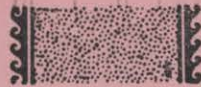


THE CHURCH OF
"PSYCHIANA"

(THE TEACHING WHICH IS BRINGING NEW LIFE TO A SPIRITUALLY DEAD WORLD)

ADVANCED TEACHING
NUMBER TWO

by
DR. FRANK B. ROBINSON



"PSYCHIANA"



LESSON NO. 13

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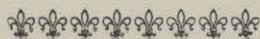
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LESSON NO. 13

BY

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Lesson No. 13 is a continuation of the subject matter we dealt with in Lesson No. 12--the worship of men as gods.

The Christian writer F.D. Maurice declares in like manner, "We accept the fact of the incarnation (of Jesus Christ) because we feel that it is impossible to know the absolute invisible God without an incarnation, as man needs to know him, and CRAVES to know him." (Logical Essay, p. 79) Here is more pagan logic--the same reasoning they employed to prove the divinity of their saviors and demigods. And the Rev. Dr. Thomas Arnold declares, "It (the incarnation of Christ) was very necessary, especially at a time when men were so accustomed to worship highest gods under the FORM OF MEN." (Sermon on Christian Life, p. 61.) Let the reader attentively observe the explicit avowal here made, and mark well its pregnant inferences. He makes Jesus Christ come into the world in condescension to the idolatrous rivalry of the Jews to be up with the heathen nations in worshipping god in the form of a man; that is, the founders of Christianity, having been Jews, disclosed the true Jewish character in running after and adopting the customs of heathen countries then so rife--that of hunting up a great man, and making him a god--which was only one case out of many of the Jews adopting some of the numerous forms of idolatry and other religious customs of their heathen neighbors. Their whole history, as set forth in the Bible, proves, as we have shown in

another chapter, that they were strongly prone to such acts. It is not strange, therefore, that they should and did convert "the man Christ Jesus" into a God. We will now listen to another Christian writer, the notable and noteworthy Dr. T. Chambers. "Whatever the falsely or superstitiously fearful imagination conjures up because of God being at a DISTANCE, can only be dispelled by God being BROUGHT NIGH TO US...

"The veil which hides the UNSEEN God from the eyes of mortals must be SOMEHOW withdrawn." (Select Works, vol. iii. p.161.) Most significant indeed is this species of reasoning. It is the same kind of logic which has led to the promotion of more than a score of great men to the god-head among the ancient heathen. "THE VEIL WHICH HIDES THE UNSEEN GOD MUST BE REMOVED," says Dr. Chambers; and so had reasoned in soliloquy a thousand pagans long before, when DETERMINED TO WORSHIP MEN FOR GODS. It is simply saying, "We are too carnally-minded to worship god in spirit; we must and WILL have a god of FLESH and BLOOD--a god who can be RECOGNIZED by the EXTERNAL SENSES;" he must "become flesh, and dwell amongst us." (See John i. 14) Our author continues: "Now all this (removing the veil from the unseen God) has been done once, and done only once in the person of Jesus Christ." (IBID) MISTAKE, MOST FATAL MISTAKE, BROTHER CHAMBERS! It has been done more than a score of times in various heathen countries--a fact which proves you ignorant of Oriental history.

Now let the reader mark the foregoing citations from standard Christian authors, setting forth some of the reasons which led the founders of Christianity to adopt a visible man-God in their worship in the person of Jesus Christ. Language could hardly be used to prove more conclusively that the whole thing grew out of an idolatrous proclivity to man-worship, that is, the gross, sensuous, carnally-minded propensity to worship an EXTERNAL, VISIBLE God--proving, with the corroborative evidence of many other facts, that they were not a whit above the heathen in spiritual development. The reason employed by the Thibetan for the worship of the Hindoo Chrishna as a god, tells the whole story of the worship and the deification of Jesus Christ. "We could not always have god behind the clouds; so we had him come down where we could see him." This is the same kind of reasoning made use of by the Christian writer above quoted, all of which discloses a state of mind among both heathen and Christians that would not long rest satisfied without deifying SOMEBODY, in order to have a VISIBLE god to worship. And hence Christians deified "the man Christ Jesus" for this purpose.

"The more externally-minded (says Fleurbach), the greater was the determination to worship a personal God"--GOD IN THE FORM OF MAN. And as the Jewish founders of Christianity (as every chapter of their history demonstrates) were dwelling on the external plane, it was not an act of direct innovation,

therefore, for them to fall into the habit of worshipping the personal Jesus as a God. It involved no serious incursion on previous thoughts or habits. And warped and blinded, indeed, must be that mind which cannot here discover the true key to the apotheosis of Jesus--one of the real causes of his being stripped of his manhood, and advanced to the Godhead. It was as naturally to be expected from the then state of the religious world, and the state of the Jewish mind concerned in the founding of Christianity, as that a autumnal crop of fruit should succeed the bloom of spring.

Let it be specially noted, that all the Christian writers above cited tell us, in effect that God sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world to be worshipped as a God in condescension to the ignorance and superstitious tendencies, and we will add, IDOLATROUS PROCLIVITIES of the people. From this standpoint we challenge the world to show why God may not have sent the Oriental saviors into the world for the same reason--that is, in condescension to the prejudices of the devout worshippers under the heathen systems. Why, then, is there not as much probability that HE DID DO SO? Why would he not be as likely to accomodate THEIR IGNORANCE and PREJUDICES in this way as THOSE of the FOUNDERS of the CHRISTIAN SYSTEM? This question we shall keep standing before the Christian world till it is answered, and we challenge them to meet it, and overthrow it if they can.

3. Men deified on account of mental and moral superiority. The ancient nations, in their entire ignorance of the philosophy of the human mind, and the laws controlling its actions, always accounted for the appearance of great men amongst them by supposing them to be gods. Every country occasionally produced a man, who, by virtue of natural superiority, rose so high in the scale of moral and intellectual greatness as to fill the ideal of the people with respect to the characteristics of a god. So low, so limited, so narrow, so greatly circumscribed were the conceptions of deity, of the undeveloped and itellectually dwarfed minds of all religious countries in that age, that a man had to rise but a few degrees above the common level of the populace to become a god. He could "easily fill the bill," and exhibit all the qualities they assigned to the highest god in the heavens. And this is as true of the Jewish mind as that of any other nation, a portion of whom adored Jesus as a God. Or if they lacked anything in natural inclination, they made it up by imitation, a propensity which they possessed in no small degree, that is, a proneness to imitate the customs of other nations.

Mr. Higgins tells us that "men of brilliant intellects and high moral attainments, and great healers (of which Christ was one), were ALMOST CERTAIN to be deified." In like manner Archbishop Tillotson says, "They deified famous and eminent persons by advancing them after their death to the dignity of an inferior kind of god fit to be worshipped by men on earth." Mark the expres-

sion "AFTER THEIR DEATH." We have shown in another chapter that Jesus Christ was not generally considered a God, even by his followers, till more than three hundred years after his death, when Constantine declared him to be "God of very God"--a circumstance of itself sufficient to establish the conclusion that he did not possess this character. A god would be adored as such by EVERYBODY WHILE LIVING, but a man's worshippers rise up AFTER HIS DEATH, as in the case of "the Man Christ Jesus."

Great mental endowments, or great moral attainments, would, in most countries, bring the most ignorant down on their knees to worship such a man as a god. But it required years, and sometimes centuries, to get him fully established among the gods. This is as true of Jesus Christ as the other human-descended deities. Whatever amount of homage Jesus might have received while living, any person who will institute a thorough, unbiased scrutiny in the case will discover that it was his great healing powers and superior mental qualities which finally deified him. His ignorant admirers knew no way of accounting for such extraordinary qualities but to suppose him to be the embodiment of infinite wisdom. Like the Chinaman who exclaimed, "See the god in that man" when an Englishman cured a young woman of partial blindness by anointing her eyes with kerosene. Such a deed would deify almost any man, in almost any country, before the dawn of letters and the recognition of the science of mind.

The missionary Rev. D.O. Allen's method of accounting for the deification of the Hindoo god Chrishna is so suggestive, that we here present it. He tells us that "as the exploits ascribed to Chrishna exceed mere human power, the difficulty was removed by placing him among the incarnations of Vishnu." (India, Ancient and Modern, p.26.) Exactly so! We are glad of such historic information. We hope the Christian reader will note the lesson it suggests. For certainly, every reader, who has not had his reason shipwrecked on the shoals of a blind and dogmatic theology, can see here a key to unlock the great mystery of the Christian incarnation--the DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST. As some of the exploits of Chrishna were supposed to "exceed mere human power," we are told the difficulty was explained by imagining him to be god. How powerful the suggestion! How conclusive the explanation, not only for the godhood of this sin-atoning savior, but for that of "our Lord and Savior Jesus Chirst," and all the other lords, and gods, and saviors of antiquity! A single hint will sometimes explain whole volumes of obscure history, as does this of the Rev. Christian Hindoo missionary D.O. Allen. And, surely, most deplorably blinded by superstition must be the two hundred millions of Christ worshippers, the three hundred millions who worship Chrishna, the one hundred and twenty million adorers of Confucius, the fifty millions of suppliants of Mithra the Mediator, and the one hundred and fifty millions of followers of Mahomet, who cannot see here a satisfactory solution of the deityship of all these

gods, and all the other man-gods of antiquity.

The question is sometimes asked, "How could two hundred millions of people come to believe that Jesus was a God merely because of his superiority as a man? We will answer by pointing to the history of the Hindoo Krishna, and by asking the same question with respect to his godhead. How could THREE HUNDRED MILLIONS of people be brought to believe in HIS divinity, and worship HIM as a god, merely because HE was a superior human being? One question is as easily answered as the other, and posterity will answer both questions alike. We observe it taught as an important and easily learned lesson of history, and one based on a thousand facts, that no man could rise to intellectual greatness of moral distinction in the era in which Christ was born without being advanced to the dignity of a god, and worshipped as such. It is really a source of humility and sorrow to every unshackled lover of truth and humanity to reflect that there are so many millions of people whose mental vision is so beclouded by a dogmatic and inexorable theology that they cannot be even moved by this great and overwhelming amount of evidence against the divinity dogma, and observe that it explodes it into a thousand fragments, but still cling to the delusion that "the man Christ Jesus," with all the human qualities and human frailties with which his own history (the Gospels) invest him, was nevertheless a God,--ay, the monstrous delusion that any being possessing a FINITE form could be an INFINITE BEING--a most self-evident and shocking absurdity. And we challenge all Christendom to show, or approximate one inch toward showing, that there was sufficient difference between Christ and Krishna to require us to accept one as a man and the other as a God. It cannot be done.

We have shown, then, by the foregoing exposition, that one cause of the deification of men was simply an attempt to solve the problem of human greatness,--an attempt to account for the moral and intellectual superiority of men which enabled them to perform deeds and otherwise exhibit, a character far above the capacity of the multitude to comprehend, and which they could find no other way to account for than to suppose them to be gods, while the low and groveling conceptions which most religious nations, and especially the Jews, had formed of the character and essential attributes of the Infinite Deity (often investing him with the most ignoble human attributes, human passions, and human imperfections), made it perfectly easy to convert their great men by imagination to Gods. The Jews represented God not only as a coming down from heaven in PROPRIA PERSONA, and walking, talking, wrestling, etc., as a man (on one occasion we are told he and Jacob scuffled all night), but he is often represented as acting the part of the wicked man, such as lying (see 2 Chron. v.22), getting mad (see Deut. i. 37), swearing, sanctioning the high-handed and demoralizing crimes of stealing (see Ex.iii.2), of robbery (see Ex. xii.26), of murder (see Deut.xiii.2) and even fornication (see Gen. xxx.i, and Num. xxi) and thus they invested Deity with such mean, low, despicable attributes as to reduce his moral character to a level with the most immoral

man in society so that it was very easy, if not very natural, to elevate their great men (if it required any elevation) to a level with their god.

Man and gods were in character and conception so nearly alike, that it was easy to bring them on a level, or to mistake one for the other. And hence it is we find an incarnated god, savior, son of god, redeemer, etc., figuring in the early history of nearly every Oriental religious nation whose name and history has descended to us. Indeed, the practice of deifying men, or mistaking men for gods, was once so common, so nearly universal, that it must require a mind very ignorant of Oriental history to adore Jesus Christ as having been the ONLY CHARACTER of this kind who figured in the religious world. It was, as before suggested, deemed the most rational way of accounting for the marked superiority among men, to suppose that some men had a divine birth, and were begotten by the great Infinite Deity himself, and descended to the earth through the purest human (virgin) channel.

As Mr. Higgins remarks, "Every person who possessed a striking superiority of mind, either for talent or goodness, was supposed anciently to have a portion of the divine mind or essence incorporated or incarnated in him." The Jews had a number of men whose names imply a participation in the divine nature, among which we will cite Elijah and Elisha (El-i-jah and El-i-sha), El being the Hebrew name or term of god, while Jah is Jehovah (see Pa. lxviii.4), and Sha means Savior. Elijah then, is an approximation to god--Jehovah, and Elisha is god--a savior. The character of men and gods were cast in molds so approximately similar, so nearly indetical, as to make the transition, or change from one to the other, so slight and easy; either of men into gods, or gods into men, that several nations went so far as to teach that a man might by his own natural exertions, his own voluntary powers, raise himself to a level with the Deity, and thereby become a god.

Mr. Ritter in his "History of Ancient Philosophy" (Chap. 11.), tells us that some of the Buddhist sects held that "a man by freeing himself by holiness of conduct from the obstacles of nature, may deliver his fellows from the corruption of the times, and become a benefactor and redeemer or his race, and also EVEN BECOME A GOD"--a "Buddha"--i.e., a savior and son of god. Singular enough that the Christian should object to this doctrine as being rather blasphemous, when his own Bible abundantly and explicitly teaches the same doctrine in effect!

We find the same thing substantially taught over and over again in the Christian Scriptures. "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matt. v.18), requires a man to become morally perfect as God, which is all that the Buddhist precept requires or contemplates, and no man can become PERFECT as God without BECOMING A GOD. But we are not left to mere inference in the matter. We have the doctrine several times expressed and unquestionably taught in the Christian Bible of man's power and prerogative to become a

God or Son of God. "Said I not that ye are Gods!" (Ex. iv. 16) "Behold now, we are the Sons of God." (i John i.2.)

Here is the Buddhist doctrine as explicitly stated as it can be taught. It is, then a Christian Bible doctrine as well as a pagan doctrine, that man can become a God, and that God can be born of woman, and thereby invested with all the frail and imperfect attributes of man. It cannot be considered a matter of marvel, therefore, that so many of the good, the great, and the wise men of almost every country, including "the man Christ Jesus," should be honored and adored with the titles of Deity, and worshipped as God absolute, "Son of God," "Savior," "Redeemer," "Intercessor," "Mediator," etc.

A god comes down and is incarnated to fight and conquer the devil. We will proceed to enumerate other causes and motives which conspired in various cases to invest some one or more of the great men of a nation with divine honors, and adore them as veritable gods and saviors "come down to us in the form of men." It was a tenet of faith with most of the ancient religions, that almost at the dawn of human existence a devil or evil principle found its way into the world, to the great discomfiture of man and the no small annoyance of the Supreme Creator himself, and that hence there must needs be a savior, a redeemer, and intercessor to combat and if possible "destroy the devil and his works."

For this purpose appeared the Savior Krishna, in India, the Savior Osiris, in Egypt, the god or Mediator Mithra, in Persia, the Redeemer Quetzalcoatl, in Mexico, the Savior Jesus Christ, in Judea, etc. In the initiatory chapter on the transgression and fall of man, some of the Oriental bibles graphically describe the scene of "the war in heaven"--a counterpart to the story of St. John, as found in the twelfth chapter of Revelation, wherein Michael and the dragon are represented as the captains and commander-in-chief of their respective embattled hosts, and in which the former was crowned as victor in the contest, as he succeeded in vanquishing and "casting out the evil one." In the pagan military drama the scene of the war in heaven is transferred to the earth. A god, a savior (a son of god), comes down to put a stop to the machinations of the "Evil One," i.e., to "destroy the devil and his works," as we are told Christ came for that purpose. (i John iii.8.)

The Egyptian story runs thus: "Osiris appeared on earth to benefit mankind, and after he had performed the duties of his mission and had fallen a sacrifice to Typhon (the devil, or evil principle), which, however, he eventually overcame ('overcame the wicked one," i John ii.11), by rising from the dead, after being crucified, he became the judge of mankind in a future state," (See Kerrick's "Ancient Egypt"; also Wilkinson's "Egypt.")

The Buddhist, or Hindoo, version of the story is on this wise: "The prince (of darkness), or evil spirit, Ravana, or Mahesa, got into a con-

test and a war with the divine hero Rama, in which the latter proved victorious, and put to flight the army of "the wicked one," but not till after considerable injury had been done to the human family, and the whole order of the universe subverted; to rectify which, and to achieve a final and complete triumph over Ravana (the devil) and his works, and thus save the human race from utter destruction, the gods besought Vishnu (the second person of the Trinity) to descend to the earth and take upon himself the form and flesh of man. And it was argued that as the mission appertained to man, the god Vishnu, when he descended to the earth in the capacity of a savior should become half man and half god, and that the most feasible way to accomplish this end was for him to be born of a woman.

"And that the glory and honor of his triumph over Ravana the devil, would be greater if achieved in this capacity than if he were to come down from heaven and conquer Ravana wholly with his attributes as a god, or wholly in his divine character--i.e., as absolute god, uninvested with human nature. The suggestion was approved by Vishnu, who descended and took upon himself the form of man" ("the form of a servant"--Phil.ii 7). And that his metamorphosis or earth-born life might be the purer, it was decided that he should be born of a woman wholly uncontaminated with man--that is, a virgin. And thus, far back in the midnight of mythology and fable, originated the story of divine saviors and gods being born of virgins--a conception now found incorporated in the religious histories of various ancient nations.

And now let us observe how substantially the Christian story of a Savior conforms to the above. Jesus, like the saviors of India and Egypt, was believed to be a man-God--half man and half God, and reputedly he came into the world, like them, to "destroy the devil and his works," or the works of the devil--that is, to put an end to the evil or malignant principle introduced into the world by the serpent in the garden of Eden; as it is declared "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head" (Gen. iii. 15)--which is interpreted as referring to Christ. And like these and various other pagan saviors Jesus is assigned the highest and most ennobling human origin--a birth from a virgin. And, as in the instances above named, Jesus had also several encounters with the devil; first in the wilderness, then on a mountain, and finally, like them, falls a sacrifice to this insidious, malignant power acting through the agency and mediumship of Judas Iscariot; for his betrayal is ascribed wholly to Satan, whom John called the serpent, entering into Judas and prompting the act. (See Rev. xii.3). And thus Christ, like the other saviors, falls a victim to the serpent or satanic power acting through the instrumentality of a Judas Iscariot; but finally, triumphed like the savior of Egypt (Osiris), by rising from the dead--"the first fruits of immortality." And thus the stories run parallel--the more modern Christian with the more ancient pagan.