain memory or reminiscence of a divine state which we have lost by our fall into matter. Previous to this our egos were in a happy, blissful but ignorant condition. The faint memory, the far-off reminiscence, of this state persists in us today, and lies, as I believe, at the bottom of every effort to attain, to something purer, truer and higher than we now are. For this reason even the religion of a Bushman, of Africa, is to be respected. It is the highest to which he is capable of attaining, and represents in him the same aspiration voiced in the anthems of the grandest cathedrals of London, or Rome. It expresses the desire of his soul to regain a lost spiritual condition, the memory of which still unconsciously haunts him.

One of the strongest evidences of all religions having this common origin, is the myth and truth which is the subject of the lecture tonight — that of a Crucified Saviour. This is universal — far more so than Christianity will admit, or perhaps knows of. The Cross itself is the most ancient symbol existing. Its form, it may be, grew out of that of a man standing with extended arms. On the cosmic plane it is a symbol of the descent of spirit into matter; on the human, of [Page 15] man's Higher Ego fallen and incarnated in a fleshly body. It has never been anything else but a symbol. There is not a particle of evidence to show that there has ever been a Saviour crucified, all these myths to the contrary, notwithstanding. The myth means and means only that the spirit of man has fallen and been crucified in matter, as I have pointed out, and not that any particular Saviour has suffered death in this manner.

In reference to this, it is a significant fact that Eusebius, [Irenaeus] one of the early Christian Bishops, declares, upon the authority of the martyr, Polycarp, that it was accepted among all the early church Fathers that Jesus of Nazareth was never crucified, but on the contrary that he lived to be fifty years of age; and that his crucifixion meant as it does in all these accounts, the symbolical crucifixion of his Higher Ego in bonds of flesh. But, though this is one, it is not the only key to the Saviour legends. In one sense, all our Higher Egos may be said to be crucified in the flesh, while the origin of these Saviour myths, or more properly legends, is either the voluntary descent and incarnation of high souls of former Humanities, or the equally voluntary relinquishment of glorious spiritual states won, by advanced souls of this Humanity, and who also reincarnate at minor cycles or at times of its great spiritual debasement and consequent danger. To thus "save" humanity by restoring lost spiritual truths is the meaning which runs through all these myriad stories of crucified Saviours. It is the meaning certainly which the early Christians gave to the crucifixion of Christ. For if he were really crucified, it is a strange thing that contemporary history did not speak of it. Not only this, but Josephus was a bitter opponent of Herod and recorded all the wicked things that his kinsman by marriage ever did, and it is not reasonable that he would have omitted to mention in this connection such a remarkable occurrence as the massacre of infants which it is claimed Herod ordered. Why this omission was made will be apparent further on.

Proceeding, then, to the proper subject matter of the lecture, the myth and truth — for it is both myth and truth — of Crucified Saviours, I will now endeavour to show the universality and identity of all these ancient accounts as the common property of every nation or race.

There is no Christian teaching which has not been anticipated by other teachers long previous to the era of Christ. Especially does the story of a crucified. Saviour appear in all histories or legends of great [Page 16] religions. Of these [This list of Saviours is from the "World's Sixteen Crucified Saviours", by Kersey Graves, from which many of the authorities mentioned are quoted] we have historical accounts, allusions, or legends, of Chrishna, [The Hindu Pantheon] of India, 1200 years B.C. Sakia, [Progress of Religious Ideas] of Hindustan, 600 years B.C.; Thammuz, [Ctesias, quoted in Anacalypsis] of Syria, 1100 B.C.; Wittoba, [Anacalypsis] the Telingonese, 552 B.C. ; lao, [Georgius] of Nepaul, 622 B.C.; Hesus, [Anacalypsis] of Great Britain, 834 B.C.; Quexalcote, [Mexican Antiquities] of Mexico, 587 B.C.; Quirinus, [Higgins-Anacalypsis] of Rome, 506 B.C.; Prometheus, [Seneca and Hesiod] of Greece, 547 B.C.; Thulis, [Wilkison] of Egypt, 1700 B.C. Indra, of Thibet,[Georgius] 725 B.C.; Alcestos, [Anacalypsis] of Greece, 600 B.C.; Atys. [Anacalypsis] of Phrygia, 1170 B.C.; Crite [Anacalypsis] of Chaldea, 1200 B.C.; Bali, [Anacalypsis] of Orissa, 725 B.C.; Mithra. [Faber and Bryant] of Persia, 600 B.C.; Salvahana, of Bermuda; Osirus, of Egypt; Horus, of Egypt; Odin, of Scandinavia; Zoroaster, of Persia; Baal, of Phoenicia; Taut, of Phoenicia; Bali, of Afghanistan; Xamolxis, of Thrace; Zoar, of the Bonzes; Adad, of Assyria; Deva Tat, of Siam; Alcides, of Thebes; Mikado, of the Sintoos ; Beddru, of Japan; Thor, of the Gauls; Cadmus, of Greece; Hil and Feta, of the Mandaites; Gentaut, of Mexico; with several others, of lesser note.

If the influence of these Saviours upon humanity be judged by their present following, it is interesting to note that Chrishna has 400,000,000 adherents; Christ, 200,000,000; Mahomet, 150,000,000; Confucius, 120,000,000; and Mithra, 50,000,000.

Their histories are strangely similar; too much so not to have been derived from a common source. Let us take as a type that of Chrishna. ["Three hundred and Forty-six Striking Analogies Between Christ and Chrishna," Loc. Cit.] It is said of him that his birth was foretold; that he was an incarnate God; his mother

a virgin; that he had an adopted father who was a carpenter; that there was rejoicing on earth and in heaven at his birth; that his mother's name was Maia: He was born in an obscure situation on December 25th; was visited by wise men and shepherds who were led by a star; was warned by an angel of danger; that all children were ordered to be destroyed in order to include him; that his parents fled to Mathura. He had a forerunner [Bali-Rama]; was wise in childhood; was lost and searched for by his parents; had other brothers; retired to solitude; fasted; preached a noteworthy sermon; was entitled a Saviour, Redeemer, Shepherd, Lion of the tribe of Sakia; existed prior to birth; and on earth and in heaven at the same time; was both human and divine; did miracles, of which one of the first was to cure a leper; [Page 17] healed, all manner of diseases; raised the dead; read thoughts; detected and ejected devils; had apostles; reformed the existing religion; abolished law of lineal descent in priesthood; was poor; was conspired against; denounced riches; meek; unmarried and chaste; merciful; associated with sinners and was rebuked for it; befriended a widow; met a gentle woman at a well; submitted to injuries and insults; was a practical philanthropist; had a last supper; was crucified between two thieves; darkness supervened; descended to hell; was resurrected after three days and seen by many people. Again, of Quexalcote, [Mexican Antiquities, Vol VI Codex Borgianus. Codex Vaticanus] the Mexican Saviour, we are told, and mostly on good Christian authority, that he was born 300 years before Christ; of a spotless virgin; that he lived a life of humility and piety; retired to a wilderness and fasted forty days; was worshipped; crucified between two thieves; descended to hell and rose again the third day; rode on an ass; forgave sin, etc.

As it will be impossible, in the short space of a lecture to note the similar important incidents in the life of each Saviour separately, I will merely note the incident and group under it all the Saviours of whom there is trustworthy evidence of that particular event having been recorded. Let us, then, as an appropriate beginning, take the prophecies concerning their Birth. Under this head we find that the coming to Earth of Chrishna, Chang-Ti, Osiris, Cadmus, Quirinus, Quexalcote and Mahomet, were all thus foretold, while prophecies of Saviours run through nearly all sacred writings. Thus the *Vedas*, the Chinese Sacred Books, [Martinus – “History of China”. Halde – “History of China.”] those of Egypt, Greece, Rome, Mexico, Arabia, Persia, etc., contains Messianic prophecies. Of those connected in some manner with a Serpent's Symbol, we have Osiris, spoken of as having bruised the Serpent's head after it had bitten his heel; Hercules is represented with his heel on a Serpent's head; Chrishna is both pictured and sculptured with his heel on a Serpent's head; Persia has the same legend to the effect that Ormuzd made the first two pure and that Ahriman took a Serpent form, in order to tempt them.

A miraculous Conception is recorded of Plato, who was said to be a son of Apollo; Zoroaster, [Malcolm —“History of Persia”] born of a Ray of Divine Wisdom; Mars and Vulcan, miraculously conceived by Juno; Quexalcote, [Mexican Antiquities Codex Vaticanus] of Suchiquetqual; Yu, [Tod – “History of the Rajahs”] of a lily or a star; Appolonius, [Philostratus] of Proteus ; Buddha, of Mahamaya; Chrishna, of Yasuva, by Narayana, and Jesus, of Mary, by the Holy Ghost. [Page 18]

Of Virgin Mothers [Higgins – Anacalypsis] we have Yasoda, mother of Chrishna; Maia, of Sakia; Celestine, of Zulis; Chimalman, of Quexalcote; Semele, of Bacchus; Prudence, of Hercules; Alcmene, of Alcides; Shing-mon; of Yu; Mayence, of Hesus; and Mary, of Jesus.

Angels, Shepherds, Magi, etc., visited Confucius. [Five Volumes] Chrishna, [Ramayana] Sakia [New Covenant Religion] Mithra, [History of Persia] Pythagoras [Progress of Religious Ideas] Zoroaster, [Aristotle and Pliny] and Jesus.

The births of many were preceded by the appearance of a new-star, and occurred upon December 25th, formerly the beginning of the New Year. Of those to whom this date is specifically assigned we have Bacchus, Adonis, Chrishna, Changti, Chris [of Chaldea], Mithra, Sakia, and Jao [of An. Britain], and Jesus.

Jesus is often poetically spoken of as the "Lamb" of God. Other nations have been equally poetical in the titles they have given their particular Saviour. Thus we find Chrishna spoken of as the Holy Lamb; Quexalcote, as the Ram of God; the Celts had their Heifer of God; and Egypt, its Bull of God.

Of Jesus and Chrishna it is recorded that they were born in caves, for the manger in which the birth of the former is declared to have occurred was hollowed out of a hill side.

Of infants threatened by hostile rulers, we have Chrishna, Osiris, Zoroaster, Alcides, Yu, Rama, Indra, Bacchus, Romulus, Salvahana, and Jesus, the two last being sons of carpenters. (World Builders?)

Theosophy affirms that there are seven keys to all these myths according as we read them in a human, terrestrial, cosmic, or other sense. To turn the astronomical key to the above, we find that Herod means the "Hero of the Skin," or Hercules, and that the Sun [Hercules] enters Gemini in May. Rachel equals Ramah, and Ramah means the Zodiac in both Indian and Chaldean astronomy. Rachel had Joseph and Benjamin; Gemini has two stars. He who runs may easily read.

Of those who descended into hell and were resurrected after three days, we have Quexalcote, Chrishna, Quirinus, Prometheus, Osiris, Mithra, Chris, and Jesus.

If we examine the Doctrines of these Saviours we shall find the same close parallelism, as bespeaks a common origin, and that "The Religion of Jesus Christ is neither new nor strange," as was asserted by Eusebius, and that St. Augustine was quite right in claiming that: "This in our day is the Christian Religion, not as having been unknown in former times, but as recently having received that name."

Among other kinds of resemblance we note that the doctrine of **[Page 19]** the Trinity was recognized in Brahmanism, Zoroastrianism, and the religions of Chaldea, China, Mexico, and Greece. Speaking of this doctrine of the Trinity, Bishop Powell declares: "I not only confess but I maintain such a similarity between the Trinity of Philo and that of John as bespeaks a common origin". The ceremony of the Eucharist was also observed by the Essenes, Persians, Pythagoreans and Gnostics, who used as elements bread and water. It also was recognized and taught by the Brahmans and Mexicans. St. Justin indignantly remarks of it: "And this very solemnity an evil spirit introduced into the mysteries of Mithra". The pious Faber also laments that: "The devil led the heathen. to anticipate Christ in several things, as for example, the Eucharist". Baptism by Water, Fire, Air, or Spirit, was a portion of the sacred teachings of the Romans, Egyptians, Zoroastrians, Jews, Hindus, Greeks and Chaldeans.

Throughout all, and the golden thread which is the religion, or "rebinding" of them all, runs the teachings of Reincarnation, Karma, and Universal Brotherhood. And it is needless to remark that all of them

endeavoured to make this latter teaching practical. The Golden Rule is found in the mouths of all of them, as was to have been expected. Below are a few instances taken mostly from the teachings of their disciples:

"Do unto another what you would have him do unto you, and do not unto another what you would not have him do unto you. Thou needest this law alone. It is the foundation for all the rest." — Confucius, 500 B.C.

"We should conduct ourselves towards others as we would have them act towards us." —Aristotle, 385 B.C.

"Do not to your neighbour what you would take ill from him" — Pittacus, 650 B.C.

"Avoid doing what you would blame others for doing" —Thales, 464 B.C.

"Act towards others as you would desire them to act towards you" — Isocrates, 338 B.C.

"What you wish your neighbours to be to you such be you to them" — Sextus, 406 B.C.

"Do not to others what you would not like others do to you" — Hillel, 50 B.C.

Let us close by a few quotations which will show the real, inner agreement better than a host of external forms. For example, the Buddha declares: "A man who foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes [Page 20] from him, the more good shall go from me. Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love; this is an old rule."

And Lao-Tse: "The good I would meet with goodness. The not good I would meet with goodness also. The faithful I would meet with faith. The not faithful I would meet with faith also. Virtue is faithful. Recompense injury with kindness."

And Manu: "By forgiveness of injuries the learned are purified".

And Kwhan-Yin: "Never will I seek nor receive private individual salvation; never enter into final peace alone; but forever and everywhere will I live and strive for the universal redemption of every creature throughout the world".

And Philo, the Essenian: "It is our first duty to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness".

While Socrates, voicing the Divine Wisdom left as the heirloom of Greece by Pythagoras, declares: "It is not permitted to return evil for evil".

Now all this mass of evidence has not been advanced by me in order to attack Christianity. That is the very farthest from my desire. It is simply brought forward to show the common origin of all religions, and so to add one more reason for the practice of Universal Brotherhood, the first step toward which is universal respect and toleration of each other's religious beliefs, and to show that there have been and will be many Christs. For each individual in humanity who evolves the Christ principle within, who thus raises himself above his race so that he is in a position to aid its spiritual advancement, becomes also a Christ.