

TRINITY IN INDIAN THOUGHT

Prof. Dr. J.D. Baskara Doss



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FOREWORD

This is yet another masterpiece of Dr.J.D. Baskara Doss with his scholarly approach on Triune God in Indian religions and philosophy. In his conclusion he gives the following evidences authoritatively that Trinitarian doctrine is not traceable in the four Vedas whereas this is the basic one found in the Dravidian Religion and Dravidian Philosophy. Pre-Christ era did not show any Trinitarian worship. But animal sacrifice by way of blood - shed was mandatory. The author of this book Dr.J.D.Baskara Doss says, "It is clearly earmarked in the Indian religio - philosophic history that the triune God and the Trinitarian dogmatics were evolved and developed only in the post-Christ era. The triple nature of our God (which is the basic theology of Christianity) has paved the way for the different denominations in Hindu Religion and in Indian philosophy".

Upanishads, Brahma Sutras and Bhagavat Gita called as Prasthanathriya' are the three primary Vedantic Scriptures in the Hindu Religion. The trinitarian concept is the fundamental theology accepted in the Vedanta.

The highest bliss for the Christian is to be ever living with God in the sense of entering into the inner dialogue and communion with the Trinity.

If man is made in the image of God, it is the Triune God in whose image he is made, and that means in the image of an interpersonal relationship which has love at its heart. The Father and the Son love one another with a mutual love, and the Spirit is himself the bond of love, as Augustine said, The highest Christian conception of God is not of an impersonal absolute, a *nirguna Brahman*, but of a unity of three Persons, united to one another in what Martin Buber has called on '**I-Thou**' relationship.

For many people the doctrine of the Trinity is one of the most obscure and difficult beliefs of the Christian faith. Because of it, the Jews and the Muslims have accused the Christians of worshipping three Gods instead of one, and many Christians find it an embarrassment - hard to explain and ever harder to defend.

The doctrine of the Trinity is the climax of Christian theology, for in it is summed up all we have been saying about God and man, about past, present

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and future, about the purpose of our life on earth, and about the way in which that purpose is fulfilled when we come into communion with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The goal of life is to share in -
the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

(2 Cor. 13:13)

The Author proves how Trinitarianism of Christianity in the post - Christ period had influenced Buddhism, Thirukkural, Saivism, Vaishnavism, Six fold Religion, Agamas, Upanishads, Vedanta Sutras and Gita.

The approach of the author on trinity aspect of God is commendable and laudable. May God bless him in his future writings. Once again the trustees Thiru.R. Soundar Rajan, Dr. M. Vijayakanth, Ms.Evangeline Sumitha, Mrs.Dora Justine, Mrs. K. Vijayalakshmi and the Board members Dr. Moses Michael Faraday, Dr. Y. Johnson Thangaiya, Mrs.Asha Sridhar, Dr.S.Dayalan, Mr. J. Ramesh, Mr. Eugene Joseph join hands with me in publishing this wonderful piece of work through our organization. We thank God for our oneness in His ministry.

G.J. Pandithurai

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PREFACE

'Trinity in Indian Thought' is a small book, an outline in nature, tries to bring out how the Trinitarian dogma is common to the Indian Religions, Philosophy and Christianity that originated in Asia. History proves the trade links between these two extreme points, Palestine and Tamil Nadu (India) and naturally there were transmigration of ideologies. The historical evidences also reveal the advent of St. Thomas, an Apostle of Jesus Christ in India during the period of Gondapharus, king of Taxila, in 49 AD or little earlier, to spread the Good News. The Syrian Christians, Mar Thoma Christians and the Malabar Christians hold that Thomas had established seven churches in Kerala and an half church in Thiruvithankodu near Nagerkoil. He landed in Kodungalur (Cranganur) in 52 A.D., came to Mylapore and preached the gospel and was martyred in St. Thomas Mount. Hence it is not a surprise to find out the common and fundamental postulates in the above religions viz. Christianity and Hindu Religion.

Tamil Bhakti Movement had given birth to Saivism and Vaishnavism in the 7c AD. The propelling force behind this religious development is now recognized as the apostolic mission of St. Thomas. When he was in India he never had the privilege of carrying the Bible with him because the biblical books were canonized at a later date.

The seed sown by Apostle Thomas had absorbed and assimilated the worship and other elements of the Tamils prevalent in the pre-Christ era and started growing into Tamil Bhakti Movement and the end result was the emergence of Tamil religion. At present there are two different major denominations namely Saivism and Vaishnavism. The early devotional songs of the Nayanmars and Azhwars reveal that Lord Siva and Lord Vishnu are one and the same person.

Poikai Ashwar and Pei Azhwar meticulously sing in praise of the two forms (Siva and Vishnu) of the same God (Naalaayiram, 2179, 2344). But much importance was accorded to the Triune God by almost all the Azhwars.

Thirumangai Azhwar sings :

'Moovaraahiya Oruvanai' (Naalaayiram 1157)

Nammaazhwar sings :

"Muthalaam Thiru uruvam moonrenbar onrae

Muthalaahum moonrukkum enbar" (3758)

"Moovaraahiya moorthiyai muthal

Moovarkkum muthalvan thannai" (2953)

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In a few of the poems in Naalayiram it goes like the following :

'Muthalaavaar Moovarae' (3198)

'Moovarai nirkkum mudhu punarppum' (3537)

The above lines magnify the glory of the Triune God, emphatically asserting One Supreme God manifests in three forms, therefore the three forms signify only One God later on the tendency changes to praise Vishnu and the Azhwars go to the extent of placing Vishnu on top of the other two. Though the Naayanmaars and Azhwars sing in praise of the Trinity, the names Siva and Vishnu alone had survived to be regarded as two Supreme names and hence we have two major denominations. No separate denomination in the name of Brahma was founded in India. One of the reasons for these divisions could be attributed to the mythological stories fabricated in course of time.

An archaeological monument of 'Thaanu maalayan' temple at Suseenthiram in Tamil Nadu is one of the living evidences of the Triune God. The Siva Linga consecrated in the temples' sanctum testifies that Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are not different Supreme Gods but they are different names of One Supreme God.

The recent researches undertaken in the later half of 20th century and through have achieved a breakthrough in the field of Indian Religions and Indian Philosophy to show that they had originated and developed from the same source by assimilating the Indian culture and heritage. Keeping this in mind, I do trust that this book shall throw much light and this shall inspire the scholars to probe further in this area.

I thank God for having made this work possible and my sincere thanks are due to the Board of Trustees and the members of National Institute of Leadership Training (NILT) who are instrumental in publishing this book.

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