PREFACE

The author's major scientific interest has been the historical approach in the study of Semitic religions from the earliest stages of their evolution, with emphasis upon the religion of Israel in the Biblical period. His research over the years has brought to light data which seem to have import for the study of Christianity, the daughter-religion of Judaism of the post-Old Testament period, in the initial stage of its development.

These matters are discussed in this book. Its purpose is to trace the possible origins of certain, specific Christian principles and institutions in Judaic and even pre-Judaic belief and practice. Its intention is in no way to approach even these few aspects of Christianity theologically, dogmatically, ethically, or philosophically. Its interest lies solely in the consideration of them in the factual light of historical evolution.

Moreover, the author's knowledge in the field of New Testament criticism is somewhat limited. His own scientific activity over a period of more than sixty years has been concerned primarily with the Old Testament and the history of the religion of Israel. This book is actually a projection of his research in the Old Testament field, and surveys its subject against this background. It is offered for the consideration of students of both Old and New Testaments, with the earnest hope that they will find merit in this approach to the subject and stimulation in the facts and theses which the book propounds.