

**THE PLEROMA: AN
ESSAY ON THE ORIGIN
OF CHRISTIANITY**

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The Pleroma: An Essay on the Origin of Christianity by Paul Carus

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PAUL CARUS

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OF CHRISTIANITY**

THE PLEROMA

An Essay on the
Origin of Christianity

By
DR. PAUL CARUS
"

"Res ipsa, quæ nunc religio Christiana nuncupatur, erat apud antiquos, nec defuit ab initio generis humani, quousque Christus veniret in carnem, unde vera religio, quæ iam erat, cepit appellari Christiana."—*St. Augustine.*



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PREFACE.

THIS little book is a mere sketch. With concise brevity it treats a great theme—the origin of Christianity—which deserves the attention of the thoughtful. The author concentrates his presentation of the case upon the main features, treating them and them only, with a considerable attention to detail; but he hopes by this limitation to the most salient points to bring clearness into a subject which has never been fully understood on account of the many bewildering side issues that surround and often obscure the main problem.

The solution here offered contains some new points of view which the author has gradually gained through his study of detached portions of this large subject, yet in all his several inquiries the results have led to the same conclusion which is here summarized.

Christianity is not the result of accident, but of necessity. There are definite causes and definite effects. Its doctrines, its ceremonies, its ethics are the product of given conditions and the result could not be different.

Yet we might say more. If local conditions had been different, some important details in the constitution of Christianity would also be different, but the essential features would after all have remained the same.

As there are remarkable parallels between Christianity and other religions, even where no historical connections can be traced, so we may be assured that even on other planets where rational beings have developed, a religion of universal love will be preached and will hold up the ideal of a divine Saviour, be he called Christ, or Buddha, or the Prophet, or the manifestation of God; and he, representing the eternal in the transient, will be to many millions a source of comfort in the tribulations of life and in the face of death. There are, as in all world-religions, certain features in Christianity which are rooted in the universal laws of cosmic existence.

The author's method is purely scientific. He does not enter into controversies as to whether or not the course of history should have been different. He has investigated the origin of Christianity as a botanist would study the growth of a tree. He does not say that the tree should be different, and still less that it should be cut down. He only knows that the tree still stands today and that many enjoy the hospitality of its shade and live upon its fruit.

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BY THE
NEEDS OF THE AGE.**