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Ethnic searches for the incarnation

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for the

Incarnation.

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Ethnic Searches for the Incarnation

"One far-off divine event to which all creation moves."

"The Prayer of the Earth in Travail"

"The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."

The investigator of the religious history of the world seeks in vain to find a people in whom the out-working of the religious impulse has not powerfully shaped their thinking, feeling, and acting. No ancient people of the primitive world have left traces

of their existence, without also leaving evidences of religious activity. No lingering fragment of a savage tribe is found on the far circles of the north, or in the heart of a tropical forest; in the wild bosom of a great desert, or on any isolated island of the distant seas, who do not give expression to the unsleeping promptings of a religious nature.

Whatever the fact may mean, it is now admitted, that religious nature is universal and imperishable among the tribes and peoples of the human race.

The interpretation of the religious activity of humanity is not far to seek.

The religious history of the race reveals a universal search for a comprehensible manifestation of the unknown superhuman Being.

No impulse of human nature is so strong, so intense, so persistent so influential upon human history as the religious impulse. In its searches it has entered

every known realm of earth and heaven, matter and spirit, and has knocked for admittance to the unknown at every accessible point. It has searched every object of sense and tested every movement of nature.

It has questioned the stones and clouds and seas and stars and mountains, until, with dimmed eyes it has seemed to see in them something taking form and coming to meet it, and speaking it into peace.

It has watched every minutest movement of life and hoped by intent care to at last detect the hidden secret.

It has gazed up into the heavens until the sky and very air have thronged with invisible spirits; flitting, chirping, smiling, frowning, they have come down and dwelt in every bush and shrub and bug and hill and stream, until bewildered it has scarce dared to stir or breathe.

It has even mistaken the sun and moon and stars for the appearing of that Unknown for which it blindly sought.

It has looked within and watched the human spirit to catch some inkling which would lead it into some hidden realm where its problem might be solved.

It has looked backward to a golden past, forward to a promising future, outward, upward, downward.

The religious nature of the race, however it has been deranged, dwarfed, darkened and disappointed has refused to die.

Centuries of mistaken belief, perverted life, and dehumanizing sensuality have not destroyed it.

The human heart has not ceased its searching even through one hundred generations of futile effort.

What region of naturism, animism and spiritism has ^{not been} tested and sought through over and over by each new generation in all the ancient world.

The religious history of the world is the record of an endless seeking which ever falls short of finding, with a deep sad undertone of disappointment.

Sometimes humanity has leaped up in violent revolutions against

all the past, and driven entire peoples into religious anarchy. Sometimes it has plunged whole ages into frantic irrationality and wild superstition. Sometimes it has settled into despair and disgust with life and cynical aversion to every known thing and has prayed for annihilation, but through all, the religious nature has lived and again ascertained itself. And at the last, against hope, it has clung with a grasp strong as life, to the inner intuition that the unfound Good was not beyond its reach. It was an echo of the worlds history which was uttered in the words of the ancient sage; "the good seems at times quite clear, quite close to me. I am just about to grasp it, when lo, my hands close upon emptiness, and having failed to find the better I fall back into the worse."

Reason has arisen and again and again proved clear as day the worthlessness of the fondly cherished ceremonies and beliefs and worships; but against reason the religious instinct

has won the day, and maintained its faith in its revelations and manifestations. In all ages have been those who, as was said of the later Romans although they had proved the gods powerless and had even denied their existence, yet worshipped and sacrificed before every shrine.

Skepticism has arisen and satisfied the intellect with negations, but there has come up a surging indignant demand from depths below the intellect for. Somewhat to believe and worship. Skepticism is not a stopping place, it is but a lull, an ebb between two flows, - but a moment of rest, perchance dismay, between the discovery of the failure of one attempt to find God, and the certain beginning of a new attempt.

The special forms in which religious activity may manifest itself are of little moment to our inquiry. They are merely accidental, determined by circumstances, by education, by chance information, by occupation, climate, surrounding manifestations of nature. They may be infinitely various, - the same impulse expressing

itself in a thousand ways. It may appear in the emotional realm or in the intellectual. It may reveal itself as worship at a shrine, as sacrifice to an angered deity, or as charming invisible spirits. It may be now a hopeful expectancy and now a forboding fear, as when the Indian hears the voice of the Great Spirit in the rippling of the stream and sighing of the trees, or the Northman lives in dread of the sudden bursting of deity upon the world to destroy it. Now it turns into the spiritual and unseen. Again it becomes grossly material. Occasionally it becomes comprehensive and great in its conceptions as here and there in the religions of Zoroaster the ancient Egyptians and the Parsees. Often it is limited and familiar as when a thousand deities are housed in one temple, when a China man carries his impersonation of deity about on his person and whips it in time of illfortune, or when the gods are conceived as swarming down like flies upon the sacrifice. Sometimes man, in his effort to bring deity down

and incarnate him. gose so far as to place him below his own level, and the gods become an invisible degenerate anthropomorphic race, and a Vesparian can exclaim upon his death-bed "Woe is me, for I am about to become a god."

Behind all manifold and perverted forms of ethnic religious activity there is in the heart of man that which yearns, fears and worships, and clutches at the nearest, easiest means of manifesting to itself the reality of the Divine Someone who, in the final analysis is the object sought in every out-going of the religious nature of man.

We now pass to observations upon the world's search for the incarnation, as it is revealed in the religious movements of naturism, animism, polytheism, pantheism and anthropomorphism.

I Searches in Naturism.

From the earliest pages of recorded religious history to the latest, there has existed

the feeling that ~~within~~ that partly inscrutable complex of life, laws and forces called nature was to be found the power and source which would explain all things that are.

The human mind has never wholly ceased to search expectantly the realms of nature hoping to find somewhere a real and tangible manifestation of that being in whom humanity has instinctively believed and ceaselessly desired to know.

The primeval man sits by a kindled fire. Its nature he does not know. It seems a thing of strange miraculous life. When near it he feels that he is near the Great Unknown. His whole religious nature awakes and wells up in wonder, adoration awe and unspeakable desire. The conviction seizes him that he has made a great and happy discovery, and in the light of it he reconstructs all his thinking. When he sees the spark leap from the flint, or the flame kindle in the tinder, or the dart

of fire flash from the cloud, he feels all of his religious nature gather itself up in reverence and worship. He has hungered for a manifestation of the great Unknown Soul; he has half-unconsciously sought it all his days, and at last found it. And the first incarnation, so far as it is known, in human history, has taken place.

But by and by he comes to know the fire better. He discovers that it is largely a thing under his own control. It gives no evidence of heeding his overtures. It does not satisfy him. Soon he is again on the search for the great Unknown. He watches the great movements of nature, the flowing of the stream, the power of growth, the movement of the heavens. He observes their strength, how they seem to cause all that is. He tries to see these acting powers, to know them. At length he has personified them, to him they think and plan and cause. Here again

he seems to have come close to the great Un-
 seen. By and by these powers of nature have
 become in his mind full incarnations
 moving about invisibly in the sea, among
 the mountains, in the heavens. These
 forces are many, and sometimes act
 against each other, Hence the gods are many
 and are sometimes at war. Thus naturism
 generates imperceptably into polytheism. Thus
 the power of the storm, of the lightening, of the
 rushing wind, of the stream, of the living juices,
 of day and night are personified, deified, wor-
 shipped, and become in the mind of the wor-
 shiper more or less comprehensible incarna-
 tions of the Invisible.

Once this process is begun, its
 continuance is natural and easy. Men have
 taken a thousand familiar objects, and
 gazed at them until their minds have
 incarnated divine power in them. Nature
 becomes an infinite workshop of manifold
 materials, and suggestions holding out hopes

to a humanity searching for deity.

Sometimes the seeking for divinity in the forms of nature becomes more striking and evident, as in the almost universal search among oriental peoples for the sacred drink of immortality, or the belief in the divine efficacy of certain waters somewhere to be found for healing and cleansing, as when the prayer is made "I invoke the divine Waters, Waters take away whatsoever sin has been formed in me, whether I have knowingly done wrong or pronounced imprecations against holy men or have spoken untruth." A like attempt to find connections with the divine is revealed in the widely found conception of a World-tree whose roots reached into hidden realms of divinity bringing up divine life.

Sometimes the whole earth has been believed to be a Great Divine One whose very soil is sacred and must not be polluted by the touch of decaying human flesh, as in the religion of the Parsees who expose the bodies of their dead

to the winds upon elevated towers.

In all ancient religions there has been a struggle to bring heaven and earth together and unite them, thus in some way incarnating the heavenly in the earthly. "What bright god is born from the embrace of heaven and earth, who is the divine youth who emerges from the lotus flower?"

Sometimes this effort descends and the most trivial objects are examined and pressed to reveal face and form of the Unknown. Men have come to believe that a divine living image resided in stones and pebbles of which they were able to catch twinkling glimpses at times. Negroes of Africa are found preserving with great care, pieces of broken bottle, chips, berries, trinkets, and believing them to have some union with a mystic supernatural power.

Again man has looked to the stars and moon and sun and tried to find in them the open way to the presence of the All-Controller, and has placed his entire life, and

the destiny of his tribe and nation under the determination of the heavenly bodies. Sometimes the effort to come near to God, is not so directly to find his incarnate form, as to find his home, the place of his abode. One of the earliest most natural and most universal of these attempts is the search for God's abode in the mountains. There is not an oriental mountain which has not become sacred as the home of deity. Sometimes the mountain itself becomes an incarnation of god, as well as his home, thus Tacitus tells us that Carmel was at once a mountain and a god.

Mountain peaks were considered the thrones of the guardian spirits of the earth, and the point to which the gods of heaven came on their visits to the earth. Sacred temples in all religions were thought of as peculiarly the dwelling place of the deity. They were often built on some faraway or elevated spot which still retained its virgin purity unpoluted by the habitation of man and therefore nearer

to the presence of the gods. The great greek oracle of Delphi was located in an out of the way place near great springs which to the Greeks were a certain sign of the presence and blessing of the gods. Now a sacred tree is the deities' home; now a waterfall, now a river, now a field, now a mound.

A sense of bewilderment and failure seems at times to press upon the heart and strange last resorts are appealed to, as when the Athenians let loose a number of goats, and on the spot where each first stopped they erected an altar to an unknown god.

At last when every accessible spot of earth has been searched with seeming futility, the home of deity has been believed to be in the deep sea, in the far north, on the clouds, in the interior of the earth.

The whole process of symbolic representation which constitutes so large a part in ethnic religions is but an effort to make deity comprehensible in incarnate forms.

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Oracles are but an effort to hear his voice. The sacred lot is but an attempt to secure his intervention in the decisions of human affairs.

Magical words formulas and combinations are but an endeavor to pick up the thread which connects with the divine.

The dedication of months, days or hours to a deity express a hope of attracting his attention and bringing him nearer of access.

May not the creation of gigantic statues as that of the Sphinx, and that of Ramses so large that from its face Arabs have scooped whole millstones, and with arms thicker than the bodies of the ponderous cherubs in St. Peters at Rome, be but an instinctive struggle to represent the divine by mere extension.

The daily placing of food for the gods to consume, and the supplying of alter-fires which for centuries burn night and day are a tribute to the deep earnest desire of humanity to keep the unseen gods near by and in touch with the life of men.

The entire historic movement which

endeavor to find the source and soul of all in nature itself, has always led to manifold incarnations of the Nature-Soul. This results not from the constitution of nature so much, as from the deep necessity of the human soul to find a comprehensible incarnate manifestation of God. The intuitive expectation of mankind has ever looked for the appearing somewhere, sometime, of a definite, located, findable, knowable, revelation of God.

II Searches in Animism.

The conception that in the world of animal life is to be found the long-sought-for Unknown which should be the sufficient explanation of all that is, is but a higher phase of naturism.

It is true that sometimes the sacred animal is but a symbol of a spiritual divinity, but often it is practically, and sometimes very literally, an incarnation. In either case the tribute is the same to the working of the religious nature of man after an in-

carnation. That which seems to be unthinking
 and unmeaning superstition has a very signi-
 ficant meaning when studied in the light of
 this inner working of the human soul after
 an incarnation of divine Super-Visible, mis-
 taken and fruitless though the effort be.
 Who can witness unmoved the careful la-
 borious century-long inspection of the flaws
 and folds and lines and wrinkles of the
 intestines of the sacrificed animals. It is a
 revelation of the untiring endeavors of men
 to decipher some hidden writing that would
 give them the lost and longed-for secret of
 the universe. It is the expression of the hope
 of mankind that somewhere was to be found
 the writing of a divine hand. How closely
 men have scrutinized the flight of birds
 and watched the curls of sacrificial flame
 and listened to the language of animal
 voices, and endeavored in them to hear the
 mysterious utterances of the gods. We see
 this impulse asserting itself among the black

men of South Africa as they gather in great ceremony and reverence about a certain bright green insect with white and red colors whenever it lights in their village. They believe it to be a benevolent deity incarnated coming to them in blessing. Again it is seen in the religion of India in the worship of a great divine fish, an incarnation of Varuna which in the time of the great flood came as a deliverer. It is seen again in the wrath of an Egyptian village upon the slaughter of a cat, in the fury of Mohammedian population when an attack is made upon its wild dogs. Perhaps a remnant of it is also seen in those Christian communities where the slaughter of doves or pigeons is resented as sacrilegious impiety. The want of an incarnation of divinity has been felt so intensely and so universally that hardly an animal is known which has not at times been exalted to the office of a temporary supply of that need, as the sacred bull, the

condor, the shark, the serpent, the poison spider, the tiger, the antelope, the swine, the raven, the horse, imaginary giants and leviathans.

III Searches in Polytheism.

No fact in the religious history of man bears such striking testimony to the tireless search of humanity for God as the great fact of polytheism. What surprise must arise in the mind of any man, entirely unacquainted with the religious history of the world, when suddenly, the countless myriads of all imaginable shapes and forms of gods, demigods, and extra-human creations answering the place of gods, crowding the whole length of the life of the race, and the whole width of the inhabited world, should break upon his view? What means this array of the world's deities? Every one of them is a distinct evolution, a separate attempt of humanity to bring deity into the realm of its comprehension. Polytheism

is a growth. As the history of any people advances, the number of its gods increase. However limited the first ideas of deity possessed by the race may have been, the number of its gods were at first few, if not, at the beginning, one. Had communion with the one god, or with the first gods, ~~and~~ been continued, and had men found in their first deity a sufficient Controller, Comforter, Teacher and Benefactor where would have been no farther search. Monotheism or a very limited polytheism would have been the permanent religion. But the first god thus in reality created out of the human heart and intellect did not satisfy the needs of the worshiper. This dissatisfaction drives to the seeking after another god who can satisfy, and a new deity results, in turn to be supplanted by another and another. The outcome is the world's vast and innumerable polytheism. In the Pantheon of every great ancient

nation one god after another rose to the supreme place and descended to be succeeded by another, and to each the same essential attributes were transferred in turn.

Oftentimes the deity can hardly be said to have reached a literal incarnation, but the direction is always downward from the idea of the great supreme Unknowable to a comprehensible incarnation. The deities which have never assumed material dress and form, really receive an incarnation in the limitations of the intellectual conception. An example of such are the guardian Spirits, found in many religions, who while remaining immaterial, are yet definitely conceived and come into very intimate relations with men. Sometimes there is the idea of a great and universal spirit as Odin the soul of the world. Sometimes they are local and dwell upon the mountains and in the streams and guard the regions round about. Sometimes they

are tutelary spirits, and preside in houses protecting the household, causing family peculiarities and shaping individual and family destinies. Throughout the endlessly changing developments of polytheism, one feature has always remained unchanged, namely the intimate relation of the gods with human life. The reactions which have tended to place deity at greater distance from earthly affairs have been short-lived. The human heart has always sought out for itself deities whose relation to men and interest in their fortunes was vital and intimate. The gods who were said to have such knowledge of human affairs as to count the winks of men's eyes and to hear the words spoken when two whisper together, have their counterparts in the pantheon of every religion.

The belief that the gods are possessed of power to give prosperity to men and to deliver them from evil is universal

among ethnic religions. Tao of the ancient Chinese who was a Refuge, a Protection, a Saviour and one who pardons guilt is but typical of similar deities among all peoples.

The effort to give the intellect some rational bases for its faith in its gods, has appeared throughout the range of religious history. It has brought forth miracles, signs, and wonders. It is said that Buddha bears seventy-two peculiar marks which are the evidences of his Buddhahood.

That which has been created in the evolution of polytheism however false and even degrading much of it is, is yet all an index pointing to some far off un-
found reality that should satisfy the half-blind, deeply-felt, religious need of the race.

IV Searches in Pantheism.

Pantheism in its incipient stages is a far wider fact than at first appears. Hardly a religion can be found which has not the beginnings of it. Not a phase

of religious development appears wholly uncolored by it. No people are entirely free from tendencies toward it.

Pantheism is the after-stage of polytheism. When the myriad deities of polytheism have in turn been tried, and found wanting, and the disappointment has forced itself upon the human mind that none of them are truly divine, the only remaining escape from atheism is pantheism.

That, upon the failure of polytheism, the vast masses of humanity have received pantheism and repudiated atheism, and that no tribe or people have ever rested for a single generation in atheism, is the striking testimony which the great fact of pantheism contributes to the world's imperishable desire for the knowledge and presence of God.

Pantheism is the working out of new forms of the comprehensible conception of divinity peculiar to itself. Pantheism al-

though its fundamental proposition is that all that is, is a representation of the impersonal divinity, is yet ever tending to personalization. It creates centers of divinity which are ever approaching personality, and are on the way toward incarnation. Such are the developments which have resulted in the deification of Truth, Beauty, Goodness, Wisdom, Righteousness, Law, Ideal Humanity, Purity, Immortality. In the processes of pantheism abstractions become finally clothed representations of the divine. No religious movement presents so bold an effort to unite the earthly with the divine as that movement which asserts that all the earthly is divinity embodied. Pantheism bears testimony to the imperative demand of human nature for divinity.

V Searches in Anthropomorphism.

Above every other visible form in which ethnic peoples have represented deity to themselves, ^{must be placed} the embodiment of deity

in human form with human attributes. Here the cravings of the religious nature of man have come nearest to finding satisfaction. Anthropomorphism is the outcome of two distinct processes, first; the exaltation of man until he becomes superhuman, and is adored as a god, second the bringing god down into a likeness of man a uniting him with human nature and ascribing to deity the qualities good and bad of men. Both of these processes alike reveal the working of the human soul after a knowable presentation of God, and the tendency of man to seek for an incarnation of deity in humanity.

Prominent among the exaltations of humanity to deity is the clothing of Emperors and Sovereigns with divine character. The emperor of China is believed to be the son of the Emperor of Heaven, and is worshiped publicly by the nation as one having divine wisdom, authority and power.

The divine character and origin of the kings of Egypt is set forth in the following words which the supreme God addresses to the king; "I am thy Father; by me are begotten all thy members as divine. I have formed thy shape like the Mendesian god. I have begotten thee, impregnated thy venerable mother. I give ^{thee} the sky and all that is in it, I lend thee the earth and all that is upon it." The Emperor believed himself to be divine, and formally proclaimed his divinity, and the doctrine was universally received. The people not only believed the Emperor to be divine but also believed him to be the living representative on earth of the supreme God. The faith of the Egyptian nation is reflected in its ode to the king: "No place is without thy goodness, thy sayings are the law of the land, when thou reposest in thy palace thou hearest the words of all lands, thou hast millions of ears." The Mongolian kingdom of

Heavens believed its chief to be the son of heaven. The sacred imperial family of the incas were divine in character and were believed to have had a separate origin from the rest of mankind, being direct descendants from the heavenly deities.

The recently existing belief in the divine right and authority of kings is a lingering fragment of the old struggle to obtain an incarnation of god among men by exalting the king to that position.

Another example of this tendency is the investing of the priest with divine prerogatives and powers, so unambiguously manifested in the great religions of the ethnic world.

Again the same proclivity is seen in the frequent deification and worship of public deliverers and benefactors. The man who in the legends of the great flood preserved the life of the race was soon raised to a place of superhuman power and glory.

and worshiped as divine among a score of peoples. Often men who have brought special blessings to mankind, have been while still living worshiped as divine. The gradual exaltation toward deity which Go-roaster received at the hands of succeeding generations until it remains a dispute whether he was really a man or one of the gods in the various pantheon, speaks loudly of this tendency of the religious nature of man to exalt its human heroes into gods. In Brahmanism the worship of the divine deliverers who came in human form as incarnate gods under the names of Civa, Vishnu, Rama, Bhagavat, played an important part in the evolution of the religious history of India.

Another illustration is found in the widely spread worship of ancestors. The Malays, Koths, and South Africans are examples of ancestor worshipping peoples. Finnic tribes hold that the present race

of men are begotten by a race of semi-divine giants begotten by the soul of God.

The desire to find divinity and humanity united, instinctively led to the hope that this would take place after death. All of the great pantheistic religions believe in the returning of the soul beyond death in some way, sooner or later, into God.

The charm of the idea of transmigration is the hope it gives of a diviner existence after death. Without the power of this appeal to the religious need of man it would have died out centuries ago.

The brightest part of the Egyptian faith was the belief that the souls of the just became Osiris upon passing from this world.

Sometimes this belief in the possibility of the incarnation of the divine in the human took the form of a conviction that divinity was possible for all men. Fravashis

is a word meaning souls of gods and men in common. The very root meaning of the

word Brahma and of the Indian words for God and priest signifies a union of God and man. This conviction leads naturally to the attempt of the individual to become an incarnation of divinity himself. For this purpose the Egyptian assumed to himself the authority and the name of the Sun. Here also may be found the explanation of the strange idea that man by imitating the gods becomes a sharer in their nature.

Sometimes again this tendency of the human heart to seek for God and man united results in the belief that the deity has a counterpart or representation among men on earth who is also in some sense an incarnation of the deity himself. The great Odin was believed to reveal himself occasionally as an elderly grave-looking one-eyed old man, with a slouch hat, green blue, or spotted mantle, and a spear in his hand. Thor occasionally revealed himself to men as a tall red bearded sturdy man.

Some of the early Mexican deities had human counterparts or representatives. Apollo was believed to sometimes speak through the voice of feeble girls and women. These persons were called *Euangelidae*. Members of the priest's family possessed the power to thus become the mouthpiece of Apollo. Sometimes the effort to reach an incarnation resulted in the belief that a pre-existent angel came to earth and took upon himself human form. The ancient Babylonians believed that upon the earth was to come an angel in human form bringing blessing. The Buddhist religion taught that access from heaven to earth was to be gained by the coming down of an angel to be incarnated. This angel had a name signifying "Connecting Link," "Bridge between earthly life and heavenly life." This angel is made to say, "I am about to assume a body (*Shav-yeon*), not for the pleasure of gaining wealth or the pleasure of sense,

but I am about to descend and be born among men, simply to give peace and rest to all flesh and to remove all sorrow and grief from the world."

The conception of the angel destined to become Buddha was of a being supernatural and spiritual. Concerning the incarnation of this angel it is said "If the child born from this conception be induced to lead a secular life, he shall become a universal monarch, but if he leave his home and become a religious person, then he shall become a Buddha and shall save the world.

Sometimes the miraculous conception of this angel incarnate is described, as for instance when the pious widow Coatlantona, miraculously conceived a divine man, by a tuft of brilliant feathers falling at her feet which she picked up and hid in her bosom.

Throughout all of the great religions the historian detects the feeling which sometimes comes to clear expression that the

final outcome of this long sought union of the human with the divine is to be the deliverance of humanity from the power of evil. The incarnated deity is over and over again represented as fighting the battle with the enemies of the race and finally destroying them. On the ancient Egyptian Monuments Ra is represented as fighting with the great serpent Apep. Again Osiris a good deity incarnated as a man is represented as killed by Sater, is raised again, becomes the protector of the world, is at once a mediator for and a representative mankind, and becomes finally the Saviour of the world. No soul was considered pure enough to enter the All-pure until after having put on Osiris, and in a sense having become Osiris. In the strength and personality of Osiris the soul fights and conquers Sater. In the Vedas the worshiper clings with passionate ardor to the divine deliverer who is a son

of power, the celestial bull, and wears the sign of heaven, and fights not for himself but for men. He shares the spoil with his faithful ones, and gives them strength themselves to overcome. There is a tablet in the British Museum which represents the gods of Egypt as themselves on the altar as sacrifices for the souls of men. Among many semi-savage ^{peoples}, the human victim, as soon as chosen for the altar, is believed to become a kind of divine incarnation and as such to die for the sake of the living. In the religions of India the redemptive purpose of incarnation is clearly worked out as when Gautama is described as having been established at some ancient time in the condition of Buddha, free forever from the possibility of sorrow and pain and therefore named Djina (the Vanquisher) possessed of all wisdom versed in the practice of it, firmly.

grounded in the ways of heaven, and in the ways of purity and holiness, possessed of independent being like all Buddhas; and then as a spirit in the fourth heaven resolves to give up all that glory in order to be born into the world for the purpose for the purpose of rescuing all men from their misery and every future consequence of it. He vows to deliver all men who are left as it were without a Saviour. He is called the Great Physician, Healer or Saviour, the Bhagavat or Blessed One, the Saviour of the World, the God among Gods. He was to be born into this world on the birthday of the Sun. Similar is the character and work of Apollo of the Greeks. Perhaps Apollo cannot be said to have assumed a human body and to have lived a man's life, yet in essential attributes and character he is intensely human, a human being with deity's powers.

The Greeks ascribe to him purity and omniscience, he possessed human individuality. He was a heavenly Shepherd, leading his flocks to the mountains. He was the Purifier, the Restorer, the Deliverer of men. He was said to be able to wash away the stain of the most guilty. He was an atoning God. If the fugitive murderer received on his brow the blood of the atoning victim, and was touched by the sacred laurel, he was then placed under the protection of the merciful god. Apollo was called the Saviour-god and was regarded as the redeemer from moral evil.

The brightest conceptions of an incarnation of God in man, who should work out the redemption of the race have ever been future. The incarnate deliverer has ever been foretold and promised by the prophets of every great religion. The battle with evil would

at last terminate in victory for righteousness. Deity would come to the rescue of humanity. The teachings of Zoroaster promised that the supreme good God would win a final triumph over evil. This victory would be achieved by a son of Zoroaster, Sochyos, the divine Combatant, who is to be born in the end of time. Then Ahriman is to be destroyed, and humanity will rise again to find Paradise at length regained. The later followers of Zoroaster awaited in the future a mysterious son of the great Champion Ormazd, a hero divine though born of a woman, who alone would be able to complete the work begun, driving Ahriman back into the eternal darkness, and inaugurating the era of endless and unalloyed bliss. How eagerly they wished his coming every one must feel who reads the following prayer, - "O, Asha, God of purity, when shall I see thee? when shall I

know thee? When shall I see the abode of Ahura Mazda, the Benefactor whom Sraosha is to reveal? What is there better for man to know before the great deliverer comes?

May the victorious Sraosha defend us.

May there come in brightness and glory the fulfillment for which all souls are waiting? It is said that at the present time

among the Chinese, the expectation is quite general of the coming of Kung-teng into the world, and of the kingdom he is to set up. "He will come from heaven be born in the flesh, and bring to the earth the highest wisdom from above. He will establish a kingdom of heavenly truth and justice, live as a man, and then die and return to heaven."

A similar belief is found in the Brahman religion. The expected deliverer is made to say concerning himself "I the sovereign of all things command my own nature and am born of myself by magic whenever there is a

failure in virtue and an increase in vice. then I produce myself for the preservation of good, and the destruction of the wicked, and the restoration of truth. I am not visible to man. I have neither beginning nor end. I am before all the gods, the typical man, the Lord. The wicked despise me in the body which I have assumed, I am the soul which is in all beings."

Prophets among the Iranians gave promise of the coming into the world of a divine serpent-slayer who should be incarnated as Manu Nooh.

This hope of all prophetic souls of all ethnic peoples was shared by Socrates, when he promised the Athenians that after his death the Deity would send them another teacher who should arouse them from slumber.

This hope likewise seemed to stir at the heart of Virgil, causing him to pen the immortal lines:-

"Now is come the age of Cumaean prophecy,

The great round of time begins afresh,
 Now the virgin returns, the kingdom of Saturn returns
 Now a new race is sent down from heaven above,
 Only be thou propitious to the child at his birth
 With whom first the iron age shall end, & the golden arise afresh
 on the whole world

Under thy guidance any remaining traces of our wickedness
 Shall be canceled, and leave the earth free from its constant dread,
 See the world tottering on its vortex weight;
 See its lands, and its ocean tracts, and heaven profound;
 See all things rejoice in the age about to come."

Likewise the native Mexicans still are living in expectation of the return of Quetzalcoatl, a man of divine powers, who long centuries ago sailed, on one bright day, away from their shore, but who in departing promised at some distant future time to come back again, sailing in white winged ships, and completely renew all things.

The Northmen believed that evil would reign until at last in the midst of confusion the heavens shall be rent asunder

and through the opening the sons of Muspell ride forth in radiant array. The present world shall then be destroyed. A new earth eternally green and fair shall shoot forth out of the sea. Visarr, Vali, Movi, Magni, Baldur and Hödur assist in bringing this transformation. All evil shall cease, and no sorrow nor trouble shall any more prevail. Then shall the mighty One come from heaven, he who rules over all, whose name man dares not to utter. He comes in his power to the great judgement seat. He will appease all strife and establish a holy peace which shall endure eternally. But the foul dragon, the venom-spotted Niohöggr, flies away over the plains and sinks out of sight bearing death upon his wings.

The tenacity with which this hope is cherished in the human breast even through centuries of savagery, and in the face of seemingly inevitable racial

ruin finds no better illustration than in the recent uprising of the American Indians of North west Dakota and Montana among whom the conviction, that a Messiah was about to arise who would obliterate the whites, resurrect the Indian dead bring back the buffalo, and restore the savage to his old prestige and power, gained a sweeping influence calling the Indian together in large assemblies wild with a desperate hope of speedy deliverance.

Conclusion.

At least the following deductions may be drawn from the study of the religious history of the world.

- I All peoples have held a belief in the being of deity.
- II The race has universally believed that deity is knowable, that he is not utterly beyond the realm of human acquaintance and comprehension.
- III The conviction that deity would become

knowable to man by manifesting himself in incarnate form or forms, has been present among all peoples throughout the world's religious history.

IV Every religion has in the course of its development tended toward the conception that deity would incarnate himself in humanity. The union of god with man has instinctively been believed in, and in the conviction of the findable reality of the human incarnation of deity, ethnic religions have reached their highest development.

V Every religion has attained with greater or less clearness, the belief that the outcome of the incarnation of deity would be the final deliverance of humanity from the power of evil, and the establishment of a fellowship between humanity and deity.

The certainty that the world's universal movement in search of God manifested, shall in the fulness of time be met

by such an incarnation as shall satisfy the religious need of the race stands equally sure upon any of the possible world-theories; theism, deism, pantheism, or atheism.

Upon the theistic hypothesis Deity has been present shaping human history, working upon the human heart. Every movement upward toward God, every effort to realize God, and every desire to know God, has been called forth in response to the influence of the Creator, who is also the intimate Governor, of humanity. Given the known laws of God's working by the adaptation of means to ends, completions to preparations, fulfillments to needs, and the world's universal need and historical preparations must have somewhere their certain completions and fulfillments.

Upon the deistic hypothesis deity has brought into being the universe with all of the means, powers, laws, and adjustments necessary for the harmonious working out of its history. Given the known laws by which the universe is working

out its history, and the ultimate fulfillment of humanity's universal needs is as sure upon the deistic as upon the theistic basis.

Upon the pantheistic hypothesis impersonal divinity is ever coming to higher and higher centralizations and revelations of divine power, goodness, and perfection. But it is simply a far higher and complete revelation of the divine which the race in all of its religious searches seeks to find. As therefore successive incarnations come in constant progression, that fulness of the divine must sometime appear, which shall fully satisfy the religious desires of man.

Upon the atheistic hypothesis, that which preserves order, and provides fulfillment for preparation, and satisfaction for need, in nature, in human evolution, and in the history of the universe, is to be found in the essence of law itself. In natural law exists the power which carries on the universe. But, given the knowledge of the method

by which natural law is acknowledged to work, the conclusion must be drawn in harmony therewith, that the law which causes or allows the universal deep felt need of the religious life of the race, will also ultimately bring into being that which shall perfectly satisfy that need.

The ethnic religious history of the race must be viewed as one great prophecy, typical-forecast, and sure promise that somewhere, sometime, shall be a full and redemptive incarnation of deity among men.