

cally identical with those of America, and are not only alike in externals, but in their morphology as well."\*

Tentatively we might venture to explain or account for this singular identity by assuming that it was simply accidental, but this assumption can have no standing in the case of other examples cited by Alexander Von Humboldt and Professor Culin. Take, for example, the cross, particularly that very ancient and hieratic symbol the Grammata Cross commonly known as the Swastika, the mention of which is so strangely omitted or forgotten by Brinton and Culin.

The symbol which, beyond all others, goes back to the Deluge and, for aught we know, to the Garden of Eden, is the cross. Anthropologists and Archaeologists in Europe and America dwell upon its sacredness in many natural religions and have invariably assigned to it a very great antiquity. Nearly all have reverently admitted its origin and symbolic meaning as a great mystery.

In our study of the sacred symbol we will go back to the death of Adam.

#### THE CROSS OF SETH, SON OF ADAM.

Before we begin the study of the mysterious Swastika and the singular rites with which this hieratic symbol was intimately associated among nearly all ancient nations and among many tribes of the old world and the new, let us deal reverently with the Cross of the Crucifixion, its origin and vicissitudes. There is a strange legend, found in the Sacred Books of the Copts, originating in the apocryphal last Gospel of Nicodemus—a ruler in Israel who visited Jesus when darkness shrouded Jerusalem. The legendary narrative informs us that when Adam lay sick unto death, his son Seth appeared at the entrance to the Garden of Eden and begged of the Angel with the flaming sword for a small cruse of oil from the Tree of Mercy that he might anoint the eyes of his dying father. By the side of the Angel guarding the entrance to Paradise stood a Spirit of radiant beauty who, moved by compassion for the sorrowing Seth, went to the Tree of Mercy and broke off a small branch of this tree, so intimately identified with Adam's fall: "Your father died when you were on your way here," said the Spirit to Seth, "but return with this branch and plant it at your father's head, and say to Eve, your mother, that when this branch becomes a tree, and is again planted, it will bear one very precious fruit and that when that fruit is taken from the tree, she and Adam will enter into Paradise."

Seth, returned, opened his father's grave and at the head of Adam planted the branch. In time it grew to be a large and very beautiful tree which was standing and fair to look upon in the reign of the great King Solomon. When Solomon was laying the foundations for his wonderful Temple, he thought of the beautiful tree, and wishing to preserve its wood for all time, ordered it to be cut down and sawed into beams for the Holy Building. The workmen felled the "Tree of Seth," but, when they began to cut out the beams, their saws made no impression on it, so, worn out by repeated trials, they stealthily carried it away by night and threw it across a stream where it was used as a bridge.

As the Queen of Sheba was on her way to visit Solomon she came to this brook, but when she was about to step upon the tree-bridge, she stopped, drew back, and, moved by a feeling she could not control, fell upon her knees and refused to cross the bridge. Then when, brought by another road, she was received with great honours by the King of the Jews, a divining Spirit entered into her and she

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