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*Prajapati, The Hindu God*

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An Introduction To How Certain Christians Have Abused Hindu Religious Books To Establish False Claims For The Christian Faith

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## A History Of The Prajapati Falsehood

Prajapati (or Prajapathi in South India) is a well known Hindu God whose name certain Christians have been misusing. These people claim that Prajapati is Jesus Christ, and to establish this claim they have used the following techniques

1. Misinterpretation of Hindu scriptures
2. Promotion of totally FORGED Sanskrit statements (which are simply not there in Hindu scriptures)
3. Emotional manipulation

As a result, many Christians are under the false impression that Hindu scriptures speak repeatedly of Christ, His virgin birth, his crucifixion, death, resurrection, and ascension. However, NO Hindu scripture contains anything even remotely similar to the Life and sacrifice of Christ.

We propose to introduce this subject to discerning Christians in several volumes. In this volume we will introduce the history of how this falsehood gained root in the Christian world.

**Beginning Of The Prajapati-Christ Myth:** Many Christians are surprised at the ease with which the Prajapati Heresy entered the Evangelical and Conservative churches. After all these churches are known for fighting against doctrinal perversion, then how did they overlook this perversion. The reason lies more in history than in theology, and thus a chronological narration of the history of this movement is essential.

To the best of current knowledge, the idea that culminated in the Prajapati Heresy began with *Krishnamohan Banerjea*. In 1875 he wrote in a book titled *Aryan Witness* that "if the writers of Rigveda could visit India today, then in comparison to all the faiths that prevail here today they would identify Christians as closest to their own religion". Many Prajapati teachers of today identify Banerjea as the originator of Prajapati movement. Missions researches also concur with this idea. However, though Banerjea originated the idea, the present development of the Prajapati Movement resulted from an apparently fraudulent tract that came subsequent to that.

Around 1950, a person of Telegu origin by the name of Anubhavananda Kesavaray Sarma published an article full of fictional quotations, which is now circulated as a tract titled "Sacrifice". Subsequently, this tract was translated from Telegu into English by a lady named H. Kaveribai, and it started appearing as a gospel tract from the forties onwards. Soon after, this questionable tract was translated into Hindi, and other Indian languages. The largest Christian Publishing house in India was the publisher and distributor of this tract. Consequently, the tract had wide distribution among all evangelical Christians. (GLS did so in good faith, but they have now reportedly withdrawn the publication of this tract following objections raised by critics of Prajapati Heresy).



*A Statue Of The God Prajapati*

The above observation reminds Christian leaders and publishers in good standing that because of their leading position they should not endorse a product, person, or teaching without due cross-examination. If an ordinary believer recommends error, the results do not travel much. When an organization or a Christian leader of repute recommends error, it travels widely riding upon their reputation.

Though attempts at relating the Christian and Hindu faiths began in 1875, the birth of the present-day Prajapati Movement actually took place with the publication of the above-mentioned fiction-filled tract. The eight decades of work done in this direction prior to this tract helped to prepare the minds of Christians to accept this work blindly and unquestioningly. Gradually the idea of Prajapati Sacrifice spread slowly among Christians, and many individuals started using these ideas in their preaching.

In the sixties and seventies Paul Sudhakar became popular for his messages relating Hinduism and the Christian faith. However, most leaders in the Brethren Movement viewed his approach with skepticism, and therefore he did not gain any widespread following here. As a result of that, he did not gain widespread following in other separatist movements like the Pentecostals and the Baptists. Apparently, Paul Sudhakar did not leave any significant disciple in these circles, though the memory of his ministries still linger (Harvest Times, 1997).

It must be remembered, however, that this *fictitious* Prajapati preaching was quite different from the *New Prajapati* who broke upon the scene in the nineties. It is in the nineties that the theology of this movement was revealed in written form. The sixties to eighties was a period of preparing the Christian minds to receive the *New Prajapati* when he arrives in his new avatar in the nineties. This was the period when Prajapati silently crept into Sunday-school textbooks, into increasing number of articles, books, and even into Bible colleges. Gradually an atmosphere was beginning to develop where Prajapati was changing from a person of doubtful utility into a welcome guest.

The changing scenario resulted in the appearance of numerous gospel tracts, all of which had Prajapati as the central theme. The idea of "nine characteristics" was repeated endlessly till it settled firmly into the Indian Christian mind, especially that of the Keralite Christians. Some scrupulous elements took advantage of the situation to introduce additional hoaxes of their own.

In the original Telegu tract the now-famous nine characteristics were mentioned only briefly. However, many people of the present generation (who did not have much connection with Sanskrit or with the Hindu scriptures) allowed their imagination to soar to great heights. They began adding to the explanation given in the original tract, till Prajapati looked like a character who is an integral part of the Bible and the Christian lore.

Some of the more aspiring people "invented" more quotations and circulated articles and tracts with these. The Christian community (already intoxicated with finding nine

characteristics of Christ in the Vedas) was excited to discover more such characteristics. Now the total number of characteristics rose to 15 to their excitement. This included the statement attributed to Samaveda: "I worship the person who is born of a virgin". The fact that such fraudulent statements were circulated mindlessly and uncritically by the Christian community shows that the time was ripe for the rise of the real Prajapati Heresy.

The real heresy raised its head in the nineteen nineties through the Books of Mr. Koshy Abraham. A lesser role was played by the books of Joseph Padinjarekara and Arvindaksha Menon. Many other lesser writers also wrote, but none of them was able to come close to the quantum of material produced (and the depth of doctrinal fallacies introduced) by these three writers.

## The Golden Period

The golden period of the Prajapati Heresy can be identified as the first half of the nineties, though the influence continued into the second half. This period saw the publication and wide distribution of their most serious and voluminous publications. These include *Is Man A sinner By Birth*, *The Christ Of Aryan Vedanta*, *The Christian Philosophy Of Aryan Vedanta*, *Crucifixion: Which Is Prajapati Sacrifice*, and many others authored by Mr. Koshy Abraham. These also include *From Death Lead Me To Immortality*, and *Christ In Ancient Vedas*, both by Dr. Joseph Padinjarekara.



Picture: Another Statue of Prajapati

The significant books also includes *Divine Harmony* by Arvindaksha Menon. Menon is a Roman Catholic follower. In their anxiety to see Christ as Prajapati, many believers are not aware of the above fact about Menon. They naively think that Menon is a Brethren or Pentecostal believer. This golden period saw the introduction of numerous cassette tapes and other such mass-distribution material that spread the message widely.

The culmination of all this can be said to be the establishment of the *Christava Vedanta Vedi* (Christian Vedanta Forum), presumably with Mr. Koshy Abraham being the motivator behind all this. Of course eventually he did become the most important person in this movement. From the name of the organization it can be gleaned that they aim to reconcile Vedanta philosophy with the Christian theology. The same idea is the thread running through all the books produced by the Prajapati Heresy in the nineties.

The Vedanta Vedi conducted numerous meetings, and the authors associated with it wrote numerous books, tracts, and articles. They also delivered numerous lectures. From these,

the philosophy of this Forum can be deduced and summarized *inter alia* into the following points:

1. Hindu religious books are as inspired by Holy Spirit as the Bible is.
2. Biblical Theology and Vedanta Philosophy are identical in essence. The seeming difference between them is only a difference in our perception.
3. Man is not a sinner by birth, and consequently there is no Adamic sin nature in man.
4. Jesus Christ and many of the Hindu gods (or avatars) are one and the same in essence.
5. Jesus Christ is NOT eternal, but rather a creation of God.
6. Hinduism contains the gospel of salvation, and a Hindu needs only to obtain salvation through this path. Similarly, people of all religions can obtain salvation through the message of salvation that is available in their own religion.
7. By implication, preaching about salvation by grace through faith in the shed blood of Christ (and Christ alone) is NOT essential.

As even a novice can recognize, propagating the above doctrines as Biblical is nothing short of heresy and blasphemy. More so among Bible-believing churches. Yet this movement was able to penetrate deep into Brethren, Pentecostal, and Baptist churches because some well known teachers, writers, and preaches stood in liaison with all this.

Mr. Koshy Abraham comes from a St. Thomas Evangelical Church background, and he had no significant welcome, theological hold, or spiritual impact among the Bible believing churches. Thus there was no way for him to directly influence people within Evangelical churches. Further, in his books he does not share the gospel, but rather tries to Hinduize the Christian faith. Thus his theology and his books would never have gained a foothold in the Brethren, Pentecostal, and Baptist churches if some people from these groups had not stood with him. This support by the insiders is the historical reason how books challenging the fundamental doctrinal position of Evangelical separatist churches gained a foothold in these churches.

These books did their brainwashing day and night all these years, particularly among the doctrinally ignorant young generation. Ideas have consequences. Consequently, at the time this research-report is being written, much theological damage has already been done by these books.

The theological situation is so bad that within these churches there are many young and spiritually undiscerning people today who are willing to defend these heretical doctrines at any cost. Even if they have to fight against the doctrines of their own church, and even if they have to go contrary to what the founding fathers of their churches believed and taught, they are ready to defend the heretical doctrines propounded in these books. Such is the hold that this movement gained during the golden period of its expansion.

## Opposition To Prajapati Heresy

Opposition to the Prajapati Heresy started right from the time this doctrine was popularized. In North India, Acharya D. P. Titus was an aggressive preacher of Prajapati and the Fulfillment Doctrines. This approach was strongly opposed in the sixties and the seventies by Rabindranath Maraj and George David.

After initial discussions on this topic with George David and Robert Reid, the writer of the present work was the next to oppose this doctrine. This opposition on Biblical grounds started in the seventies. Most of this systematic opposition, however, was confined to the Hindi belt because all these persons had their ministries confined to North India. However, some people from Kerala like Abraham Thomas, Ernakulam, did come under this influence in the early eighties.

Though several individuals in Kerala opposed these heresies on individual level, there was initially no organized opposition here. This was not needed till the eighties because this movement had not till that time taken this cultic form which it acquired in the nineties. However, once it became so perverted in the nineties, opposition became necessary.

The expected opposition did not come forth from the older generation because most of them assumed that all this renewed activity in the name of Prajapati is nothing except the same old teaching that has been here for decades. (Interviews with scores of older leaders have revealed that they did not read the books produced in the nineties). The majority of eager readers were those in their forties and below, and among them these books sold like hot cakes. The doctrinal illiteracy and lack of conviction in this generation made it possible for these heresies to penetrate deep into them. However, not all of them ignored this deviation from fundamental doctrines and a young pastor by the name of T. S. Balan came forward to oppose it in Kerala.

As of now, Pastor Balan has published several articles, one book, and some cassette tapes opposing the new heresies. He has also started a monthly tabloid by the name of *Defender*, which these days devotes a large proportion of space to expose the Prajapati Movement. He was the first to put information about these subjects on the INTERNET.

Pastor Balan is authoritative in his information, and none has been able to find fault with his data. Being a Hindu convert, he has been able to see the implications of the Prajapati Heresy far more clearly than many others who come from a Christian background. However, his language tends to be on the harsher side. Though his crusade has resulted in many preachers abandoning Prajapati like hot potatoes, his scorching style has distressed many of the more serious inquirers. He, however, continues in his crusade and would not rest till the Prajapati Heresy is eliminated from the Pentecostal and separatist churches.

The second one to systematically expose the errors (in Kerala) was the author of the present work. This work came in the form of a series of seven articles. He then collaborated with Dr.

O. M. Samuel to publish two articles about "Revelation". A substantial appendix on Prajapati Heresy was added to Systematic Theology published by Satyam Publications. Then came Shibu K. Paul's thesis on this subject. This was followed by several semi-technical articles on Divine Revelation And The Pagans.

All the above invoked much interest among the writers in Kerala, and many of them started publishing on the various aspects of either this subject, or on related themes. These writers include Jos Jacob (Our Link), Dr. O. M. Samuel (Atmaprakashini), Dr. Oommen Philip, Shibu K. Paul, and Justin Jacob (in Suvisheshadhvani). Around the same time many top leaders in the IPC started demanding that Prajapati be removed from IPC Sunday School textbooks because of its fraudulently nature.

All of the above activities generated further interest among the believers in Kerala. Shocked to realize that all these years they have been fed on a diet of deception, many started demanding a full-fledged research and investigation into this subject. Many have started working on this subject, and this work is one of them.

## Fraudulent Origin

The Christian world has seen plenty of frauds in the twentieth century. Many of these were propagated by naive Christians who wanted to establish that the Bible is unique. Not having sufficient training or background to do so, many of them stooped down to plain deceptions to defend the Bible. However, many of these hoaxes were detected before long.

The story of a NASA computer that detected a "missing day" in the Universe, the story that scientists discovered the hell in a 10-kilometer deep well in Siberia, and the story that a super-computer named BEAST or 666 is going to store information on all humans, fall into this category. All of them were deceptions. Fortunately, all of them were discovered and exposed very fast. However, one deception that continued to be perpetrated for almost 60 full years was the Prajapati Hoax.

The background for this hoax was prepared when Banerjea proposed his Fulfillment Theory, as mentioned previously in this chapter. After about eighty years in incubation, the Prajapati finally came out around 1950 in the tract now known as SACRIFICE. Pretending to be a tract written by a "Pandit", it contained numerous Sanskrit statements and their alleged meanings. The tract was worded in such a way that the Vedas seemed to preach the gospel of Christ. However, several problems were there with this tract.

First, Hindus with a good background in their scriptures immediately and instantly rejected this tract on reading it. They claimed that this is total misrepresentation, and some of them even went so far as to say that this was outright fraud by Christians. Thus the tract was never able to attract any Hindu who was knowledgeable about the Hindu scriptures and

philosophies. However, many ignorant Hindus were definitely attracted by all this. (Whether attracting others by deception is right or wrong would be considered more fully in the chapter on Ethics).

Though the above tract failed to attract knowledgeable Hindus, it did create a stir among Christians, specially among those who had no idea of fundamental Biblical doctrines. Added to this was their inadequate knowledge of Sanskrit and the non availability of Hindu scriptures to them.

The deception in this tract is of several types, and only some of them are mentioned below:

**FRAGMENTARY QUOTES:** Most Sanskrit slokas are two lines long, and many even have four to six lines. These lines are totally interconnected, and they need to be quoted fully to arrive at their real meaning. In this tract almost 18 Sanskrit quotations are given, of which 16 are fragments containing merely two to five words.

Thus what the author did was to go through the Hindu religious books, pull out a couple of words here and there, and then present them as though this is the substance of what the Hindu scriptures said. No person of integrity would do this. When many Hindus try to do the same with the Bible, Christians decry that as foul play. However, the same kind of foul play can be seen in this tract, which is the originator of the Prajapati Movement.

**ARBITRARY INTERPRETATION:** Interpretation of a statement depends upon the context in which it is spoken. "You Rascal" in English, has a totally different meaning when spoken by a policeman to a thief as opposed to when spoken by a grandfather to his naughty grandchild. Detach them from their context, and the meaning becomes radically different.

Modern Hindu Gurus do this often when they quote "God Is Love" from the Bible and then claim that Bible teaches that "Love Is God". Similarly, in this tract, the (criminally) isolated fragmentary statements are given a second mistreatment by interpreting them in isolation from the context in which they were spoken. This was the second fraud committed in this tract.

**CHRISTIAN HERMENEUTICS:** A statement has to be interpreted not only in context, but also using the proper hermeneutics. Thus a Biblical text has to be interpreted using Biblical hermeneutics, and a Hindu text has to be interpreted using Hindu hermeneutics. Anything other than this is Hermeneutical Sorcery.

Thus when the famous ASATO MA SADGAMAYA, TAMASO MA JOYTIRGAMAYA, etc. is interpreted using Christian hermeneutics, it looks like a statement out of the Bible. However, that is not at all the meaning of this sloka. (More details about this are given in another portion of this work).

In the tract under consideration, Christian hermeneutics has been unfairly imposed upon the Hindu texts to yield meanings that satisfy the Christian ego. This was the third fraud committed in this tract.

**MULTIPLE SOURCES MIXED:** Another trick seen in this tract is to quote from multiple sources but give the impression as though they are all speaking on one and the same subject. Actually the Hindu religious scriptures are a massive library, with anywhere between two to six thousand books (depending on the criteria). Even if we take only the smaller of these numbers, 2000 books are sufficient to fill a library.

When an entire library of books is at one's disposal, and when one quotes only fragments from them, then it is possible to prove any point in the world. All what one needs to do is to pick up a quotation from one book, another from another one, and so on. This is one trick used in this tract, and it is dishonest (to say the least).

**FRAUDULENT QUOTATIONS:** The most serious problem with this tract is the fraudulently quotations used in it to establish that the Rigveda mentions nine characteristics of the sacrificial animal. The precise words of the tract are: "This is what the Rig Veda says about the sacrificial animal"

The implication is very clear that the nine points that follow are taken from Rigveda, as these are things "said" by it. Then nine characteristics of the sacrificial animal are mentioned, without giving any Sanskrit quotations and without giving any citations. But due to the previous eighteen Sanskrit quotations, the reader is mentally prepared to accept these nine also as having their origin in Rigveda in Sanskrit.

The above is a trick used very frequently by propagandists. They begin with truth (or with a semblance of truth), and this mollifies people into thinking that the speaker is on the side of truth. Then once the defense mechanisms of people are down, the propagandist brings his real message. By this time people simply accept what he says. This is exactly what happened in the case of this tract.

Due to the initial Sanskrit quotations, Christians assumed that the nine points attributed to Rigveda would surely be there in that book. Further, when believers circulate this kind of material, other believers simply believe the claim till there is reason to suspect it. Since there was no strong or systematic opposition to it in Kerala, generation after generation of Christians were persuaded into believing the false claims of this tract.

Discerning people should have suspected the whole thing on seeing that though Rigveda is mentioned, no citations are given. After all, if it is there in Rigveda, citing the precise location would greatly add to the persuading power in favour of this tract. This was not done, and there was an obvious reason why this was not done: the claim was a fraud, an outright lie. Twisting evidence, and fabricating evidence, are all considered by courts of law as cheating. Here is a good example of that.

Thus the entire Prajapati Movement was built up from a tract that was totally a fraud. Never before has the Christian community been deceived for such a long period. But here was the mother of all deceptions that escaped detection for a solid 60 years !!

The deceptive and fraudulently nature of this tract was pointed out in the Hindi belt for the first time by the author of the present work. In Kerala it was pointed out by Pastor T. S. Balan. He even offered a reward of Rs. 100,000/- to anyone who cited a mere *five* of the alleged nine statements found in the Rigveda. The answer has been amazing: nobody has come forward to claim the reward so far !

Mr. Koshy Abraham put a very strong front in the book *Prapanchasilpiyaya Kristhu*, but he did not succeed. The book is full of mockery against Balan, and then the author pulls out some quotations from here and there. However, the quotations are not all from Rig Veda. Worse, they do not substantially match the statements given in the original tract. This once again confirms the fraudulently nature of the nine characteristics of the sacrificial lamb mentioned in the tract.

In summary, the Prajapati Movement was built upon a foundation of sand. For sixty years people were deceived into believing that the statements are there in Rigveda, but it was the biggest (and cruelest) theological hoax of the twentieth century. Obviously, it is high time for God-fearing and Bible-believing Christians to stop supporting a white lie. It is against Christian ethics. It is against every norm of the civilized society.

## Types Of Prajapati

This subject is discussed in detail in another chapter, but it is necessary to briefly introduce it here for the sake of completeness of the historical sketch.

Hindu religious books contain mythologies about several Prajapatis, some of whom had a questionable moral character. Since the general public does not know that there are more than one Prajapati, they attribute all these moral defects to the one person named "Prajapati". Thus when Christians compare Prajapati with Christ, the picture forming in the minds of the Hindus might not be very healthy. This has been pointed out by many Christian apologists.

Prajapati proponents retort by saying that their discussions are limited to the Purusha Prajapati of the Purusha Sukta of Rigveda. This is an interesting argument, but this is totally false. They do mingle Prajapatis, and their quotations are NOT restricted to passages that describe the Purusha Prajapati alone. Thus this defense is false because they themselves violate it. A listing of sources from which they quote is given in the chapter on Prajapatiology (The Person And Works Of Prajapati). A look at this list would instant demonstrate that the Prajapati Proponents DO NOT confine their quotations to the Purusha Prajapati of Purusha Sukta alone.

Thus none should be lulled into thinking that Prajapati proponents teach only about the sanitized-looking Purusha Prajapati. Further, every Christian should know even this Purusha Prajapati has no similarities with Jesus Christ. Full documentation about this and also about the actual character of the Purusha Prajapati would be given in another chapter. The Purusha Sukta is also added elsewhere in this work for the information of interested people. Suffice to say here that historically, this heresy has not confined itself to Purusha Prajapati.

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