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## WHAT IS RELIGION?

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### I.

It is asserted that an infinite God created all things, governs all things, and that the creature should be obedient and thankful to the creator; that the creator demands certain things, and that the person who complies with these demands is religious. This kind of religion has been substantially universal.

For many centuries and by many peoples it was believed that this god demanded sacrifices; that he was pleased when parents shed the blood of their babes. Afterwards it was supposed that he was satisfied with the blood of oxen, lambs, and doves, and that in exchange for, or on account of, these sacrifices this God sent pestilence, famine, flood, and earthquake.

The last phase of this belief in sacrifice was, according to the Christian doctrine, that God accepted the blood of his son, and that after his son had been murdered he, God, was satisfied and wanted no more blood.

During all these years and by all these peoples it was believed that this God heard and answered prayer, that he forgave sins, and saved the souls of true believers. This, in a general way, is the definition of religion.

Now, the questions are, Whether religion was founded on any known fact? Whether such a being as God exists? Whether he was the creator of yourself and myself? Whether any prayer was ever answered? Whether any sacrifice of babe or ox secured the favor of this unseen God?

First.—Did an infinite God create the children of men?

Why did he create the intellectual inferior?

Why did he create the deformed and helpless?

Why did he create the criminal, the idiotic, the insane?

Can infinite wisdom and power make any excuse for the creation of failures?

Are the failures under obligation to their creator?

Second.—Is an infinite God the creator of this world?

Is he responsible for all the chiefs, kings, emperors and queens?

Is he responsible for all the wars that have been waged, for all the innocent blood that has been shed?