

THE FREETHINKER'S
TEXT-BOOK.

PART I.

MAN: WHENCE AND HOW?
RELIGION: WHAT AND WHY?

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PART I.

MAN : WHENCE AND HOW ?

OR,

REVEALED AND REAL SCIENCE IN
CONFLICT.

BY CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

Is it true, as alleged by the Hebrew chronology, that about 6,000 years back from the present date one man (Adam) and one woman (Eve) were created, and that these were the first of the human family on earth, and that from them were descended the entire human race? The answer to this question touches the very root of the Christian religion. If Adam and Eve were not the first parents of the whole human race, then the gospel of Christianity is a false pretence. If Adam was not the first man, then his fall, by disobedience, in Eden's Garden, did not bring death and sin as heritage for all human kind. To re-quote the words of the pious and erudite Sir William Jones : "Either the first eleven chapters of Genesis, all due allowances being made for a figurative Eastern style, are true, or the whole fabric of our national religion is false." (Essay on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India ; "Asiatic Researches," vol. i. p. 225.) The task in these pages shall be to show that no portion of the Genesiac story of man's creation, fall, and dispersal on the earth can be regarded as historic

As it is sometimes disputed—by clergymen, Scripture-readers, and other persons unacquainted with the contents of the Bible—that any such limitation as 6,000 years is made to man's existence on earth, I shall first present the exact proof, by chapter and verse, of this allegation. In the orthodox chronologies used in the English schools and colleges the date of the creation of the world itself was fixed at about 4,004 years before the Christian era. First, I direct attention to the Bible account of man, as given in the Hebrew, Septuagint, and, so far as the Pentateuch is concerned, Samaritan versions. The credibility of these versions will be dealt with, after examining their several testimonies, before presenting the evidence offered by History, Ethnology, Anthropology, and Geology against the Bible.

Luke Burke, in the *Ethnological Journal*, page 17, prepared a "chronological arrangement of the Patriarchal ages, from the creation to the birth of Abraham, according to the Hebrew, Samaritan, and Septuagint versions of the Old Testament." To this are now added the chapters and verses from the ordinary orthodox version, to make the evidence complete at a glance:—

	Before Generation.			After Generation.			Total Ages.		
	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.
Adam (Gen. v. 3, 4, 5)	130	130	230	800	800	700	930	930	930
Seth (6, 7, 8)	105	105	205	807	807	707	912	912	912
Enos (9, 10, 11)	90	90	190	815	815	715	905	905	905
Cainan (12, 13, 14)	70	70	170	840	840	740	910	910	910
Mahalaleel (15, 16, 17)	65	65	165	830	830	730	895	895	895
Jared (18, 19, 20)	162	62	162	800	785	800	962	847	962
Enoch (21, 22, 23)	65	65	165	300	300	200	365	365	365
Methuselah (25, 26, 27)	187	67	167	782	653	802	969	720	969
Lamech (28, 30, 31)	182	53	188	595	600	565	777	653	753
Noah (32)	500	500	500						
Added century to Deluge (vii. 11)	100	100	100						
Date of Deluge ...	1656	1307	2242						

These totals show the exact period of the Noachian Deluge after the creation of Adam, and are exactly agreed with by Samuel Sharpe, in his "Translation of the Hebrew Scriptures," page 8. The generations after the Deluge are:—

	Before Generation.			After Generation.			Total Ages.		
	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.	Heb.	Sam.	Sep.
Shem (Gen. xi. 10, 11)	2	2	2	500	500	500	600	600	600
Arphaxad (12, 13)	35	135	135	403	303	400	438	438	535
Cainan (omitted in the orthodox Genesis, but inserted in Luke iii. 36)			130			330			460
Salah (14, 15)	30	130	130	403	303	330	433	433	460
Eber (16, 17)	34	134	134	430	270	270	464	404	404
Peleg (18, 19)	30	130	130	209	109	209	239	239	339
Reu (20, 21)	32	132	132	207	107	207	239	239	339
Serug (22, 23)	30	130	130	200	100	200	230	230	330
Nahor (24, 25)	29	79	179	119	69	125	148	148	304
Terah (26, 32)	70	70	70	135	75	135	205	145	205
From alleged date of Deluge to birth of Abraham ...	292	942	1172						

Making, from the creation of Adam to the birth of Abraham, 1,948 years according to the authorised orthodox English version which follows the Hebrew, according to the Samaritan 2,249, and according to the Septuagint 3,414. That these versions contradict one another is no help to the defender of the Bible. They are his witnesses. Nor is it honest to teach the first version to children as truth, and then to fly for help, against grown men, to the longer chronologies in the Samaritan and Septuagint, when the falsity of the shorter chronology has been demonstrated. Yet this is precisely what has been done by many of the clergy, and notably by the Rev. Canon Rawlinson, Professor of Ancient History at Oxford, when, as mouthpiece of the Christian Evidence Society, he sought, in stumbling words, to explain away the chronological difficulties of Genesis. The learned and reverend professor says, on pages 8 and 9 of his lecture, delivered under the auspices of the Christian Evidence Society: "We possess the Pentateuch in three very ancient forms—in Hebrew, in the Greek version known as the Septuagint, and in Samaritan. Our English numbers represent those of the Hebrew text. The numbers of the Septuagint and the Samaritan version are different. Those of the Samaritan version extend the period between the Deluge and the birth of Abraham from the 292 years of the Hebrew text to 942 years—an addition of six centuries and a half—while those of the Septuagint, according to some copies,