



The Common Ground

He Alone



Philosopher:
Acharya Shams Naved Usmani

Writer:
Syed Abdullah Tariq

In the NAME of ONE Who is the sole Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer
But when it came to worshipping, many people chose others.

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My Right!

The present booklet is the English version of the first part of the proposed Hindi book 'Vahi Ek—Ekta Ka Aadhar ('HE Alone—The Common Ground' in English). Where and how Sanatan Dharmis, Christians, Sikhs and Muslims have deviated from Unitarianism preached in their main scriptures Vedas, Bible, Guru Granth and Qur'an, is the subject of the proposed original book. In every part of that book the prevalent beliefs of each *Dharma* have been analyzed in the light of the professed holy books of their respective followers. Presently the circumstances permit only the first part of the book 'Sanatan Dharma' to be published. God willing, the whole book or the other parts of the book will also be published in future.

Reviewing the soft copy of the second part of the book 'Christianity', my friend Anil Madhur raised a basic question. "What right do you have to write thus on Christianity"? I responded, "I am also a Christian. Who has the right if I don't have it"? Bewildered, he stared at me. I clarified, "I believe in the gospel and Jesus Christ. Who else is a Christian? Is there any other definition of a Christian? While writing about Christianity I am taking only the Bible as basis. Why should I

not be aggrieved if some Christian brethren are deviating from the monotheism preached by the Bible? I am not slinging mud. Why don't I have a right to seek their attention with pained heart and the feeling of love? Similarly I believe in Vedas. I believe in the teaching of Manu of the great Deluge to whom Vedas were revealed and the same teaching was renewed by Qur'an later. Am I not a true Sanatan Dharmi? I have unflinching faith in Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). I am a Muslim. Qur'an has ordered me to believe in all the earlier prophets and scriptures. I cannot be a true Muslim without being a true Sanatan Dharmi and a true Christian. I am a believer of the same Sanatan Dharma which was preached by all these *Dharmas* and the prophets and I am a preacher of the same Unitarianism that was preached by Sanatan Dharma".

I hope that the readers do not consider this booklet an effort of criticism of Sanatan Dharma by a Muslim. Vedas are not the sole property of a particular community. I have the same right to Vedas as anyone else has.

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Form Worship

Form Worship:

Form worship is prevalent in some way or the other among many sects of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians but of these Hindus are clearly the most vocal or apparent practitioners of Form Worship. All the other seem to justify their practices which are essentially form worship.

Sanatan Dharmis in general are in favour of idolatry. Let us see what do their own professed holy books and the scholars say:

The Vedas:

"...नैलमूर्द्ध्यं न तिर्यञ्चं न मध्ये परिजयमत" (Y.V. 32:2)
He cannot be comprehended from either sides or in the middle.

It means He cannot be seen directly. He is beyond time and space. This Veda *Mantra* testifies that His idol cannot be carved. In the immediately preceding *Mantra*, this fact is more elaborately described:

“न तस्य प्रतिमाऽस्ति यस्य नाम महद्विशः ...” (Y.V. 32:3)
He has no figure (the remembrance of) whose Name is the greatest virtue.

His picture or idol cannot be made who has no figure. It is a clear order of Formless worship.

“स पर्यगाच्छुक्रमकायम्...” (Y.V. 40:8)
He is All-encompassing and bodiless.

There cannot be an idol of Him who has no body. The next *Mantra* is very important in the prohibition of Form Worship.

“अन्धन्तमः प्र विशन्ति येऽसम्भूतिमुपासते
ततो भूयऽइव ते तमो यऽउ सम्भूत्याश्च रताः” (Y.V. 40:9)
They enter into deep blinding darkness who worship *Asambhuti** (i.e. Nature in its original form e.g. fire, earth, air, water etc.) and they are sunk in deeper darkness who indulge in *Sambhuti* (i.e. things created out of *Asambhuti* e.g. trees, plants, idols etc.)

Can there be a more obvious prohibition?

In Gita:

“अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषी तनुमाश्रितम् ।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम्” ॥ (Gita 9:11)

* (In his translation of *Veda*, Griffith has mentioned in the foot note of the above *Mantra* that Shankaracharya has defined *Asambhuti* as *Undeveloped Prakriti* or *Nature in its casual or germinal state*)

Unaware of my higher state, as the great Lord of being, fools disregard Me by imagining me as dwelling in the human form.

In Gita 13:10 there is command of adultery-free devotion (अव्यभिचारिणी भक्ति). What is adultery-free devotion? As sharing another person in the wedlock is called adultery, similarly making partner in the godhead of One God is adulterous devotion. God's subtleness has been described in Gita thus:

“सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं” (Gita 13:15)
He is subtle so He is incomprehensible.

In Purans:

It is declared in *Srimad Bhagawat Maha Puran* that:

“न देवा मृच्छिला मया” (10:84:11)
The idols of earth and stone are not God.

In the 13th Shloka of the same Ch. Of *Bhagawat* the idolaters are even called the donkeys feeding the cattle. See also the following Shloka of *Garuda Puran*:

“न काष्ठे विद्यते देवो न पाषाणे न मृगमये भावे हि विद्यते
देवस्तस्माद्भावो हि कारणम्” (Garuda Puran 38:13)
God is neither in wood nor in (the idols carved of) stone or clay. He is present in the feeling. Wherever one feels Him, He is there.

The Influence of Atheists:

They themselves adopted the beliefs contrary to their own professed sources of knowledge, who had once enlightened the world with the light of knowledge. Whose influence changed

them? To this question the Jains proudly claim that they taught idolatry to Hindus. They who did not believe in the Sovereignty of God could have found solace in material objects only but why did Vedic Dharmis sent their spiritualism in to hibernation so as to need symbols for worship? Lala Sumer Chand Jain writes:

"It is true that idolatry was started by Jains as it is mentioned in Jain *Shastras* that Bharat Chakravarti erected 72 temples on Kailash. The time of Bharat is the age of beginning of culture. After Bharat other Jains built the idols of saints. Thus they taught the world to respect the virtuous by eulogizing them".

The practice of idolatry became so popular among Jains that it seemed that it was an essential part of Jainism. The fact is that many Jain sects strongly condemn it. Taaran Panth among Digambar Jains and Sthaanak Vaasi, Loka and Dhundhia among Shvetambars oppose it. The Sthaanak Vaasis say: "As a child calls his baton a horse, in the same manner we may assume idols to be the forms of God but we shall not bow to them and will not offer them sweets".

As behind Swami Dayanand's hatred for idols is the event of mice running over the idol of Shiva and eating its offering when he was 14, similarly behind leaving the idolatry by Taaran Panth's founder Taaran Swami was a similar event.

One day Taaran went in to a temple and placed the food plate before the lord. After a while he went there again and

* Lala Sumer Chand Jain, Jain Mat Saar (Urdu) Jain Mitra Mandal Dharampura Delhi, May 1938, P. 293.

observed that the idol had not eaten anything from it. He thought it was perhaps because the lord had not taken a bath. He took the idol to the river, dived to the bottom and left it there. After he came out of water he called the god to come out. Getting no answer he said, "I am going home and shall visit the temple after my lunch. Meanwhile you come over to the temple. The idol was not there when Taaran reached the temple. The same evening when his father came home, Taaran narrated the event to him. Filled with rage, he ordered Taaran to be drowned in the river. He escaped. He was poisoned but he survived. This lad later became Taaran Swami.

Idolatry was not prevalent in Vedic age. To the question when and how it started, Swami Vivekananda opines:

"Image Worship originated in India as a consequence of Buddha's relentless arguments against 'God with attributes'. Image Worship did not exist in Vedic age. People then believed that God is Omnipresent but due to Buddha's preaching we lost the Creator and our Friendly God and as a result of its reaction Image Worship originated. People faked the idol of Buddha and started worshipping it".

Not found in Ancient Hindu Religious Books:

When we look in to the ancient Hindu religious literature, we find that not only in Vedas but in principal Upanishads there is no mention of Symbol Worship. The belief in 10 out of 108 Upanishads is unanimous. These are Ish, Ken, Kath, Prashna, Mundak, Mandukya, Aitreya, Taitreya, Chhandogya and Brahadaranyak. They are free of any reference of idolatry. For the Valmiki Ramayana found today there is near unanimity among scholars about its major part being interpolation. It is

claimed that there were 6680 Shlokas in the original Ramayana while at present we find 24000 Shlokas in it. Even in today's interpolated Ramayana there is no mention of idolatry except the Linga-establishment by Ravana. In it, at many places there is description of Morning and Evening Sandhyas as well as Jap and Havan etc. but not even a passing reference of idolatry is there. This shows that idolatry was not practiced by Hindus till the time the interpolations were made in Ramayana. There is also unanimity about major part of Mahabharata being interpolated. Scholars believe that its first author Ved Vyas had written a history comprising of 8000 Shlokas and named it Jai. Later his disciple Vaishampayana increased the number of its Shlokas to 24000 and named it 'Bharata'. Today there are more than 100,000 Shlokas in it and its name is Mahabharata. While in Mahabharata there is the edict of idolatry, there also are Shlokas in its clear prohibition in this voluminous Work. For example:

“मूर्च्छिलाघातुर्दावृदि मूर्तायोस्वरकुद्धयः
किलश्यन्ति तपसा मूढाः परा शान्तिं न यान्ति ते”
The fools think that the idols of clay, stone, metal or wood are gods. They can never attain peace.

It is not difficult to imagine which of these two mutually contradicting beliefs formed the part of the original 8000 Shlokas of Mahabharata and which was inserted later.

Purans are generally of much later era. Of these some prohibit the idolatry as mentioned earlier while some verify it. Symbol worship is a thing of Puran era.

Obviously the people in such a large number cannot be misled unless the idolatry was not justified by the religious scholars. Unfortunately it was true in the past and is still true. But why?

Form Worship is not without basis:

Dr. Chaman Lal Gautam writes:

“...The Rishis started the practice of idol worship so that they could personally witness (God) in form by making that idol a medium...”

This argument of the advocates of Form worship has substance that the commoners need a form as medium to concentrate in worship. Yet Symbol worship is not verified by the ancient religious books. What is the remedy then? Indeed the dilemma is also ancient. The works that forbade the idolatry offered the solution too.

The Solution:

The Rig Veda had declared in the very beginning, “सत्यश्चित्र श्रवस्तमः” i.e. only that image or idol is true that hears or in other words which is alive. The man is a God-made idol in this temple of universe. The man, made of earth is a masterpiece model of His Creation. Every art reminds of its artist. The man-made idols speak of the artistry of their makers. The human being reminds of his maker-artist, the Creator. This living idol is the unique medium of His worship. Elaborating this principle, Gita said:

“संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन्” (Gita 6:13)
Concentrate your gaze upon your own nose-tip in a manner so as not to look in any other direction.

* Dr. Chaman Lal Gautam, Vishnu Rahasya, P. 149

Gita had ordained to concentrate upon one's own nose-tip while in worship and simultaneously had forbidden to look other ways. We must deliberate upon incomparable ability of the maker of this living idol after concentrating upon our nose-tip. He is sustaining us by our breath. One may be misled about food and water by believing that they are provided by others but who bestows upon us the provision of breath at every moment of the day and night without which we cannot survive for a moment. Indeed He alone is our Sustainer. One day he will destroy this idol by stopping the breath from this nose. He alone is our Destroyer. To realize the provider of this breath and to offer thanks to Him is Faith. The saints recommended '*Sashtang*' as the mode of worship to correlate the teaching of Vedas and Gita. Presently the people have forgotten the true mode of *Sashtang*. The word *Sashtang* itself explains its posture. *Sashtang* (साष्टांग) = Sa (स) i.e. 'with' + Asht (अष्ट) i.e. 'eight' + Ang (अंग) i.e. 'part of the body'. Thus *Sashtang* means 'with eight parts of the body'. *Sashtang* is that posture in which eight parts of the body participate. *Sashtang* is performed by placing two toes, two knees, two palms along with the nose and forehead upon earth. There is no other balanced posture possible in which eight parts of the body take part and at the same time it is not possible to look anywhere but upon the tip of the nose. Needless to mention that when it was commanded not to concentrate anywhere else but upon the tip of the nose for meditating upon Formless God (Gita 6:13), which the Gita also described as true Yoga (The meeting with God), it is worthless to concentrate upon other images or forms like idols.



Sashtang: Eight parts of the body touching the earth
Forehead + Nose-tip + 2 palms + 2 knees + 2 toes

To meditate upon Formless God by concentrating upon the nose-tip of one's own God-made idol, is the only coordination of Form-worship and Formless-worship. This is the only way of Form-worship that does not contradict the strictly ordained Formless worship.

Polytheism

In the context of polytheism in Sanatan Dharma, the important analysis of the great scholar Pt. Sri Ram Acharya is worth deliberation.

"To explain the process of origin of the world to the process of inspiration of morality, the Indian philosophers have created the symbols of gods. The expressions of the eternal truth have been articulated by these *Puranic* symbols".¹

"The sketches of the gods of India have been made by assuming that they are the symbols of inclination of truth".²

It is clear from the statements of the great Acharya that the polytheism is the presumption of the philosophers of the time much after the Vedic age. Its purpose was to illustrate different modes of authority of One God. The Acharya has expressed this very fact in the following words:

¹ Akhand Jyoti, April 1981, P. 9

² Akhand Jyoti June 1985, P.15

"God is One. ... In God's Sovereignty, there is neither any partner nor helper. He is the only One Creator, and Sustainer of the whole creation. The *Rishis* have called His different attributes by the names of different gods. It is said: 'एको विश्वस्य भुवनस्य राजा' which means that the scholars have addressed One God by many Names...".³

To assign the names of separate gods and goddesses to the attributive Names of One Formless God and then assigning to these symbols, the definite forms, proved to be counterproductive instead of being constructive. The greatest harm was that not only the commoners but educated and sensible people also started worshipping these gods and goddesses believing in their separate existence and personal forms. 33 crore partners were assigned to One God who has no partner. The very nature of *Dharma* was distorted and became anti-Vedas. Vedas had proclaimed:

"त्वामने इन्द्रो वृषभः सतामसि त्वं विश्वरुद्रगायो नमस्यः ।
तवं ब्रह्मा रयिविदब्रह्मणस्पते त्वं विवर्त सवसे पुरन्ध्या ॥"
(R.V. 2:1:3)

O *Agni* (God) you alone are Indra fulfilling the wishes of the virtuous, only you are worthy of worship, only you are Vishnu revered by many. You are Brahma and Brahmanaspati.

"य एक इत्तमुद्दिहि" (R.V. 6:45:16)
He is One only. Praise only Him.

"स दावार पृथिवीं द्यामुत्तमां कस्मै देवाय हविषा विष्म" (R.V. 10:121:1)
He alone is the sustainer of earth and heaven. Except Him, to which gods we offer oblations?

³ Akhand Jyoti, July 1985, P.28

“मा चिदन्यद्वि शन्सत...” (R.V. 8:1:1)
Do not deify anyone but Him.

In spite of alert warning of Vedas, independently existing gods and goddesses were assumed. Adultery was made in the worship of One God. His Godhead was divided. Philosophical Pundits would not have even imagined such dangerous consequences of the solution they had provided to the common people to simplify the worship. The very foundation of *Dharma* lays in the realization of the mutual relationship between God and His creation. There is no *Dharma* when this very comprehension is changed. It became *Adharma*. The terrible outcome of regular symbols of the attributes of Formless God was that the gossip of the compassion of Vishnu, the favor of Lakshmi, the kindness of Shiva and the bestowment of Kali became widespread. Lamenting upon this sorrow state Pt. Sri Ram Sharma Acharya says:

“The creator of this creation is One. He alone concludes all process of production cultivation and transformation. There is neither his partner nor helper. ... One sovereignty was split in many and it was believed that whoever will worship and please whichever god or goddess, he will take him in to his clan and support him. ... This is the belief of today's polytheism. In this way not only the creator was divided but separate gods and goddesses were fashioned for every family, village and town. ... Division and Narrow mindedness did not remain restricted to this limit; the Supreme God was also split. Numerous gods and goddesses were erected. Not only their figures but also their temperaments were different. The gods became furious and were keen to intimidate

those who worshipped other gods. ... Physical and mental diseases were presumed to be the consequence of their anger. ... Numerous stories and fables were fabricated to support polytheism. Fabulous tales were concocted about the benefits due to their pleasure and harm due to their anger. Numerous festivals were associated with different gods. It became obligatory to visit their assigned habitats. ... It must be understood that God is One. There cannot be many partners in His management. ... The form and nature of God is believed to be different among different sects. If it is accepted then only one of them will have to be called honest, others being liars. ... Even after granting them due respect, the judgment is difficult as to which among these mutually contradictory theories is true and which is false. ... On the basis of good judgment and wisdom this has to be accepted that God is One. His forms and laws as imagined by different sects cannot be factual. ... The All-encompassing power must be formless. Anyone with form will remain limited and belong to one place. It is said: ‘न तस्य प्रतिमाऽअस्ति’ (Y.V. 32:3) i.e. He has no form. Neither shape nor image. There is another similarly undeniable of the great proverbs that says: ‘एक सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति’ i.e. One God has been called in many ways by the scholars. This reminds us of the story of blinds, touching different parts of an elephant and describing him as per shapes of the respective parts. ... For the purpose of human dignity and excellence, the seers have portrayed the general aptitude of the masses regarding important beliefs and efforts, in mysterious figures, through the medium of

art. They should not be misunderstood to mean that there are partners in the order of creation of Formless, All-encompassing and Just God and they are appeased and displeased on the basis of mere flattery, gifts and practices, condemn or bestow irrespective of ability and incapability, become annoyed and pleased. Such beliefs will be considered as blind faith and will delude those who profess them. They will cast the reality miles away. Every one of us must be pragmatist and seer of reality".^{*}

This in fact has been the wisdom (or imprudence) of the seers that they remained completely incapable of thinking at the mental level of general masses by descending from their higher plane, while assigning the principles for the masses that were different from their own perceptions. By calling an attribute of One God as Shiva and imagining its form and figure they could not foresee that Shiva's birthday will be started and this imaginary figure will take form of a definite person to the extent that its *Linga* (male organ) will become the object of worship. Let the Sanatan Dharmi brothers think whether there can be a birth day of eternal God. Is it possible for any of his attribute to have male organ? How deep is the dark ignorance in which those proud ones are lost who had once enlightened the world? The only solution of this sorrow state is that Sanatan Dharmis should destroy all the symbols of imaginary partners of One God with their own hands. Pt. Sri Ram Sharma has invited to reflect in this direction:

"The sensible sects are now increasingly getting rid of this predicament. ... There is need to rethink in this

^{*} Akhand Jyoti, June 1985, P. 13-16

context, otherwise this deception and dilemma will go on increasing. The disbelief will increase in addition. The agents and priests of those gods will continue rejoicing. And the poor devotees' pockets will continue to be looted because of their blind devotion".^{*}

"The discreetness of confessing truth and reality is in turning back from the belief of gods and goddesses of independent existence partnering in the scheme of creation".^{*}

^{*} Akhand Jyoti June 1985, P. 14.

^{*} Akhand Jyoti June 1985, P. 16

The Doctrine of Incarnation of God

Incarnation-ism:

The belief in incarnation of God is an important part of present day Sanatan Dharma. It is said that whenever there is decline of *Dharma* and rise of *Adharma*, God takes birth on earth in human mould to re-establish *Dharma*. This belief is called *Avtar-vaad* or incarnation-ism. Let us see how rational it is and how far it is justifiable in the light of Vedas, called Word of God.

God is All-Powerful. He does not need to be born as a man to eradicate the sins. His Power is pervaded in every particle of creation that is why He is called All-Pervading. Lauding His authority, the Vedas say:

“तमिदं निगतं सह स एष एक एकवृदेक एव” (A.V. 13:4:12)
Indeed He is capable of this. Only He, who by Himself (without being born to any one) alone is present, is One.

“तस्याम् सार्या नक्षत्रा वशे चन्द्रमसा सह” (A.V. 13:4:28)
All these planets including moon are under His ordinance.

“सर्वं _____ तस्मादापोऽजायन्त” (A.V. 13:4:29-37)
He created the day, created night, created space, created air, created heaven, created directions, created earth, fire and water. By manifesting these (as if) He (Himself) became manifest.

“यदा कुण्ठोष्णोष्णवीर्यंदा वर्षसि भद्रया यदा जन्यमवीकृत ”
(A.V. 13:4:43)

It is only Him who makes the plants grow, showers rain for fertility and who nurtures the human race.

Is it logical that God who even after being at one place is also omnipresent, and is getting every scheme implemented from heaven to earth, will have to take birth in human mould for the purpose of establishment of *Dharma* and destruction of evil and then after growing up he concludes this work and then dies like a man? Why at all *Dharma* is subdued in the world? Why do the evil prosper? It is because God has given the discretion to man to act as he wills after giving him knowledge of good and bad. This is the scheme and design of God. When *Adharma* (*Anti-Dharma*) prospers and the knowledge fades then Divine Guidance is needed. But God does not descend Himself for this purpose. Instead He selects the pious to guide the people and reveals His Word to their inner self. Had He willed He could have instituted *Dharma* without going through this process but then the liberty and free-will of man to act would have become meaningless. “अपञ्चानि वरुणस्य प्रदानि ” (R.V. 1:24:10) i.e. the laws of God do not change. The liberty He has given to man will last till his death. He could have preached the Truth after taking birth in a human mould but then the man could have argued, “O Lord, You could face the hardships and trial associated with the path of Truth as you were in fact God in the mould of man. A mere human being could not bear it”. Therefore for guiding

people in every era, God chose a human being who not only would guide but be a model also in practice. *Ish-Doot* (Messengers of God) is the most appropriate word for such people. There is no harm in allegorically calling the arrival of such seer in the world as the arrival of God Himself but those saints were not God. They were humans.

Vedas say that God is not born:

“तमिदं निगत सहः स एष एक एकवृदेक एव” (A.V. 13:4:12)
Only He alone is by Himself (without being born) present.

Vedas declare that He has no body:

“... अकायम ...” (Y.V. 40:8)
He is bodiless.

Vedas state that He is never subordinate to anyone:

“विश्वस्य मिषतो वशी ...” (R.V. 10:190:2)
He controls all being.

Vedas declare that He neither grows old nor dies:

“न ममार न जीर्यति ...” (A.V. 10:8:32)
He neither dies nor grows old.

Vedas emphasize that do not even imagine of death while describing Him:

“भूयानिन्द्रो नमुराद ... पतिस्त्वमिन्द्रासि विभूः” (A.V. 13:4:46,47)
(Not only) He is beyond death but He is even beyond the imagination of eternity.

The above attributes of God have been described by Vedas. Those who believe in incarnations of God may please think that

Incarnations (अवतार) are believed to be born, they have bodies, they are helpless and subjugates to their parents in their childhood, they experience grieves and pleasures and finally they die. Is this philosophy anywhere near Vedic principle?

Rama was born and attained his death. He cannot be God. Krishna was born and attained death. He too cannot be God. They could be Truthful, model-persons and the greatest human beings of their times whom God had given birth for the establishment of *Dharma* and destruction of evil.

Whenever the *Dharma* declined, instead of God taking birth, He chose the righteous to remind the mankind its forgotten *Dharma*. They also demonstrated to them the way by leading the life according to *Dharma* thereby becoming models and setting example. The true meaning should be apprehended if at occasions the advent of these persons is allegorically described as God's own coming. Sanatan Dharma has suffered much by accepting the allegorical events of Upanishads, Purans and history as the actual happenings in literal sense. The mention of what Sant Kabir Das had said while opposing the incarnation-ism, will not be out of place, here:

“He asked the Hindus to give up what every reformer since the day of Buddha had insisted upon ... worship of idols, gods and goddesses, Brahmin supremacy, cast differences, prejudices concerning untouchability and food. He openly condemned the doctrine of incarnations: ‘The Creator did not marry Sita nor did he make a stone bridge across the waters’.”

* Dr. Tara Chand in ‘Influence of Islam on Indian Culture’ and Kabir, Shabad 8 quoted in the above book, 1963 P. 163

"They say the Lord of the world, finding inequalities of the weak and the strong came as Rama. But Kabir says, before such a one (Rama) who took birth and died, I cannot bend my head".¹

Following is the gist of one of the detailed preaching of Guru Nanak Dev:

"Rama and other incarnations, like common people used to be aggrieved by the ups and down of life. Had they been God it would not have been their fate".²

In Sanatan Dharma there is belief of basically ten incarnations. (though at some places there is mention of up to 24 incarnations including Rishabh Dev and Buddha of atheist faiths Jainism and Buddhism). Of these 4 are believed to have appeared in *Satyuga*, 3 in *Treta* and 2 in *Dwapar*. For *Kaliyuga* only one incarnation '*Kalki Avtar*' who has yet to arrive, is believed. According to the calculation of Pt. Sri Ram Sharma, *Kaliyuga* is now about to end.

"Such substantiation is available that the time of change of *Yuga* is approaching. *Kaliyuga* is now departing"³

Kaliyuga is on the verge of ending and *Kalki* is not yet born. Different scholars have their different calculations. Some believe that there is quite some time remaining till the end of *Kaliyuga*. Whatever the truth, is it not worth deliberation that thousands or lakhs of years have passed since the *Kaliyuga* began and during

¹ Kabir, Shabad 8 quoted by Dr. Tara Chand in 'Influence of Islam on Indian Culture' 1963 p.163

² (The gist of) Guru Granth sahib, Ram Kali Ki Vaar, Shloka M 1, P. 153-54

³ Akhand Jyoti, March 1981, P. 39

this period the history recorded the most gruesome, heinous, outrageous, oppressive, licentious, immoral, scandalous and anti-*Dharma* scenes upon the face of the earth. We have witnessed the lions ripping the slaves in the Roman Colosseums to the sheer joy and entertainment of the masses. The Greek created a goddess of love Aphrodite who mated with her lover giving birth to the sex-god Cupid who was also fond of two of his male lovers. The idols of all these and hundreds of such gods and goddesses were worshipped by them. In Palestine, Titus massacred 1.5 lakh humans. In Arabia the female children were buried alive. More recently the slaughter of millions of people in the name of revolution in France and Russia, the carnage of 6 million Jews by Hitler, The oppression of blacks by whites, two world wars and the preparation of the third, are the proceedings from a few years ago till date. The total collapse of moral values is besides these. Incestuous father-daughter, mother-son and brother-sister relationships are common in the west. In many countries the same sex marriage has been authenticated. What more appalling is awaited by *Kalki Avtar* to appear in this age of heroin and smack culture? What more dreadful remains to be seen?

God has never been casual about His creation. During this long span of time called *Kaliyuga*, the messengers of God kept coming to different parts of the world at different intervals. The *Dharma* never totally collapsed in all parts of the world. Even today the righteous are born and preach according to the guidance of the messengers of God. It may be that a pious person has already passed during the *Kaliyuga* whom the Purans have allegorically called *Kalki* otherwise there is no rational basis of God visiting the earth in human mould in the meager time remaining in *Kaliyuga*.

Talking of rationale, let us also deliberate upon a subtle aspect of the doctrine of god-incarnation that is generally neglected.

Satyuga was the age of Truth and *Dharma*. There were no evil and sins. For whose destruction in the times of righteousness God had to visit the earth in human body as many as four times? There were some evil in *Treta* and God assumed three incarnations. The evil increased in *Dwapar* but God visited only twice for the reform and *Kaliyuga* is the age of pitch darkness and evil and not only God has not yet taken birth but it is said that He will be born only once in the remaining time of *Kaliyuga*! How irrational is this? The only acceptable assumption in this context would be that there had been four virtuous persons of such a high stature in *Satyuga*, three in *Treta*, Two in *Dwapar* and One in *Kaliyuga* that their advent was allegorically called as the descent of God. This is totally unacceptable that for the eradication of evil, God visited frequently in the age of righteousness and the number of his visits decreased with the increase in evil.

Rama was *Maryada Purushottam* (the best man of his time) but not God:

Of the nine incarnations believed to have visited so far, Rama from *Treta* and Krishna from *Dwapar* have been most popular. Their idols are worshipped most among all the incarnations. To know the events of their life time, Valmiki Ramayana and Mahabharata are the two earliest and basic sources. Of numerous evidences, one each of their being men, not God, is offered from these two works:

“(Rama) states that that there is no man on this earth who is as evil doer as I...” (Valmiki Ramayana, Aranya Kand, 63:3)

An evil doer god? Whose exclusive purpose of visiting the earth is to destroy evil, fell prey to evil himself! These words can never be ascribed to God though it is understandable that

a pious human being may have uttered it. The greater a person is, the more ego-free is his disposition. Even after doing good deeds he fears God lest it was to His acceptance. He sets higher standards for himself about his otherwise good acts in the eyes of others. One at the peak of pioussness sees faults in his virtues. Judge in the light of Valmiki Ramayana whether Rama was a god-incarnation or *Maryada Purushottam* (the greatest man of his time).

Krishna, a mortal, not God:

Sri Krishna died due to a wound in the foot. The event is described in Mahabharata (Mausal Parva, Ch. 4). Sri Krishna was asleep when 'Jara', a hunter, confusing him to be a deer shot an arrow that hit in the sole of his foot. He ultimately died because of this injury.

Can God be injured? Can there be an aperture in his body? Vedas' edict is otherwise. He has been described as 'अकायम' (Bodiless) by Yajur Veda 40:8

This is also worth considering that had there been God in the human mould, He would have left the body by His own will at the time of His choosing. Sri Krishna was accidentally hit while asleep. It was an accidental death.

Some more natural questions arise after going through the above two parts. Raise them in your mind and ponder — whether Rama and Krishna were God or humans? Great humans indeed.

Anshvaad

(The doctrine of God's fragments)

Shankaracharya declared: "Only God is True, the creation is illusion".

Ballabhacharya said: "The reality of the relationship of God and creation is akin to a spider weaving a web around her".

There are great names behind the theory that all creation originates from God. All of them with minor variations have adopted the theory propagated by either of the above Acharyas. The doctrine has two basic variants. One, that everything we see is an optical illusion, Only God being really present. Two, there is part of God in everything. How so great these scholars were, such doctrines may be the result of their thoughts or their propounded philosophies but they do not corroborate the *Dharma* given by God. The scholars of this class base their contention mainly on *Vedanta* or *Uttar Mimansa Darshan* instead of any divine scripture. *Vedanti* scholars claim that *Vedanta* is the synopsis of Vedas. *Vedanta* is one of the six ancient Indian philosophies. Whereas the other five philosophies either reject the sovereignty of God or put limits to it, Badrayan the creator of *Vedanta* has presented such a magnificent account of God that to many,

the creation seems to be an illusion and this is the reason of *Vedanta's* popularity. Before concluding that how much *Vedanta* is in conformity with Vedas, it is very important to understand the subject of 'Agni' in Vedas as there are many flaws and many disputes in the interpretation of Vedas without comprehending 'Agni'.

The Mystery of Agni^{*}:

Agni is the main subject of the Vedas and the main mystery as well. Numerous Veda *Mantras* have inspired to unfold the mystery of *Agni* and to undertake *Manthan* or research for this purpose. *Arni Manthan* (अरणी मथन) is specially recommended. The word *Arni* (अरणी) is used for torch (मशाल), Sun or Light. Taking it to represent 'Knowledge', *Arni Manthan* would mean 'the research through knowledge'. The followers of Vedas have been given good tidings of being placed on the throne of World Leader (विश्व नरेश पद) when they unfold the mystery of *Agni*.

"मन्थता नरः कविमद्वयन्तं प्रवेतसममृतं सुप्रतीकम् यज्ञस्य केतुं प्रथमं पुरस्तादग्निं नरो जनयता सुशेवम्" (R.V. 3:29:5)

Reveal *Agni*, the most learned, indestructible and possessor of the illuminating body, by research through knowledge (अरणी मथन). You are (destined) to lead the people in religious oblations.... Reveal him (*Agni*) in the beginning.

When we study the subject of *Agni* in Vedas, we find that at places this word is used for God and elsewhere it represents a man. See below:

* For the detailed discussion of this subject you may see Ch. 'Agni Rohiyo' in our Hindi book 'Kitney Door Kitney Paas'.

"यदग्ने ... सहस्रं सुनवाहुत" (R.V. 8:19:25)
O Agni, the creator of world, worshipped by all...

"त्वमाने प्रयदक्षिणं नरं ..." (R.V. 1:31:15)
You are Agni, the human who is pleased with worshippers.

The same is the state of Brahmans and Upanishads. At some places Agni is God, somewhere it is soul and elsewhere man.

"ब्रह्म वा अग्नि" (Kau. 9:1:5)
Agni is God.

"आत्मैवग्नि" (Sh. P. 6:7:1:20)
Agni is the Soul.

"धुरुषोऽग्नि" (Sh. P. 10:4:1:6)
Agni is man.

Because of this sometimes God was mistaken as the soul, sometimes fire was supposed to be a god and sometimes Purush (man) became God. God is neither a soul nor a human and most certainly not fire. Brahadaranyak has repeatedly said no, no (नेति नेति) to describe Him. "Is He like this?" "No". "Is He like that?" "No". God is beyond anything a human mind could grasp. He has no eyes but He sees. He has no ears but He hears. He is the subtlest of the subtle but still encompasses the whole creation. He cannot be bound by the heavens and earth but can stay in the heart of a devotee. Thinking of this complexity Ramanuj Acharya had prescribed a God with attributes for the general masses. Agni is God, the soul and human while God is neither soul nor man. Unveiling this mystery it was said:

"म अग्निनाग्निः समिध्यते कविर्गृहपतिर्युवा हव्यावाड् जुहवास्य" (R.V. 1:12:6)

Knowledgeable, Home-protector, Oblation solemnizer and bright faced Agni is lighted by Agni.

"अग्निमग्निं हवीमभिः सदा हवन्त विश्वं हव्यवाह पुरुप्रियम्" (R.V. 1:12:2)

We offer oblation for ever to Agni's (originator) Agni who is the sustainer of the entire world.

It evolves that there are two Agnis. One is the Creator Agni and the other creation. The word 'Agni' has been explained by both Arya Samajis and Sanatan Dharmis as Agrini (अग्रणी) i.e. Foremost, the First of all. Now the God is Agni as He is First of all. Nothing existed before Him. When He created his first creation, He gave him His attributive name Agni as he was the first and foremost among all creation. This first creation was a soul, the first soul Param Aatma (परम आत्मा) or Paramatma (परमात्मा) because before being given the material body it was in celestial world.

"अग्निर्वै स्वर्गस्य लोकस्याधिपतिः " (Ait. 3:42)

The Overlord of the world of paradise is Agni.

God made the first creation His messenger.

"अग्निं दूतं वृणीमहे" (R.V. 1:12:1)

We choose Agni, Our messenger.

The messenger of the world of souls had to come to the earth in human mould that is why Agni was also called man. When he visited the earth, he was called Narashansa and Jatveda.

"तनूनपादुच्यते गर्भ आसुरो नराशंसो भवति यद्विजायते" (R.V. 3:29:11)

Agni whose encompassing nature does not end is called Tanunpat. When he appears in human body he is called Aasur and Narashansa.

“दिवस्पति प्रथमं जज्ञे अग्निरस्मद् द्वितीयं परि जातवेदाः” (R.V. 10:45:1)

Agni was first born in paradise in the form of energy. His second birth was among us humans. Then he was called *Jatveda*.

This clearly shows that *Param Aatma* or *Paramatma* is not God. He is the first creation. He is a worshipper, not to be worshipped. When the people of Vedas lost this secret they were no more the World Leaders, having gone astray in the darkness of ignorance. *Aatma* (the soul), *Paramatma* (The Prime Soul) and *Brahm* (God) got mixed up. Other deities cropped up with the Only to be worshipped. How will they be redeemed?

Born of Will Power not from Self:

There is no Part of God in anyone, not even in His first creation. The creator lent His attributive Names to the Foremost creation and used that first creation as a means to produce all other creation. In this way no part of His Self but the reflection of His attributes, is in the first creation and through it, in all the other creation. The Vedas clearly verify that He created the First Being, the *Paramatma* through His Will Power.

“कामस्तदयो समवर्ततामि मनसो रेतः प्रथमं यदासीत् ।
सतो बन्धुमसति निरविन्दन्द्दि प्रतीष्या कवयो मनीषा ।
तिरश्चीनो बिततो रशिमरेषामघः स्थिदासीदुपरि स्थिदासीत् ।
रेतोघा आसन्माहिमान आसन्स्वघा अवस्तात्प्रयतिः परस्तात् ॥”
(R.V. 10:129:4-50)

When God, in the beginning willed to create, the first seed was manifested. He, the One concentrating by His Will envisioned the existence of the non-existent. Thus the First creation came in to being.

The Forgotten Eternal (*Shashvat*) Dharma

Sanatan Dharma had always believed and still believes that Vedas are the Word of God. All the other religious literature considered holy by Sanatan Dharma is the work of saints and scholars. Howsoever great those saints and scholars be, all such doctrines that are contrary to the teaching of Vedas are to be discarded. According to Vedas only One formless God is worthy of worship. Idolatry, atheism, incarnation-ism and the doctrine of God's *Ansh* (parts) are against Vedas. There are innumerable beautiful attributive Names of One God. By whatever Name He is called He will remain One. There is no form of any attributive Name. There is no shape or figure of any of His Name. He does not take birth, dies and experience joy and sorrow by adopting human body. To make His masterpiece creation, the man bow down before man-made figures is His insult and a great sin. Let us revise the judgment of Vedas once again:

“स एष एक एकवृदेक एव” (A.V. 13:4:12)

Only He, who by Himself (without being born to any one) alone is present, is One.

“तस्य ते भक्तिवासः स्याम” (A.V. 6:79:3)
O God, let us be only Your devotees.

“एक एव नमस्यो विक्ष्वीड्यः” (A.V. 2:2:1)
Only One god is worthy of worship and reverence by all creation.

“इन्द्र मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान एकं सद्भिर्वा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः”
(R.V. 1:164:46)
God is called Indra, Mitra and Varun. He is Garutman in heaven. He is Agni, Yama and Matarishva. The knowers call Him by numerous Names.

“त्वमग्ने इन्द्रो वृषभः सतामसि त्वं विष्णुरुरुगायो नमस्यः त्वं ब्रह्मा रयिविद्ब्रह्मणस्पते त्वं विधर्तः सचसे पुरन्ध्या ।”
(R.V. 2:1:3)
O Agni, it is You who are Vishnu, You are Brahmanaspati and Brahma. O God, You are Indra, fulfilling the wishes of the righteous, You are worthy of worship.

(In the same way, in the succeeding *Mantras* of this *Sukta* i.e. 2:1:4,6,7,&11 the same One Sovereign is called Mitra, Aryam, Rudra, Pusha, Savita, Vayu, Ida and Saraswati etc.)

O brothers of Sanatan Dharma, I have no personal worldly gain in reminding you, your own lost and forgotten Vedic and eternal *Dharma*. Embrace it if you wish so. The seat of World Leadership (विश्व नरेश पद) is awaiting you otherwise this life is not the end. There is an eternal life hereafter where you will be accounted for your beliefs and deeds and granted the eternal life of pleasure or grief accordingly.