

THE
JEWISH LIFE OF CHRIST
BEING THE
SEPHER TOLDOTH JESHU.

זשי תזקלות רפס

OR
BOOK OF THE GENERATION OF JESUS.

Translated from the Hebrew.

EDITED
(With an Historical Preface and Voluminous Notes)

BY
G.W. FOOTE & J.M. WHEELER.

LONDON:
PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHING COMPANY,
28 STONECUTTER STREET.
1885

LONDON
PRINTED BY G.W. FOOTE,
AT 14 CLERKENWELL GREEN, E.C.

[CONTENTS]

[PREFACE]

[CHAPTER I.] [Footnotes]

[CHAPTER II.] [Footnotes]

**[CHAPTER
III.]** [Footnotes]

**[CHAPTER
IV.]** [Footnotes]

[APPENDIX]

PREFACE.

WHEN we first announced our intention of publishing a translation of this work, we were unaware that it had ever appeared in English before it was inserted in the New York Truthseeker by "Scholasticus." This able and learned writer, who has since published his translation, with other highly interesting matter, under the title of "[Revelations of Antichrist concerning Christ and Christianity](#)," (Boston: J. P. Mendum.--New York: D. M. Bennett; 1879) supposed that he was the first who introduced it to the English-speaking world. He was, however, mistaken. We have quite recently lighted on a translation published by Richard Carlile in 1823. It was done by a Jew, who stated that it had "never before been *wholly* translated into any modern language." He appears to have been right in this statement, as the earliest continental translation we can trace is in German, and was published at Stuttgart in 1850, in a volume together with the Apocryphal Gospels, by Dr. R. Clemons. No copy of the Richard Carlile edition (the Hebrew translator does not give his name) is to be found in the British Museum. It is a sixteen-page octavo pamphlet, with an Editor's Preface, probably by Carlile himself, and a Dedication by the translator "To the Clergy of the Church of England." His English text is substantially the same as that now published. Some of its phrases are rough and racy, possibly owing to his strict adherence to the original; and instead of veiling in Latin the amours of Pandera and Miriam, he relates them in plain English, with Biblical *naïvité*.

The *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu* was first published in Latin, with the Hebrew text in parallel columns, by J. C. Wagenseil in his "Tela Ignea Satanae," a collection of Jewish Anti-Christian tracts, all translated into Latin, with attempted refutations. To collect these valuable tracts, Wagenseil travelled widely through Spain and into Africa, where the chief centres of Jewish learning then existed. His work was published at Altdorf in 1681.

A later and widely different version, the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu ha Nozri* (History of Jesus of Nazareth), was published by J. J. Huldrich at Leyden in 1705. It is certainly a more modern version of the Jeshu story. Interpolations are found referring to Worms and the people of Germany, and the narrative abounds with capricious phantasies that belong to the superstition of a later age.

A shorter and earlier version of the Jeshu story was probably used by Luther and condensed in his *Schem Hamphoras*, although Mr. Gould [iv:1] considers that "the only Toldoth Jeshu he was acquainted with was that afterwards published by Wagenseil." Luther was stung by it into a characteristic fit of vituperation, as the following passage will show:

"The haughty evil spirit jests in the book with a threefold mockery. First, he mocks God, creator of heaven and earth, with his son, Jesus Christ, as you may see for yourself if you believe, as a Christian, that Christ is the son of God. Secondly, he mocks all Christendom, because we believe in such a son of God. Thirdly, he mocks his own Jews by giving them such a scandalous, foolish, doltish thing about brazen dogs and cabbage-stalks, etc., which would make all dogs bark to death, if they could understand it, at such raving, ranting, senseless, foaming mad fools. Is not this a master of mocking, who can effect three such great mockeries? The fourth mockery is that herewith he has mocked himself, as we shall one day to our joy see, thank God!"--*Werke*, Wittemberg, 1566, vol. v., p. 515.

Long before the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu* was published, in our modern sense, it was known to the learned.

The work came to light in the dawning after the Dark Ages, but, says Mr. Gould, "it was kept secret, lest the sight of it should excite tumults, spoliation and massacre." Those who know how flamingly the evidences of Christianity have been written on the tear-washed and blood-stained pages of Jewish history will appreciate this cautious reserve.

It was doubtless the Jeshu story which was denounced and prohibited by Pope Valentine in his Bull of May 11, 1514, under the title of *Mar Mar Jesu* [v:1]. Dr. G.B. de Rossi, in his *Dizionario Storico degli Autori Ebrei*, catalogues a book entitled *רשי השעמ*, which he considers the same as the *Toldoth Jeshu*, and which may also be the same as the proscribed work.

In the thirteenth century, Raymond Martini, a Dominican friar, composed a work against the Jews and Mahommedans, with the suggestive title of *Pugione Fidei*, the Dagger of Faith. Without naming the *Toldoth Jeshu*, he gave long extracts from it, or at least a good summary. A Latin rendering of Martini's Jeshu story appears in a folio volume by Porcheti de Salvaticis, published at Paris in 1520, and entitled *Porcheti victoria adversus impios Hebreos* -- Porcheti's victory over the impious Hebrews. As the Inquisition took part with Porcheti, the impious Hebrews did not venture to dispute the victory.

The author of "Revelations of Antichrist" gives a complete translation of Porcheti's Latin narrative. It is substantially the same as the one now published, although much shorter. It ends with the hanging of Jeshu, and makes no allusion to any of the matters in our fourth chapter.

The learned Rossi, in his work already cited, after referring to Wagenseil and Huldreich, says that besides their editions several manuscript copies are to be found in various libraries. Some, he says, bear the different title of *Maasi Jesù*, or that of *Storia di Gesù o del Crocifisso*--The History of Jesus the Crucified. Rossi goes on to say that the most pronounced Deists, who have drawn from the Hebrew writings, and from the *Chissuk Emuna* of Rabbi Isaac ben Abraham, arguments against Christianity and its founder, agree that *this* book is a mass of Rabbinical sophisms and revolting false inventions; the celebrated Mendelssohn, whom he places among these Deists, protesting that it is one of those books which no sensible Hebrew reads or knows. It may be remarked, however, in opposition to Rossi, that the anonymous Jew who translated Carleile's edition of our work says "it is considered of authority by the wise men of our nation." Even Mr. Gould throws no doubt upon its having been widely and honestly accepted by the chosen race.

Perhaps the Deist whom Rossi had principally in his mind was Voltaire. The Heresiarch of Ferney, in his *Lettres sur les Juifs*, says that "Le Toledos Jesu est le plus ancien écrit Juif qui nous ait été transmis centre notre religion. C'est une vie de Jésus-Christ, toute contraire à nos Saints Evangiles: elle parait être du premier siècle, et même écrite avant les évangiles."-- "The Toldoth Jeshu is the most ancient Jewish writing that has descended to us against our religion. It is a life of Jesus Christ, altogether different from our Holy Gospels. It appears to be of the first century, and even to have been written before the Gospels." Voltaire's error seems to have arisen from his supposing that Celsus "cited" the work, whereas he merely cites the story of Pandera, which forms its nucleus. In his "Philosophical Dictionary," article *Messiah*, Voltaire writes on the Toldoth Jeshu in a delicious vein of grave irony, which appears to have deceived "Anti-Christ" himself, who is certainly no fool, nor devoid of humor.

Mr. Gould devotes a chapter to "The Jew of Celsus." Celsus wrote, about A.D. 170, a work called "The True Word (Logos)," of which, as well as of the author, Mr. J. A. Froude gives a very interesting account in his fourth volume of "Short Studies on Great Subjects." The writings of this early opponent of Christianity, like those of others, such as Porphyry, who would not bow to the Nazarene, were ruthlessly suppressed, so that nothing remains of them except the extracts given by Origen in his refutation. In a passage which will be found among our foot-notes, Celsus describes Jesus as a bastard, born of a Jewish countrywoman and a soldier named Panthera. The genealogy of Jesus, given by St. Epiphanius, induces

Mr. Gould to say that "it shows that in the fourth century the Jewish stories of Panthera had made such an impression on the Christians that his name was forced into the pedigree of Jesus." Basnage, in his "History of the Jews" (Taylor's translation) has an extremely interesting passage on this subject:

"Celsus is excusable in having upbraided Christians with the virgin being forced by a soldier called Pandera, but how can St. Epiphanius [A.D. 367] be excused, who assures us that Jesus was the son of Jacob surnamed Panthera? Or how can John of Damascus [A.D. 760] be justified, who is indeed of another opinion, but for all that makes him come into the genealogy of J. Christ? for he maintains that Panthera was great-grandfather to Mary, and Barpanther her grandfather. Raban Maur [A.D. 874] doth also speak of these two men; and the learned Grotius [A.D. 1640] made an advantage of this tradition, as if it had been well grounded, that so the romance invented about the virgin might appear more probable. And indeed the name given here to the soldier, Panther, is a Greek one; how then can it be introduced into the genealogy of J. Christ as the surname of a family? There is good reason to believe that it was invented only to make the birth of the Messiah more odious. The panther, or male of the panther, is a savage and cruel beast that couples with a lioness, and from thence proceeds the leopard ... The manuscript of a Rabbi is also quoted, wherein it is said that as the leopard is produced by the mixture of different species, so J. Christ sprung from a Greek soldier and a Jewish woman. Those who reckon Panthera among Christ's ancestors, fall into the snare which the most inveterate enemies of the Christian religion have laid for them. Emanuel de Tesauro is one of these, for he blesses the fate of Marham and Panther because Jesus Christ came from them." (B. iv., ch. 27).

The learned Basnage rather hobbles than walks out of the difficulty. We leave it to the Christians to explain satisfactorily why Panthera crept into the ancestry of their Savior.

Mr. Gould's treatment of Celsus we should be obliged to consider disingenuous if we did not think it confused. Mr. Gould, in fact, is far from being an accurate writer. He sometimes forgets on one page what he has written on another; his chronology is often full of gross and obvious blunders; and his proofs have been read with remarkable carelessness. For instance, through thirty-six successive headlines he has allowed "Jewish Ante-Gospels" to stand for Anti-Gospels, which is exactly what he is laboring to disprove. In short, with a great appearance of scholarship, Mr. Gould is a very untrustworthy guide.

With respect to Celsus, Mr. Gould says it is "remarkable" that "living in the middle of the second century and able to make inquiries of aged Jews, whose lives had extended to the first century, he should have been able to find out next to nothing about Jesus and his disciples except what he read in the Gospels." Now there is no proof that Celsus ever saw our Gospels, and his account of Jesus is very unlike theirs. And is the story of Christ's birth, which involves the central doctrine of the Incarnation, "next to nothing"? Besides, Mr. Gould had staring him in the face the declaration of Celsus, as quoted by Origen, that he "could relate *many things more concerning Jesus*, all which are true, but which have quite a different character from what his disciples relate touching him." To this Origen replies, in short, You cannot. But as Celsus had no opportunity of rejoining, having incontinently died a century before his opponent took the field, it is hardly fair to assume that he was lying.

Celsus's contemporary, Justin Martyr, one of the early Fathers, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, bitterly complains that the Jews had sent persons into all parts of the world to publish blasphemies against Jesus. Of what value, then, is Origen's denial of these things a century later?

In the Babylonian Gemara of the Talmud, which, although not completed until about A.D. 500, represents the authoritative traditions of the Jews, the name of Pandera is given to the father of Jeshu;

and the same parentage is given in the Jerusalem Gemara, which was compiled independently a century earlier. Amidst a great deal of confusion, by Mr. Gould worse confounded, this one fact shines out incontestible and unquestioned.

Mr. Gould's theory of the origin and development of the Jeshu story supposes on the part of the Jews a flagrant ignorance of their own language, traditions and history; and what, except the necessity of supporting a theory, could lead him to state that "The Jew of Celsus had already fused Jesus of Nazareth with the other two Jehoshuas" of the Talmud? The Jew of Celsus relates nothing of Jesus at all resembling the later Talmudic confusions of the two Jehoshuas; and those confusions probably arose through the discordant opinions of different rabbis of various ages being cited indifferently. In his anxiety to prove that the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu* is entirely a production of the Middle Ages, Mr. Gould maintains that "the Jews in A.D. 500, when the Babylonian Gemara was completed, had no traditions whatever concerning Jesus of Nazareth." But his contention may be opposed by the weightier opinion of Lardner and Lightfoot, that the Talmudic references to Jeshu clearly point to Jesus Christ.

In discussing the date of the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu*, Mr Gould says (p. 69) that neither Wagenseil's nor Huldreich's version "can boast of a greater antiquity than, at the outside, the twelfth century. It is difficult to say with certainty which is the earlier of the two. Probably both came into use about the same time." But with his usual laxity he advances a very different opinion later on (p. 115), where he says "That this second version of the Life of Jeshu is later than the first one, I think there can be little doubt." He even goes to the length of suggesting that the Huldreich version may have "been composed after the Reformation."

The centre of Mr. Gould's theory, around which his orbit is extremely eccentric, may be found in the following passage:--

"The persecution to which the Jews were subjected in the Middle Ages from the bigotry of the rabble or the cupidity of princes, fanned their dislike for Christianity into a flame of intense mortal abhorrence of the Founder of that religion whose votaries were their deadliest foes. The Toledoth Jeschu is the utterance of this deep-seated hatred,--the voice of an oppressed people execrating him who had sprung from the holy race, and whose blood was weighing on their heads."

This appears to us a very lame theory. In our opinion the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu* betrays no vehement malignity; it narrates everything with an air of candor; and we confidently leave the reader to judge for himself. We perceive in this work many marks of antiquity, and evidences of a far closer acquaintance with the manners, customs and opinions of the Jews in Palestine than is betrayed in our Greek gospels.

If we except the fourth chapter, which forms no part of the Life of Jeshu, but is related to it very much as the Acts of the Apostles is related to the Gospels, the only indication of a late authorship is the reference to the Talmud. But that may have been originally a marginal gloss, afterwards incorporated with the text, like so many "interpolations" in the New Testament. Even, however, if the date of the work was slightly subsequent to the compilation of the Talmud, we are still within measurable distance of the earliest Christian manuscripts.

If, as Mr. Gould maintains, the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu* is a 'Counter-Gospel' written to asperse the character of Jesus Christ, it is a singular thing that the authors did not keep closer to the gospel story? How, for instance, came they to place the birth of Jeshu in the reign of Janneus, at least ninety years before the alleged birth of Christ? How came they to make him contemporary with Rabbi Simeon ben Shetach, who flourished about 90 B.C.? Satire is futile unless it adheres to familiar features, and we can scarcely imagine sane men so stupid as the satirists of the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu* must have been if Mr.

Gould's theory be true.

The reader perhaps may say "But, if Jesus Christ was born in the first year of our era, and Jeshu was born ninety years before, how can they have been one and the same person?" To which we reply, that there is no proof of Jesus Christ having been born in the first year of our era, and [many indications to the contrary](#). Christian chronology has been arbitrarily established. There was great uncertainty among the early Christians, who reckoned like all Roman subjects from the reign of the Caesars, not only as to the birth, but also as to the age of their Savior. Irenaeus, the first Christian Father who mentions the four gospels, maintains that Jesus was fifty years old at his death, and the [chronology of Luke](#) is absolutely inconsistent with Roman history, as well as being at variance with that of Matthew. It might likewise be effectively argued from the only chronological reference in Paul's Epistles (ii. Cor., xi., 32) that the Great Apostle himself flourished at least sixty-two years before our era. According to his own statement, he escaped arrest at Damascus while the city was "under Aretas the King," who must have ruled there before the city was captured by Pompey (B.C. 62) and made a part of the Roman empire.

We would not dogmatise, but we venture to think that the Christian legend of Jesus may have originated in the Jewish story of Jeshu. This theory at any rate accounts for the hero's introduction to the world. The two Hebrew versions of a career similar to that of Jesus, as well as the Talmud, agree in making Jeshu the illegitimate son of Pandera and a Jewish maiden; and Celsus flung the same charge at the Christians before our present Gospels can be proved to have existed. That both the Jewish and the Christian story are largely fabulous, we cheerfully concede, but no advantage can be derived to either from that fact. We now leave the question with the reader. It is for him to decide whether it is more probable that the father of Jesus was a human being or the intangible third person of a hypothetical Trinity.

March, 1885.

G. W. FOOTE.
J. M. WHEELER.

[Contents](#) [Next Section](#) >

HTML © 2002 - 2015

THE JEWISH LIFE OF CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

IN the year 671, of the fourth millenary [13:1] [of the world], in the days of Jannaeus, the king, a great misfortune happened to the enemies of Israel.

2. There was a certain idle and worthless debauchee named Joseph Pandera [13:2], of the fallen tribe of Judah.

3. He was a man of fine figure and rare beauty, but spent his time in robbery and licentiousness. He lived at Bethlehem of Judea. [14:3]

4. Near by there lived a widow, who had a daughter named Miriam [14:4], of whom mention is several times made in the Talmud as a dresser of women's hair.

5. This daughter was betrothed by her mother to a very chaste, gentle, and pious youth named Jochanan.

6. Now it happened that Joseph occasionally passed by Miriam's door and saw her. Then he began to have an unholy affection for her.

7. So he went to and fro about the place, and at length the mother said to him, What maketh thee so thin? He replied, I am madly in love with Miriam.

8. Then, said the mother, I would not deny thee the favor; see if she is willing, and do with her as thou pleasest.

9. Obeying her counsel, Joseph Pandera went frequently by the house, but did not find a suitable time until one Sabbath evening, when he happened to find her sitting before the door.

10. Then he went into the house with her, and both sat down in a dormitory near the door, for she thought he was her betrothed, Jochanan.

11. [15:5] *Tum ea homine ait: Ne me attingio; in menstruis sum. Sed is morem ille non gerebat, cumque circa eam voluntati suae obsequutus fuisset, in domum suam abit.*

12. *Circa medium noctis iterum in eo exadescere desiderium malum. Ergo somno levatus ad domum Miriamis viam affectans, ad cellam se confert, factumque repetit.*

13. *Valde autem exhorruit puella, et quid hoc, ait, tibi vult, Domine, quod eadem nocte bis me convenisti? idque non passa sum ab eo inde tempore quo sponsam me tibi elegisti.*

14. *Verum in silens repetit, nec verbum ullum proloquitur. Ergo Miriam queri: Quousque tu peccato scelus addis? annon pridem tibi dixi esse me menstruatam?*

15. *Verum ille non attendebat ad ejus verba, sed desiderio satisfaciebat, ac tum postea iter pergebat suum.*

16. After three months, Jochanan was told that his betrothed was with child.

17. In great agitation, he went to his preceptor, Simon Ben Shetach [15:6], and, telling him about the matter, asked him what he ought to do.

18. The preceptor inquired. Dost thou suspect anyone? Jochanan said, Nobody, except Joseph Pandera, who is a great debauchee, and liveth near her house.

19. The preceptor said, My son, take my advice, and keep silent; for if he hath been there he will surely go there again. Therefore be wise, and get a witness, so that thou mayest bring him before the great Sanhedrim.

20. The young man went home and was sorely troubled during the night. He thought to himself, When this thing becometh known the people will say it was my doing.

21. Therefore, to avoid the shame and disgrace, he ran away to Babylon [15:7] and there took up his abode.

22. In due time Miriam brought forth a son and named him Jehoshua, after her mother's brother.

23. She sent the boy to a teacher named Elchanan, with whom he made progress in learning, for his mind was very bright [16:8].

24. And it came to pass by-and-bye that he met the senators of the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem.

25. It was then the custom that whoever met those senators should cover his head and bow down.

26. But this boy as he walked past them bared his head, and touching his forehead saluted the principal only.

27. Then all began to say, What impudence! probably he is a bastard. And one of them said, Indeed he is a bastard, and the son of an adulteress [16:9].

28. Presently Simeon Ben Shetach said, I remember now that not many years ago my pupil Jochanan came to me and said,

29. Alas! what a shame and disgrace has happened to me! for Miriam my betrothed is with child, not by me, but by someone else. This is the son of that Miriam.

30. And when I inquired if he suspected anyone, he said, Joseph Pandera, [16:10] who was a near neighbor of hers.

31. And soon afterwards Jochanan went in shame to Babylon, where he dwelleth even now,

32. Then they all said, If these things are so, this boy is indeed a bastard and the son of an adulteress [17:2].
33. Then they published him as such by the blowing of three hundred trumpets [17:3], declaring him not fit to come into the congregation, and called his name Jeshu, signifying that his name and memory deserved to perish [17:4].
34. When it became known that he was declared unworthy to be admitted into the congregation, Jeshu with a sad heart fled to upper Galilee, where he dwelt many years [17:5].
35. In those days there was a stone in the Temple on which was inscribed the inexpressible name of God [17:6].
36. For when David laid the foundation [18:7] he found a certain stone at the mouth of an abyss on which the name was engraved, and taking it up he deposited it in the Holy of Holies.
37. But when the wise men feared that perchance studious youths might learn this name and bring destruction upon the world (which calamity may God forbid), they made by magic two brazen lions [18:8], and placed them at the entrance of the Holy of Holies, one on the right and the other on the left.
38. If, therefore, anyone drew near and learned the hidden name, as he went away the lions would roar, so that in his fright he would forget the name for ever.
39. Now when the report that Jeshu was a bastard had spread abroad, he left upper Galilee and, coming secretly to Jerusalem, he went into the Temple and there learned the sacred letters.
40. And when he had written the hidden name on a piece of parchment, and spoken it, that he might feel no pain, he cut open his flesh and enclosed therein the mysterious parchment. Then, having again pronounced the name, he closed up the flesh [18:9].
41. But to enter the Temple it was necessary to use magic and incantations; otherwise how could the most holy priests, the descendants of Aaron, have allowed him to go therein.
42. Therefore it is manifest that Jeshu did all this by the art of magic and the power of an impure name [19:1].
43. As he was coming out of the door the lions roared and he forgot the name.
44. So he went outside the city, and, having reopened his flesh, drew forth the writing, examined well the characters, and got full retention of the name.
45. Then he went to the place of his nativity, and with loud voice cried out,
46. Who are these bad men who report me to be a bastard and of impure birth? They are themselves bastards and impure.

47. Did not a virgin bear me? Did not my mother conceive me in the top of her head? [19:2]
48. Indeed I am the Son of God, and concerning me the prophet Esaias spoke, saying, Behold, a virgin [19:3] shall conceive, etc.
49. Did I not form myself, and the heaven, earth, sea, and all things contained therein?
50. Then they all answered and said, Make known by some sign, and show by a miracle that thou art God.
51. He, answering, said, Bring hither to me a dead man, and I will restore him to life.
52. The people made haste, and having dug into a certain sepulchre, found there nothing but dry bones.
53. And when they told him that they had found only bones, he said, Bring them hither.
54. And when they were brought, he put all the bones together and covered them with skin, flesh, and nerves, so he that had been a dead man stood up on his feet alive.
55. The people seeing this, marvelled. Then he said, Do ye wonder at this? Bring hither a leper and I will cure him [20:4].
56. And when they had brought a leper he restored him to health in like manner through the *Shem Hamphoras*.
57. When the people saw this, they fell down and worshipped him, saying, Verily thou art the Son of God [20:5].
58. And it came to pass, after the fifth day, that the dismal tidings were brought to Jerusalem the most holy city, and there all the things were told which Jeshu had done.
59. Then the profligates rejoiced greatly; but the old men, the devout, and the wise wept bitterly; and in the greater and the lesser Sanhedrim there was sore lamentation.
60. At length they all resolved to send messengers to Jeshu, saying among themselves, It may be that by the help of the Lord we shall capture him, bring him to judgment, and condemn him to death.
61. Therefore they sent Ananias and Achasias, most honorable men of the lesser Sanhedrim, who went and fell down before Jeshu in adoration, thereby augmenting his wickedness.
62. Therefore, thinking that they were sincere, he received them with a smiling face and appointed them leaders of his wicked flock.
63. Then they thus began to appeal to him: Lo, the leading citizens of Jerusalem have sent us ambassadors to thee, praying that thou wouldst deign to come to them, for they have heard that thou art the Son of God.

64. Then said Jeshu, What they have heard is true, and lo, I will do all that ye ask, but upon this condition:

65. That all the senators of the greater and lesser Sanhedrin, and those also who have defame my nativity, shall come forth and worship me, receiving me even as servants receive their lords.

66. The messengers, returning with to Jerusalem, reported all that had been said.

67. The elders and devout men answered, We will do all that he asketh.

68. Therefore the men went again to Jeshu and declared that they would do whatever he desired. Then Jeshu said, I will go with you at once.

[< Previous
Section](#)

[Contents](#)

[Next Section >](#)

HTML © 2002 - 2015

[FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER I.]

[iv:1] *The Lost and Hostile Gospels*. By Rev. S. Baring Gould, M.A.; 1874.

[v:1] Rodriguez de Castro, *Biblia Espana*, tom i., p. 223.

[13:1] "In the year 671 of the fourth millenary." The Rev. S. Baring Gould translates it "in the year 4,671," which, he says, would be 910 B.C. We cannot understand this computation; it agrees with no chronology known to us, neither the Samaritan, the Septuagint, Josephus nor Usher. According to the established Jewish chronology the world was 3,761 years old at the beginning of our era. The year 3,671 would therefore be 90 B.C. This fairly harmonises with what Gibbon says of "the anachronism of the Jews, who place the birth of Christ near a century sooner." It also agrees with the date of Janneus, the Sadducee king of Judaea, who reigned from 106 B.C. to 79 B.C. If we suppose, with the author of "Revelations of Antichrist," that the Olympiad of Iphitus is meant in in the text, the year 671 of that era, which began 884 B.C., would be 106 B.C. This brings the birth of Jeshu barely within the reign of Janneus. On the whole we prefer to regard the Jewish chronology as the one the writer employed. He wrote for Jews and would naturally use it.

[13:2] Pandera, according to the Jewish Gemara (compiled between the fourth and sixth centuries of our era, but containing ancient traditions orally transmitted), was the paramour of a wanton who went astray from her husband. The Talmudic references to Miriam and Pandera may be found fully cited in the works of Lightfoot and Lardner. These scattered accounts of Jesus, when brought together, give us the following:--In the time of Janneus the Sadducee, one Mary, a plaiter of woman's hair, was false to her husband, and had, by a person named Pandera, a son called Jesus. This son was taken in tutorship by Rabbi Joshua ben Perachia, President of the Sanhedrim, and, at the time when the rabbis were persecuted by Janneus, accompanied him to Alexandria in Egypt, where he learnt how to charm diseases, and other magic arts. On his return with, his master they fell out because Jesus praised a woman's beauty. Jesus then taught new doctrines, defamed the rabbis and gave himself up to magical practices. He had five chief disciples, Mathai, (Matthew?), Nezer, Boni and Thodah (Thaddeus?). They were put to death, and Jesus himself was stoned at Lud or Lydda, twenty-two miles north-west of Jerusalem, and then hanged on the evening before the passover.

Celsus, writing in the second century, as quoted by Origen who "refuted" him a hundred years later, says that Jesus was born of a countrywoman, and that when she was pregnant she "was turned out of doors by the carpenter to whom she had been betrothed, as having been guilty of adultery, and that she bore a child to a certain soldier named Panthera" ("Origen against Celsus," book 1, ch. xxxii., p. 431.--"Ante-Nicene Christian Library"). This calumny the Christian Father easily confuted by such powerful arguments as that God would not make a teacher of a bastard, and that some animals--for instance vultures--conceived without any connection with a male.

Celsus, speaking on behalf of the Jews, further says, as reported by his opponent, "that he (Jesus) having been brought up as an illegitimate child, and having served for hire in Egypt, and then coming to the knowledge of certain miraculous powers, returned from thence to his own country, and by means of those powers proclaimed himself to be God" (book 1, ch. xxxviii., p. 438).

[14:3] Pandera's living at Bethlehem might account for the gospel tradition of Jesus being born there. According to the Apocryphal Gospel of Mary, she lived at Jerusalem before Joseph married her, and Bethlehem is not far from the holy city. Actually, it is more probable that Jesus was born at Nazareth, where Joseph lived. The Rabbinical writers refer to him as Ha Notzri, a native of Nazareth; his disciples were called Nazarenes before they received the name of Christians; and a Nazarene is still the designation for a Christian throughout the East.

[14:4] Miriam is the Hebrew word for Mary, and signifies *bitterness*. Lardner says, "In several other places of these Talmudical writers, Mary is called 'a plaiter of woman's hair'; as may be seen in Lightfoot p. 270. And from some things alleged just now it seems that thereby they denote a transgressor of the laws of purity. And we are led to think that by this description they intended to represent not her outward condition, but her moral character" ("Jewish Testimonies." Works, vol. vi., p. 524; 1838).

[15:5] We are obliged to keep these passages veiled in Latin. There are worse things in the Bible, but we do not feel at liberty to emulate the indecency of the inspired writers. A reference to [Leviticus xx., 18](#), will give a fair idea of the meaning of Miriam's exclamation in the first sentence.

[15:6] This rabbi is undoubtedly an historical character. He flourished about 90 B.C., and is mentioned in the Talmud. It was customary for rabbis, like the Greek sophists, to take pupils, who generally became their disciples. Paul tell us (Acts xxii., 3), that he was "brought up at the feet of Gamaliel."

[15:7] Ever since the captivity there had been an extensive Jewish colony at Babylon, where the chief part of the Gemara was compiled, and whither many Hebrews repaired after the fall of Jerusalem. This reference to Babylon seems an unmistakable touch of authentic history.

[16:8] The apocryphal Gospel of the Infancy and the History of Joseph both give Jesus a schoolmaster, and both praise his bright parts. Luke (ii., 40) also says that "the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom." The only indication, however, that Jesus could write is furnished by John (viii., 8). But this story of his writing on the ground is wanting in the earliest manuscripts.

[16:9] Verses 24-27.--Jesus in our Gospels argues with the rabbis, and bestows all his impertinence on his mother; but Jeshu offers it all to the doctors.--The same story is thus told in the Talmud;--"As once the elders sat at the gate there passed two boys before them. One uncovered his head, the other did not. Then said Rabbi Elieser, The latter is certainly a bastard; but Rabbi Jehoshua said, He is a son of an adulteress. Akiba said, He is both a bastard and a son of an adulteress. They said to him, How canst thou oppose the opinion of thy companions? He answered, I will prove what I have said. Then he went to the boy's mother, who was sitting in the market selling fruit, and said to her, My daughter, if you will tell me the truth I will promise you eternal life. She said to him, Swear to me. And he swore with his lips, but in his heart he did not ratify the oath." Lardner notes that "though no person is here named, there can be no doubt who is intended."

[16:10] "Joseph Pandera." R. von der Alm conjectures that the Christian story kept the first name of Pandera-- *Joseph*--as that of the father of Jesus. According to Luke iv., 22, the Jews inquired of Jesus "Is not this Joseph's son?" They obviously knew or suspected nothing of his divine parentage. The passage in brackets in Luke's genealogy, iii., 23, representing Jesus as the "supposed" son of Joseph is the language of the evangelist himself, who was not a contemporary. The friends and countrymen of Jesus allude to him as a man, a carpenter, and the son of a carpenter. See Mark vi., 3; Matthew xiii, 55. In the face of these texts, it is astonishing that Origen, in reply to Celsus, should assert that "in none of the gospels current in the churches is Jesus himself ever described as being a carpenter." This sweeping

denial can only be explained on one of three hypotheses: Origen's unscrupulous audacity, his ignorance of our gospels, or the subsequent interpolation of the passage he contradicts.

[17:2] Bastard is a strong word, but it is accurate of Jesus as well as of Jeshu. There was a Jewish law against bastards entering the congregation until the tenth generation (Deuteronomy xxiii., 2).

[17:3] Proclamations among the Jews were made by the sound of trumpets. See many places in the Old Testament. The same ceremony has been performed in more modern times. The blowing of rams' horns was a conspicuous feature in the excommunication of Spinoza.

[17:4] Jehoshua, which we shorten into Joshua, is a common Jewish name, of which Jesus is the Greek [version]. It means "Jehovah is his salvation." Rabbi Abraham Farrissol, in his *מהרבא בנמ* (Megan Abraham) Ch. 59, says "His name was Jeshua, but as Rabbi Moses Maimonides has written it, and as we find it throughout the Talmud, it is written Jeshu. They have carefully left out the *ain*, because he was not able to save himself." So Elias in Tishbi, under the word Jeshu, says "Because the Jews will not acknowledge him (Jesus) to be the savior, they do not call him Jeshua, but reject the *ain* and call him Jeshu." By omitting this letter a peculiar significance was given to the name. In the curtailed form it is composed of the letters *jod, shin, vau*, which are taken to stand for: *ונורכזו ומש חמי* -- "his name and remembrance shall be extinguished," the meaning which is given in the text.

[17:5] Jesus also returned from Jerusalem and dwelt in Galilee, from which district all his disciples were chosen. It was just the place for prophets and demagogues. Renan remarks very justly that "Palestine was one of the countries most in arrear in the science of the day; the Galileans were the most ignorant of all the inhabitants of Palestine, and the disciples of Jesus might be reckoned among the most stupid Galileans."

[17:6] This was the Shem Hamphoras -- *שפמח*, the Sacred Ineffable Name, by which expression the Jews name Jehovah or Jahveh, the correct pronunciation of which is lost, the word Adonai (*Lord*) being substituted. The rabbis affirm that the decadence of Israel is due to the loss of this sacred name, and that, if any one were able to pronounce it, he might thereby create or destroy worlds. Numerous wonders are ascribed to it. By its aid Moses slew the Egyptian, and it was engraved on Solomon's seal. The great prophet must, however, have forgotten it during his residence with Jethro; for according to the Kabbalists he spent forty days on Mount Sinai, learning it afresh from the angel Saxael.

[18:7] Mr. Gould considers that this verse shows the writer's "amazing ignorance" of Jewish history, which represents Solomon as the builder of the Temple. But the remark rather shows Mr. Gould's amazing ignorance; for, according to Rabbinical tradition, although Solomon erected the Temple, its foundation was laid by David; and this tradition is corroborated by 1 Chronicles xxii., 1-4. The foundation stone of the Temple is said to have been the same block that Jacob reposed on (Genesis xxviii., 22), and which he prophesied "shall be God's house."

[18:8] The Talmud calls them "brazen *dogs*," and Luther appears to have thought them of this species. Alm refers to Ezekiel i., containing a description of the Cherubim, Jehovah's four-faced body-guard, one aspect being leonine. Madame Blavatsky thinks the text refers unmistakably to these Hebrew chimeras, or, to use her own phrase, "symbolical monstrosities" ("Isis Unveiled," vol. ii., p. 201; 1877).

[18:9] The Talmud refers to a similar performance in the query "Did not Ben Stada bring enchantment out of Egypt in the cutting which was in his flesh?" Ben Stada (the son of Stada) of course is Jesus, who according to our Gospels went into Egypt. It is curious that Revelation (xix., 12, 16) ascribes to Jesus "a

name written, that no man knew but he himself;" and this, or an equivalent name, was "on his thigh;" but whether tattooed or sewn in we are not informed.

[19:1] According to several passages in our Gospels, the Pharisees charged Jesus with casting out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of devils. There are many illustrations in the Bible of the superstition of using the divine name as a spell. When Jacob wrestled with the angel he demanded his name (Genesis xxii., 29). Manoah made the same request to the angel who predicted the birth of Samson (Judges xiii., 18). The third commandment prohibits the taking of God's name in vain (see also Lev. xxiv., 16). Jesus (Mark xvi., 17) says of his disciples "in my name they shall cast out devils." According to Acts iii., 16, his name made a lame man strong; and Peter in answer to the question "By what power or by what name have ye done this?" replies (Acts iv., 12) that there is none other name under heaven given whereby we must be saved." Paul also (Phillipians ii., 9) says "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every other name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth."

[19:2] Jeshu boasts of his virgin mother; the Christians claim the same glory for Jesus, and probably with equal truth. Mary did not, however, conceive at the top of her head, although according to St. Ambrose she was impregnated through the ear -- *Maria per aurem impregnata est*. Dr. Clemens mentions an early Christian belief that Jesus *was* born from his mother's head. Both these notions are plagiarisms from the Greek mythology, which represents Minerva as springing full-armed from the brain of Jove. Justin Martyr, indeed, in his First Apology (Ch. 21) places the miraculous births of Jesus and the offspring of Jove in the same category. In the legends of the birth of Buddha, the Indian savior is born from the side of his mother Maya.

[19:3] The claims of Jeshu and Jesus are equally founded on a false interpretation of Isaiah. The word *almah* (vii., 14) means any young woman, whether single or wedded. Besides, Isaiah took care to fulfil his own prediction by the aid of a female colleague, leaving nothing to be added by the labor of his successors (viii., 3).

[20:4] Jeshu's readiness to work a miracle is in striking contrast to the reluctance of Jesus. Instead of calling people evil, wicked and adulterous, for seeking a sign, he promptly acquiesces in their request, and at once calls for a good subject.

[20:5] Matthew puts a similar exclamation into the mouth of the centurion at the Crucifixion.

[Return to Chapter I.](#) [Table of Contents](#)

HTML © 2002 - 2015

