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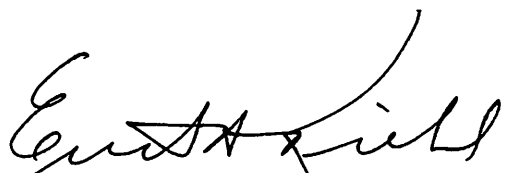
CHARISMATA OF THE SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IN
COMPARISON WITH HINDU RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

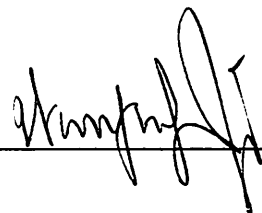
A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by

M. Selva Gunalan

May 1983

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Advisor


Reader

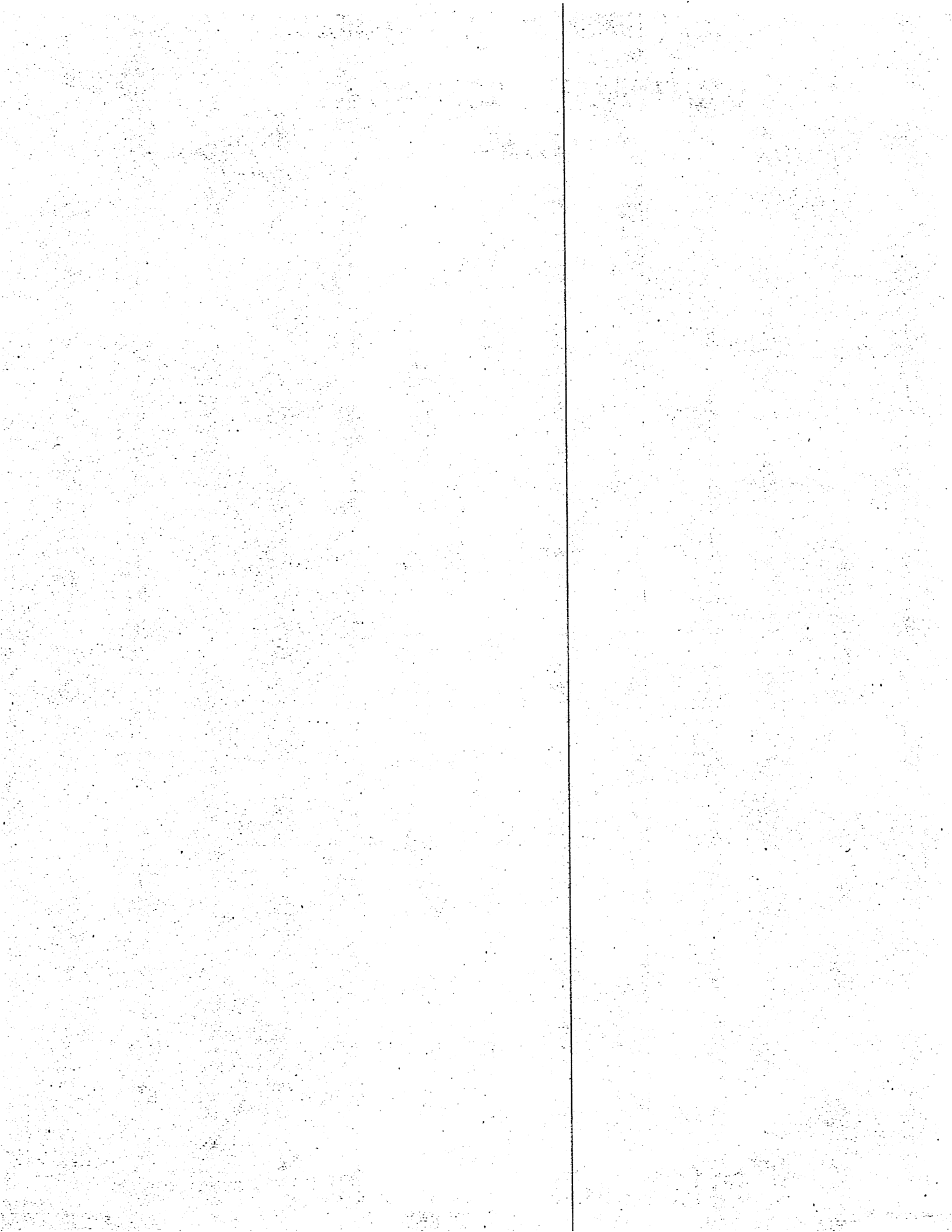


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INTRODUCTION

About 80 percent Christian population in India is rural; it accepts spectacular supernatural gifts as being real. Similarly, about 75 percent of the Hindu population living in Indian villages believes in divine power manifesting itself through extraordinary works of the Hindu holy men.

Exorcism, healing miracles and foretelling the future dominate the practices of Hindu and Christian charismatics in India. Hindus consult Christian charismatics. For Christians to consult Hindu holy men is very common in the Indian villages. The present writer has encountered this mutual exchange during his pastoral ministry and research on "Popular Hinduism" in rural villages of the Tamil-speaking area.

In recent years Christian scholars in India have begun the challenging task of working on a "Local Village Theology" to help the village Christians. A major concern in this undertaking is "the Theology of the Supernatural," which includes the Biblical view of demons, exorcism, visions, revelatory dreams, signs of nature, healing miracles and spiritual ecstasies.¹

Localizing such theology may involve the danger of developing syncretistic ideas of the spectacular nature of supernatural powers. Moreover, the belief in supernatural phenomena does not confine itself

¹Herbert Hoefler, "Local Village Theology in India," Lutheran World Information, 41 (1980):12-16.

to a locale but is found throughout the world. Therefore, the localized theology of supernatural in India would not be helpful for Christians in witnessing the Christian faith in the Holy Spirit and His gifts.

The above situation together with the growth of so-called charismatic practices of Indian Christians and Hindus, provided the motivation to investigate problems involved in charismatic practices in Christianity and in Hinduism in the light of the Scriptural understanding of the charismata.

The result of this investigation demonstrates that there is very little difference in the spectacular characteristics of Christian and Hindu use of the so-called supernatural gifts which prompt the Hindu-Christian exchange of these gifts, irrespective of their source.

In order to understand the source and use of supernatural gifts, the first part of this paper outlines the Scriptural data on the Holy Spirit, His gifts, and the use of supernatural gifts in the Church through the ages as well as the phenomena of evil spirits. Part Two provides a brief description of Hindu beliefs and practices of supernatural gifts. A background of the Hindu religion has been included as an introduction to the Part Two to aid in gaining a better understanding of these. The final section of the second part presents similarities and dissimilarities between Christian and Hindu charismatic practices.

Now with reference to sources for the writer's investigation: in addition to pertinent resources in the library of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, the present writer drew heavily on extensive materials he gathered in working in Tamil-speaking villages from 1974 to 1977. During

these years he worked as part of the staff of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore, India. The rather extensive personal experience he had during these years of service are included as part of the primary source material. Some of the insights can be gained only in such personal activity in villages of India.

It is the present writer's prayer that these study findings may be very helpful in his future ministry in India.

PART ONE

CHARISMATA IN THE SCRIPTURE AND
IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

CHAPTER I

PHENOMENA OF THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

A renewed interest in the Spirit and charismata has increasingly resulted in a wide array of literature. The present state of the Charismatic Movement seemingly has created a new awareness among Christians of the need to discern the peculiar phenomena of the movement in the light of the Scriptures. Secular fields of study, such as sociology, anthropology and psychology also have been striving to investigate the cause and effect of the supernatural elements claimed by the Charismatic Movement.

The Charismatic Movement has received severe criticism as well as enthusiastic acceptance. This movement has grown rapidly and has left its effect both inside and outside the Church. Therefore, it becomes necessary to begin with a brief survey of the charismata in the light of the Scriptures and a brief look into the life of the Church for the movement's development.

A Brief Study on Charismata

The word charismata is a transliteration of the Greek word *χαρίσματα*. It stands for 'gifts' that are freely and graciously given or 'favours' bestowed. In the New Testament this word has been

used of gifts of divine grace.¹ The privileges granted to the people of Israel (Rom. 11:28-29), the gracious gift of rescue from mortal danger (2 Cor. 1:10), the spiritual possession of a believer (Rom. 1:11), the gracious gift of redemption (Rom. 5:15; 6:23) and the gifts of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 28-31) are some of the charismata. These references show that the context must decide the specific meaning of the word in the particular author's mind. We will discuss this in some detail later in this section.

The Old Testament origin and usage of charismata are usually overlooked in books and articles on the subject. Even the charismatics do not claim for such origin in the Old Testament, since they believe that only after the exaltation of Jesus Christ the gifts were given to the believers by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost as a fulfillment of the promise to the disciples (Acts 2). A charismatic writes:

Holy Spirit could not be given to the Church before Christ was glorified with the Father in heaven...this gift was bestowed upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost.²

This reminds us that charismatics often interpret scriptural passages without paying attention to the context. The significance of the feast of Pentecost and the fulfillment of the promise of pouring out of the Spirit cannot be limited to the New Testament (Acts 2; compare Joel 2:28-32) as the charismatics usually do. The Pentecost event should be interpreted in the light of the significance of the Feast of Weeks

¹W. Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature, trans. Wm. F. Arndt and Wilbur F. Gingrich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1979), pp. 878-79.

²Derek Prince, Purpose of Pentecost, (Ft. Lauderdale, FL: Derek Prince Publications, n.d.) p. 24.

(First-Fruits),³ the prophecies of the Old Testament and especially that of Joel, and the promise of Jesus (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:7-8).

To some it may seem unimportant to study charismata as evidenced in the Old Testament. But the Old Testament does refer to charismata and their proper function in the life of God's people.

The Old Testament Understanding

In general, charismata in the Scripture can be described in the light of the Spirit of God working in a special way through His special men. Such special men were called Nabhi, which means prophet.

Along with the standard term Nabhi, the phrase 'man of God' (אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים) also is often employed in the Old Testament (Deut. 33:1; Joshua 14:6; 1 Sam. 9:8-9; 2 Kings 4:7; 2 Chron. 8:14). In one case, the prophet is designated by the descriptive phrase 'the man of the Spirit' (Hos. 9:7) and in another as 'an angel of Yahweh' (Hag. 1:13). The terms "shepherd," "servant," or "watchman" and similar names were also in use. Many scholars consider these expressions to be figures of speech,⁴ since their special usage have an association of ideas. In accordance with the function of the prophets, these phrases are 'adverbial noun figuratives of mediatory function.' Such expression in the Scriptures do not come from philosophical ideas, but from the experience of relationship between God and His people. In other words, the prophets were the men of God when they received the Word of

³Marshall I. Howard, "The Significance of Pentecost," Scottish Journal of Theology 30 (1979):347-50.

⁴Willis J. Beecher, The Prophets and the Promise (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, reprint ed. 1975), p. 32.

God; they were the men for the people as they proclaimed the Word of God. This idea inherently lives in the descriptive phrases that grew out from the experience of Israelite. The twofold function of the prophets in the history and religious life of Israel has to be understood in the association of God with the prophets, not vice versa. A prophet is not only "a person who speaks forth the message that God committed to him"⁵ but also is a God-chosen leader and representative of the people of Israel (1 Sam. 7:15-17; Jer. 14:7-15:9).

Hozeḥ (הוזה) is directly applied to "prophet" only a few times (Is. 30:10; Amos 7:12). Other references use this word for "seer" in the sense of one who sees a vision.⁶ However, the word hazon (חזון) or vision is associated with nabhi (2 Chron. 32:32; Jer. 14:14; Ezek. 7:26). In Hos. 12:10, hazon is the means through which God speaks to the nabhis. In Is. 29:10, prophets and seers are used in parallels. The more general word roeh (רוה), to see, is used of prophetic or spiritual sight in a few passages (Gen. 46:2; Num. 12:6; 1 Sam. 3:15; Is. 28:7; Dan. 8:16). Determinately, 1 Sam. 9:9 says that רוה and חזון are the same. It is difficult to determine whether רוה and חזון have the same meaning. One suggestion would be that both are perceiving a form of revelation from God, namely, through a vision or a dream, or perceiving of a divine voice.⁷ These words also

⁵Willis J. Beecher, p. 90.

⁶Robert B. Girdlestone, Synonyms of the Old Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans reprint ed. 1981), p. 241.

⁷Griefswald A. Jepsen, " רוה ," Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, vol. 1, eds. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans 1980), pp. 280-90.

mainly refer to the function of God's men to receive and proclaim the message of God.

Charismatic elements such as prophecy, vision, oracle, ecstasy and miracle in the work of the prophets have been special means of expressing or communicating the Word of God through a special kind of God's association with them. Any one who pretended to speak for God is considered in Scripture to be a false prophet (Deut. 13:1-8; 18:20; 2 Kings 10:19). Although some charismatic elements are found in the performance of the prophets, those elements were neither characteristics nor qualifications of all the prophets. For instance, Abraham and Aaron are given the title prophet (Gen. 20:7; Ex. 7:1). Abraham did not perform any supernatural work like Moses⁸ nor did he prophesy like Deborah.⁹ Some scholars think that Abraham was called prophet on the basis of his function, namely, his intercession (Gen. 18:22-33), and Aaron was being a mouthpiece of Moses (Ex. 4:16).¹⁰ But Aaron performed miracles (Ex. 7:8-13). However, the most important consideration is not their function but God's purpose in choosing and using them in the history of Israel. In other words, God's special association is more important; the prophets' function is secondary. God used His true prophets to speak for Him, as He chose to have them speak.

God's special relationship with the prophets manifested itself in prophecy, oracle and miracle. These manifestations may be called

⁸ Moses is called 'nabhi' in Deut. 18:15-19.

⁹ See Judg. 4:4-7. Miriam, sister of Aaron also is called 'nabhia' in Ex. 15:20.

¹⁰ G. R. Kittel, gen. ed., Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. G. Eerdmans, 1968); 6:803. Hereafter this work will be referred to as TDNT.

charismata in terms of God's gracious gifts. Most of the spectacular supernatural gifts seem to have appeared more frequently among the prophets of the earlier Old Testament period ending with Samuel. These prophets are given the title charismatics or ecstatic prophets, by some scholars.¹¹ The second group of prophets are called 'writing prophets' or classical prophets or later prophets,¹² whose function in most cases did not involve the more spectacular supernatural performances. It does not imply that there is no possibility to assume that this second group never did any extraordinary works (2 Kings 20:7-11; compare Is. 38:1-9), but not much evidence is recorded in their writings. Moreover, the Scriptures affirm that the prophets in the Old Testament were statesmen, reformers, organizers, preachers, literary men and the men of supernatural gifts. All these gifts come under one category, 'the special gift' from God used for His special purpose.

Spiritual gifts are mainly divided into two groups, miracles and prophecies. Other gifts such as visions, dreams and ecstasy may be taken as gifts which affirmed that the individuals had a special relationship with God. Speaking in tongues which figures prominently among spiritual gifts of Corinth was also exercised by the Old Testament prophets (2 Kings. 9:11; compare Is. 28:11).¹³ However, when Paul

¹¹Edward D. O'Connor, ed., Perspectives on Charismatic Renewal, (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), p. 15.

¹²Major prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel (3),; Minor prophets are Hosea to Malachi (12).

¹³E. E. Ellis, Prophecy and Hermeneutics in Early Christianity, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1978), p. 28.

quotes Is. 28:11, he wishes to indicate the ineffectiveness of speaking in tongues (1 Cor. 14:21).¹⁴

The miracles performed by the early prophets are especially noted in the Scriptures (Ex. 7:8-13; 1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:1-7 etc.). Generally, the miracles in the Old Testament are evidences of God's direct intervention and serve to confirm the prophets as His chosen instruments.¹⁵ At the same time one cannot limit the purpose of miracles to be only instruments of confirmation. A miracle always has two ends, the performer and the beneficiary. A miracle confirms the performer as God's chosen one, and to the beneficiary it is an experience of God's miraculous help either physically or spiritually. For instance, God's miracles through Moses confirmed him as His instrument, and to the Israelite the miracles resulted in deliverance from slavery.

Second, the prophetic sayings dominate the ministry of the prophets. The Hebrew term נָבִיא stands for prophecy, or a prediction or an inspired teaching of a נָבִיא or נָבִיָּה (prophet or prophetess).¹⁶ Although it would be helpful to go into the details of the literary analysis of prophecy¹⁷ such as formula and types, this would not serve a necessary purpose here. Our major concern is mainly

¹⁴C. K. Barrett, A Commentary on The First Epistle to the Corinthians, (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 323.

¹⁵H. C. Kee, "Miracle Workers," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, supplemental vol., Keith Crim, gen. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976), pp. 598-99.

¹⁶R. Laird Harris, ed., Theological Word Book of the Old Testament, vol. 2 (Chicago: Moody Press 1980), pp. 544-45.

¹⁷Richard N. Soulen, Handbook of Biblical Criticism (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1978), pp. 129-33.

with the use of prophecy. A prophetic saying spoke to its contemporary time or pointed to a future time, in warning or prediction. The essential content of the prophetic saying in the Old Testament was the imparting of the will of Yahweh.¹⁸

It is worth noticing that diviners and shamans in Eastern religions are very similar to the Israelite prophets in their social activities.¹⁹ The Bible also refers to the prophets of Baal and of Asherah (1 Kings 18:19) as well as other false prophets (Jer. 6:13; 26:7; Zech. 13:2). This shows that there were pagan influences also among Israel in their conception of the prophets. But, the prophets in the Scriptures cannot be compared to pagan prophets, as some scholars do through the use of the comparative religious studies.

Third, the dreams, visions (Ex. 33:11; Num. 12:6-8), ecstasy (1 Sam. 10:6-7) and laying of hands to impart power (Duet. 34:9) were phenomena of prophetic activity. Such phenomena of ecstasy have been topics for discussion among the scholars. The Bible refers to prophets who seemingly lived together as a charismatic community (1 Sam. 10:10; 19:23; 1 Kings 22:1-6; 2 Kings 2:3, 15; 4:38).

May one properly apply the word 'ecstatic' to the Old Testament prophets? According to L. J. Wood, the view that Israelite prophets engaged in ecstatic frenzy, is based upon a study of comparative religion, and negligence of careful consideration of the basic characteristics of prophecy in Israel. The characteristics of prophecy are:

¹⁸Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, trans. P. R. Ackroyd (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), pp. 78-79.

¹⁹H. B. Huffmon, "Prophecy in the Ancient Near East," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, pp. 697-700.

a) special call (Jer. 1:5; Amos 7:14; Is. 6; Ezek. 1:1; 2:2; Ex. 3:4), b) recognition of the Torah (Deut. 18:9-22), c) courageous individuals (1 Sam. 3:4-18; 1 Kings 13:1-10) and d) the terms of designation and task (1 Sam. 9:1-10:6).²⁰ Some prophets did experience ecstasy, but one must always see this in the light of the foregoing.

Prophets had emotions as do other human beings. Human emotion may create interaction or reaction. Ecstasy was a visible reaction, showing the prophets association of the Spirit of God. There is no word available in the human vocabulary to explain the difference between a pagan prophet's ecstasy and the Old Testament prophet's experience. Yet, the genuine quality of the ecstasy experienced by a true prophet makes for a decisive difference.

Some scholars identify a turning point at the time of Amos. Their argument is that Amos rejected the high priest Amaziah's definition of the prophetic office (a band of prophets who were considered to be ecstatic) (Amos 7:14-15).²¹ The simple fact is that Amos' call seems to have been different from that of other prophets before him. Amos was also a writing prophet which is assumed to separate him from the so-called 'institutionalized prophetic office.' It is difficult to consider this as a genuine turning point in the understanding of prophetic office. Scriptures record evidence for dreams, visions and some sort of special experiences continuing among the writing prophets (See Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel as examples). They could not have

²⁰Leon J. Wood, The Prophets of Israel, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1979), pp. 37-56.

²¹Edward D. O'Connor, p. 14.

given much importance to ecstasy in their writings because their major concern was to communicate the Word of God through preaching and writing.

Generally speaking, miracles, prophecy, dreams, visions and ecstasy have something to do with the prophetic office. These extraordinary phenomena were charismata. At the same time, one can not limit the charismata to this short list. Mighty works of the Judges, powerful preaching of the prophets and the good leadership of Nehemiah also are charismata. Any superhuman and benevolent activity through God's chosen people is a charisma only when it came from and served the purpose of God.

At least seven different words in Hebrew have been translated as $\chi\alpha\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$ (accusative singular) or $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\tau\alpha\varsigma$ (accusative plural), a derivation of the root word generally means 'grace.' The Hebrew words are: 1. $\text{דָּבָר} \text{ } \text{כְּבוֹד}$ or dignity, (Esther 6:3) 2. חֵן or grace, favor (Gen. 6:8; Num. 11:11; Ex. 3:21). 3. חַסְדִּים or favor (Esther 2:9,17) 4. חַסְדִּים or charm (Prov. 18:22) 5. חַסְדִּים or mercy (Gen. 43:14) 6. חַסְדִּים or favor (Prov. 11:27; 12:2) 7. חַסְדִּים or flattery (Ezek. 12:24). Among these words חֵן (grace) or its verb form חָנַן (be gracious) is important as it denotes 'a free spontaneous willingness to bestow good either in a way of kindness (חַסְדִּים) or compassion (חַסְדִּים); hence to show favor, mercy, pity as the act of previous good will²² (Gen. 33:11; Ex. 33:19; 2 Sam. 12:22; Is. 33:2; Amos 5:12; Mal. 1:9). These references show that the will and act are closely joined as these are used of God.

²²William Wilson, Old Testament Word Study, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishing, 1978), p. 190.

The same sense is reflected in the New Testament in the words

χαρίζεσθαι (Eph. 1:6; Luke 1:28). Paul stresses that charismata were given at God's initiative as God choose to be used for the up-building of the Church (1 Cor. 14:12).

For the human giving of a present or gift, *נָתַן* and *תָּתַן* are being used (Ps. 45:13; Prov. 6:35). The word *נָתַן* frequently used to mean 'offering' (Lev. 2:1). Another word *תָּתַן* which generally means 'gift' in material sense (1 Kings 13:7; Prov. 25:14). The material prosperity is considered to be the gift of God (Eccl. 3:13; 5:19, *וְהָיָה לְךָ כֶּסֶף וְכֶסֶף וְכֶסֶף*).

What becomes obvious in this investigation is that no Hebrew word has been translated as *χαρίσματα*. Yet, in several places in Sirach, an apocryphal book, the Hebrew word *נָתַן* has been translated as *χαρίσμα* (Sir. 7:33; RSV translates 'give graciously; *χαρίσμα σώματος*). Here it stands for man's giving, not God's. Evidently, no supernatural manifestation is mentioned as *χαρίσμα* even though it is believed to be a divine act.

The word *נָתַן* has been preserved for the special use in relation to God's gracious giving (Gen. 33:5). It has been reflected in the New Testament with its same meaning (Luke 1:28, *κεχαρίτωμεν* or favoured one; Eph. 1:6. *τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ, ἧς ἐχαρίτωσεν* or his grace which he freely bestowed). This leads us to believe that the Pauline use of the word *χαρίσματα* would mean 'free gifts' or 'gifts of grace.' In the light of the Old Testament, charismata is applicable to any material gifts come from God by His grace either to

an Israelite or to the people in general. Only in the New Testament does it take a special meaning.

The New Testament Understanding of the Charismata

The word *χαρίσμα* or *χαρίσματα* appears only seventeen times in the entire New Testament - sixteen times in the Pauline Epistles and once in 1 Peter (4:10). Paul uses this term fourteen times in his letters to Romans and Corinthians and one each 1 and 2 Timothy. The word *χαρίσμα* is a verbal noun, coming from the verb

χαρίζομαι.

Most of the scholars agree that the word denotes the result of *χάρις* (grace). If one reads the verses in which the word *χαρίσματα* occurs, it becomes apparent that the context must decide its distinctive meaning in each case. In Pauline usage, as E. E. Ellis points out, it is singularly the gift from the risen Lord as the salvation (Rom. 6:23) and distributively, the gifts were of no fixed number or kind (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28-30).²³

The Book of Acts points to the gifts of the Holy Spirit that come from God (Acts 2:38; compare 2:17-18). The same thought which surrounds charisma or charismata may be explained in another way. The word charisma has an inclusive sense when it refers to the total outpouring of God's love and goodness; it goes on forever (Rom. 5:15-16). A particular use of charisma speaks of many kinds of charismata

²³E. E. Ellis, "Spiritual Gifts," IDB, Keith Crim, Gen. ed., (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, Supl. vol., 1976), pp. 841-42.

(1 Cor. 12); these in fact, are all expressions of the one inclusive charisma.²⁴

Paul's unique use of the word *πνευματικά/πνευματικός* also should be considered (Rom. 1:11; 1 Cor. 12:1,9). Sometimes the two terms *χαρίσματα* and *πνευματικά* have been considered synonyms²⁵ on the basis of most unusual combination in Rom. 1:11. It is unclear whether "charismata are *πνευματικά*,"²⁶ since Paul uses them alternatively (1 Cor. 12:1,4,9; 14:1). In Rom. 1:11 *πνευματικόν* means 'spiritual' whereas in 1 Cor. 14:1 *πνευματικά* means 'spiritual gifts' or 'spiritual things.' But the word *χαρίσματα* stands for 'gifts of grace' (Rom. 12:6) or simply 'gifts' (1 Cor. 12:9). Therefore, it can be said that there is a difference between *χαρίσματα* and *πνευματικά*, but that they have close relationship.

Some Christians in Corinth believed that sophia or wisdom could serve to elevate the soul from the state of psychikos to pneumatikos, in which state one could practise charismata (1 Cor. 1-2; 14:37).²⁷ For Paul, the sophia is Christ as both the content and the

²⁴Eric Osborn, "Spirit and Charisma," Colloquium, 7 (October 1974):34.

²⁵Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, trans. Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951 and 1955), p. 281.

²⁶Ernst Käsemann, Commentary on Romans, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromily (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1980), p. 19.

²⁷Richard A. Horsley, "Pneumatikos vs. Psychikos Distinctions of Spiritual States among the Corinthians," Harvard Theological Review, 69 (July-October 1976):269-88.

agent of salvation (1 Cor. 2:10-16). Not sophia, but God's ΠΝΕΥΜΑ coming in Christ makes the hearer of the Gospel as ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΟΣ (1 Cor. 2:13-15; compare 1 Thess. 1:6).

One is reckoned ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΟΣ by the grace of God through the forgiveness in Jesus Christ and through the work of the Holy Spirit; and thus he comes into the ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ of the ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΟΙ in the ἘΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ. The graciously given variety χαρίσματα (1 Cor. 12:14) to the ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΟΙ are to be used for the upbuilding (οἰκοδομέω) of the Church (1 Cor. 12:14-16). The charismata are the manifestations of supreme expressions of the Spirit, namely the ἀγάπη (1 Corinthians 13).²⁸ The ἀγάπη is God's love for man through Jesus Christ.

The next question arises about the varieties of charismata. Charismatics sometimes polemicize some specific gifts against the structured ministries of the organized Church. Practically, the so-called special gifts, that is, healing, speaking in tongues, outwardly look more attractive. This results in a tendency to differentiate and rate the gifts and ministries in a way of treating 1 Cor. 12:8-10 (for gifts) and 1 Cor. 12:28-30 (for ministries) as different categories.²⁹

In Paul's listing of the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11) he does not leave room for such division. In fact, Paul begins to enumerate different manifestations of the Spirit as

²⁸W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 4th edition, 1980) p. 201.

²⁹W. Don Basham, A Hand Book of Tongues, Interpretation, and Prophecy (Monroeville, PA: Whitaker Books, 1971), pp. 15-17.

consequences of the gifts of the Spirit.³⁰ There is one Spirit who gives various spiritual gifts as He chooses (1 Cor. 12:8,11).

Above all individual gifts mentioned in the New Testament (1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28-30; Rom. 12:6-8; Eph. 4:1), the par excellence free gift of the eternal life in Jesus Christ comes to men at God's initiative; it is the most important gift (Rom. 6:23, τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ Θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). The Love of God (ἀγαπή) in grace manifested in Jesus Christ is key χάρισμα (Rom. 5:5; 1 Corinthians 13; 14:1). Any number of χαρίσματα of the Spirit manifested in the Church are given in grace (Rom. 12:6, χαρίσματα κατὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσαν) for the common good (1 Cor. 12:7) and given as God choose. The goal is always the upbuilding of the Church (1 Cor. 14:12).

To summarize, the χάρισμα of God's χάρις is gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ; decisive is the ἀγαπή of God; God's πνεῦμα makes it possible for man by leading him into faith and thus he becomes one who lives in God's grace as a πνευματικός . Being πνευματικός he receives πνευματικά , the πίστις (faith), ἐλπίς (hope) and ἀγαπή (love) because of God's χάρις . Through the Holy Spirit God gives varieties of χαρίσματα in grace. The leading principle of the use of χαρίσματα is for the common good. The goal of χαρίσματα is the upbuilding of the Church. Therefore, if the misuse of a charisma divide the κοινωτία of the Church it would be against the will of God's purpose of giving.

³⁰ F. W. Grosheide, Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979), p. 285.

The Apostles' Use of Spiritual Gifts

The Book of Acts speaks of the apostles' receiving and using supernatural gifts. (The New Testament Apocryphal Books³¹ supply abundant legendary materials, but these cannot be considered as evidence). Luke speaks of miracles and startling wonders in Acts 2:43 and 5:12 as performed by the Apostles, but his key purpose is to speak of the Spirit's outreach through their proclamation of the Gospel.

The Apostles' use of extraordinary gifts has a specific purpose in each occasion. Those incidents show the power of the Gospel preached in the name of Jesus Christ.³² The Apostles use of signs and wonders led many to believe in Jesus Christ and to confess their sins, (Acts 19:18-20). Peter healed people (3:1-9; 9:32-25) cast out unclean spirits (5:15-16) and raised a woman from the dead (9:32-35). Luke records and Paul also did many miracles (19:11-12; 28:9) other than those described in some detail (14:8-18; 16:16-22; 20:9-12; 28:7-10).

Philip, one of the seven elected for a particular responsibility (6:1-6), also preached the Word of God and performed miracles (8:6-13). Luke records that the Apostles with Jesus at the time of his ministry who witnessed His resurrection and ascension, His specially appointed Apostle Paul and lay workers such as Philip were all filled with the Holy Spirit. They all shared the Gospel and performed miracles as God chose to use them. R. L. Hamblin illustrates the integration of the miracles with the ministry of the Apostles in these words:

³¹William Wright, Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1968).

³²F. F. Bruce, "The Book of the Acts," The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1981), pp. 390-92.

The miracles form a vital part of the narration of Acts. The message of Acts would be incomplete and Luke's purposes would not be accomplished if the miracles were disregarded.³³

The miracles of Acts are recorded as a continuation of the miracles of Jesus and in accordance with His promise (Mark 16:17,18, compare Luke 10:19). The gift of the Holy Spirit made it possible for the Church at the Spirit's option to continue the works of healing, casting out demons, and helping the needy, by the same power which was with Jesus at his ministry in the world.

Some references to the prophets, prophetesses and prophecy (Acts 2:17; 19:6; 21:9-10) as well as false prophets among the Jews in the New Testament times (Acts 13:6; compare Matt. 7:15) vividly show and explain the continuity of the gift of prophecy and its counterfeit.

Quite clearly in Acts, the phenomenon of speaking in tongues is also present. The Apostles and the believers spoke in intelligible speech as the Holy Spirit came upon them (Acts 2:1-11). In the events recorded in Acts 10:46 and 19:1-7, the text does not specify that those recorded spoke in intelligent or ecstatic speech. The Apostles understood tongues as a gift of grace. Paul states that he himself had the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 13:1; 14:6,18); but he did not give prominence to it in his ministry (1 Cor. 14:19).

Vision, as another charismatic phenomenon, has also been recorded by Luke in the ministry of Peter and Paul (Acts 10:9-16; 16:9-10; 22:17-19; compare 2 Cor. 12:2-4). In Paul's visions divine action and guidance are central for his future activity experience.³⁴

³³Robert Lee Hamblin, "Miracles in the Book of Acts," South Western Journal of Theology, 17 (Fall 1974):34.

³⁴William M. Ramsey, St. Paul the Traveller and Roman Citizen (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, reprint ed., 1979), pp. 198-200.

The same is true of Peter's vision. On the basis of an 'authentic experience' recorded in 2 Cor. 12:2-4, some scholars brand Paul as a 'mystic.'³⁵ F. F. Bruce also agrees with R. C. Tennhill that Paul may be spoken of as a mystic, and says, but he does not have a mystical theology.³⁶ It will be readily admitted, however, that it does not mean that he tried to be thought of as a 'deified being' as other mystics did.³⁷ Instead, he was always a 'ready-recipient' when the Holy Spirit intervened in his life.

The present writer believes that Luke as a 'historian and theologian,'³⁸ wrote a history of faith (Luke and Acts). Therefore, Luke's information about miracles, prophecy, speaking in tongues and visions must be considered as having happened as recorded. They are evidence of God at work in the life and ministry of His servants. This raises three questions.

First, how often and for what purpose did the Apostles use the gifts of the Spirit? The answer is simple. Following in the footsteps of their Lord who preached the Good News of the Kingdom of God, the disciples gave primary importance to preaching the Gospel of the Risen Lord. They used the charismatic gifts only as they were moved and directed by the Holy Spirit. They did not use them to show themselves off. Paul firmly believed that his call and commission was to preach

³⁵W. D. Davies, p. 197.

³⁶F. F. Bruce, Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 4th printing 1980), pp. 134-44.

³⁷W. D. Davies, pp. 13-15.

³⁸I. Howard Marshall, Luke: Historian and Theologian (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1971), p. 52.

the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 13:1-3; compare Gal. 3:1-13). One can see 'mission motives' behind the signs and wonders performed by the Apostles.

Secondly, for what purpose has Luke recorded the manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles? The theme permeating through the entire Book of Acts is

the Great Commission of the risen Lord, as revealed in 1:8 is a key to the structure of the narrative which reports the progress of evangelization in the same order as in that passage: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the remotest part of the earth.³⁹

Luke shows how the culmination of the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (Acts 2:17-18; compare Joel 2:28-32) and the Spirit abiding first on Jesus (Luke 4:16-18) and later on the Church in the proclamation of the Gospel (Acts 1:8). Throughout both his Gospel account and the Book of Acts, Luke stresses the role of the Holy Spirit at work as fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

Donald Guthrie suggests,

Such miracles occurred for a time, but when the developing church became more established the accompaniment of supernatural signs gradually reduced.⁴⁰

One of the early church fathers, Irenaeus (ca. 130-200 A.D.), the Bishop of Lyons (ca. 177-200), wrote:

Those who are truly his (Jesus Christ) disciples receive grace from him and put this grace into action for the benefit of other men, as each has received the gifts from him. Some drive out devils . . . some have fore-knowledge of the future . . . others

³⁹ Everett F. Harrison, Acts: The Expanding Church (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), p. 11.

⁴⁰ Donald Guthrie, The Apostles (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975), p. 36.

heal the sick through the laying on of hands . . . and even the dead have been raised up before us now and have remained with us for many years.⁴¹

Third, are the ministries equal to other supernatural gifts? Charismatics and Pentecostals make such distinction (see above p.). Obviously, the New Testament does not give a blue-print for ministry in terms of form and structure. The charismata are not limited in numbers. Both rest upon the gifts from the exalted Lord given in the measure as He sees fit. E. E. Ellis points out, the ministries are no less charismatically determined and are equally dependent on the constantly recurring miracle of God's grace in the lives of men.⁴²

In Jesus' ministry the special gifts and office are found as being fused together. Jesus is the Apostle, the High Priest (Heb. 3:1), the prophet (John 7:40; Acts 3:22), the Teacher, the miracle worker (Acts 2:22), the Healer, the Bishop (1 Peter 2:25, ἐπίσκοπος) and the Mediator of Divine Wisdom (Mark 6:2). The same Jesus Christ manifests His powers through His followers (1 Cor. 12:8, 28-30; Eph. 4:11). In 1 Corinthians 12, prominence is given to the charismata which belong to the Apostles and prophets. This may be explained without reference to a quantitative understanding of charisma.

In the first place the apostles are the prime examples of ministers of the Word which is unmediated, that is, which comes directly from the kyrios.⁴³

⁴¹Henry Bettenson, ed., The Early Christian Fathers: A selection from the writings of the Fathers from St. Clement of Rome to St. Athanasius (London: Oxford University Press, 4th impression, 1978), p. 93.

⁴²E. E. Ellis, "Spiritual Gifts," IDB, Keith Crim, gen. ed., (Nashville: Abingdon, suppl. vol., c-1976), p. 841.

⁴³V. C. Pfitzner, "Office and Charism in Paul and Luke," Colloquium, 13 (May 1981):29-30.

In the second place the apostolic office was universal whereas all other offices and services are confined to the locality whether they are ordinary or extraordinary in nature.⁴⁴ F. W. Grosheide correctly says that "the difference in the distribution of the gifts of the Spirit is not an unrelated phenomenon; on the contrary, it is analogous (similar) to the diversity of the offices."⁴⁵

In a broad sense all the believers are charismatics and the Church is charismatic for two reasons.

It is charismatic in that it is called into being and constituted by God's gracious work of salvation effected by the Holy Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ. Secondly, it is charismatic in that God by His Spirit works graciously in the Church to build up and equip it for ministry through the distribution of a variety of spiritual gifts.⁴⁶

Holy Spirit, Evil Spirits, Charismata and the Church

The preceding section is a brief survey of charismata in the Old and the New Testament. This section is dealing with the Christian concept of Spirit and practices of supernatural powers in the Jewish and Christian arena.

Concept of the Spirit in the Scriptures

Man's spirit and God's Spirit

When talking about spirit, two different levels of spirit come to mind. All religions teach about man's spirit and God's Spirit. The non-dualistic idea of the spirit in Hindu philosophy teaches that the

⁴⁴F. W. Grosheide, pp. 298-99.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 300.

⁴⁶Howard A. Snyder, "The Church as Holy and Charismatic, Wesleyan Theological Journal, 15 (Fall 1980):10.

Paramātmān (Supreme Soul or Spirit) is within the man as ātman (soul or spirit).⁴⁷ Many Indians seemingly find this to be easily understood. This concept exalts only the objective reception and not the subjective from the human view point. It must be remembered that the same concept has caused the dualistic view of objective nature of salvation in Hindu religion. This is alien to the basic Biblical, Christian principle of sola gratia.

In this connection it is worth noticing that Hindus do not find much difference between the thought pattern of salvation in Hinduism and Christianity, especially when the puritans and moralists among the Pentecostals and Charismatics emphasize good works in their preaching.

The rationale of Paul Tillich regarding the relationship between the divine spirit and the spirit of man resembles the Hindu philosophy of 'qualified non-dualism' (Visishtadvita)⁴⁸ developed in the twelfth century A.D.; his is not mere dualism as Wolfhart Pannenberg assumes.⁴⁹ Tillich thinks that the Spiritual Presence or divine Spirit is 'in' the spirit of man; the divine Spirit and human spirit are united, but must not become confused.⁵⁰ Tillich's approach to theology

⁴⁷ Sankara of 8th century A.D., founder of Advita School, believed in an emancipation theory of creation and thought that the world and man are not other than one substance which is of the Supreme Being. John A. Hutchison, Paths of Faith (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), pp. 170-71.

⁴⁸ Ramanuja, the founder of Visishtadvita, taught that the God 'in' man is Antaryamin or 'indwelling.'

⁴⁹ Wolfhart Pannenberg, "The Doctrine of the Spirit and the Task of a Theology of Nature," Theology, 75 (January 1972):14.

⁵⁰ Alexander J. McKelway, The Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich (New York: A Delta Book, 1964), p. 198.

on this subject is idealistic and anthropological, being man-centered. Seemingly some of the German theologians have been influenced by Eastern philosophy.

The Hebrews did not divide man into spirit and body. They thought of man as single entity, a living person. In him there is ruach or spirit and nephesh or life. Occasionally, both are unintentionally equated. But in general, "nephesh is natural; it belongs to man. Ruach is supernatural; it belongs to God. Though ruach may be found in man, it is always so to speak, on loan, and not a possession; a resident alien; not native."⁵¹

God's Spirit is often called the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, especially in the New Testament. The controversies on the subject of the Holy Spirit have a long history, the landmark being the formulation of the Nicene creed at the Second Ecumenical Council at Constantinople in 381 A.D.⁵² Important in its history was the debate on the relationship of the Son and the Holy Spirit to the Godhead.

The word *ὁμοούσιον* (of one substance or of the same substance) was inserted and rejected the view of the Homoiousion party.⁵³ Arius' Christology that 'Christ was a created being whose existence began in time' was also rejected.⁵⁴ Yet, the problem was not completely

⁵¹Michael Green, I Believe in the Holy Spirit (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, Reprint ed., 1980), p. 19.

⁵²J. N. D. Kelly, Early Christian Creeds, 3rd ed. (London: Longman, 1972), pp. 296-98.

⁵³This party favored the word *ὁμοούσιον* (of like substance or like in substance).

⁵⁴Bengt Hagglund, History of Theology, trans. Gene J. Lund (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House 1968), pp. 75-78.

solved. Through the centuries the soteriological function of the Spirit, the doctrine of the grace of the Spirit (Medieval Age), the role of the Spirit in creation (Reformation period) and identification of the divine Spirit with the human spirit (16th and 17th centuries) and similar subjects have been debated.⁵⁵

In the New Testament era the problem of understanding of the Spirit seems not to have been serious except for a tendency, as Michael Green calls it, 'to domesticate the Holy Spirit.'⁵⁶ On the one hand, the idea of possessing the Holy Spirit for self-pride and superiority had developed in the Church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 12-14). On the other hand, the Church at Thessalonica was warned not to depreciate the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19-22).

Surprisingly the phrase 'Holy Spirit' is mentioned only three times in the entire Old Testament (Ps. 51:13), ^{וְרוּחַ יְהוָה לֹא־חָפַץ} ^{לְקַח־לָּוִי} ^{וְרוּחַ יְהוָה לֹא־חָפַץ} ^{לְקַח־לָּוִי}, and take not the Holy Spirit from me. Is. 63:10 and 63-11: ^{וְרוּחַ יְהוָה חָפַץ־לְקַח־לָּוִי} ^{וְרוּחַ יְהוָה חָפַץ־לְקַח־לָּוִי} but they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit). Michael Green holds that in each case the moral and ethical aspect of God's ruach is emphasized.⁵⁷ This interpretation is incomplete. In the context of Psalm 51 the psalmist reflects his feeling that he needs to continuous presence of the Holy Spirit for prolonged sanctification and salvation by the mercy and love of God (51:1,12). Isaiah speaks of God's continuous love and

⁵⁵Wolfhart Pannenberg, pp. 8-16.

⁵⁶Michael Green, p. 11.

⁵⁷Michael Green, pp. 29-30.

mercy in redeeming Israel, irrespective of Israel's rebellious attitude against God's Spirit (Is. 63:7-14).

If so, it may not be wrong to conclude that the mediation of God's Spirit in God's redemptive activity is reflected in the two passages mentioned earlier. The word 'mediation' should not be mistaken as to mean separating God and Spirit. Mediation may happen within and around God's being of Trinity.

This mediation in God's redemptive activity is found elsewhere in the Old Testament in the noun form $\aleph \aleph$ meaning 'wind or breath or spirit.' Occasionally the word ruach is used instead of nephesh when it stands for man's life (Prov. 25:28; Ps. 32:2). Ruach is also used to depict particular needs or impulses (Joshua 5:1; 1 Kings 10:5; 21:5).

The Scriptures speak about the Spirit of God/Lord at the very beginning (Gen. 1:2, $\aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph$). E. A. Speiser translates it 'awesome wind,' reading $\aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph$ as adjective.⁵⁸ It is difficult to see why $\aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph$ would be used in adjectival sense in Gen. 1:2 when elsewhere in the Old Testament it is used as a noun.⁵⁹ Moreover, in the context of Gen. 1:1-3, the word $\aleph \aleph$ refers to the presence of God in the world, or it may refer to the presence of the life-giving Spirit of God. "The Spirit of God has made me and the breath of the Almighty give me life," (Job 33:4). The presence of the

⁵⁸E. A. Speiser, Genesis: Introduction, Translation and Notes, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 3rd edition, 1979), pp. 3, 5.

⁵⁹Robert Davidson, "Genesis 1-11," The Cambridge Bible Commentary (London, NY: Cambridge University Press, Reprint ed., 1979), p. 16.

Spirit of God in the creation indicates the mediation or participation of the Spirit in the redemptive act of God. Probably Psalm 74:12-17, and especially verse 12, focuses on God's creation as a symbol of God's saving action in the history of Israel. The Scriptures also provide evidence for the association of the Spirit with God's special people like judges (Judg. 13:25), kings (1 Sam. 10:1-8), the messianic king (Is. 11:2; 42:1), prophets and the people of the promise (Joel 2:28-29).

Spirit in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts

Although the word *πνεῦμα* (a spirit) appears about 379 times in the New Testament, only about fifty percent of them refers to 'the Spirit' with or without an adjective *ἅγιος* (holy). Among these references, 34 are in the Synoptics, 56 in Acts, 45 in Romans and 1 Corinthians, and 21 in Johannine literature.

Like the word ruach in the Old Testament, *πνεῦμα* also has been used in the New Testament with great variety of meanings. These include wind or breath (John 3:8; 2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 11:11); the vital principle by which the body is animated (Luke 8:55; John 19:30; Acts 7:59); an aspect of human self (1 Thess. 5:23); an attribute of God (John 4:24); an attribute of resurrected Jesus (2 Cor. 3:17); and demon (Mark 8:16; Luke 9:39; Acts 16:18). Therefore, the problem of understanding the Holy Spirit in the Gospels or in the Epistles is a matter of exploring how these writers in each context use the word in relating God.

In His pronouncement at Nazareth, Jesus clearly relates His Messiahship with the Spirit of God (Luke 4:18; compare Is. 61:1,2). But the people of His day repeatedly identified Him with the prophets

of the Old Testament (Matt. 21:11; Mark 6:15; Luke 7:16) since they heard His authentic teaching and saw His miracles (Mark 1:22; 6:15). Because of their Spiritual blindness they failed to see Him as being any more than a prophet (Matt. 13:14-17).

Similarly, some of the modern redaction critics have understood the references to the Spirit in the Gospels as an outcome of the spiritual enthusiasm of early Christianity to affirm Jesus' messianic uniqueness.⁶⁰ Such suppositions obscure the fact that the writers of the Gospels focused on the personal reality of the Spirit in the redemptive work of God through His Son Jesus Christ.

From His very conception Jesus had been anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power (Luke 1:35; see also Acts 10:38; Heb. 1:8-9). Caution must be exercised not to equate this with a "Spirit Christology," which subjugates Jesus to the level of an ordinary man. To explain a "Spirit Christology," by giving a dual nature of transcendence and immanence to the Spirit of Jesus will not clarify the mystery of the relationship of the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ.⁶¹

Four Gospels in the New Testament are mainly concerned with Jesus and His ministry. Yet, the recorded references to the Holy Spirit supply a vital ground to understand the presence of the Holy Spirit and His relationship to Jesus.

In God's redemptive activity, the abiding Spirit on Jesus manifests God's being with Jesus Christ and with God's people. This vital

⁶⁰R. Jewett, "Spirit" Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, p. 840.

⁶¹Norman Hook, A Spirit Christology, Theology, 75 (May 1972): 226-32.

bound between the Father, Son and the Spirit is carefully reflected in the Gospels. This bond can be explained in two dimensions: Spirit to Christ and Spirit from Christ.⁶²

Jesus is both the bearer and the giver of the Spirit. He was conceived through the operation of the Spirit (Luke 1:35); the Spirit was with Him from birth on (Luke 2:40; also 1:8; 2:52); Jesus' ministry began and continued with the co-existing Spirit (Luke 3:22; 4:1; 10:21). When Baptist John pointed his followers to Jesus, he identified Jesus as the giver of the Spirit (Matt. 3:11,12; Mark 1:7,8; Luke 3:16,17).

The Gospel writers also speak of the relationship between God and the Spirit. The phrase 'Spirit of God' in Matt. 12:28, and the 'finger of God' in Luke 11:20, both stand for the power of God which was with Jesus.

The references to the Holy Spirit also underline the inter-relationship between the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, as well as a special inter-mediatory function of the Son and of the Spirit of God that are inseparably intertwined (See John 14-16). This is beyond human understanding. It is best humbly to leave this mystery to God and to wait for His revelation in the Second coming of Jesus.

Παράκλῆτος in the Gospel of John

The use of the term *Παράκλῆτος* for the Spirit is restricted to John's Gospel (14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7). It occurs one more time in the New Testament (1 John 2:1), but there is applied to Jesus Christ.

⁶²Richard B. Giffin Jr., The Holy Spirit, Westminster Theological Journal, 43 (Fall 1980):64-65.

This term does not occur in the Septuagint. The history of the usage of term *παράκλητος* outside the New Testament yields technical meanings, namely, 'summoned' (to give assistance = helper in court) or 'advocate' (to speak on behalf of the accused before rulers).⁶³ In the religious vocabulary of the Rabbis *שׁוֹפֵרִיץ פִּיזֵר* became a common loan word in the sense of 'advocate,' related in meaning to 'counsel' or 'defender.'⁶⁴ Strangely, however, the Greek fathers normally seem to have used the word in the active sense, 'counselor,' and 'comforter.'⁶⁵

An examination of some Bible versions reveal a variety of renditions: comforter (KJV, LB), counselor (RSV, NIV), advocate (JB, NEB), helper (Today's English Version), and someone else stand by you (Phillips).⁶⁶

In its strictly literal sense, the term paracletos has the meaning 'called to the side of' (that is, for the purpose of helping).⁶⁷ The one who was called to the side of an accused, supposedly could have had a twofold function in the social conditions of the first century A.D., a) 'advocating' and 'mediating' for the accused in the court language, namely, in sophisticated Greek. b) 'explaining' and 'interpreting' the court's arguments to the accused in a simple language or

⁶³Johannes Behn, " *παράκλητος* ," TDNT, 5:800-803.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Leon Morris, "The Gospel according to John," The New International Commentary on the New Testament, ed. F. F. Bruce, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979), p. 662.

⁶⁶Eight Translation New Testament, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 4th printing, 1980), pp. 768-69.

⁶⁷Leon Morris, p. 662.

perhaps in his mother tongue. The assumption behind this suggestion is that there could have been illiterate people or those who spoke domestic languages which had been suppressed by Greek. In India this kind of setup is common after English became the court language.

Therefore, the term *παράκλητος* can mean 'advocate' and 'mediator' in a court room setting. Whether John used the term in the same sense is perhaps beyond our comprehension. Yet, the rendition 'mediator' also may fit in the context of John 16:7-15, especially verses 13 and 15. Ladd, for example, suggests that 'mediator' is a better translation.⁶⁸ The idea of advocatory mediation includes also other aspects such as comforter, counselor, exhorter and spokesman.

Jesus Himself said that the Holy Spirit, who comes from the Father and Son as a mediator, will teach all things about Him (John 14:16; 15:26) to the believers and non-believers. As a counselor, Holy Spirit will uncover the guilt of the world exposing its sins, and as an advocate Holy Spirit will speak on behalf of the believers (John 16:8-11). As a comforter and helper He would be with the believers (14:16) and bring joy (16:22,24) and peace (14:27; 16:33).⁶⁹

Jesus is also the *παράκλητος* who on our behalf continuously intercedes for us (1 John 1:2) as does the Spirit *παράκλητος* (John 14:16). It is better not to distinguish these

⁶⁸George E. Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1974), p. 293.

⁶⁹D. Moody Smith, "Expository Articles," Interpretation, 33 (1979):58-62.

two παρακλητος as first and second.⁷⁰ Wherever the true word of God is preached, there is the παρακλητος . Through His prophets God promised to send both παρακλητος (Is. 7:14; Joel 2:28-30). Their presence among God's people continues (Matt. 28:20; John 14:16; see also John 1:1-14; Acts 2:4).

Concerning the power of an individual believer to perform miracles, C. M. Gullerud states:

[It] was not given with intention of drawing big crowds for the purpose of experiencing the results of a spectacular healing ministry, but this gift of the Holy Spirit was given that it might serve as a witness to the legitimacy and the authenticity of the Word proclaimed (cf. Acts 8:5ff).⁷¹

Paul's view of the Spirit

Paul's concept of the Spirit is centered on the concept of 'being in Christ' (ἐν Χριστῷ). He stresses that being in Christ is being in the Spirit.

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God (Rom. 8:14).

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (2 Cor. 3:17).

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ . . . and all were made to drink of one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12-13).

On the basis of these verses, Paul's view of the Holy Spirit may be brought under three major headlines: a) God and Spirit, b) Christ and Spirit, and c) Church and Spirit. These three topics are fused together at a focal point set forth in 2 Cor. 3:17.

⁷⁰ Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1980), pp. 516-18.

⁷¹ C. M. Gullerud, "The Holy Spirit--The Promised Paraclete," Journal of Theology, 20 (September 1980):15.

a) God and Spirit: Paul often speaks of the pnuema of God (Rom. 8:9,14; 1 Cor. 2:11,14; 2 Cor. 3:3 and so forth), and of the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 4:8; Eph. 1:13; 4:30). The correlation between God and the Spirit is indivisible. For example, the term stands for God's Spirit or God is Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16; compare John 4:24) and Christ's Spirit or Christ (Lord) is Spirit (Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 3:17; compare Gal. 4:6; Phil 1:19). At the same time the Spirit is spoken of as having an independent entity in the entire unity of Trinity (Rom. 8:11,16; compare 2 Cor. 13:14). However, in most cases the Spirit seems to be an instrument or mediator of God (1 Cor. 2:10; 12:7; Eph. 1:13; 2:22; compare John 14:16; 16:13).

God reveals His divine wisdom. His wise plan of redeeming the world through the crucified and risen Messiah and thus by the Holy Spirit reckoning the believers righteous through Christ's redemptive work is underlined in 1 Cor. 2:6-12; (see also Rom. 1:17).⁷² God gives His Spirit to every man (1 Cor. 12:7,13) to dwell in him (1 Cor. 3:16) so that he may confess Jesus is Lord (1 Cor. 12:3; compare Rom. 8:14).

Through the same Spirit God distributes varieties of gifts as He wills (1 Cor. 12:8-10) since the believers have different functions in the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:14-18), ultimately for the common good (1 Cor. 12:7). Paul clearly points to the diversity of functions in the unity of the Church. "Uniformity of experience and service is not to be expected; unity lies ultimately in the Spirit who gives, the Lord who is served, the God who is at work."⁷³

⁷²C. K. Barret, A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), pp. 66-75.

⁷³Ibid, p. 284.

b) Christ and Spirit: The Spirit poured out by God (Rom. 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5) is the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9), the Spirit of His Son (Gal. 4:6). A close relationship between the Spirit and Christ is affirmed in 2 Cor. 3:17: "The Lord is Spirit." This reciprocal relationship should not be confused either as Gnostic dualism⁷⁴ or adoptionist Christology.⁷⁵ What Paul intends to say is that,

They are two persons but of identical essence and do the same work. Where there Lord is, there is the Spirit, and where the Spirit is there is Lord. In the presence of the Spirit we see the glorification of the Lord, and in the presence and the glorification of the Lord we see the Spirit at work, Jn. 16:14.⁷⁶

The goal of their work is to make men the children of God (Rom. 8:13-16).

c) Church and Spirit: While Paul places great emphasis on the work of the Spirit in individual Christian experience (1 Cor. 12:4-11), it has also a corporate side: it is the work of the Holy Spirit to create the church (1 Cor. 12:13; see also Eph. 1:23). The greater gifts-faith, hope and love-abide (remain) in individuals (1 Cor. 13:13). The greatest gift is love, a manifestation of God himself who through the presence of Christ is able to build up a Christian community in harmony and unity.⁷⁷ In that unity faith and hope remain by the power

⁷⁴Gnostic dualism: Nestorians taught the doctrine that Jesus was two persons linked together and not truly one Person.

⁷⁵Adoptionist Christology: In the early centuries some maintained that the divine Spirit descended upon the man Jesus at His baptism, and that He was deified after His resurrection. (See, George E. Ladd, pp. 488-89).

⁷⁶R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretatin of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians, Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1963), p. 946.

⁷⁷C. K. Barrett, pp. 310-11.

of the Holy Spirit. For the same unity and the expansion of the unity all other gifts of the Spirit have been given by the Holy Spirit, for service (1 Cor. 12:5).

In the New Testament thought there can be no such thing as an isolated believer - a Christian who stands remote from other Christians . . . he is joined to Christ himself and therefore to all others who in union with Christ constitute his body.⁷⁸

Idea of Evil Spirits in The Scriptures

Names and characteristics in the Old and New Testament

In the Old Testament the word $\gamma \lambda \psi$ is rendered $\mu \alpha \tau \alpha \iota \alpha$ (vain things) in two places (Lev. 17:7; 2 Chron. 11:15) and $\delta \alpha \iota \mu \acute{o} \nu \iota \alpha$ (demons) in two places (Is. 13:21; 34:14). The Revised Standard Version translates both Greek words as 'satyrs.'⁷⁹ These references probably are referred to Israelites' superstitious belief on "field-devils," may be in the form of goats.⁸⁰ The related belief was such demons haunt desolate places and ruins.⁸¹ The word $\tau \tau \psi$ (singular $\tau \psi$) is translated $\delta \alpha \iota \mu \acute{o} \nu \iota \alpha$ (demons or spirits) in the Septuagint (Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37). The context of the word usage is that of animal and human sacrifices to gods.

⁷⁸George E. Ladd, pp. 542-43.

⁷⁹Satyr: Generally means a sylvan deity of Greek mythology having certain characteristics of a horse or goat and fond of Dionysian revelry.

⁸⁰C. F. Kiel and F. Delitzsh, "Pentateuch," Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1891), p. 408. See also Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1965, p. 428.

⁸¹R. B. Girdlestone, Synonyms of the Old Testament: Their Bearing on Christian Doctrine (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1981), pp. 287-88.

Satan, a transliteration of the Hebrew word $\gamma\psi\psi$ means adversary or plotter or one who devises means for opposing another (Num. 22:22; 1 Sam. 29:4; 1 Kings 11:14; 1 Chron. 21:1; Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; Ps. 38:20; 109:4; Zech. 3:1,2). In these passages the Septuagint renders $\delta\iota\alpha\beta\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omega$ or $\delta\iota\alpha\beta\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ (RSV translates "adversary" or "Satan"). These references indicate that "Satan embodies the threat to man from the world of God, whether as the prosecutor of ethical faults or as a demonic and destructive principle firmly anchored in the plan of salvation."⁸²

In the New Testament, four words shed light on this subject: $\delta\alpha\iota\mu\acute{\omicron}\nu\iota\omicron\nu$ (evil spirit, demon), $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ with an adjective, $\delta\iota\alpha\beta\acute{\omicron}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ (devil) and $\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\tau\alpha\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ (Satan). Except in Acts 17:18, where $\delta\alpha\iota\mu\omicron\nu\iota\omicron\nu$ means divinities (gods), elsewhere in the New Testament $\delta\alpha\iota\mu\acute{\omicron}\nu\iota\omicron\nu$ used of evil spirit (Luke 4:35; 9:1,42 and so forth). Commonly $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ is followed by an adjective such as $\acute{\alpha}\kappa\acute{\alpha}\theta\alpha\rho\tau\omicron\nu$ or unclean (Matt. 10:1; 12:43; Mark 1:23, 26; 3:11; Luke 6:33,36; Acts 5:16; Rev. 16:13), $\pi\omicron\nu\eta\rho\acute{\omicron}\nu$ or evil (Matt. 11:45; Luke 7:21; Acts 19:12), and $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\alpha\lambda\omicron\nu$ or dumb (Mark 7:37; 9:17,25). The words unclean/evil $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ do not differ greatly. The demon and unclean or evil spirit takes possession of human beings and cause physical and spiritual diseases.

The word $\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\tau\alpha\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ or Satan, in the Synoptic Gospels, has been used in the sense of "tempter," or "opponent" (Mark 3:23,26; Luke 10:18; Matt. 4:10). Sickness can also be attributed to Satan (Luke

⁸²Gerhard von Rad, "The Old Testament View of Satan," (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 10 vols., ed. G. Kittel (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1978), 2:75.

13:16). The Epistles mention temptation and the opposition of Satan in connection with his attack on the community in various ways (2 Cor. 2:11; 11:14; 1 Tim. 3:7; 1 Peter 5:8; see also Rev. 2:10; 12:17).⁸³

It is worth noting that on a few occasions, however, the word *σατανᾶς* is used interchangeably with *διδάκτορας* (Matt. 4:10; see also Luke 4:2; Mark 4:15; Luke 8:12).

Now to summarize some of the observations regarding evil spirits as found in the Scriptures:

Different terms applied to evil spirits denote more explicitly their different status and functions. Satan, the devil is the head of the kingdom of evil. He is the organizer and executive (Mark 3:2; Eph. 6:12; Rev. 12:7; 20:7,8). Demons or evil spirits are multitude in number and veterans in the service of Satan (Matt. 12:22-30; Mark 5:9; Luke 8:30).

Regardless of whatever name is given to the Devil, he always is the symbol of the collective shadow, the archetype of Evil . . . Satan as the Devil is therefore a master of demons and by necessity a demon himself.⁸⁴

Satan has intelligence (2 Cor. 2:11; Eph. 6:11), the ability to speak (Job 1:9,10; Matt. 4:1-11), to tempt (Matt. 4:3; 1 Cor. 7:5; 1 Thess. 3:5), to accuse (Job 1:9-11; Rev. 12:10) and to perform miracles (Ex. 7:11; 2 Thess. 2:9).

Demons afflict men physically and mentally (Matt. 9:32; 12:22; Mark 9:22; Luke 8:26-35; 13:11-17) and bring men under their evil control (Matt. 4:24; Mark 5:8, 11-13; Acts 8:6,7).

⁸³Werner Foerster, "*σατανᾶς*," TDNT, 3:151-63.

⁸⁴Marc Cramer, The Devil Within (London: Howard & Wyndhom, 1979), p. 150.

Satan and his disciples mislead people by means of ideas (2 Cor. 4:4; 11:14), preventing the spread of the Gospel by interrupting God's servants (2 Cor. 12:7; 1 Thess. 2:18; see also Dan. 10:13; Zech. 3:1), and raising up the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:9-11; Rev. 13:2).

Satan uses a policy of secrecy and deception to keep men at enmity against God. As a false spiritual leader, he will make men idol worshipers of money, family and so forth (Luke 16:13). With his lying policy he contradicts, distorts and misuses the word of God (Genesis 3; Matthew 4).⁸⁵

The Origin of Satan:

The Scriptures give more evidence of the existence of the Satan and evil spirits rather than on the origin of them. It clearly suggests that soon after the creation of this world, Satan led a rebellion against God (Gen. 3:1-19; Is. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:12).

As man was created in the image of God to be obedient so the angels were created to be obedient to God. Before man became sinful some angels rebelled against God (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). They rest under God's condemnation (1 Kings 22:19-23). Their leader is called Satan (compare Job 1-2; Zach. 3:1-2). He is the father of all evil sinners (John 8:44). Together with all his followers he was expelled from heaven (Rev. 12:7-10).

⁸⁵Phillips McCandlish, The Bible, the Supernatural, and the Jews (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany Fellowship, 1970), pp. 72-91.

Development of the idea of demons:

The Old Testament was conscious of alien, perverted and demonic spirits which overpower persons (1 Kings 22:21-23; Hos. 4:12; 5:4). The need to distinguish discerningly among the prophetic spirits was present long before the New Testament era (Jer. 29:8).⁸⁶

The New Testament also speaks of Satan's attempt to rule over mankind. It tells us of God's action in history to bind and ultimately defeat Satan completely (Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14; 1 Peter 3:18-20).

The apocryphal books of the Old Testament dating back to the intertestamental period, accommodate more mythical and dualistic views of Satan. This is true also of the Dead Sea Scrolls. This literature contains many legends and different ideas regarding Satan and evil spirits. For instance, Rabbinic literature speaks of Sammael as the one who once entered the body of a serpent to deceive Eve and later brought death to Moses.⁸⁷ The Dead Sea Scrolls speak of Belial as the spirit of evil, and the angel of darkness who was created by God.⁸⁸ In Damascus Document and in the pseudepigraphic writings, Belial is the agent of punishment and the destroying angels.⁸⁹

These legends and descriptions make certain points about Satan and demons: a) Satan uses people as his instruments to fulfill his

⁸⁶R. Jewett, "Spirit," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, p. 840.

⁸⁷Werner Foester, " *ṣatavās* " TDNT, 7:151-63.

⁸⁸Marc Cramer, p. 151.

⁸⁹Ithamar Gruenwald, Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980), pp. 206-207.

evil wishes against God. b) The demons work together with Satan. c) To Satan, only the activity of prosecution is attributed. c) As a tempter, his purpose in tempting is man's destruction. e) A fall of Satan from heaven made him to work against humanity.⁹⁰

Gnosticism also has contributed many alien influence of ideas on the evil spirits. The Nag Hammadi Library, a collection of Gnostic literature, sheds new light on dualistic idea of good and evil spreading among the Jews and Christians during the early centuries.⁹¹ There is a suggestion that some dualistic teachings of Hinduism reached Syria in vague and self contradictory forms, and influenced Persian views which have left their marks on Gnosticism.⁹²

The beliefs in demons, as found in Gnostic literature, may be summarized as follows:

a) A great demon has been appointed by God to be an overseer or judge over the souls of men. b) His place is in the middle of the air between the earth and heaven (The Apocalypse from Asclepius VI, 8:76). The place of demons is the underworld (Trimorphic Protennoia XII, 1:41). c) The great Demon produced aeons in the likeness of the real Aeons. d) Man is vulnerable to become a place for the devil by himself (The Gospel of Truth I, 3:33) having desires for the pleasures of the world (The Treaty of Silvanus VII, 4:88-90). e) The believers are abused, accused unjustly, shut up in prison and even crucified by

⁹⁰Werner Foerster, "Scabolas," TDNT, 2:75-79.

⁹¹James M. Robinson, gen. ed., The Nag Hammadi Library (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981), pp. 1-10.

⁹²Paul Carus, The History of the Devil and the Idea of Evil (Chicago: The Open Court Publishers, 1900), pp. 138-47.

the Evil One. f) Only by the power of the Saviour and with the help of the Spirit, all the temptations and evils from the Evil One may be overcome (The Apocryphone of James I, 2:4-5).⁹³ Alongside these beliefs, as Eusebius witnesses, the office of exorcism became one of the orders in the Church during the third century.⁹⁴

J. Michelet's collection of information on the beliefs about Satan, evil powers and spirits of saints, provides more details about the practices among Christians to possess and use these spirits. His collection includes the development of diabolic legends, magic formulas, tools for exorcism and other practices among the Christians through the centuries.⁹⁵

The author believes that some of the Gnostic ideas and unscriptural practices prevailing among some Christians in the past, have left their influences on the Pentecostals and Neo-Pentecostals today.

A Relation Between Mysticism and Supernatural Powers

The practice of possessing extraordinary powers and exercising exorcism are closely connected with the belief in spirits and demons. This practice has a strong root in the spiritualism and mysticism.

Mysticism is a very difficult term to define since it has varying meanings depending on the context. P. G. Moore's suggestion to categorize the mysticism is helpful to understand it.

⁹³James M. Robinson, pp. 33, 44, 305-306, 464-65, 473.

⁹⁴J. W. Montgomery, Demon Possession (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1976), p. 335.

⁹⁵Julius Michelet, Satanism and Witchcraft A Study in Medieval Superstition, trans. A. R. Allinson (New York: The Citadel Press, 4th ed., 1963).

1) Pantheistic mysticism: is an experience of unity or rapport with nature, that is, drug induced experiences, nature mysticism and manic states.

2) Monistic mysticism: is an interior experience of undifferentiated oneness, that is, the goal in Hindu and Buddhist mysticism; it is a lower stage in Christian and Muslim mysticism.

3) Theistic mysticism: is an interior experience of union with God through love, that is, a goal in Christian and Muslim mysticism; some Hindu mysticism also comes under this category.⁹⁶

The complexity of spiritualism and mysticism is insoluble. Both are basically grounded in a special experience and an attempt to know the will of God. The basic difference is that the former is utterly man's effort to become spiritually better and the latter is man's attempt to have a special relationship with a deity by certain techniques. The Christian mysticism may be defined as God's unpredicted response at man's communication (through prayer) with God.

Jewish Mysticism

The prohibition of an attempt to gain divine revelations through spiritism clearly shows the existence of such practice (Ex. 22:18; Lev. 19:26; 20:27; Deut. 18:10-11). King Saul had once removed mediums and spiritists, but at the end of his life he consulted a woman medium to seek and secure information from God through the Spirit of Samuel (1 Sam. 29).

⁹⁶N. Drury and G. Tillet, *The Occult Source Book* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 116-18.

The practice of exorcism has been an accepted one in Judaism. Josephus (A.D. 37-100) suggested that God enabled King Solomon to learn the skill to expel demons; this skill was followed by gifted Jews.⁹⁷ We should note the Scriptures do not give evidence for Josephus' statement.

Jewish mysticism is well founded in Hakhalot literature.⁹⁸ Hakhalot or divine Palaus literature presents Merkavah or divine chariot mysticism. It developed from visions such as those described in Isaiah 6 and Ezekiel 1; 8; and 10. The mystics observed special techniques such as paraxis of the mystical experience (prayers or incantations, fasting and special diets; see Dan. 10:2,3; 2 Baruch 9:2; 4 Ezra 5:13,20), utterance of magical names and use of magical seals, and finally ritual of cleansing the body. Some Jewish magical literature of Jewish mysticism is paralleled to Greek magical papyrus.⁹⁹

Those who achieved the desired experience through magic or mystic practice, are believed to hold all kinds of supernatural powers, that is, to identify criminals and transgressors, to know what will happen to people in the future and to have supernatural protections against enemies. Hebrew magic (keshafim) may be considered "white magic," (used for good purposes), not "black magic" (used for harming people).¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷William Whiston, trans., The Work of Josephus, (Lynn: Henrickson Publications, 1981), p. 173.

⁹⁸Ithamar Gruenwald, Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980).

⁹⁹Hans Dieter Betz, "Fragments from a Catabasis Ritual in a Greek Magical Papyrus," History of Religions, 19 (May 1980):287:95.

¹⁰⁰Ithamar Gruenwald, p. 223.

Jewish mystics believed that Noah was selected to be the first recipient of magic and his techniques to cure illness were transmitted down through the generations.¹⁰¹

The influence of Merkavah mysticism is found in Jewish medieval mysticism, the Kabbalah and Hasidism. Kabbalah (tradition) is a broad stream of Jewish mysticism rooted in Qumran scrolls and the apocalyptic literature. Another mystic movement, Hasidism, spread in the last decades of the eighteenth century.

Hasidism became a Jewish religious movement under the leadership of Israel ben Eliezer (ca. 1700-1760). Eliezer was a magician and religious teacher.¹⁰² This movement became dominant among Jewish communities in the Ukraine, Poland and Galicia. Its leadership succession was decided by the charisma of oracles and other supernatural powers. Although there is a vast difference between Hasidism and Pentecostalism or Neo-Pentecostalism, both, however, emphatically stress supernatural charisma and special experience.¹⁰³

Christian Mysticism

It is improper to apply the phrase 'Christian mysticism' to the unscriptural practices of so-called Christian mystics (see p. for definition). It has become necessary to use that phrase here since it appears in the scholarly writings. There are diversity of opinions

¹⁰¹Ibid., 228.

¹⁰²Stephen Sharot, "Hasidism and the Routinization of Charisma," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 19 (December 1980):325.

¹⁰³Ibid., 333-35.

regarding the source of Christian mysticism.¹⁰⁴ However, one can assume that the inroads of mysticism in the mystery cults, Gnosticism, Neoplatonism, Manichaeism, Hellenism and Monasticism affected the Church during the first five centuries. As a result, "pagan divinities and heroes, more or less thinly transformed or disguised, persisted under Christian names or were displaced by Christian substitute,"¹⁰⁵ such as Virgin Mary, the saints and the figure of the child Jesus.

Moreover, the dualistic idea of good and evil was incorporated with especially the pre-Gnostic idea that body is evil and soul is good. Consequently the 'body-spirit' separatism attached the charismatic gifts to the good soul. This concept was condemned by Gregory of Nazianzus.

It is a ridiculous theory: that the soul has had a life elsewhere, and after that has been attached to this body; and that as a consequence of this life elsewhere some receive the gift of prophecy, while others, those who have previously lived an evil life, and condemned. This supposition is absurd, and it is contrary to the teaching of the Church; let others play with such doctrines; we regard such pastimes as unsafe. In this place, also, after "to whom it has been given," you must understand "those who are worthy." This worthiness is what they have received from the Father.¹⁰⁶

Apart from the strong criticism from the Church Fathers, Gnostic dualism has survived in the form of mysticism. The mysticism of a union

¹⁰⁴H. W. Basser, "Allusion to Christian and Gnostic Practices in Talmudic Tradition," Journal for the Study of Judaism, July 1981, pp. 87-105. See also, H. B. Swete, Commentary on Revelation (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishing, 1980), p. xxvi.

¹⁰⁵Kenneth Scott Latourette, The First Five Centuries: A History of the Expansion of Christianity, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1970), p. 320.

¹⁰⁶Henry Bettenson, ed. and trans., The later Christian Fathers (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 100.

of essence between God and man through the highest experience of the Spirit and the practice of techniques and display of spectacular powers began to grow like a twins.¹⁰⁷

From the time of William of Sain-Thierry (ca. 1085-1148) and Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) the idea that the spiritual life and experience in the union with Spirit and the end result of being under the regime of the gifts of the Spirit blossomed.¹⁰⁸ Although some Christian mystics confessed the faith of the Church,¹⁰⁹ the damage their practices did to the Church was very great.

During the Reformation Period, Calvin's emphasis on God's glory, man's regeneration and experience of conversion also has helped the modern Christian mysticism of special experience. John Wesley's (1717-1788) interpretation of the operation of God's grace in individual experience, also has contributed much to the later development of the Holiness and the Charismatic Movement.¹¹⁰

Although the charismata of the Holy Spirit were recognized in Church life during and after the time of the Church Fathers, the danger of the impact of Gnostic dualism and mysticism existed. Paul Tillich rightly observed:

¹⁰⁷Edward D. O'Connor, Perspectives on Chrismatic Renewal (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), pp. 89-129.

¹⁰⁸Edward D. O'Connor, p. 129.

¹⁰⁹George H. Tavard, "The Christology of the Mystics," Theological Studies, 42:4 (1981):560-79.

¹¹⁰Howard A. Snyder, "The Church as Holy and Charismatic," Wesleyan Theological Journal, 15 (Fall 1980):7-32.

Mysticism becomes an attempt at self-salvation when sensitivity to the presence of the divine in experience by which a union with God is sought.¹¹¹

Today this danger exists practically in the practices of Charismatics who seek a special experience and spectacular supernatural powers.

The next section is a brief history of the Charismatic Movement in India and a brief survey of their teachings and its effect on the Church.

¹¹¹Alexander J. McKelway, The Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich (New York: Dell Publications 1964), p. 156.

CHAPTER II

CHARISMATICS' INFLUENCE IN INDIA

The Pentecostal Movement is the channel for the Charismatic Movement in India. It is a sizeable Christian denomination. But, the Charismatic Movement is perhaps like a baby in the crawling stage. Presently its contingent growth and confirmable distinctions are difficult to discern. Yet, its sweeping influence and impact are felt in the Churches in India.

Neither the Pentecostal nor the Charismatic Movement has yet produced any literature on its history in India. Only a few glimpses of both movements' history can be traced in writings. Therefore, the history of the Charismatic Movement has to be studied alongside the Pentecostal Movement.

A Brief History

In the first half of the 1960s, about 200,000 people claimed to be Pentecostals.¹ In the 1970s, this movement grew rapidly and began appearing wherever the mainline Churches were already in existence. In the 1980s, about 45 million people are Pentecostals world-wide.²

¹Gordon F. Atter, The Third Force (Peterborough, Canada: The College Press, 2nd ed., 1965), p. 227.

²Patrick Grandfield, "The Ecumenical Significance Of the Charismatic Movement," Ecumenical Trends, 9 (July/August 1980):97.

The Pentecostal Movement's beginning in India goes back to 1905, a year before Pentecostal groups became public in America.³ Gordon F. Atter states that "the first Pentecostal Revival of the early Church began in an upper room in Jerusalem, Asia. The second Pentecostal Revival seems to have first come to India . . ."4

The story begins with Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922), an Indian Christian reformer. She came from a Brahmin family, living near the city of Mangalore, South India. When she was 22 years old, she married a lower caste man who died two years later. She studied in Britain and in America. Ramabai established a Mukti (salvation) Mission, near the city of Poona in North India. The purpose of this Mukti Mission was to help poor girls and widows.⁵ Many turned to Christianity through her evangelism and social work.

Girls in the boarding school at Mukti spoke in other tongues during prayer. This was in January 1905. Gordon F. Atter would specify that it happened on January 29, at 3:30 a.m., when the Holy Spirit was poured.⁶ Thus seemingly begins the history of Pentecostals in India.

There had been a tendency among the converts from higher caste communities to become independent preachers. One of them was Ramabai. Sometimes such evangelists were encouraged and welcomed by the Church

³Joseph E. Campbell, The Pentecostal Holiness Church; 1898-1948 (Franklin Springs, GA: House of Pentecostal Holiness Church 1951), p. 191.

⁴Gordon F. Atter, p. 50.

⁵J. D. Douglas, gen. ed., The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), pp. 823-24.

⁶Gordon F. Atter, pp. 50-51.

leaders. One of the well-known preachers was Sadhu Sunder Singh (1889-ca. 1929), a Christian mystic, who is believed to have become a martyr in Tibet. Such independent evangelists stressed experience and claimed extraordinary powers. This movement attracted many members of the main-line Churches and created closed fellowship groups. This resulted in Pentecostal revival in India.

Moreover, J. H. King, a prominent preacher from the Pentecostal Holiness Church in America, visited India on a foreign missionary tour in 1909. His visit encouraged some independent missionaries, namely, R. E. Massey and D. S. Mahaff, to join Fire-Baptized Holiness Church.⁷

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Pentecostal revival was channeled largely through the Syrian Orthodox and Presbyterian churches in South India. K. E. Abraham, a student in a Syrian Christian Seminary, was waiting for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, he was expelled from the seminary. In 1923, he organized the Indian Pentecostal Church.⁸ It is the largest Pentecostal Church today. It is an indigenous church with no foreign missionaries; it sends missionaries to other Eastern countries.

At the same time, the Assumbly of God, the Church of God and other Pentecostal groups were getting missionaries from America. In 1948, there were eleven Pentecostal missionaries working in five mission stations and another ten missionaries were on the accepted list.⁹ The Pentecostal Church in America alloted 75,000 dollars for foreign missions

⁷Joseph E. Campbell, p. 347.

⁸Gordon F. Atter, p. 111.

⁹Joseph E. Campbell, pp. 354-55.

in the year 1948. That was a large amount when compared with what other organized churches spent for mission work.

After the Independence of India in 1947, the Pentecostal Movement grew faster. Some of the reasons are:

1) The formation of the Church of South India (CSI), a Church union, in 1947. Some groups who disliked this union joined the Pentecostal Movement or formed independent Churches.

2) The congregations outnumbered the pastors and the number of incoming missionaries decreased. A pastor had to care for from five to twenty congregations, including school administration. On the other hand, the Church members sought a close pastoral care from their pastor. To such Christians, laity-headed Pentecostal Churches offered warm welcome and good care.

3) The Indo-China and Indo-Pakistan wars during three decades after India's Independence and frequent famines, and floods, created spiritual depression which moved many Christians to seek for spiritual fantasy as a release or escape, and this attracted them to the Pentecostal Churches.

4) Rigidity in observing caste differences in the Churches caused many lower caste people to search for a better fellowship possible in Pentecostal Churches.

5) Increasing number of independent preachers and prayer groups that emphasized experience became an added attraction for many Christians.

6) A flow of faith-healers and emotional preachers from the Western world encouraged Christians and non-Christians to form free churches.

7) Mobility caused by education, industrialization and urbanization has opened the door for Pentecostal influence. For instance, Christians from mainline Churches who migrated to foreign countries, in which they could not find their own denominations, found warm welcome in Pentecostal families or gatherings for worship. In Bahrein, a small country in the Middle East, three Indian Pentecostal Churches (Indian Brethren, Indian Pentecostal Church and the Church of God), have 215 members. But one of the largest denominations, the Church of South India (CSI), has only 75 members. In Kuwait, Pentecostals have a total of 300 whereas CSI has only a 100.¹⁰ The same is true for Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, where many Indians have moved in search of employment.

In India, Charismatics are growing in number very rapidly. Mid-1980 statistics show that there are about 27,078,000 Christians. The adherents of Charismatic Movement have increased to 60,000 from 20,000 in mid-1975.¹¹

Distinguishing Charismatics

Unlike America, Indian Charismatics have not yet received public attention. In fact, very seldom can they be distinguished from the Pentecostals. From 1960 on mainline Churches saw a number of independent preachers refusing to be restricted to a particular denomination,

¹⁰ Don M. McCurry, ed., World Christianity: Middle East (Monrovia, CA: A Ministry of World Vision International, 1979), pp. 22, 64.

¹¹ David P. Barret, ed., World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the Modern World AD1900-2000 (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 370-71.

such as Sadhu Sunder Singh. Presently, such preachers are engaged in preaching and faith-healing in denominational, non-denominational and Pentecostal conventions. They are establishing groups of followers of their own, outside and inside the churches.

Among such preachers prominent in South India are, Dhinakaran, Jeevaretnam, Jebasingh, Palus Larry, and a woman evangelist Papa Sankar. As a result of their work, many Christians keep their regular membership in their churches and at the same time regularly attend the worship of spiritual groups. Some hold dual membership as well.

Some of the charismatic oriented Christians have begun to form prayer groups and fellowships inside the Church rather than to join independent groups. This development has occurred since the denominations of Anglican and Presbyterian origin are now permitting charismatic preachers in their pulpits, regardless of what they preach. There seems to be a move to accommodate the separated Pentecostals into the Church.

In an authorized monthly of the Church of South India, a churchman writes, "we can not deny the gifts of the Spirit to Pentecostal pastors whom God has raised to fulfill the spiritual hunger of His people, and who are we to say 'nay' to their ministry."¹² Further he recommends that the Church must call Pentecostal pastors.

Today, there are at least two organized charismatic groups, the Christian Association of Charismatic Society in Tamil-speaking area,

¹²A. J. George, "Some Problems Confronting the Church of South India," The South India Churchman, (June 1972) pp. 13-14.

located in Madras city¹³ and the Church of South India Charismatic Centre, in Malayalam-speaking area, located in Kottayam.¹⁴ These groups claim that they are very loyal to the Church, its dignitaries and pastors in the context of their growth and development. They believe that "the rope of Charismatic renewal is long enough to make the congregations the real power houses for Christ."¹⁵

Whatever rationale they may give, there is a mixed reaction to the charismatic renewal groups. The writer believes that this movement's growth and entity depend mainly on the ignorance of illiterate or spiritually under-nourished Christians. The writer himself has witnessed that the reason for separate charismatic group formation was a personal grudge or an inability to cope with the congregation. In some cases, the charismatic renewal has been used as an effective means of revenge against the congregation or the pastor.

Reactions Towards The Movement

Irrespective of sex, education, class and caste, many Christians have an inclination toward the charismatic renewal. They are immature in doctrinal teachings, and unable to distinguish Pentecostalism and charismaticism. Moreover, faith healing, exorcism and speaking in tongues are added attractions for many people. Many Christian homes are readily opened to any Christian who comes to pray and talk about

¹³V. M. David, "Interview with C.A.C.S., Madras," The South India Churchman, (March 1979):5.

¹⁴"CSI Charismatic Centre, Kottayann," The South India Churchman, (May 1977):9.

¹⁵V. M. David, Interview with C.A.C.S., Madras, "The South India Churchman, (March 1979):5,9.

Christ. This reception gives an opportunity for the Pentecostals and Charismatics to draw them away from the Church to which they belong. On the other hand, Christians who have understanding of basic doctrines, reject any form of emotional spiritualism.

With a few exceptions, those who strongly oppose Pentecostals and Charismatics are Lutheran pastors and laymen. This opposition has doctrinal and practical aspects. Although, Charismatics' work among non-Christians is welcomed by the Lutherans, they are worried when these groups infiltrate the Church and distract and confuse spiritually malnourished Christians.

Hindus have less respect for Pentecostals and Charismatics than for the organized Churches. The hostility toward Pentecostals' law-preaching and the antagonism of noisy worship are prevalent among the Hindus. Vivekanandha, one of the greatest Hindu philosophers, has often indicated that calling one's neighbor a sinner is a sin. In addition, silent meditation and silent prayer are ingredients of Hindu worship. These two concepts of Hindus, develop hostility toward Pentecostals and Charismatics.

Despite this fact, some Hindus attend spiritual conventions and revival meetings. Mainly those who can not openly go to the Church for caste reasons and those who seek free healing for financial reasons, participate in such meetings. They easily respond to the altar call and, when they return home, are different persons.

A third group of Hindus react differently to the practice of speaking in tongues, healing through prayers and exorcism in the name of Jesus. They argue that if such supernatural acts are done by the

Holy Spirit, how can a Christian condemn the similar happenings in Hinduism as the action of evil spirits. This argument is based on their syncretic belief that the religions of the world are different roads and that all roads lead to the One Supreme Being. In brief, they think that all good things including the supernatural powers come from the same God through different religions and through devoted persons of any religion.

The Effects on Church Life

The influence of the Pentecostal and Charismatic revivals has affected Church life both positively and negatively. The positive effects are few and the negative effects are great. We list them briefly.

Positive Effects

1. Mainline Churches have again begun to educate their members to study the Scriptures. Its teaching on the doctrines of the Holy Spirit and baptism have become major emphases.
2. Unprecedented participation of laity in the worship and Church activity have become major concerns.
3. The scope of a closer fellowship in the Church life has become more significant.
4. The competition in out-reach evangelism has helped a new spirit of evangelization to thrive constantly.

Negative Effects

1. The revival movements caused damage to the Church fellowship by teaching man's role in obtaining salvation, second baptism and speaking in tongues as initial signs of Spirit Baptism, false doctrines of self-sanctification and mystical union with God.

2. Pentecostals and Charismatics put much effort into gaining Christians for their movements rather than reaching out to non-Christians. This has affected Church membership and administration.

3. Added competition from these movements in the field of evangelism work has confused non-Christians and thus prevented many potential conversions.

4. Since faith healing, exorcism, speaking in tongues and other seemingly supernatural phenomena are very common in Hindu religion, the new emphasis on similar phenomena by the Pentecostals and Charismatics have become rather ludicrous to Hindus. It adds a further obstacle for evangelism work in Indian context.

In the second part we will take a careful look at the beliefs of Hindus in terms of spectacular gifts, their source and use which cause them misunderstanding of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

PART TWO

CHARISMATIC PRACTICES IN HINDUISM

CHAPTER I

SETTING THE BACKGROUND

Years of scholarly works on Hindu religion and Indian culture have contributed to a better understanding of India and its people. However, much of what has been written and the terminology used are interpretive in nature; these very often fail to do justice to the original meaning in the belief and thought context of India itself.

For example, the word varam (in Tamil language) which stands for any 'gift that comes from God' is very close to the word charismata in meaning. Yet, the word charismata has never been applied to the gifts of faith healing, miracles, oracle telling and speaking in tongues in the Hindu religion. Hindus believe that the above gifts are from God or gods and that other harmful magic and occult powers are received by possessing the evil spirits. But, most scholars in religion list these gifts under magic and occult or the result to being possessed by evil spirits.

Today, some scholars sincerely recognize the mistakes made in the past.

We have either succumbed to the old and still present Western tendency to believe that nothing outside the Western world is of much value to the modernized, contemporary man or woman of the West; or we have thought of the world's non-Western cultures as being so lethargic, and perhaps decadent, that we have dismissed them on the

assumption that today they do not even possess viability or vitality in their own homelands.¹

To understand Hindu charismatic practices, an empirical study is necessary since the "religion of India prevails in the oral tradition of the common people, not in the written books."²

To understand the beliefs and practices of the ordinary Hindu population, an investigation into the background of Hinduism is most helpful.

The Vedic Religion

The Vedic³ religion is precisely the Aryan religion brought by the nomadic invaders from Asia Minor. According to Radhakrishnan, the Aryans came down into India from Central Asia, settled there and gradually expanded and developed their Aryan culture and civilization.⁴

The Dravidian Civilization of Indus Valley (ca. 3500-1500 B.C.) exited in its purity during the Aryans invasion (ca. 2000-1000 B.C.) and their Vedas development (ca. 1500-800 B.C.).⁵ Aryans ruthlessly

¹Philip H. Ashby, Modern Trends in Hinduism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), p. 3.

²Sunderaraj Manickam, The Social of Christian Conversion in South India (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1977), p. 17. See also Klaus Klostermaier Hindu and Christian in Vrindaban (London: SCM Press, 1969).

³The religion based on Vedas, the scriptures of Hindus. There are four Vedas the Rig, Yajur, Sama, Atharvana.

⁴Heinrich R. Zimmer, Philosophies of India (New York: Bellingham Foundation, 1953), p. 615.

⁵S. S. Radhakrishnan and C. A. Moore, eds., A Source Book in Indian Philosophy (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. xv-xvi.

took away the rights of non-Aryans or Dravidians⁶ and denied education,⁷ by introducing the four caste system: a) Brāhamanās, the priests and teachers, b) Kshatriās, the royal family and warriors, c) Vaisyās, the farmers and businessmen, and d) Sūtrās, the artisans and servants.

In spite of Aryans' efforts to subdue the non-Aryans the old religion survived.⁸ Therefore the Aryans had to absorb the Dravidian gods and beliefs into the spectrum of Aryan beliefs in natural-gods, to gain the upper hand over the entire natives. Aryan gods or Rig Veda gods are celestial and are ideal for Aryan nomadic life, whereas the great gods of the Dravidians are Siva, the ascetic yogi, and Kali his partner.⁹ Supremacy could not be attained since the followers of Buddhism, Jainism and the primitive form of Sivism did not accept the authority of the Vedas and denied the Aryan supremacy.¹⁰

The Vedas also have a sacrificial cult that honored heavenly deities, that is, Surya (sun), Varuna (rain), Vayu (wind), Indra (lightning or fire) and other natural phenomena. On the other hand, archaeological remains of Indus Valley culture abound in male and female figures, probably Siva and Sakti.¹¹

⁶Dravidians: The original inhabitants of India (see R. W. Frazer, "Dravidians: South India," Encyclopedia of Religions and Ethics, J. Hastings, ed., (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, vol. 5, 1960), p. 21.

⁷Heinrich R. Zimmer, p. 59.

⁸G. Parrinder, Upanishads, Gita and Bible: A Comparative Study of Hindu and Christian Scriptures (London: Faber & Faber, 1962), pp. 32-33.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Heinrich R. Zimmer, p. 59.

¹¹Cornelia Dimmit & J. A. B. van Buitenen, Classical Hindu Mythology: A Reader in the Sanskrit Puranas (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978), pp. 220-21.

This indicates that Aryans' polytheism and the Dravidians' dualism and non-dualism were in conflict through the ages. The widespread Saktism, a worship of female deity of the present day, can seldom be separated from the prominent Sivism which does not show any interest to be wedded to Vedism.

Moreover, the role of Kshatriyas, who reacted to the Brahmanical ritualism, was considerably great in developing the religious philosophy of the Upanishads, the prose sections of the Vedas. Undoubtedly, some Brahmin sages also may have disliked ritualism and contributed to the Upanishads.¹² Interestingly, Buddhism has emerged from the Kshatriya circle as an anti-Brahmanism, and the famous Advaita (dualism) philosophy of Hinduism has come from the mind of Sankara, a worshiper of Kali (a form of Sakti).

Such evidence leads to the view that the Aryan or Vedic religion was polytheism. The Dravidian religion (Sivism and Saktism) has influenced the Vedism with its dualistic and non-dualistic views, not vice versa.

Vishnavism

Vishnavism is an anti-Sivite religion. It supposedly emerged from a combination of Brahmin and Kshatriya castes. Therefore it is not the original religion of the original inhabitants of India. Although Kshatriyas happened to be mainly non-Aryans, they were the first

¹²Pratima Bowes, The Hindu Religious Tradition: A Philosophical Approach (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 135.

victims of Aryans because of their function as kings and warriors under the guidance of Brahmin priests, teachers and ministers.

Presently, no archaeological evidence supports the existence of the Vishnavism prior to the Sivism. The earliest evidence does not go beyond the second century B.C. Vishnu, the god of Vishnavism, is identified with Vāsudeva in Vedas.¹³ Bhagavat Gita, the scripture of Vishnavites, is dated 300 A.D., few centuries later than the appearance of Sivite literature.

A major evidence supporting our contention is the status of the major deities of the religious sect. Krishna, one of the major avatārs or incarnations "was born a Kshatriya, that is, one who by birth belonged to the social category of warriors and rulers."¹⁴ He is portrayed as a chariot driver to the main hero of the Mahābhārata war. Gita itself is the conversation of Krishnā and the hero Arjunā, which took place during the war. The next major avator was Rāmā, a king.

The interconnection between Brahmins and Kshatriyas is evidenced by two common beliefs today. First, Krishna was a cattle shepherd while in his teens; this reflects the nomadic character of Aryans into the religion. Second, Garudā or eagle, another worship-object in Vishnavism, probably was the symbol of warriors or Kshatriyas. At the same time Garudā was conceived as the sun, a beautiful-winged divine bird, in Veda in connection with Vasūdeva or Vishnu.¹⁵

¹³J. N. Banerjea, Religion in Art and Archaeology: Vishnavism and Sivism (Lucknow, India: University of Lucknow, 1968), pp. 7,8.

¹⁴Pratima Bowes, p. 222.

¹⁵J. N. Banerjea, pp. 8,9.

Moreover, the worship in Vishnavite temples today has significant evidence pointing to the fact that it is a religious combination of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas. The unique practice of Brahmin priest crowning the worshipers, discloses the fact that ancient royal priest crowned kings and consecrated army chiefs.

Evidently, Vishnavism and Sivism have always been in serious conflict in the history. For instance, in the Narasimha Purāna¹⁶ of Vishnavism, Siva is humiliated by portraying him as a worshiper of Vishnu. In contrast, the Siva Puranas make Vishnu inferior to Siva.¹⁷ Besides a large number of theological polemics, many more practical differences are recognized today. The priestly families of both religious sects call themselves by different names, that is, Iyyankār (Vishnavite) and Iyyar (Sivite); no marriage is allowed between these castes.

Different worship patterns, worship objects and offerings between these religious sects to show their different origin. The architecture and design of the temples of Sivites and Vishnavites also reflect polarity.

Lastly, it must be mentioned that Vishnavism accepts the authority of Vedas, whereas the Sivism does not. The god Vishnu is directly mentioned in Vedas, whereas god Siva is not.

¹⁶Purana: Literally means 'ancient.' It is an exoteric writing containing popular myths, legends and traditional lore.

¹⁷J. Gonda, Vishnuism and Sivaism: A Comparison (London: The Athlone Press, 1970), pp. 105-107.

Saktism

Saktism is a counter part of Sivism and both are inseparably integrated. The 'Siva-Sakti,' as often called, might have been the religion of the original inhabitants of India.¹⁸ For convenience, we may call it 'Savasaktism.'

Most scholars hold the view that the Indus Valley remains of the pre-Vedic times contain many objects which prove that the cult of Proto-Siva (Pasupati), the progenitor god with its concomitant association of phallicism, was in vogue among the rich and prosperous inhabitants of the region.¹⁹ There is no doubt that the female aspect of the Supreme Being also is traceable along with Siva.²⁰ Tantric literature, the old form of the doctrine of the Sivasaktism, is in the form of Siva-Sakti dialogue that teaches creation of the universe, its dissolution, worship of deities, spiritual exercises, rituals, magical powers and meditation.²¹ The Aryans misunderstood the native religion as Phallus worship and the worship of Female Energy.²² Later, they borrowed Dravidian beliefs and adapted them into Aryan nature-worship.²³

¹⁸ Benjamin Walker, The Hindu World: An Encyclopedia Survey of Hinduism vol. 2 (New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, 1968), p. 482.

¹⁹ J. N. Banerjea, p. 42.

²⁰ S. K. Belvalker and R. D. Ranade, History of Indian Philosophy: The Creative Period (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1974) p. 11.

²¹ Benjamin Walker, 2:484.

²² Belvalker and Ranade, p. 11.

²³ Ibid., pp. 12-15.

Generally, it is mistakenly or ignorantly understood that Sivasaktism is comprised of male-female organ worship, drinking blood and urine, worship of nude female, sexual indulgence including incest, and various antinomian practices. In fact, this type of alien practices have been brought into the Sivasaktism of India by Taoist Bogar and Tantric master Vasishtha; it is called Chinachara or Chinese way.²⁴

Moreover, the refined Sivism of Sivasidhandha philosophy of South India does not teach sexual organ worship. Instead, these organs are considered symbols representing the male-female divine energies.²⁵ Nevertheless, the human figures of Siva exceed the number of lingam or male organ figures found anywhere else in India. Even the seals found in the course of excavations at Mohenjodaro bearing the three-headed figure of Siva has been described as Urddhvalinga (penis erectus).²⁶

Because of this, it cannot be taken for granted that the linga was merely the form of male organ. Most of the lingas, in fact, have no specific shape. Even if one considers these uncertain forms as male organs, it can be argued that they may have been the worship-objects of the ancient fertility cult of the agriculture community. The majority of Hindus prefer to keep the human figures of Siva-sakti, not the sex organs.

²⁴ Benjamin Walker, 2:482.

²⁵ Peter Brent, Godmen of India (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1972), p. 231.

²⁶ J. N. Banerjea, p. 42.

It should be taken into account that with the exception of the large temples of Siva-Sakti, all other open-air shrines dedicated to them have a unique shape of unrecognizable figures. They are idols of the common people. These idols are pyramidive type structure with four horns on the top four corners. On top of the plane appears a slope-three-edged cone at the center.²⁷ The idol's sex is identified by its cloth tied around its bottom-half; white and red represent male and female. All who evaluate this seriously would find a close connection with the unrecognizable figures, found in the ancient ruins of the original inhabitants (Dravidians) of India.

A sivite of South Indian village once explained the male-female organ to the present writer as follows:²⁸ River Civilization neither made lingam and yoni nor worshiped them. The half-coconut shaped cupola (misunderstood by many as lingam) represents the sky, and its round-shaped base (misunderstood by many as yoni) represents the earth. Thus, both together represent the omnipresence and onnipotence of Siva-Sakti, the male-female energy of the Supreme. To make this concept more easily understandable to illiterate people, the Puranis²⁹ story writers symbolically described them as male-female organs.

Although this explanation has no authoritative support, it cannot be simply ignored. Most of the ancient beliefs and their application to human life still survive in oral form among the ordinary people.

²⁷See Figure 1.

²⁸The present writer got this information during his research, when he was working with The Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore, India.

²⁹See p. 67, n. 16.

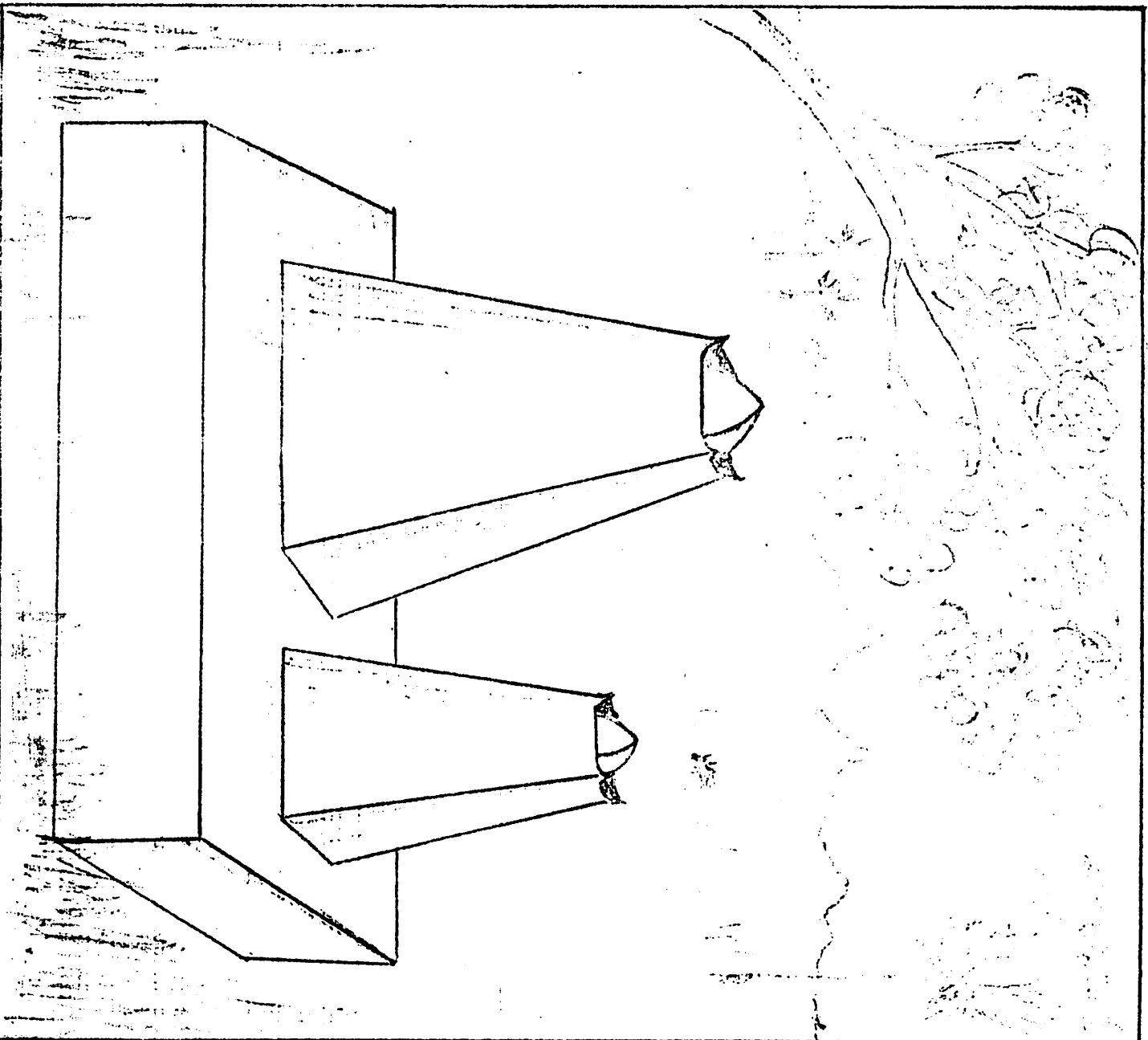


Figure 1

Idols of open-air shrine

Vedism and Sivasaktism have always been in conflict, though the male-female divine aspect of Sivasaktism has been absorbed into the Vedic religion. For an example, we quote:

In South India an aspect of the Mother Goddess is worshiped as Ellamma, a guardian of South. She is sometimes represented with the torn-off head of a Brahmin in her hand, which is interpreted as the victory of the Dravidian element over the Aryan in the Deccan.³⁰

Similarly, Siva is portrayed as holding the skull of the Brahman, the creator god, representing victory over Brahmins.³¹

The aforementioned points clearly show that Sivasaktism was the original religion of India. However, it does not mean that there was no animism at all. Animism was common among the hill tribes and uncivilized non-Aryans of India. When some of those uncivilized communities became civilized or mingled with the agricultural communities their tribal superstitions and worship forms also became fused with the Sivasaktism in the course of time.

Earliest Veda also supply evidence to show that the Vedism partially absorbed some elements of the Sivasaktism, but Siva and Sakti were made inferior to the gods of Aryans by their lack of knowledge and understanding, many scholars have contributed in humiliating Sivasaktism as a religious sect which developed after the Vedic religion. This is due to their approach in finding the origin of Sivasaktism in Vedas.

³⁰ Benjamin Walker, 1:398.

³¹ According to one legend, the Brahmins were created from the Brahma's head, Kshatriyas from His chest, Vaisiyas from His stomach and finally the Sutras from His feet.

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... was no ... at all. ...

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When some scholars found some characteristics of Siva similar to that of Rudra of Vedas, they assumed that the Rudra was Siva. Even a superficial investigation into the Rig Veda would disclose the fact that the word "siva" is mentioned only once in its singular form in the abstract sense meaning "auspicious."³² In other places the word is attributed to more than one deity³³ and in most cases in plural form, sivas. On the other hand, Vishnu is directly mentioned more than about forty times in Rig Veda (III, 54:14; IV, 55:4; V, 46:2 and so forth).

The name of Siva's counterpart Sakti is mentioned more than 65 times, but she is never mentioned as the consort of Siva by her name Pārvati. At the same time, the names Sarasvathi, the consort of Brahma and Sita, the consort of Rama (a major avatar of Vishnu) are directly mentioned. In addition, there is no mention of either Sakti and Parvati or any other names of Sakti in the list of gods and their female-partners, although Rudra, the so-called Siva is mentioned (Rig. V, 46:2, 8).³⁴

On the basis of the above evidence it must be concluded that 1) the Aryans absorbed Sivasaktism by dethroning Siva and Sakti from Aryan pantheon and 2) if Siva is identified with Rudra, obviously Aryans have done injustice to Siva by portraying him as a god of

³²Ralph T. H. Griffith, The Hymns of the Rig Veda: Translated with a Popular Commentary, vol. 1 (Benaras: E. J. Lazarus & Co., 1889), p. 386.

³³J. N. Banerjea, p. 43.

³⁴Ralph T. H. Griffith, vol 2, Rig. ch. V.

destruction. The authentic Sivism teaches that "Siva is the lord of the universe and there is nothing that happens here except on his wish."³⁵

The purpose of the above has been to provide a background for understanding clearly the concept of the gifts of god which are mostly emphasized in Sivasakti cult. With this background now we turn to investigate the Hindu beliefs in the spirit and charismata.

³⁵Pratima Bowes, p. 240.

CHAPTER II

BELIEFS ON SPIRITS

Concept of Spirit in Vedas and Puranas

The idea of Spirit of God is vaguely mentioned in Vedas and Puranas. Yet, they reveal the concept of the Spirit of God in terms of god's mediation or power dealing with creation and the world. Hindu literature does not speak of the personality of God's Spirit or Holy Spirit, but explicitly gives evidences of the nature of Spirit.

There is confusion whether the Spirit may be identified with ātman (soul) or with māyā (illusion) or with mahāsakti (great power). Atman is often spoken of as a life-giving power or life itself. Māyā is believed to be a separate entity that helped the Supreme Being to create the world. Mahāsakti is identified with māyā or the inextricable feminine side of god. The contingent identification of Hindu concept of Spirit lies in the bottomline idea of dualism and non-dualism of the Hindu religion.

Concept of Dualism

Dualism probably developed from the male-female god worship of the ancient Indians. Conversely, the monotheistic idea has been expressed in the form of "Oneness" or integration of the male-female god. The antagonistic idea has influenced the paradoxical dualism of

the Vedic philosophy. Neither dualism nor monotheism seems to be clearly explained since they overlap in certain levels of the Hindu philosophy.

For example, the existence of the Supreme Being is described as Nirguna Brahama (the Being without attributions) who is not approachable to humanity. The same Supreme Being is explained as Saguna Brahma (the Being with characteristics) who is available to human knowledge in the forms of creator, protector and destroyer or, Brahman, Vishnu and Siva. Consequently, the Vedas easily identify one God with another and all gods with one Divine Essence.¹

Māyā or illusion is believed to be a co-existing eternal power that caused change in the Nirguna Brahma to become Saguna Brahma and thus became the primary cause of creation.

Before God there is no distinction of good and evil, pure and impure. Such pairs of opposites become manifest only when the light of Brahman is obscured by maya.²

These words of Vivekananda explain the function of the maya.

According to Radhakrishnan, maya does not mean illusory but the "creative power" of the Brahman.³ He introduced a new meaning to maya,

¹Abanash Chandra Bose, Hymns from the Vedas: Original text and English Translation with Introduction and Notes (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), p. 20.

²Swami Nikhilananda, Vivekananda: The Yogist Other Works Chosen and with a Biography (New York: Radhakrishnan-Vivekananda Centre, 1953), p. 55.

³S. J. Samartha, Introduction to Radhakrishnan: The Man and His Thought (New York: Association Press, 1964), pp. 59-60.

the Vedic philosophy. Whether doubt or nihilism seems to be clearly explained since they existed in certain levels of the Hindu philosophy.

For example, the existence of the Supreme Being as described as Atman Brahman (the Being without attributes) who is not approachable to humanity. The same Supreme Being is explained as Parama Brahman (the Being with characteristics) who is available to human knowledge in the form of creator, protector and destroyer or, Brahman, Vishnu and Shiva. Consequently, the Vedas really identify one God with another and all gods with one Divine Essence.

It is or illusion is believed to be a co-ordinate spiritual power that caused change in the Atman Brahman to become Parama Brahman and thus became the primary cause of creation.

Before God there is no distinction of good and evil, pure and impure. Such pairs of opposites become manifest only when the light of Brahman is obscured by Maya.

These words of Vivekananda explain the function of the Maya. According to Vedantism, Maya does not mean illusion but the "creative power" of the Brahman. He introduced a new meaning to Maya.

Abanash Chandra Bose, Lecture from the Vedas: Original text and English translation with Introduction and Notes (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), p. 22.

Syama Subramanya Vivekananda: The Yogas of Sri Ramana Maharish and with a Commentary (New York: Ramana-Vivekananda Center, 1953), p. 22.

S. J. Sanyal, Introduction to Vedantism: The Pan and the Panch (New York: Association Press, 1964), pp. 22-23.

namely, "to build or produce forms," and he disapproved the suggested meaning of "illusion or mystery."⁴

However, most of the Hindu scholars consider māyā as a power existing with god as a separate entity. This, we suppose, is a refined female aspect of god from the ancient Sivasktism. Vivekananda states: "Maya is the energy in the universe, both potential and kinetic." Maya is the Mother.⁵

Rita (eternal order) is another major concept in Hinduism. It can be applied to the boundary of a god's function and the law of nature as well. Basically, it consists of all opposites, that is, male and female, truth and untruth, good and evil and so on. These opposites are necessary for the existence of the world, of nature and beings in the world. In Vedas, the opposition to rita is symbolized in the person of the demon Vritra or Serpent.⁶ It must be noted that the Power manifests itself as evil or good and thus "God and the Devil are the same river with the water flowing in opposite directions."⁷

Man is often called atman or soul. It has an ultimate relationship with the Paramātmān or the Supreme Soul, the God himself. The ātman is not bound by the conditions of matter. Human death means only a change from one body to another.⁸ Once the soul is liberated from avidyā (ignorance) caused by maya, the soul merges with the Supreme Being. In paradox, the same Maya, the Mother Goddess, releases the soul.⁹

⁴Ibid., pp. 60-61.

⁶Abanash C. Bose, p. 10.

⁸Ibid., p. 187.

⁵Swami Nikhilananda, p. 530.

⁷Swami Nikhilananda, p. 523.

⁹Ibid., p. 530.

The dualism of the body and soul concept necessitates the karma (work) concept that teaches salvation through good works. Two other paths to salvation are bhakti (devotion) and jñāna (knowledge or intellectual vision). Karma includes both ritual and moral deeds.¹⁰ According to one's karma his soul takes several births. This life cycle is called samsāra.¹¹

Whatever the arguments are adduced by those who support non-dualism, such arguments are not valid, because they accept the concept of pre-existing opposite entities of rita and anrita. Moreover, the paradox of dualism and non-dualism are clearly focused in the Puranic stories. For example, Puranas portray Siva as a deity of contrast. He is celibate as well as lover of his spouse; he is the creator as well as destroyer.¹²

On the basis of the above evidences, we can conclude that Hinduism teaches God is good and evil and that He created everything with the opposites of good and evil.

Beliefs on Spirits and Demons

God is Spirit. "There is only one Being and that Being is the Divine Spirit."¹³ This Being is often compared with the phrase "I am

¹⁰J. A. Hutchison, Paths of Faith (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), pp. 159-65.

¹¹Peter Brent, Godmen of India (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1972), pp. 22-23.

¹²Cornelia Dimmit and J. A. B. van Buitenen, Classical Hindu Mythology: A Reader in the Sanskrit Puranas (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978), pp. 220-21.

¹³S. J. Samartha, p. 51.

that I am" (Ex. 3:14).¹⁴ This Supreme Being is called Brahman, the secret life-essence of everything. His macromicrocosmic correspondence with humanity makes man a spirit. Thus the Spirit of Brahman dwells in all beings.

Brahman's brāhna (wind-like power or strength) takes the form of prāna (life-breath-energy) within man.¹⁵ Prāna is a word closely corresponding to the word pneuma.¹⁶ The spirit of god in man cannot be pierced with evil by the demons.¹⁷ Such power of the spirit of god can be joined to bodily strength through a ritual called Brāhmanah parimārah or the dying round of the holy power.¹⁸

Another aspect of the spirit of god is the female energy. Brahman's power was in a stage of stillness when He was Nirguna Brahman (inaction Being). It was activated by Maya and He became Saguna Brahman (action Being). If so, Maya must be the power or spirit or the Universal Energy.

Brahman-Maya relationship, as is found in Vedic literature, reflects the Father-Mother relationship in the Sivasaktism of the ancient inhabitants of India. Sakti worshipers believe that Sakti is the Universal Energy and Universal Mother.¹⁹ Sivism of today also

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Heinrich R. Zimmer, Philosophies of India (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1953), pp. 70-72.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷S. K. Belvalker and R. D. Ranade, History of Indian Philosophy: The Creative Period (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1974), p. 183.

¹⁸Heinrich R. Zimmer, pp. 70-73.

¹⁹Swami Nikhilananda, p. 525.

teaches Sakti, the wife of Siva, is the Divine Mother. (It reminds us that an Indian Christian theologian, V. Chenchiah (1886-1959), held the view that the Spirit is 'the new cosmic energy' or mahasakti; the believer needs this Spirit for the yoga. To him, yoga is the transformation of oneself into the figure and image of Christ).²⁰

Man is spirit. One group of Hindu scholars believe that the spirit of god in man does nothing positive to stimulate change in matter but merely acts as a catalyst, for matter to undertake its own transmutation.²¹ According to this concept the infinite spirit becomes to all intent and purposes a final empirical man with the complex of body and soul. Thus, the real or essential man is the spirit.

Rig Veda teaches that man is mortal but his soul is immortal. The individual soul is a particle of the Supreme Soul. This mortal-immortal complex of man is expressed in Rig Veda, VII, 59:12:

"Release us from mortal life
and not from immortality."²²

Yoga school of thought also accepts the status of man as a spirit. The eternal spirit in man strives for an integration with his eternal source.²³

²⁰Robin H. S. Boyd, An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology (Madras: Christian Literature Society 1969), pp. 155-56.

²¹Pratima Bowes, The Hindu Religious Tradition: A Philosophical Approach (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 183.

²²Abanash C. Bose, p. 33.

²³Pratima Bowes, p. 179.

The spirit in man is called ātma. It can be translated as breath, life, spirit or soul. The body and spirit combination of man can be understood from the Rig Veda X, 16:3:

"May the eye go to the sun
The breath (Atma) to the wind."²⁴

Here, the wind stands for the power or spirit of the Supreme, and the breath for the spirit in man.

After the prāna or pneuma of the creator has entered into a man's body he is called ātman.²⁵ This idea in Hinduism helps them believe in obtaining special powers through certain techniques of yōga or spiritual exercises.

In brief, God is Spirit and man is spirit. Although the terms for spirit in Hindu vocabulary are confusing, they indicate the existence of god's spirit in his creation and humanity. The function of the spirit is communication between god and man and helping hand in creation of this world.

Heavenly Beings or Demons?

The dualism of good and evil plays a major role in the Hindu belief of spirits and demons. Neither all spirits nor all demons are bad.²⁶ Very often the village gods and goddesses have been mistaken for demons or devils. In fact, they are different forms of Siva and

²⁴Friedrich Max Müller, The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy (New York and Bombay: Longmans, 1903), pp. 71-72.

²⁵Belvalker and Ranade, pp. 368-70.

²⁶Paul Carus, The History of the Devil and the Idea of Evil, from the Earliest Times to the Present Day (Chicago: The Open Court Publishers, 1900), pp. 75-77.

Sakti worshiped by the descendants of the original inhabitants of India. They are still served by a priesthood sprung from original inhabitants.²⁷

The descriptions of spirits and demons, and the categorization of smaller gods, spirits and demons are varied and differ from one scholar to another. This complexity has grown out of the fusion of ancient religion and the Vedic religion.

As discussed above, the ancient religion was the Sivasaktism. The original inhabitants of India worshiped different forms of Siva and Sakti and also the disembodied human beings. For example, Kali is a cruel form of Pārvati, the wife of Siva; Sundalai, a guard of graveyards, is a cruel form of Siva. In fact, the cruel forms of gods represent the aspect of chastisement and punishment of gods.

When Aryans invaded India, they made major contributions to the idea of spirits and demons. 1) They took Dravidians for devils. The color, language, customs and sudden night attacks on Aryans with loud yells caused Aryans to think of Dravidians as devils. Dravidians are mentioned as Asurās or terrified and Rākshās or ogres in Vedas.²⁸ 2) When Aryans and Dravidians blended together as friends, Aryans transformed the gods of Dravidians into celestial beings. Major gods, namely, Siva and Sakti were renamed as Rudra and Maya and were elevated to the divine gods pantheon. Other forms of these two gods were absorbed into the flocks of servants of the gods.

²⁷R. J. Blackham, Incomparable India: Tradition; Superstition; Truth (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, n.d.), p. 94.

²⁸Popular Hinduism (Madras, India: Christian Literature Society, 1896), pp. 4-5.

Servants with good characters were called Ganas or hosts; some Ganas with terrifying figures were called Boothas. Ganas are strictly to serve in the gods' palaces and Boothas are to carry out orders from gods when dealing with human beings. Since the Boothas come into contact with man, their favour can be obtained to help his family.²⁹

Servants with bad characters were called Pisāsas or demons. They are the real enemies of gods and human beings. By getting the spirit of god, man can bring demons under his possession and can use them for good and bad purposes.

According to the present belief of Hinduism, spirits and demons may be classified as follows:

a) Celestial: Ganas and Boothas may be considered as the servants in gods' palaces in heavens. (Sivites believe that Sivalokh or the world of Siva is the heaven). Hindus compare these two groups with the angels and archangels. Evidently, their images in the Hindu temples appear with wings. Some legends portray Ganas as gods' army, and Boothas as bodyguards and messengers, those who act upon commands by the gods.

b) Ethereals: Asurās, Rāktchasas and Pisāsas may be categorized as the enemies of gods. Most of the Hindu legends portray them as opposing powers against gods. Sometimes the first two groups are shown as the powers disturbing bakthās (believers) of gods when they worship, perform rituals and involve in meditations.

²⁹ Abbe J. A. Dubois, Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1943), p. 645.

Pisasas may be translated devils or demons. Hindus believe that the demons cause physical diseases and inflict plagues.³⁰ These demons have never lived in human form and have definite spheres of evil.³¹ This group should not be confused with ghosts.

The activities of Asuras, Raktchasas and Pisasas are often interpreted as god testing devotees.

c) Terrestrials: Prēta or ghost and Āvēsa or apparitions may be considered as demons or evil spirits. These kinds of demons are supposed to have originally been human beings, especially those who met with a sudden or violent death.³² In an interview with the present writer, a Hindu described the process of a man becoming a demon in these words:

God fixes a person's lifetime from his conception to his death. This period of one's life-span fixed by god is called pūrṇa āyusuor or full lifetime. Suppose he meets unnatural death earlier than the fixed years, his āvi or spirit will be wandering for an uncertain length of period, until his spirit gets a chance to be present before god. After his karma has been judged, he will be offered another birth according to his merits and/or demerits. This second birth is to fulfill the period of time he missed in his previous birth.

While his spirit wanders on the earth, it may be good or bad. It depends upon his desires, ambitions, the success and failures he had before he died.

³⁰R. J. Blackham, p. 87.

³¹Ibid.

³²Popular Hinduism, p. 5.

This common belief is held by most Hindus. They believe that such spirit may take its abode where its body died or a place it loved most. It may possess whom it loved or those who got scared while it appeared in front of them.

All other spirits except the Ganas listed above are temporary beings. They may be destroyed by gods or may be controlled by those humans who have special gifts of exorcism, given or obtained from gods.

There is much uncertainty about the origin of Ganas, Asuras, Raktchasas and Pisasas. According to some Hindu literatures, they were created by Brahma from the stray drops that fell off during the creation of gods and human beings. Manu, a Hindu code of religious laws, states that they spring from the Prajapati.³³

Tantrism, A Spiritual Movement

The word tantra is of obscure origin, and its meaning is not established. The origin of Tantrism is unknown. Some hold it to be the most ancient cult of the original religion of the pre-Aryan inhabitants of India, and others view it as brought to India.³⁴

Both may be true. Since it has been founded on the worship of the female principle, it might be pre-Aryan. Since an influence of antinomian practices from China and Tibet can be traced in Tantric practices, it might have come partly from outside India.³⁵ It may also be possible to consider Tantrism as a combination of fertility cult,

³³ Benjamin Walker, The Hindu World: An Encyclopedia Survey of Hinduism, vol. 2 (New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, 1968), p. 214. Prajapati literally means "lord of creatures," frequent appellation of Brahma and other major gods.

³⁴ Benjamin Walker, 2:482-86.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 482.

animism of uncivilized people, and the worship of Sivasakti existing among the civilized people. And thus, Tantrism could also have originated entirely in ancient India.

A possible meaning of the word tantrā may be drawn from the transliteration of tantram, very commonly used among the South Indians. In Tamil, one of the South Indian languages, the word tantram stands for "cunning, magic, secret and mystery." The first two meanings are mainly secular, the last two are more religious. Therefore, the word tantrā may be translated mystery and tantric as mystic. Moreover, the Tantric philosophy's basic idea is to experience a mystical union with the Devi or goddess. The Tantric devotee thinks "I am Devi and none other. I am a form of sacchidananda (Siva) whose true nature is eternal liberation."³⁶

Tantrism emerged as a spiritual movement when Vedism was limiting religious authority to the Bramin caste. Tantrism has revolted against Aryan intrusion into the original religion of India and safeguarded equality of male and female which also was in danger of Aryan cultural influence. Therefore, Tantrism is both a spiritual movement and cultural revolutionary movement.³⁷ It is deeply rooted in Siva-saktism, the ancient religion of the original inhabitants of India.

Siva-Saktism, the Cradle of Tantrism

The dual characteristics of the Hindu gods, the contemplative and the active, the reigning and conquering, the mediating and the militant, are nowhere so prominent as in Siva and his consort.³⁸

³⁶Heinrich R. Zimmer, p. 602.

³⁷Benjamin Walker, 2:484.

³⁸Ibid., p. 336.

Sakti equally shares the power of Siva. Tantrics directly worship the female principle.³⁹ This does not mean that they do not worship Siva. The importance of the female consort in Tantric practices stems from the fact that, according to Tantric doctrine, every woman is a sakti, that is, she embodies the secret, fundamental forces which control the universe.⁴⁰ This belief has retained woman's role as priestess in Sivasakti temples. Later, foreign elements of sexual union to attain a spiritual union seemingly intruded themselves into Tantrism.

Tantric discipline is not merely sexual as foreigners think. Sivism as well as Saktism teach that women are mothers and sisters, in order to respect the Great Mother Sakti. The Indian social system also observes this teaching in practice by calling a neighbour woman, "mother" or "sister."

Occasionally, the practice of sexual union for spiritual union occurs among the rituals of the extreme Tantrics. This practice has emerged from the personification of Sakti as a tender and devoted wife and conjugal partner of Siva.⁴¹ In practising this unusual ritual, the Tantrics show social consciousness of sexual purity. Only when and if a Tantric wants to do this ritual for his spiritual enlightenment, is he allowed to use his wife or to hire a girl and consecrate her as life-long partner for sexual-spiritual union.⁴²

³⁹Peter Brent, p. 231.

⁴⁰Omar V. Garrison, Tantra: The Yoga of Sex (New York: The Julian Press, 1971), pp. xxi-xxii.

⁴¹Benjamin Walker, 2:336.

⁴²Omar V. Garrison, p. 102.

However, classical Tantrism discourages this practice. Sri Ramakrishna, the Guru of Vivekananda, said:

There are three such kinds of discipline. One may regard woman as one's mistress or look on oneself as her hand maid, or as her child. I look on woman as my mother. To look on oneself as her handmaid is also good; but it is extremely difficult to practice spiritual discipline looking on woman as one's mistress. To regard oneself as her child is very pure attitude.⁴³

The ultimate purpose of Tantrics is seeking union with God himself, mainly with the female principle of God: They believe that the Mother Goddess holds riches and boons in reserve,⁴⁴ and Sakti is the means by which Siva bestows worldly pleasures and salvation.⁴⁵

The main emphasis in Sivism and Saktism is grace and love of God. Sivism teaches that by means of Siva's grace, the soul is released. The grace of Siva calms, purifies and elevates the soul.⁴⁶ The result of Siva's grace is the union with god. This union is characterized by love and symbolized by conjugal love.⁴⁷ Kali, another aspect of the Mother Goddess Sakti, is a fierce fighter against demons, yet she is also depicted as a dispenser of grace.⁴⁸

Tantrics believe that the love and grace of Siva-Sakti can be realized by the union with the goddess. It may be worth noticing that this grace and love concept in Sivasaktism is not apparent in Vedic

⁴³Heinrich R. Zimmer, p. 682.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 598.

⁴⁵Carl Olson, "The Siva Mystic and The Symbol of Androgyny," Religious Studies, 17 (September 1981):378-79.

⁴⁶Manikkavacakar, The Tiruvagam of Manikka Vasagar, trans. G. U. Pope, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), 10:23.

⁴⁷Ibid., 27:8 and 49:23.

⁴⁸J. A. Hutchison, p. 176.

religion.⁴⁹ This may be one of the reasons why most scholars in Hinduism who search for sources in Vedic literature, conclude that Hinduism lacks the idea of grace and love of God.

Sivism and Saktism point out that spiritual union can be attained by spiritual techniques. These techniques are called yoga, mainly used by the Tantrics.

Yoga, a Technique of Spiritualism

Yoga is believed to be a way by which one may achieve spiritual nature through an eightfold series of steps. These demand full participation of both body and mind.⁵⁰

The word yoga properly means "union." The principle meaning of the term is the effective union of the human being with the Universal Being.⁵¹ A writer on Hindu doctrine states: "Only the esotericists attempt to make up for their own lack of doctrine by fanciful inventions, and looked upon yoga as a method for developing the latent powers of the human organism."⁵²

Yoga, in a broader sense means marga or 'ways,' and in a restricted sense it stands for mysticism. Hinduism teaches four yogas or margas are necessary to realize one's spiritual nature and to have

⁴⁹Richard Lannoy, The Speaking Tree: A Study of Indian Culture and Society (Bombay and London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 206.

⁵⁰J. A. Hutchison, p. 169.

⁵¹Rene Guenon, Introduction to the Study of the Hindu Doctrine, trans. Marco Pallis (London: Luzac & Co., 1945), p. 261.

⁵²Ibid., p. 262.

union with god. They are Jnāna yōga, Bhakti yōga, Karma yōga and Rāja yōga.⁵³

Jnāna yōga is a direct experience of contemplative intellectual vision of the One Supreme Reality.⁵⁴ It needs the help of vidyā or 'wisdom' (note, vidyā is feminine gender) which comes from a revelation of god and needs ascetic discipline of life.

Bhakti yōga insists on personal devotion to cultivate a love for one's personal god. It requires trust in god, rituals and meditations. The word bhakti stands for piety, faith and obedience.

Karma yōga means both ritual and moral deeds. Unlike Bhakti yoga, the rituals in Karma yoga are considered Samskāra or Consecration or Sacrament.⁵⁵ In Bhakti yoga the rituals are related to worship. The Samskaras are observed during any of the transitional phases in the life of a Hindu from the cradle to the grave. These sacraments includes mantrās or incantations, auspicious times and specified visible elements. Besides samskāra, Karma yoga insists on dharma or alms giving, helping, being kind, loving people and leading a good moral life.

Rāja yoga (rāja means mind) involves mind control and serious meditation which result in getting a vision of one's personal deity.

Besides these four spiritual techniques, Hatha yoga is distinguished for its emphasis on physical exercises and control of the body.⁵⁶ Frequently, it joins with the Raja yoga.

⁵³Peter Brent, p. 13.

⁵⁴J. A. Hutchison, p. 165.

⁵⁵Benjamin Walker, 2:315.

⁵⁶J. A. Hutchison, p. 169.

Yoga and Yogis

Since there are different types of yōgas, there are also yogis of different kinds. Presently, most yogis practice a combination of Bhakti, Raja and Hatha yogas. No matter whatever means they use to become yogis, basically they need to practice sāmyama or inner discipline which includes dhāraṇa (concentration) dhyāna (meditation) and samāohi (trance).⁵⁷

By practicing sāmyama, yogis get vibhūtis or 'attainments.' The term vibhūti refers to siddhi or supernatural powers, since siddhi stands for a stage of attainment. The vibhūtis or siddhis can be used for good and bad purposes.

The yogi who has attained perfection, his actions and results do not bind him, because he is free from desires. He works to do good and he does good, he does not care for results. But for ordinary men, who have not attained to that highest state, works are of three kinds: black or evil, white or good and mixed.⁵⁸

Therefore, Indian society knows both good and evil yogis. Some use their siddhis for sorcery, magic, spells and curses to bring ruins.⁵⁹ Others use them for exorcism, healing people and telling the future. According to the Karma concept, those yogis who use their siddhis for evil purposes, bring a curse on themselves that will be experienced in the next birth.

The siddhis attained through yogic practices may be considered charismata, since Hindus believe that they come from one's personal good god. These are freely given charismata and must be shared freely

⁵⁷Swami Nikhilananda, pp. 667, 674.

⁵⁸Swami Nikhilananda, p. 682.

⁵⁹Benjamin Walker, 2:324.

with the society. For example, good yōgis or sādhus never expect gifts for performing exorcism or healing. Instead, they will exhort the one who was helped to worship his god, give offering and help the poor.

Yoga in Popular Religion

Popular Hinduism considers Bhakti as the best means to obtain certain gifts from god, because it gives more opportunities for family people, whereas other yogas require an ascetic unmarried way of life. Another distinctive belief in popular Hinduism is that supernatural gifts may be hereditary or the result of natural endowment,⁶⁰ in other words, they are free gifts from god. Less often, Raja yoga is believed to be a means of obtaining special gifts.

Another way of attaining supernatural powers is by invoking spirits. By means of worship, reciting mantras and performing rituals, one's favorite deity is called upon to possess him and under the direct control of the deity, he attains supernatural powers.⁶¹

Certain men or women, who are thought of as having a special relationship with local deities, use the technique of invoking spirit possession to meet a need of an individual, family or community. After a person is possessed by his deity's spirit, he will be consulted for advice to begin a business, arranging a marriage, building a new house, deciding on village matters and so on.

⁶⁰Benjamin Walker, 2:394.

⁶¹G. R. Singh and David C. Scott, "Invoked Spirit Possession Among Some Tribals of Mid-India," The India Cultures Quarterly, 30 (1975):1, 2.

Temple priests and others who claim to have a special relationship with a certain deity, are involved in counseling, therapeutic function and spiritual leadership in a community.

We have discussed the idea of the relationship between god's spirit, man's spirit and evil spirits and then dealt with a brief investigation of the practices of mystical union with gods in order to obtain supernatural gifts.

The following section will take up the charismatic elements in Hindu practices.

CHAPTER III

CHARISMATIC ELEMENTS IN HINDU PRACTICES

Very seldom do most scholars apply the word charismata to Hindu practices of exorcism, faith healing, speaking tongues, future telling and other supernatural performances. In essence, there is no difference between the visible nature of the supernatural gifts claimed by Christian Charismatics and Hindu Charismatics. The following section describes some of the Hindu charismatic practices to help the reader understand their claims.

Hindu Charismata: Gifts or Techniques?

Words referring to supernatural powers in Hinduism are misleading. The word siddhi literally means "attainment," that is, attainment through sādhana or spiritual practice. Those who have attained siddhi through sādhana are called Sādhu, which literally means polite, calm or saint. The word vibhūti means holy power or attainment which can be gained through sāmyama or inner discipline of holding firm.¹

The terms siddhis or vibhūtis cannot be applied to charismata or gifts of grace in a Christian understanding. In spite of the weakness of these words, they clearly refer to supernatural gifts which are given by gods.

¹Friedrich Max Müller, The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy (New York and Bombay: Longman's, 1903), pp. 350-52.

The Tamil word varankal (gifts) derives from its singular form varam. It is equivalent to the Greek word charismata. The word varankal is applied only to the gifts of a god and is linked with the word arul or grace. Very often, the words arul and varam are combined together in Tamil literature, and thus become arulvaram or gracious gift. An alternate word arutcelvam or gracious treasure, stands for spiritual gifts. Arulvaram denotes specifically the supernatural gifts. Arutcelvankal, as per Tamil Hindu belief, are salvation, forgiveness, mental solace, peace, joy and happiness. Arulvarankal are special powers of exorcism, healing, oracle telling and other yogic powers. It includes also the special talents, wealth, health and remarkable service. The word arul is used as a verb, particularly to mean the giving of a god.

The Tamil translation of the Bible does not use any of these words in translating the Greek word charismata. Instead it uses an interpretive phrase āvikkuria varankal, which literally means 'gifts belong to spirit.' This phrase does not make any sense to a non-Christian, because, the word āvi is an euphemistic expression for ghost or evil spirit. For example, when a person behaves abnormally, people name him as "āvipidittu alaikiravan" (a mobile man possessed by evil spirit). If a person is possessed by a divine spirit, people tell that "avanmēl dēvi or sāmī irankivittathu" (a goddess or a god has descended on him). Hindus do not use the word āvi for divine spirit, instead they use personal names or general names of the deities.

Therefore, when Hindus use the word varankal or charismata, it does mean supernatural gifts coming from a god. One can notice that the

Sanskrit Vedas and Puranas use two words to refer supernatural powers, but do not mean 'gracious gifts.' Those two words vibhūti and siddhi, literally mean 'attainment.' It shows that the charismata idea, with the sense of a god's grace, is dominant in Sivism and Saktism. The idea of a god's grace in Vedic literatures is very difficult to define. However, Hindus view the supernatural gifts as charismata, not techniques.

Temples and Charismata

In an Indian village the temple is the heart of the community life. Each shrine, in the eyes of a Hindu, is the site of creation, the center of universe, and the one spot where salvation is most readily obtainable.² The temple is the place from which the immanent God is taking care of people. The majority of Hindus living in rural areas believe in the spectacular charismata and expect someone to perform such charismata. In this connection, it is well to bear in mind that India's population is still at least 75 percent rural and its worship is enveloped in Sivasaktism.

The temple sanctuary is also considered a zone of safety and freedom which evil cannot penetrate. This Hindu idea serves two purposes: First, to Sādhus or charismatics and Sanyasis or ascetics, temples serve as places for meditation without interruption from demons. Second, to the ordinary people, temples serve as counseling centers,

²David D. Shulman, Tamil Temple Myths: Sacrifice and Divine Marriage in the South Indian 'Saiva Tradition' (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 18.

places of healing and, as religious schools.³ When the Sadhus stay in a temple for a short period in their long pilgrimage in their way of life, they are available to people. They counsel, heal and teach devotees. At other times, the local priests will be available for such purposes.

The temple priest has a major role in the temple at the time of worship. He participates in the community life as a healer and as a middleman between man and the gods.⁴ Most scholars refer to these kinds of priests as shaman. Caution is necessary as far as its meaning of this term is concerned, since many understand shaman in the sense of an exorciser of spirits. Shaman, a Tunguz word, not only means exorciser of spirits⁵ but also means one who is excited, moved or raised.⁶ A priest is believed to be the one who is moved by a god and raised to be a communicator between god and community.

There are two kinds of shamans, the black and the white shamans. The black use underworld spirits; the white use heavenly spirits, namely the spirit of gods.⁷ The priests of Indian village temples and shrines are white shamans.

³Richard L. Brubaker, "Barbers, Washermen and Other Priests: Servants of South Indian Village and its Goddess," History of Religions, 19 (November 1979):129-31.

⁴Marc Cramer, The Devil Within (London: Howard & Wyndhom, 1979), pp. 30-31.

⁵E. G. Balfour, Cyclopedea of India, and of Eastern and Southern Asia, vol. 3 (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1885), p. 593.

⁶I. M. Lewis, Ecstatic Religion: An Anthropological Study of Spirit Possession and Shamanism (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 51.

⁷Robert J. Beck, "Some Proto-Psychotherapeutic Elements in the Practice of the Shaman," History of Religions, 6 (1967):325-26.

The primary function of a shaman or priest is to protect people from malignant external forces and help them when they are afflicted by such forces.⁸ They are charismatics when they use power from a god for the good of society; they are magicians when they misuse such power.

How do they demonstrate charismata? Dancing to music, listening and dancing to the song-narrative folk-lore of a local deity, performing rituals and inhaling incense-smoke are the means to invoke the spirit of god or goddess. It results in a trance.⁹ In this stage the shaman identifies himself with his deity. Speaking in tongues, taking fire in hands, showering himself with boiling water, and cutting his tongue are some of the signs to persuade devotees to accept him as their sami or deity. Once he demonstrated one of these signs, a shaman becomes the mouth-piece of deity.¹⁰ As a representative of the deity, he performs healing, promises good fortunes, foretells future and casts out evil spirits.¹¹

Some who claim to have special associations with his or her personal god, other than the accepted priest, also are acknowledged in Hindu society. Such individuals put up shrines to their favorite deities and perform spectacular, extraordinary works. However, such

⁸ Joseph Falky, "Shamanic Aspects of the Bruidhean Tale," History of Religions, 20 (May 1981):303.

⁹ Richard Lannoy, The Speaking Tree: A Study of Indian Culture and Society (Bombay and London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 192.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 201.

¹¹ For detailed information see G. R. Singh, "Invoked Spirit Possession Among Hindus in Mid-India," The India Cultures Quarterly, 33 (1978):9-25, and see also Edward B. Harper, "Shamanism in South India," South-western Journal of Anthropology, 13 (Autumn 1957):267-87.

charismatics normally keep a close relationship with the main deity of their village. They take part in temple dancing with local temple priest. They are thought to possess their favorite deities' spirits and serve their community by performing faith healing and oracles speaking, during the village temple festival.

Body-mind control techniques of yoga are unimportant to the above mentioned shamans. Shamans believe that they have been chosen directly by their deities and entrusted with supernatural powers. A criterion for village acceptance is that a shaman must demonstrate divine possession through supernatural powers. The present writer once witnessed a young boy and a girl undergoing a state of ecstasy and convulsions during a temple festival. He was told that the boy and girl would be future priest and priestess of the village temple and charismatics in their community.

This indicates that the rural Hindus place more importance on a god's voluntary possession to be a charismatic. The classical yoga school emphasizes man's voluntary possession of god's spirit in order to be a charismatic.

Holy Men and Charismata

All Hindu mystics are generally considered to be holy men, irrespective of their affiliations with religious sects and the training they may have. Either natural or trained holy men are believed to be men with charismata. It would be very difficult to classify Hindu holy men, since the nature of holy men from different traditions overlap each other. For example, an avatar or incarnation may also be a guru or teacher; a sanyasi or monk who renounced family ties may be a

siddha or one who has attained super-human powers. Hence, we will classify holy men for our convenience and better understanding, under five categories: Guru, Yōga, Avatār, Sanyāsi and Sādhu.

1. Guru, literally means teacher or preacher. Generally in the Hindu tradition, any person who teaches or preaches is considered a Guru. The people in India use a common phrase indicating that an academic teacher is also a Guru. The Tamil phrase is: "Māthā, Pithā, Guru Deivam"; it means "mother, father and teacher are (visible) gods." Not all the Gurus need to be ascetic but they must have good reputation, a good moral life and a firm faith in god.

In some cases, the idea of Guru involves the idea of his divinity and the idea of worshiping the Guru.¹² Only Gurus with special powers are revered and venerated, the higher ranking Gurus, that is, āchāryās (Sivite Gurus) and ālvārs (Vishnavite Gurus) generally practice asceticism, mysticism, mysticism and charismaticism. Their main role in the society as religious leaders is to teach people and to defend the faith of their religious sects. These religious leaders most often rise from the high-castes, namely Brahmins.

Sometimes, the Avatars also play the role of a Guru. Hinduism is able to tolerate such flexibility since it teaches that the creator-god has fixed one's action beforehand.

2. Yogi, is one who has spiritual experience or union with God. By the means of sāmyama or inner discipline. Yogis cut across any caste system and family relationship. A true Yogi attains eight

¹²Peter Brent, Godmen of India (London: Allen Lane the Penguin Press, 1972), p. 191.

vibhūtis or powers: yāma (restraints), niyama (subduing), āsana (posture), prānāyāmā (regulation of breathing), pratyahāra (abstraction), dhāraṇa (firmness), dhyāna (contemplation), and samādhi (absorption).¹³

He can attain also eight siddhis or supernatural powers: anima (shrinking), mahima (expanding), laghima (weightlessness), garima (weightfulness), prāpti (power to transport his power to distance), karma-avasāyitva (perfect contentment), vasitva (control all elements and creatures), and finally sitva (overlordship).¹⁴

Hindus believe that Yogis know both the past and future, understand the language of birds and animals, obtain the strength of an elephant, send the soul to another body, move to celestial and the like.¹⁵

Siddhi and vibhūti are interchangeable words. If siddhi means attainment, vibhūti may mean manifestation of supernatural powers.¹⁶ If vibhūti means attainment, siddhi may mean manifestation or supernatural powers.

In popular Hinduism, sāmyama is not the only way to obtain supernatural powers; the path of devotion itself is yoga.¹⁷ Therefore, a shaman may be also classified as a yogi since he claims to have the power of goddess Sakti to perform supernatural powers.

¹³F. Max Müller, p. 350.

¹⁴Benjamin Walker, The Hindu World: An Encyclopedia Survey of Hinduism 2 vols, (New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, 1968), 2:394.

¹⁵Max Müller, pp. 351-52.

¹⁶Benjamin Walker, 2:394.

¹⁷Heinrich R. Zimmer, Philosophies of India (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1953), p. 596.

3. Siddha, is the one who attained siddhi by means of sādhana, a method of attaining enlightenment or knowledge. Sādhana can refer also to sāmyama. The common characteristics between Yogis and Siddhas create a confusion in classification. Yet, certain differences may be noticed in their tradition and relationship with the society.

Yogis mainly practice jnāna yōga and hatha yōga, whereas Siddhas practice mainly bhakti yōga and rāja yōga. Some individuals may go through other yogas too.

Regarding relationship with society, Yogis very seldom move from place to place and mostly separate themselves from people. But, siddhas move with the people to teach them and help them with native medicine and extraordinary powers. Another important difference is that people go to Yogis but siddhas come to people.

4. Avatar, literally means 'descent' and refers to incarnation. God taking avatar is the fundamental theology of the Vishnavism. Vishnavites believe that their god Vishnu took ten avatars.¹⁸ Literally, innumerable avatars are claimed and celebrated by Vishnu's devotees. The first kind of avatar is that a god taking the form of human being or the form of an animal. The second kind of avatar is a dead man's soul taking rebirth. Seemingly, the belief in avatars has its origin in the concept that god's soul in man is eternal.

In this connection, it should be remembered that the Sivites emphasize theophany of their deities Siva and Sakti, rather than avatar.¹⁹

¹⁸J. A. Hutchison, Paths of Faith (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), pp. 179-81.

¹⁹Charles J. White, "The Sai Baba Movement: Approach to the Study of Indian Saints," The Journal of Asian Studies 31 (August 1972): 865.

The devotees of Siva and Sakti apply the word avatar to a man or woman, only at time when possessed by their deities. Presently, most Sivites believe in a god's avatar mainly because of the Vishnavite influence.

The role of avatars is to lead the people to faith and to save people from the evil spirits. Avatars use charismata to prove that they are divine and to help the needy people. Some avatars play the role of Guru.

Sathya Sai Baba, who is believed to be a living avatar, godman and saint, teaches a syncretic religion and performs miracles.²⁰ Many Hindus believe that he is a combination of a god's avatar and a man's re-incarnation. His god's avatar is Vishnu and his re-incarnation or man's avatar is that of Sai Baba of Shirdi, North India. This Shirdi Sai Baba, who is now deceased, is believed to have taken avatar in the form of present Sathya Sai Baba, now living in Andhrapredesh, South India. He is a living example for the Hindu belief of two kinds of avatar.

5. Sanyasi, literally means monk, one who detaches himself from family ties and lives an ascetic life. Ascetics mainly follow the bhakti yoga and rāja yoga. Such asceticism might have grown from the pre-Aryan Siva worship since Siva is portrayed as the Master of Ascetics,²¹ and the Author of Yogas.²² This has been the reason for Sivite ascetics outnumbering the ascetics of any other Hindu denomination.

²⁰A. S. Raman, "Baba Andi," The Illustrated Weekly of India, 102 (March 15-21, 1981):35-37. See also: Charles S. J. White, pp. 863-78.

²¹Charles S. J. White, pp. 864-65. ²²F. Max Müller, p. 348.

Ascetics generally do not work but get their daily bread from Hindu families and temples. Sanyasis' main role in the society is to help the people to grow spiritually. They do it by teaching through stories and folk lores, and by witnessing to a god's helping people in a miraculous way. Ascetics are characteristically wanderers and pilgrims. Some Sanyasis claim that they have supernatural powers.

6. Sādhu, is a general term for saint and refers to those who have attained siddhi. Most often the term Sādhu is confused with the word Sanyāsi. Moreover, this term can be applies to Gurus, Yogis, Siddhas, Avatars and Sanyasis. Sadhus may be described in the words of Richard Lannoy:

It is precisely these men, liberated from the confinements of caste, no longer tied down to a constricted existence in one place, no longer burdened with economic and family responsibilities, learned in the heritage of literature and metaphysics, who have been the main culture-bearers in India since ancient times.²³

Sadhus can be distinguished from all other holy men in terms of their education and intellectuality. The life style of Sadhus is also different from other groups of holy men. Sadhus dress neatly covering their whole bodies, whereas Siddhās, Yōgis and Sanyāsis merely wrap a small piece of cloth around their waist to just cover the sexual organ.

Sadhus lead an ascetic life but are involved in all the spheres of society life; in other words they live with and for the people. Their main role in the society is teaching religion and defending the culture, religious heritage and faith. Supernatural charismata are

²³Richard Lannoy, p. 210.

seldom practiced among Sādhus. Only a few Sādhus involve themselves in yoga techniques, especially bhakti yōga and rāja yōga.

If Hindus believe the supernatural gifts are from gods and manifested through Gurus, Yogis, Siddhas, Avatars, Sanyasis and Sadhus, and if the powers are good, what can be said about the magic and occultism?

Magic and Occultism

Magic and Occultism permeate Indian life and they are considered enemies by Hindu charismatics. Performing magic is considered a charisma only if this is used for entertaining people. Otherwise, they are evil magics or black magics assisted by the evil spirits. Those who do the black magic are called māntrikan which literally means that one who twist the mantrā. In other words, the man who twists the divine formula into evil formula to cause harmful things is māntrikan. This idea of misusing divine gifts evidently derives from the concept of conflict between gods and demons.

Both Vedic and Puranic literatures contain many legends about the rivalry between gods and the demons.²⁴ Some legends display the Hindu belief that demons can also win boons through meditation and propitiating gods. Since the given boons should not be withdrawn by gods, some other way must be found to stop demons from misusing those

²⁴Cornelia Dimmit and J. A. B. van Buitenen, eds. and trans., Classical Hindu Mythology: A Reader in the Snaskrit Puranas (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978), pp. 306-7.

boons against devotees. One way of dealing with demons by a god seems to be taking avatar or getting help from other gods.²⁵

Most scholars think that the end of demons in Hinduism is death and its result is salvation for the devotees of gods.²⁶ But, another distinctive point of view in Hinduism is that there is salvation for the repented demons.²⁷ For example, a demon defeated by Siva later became an ornament around Siva's neck since that demon asked for Siva's mercy. Murugan, the son of Siva and Sakti removed a curse a demon had when the demon pleaded Muruga's mercy. This demon later became his vahana or vehicle in the form of a peacock.

This idea of salvation for demons is based on the concept of universal salvation and the dualistic idea of co-existence of opposite powers, that is, god and demons, and good and evil.

In the light of the above mentioned ideas of demons, magic seems to have two dimensions: a) After obtaining extraordinary powers from god, those powers can be used for good and evil purposes.²⁸ b) By possessing a demon under one's control through the help of the power of god, the demon can be used for good and evil purposes.²⁹

²⁵David D. Shulman, pp. 322-27.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 319-20.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 328-37

²⁸Benjamin Walker, 2:350.

²⁹Abbe J. A. Dubois, Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1943), p. 138.

There are four magical powers obtainable by Siddhas:³⁰

1. Shiwa, a power to prevent misfortunes befalling oneself or others. It also includes the power of guarding against illness, and of prolonging the life-span.

2. Gyaispa, is a power to secure prosperity, fame, progeny and knowledge.

3. Bangwa, is a power to control spirits, to influence man and animals, and to animate objects.

4. Dragpo, is a terrible magical power to cause natural calamities, create enmity between human beings, to kill and destroy, and to cause physical disabilities.

The means to obtain the above magical powers is mantrās or consecrated formulas or incantations. The gods as well as demons can be controlled by such mantras.³¹

Very often the words mantram or tantram are applied to magic. But there is no specific word for occultism. Those who practice occultism and/or black magic are called māntrikan. The word occult means "hidden, secret, sinister, dark or mysterious."³² This term can be applied in general to extrasensory experiences.

In Hindu religion, occultism is closely related to the ancestral worship. Hindus believe that the spirit of a dead person may be

³⁰Omar V. Garrison, Tantra: The Yoga of Sex (New York: The Julian Press, 1971), p. 150.

³¹Abbe J. A. Dubois, pp. 138-40.

³²Kurt E. Koch, Demonology Past and Present (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1973), p. 11.

benevalant³³ or harmful which depends upon one's karma, the previous karma of the spirit or the present karma of the person who is affected by a spirit.

Occultism in Hinduism is mainly used for telling oracles.³⁴ The āvesa or ghost of a dead person is invoked by mantras and propitiated by food and drink. The ghost is believed to answer through a lizard, crow or through its relative by taking possession of him.

To summarize, the Hindu belief on supernatural powers in man is prominent among the Hindus. Since they believe those powers are given freely by gods they may be considered charismata. Charismata includes supernatural powers as well as material prosperity and special talents. Charismata in Hinduism have two sides, that is, their availability and attainability. In other words, charismata can be attained by one who desires them or they can be given naturally. Both can be abused. If charismata are abused and misused they are considered coming from demons. Magic is also considered as a charisma if its source is a deity and is used for good purpose. Likewise, if a good āvesa is used in occultism it is considered a charisma.

Similarities and Dissimilarities

There is a considerable number of similarities and less dissimilarities in Christian and Hindu charismaticism, especially in India. Some beliefs about spiritual gifts and most of the practices of so-called supernatural powers, namely, exorcism, speaking in tongues, faith healing and oracle telling are seemingly identical.

³³Dimmit and van Buitenen, pp. 340-42.

³⁴Richard Lannoy, pp. 201-202.

Employing the Word "Charismata"

Generally, the charismatics in Christianity and Hinduism apply the word charismata³⁵ to any extraordinary powers with good end. Both groups believe that the gifts are given to individuals by the grace of God. Arul and kirupai are the two words in Tamil, specifically attributed to God's grace. If a Hindu charismatic uses his power to harm somebody, people would say, "kēdu Kālam vanthatu" (bad time has come). By saying this, they indicate that such charismatic is controlled and guided by some evil spirits, and thereby he is at his bad time.

The phrase kēdu kālam includes one's bad karma at present birth, and bad life-time to come in his next birth. The word Kētu, a name of a mythical planet believed to cause descending nodes and the eclipse of the moon,³⁶ may be the root for the term kēdu.

The idea of misuse of special powers is not alien to the Scriptures. There were spirits (Lev. 20:27; 2 Kings 23:24; Jer. 27:9) and false prophets (Jer. 6:13; 27:14) and they were punished (Jer. 28:1-17). Charismatics today also realize their accountability for God's gift and also the possibility of misusing spectacular gifts.

Hindus apply the word varam to special talents, remarkable service to the society, wealth, health and material welfare. For his great service to India, for example, Gandhi is praised as mahātma or

³⁵Tamil Christians in India use the phrase avikkuria varankal which literally means 'spiritual gifts.' Tamil Hindus use the term varankal. The Christians in India have supplemented the adjective 'avikkuria' as to show a difference.

³⁶C. J. Fuller, "The Calenderical System in Tamilnadu (South India)," Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1 (1980):53.

super-human and avatār or incarnation. The charismatics in Christianity in India do not apply the word charismata for ministries in the Church and other non-spectacular gifts of individuals, even though the Scriptures speak diversely of gifts as charismata.

Charismata in Practice

Speaking in tongues, healing power, exorcism and oracle-telling are prominent practices among the charismatics in Hinduism and Christianity.

a) Speaking in tongues: In Hinduism, only the shaman type of charismatics demonstrate this unintelligible glossolalia as an initial proof for spirit possession.³⁷ Other types of Hindu charismatics claim that they can understand foreign languages not known to them. Sai Baba is believed to understand and communicate in foreign languages which he does not know.

The utterances of syllables and words of shamans during his trance, sound similar to the so-called Christian glossolalia. It is accompanied by overt behavior such as shaking and seizure of the body by convulsions. After this primary demonstration of spirit possession, a shaman utters the oracles. Oracles or inspired utterances are believed to be the direct words of the possessing deity which resides temporarily in the throat of a shaman.³⁸

The Christian charismatic practice of speaking in tongues does not display any spectacular difference from the glossolalia of a shaman.

³⁷G. R. Singh and David Scott, "Invoked Spirit Possession Among Some Tribals of Mid-India," The Indian Cultures Quarterly 30 (1975):31.

³⁸G. R. Singh, Indian Cultures Quarterly 33 (1978):21.

Only the sounds and syllables in glossolalia vary according to one's own language and accent. Obviously, spiritual songs introduce an atmosphere to bodily expressions and a trance state followed by speaking in tongues.³⁹ Those who are in favor of speaking in tongues in the Church, call it "free vocalization."⁴⁰

When comparing speaking in tongues in both religions, one may find similar elements in charismatic practices. The function of speaking in tongues in a group seems to be complementing the purpose of proving spirit possession.

The explicit difference between Hindus and Christian charismatic practices of speaking in tongues is the name of the deity meditated and called upon.

b) Healing by prayer: Healing without medication is a common phenomenon among the Hindus. Apart from the Hindu charismatics, each village in India has specialists for certain diseases. These specialists possess such healing capacities by inheritance. Ordinarily, such powers are claimed to be the gifts given to one particular family by its family deity.

Other faith healers in Hinduism use mantra or mystical formula/incantation, yantra or amulet, vibhuti⁴¹ or sacred ash and

³⁹Bennetta Jules-Rosette, "Ceremonial Trance Behavior in an African Church: Private Experience and Public Experience," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 19 (March 1980):1-15.

⁴⁰Vern S. Poythress, "Linguistic and Sociological Analyses of Modern Tongues-speaking: Their Contributions and Limitations," The Westminster Theological Journal, 2 (Spring 1980):366-88.

⁴¹Vibhuti literally means attainment and stands for super powers and sacred ash.

margosa⁴² leaves for healing purposes. Laying hands on sick persons, marking with ash on forehead, and sprinkling teertam or holy water are more familiar practices.

Most diseases are considered to be inflicted by evil spirits. Mantra is used as prayer which includes the names of god and/or goddess, praise to gods and applications. The diseases that are dealt with by the Hindu charismatics, range from ordinary headache to abnormal cancer⁴³ and to animal diseases.⁴⁴

The charismatics among Indian Christians perform so-called healing miracles which are very similar to Hindu charismatic practices. Prayer, marking a cross with oil on the sick person's forehead, laying on of hands, issuing a cross or picture of Jesus and prayer cards are the replacements for Hindu techniques. Some faith healers in America distribute amulets such as a cross made of olive wood from Palestine, a piece of cloth and metal pieces inscribed with the name of Jesus, so that a healed person may use them to protect himself from the evil spirits. The present writer has personally witnessed such practices.

Religious exhortations, moral advice and confession of sins are also common to both groups of charismatics. However, the Hindu charismatics do not insist on confessing sins and repentance. Instead,

⁴²Margosa is a neem tree with bitter leaves. It is considered to be an aspect of goddess. Its partner is pipal tree, an aspect of male god. Suppose, if these two trees grow adherently they are believed to be more beneficiant. The young girls circumambulate it to get husbands and childless parents to get children. Using margosa leaves and vibhuti is the most common practice among the ordinary and extraordinary charismatics.

⁴³Charles S. J. White, p. 878.

⁴⁴Edward B. Harper, p. 275.

they advise people to make an offering to the temples and to perform special pūja or worship. In Hinduism, these two rituals are considered to be the expressions of repentance.

Seemingly, there are no explicit differences between both religious charismatics in executing their healing powers, with an exception of the divine names used. Both groups insist on the faith of the sick persons that he will be cured.⁴⁵

c) Exorcism: Like other supernatural powers, exorcism is also a worldwide and age-old phenomenon. Most religious people believe in the existence of the demons as the powers that provoke evil among men.

The concept of gods fighting against the demons has wide currency in Hindu literatures. Specifically, stories about Siva and Sakti destroying demons are comparatively more frequent than those of any other Hindu gods. In the beginning of the time, Siva stood on the demon, the monstrous serpent Vasuki, and held it in one of his hands.⁴⁶ It is considered to be the first conflict between a god and a demon. We assume that the exorcism began in the ancient Sivasaktism and then spread through Vedism to all other Hindu religious sects.

Most of the Hindu exorcists have their affiliations with Sivasaktism of popular Hinduism. They believe that the demons are afraid of a true devotee of Siva and Sakti.

Hindu charismatics use many techniques to cast out demon spirits such as animal or bird sacrifice to pacify the demons, consecrated

⁴⁵J. Gonda, Vishuism and Suvaism: A Comparison (London: The Athlone Press, 1970), pp. 125, 132.

⁴⁶Edward B. Harper, pp. 275-76.

formulas, nailing on a tree in the forest,⁴⁷ chasing away demons⁴⁸ and so on. All these techniques for casting out demons must be accompanied with the use of the names of familiar gods.

Charismatics among the Christians also practice exorcism. They interpret ordinary physical and emotional problems such as bad temper, pains all over the body, bad dreams, irregular periods in women, miscarriages and similar diseases, as the signs of demon possession.⁴⁹

Prayers and giving commands in the name of Jesus are common practices of exorcism by Christians. Some Christians practising exorcism use the Bible and a cross as tools for casting out the demons. One of the major differences from the Hindu exorcism is the absence of sacrifice and other dramatic rituals.

d) Oracle telling: Among the Hindus, oracle telling takes place at homes or temples. This widespread practice has diverse forms. For example, palm-reading and astrology are considered to be mathematical calculations although their purpose seems to be a kind of predicting. But most Hindus do not make distinctions between oracle telling and other forms of forecasting techniques.

However, an oracle teller is different than other fortune tellers because he delivers oracles after possessing his deity's spirit.⁵⁰

⁴⁷It symbolizes that the demon is nailed to death. Hindus believe that it may come alive if the nail is removed.

⁴⁸A symbolic chasing in which the exorcist or shaman believed to be casting demons to their place, namely, graveyard and binding them by drawing a symbolic fence on the ground.

⁴⁹W. H. Hollenweger, The Pentecostals, (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1977), p. 378.

⁵⁰Richard Lannoy, pp. 199-205.

Most often the temple priests or shamans play the roles of oracle tellers. The fortune tellers are consulted for various reasons, such as, making marriage alliances, beginning a business or trade, building a new house, to check with a deity whether one will have children or not, to find missing things or animals, and to learn the meaning of dreams. In most villages shamans are expected to tell oracles on issues of village programs, problems and decision making.

Christian charismatics in India also are involved in oracle telling, but not very often. Very few of those who claim special association with the Holy Spirit, practice oracle telling. However, one Christian woman known to the present writer, gets about ten people every day. Her audience are Hindus and Christians. She draws a cross on the floor, places an open Bible and lights a candle as preparation for oracle telling. Then she meditates silently for a few minutes and begins oracle telling to individuals. Her audience believes that she reads minds and reveals the reasons why an individual has come to her.

There is no uniform techniques involved in oracle telling among Christians. However, the Hindu and Christian oracle telling cannot be distinguished as far as the methods are concerned. The purpose of Hindu as well as Christian use of oracle seems to be to give some advice. The basic difference is the name of deity being used.

The Exposure of Charismatics

Life style

The Old Testament refers to charismatic prophets who had distinctive dress and hair style (Num. 22:7; 1 Kings 22:1-6; 2 Kings 18). Distinctive dress to symbolize certain designation is not unusual in

the religious and secular world in India. Some of the Christian charismatic leaders in India wear long robes in a deep orange color; others were full suits when they lead a Charismatic convention.

Hindu charismatics have distinctive dress and hair style according to the particular tradition to which they belong. The obvious difference is that the Christian charismatics do not have a particular hair style. Most of the Hindu charismatics drop all family ties but the Christian charismatics do not.

Christian charismatics commonly carry a Bible when they are in public. The Hindu charismatics carry Hindu literature.

Most Hindu charismatics depend on temples and devotees for their daily bread, whereas the Christian charismatics take care of themselves. However, a few Christian charismatics receive financial assistance for their livelihood through donations from their followers and collections from the conventions.

Teachings

One of the major teachings among the Christian charismatics is that Baptism in the Holy Spirit with an initial outward sign of speaking in tongues is necessary.⁵¹ The inward change called for in spirit baptism is accompanied with stress on moral perfection.⁵²

⁵¹Larry Christenson, The Charismatic Renewal Among Lutherans, (Minneapolis, MN: Lutheran Charismatic Renewal Services 1976), p. 48.

⁵²Hans Jacob Froen, "What is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit," Jesus, Where are You Taking Us?: Messages from the First International Lutheran Conference on the Holy Spirit, ed. Norris L. Wogen (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House 1973), pp. 126-27.

Among the Hindu charismatics there are different kinds of dīksha or initiation, which may be considered similar to spirit baptism.⁵³ In classical Hinduism, a proper diksha is given to a person, after certain yoga training and proof of his ability to perform wonder-works. In popular Hinduism, a person is considered to have the power of a god's spirit, when he speaks in tongues or does some other extraordinary signs in front of the people. The stress on moral perfection, even to the point of ascetic living, is the main consideration among the Hindu Charismatics.

Christian charismatics believe in supernatural and spectacular gifts of the Holy Spirit as a continuation of Jesus' compassionate ministry to those in need (Mark 16:17-18, 20; John 14:21). Hindu charismatics also believe that they have supernatural gifts from their gods which are used to help needy people. These gifts are considered to be the continuation of a god's performances during the time of a god's avatars and theophanies in the past.

Major differences may be discerned only in the use of such gifts. Some Hindu charismatics use the gifts with evil intentions whereas Christian charismatics believe that the Holy Spirit will not allow them to use His gifts for evil purposes.

Christian charismatics emphasize a "unity of the Spirit" and look forward to its full expression in a "unity of the faith."⁵⁴ In other words, they gravitate towards a special ecumenism of fellowship in an invisible unity.

⁵³Peter Brent, p. 17.

⁵⁴Theodore Junkuntz, A Lutheran Charismatic Catechism (New York: Bread of Life Publications 1979), pp. 13-16.

Hindu charismatics emphasize a kind of ecumenism among the Hindu religious sects and gravitate towards a universal brotherhood in terms of faith. "Ontrē kulam, Oruvanē Deivam," or "One-people-One-God" is a Tamil Sivite slogan that indicates such universal idea. Here also seemingly not much difference is found, except in the name of god connected with the faith of both the Christian and the Hindu charismatics.

Regarding charismatic gifts, the Christian charismatics expect every Christian to desire and pray for such gifts. But, in Hinduism the supernatural gifts are believed to be given to someone by a god or obtained through a procedure called sāmyama which includes concentration, meditation and trance. Sāmyama in Hinduism may be compared to Christian charismatics' mystic practices of fasting, praying, and waiting for the Holy Spirit.⁵⁵ Again, the difference is the god to whom they pray or meditate.

Christian charismatics claim that the manifestation of spiritual gifts exemplify and authenticate the Church's proclamation that Jesus is Lord, bringing glory to the Father.⁵⁶ This claim is scriptural. But in practice, their claim does not remove the danger of bringing glory to the person through whom the seeming supernatural gifts are manifested.

So also, Hindu Charismatics are expected to perform supernatural powers with nishkāmakarma or deed without desire. In other words, they are expected to direct people who are benefited by supernatural gifts, to worship and glorify their deities and to bring offerings of

⁵⁵W. V. Grant, Searching for the Supernatural (Dallas, TX: Grant's Faith Clinic, n.d.), pp. 1-28.

⁵⁶Larry Christenson, p. 75.

thanksgiving. Yet, there is evidence that some Hindu charismatics are revered as gods.

Christian charismatics in India claim that they are very loyal to the Church, to dignitaries and pastors.⁵⁷ But in practice, some charismatics form their own circle of fellow believers, worship together outside the Church, and conduct faith healing conventions without the local congregation's involvement. In the same way, some Hindu charismatics build their own ashrams⁵⁸ to facilitate their followers to come and participate in bhajans⁵⁹ and to bring sick people to be healed. This practice is accepted by the classic and popular Hinduism. The Hindu charismatics do not conduct conventions as such for faith healing.

Since non-Christians in India do not see much spectacular differences between the Hindu and Christian charismatic practices, the suggested purpose of using spectacular gifts in the name of Jesus for the glory of the Father, is often not apparent. Unless the Christians charismatics convince the non-Christian population that the charismata of the Holy Spirit are distinctive, the use of their seeming spectacular gifts is of little lasting spiritual benefit.

Above all Christian Charismatics need to be much more concerned to bring the message of salvation through faith in Christ to their

⁵⁷V. M. David, Interview with C.A.C.S., Madras, The South India Churchman, (March 1977), pp. 5, 9.

⁵⁸Ashram is a secluded dwelling place of Hindu saints; 'a' means 'toward,' and 'shrama' means religious experience. It is a place for mystical practices and worships.

⁵⁹Bhajan stands for a form of worship, especially a group of people praising their deity by songs. Occasionally, a homily is delivered by the leader of the bhajan.

community, rather than to emphasize Charismata. This is one of the urgent needs of the Christian Church in India.

PART THREE

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER I

UNDERSTANDING THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Holy Spirit and His Gifts

A general trend among Christian charismatics is to compartmentalize their sacramental Baptism and born-again experience in what they call "the mature expression of faith."¹ As a consequence of their emphasis on the mature expression of faith, they expect a special emotional experience of a mystical association with the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues as an initial sign, and other spectacular gifts as an assurance of the work of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life. Regarding the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, they teach that "the Holy Spirit is with everyone . . . to convict him of his sins . . . In the Baptism of the Holy Spirit the Spirit is upon us. Before this experience the Holy Spirit is in us; after this experience it is we who are in the Spirit. This is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit."²

The Scriptures say that in baptism our sins are washed away (Acts 22:16). Thereby we participate in the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 6:3-6), and put on Christ (Gal. 3:26, 27). In fact,

¹Theodore Jungkuntz, A Lutheran Charismatic Catechism (New York: Bread of Life Publications, 1979), p. 8.

²Hens Jacob Froen, "What is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit," Jesus, Where Are You Taking Us? Messages from the First International Lutheran Conference on the Holy Spirit, ed. Norris L. Wogen (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1973), p. 118.

baptism saves men as it is founded on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:21) through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:4-8). Baptism is "God's pressure on the Church, as it is on the believer, to seal what has happened through the Gospel . . . Baptism and the gift of the Spirit belong together."³

In the mysterious event of Baptism, the Holy Spirit leads man to a realization of his total spiritual depravity and his complete dependence on Christ (Matt. 18:1-4; 1 Peter 2:2) for his salvation and eternal life in Jesus Christ. The faith of those who come into belief "is not man's work but the work of the Holy Spirit operating in man through Gospel and Sacrament."⁴ Therefore, an infant also needs to be baptized to receive the blessing of salvation in order that "it may be redeemed from sin, death and the devil, that it may become a member of Christ (the New Covenant) and that it may come into Christ's Kingdom and Christ becomes its Lord (1 Peter 3:21).⁵

Baptism with the Holy Spirit is an experience that occurs in a slightly different form in the New Testament (Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:5; 11:16 and so forth). Jesus' promise of baptizing with the Holy Spirit is a general promise (Acts 1:4, 5), not only to the 120 followers but also to all those who heard the Word (Acts 10:44-46). All those who

³F. D. Bruner, A Theology of the Holy Spirit (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1980), p. 60.

⁴Edmund Schlink, Theology of the Lutheran Confessions, trans. P. F. Koehneke and H. J. A. Bouman (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978) p. 178.

⁵Ibid.

confess that Jesus is Lord have the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3) and thus their confession itself is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit and the result of His work in their hearts. The power of the indwelling Spirit and His gift of inherent faith are permanent and continuous, according to the promise of Jesus Christ (John 14:26). His promise is for every man either infant or adult (John 16:7-11).

Baptism of the Holy Spirit is an inherent experience to all believers since He is dwelling in the hearts of them. Unless the Spirit works in the hearts of individuals the realization of their relationship with God cannot be experienced. But, the experience in most cases does not result in an audible and/or dramatic display. Whether the Spirit creates a sparkling experience in one's heart or a quiet experience in another heart, His ultimate goal is to lead men to be born again through faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:8; see also 1 Cor. 12:3).

Regarding spiritual gifts, the Charismatics hold the view that the "Spiritual gifts are concrete manifestations of the Holy Spirit whom the believers have received. The manifestations of these gifts exemplify and authenticate the Church's proclamation that Jesus is Lord, bringing glory to the Father."⁶ The gifts of administration, helping, giving and teaching are normally spoken of as more ordinary gifts.

This idea indicates that Charismatics ignore what the Scriptures say about the relationship of pneumatikoi or spiritual men (1 Cor. 2:15; 3:2; 14:37; Gal. 6:1), pneumatika or spiritual gifts/things (1 Cor. 14:1) and charismata or gifts of grace/gifts (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:9). In the

⁶Larry Christenson, The Charismatic Renewal Among Lutherans (Minneapolis, MN: Lutheran Charismatic Renewal Services, 1976), p. 75.

light of the overall usage of these Greek terms in the New Testament, we may correlate them as follows:

The charismata of God's charis is eternal life freely given to those who believed in Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:22-23). Those who have salvation in Christ are the pneumatikoi, as a result of God's pneuma creating faith in them in Christ, and thus they are hearers of the Gospel as pneumatikoi (1 Cor. 2:13-15; compare 1 Thess. 1:6). A pneumatikos receives the pneumatika, faith, hope and love (1 Cor. 13:13). Faith, hope and love come freely from the source of God's charis in Jesus Christ; they are higher charismata (Rom. 5:1-17). Since they are given through the work of the pneuma they are pneumatika. The greatest charisma is agape, God's love in Christ (1 Cor. 13:13; compare 1 John 4:8-10).

Other specific gifts enumerated in the New Testament (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-10; Eph. 4:1; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8; 5:7 and so forth) are which God bestows on His pneumatikoi through the Holy Spirit to equip the Church to meet the world's need for the Gospel (Acts 8:58; 11:1-8; 13:1-3; 16:6-10).

To avoid any narrow understanding of these gifts, their purpose should be sought first, in the light of the Christo-centric nature of the Holy Spirit's function in the Church, and secondly, in the centrifugal nature of all other gifts that acquire proper meaning only when they support and serve the primary goal of proclaiming the Gospel and are used for the good of all (1 Cor. 12:7). God's greatest gift is eternal life in union with Christ (Rom. 6:23).

The Problem of Hindu and Christian Charismatics
in the Indian Context

The so-called supernatural manifestations of Hindu and Christian charismatics share common audible and visible characteristics. Some studies conducted among the Christian charismatics with regard to prophecy, faith healing and glossolalia, reveal identical elements in the Hindu charismaticism. Examples of such follow:

a) Propheying requires the public validation of a ceremonial authority.

b) Healing and exorcism are parts of a collectively enacted social drama. Successful cure is based on the public recognition that demonic trance has been replaced by spiritual inspiration.

c) Glossalalia are contributed by words blending and onomata-poetic references. Although the trance utterances are unintelligible, the final messages they transmit are thought to reinforce religious teaching. They are also imbued with social and political meaning when they are used to provide legitimacy for moral advice.⁷

One cannot simply deny the presence of the extraordinary spiritual gifts because of some social and/or psychological factors⁸ are involved in the charismatic practices. Some Christian scholars hold the view that at least some of the more spectacular charismata

⁷Bennette Jules-Rosette, "Ceremonial Trance Behaviour in an African Church: Private Experience and Public Expression," Journal of the Scientific Study of Religion, 19 (March 1980):1-13.

⁸Richard A. Hutch, "The Personal Ritual of Glossolalia," Journal of Scientific Study of Religion, 19 (September 1980):255-66.

ended with the apostolic age.⁹ The present writer believes in the continuation of the spiritual gifts according to the promise of Jesus (Luke 24:29; Acts 2:4). The Scriptures say that they are going to continue until they will be abolished () when comes the perfect thing () with the second coming of Jesus (1 Cor. 13:8-10, 12). No passage in Scriptures can be properly cited to show, for example, that glossolalia have ended.

Besides spectacular similarities between the Christian and Hindu charismatic performances, the Hindu understanding of supernatural gifts has some basic corresponding aspects. This may be verified after doing some degree of demythologization, but not defactualization. This demythologization is essential since Hinduism has developed much esoteric literature since 500 B.C. Moreover, many legends, stories, folklores, allegorical and symbolic speeches preserved in the form of oral tradition, have animated the Hindu doctrines through the ages.¹⁰

Basically, Hindus believe that all good spiritual gifts, material well-being, and good health are coming from one supreme being. This god is true, good and holy. The one word satya carries all three meanings.¹¹ Since the God is paramatman (supreme spirit) the gifts

⁹Douglas Jewish, An Evaluation of Claims to the Charismatic Gifts (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House 1978), pp. 13, 54, 62 and 63.

¹⁰See Classical Hindu Mythology: A Reader in the Sanskrit Puranas, ed. and trans. Cornelia Dimmitt and J. A. B. van Buitenen (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978), pp. 340-42. For figurative and symbolic expression of Hindu doctrine see Omar V. Garrison, Tantra: The Yoga of Sex (New York: The Julian Press, 1971), p. 97.

¹¹Robin H. Boyd, Kristadvita: A Theology for India (Madras: Christian Literature Society 1977), p. 39.

that come from Him are spiritual gifts, freely given varam (charismata) by the krupai or arul (grace) of God. In Hindu understanding, the pneumatikoi are those who have attained a state of having close association with god's spirit.¹²

Seemingly, both Christian and Hindu Charismatics realize that charismata may be manipulated or simulated by those who seem to have them and by those who are seeming beneficiaries.

Discernable similarities in Christian and Hindu charismaticism pave the way for hostility among the Hindus with regard to Christian charismatic phenomena, since Christian Charismatics criticize the Hindu Charismatics as being the devils' instruments. In addition, the seeming similarities create an enticing atmosphere for spiritually undernourished Christians to go to the Hindu Charismatics to meet specific needs. As mentioned earlier, there is a mutual exchange between some Hindus and Christians in approaching Hindu and Christian Charismatics for help.

¹² See pages 100-105 for different types of charismatics.

CHAPTER II

DISTINGUISHING HINDU, CHRISTIAN CHARISMATA

Since both Christian and non-Christian charismatics claim that spiritual gifts are of the spirit of god, it is essential to discern spirits (1 Cor. 12:10; 1 John 4:1-3; compare Jer. 29:18). To do this responsibly, one must understand the charismata.

The Charismata that Man Cannot Perform

The charismata of salvation and eternal life in Jesus Christ are manifested through the pneumatika of faith, hope and love. They are freely given in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

Hinduism does not consider faith, hope and love as the gifts, nor salvation and eternal life. Salvation is the final stage of one's birth-cycle; faith, hope and love are man's ways to salvation. Moreover, man's spirit is spoken of as being capable of attempting to attain these gifts, since his spirit is God's spirit. This basic difference is very important in distinguishing the so-called charismata in Hinduism and Christianity, because of the dependent nature of charismata

The Charismata that Man Cannot Receive by Himself

Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit to the individual Christian as God chooses. These gifts are servitudinal in nature and are to be supportive of the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ.

In view of the karma concept of Hinduism, supernatural gifts are rewards for good and meritorious life of a person's previous birth. As one's karma of previous birth predestines his fate for the present life, he may be helped by a good charismatic or affected by an evil charismatic. The same karma becomes the deciding factor in selecting a yoga as a means of attaining the stage of charismatic. In a nut-shell, karma decides the type and purpose of charismata.

The Charismata that Man Can Abuse

The Christian charismatic is a forgiven sinner together with his fellow believers. Because of his sinful nature, he may use the gifts contrary to the primary purpose of the Holy Spirit as the result of the work of Satan. The result of this is abuse of charismata, and an insult to the glory of God.

Even though Hindus believe in the relationship of evil spirits, black magic and harmful powers, according to the karma theory the evil spirits should be interpreted as the promoters of predestined karma of man. Certainly, Hinduism teaches that the evil spirits are the enemies of god. Yet, they are considered to be the aspect of co-existing power with god, and their finality would be salvation to have union with god. Sivites would say that everything is God's drama of good and evil.

Charismata that Can Misdlead Man

Misunderstanding of the nature and purpose of spiritual gifts has troubled the koinonia or fellowship of the Church (1 Cor. 14:33, 40). This is very true today in the Churches of India. Some charismatic performances have affected not only the koinonia but also the church's proclamation of the Gospel to the non-Christians.

Charismata in Hindu practices keep the people in spiritual darkness and make them comfortable under the dominance of spiritual slavery to the idol worship, self-righteousness, and the idea of terrifying re-births related to karma. A few comments on the nature of Hindu charismata:

a) The spirit behind the charismata leads man to carry the burden of ritualism and the slavery of demon worship. The true Spirit of God leads man to liberty (Rom. 8:15; 2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 5:18).

b) The spirit behind the charismata does not lead man to the truth. Because it tells man that good and evil come from the same god that have an inter-play in man's life. The true Spirit of God leads man to the eternal Truth in Jesus Christ (John 14:6; 16:13).

c) The spirit behind the charismata does not lead man to glorify the Name of Jesus. Instead, it makes man to deny Christ as his Lord. The true Spirit of God leads man to confess Jesus Christ, his lord (1 Cor. 12:3; compare Rom. 8:14).

d) The spirit behind the charismatics is not one and the same one. Some are considered good and others are terribly evil. The so-called good spirits' power can be manipulated by the evil spirits. This creates confusion in faith on god. The true Spirit of God always leads man to one faith, the faith in Jesus Christ.

e) The spirit behind the charismatics does not motivate them for the good of all. The presence of the true Spirit is shown in some way in each person for the good of all (1 Cor. 12:7).

All these negative aspects of the Hindu charismata prove that they are not coming from the True Spirit of God but from the spirit opposing the truth (2 Tim. 3:8, 9).

This study has dealt specifically with charismatic practice in Hinduism and in Christianity. A potential area of fruitful study would be to investigate the nature of the true motivating force at work in the so-called Christian charismatic movement and to see whether the so-called supernatural gifts in reality fulfill in a Biblical, God-pleasing manner the purpose for which any true spiritual gift is given. Such a study would be of special interest for the Indian context of charismata. It would need to be made by one very intimately conversant with life in the Christian churches in India.

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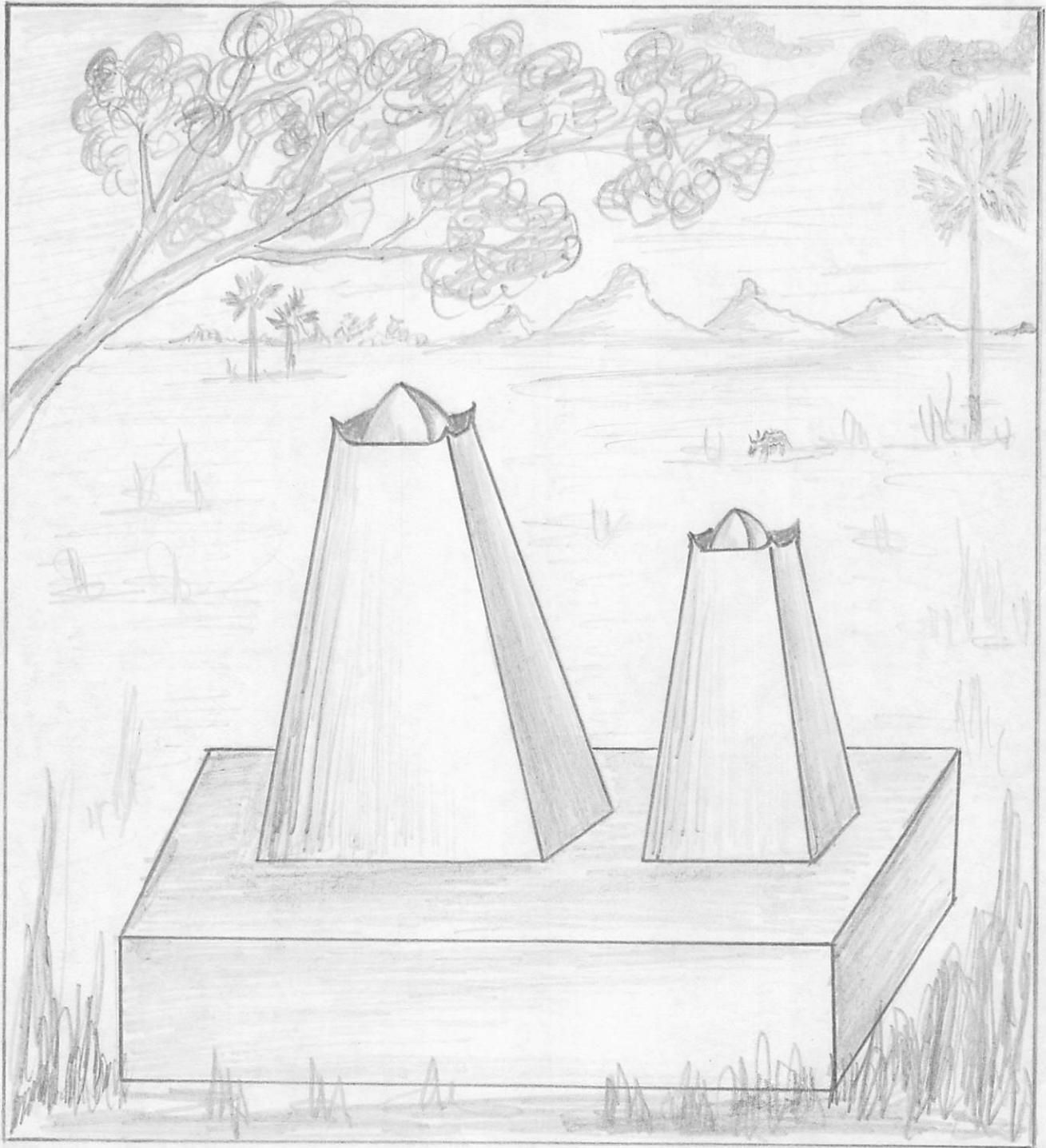


Figure 1

Idols of open-air shrine