

**THE RELIGION OF THE CHRIST: ITS  
HISTORIC AND LITERARY  
DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERED AS  
AN EVIDENCE OF ITS ORIGIN; THE  
BAMPTON LECTURES FOR 1874**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649742653

The Religion of the Christ: Its Historic and Literary Development Considered as an Evidence of Its Origin; The Bampton Lectures for 1874 by Stanley Leathes

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**STANLEY LEATHES**

**THE RELIGION OF THE CHRIST: ITS  
HISTORIC AND LITERARY  
DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERED AS  
AN EVIDENCE OF ITS ORIGIN; THE  
BAMPTON LECTURES FOR 1874**



THE  
RELIGION OF THE CHRIST

THE  
RELIGION OF THE CHRIST

*ITS HISTORIC AND LITERARY DEVELOPMENT  
CONSIDERED AS AN EVIDENCE  
OF ITS ORIGIN*

THE BAMPTON LECTURES FOR 1874

BY THE  
REV. STANLEY LEATHES, M.A.  
MINISTER OF ST. PHILIP'S, REGENT STREET;  
PROFESSOR OF HEBREW, KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON

Second Edition



New York  
POTT, YOUNG, AND COMPANY  
COOPER UNION, FOURTH AVENUE  
MDCCCLXXVI

## CONTENTS.

PREFACE . . . . . Page ix.

### LECTURE I.

#### Anticipation of the Christ in Heathen Nations.

*"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God."*—PSALM xlii. 1.

Permanent interest of Christianity—Reasons of this—Comprehensiveness of the name—Limited by its relation to Christ—What the name of Christ implies—Its bearing on the Gentile world—Witness of the Gentile world—First by sacrifice—Secondly by mythology—Methods of interpreting mythology—The solar theory—Legends not so understood—The teaching implied—Its result—Insufficient to awaken definite hopes—Truth in all religions—This truth revealed, not discovered—How did the idea of God first arise?—The idea of sin—God has given us the power to recognise a revelation when given—As He has shown us the difference between right and wrong, which is not derived from nature, only to be expressed by analogies derived from nature—Mythology points to a declension—The origin of Christianity therefore is not to be referred to mythology—Mythology gives its witness to the need for Christianity, not to being connected with it in origin—The existence of the want in some sense a promise of its being supplied—If therefore mythology was the production of nature, Christianity was not—Christianity must have been the product of mythology, unless we admit the influx of Divine light somewhere—This is a conclusion dependent on and attested by facts—The fact of a moral revelation through the conscience analogous to a similar revelation of Divine truth, of which the proof is in the thing revealed—How shall such a revelation be brought home? or how shall we test it when presented?—Internal superiority of the Old and New Testaments to other sacred writings—External evidence of history sufficient to arrest attention—The Old Testament the basis of the New—The conception of the Christ complete in the New Testament—Object of the Lectures—Method of argument pursued . . . 1-36.

### LECTURE II.

#### The Christ of Jewish History.

*"In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."*—GEN. xxii. 18.

The religions of the world bear an indirect testimony to Christ—The pedigree of Christianity known—The promise to Abraham—The

Exodus—The wanderings—The prophet—The king—Summary—The hope not groundless—The difficulty of explaining it—The message by Nathan—Illustrated by David's great sin—The inference suggested—David's line maintains itself—The prophets Elijah and Elisha—Change in the history—Its apparent non-fulfilment—The history not complete—It excites expectation—The priest—Meaning of the ritual, and of its cessation—Result of the death of Christ—Conclusion—The seed—The prophet—The king—The priest . . . 37-72.

## LECTURE III.

## The Christ of the Psalms.

*"As it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. . . . Wherefore He saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption."*—ACTS xiii. 33, 35.

The evidence from the Psalms—Their character—The portrait of the righteous man—The general characteristics of the Psalms—The Divine election and trust in God—National election—Election of a particular line—These features independent of date—The Messianic Psalms—The Second Psalm—The Eighth Psalm—The Sixteenth Psalm—The Twentieth and Twenty-first Psalms—The Twenty-second Psalm—The Fortieth Psalm—The Forty-fifth Psalm—The Seventy-second Psalm—The Eighty-ninth Psalm—The Hundred-and-tenth Psalm—The Hundred-and-thirty-second Psalm—Summary of the evidence from the Psalms . . . . . 73-104.

## LECTURE IV.

## The Christ of Prophecy.

*"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."*—LUKE xxiv. 27.

Position of the prophets—Jonah—Amos—Micah—Obadiah—Isaiah—"The servant of the Lord"—The Fifty-third chapter—Jeremiah—Haggai—Zechariah—Zechariah ix.-xiv.—Malachi—Daniel—Conclusion . . . . . 105-136.

## LECTURE V.

## The Christ of the Gospels.

*"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."*—MATT. i. 1.

Conclusions derived from survey of the Old Testament—Corollaries following therefrom—Peculiarity of the Old Testament Scriptures—Vagueness of the conception of the Messiah—But mainly twofold—Unfavourable as a basis for the gospel history—The mission of John the Baptist—The results produced by it—The character of John not constructed out of the prophets, but wholly original—This much



more true of Jesus—The materials available for Jesus or for the Evangelists—These were the Scriptures and the career of John—The career of Jesus entirely independent and distinct—The evidence on this point clear—The originality of Christ's language and teaching—Its contrast to that of John, which was real, or else invented by the Evangelists—The method pursued by Jesus, which embraced miracles and parables—The position He claimed for faith—Identifying Himself with the object of it—The appointment of the twelve, who were forbidden to go to the Gentiles—The thought of His own death—He claimed to be the Christ—His betrayal and violent death—His resurrection the third day, not suggested by the Scriptures—The parallel not immediately suggested by the facts themselves—The triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and other details of His history—The disciples' slowness to believe—The position assumed and the conclusions drawn—The instance of the slaughter of the children—The gospel narrative substantially true, and true in subordinate details—Comparison of antecedent improbabilities—How are the facts to be interpreted?

137-170.

## LECTURE VI.

*The Christ of the Acts.*

*"For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ."*—Acts xviii. 28.

The position at present arrived at—The date of the Acts left open—The general trustworthiness of the book—The evidence fairly deducible from it—An earlier condition pre-supposed—The Acts did not grow out of the Gospels—The probable author—The Acts entitled to independent consideration—The birthplace of the new religion—The death of Jesus one of the earliest facts proclaimed—The agency of the Scriptures—The importance of this fact, brought to bear alike upon Jews and Gentiles—The Christ-character inseparable from the preaching of Jesus, but manifestly inappropriate—Results obtainable from the Acts—Independent of the Gospels, but confirmatory—The Jesus who had died was accepted as the Christ of the Scriptures—Another element at work, which was the announcement that He had risen—The conviction produced impossible without it—The Acts differs from the Gospels, in giving the history of Christian life, and its growth—The originality of the phenomenon—Agency of the Holy Spirit—The Acts the measure of the results produced, which were evidence of a new life at work, which was not generated by the faith of the disciples—The tendency of the new teaching, of which the essence was, "Jesus is the Christ"—Baptism and the Lord's Supper indicating a personal life—The history presupposes the life of Jesus, and the reality of the facts alleged—The Acts illustrative of our Lord's own words—Practical conclusions . . . . . 171-202.

## LECTURE VII.

*The Christ of the Pauline Epistles.*

*"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."*—COR. III. 2, 3.

The certainty of the Pauline Epistles—What the Epistles prove—The identity of the Person of whom they speak—Jesus accepted as the Christ—It was thus with the Gentiles as well as with the Jews—The persuasion produced by the Scriptures—The Epistles corroborate the Acts and the Gospels—They show the general trustworthiness of the history of the Acts—The Epistles witness to the writer's faith—The events implied certain, especially when we take into account the means employed—These Epistles carry us back to an earlier time—Events cannot be imagined, but may be misunderstood—The import of the word "Christ"—The relation of the Epistles to the Gospels—Features common to the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles—The belief in Christ the product of two factors, but could not have been foreseen—The Epistles the product of belief in Jesus as the Christ—The agency of the Holy Spirit implied—The Pauline Epistles prove the life of Jesus, and the effects which followed His acceptance as the Christ—The contrast between the Epistles and the Gospels—They were not antagonistic—Facts which the Epistles presuppose—The conclusions which follow—The Christ-character of Jesus permanent—The seal of the Old Testament Scriptures . . . . . 203-236.

## LECTURE VIII.

*The Christ of the other Books.*

*"I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches, I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and Morning Star."*—REV. XXII, 16.

The Christ-conception the net result of the New Testament—Original and unique—Pointing to a human life—Other aspects of the same idea—The Epistle of St. James—The Epistles of St. John—The First Epistle of St. Peter—The Second Epistle of St. Peter—The Epistle of St. Jude—The Revelation of St. John—The results that follow from all this—The expression, "The Holy Spirit"—Is the witness of a new fact—The points of contact in the Christian writings more important than those of contrast—The rapid development of the Christ-idea—The result of the human life of Jesus—The Christ-conception spiritual, producing results not to have been anticipated, which could have been produced by no one else—The evidence of origin afforded by it—Recapitulation—The consequent permanence of this religion—Conclusion . . . . . 237-268.

## PREFACE.