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You Mean THAT'S in the Bible?

By Steven J. Rosen

Dedicated to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, who set the perfect example in his own life, by loving the Lord with all of his heart, soul, and mind. (see Matt. 22:36–40)

1) Introduction

Both read the Bible day and night. But thou read'st black where I read white.
William Blake

Everyone has some conception of Christianity, whether one is a believer or not. The Christian doctrine is amenable to many different interpretations and indeed, many have taken advantage of this amenability. As early as sixty-five years after the time of Jesus, for instance, Paul, who had never met Jesus, debated with the original Apostles in regard to Jesus' teaching: Paul taught that Jesus' advent freed the people from following the Old Law, that faith alone was required. Meanwhile, the Apostles taught that Jesus came to enforce the Old Law, and that faith without works is dead.

The faith/works polemic has been going on for centuries. And countless forms of "Christianity" have emerged as variations on this theme. The subject became so confused that by the time of Martin Luther (1483–1546) both faith and works were hard to find.

The Popes of the Renaissance epitomize this confusion. The deMedici Popes are considered the most debauched men in the history of religion. The original Pope John XXIII was deposed for "notorious incest, adultery, defilement, and homicide." In 1415, while still a chamberlain, he openly kept his brother's wife as a mistress. In an effort to squash the scandal, his superiors promoted him to cardinal and sent him to Bologna, where "two hundred maids, matrons and widows, including a few nuns, fell victim to his brutal lust." In 1484, Pope Innocent VIII was elected. He was nicknamed "the Honest" because he was the first Pope to acknowledge his illegitimate children publicly. This whole farce reached an unquestionable peak when, in 1724, the Roman Catholic Church banned the confessional requirement that men name their partners in

fornication when it was discovered that priests were actually making carnal use of the information.

Seeing the iniquities of the Papacy, Martin Luther proposed an egalitarian solution: "Each man should have his own divine right to interpret holy scripture." While this new version of Christianity released many believers from the dictates of insincere leaders, a new problem arose. Many would interpret the scriptures with some ulterior motive (both consciously and unconsciously). And this is the problem that exists today. Many are using the scriptures to rationalize baser habits, activities that God would never ordain.

Readers of this pamphlet – Christian and non-Christian – are advised to view the following with an open mind, possibly achieving a fresh outlook. The distinct feature of this work is that it is not beleaguered by vague or popular translations of the Bible. All Bible verses are rendered with reference to Reuben Alcalay's Complete Hebrew/English Dictionary for the Old Testament, and to Nestle's Greek/ English Interlinear for the New Testament. The importance of a word-for-word translation should not be underestimated. Ambiguous and aesthetically pleasing – but inaccurate – translations are at the heart of Biblical interpretive problems.

We are, of course, working with the premise that the Bible has not been drastically changed (this is obviously an important assumption when delivering textual criticism). Otherwise, all Biblical texts become meaningless. An opinion that is not uncommon.

Still, America is basically a Christian country, and all Christians base their conception of Christianity on the Bible. For such persons, this pamphlet should prove useful; with the exception of a few editorial notes, we will allow the Bible to speak for itself.

The ultimate purpose of this work, however, is to show the harmony that exists between the Bible and the more-ancient Vedic texts of India. The essential message of the Bible and the Vedas is one: to love the Lord with all of one's heart, soul, and mind. This message is revealed to different people according to time, place, and circumstance; based on these considerations, specifics may vary. Still, the essence remains the same – it is simply delivered according to the capacity of the audience.

For instance, that which is taught in a primary math course differs greatly from that which is taught on a higher level. In elementary mathematics, one is taught that larger numbers cannot be subtracted from smaller numbers. And this premise should be accepted by all who study basic arithmetic. However, in advanced mathematics, you learn that you can subtract larger numbers from smaller ones: the results are negative numbers.

Similarly, prophets and sages reveal religious truths selectively, for the benefit and gradual upliftment of their audience. And, on minor points, you may find that one prophet deprecates a certain activity, while another, from another tradition, endorses it.

In this way, persons of different cultures can advance gradually, according to their means. Revelation itself comes gradually. And the ultimate revelation is that religion is one – for God is one. If this short pamphlets can induce even one person to reach this conclusion, the author will have considered this work worthwhile.

2) You Are Not The Body

40) "There are also celestial (epourania: heavenly) bodies, and bodies terrestrial (epiyeia: earthly): but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another."

42) "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption (i.e. born in matter); it is raised in incorruption (i.e. spirit)."

44) "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and a spiritual body."

47) "The first man of the earth, earthly (i.e. first birth is material): the second man is the Lord (anthropos: man) from heaven (i.e. second birth is spiritual).

48) "As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."

49) "And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

50) "Now this I (Paul) say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption

inherit incorruption." **I Corinthians 15; 40, 42, 44, 47, 48, 49, 50.** This section clearly shows that man has both a material body and a spiritual body, and that man first goes through a birth of the material body and then takes birth in his spiritual body.

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." **II Corinthians 4:18.** This shows that the seen, material world is temporary, while the unseen, spiritual world is eternal. Similarly, the body, which is seen, is temporary, while the life-force (soul), which is unseen, is eternal.

1) "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

2) "I or in this (house) we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven."

6) "Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that, while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."

7) "For we walk by faith, not by sight:"

8) "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." **II Corinthians 5:1, 2, 6, 7, 8.** This is clear that while in this material body we are suffering, and desiring to be in our spiritual

body; and that by spiritual knowledge we know that the material body is separate from the Lord. Note the reference in verse 7 to sastra caksus.

“And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom do the people say that I am? They answering him said, John the Baptist; but some say Elias; and others say that one of the old prophets is risen again.” **Luke 9:18–19** Now why would the disciples answer like this if they did not believe in reincarnation?

CONFLICT BETWEEN HIGHER AND LOWER SELF

“For I know that nothing good lodges in me – in my unspiritual nature, I mean – for though the will to do good is there, the deed is not: The good which I want to do, I fail to do; but what I do is the wrong which is against my will; and if what I do is against my will, clearly it is no longer I who am the agent, but sin that has its lodging in me.”

“I discover this principle, then: that when I want to do right, only the wrong is within my reach. In my inmost self I delight in the law of God, but I perceive that there is in my bodily members a different law, fighting against the law that my reason approves and making me a prisoner under the law that is in my members, the law of sin. Miserable that I am, who is there to rescue me out of this body doomed to death.” **Romans 7.18–24**

3) One Who Loves Christ Must Follow His Commandments

“If ye love me, keep my commandments.” **John 14:15** Very clear instruction.

“He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved by my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas said unto him, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, if a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and make our abode with him.” **John 14:21–23** This clearly says that love of God means keeping the commandments, and if one does not do so, he will not have God manifested to him.

“If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.” **John 15:10** This says also that love of God comes from following the rules of God.

“For this is love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.” **I John 5:3**

“For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from holy commandment delivered unto them. But it happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.” **II Peter 2:21–22** This shows that performing atonement for sin then doing the sin again is like eating vomit.

21) “Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”

22) “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?”

23) “And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” **Matthew 7; 21, 22, 23** This is a good verse to quote to people who say that it is by Gods grace that you are saved, and not by works. Here it is clear that one attains grace by doing the will of God only.

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” **Matthew 5:48** This kills the argument that one cannot stop from sinning, therefore just accept Jesus and you are saved. Here Jesus is commanding them to become perfect, that is to not commit any sin.

4) Meat-eating

While the Bible – in many places – seems to endorse meat-eating, these sections should not be taken out of context. Instead of using Noah’s emergency expedient (following the flood in which all vegetation was wiped out) as outlined in Genesis 9:3, a more important diet is the original one, enunciated by the Lord in Genesis 1:29: “And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb-bearing seed and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat (food).” God further indicates—in the very next verse—that this diet is “good,” while the later diet referred to – the one containing meat – was allowed “simply to satisfy their lust.” This is outlined quite clearly but, again, it must all be studied in context.

The example of the quail God purportedly arranged for the children of Israel, after they “tired” of His manna (Numbers 11:31), is a prime example of quoting out of context. Indeed, verses 31 and 32 (of Numbers) describe the quail and the feasting that followed, but verse 33 must be read to secure the full impact of this passage: “And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote them with a great plague.” He was not happy with their meat-eating.

It also becomes clear when one studies the early history of the Church that the founding fathers espoused the vegetarian ideal. You can study their lives: Tertullian, Pliny, Origen, St. John Chrysostom, the list goes on and on. Parenthetically, that these early Church fathers were avowed vegetarians makes a large statement as to what we may have read in the Bible before it was worked on at the various Ecumenical councils...

It was not until the time of Emperor Constantine (Fourth Century) that vegetarian Christians had to practice underground – this was because Constantine was a meat-eater. He was also a maniac, and Church history books abound with the stories of how he would pour molten lead down the throats of Christian vegetarians for their chosen diet. Incidentally, he also killed his wife by setting her in a vat of boiling water.

Scriptural knowledge is simple for the simple – but it is difficult for the twisted. The Bible clearly says “thou shall not kill” (Exodus 20:13). It could not be stated

more simply. The exact Hebrew is lo tirtzach, which accurately translates: “thou shall not kill.”

One of the greatest scholars of Hebrew/English linguistics (in the Twentieth Century) Dr. Reuben Alcalay has written in his mammoth book The Complete Hebrew/English Dictionary that “tirtzach” refers to “any kind of killing whatsoever”. The word “lo,” as you might suspect, means “thou shalt not.” DON’T KILL! Let’s face it, the Bible is clear on this point.

The Vedic literature is also clear on this point. In fact, the Vedas take this point beyond vegetarianism, because there is still a sinful reaction in killing vegetables. Therefore, the Vedic prescribe a lacto-vegetarian diet, the diet which is least harmful to living beings – and a special process to free one from the minimal sinful reaction that is there from killing the plants. The process is given in rudimentary form in Bhagavad-gita, and is elaborated upon in Srimad-Bhagavatam. After applying the process – which centers about the chanting of the holy Name of the Lord with love and devotion – the foodstuffs are known as prasadam, a Sanskrit word which means “the Lord’s mercy.”

* * *

Many Bible scholars persist with the theory that Christ ate animal flesh, obviously swayed in their opinions by personal habits. The desire to accede to prejudice and uphold existing tradition has been a human characteristic for many centuries, but truth appears now even more important as man exerts his independence in so many aspect of life.

Respected Bible scholar Rev. V.A. Holmes-Gore has researched the frequent use of the word “meat” in the New Testament Gospels. He traced its meaning to the original Greek. His findings were first published in World Forum of Autumn, 1947. He reveals that the nineteen Gospel references to “meat” should have been more accurately translated thus:

Greek	Number of References	Meanings
Broma	4	"Food"
Brosis	4	"the act of eating food"
Phago	3	"to eat"
Brosimos	1	"that which may be eaten"
Trophe	6	"nourishment"
Prosphagon	1	"anything to eat"

Thus, the Authorised Version of John 21:5, "Have ye any meat? " is incorrect. It should have been translated: "Have ye anything to eat? "

"Fish" is another frequently mistranslated word in the Bible. Its reference is often not to the form of swimming life, but to the symbol by which early Christian could identify each other. It was a secret sign, needed in times of persecution, prior to official acceptance of Christianity as a state religion.

The sign of the fish was a mystical symbol and conversational password, deriving from the Greek word for fish, "ichthus." As such, it represented an acrostic, composed of leading letters of the Greek phrase, "Iesous Christos Theou Uios Soter" - "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour."

Frequent references to fish are intended as symbolic of The Christ, having nothing to do with the act of eating a dead fish. But the symbol of the fish did not meet with Roman approval. They preferred the sign of the cross, choosing to concentrate more on the death of Christ than on His brilliant life. Perhaps this is one reason only ten percent of His life record appears in the canonical scriptures. Most of His first thirty years is omitted.

How many worshippers go home from church and sit down to a feast cut from a once proud beast in defiance of the very commandments they have just been advocating? The verses below should clear up any misgivings the reader may have in this connection.

DISCUSSIONS OF MEAT IN THE BIBLE (OLD TESTAMENT)

“And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.” **Genesis 1:29** Shows that the true diet of man is vegetarian.

“But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it.” **Gen. 9:4–5** Shows that man is not allowed to eat meat, and if he does he will pay with his own life. And he will be killed by the one he kills. This is called karma.

“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? Saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offering of rams, and the fat of beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of goats. When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear, for your hands are full of blood.” **Isaiah 1:11,15** Shows that God does not accept even the prayers of a meat-eater.

“He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man.” **Isaiah 66:3** Shows that cow killing is equated with murder.

“It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood.” **Leviticus 3:17** A trick commandment: you cannot eat meat and not eat blood. This is the origin of the idea of Kosher food (meat with the blood drained out of it). It has been compared to passing stool and not passing a drop of urine. Impossible!

“And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of strangers who among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set My face against that soul that eateth blood.” **Leviticus 17:10** Note the term “any manner of blood”. All flesh comes from blood.

APPEARANCES OF THE WORD “MEAT” IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

This section shows how certain words were translated wrongly in the King James Version of the Bible. The correct translations are taken from the Nestle Interlinear Greek–English New Testament, which also references the King James Version.

“And the same John (the Baptist) had his raiment of camels hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.” **Matthew 3:4** The word used here is trophe, nourishment. Also note that the word “locusts” refers to locust beans, or carob, St. John’s bread.

“And her spirit came again (referring to a woman Jesus raised from the dead), and she arose straightaway: and he (Jesus) commanded to give her meat.” **Luke 8:55** The word used here is phago, to eat.

14) “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a young woman shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

15) “Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.” **Isaiah 7:14,15** Christians are fond of quoting the first part of this verse as proof that Jesus is the saviour, but they rarely quote the very next verse, which says he will be a vegetarian.

“And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he (Jesus) said unto them (his disciples), Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. And took it, and did eat before them.” **Luke 24:41–43** The word used here is brosimos, eatable. Note the use of the word “it” (my underline), which is in the singular. Jesus was offered fish and a honeycomb, but took only one. Judging from Isaiah 7:15, we know which he chose.

“For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.” **John 4:8** The word used here is trophe, nourishment.

“And when he had received meat, he was strengthened.” **Acts 9:19** The word used here is trophe, nourishment.

“And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, this is the fourteenth day ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you. And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.” **Acts 27:33–36** All three words used here are trophe, nourishment. Note that even though they say meat, they show clearly that what he was referring to was bread, which they all took.

“And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoice, believing in God with all his house.” **Acts 16:34** The word used here is trapesa, table. It says he set a table before them!

“But if thy brother be grieved with that meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy him not with thy meat, for whom Christ died.” **Romans 14:15** Both words used here are bromia, food. This is actually a reference to spiritual food.

“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, joy in the Holy Ghost.” **Romans 14:17** The word used here is brosis, act of eating. This is a reference to the fact that the kingdom of God is not material.

“But meat commendeth us not to God, for neither, if we eat, are we the better, neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.” **I Corinthians 8:8** The word used here is bromia, food. This verse does not say that it doesn't matter if we eat meat or not, but that the activity of eating has little to do with our relationship of God.

“Wherefore, if meat makes my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.” **I Corinthians 8:13**

“And (they) did all eat the same spiritual meat;” **I Corinthians 10:3** The word used here is bromia, food.

“For meat destroy not the word of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is

made weak.” **Romans 14:20–21** A very good verse. The word meat used here is bromia, food. It shows that it is not food that is wrong, it is not eating prasadam, food offered to God. The word flesh used here is kreas, flesh. So it is clear that meat eating is not good.

5) Reincarnation

Under circumstances that to this very day remain shrouded in mystery, the Byzantine emperor Justinian in 533 A.D. (at the Second Council of Constantinople) banned the teachings of reincarnation from the Christian scriptures. There remain, however, certain allusions to reincarnation in the Bible. And these few are very powerful. In the ninth century B.C. the Hebrew prophet Elijah is supposed to have lived. Four centuries later, Malachi recorded this prophecy in the closing lines of the Old Testament: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.”

The first book of the New Testament, Matthew, refers to this prophecy on three occasions, and the remaining gospels speak of it seven times. In the verses that follow, the Greek form of the prophet’s name is used. It will be noted from the remarks of the disciples of Jesus that there was much speculation and widespread acceptance among the Jews concerning not only the return of Elijah, but of other ancient Hebrew prophets.

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that I am? And they replied, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the other prophets. **Matthew 16:13–14**

And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

And Jesus answered them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias has come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall the Son of Man suffer from them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist [who had already been beheaded by Herod]. **Matthew 17:9–13**

Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John...this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee... And if ye will receive it: this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. **Matthew 11:7, 10–11, 14–15**

Another reference is to be found in Luke 9:7–9: “Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Jesus, and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead; and of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. And Herod said, John have I beheaded; but who is this of whom I hear such things?” The same incident is related in Mark 6:14–16.

The early Church father Tertullian offers the view that some orthodox people take concerning all these verses from the New Testament [Although Tertullian was also an outspoken advocate of reincarnation]. In brief, Tertullian’s reasoning is that Elias never died in the first place. God translated him directly to heaven. Thus, his subsequent re-descent was not a rebirth, but merely a return visit. It has been described that Tertullian bases his reasoning on the statement in II Kings 2:11:

“Behold there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire...and Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven” and was seen no more. However, if this church father’s reasoning is to be logically sustained, Elijah’s return to earth as John the Baptist should have been in the same miraculous way he left: He should have been precipitated on earth as a mature man. Yet the scriptures indicate that John was born in the ordinary way. Thus, all serious Christian theologians have concluded that Tertullian’s theory is not tenable.

The nineteenth-century American philosopher Francis Bowen of Harvard, after citing a number of the Gospel passages already quoted, remarks in his article, "Christian Metempsychosis": "That the commentators have not been willing to receive, in their obvious and literal meaning, assertions so direct and so frequently repeated as these, but have attempted to explain them away in a non-natural and metaphorical sense, is a fact that proves nothing but the existence of an invincible prejudice against the doctrine of the transmigration of souls."

One final point. The rebirth of saviors and prophets is clear enough in Christian teaching, but what about ordinary men? Do they return? That the disciples of Jesus seriously considered this possibility is evident from their question concerning the man who had been born blind. They asked: "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he is born blind?" One cannot evade the conclusion that the disciples must have had reincarnation in mind, for obviously if the man had been born blind his sin could not have been committed in this life. Jesus had a good opportunity to smash the reincarnation idea once and for all – but he did not! He merely replied that the man was afflicted because he was destined through Christ to have his sight restored so that "the works of God should be made manifest in him."

That it may be legitimate to look to a previous life for the source of individual goodness or badness seems plain from St. Paul's comments on Jacob and Esau. He says that the Lord loved one and hated the other before they were born. Romans 9:10–13; Malachi 1:2–3. How could a nonexistent being be loved or hated?

Another illustration is the one in which Christ warns that those who live by the sword will die by the sword [Matthew 26:52]. This could only be universally true – as all of the savior's statements should be – if there is more than one life in which to experience the reaction, for many professional combat soldiers die quietly in their own beds. This view is completely consistent with Newton's Third Law of Motion—far every action, there is an equal and opposite reactions—and with the Law of Karma promulgated in the Vedic literatures.

A similar reference is found in Mark 10:28–31, where rewards are listed that could hardly be fulfilled in one life. Peter said unto Jesus: "Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. " "And Jesus answered" "Verily I say unto you, There is

no man that has left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time [in this age] houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first. ” Certainly the enumerated rewards could not possibly be fulfilled in one incarnation.

Saint John states in Revelation 3:12: “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out. “It seems he had gone out into incarnation before, otherwise the words “no more ” could have no place or meaning. It may have been the old idea of the exile of the soul and the need for it to be purified by long sojourn before it could be admitted as a “pillar in the temple of my God. In Luke 20:35–36, a similar idea again occurs. Jesus says: “They who are accounted worthy to obtain that world...neither marry...neither can they die any more. “

It can be concluded from both these verses that the goal to be achieved is of such a transcendent nature, one short life would be insufficient to reach it. Thus in Professor Bowen’s essay, “Christian Metempsychosis, ” previously cited, he wonders whether in addition to the obvious spiritual meaning, there may be a literal meaning in the solemn words of the Saviour ‘Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. “

“An eternity of either reward or punishment,” says Bowen, “would seem to be inadequately earned by one brief period of probation on earth. “

6) Celibacy

There are many verses in the Bible stating that one should be chaste and celibate. The entire chapter of I Corinthians, chapter 7 deals with this subject comprehensively. Here are the highlights of that chapter:

- 1) "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me (Paul): it is good for a man not to touch a woman."
- 2) "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."
- 3) "Let the husband render unto wife due benevolence; and likewise also the wife unto the husband."
- 5) "Defraud ye not one the other (i.e.have sex), except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."
- 6) "But I speak this by permission, and not by commandment."
- 7) "For I would that all men were even as I myself (celibate). But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that."
- 8.) "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I."
- 9) "But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn."
- 10) "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, let not the wife depart from her husband."
- 11) "But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband; and let not the husband put away his wife."
- 25) "Now, concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgement, as one that hath obtained the mercy of the Lord to be faithful."
- 26) "I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be."
- 27) "Art thou bound unto a wife? Seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife."
- 28) "But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned: and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you."
- 32) "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord."
- 33) "But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife."
- 34) "There is a difference, also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and in

spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.”

37) “He that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well.”

38) “So he that giveth her in marriage doeth well, but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.” I **Corinthians, Chapter 7**

“This I say then, walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” **Galatians 5:16–21** Compare to Bhagavad-gita 3.3 7, where Krishna says that it is lust only that drives a person to perform sinful acts.

“But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints.” **Ephesians 5:3** Note how fornication is linked with uncleanness, and is considered an unsaintly quality.

“Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication; uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence (bad desires), and covetousness, which is idolatry;” **Colossians 3:5** Here also fornication, linked with uncleanness, is condemned, and also plain old inordinate affection.

“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor.” I **Thessalonians 4:3–4** This is a good verse. It states that the method of sanctifying the body is to abstain from sex life; it also shows that the body is just a vessel for the spirit.

(Paul speaking to disciples) “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” II **Corinthians 11:2** Note the implication here that Paul arranged the marriages of his disciples.

“I (Jesus) say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” **Matthew 5:32** Shows even subtle sex life is to be considered as adultery.

“It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much named among the Gentiles, that should have his father’s wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.” **I Corinthians 5:1–2** This shows that Paul felt that if one of the followers committed fornication, he should be kicked out of the association of other disciples.

“Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.” **I Corinthians 6:18** Very clear verse. Fornication is considered to be the main cause of material life. Note that the word used here is porneian, fornication, not moicheian, or adultery. The purport is that any sex life, not just illicit sex life, causes material consciousness.

“Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but the Lord shall destroy both it and them. Now that body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.” **I Corinthians 6:13** The words used here are both bromia, food. Also note the statement about the body not being for sex life. The word used here is porneia, fornication, not moicheia, adultery.

THE ADVANTAGE OF CELIBACY

“It is my opinion, then, that in a time of stress like the present this is the best way for a man to live—it is best for a man to be as he is (celibate)... .If, however, you do marry, there is nothing wrong in it; and if a virgin marries, she has done no wrong. But those who marry will have pain and grief in this bodily life, and my aim is to spare you... I want you to be free from anxious care. The unmarried man cares for the Lord’s business; his aim is to please the Lord. But the married man cares for worldly things; his aim is to please his wife; and he has a divided mind. The unmarried or celibate woman cares for the Lord’s business; her aim is to be dedicated to Him in body as in spirit; but the married woman cares for worldly things; her aim is to please her husband.”

“In saying this I have no wish to keep you on a tight rein. I am thinking simply of your own good, if what is seemly, and of your freedom to wait upon the Lord without distraction.” **I Cor. 7.25–26, 28, 32–35**

CHASTITY

“...The disciples said to him, ‘If that is the position with husband and wife, it is better not to marry.’ To this he replied, ‘That is something which not everyone can accept, but only those for whom God has appointed it. For while some are incapable of marriage because they were born so, or were made so by men, there are others who have themselves renounced marriage for the sake of the kingdom of Heaven. Let those accept it who can.’ **Matt. 19.10–12**

LUSTY OR GREEDY PERSONS HAVE NO SHARE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

“Fornication and indecency of any kind, or ruthless greed, must not be so much as mentioned among you, as befits the people of God... no one given to fornication or indecency, or the greed which makes an idol of gain, has any share in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” **Eph. 5.3,5**

ONE MUST LIVE A PURE LIFE, FREE FROM EARTHLY THINGS

“Agree together, my friends, to follow my example. You have us for a model; watch those whose way of life conforms to it. For, as I have often told you, and now tell you with tears in my eyes, there are many whose way of life makes them enemies of the cross of Christ. They are heading for destruction, appetite is their god, and they glory in their shame. Their minds are set on earthly things.” **Phil. 3.17–19**

7) Renunciation

ONE MUST BE DETACHED FROM THE MATERIAL WORLD

“Do not set your hearts on the godless world or anything in it. Anyone who loves the world is a stranger to the Father’s love. Everything the world affords, all that panders to the appetites or entices the eyes, all the glamour of its life, springs not from the Father but from the godless world. And the world is passing away with all its allurements, but he who does God’s will stands forevermore.” **John 2.15–17**

ONE “GUIDED BY THE SPIRIT” TRANSCENDS THE LOWER NATURE

“If you are guided by the Spirit you will not fulfill the desires of your lower nature. That nature sets its desire against the Spirit, while the Spirit fights against it. They are in conflict with one another so that what you will to do you cannot do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.” **Gal 5.16–18**

ONE WHO HAS THE SPIRIT TRANSCENDS BODILY DEMANDS

“Our lower nature has no claim upon us; we are not obliged to live on that level. If you do so, you must die. But if by the Spirit you put to death all the base pursuits of the body, then you will live.” **Romans 8.12–13**

RENUNCIATION OF POSSESSIONS

“... none of you can be a disciple of mine without parting with all his possessions.” **Luke 14.33**

“If thou will be perfect, go sell what thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. And come follow Me.” **Matt. 19.21**

SELF SACRIFICE

“If anyone wishes to be a follower of mine, he must leave self behind; day after day he must take up his cross, and come with me.” **Luke 9.23, Matt. 16.24, Mark 8.34**

“As they were going along the road a man said to him, ‘I will follow you wherever you go.’ Jesus answer, ‘Foxes have their holes, the birds their roosts; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.’ To another he said, ‘Follow me,’ but the man replied, ‘Let me go and bury my father first.’ Jesus said, ‘Leave the dead to bury their dead; you must go and announce the kingdom of God.’ “Yet another said, ‘I will follow you, sir; but let me first say good-bye to my people at home.’ To him Jesus said, ‘No one who sets his hand to the plough and then keeps looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.’ “ **Luke 9.57-62**

THE DEVOTEE NEED NOT ENDEAVOR FOR MATERIAL NECESSITIES

“I bid you put away anxious thoughts about food and drink to keep you alive, and clothes to cover your body. Surely life is more than food, the body more than clothes. Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow and reap and store in barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. You are worth more than the birds! And why be anxious about clothes! Consider how the lilies grow in the fields; they do not work, they do not spin; and yet, I tell you, even Solomon in all his splendor was not attired like one of these. But if that is how God clothes the grass in the fields, which is there today, and tomorrow is thrown on the stove, will he not all the more clothe you? How little faith you have! No, do not ask anxiously, ‘What are we to eat? What are we to drink? What shall we wear?’ All these are things for the heathen to run after, not for you, because your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. Set your mind on God’s kingdom and his justice before everything else, and all the rest will come to you as well.

So do not be anxious about tomorrow; tomorrow will look after itself. Each day has troubles of its own." **Matt. 6.25-34**

ONE SHOULD RENOUNCE THE MATERIAL WORLD

"The world is crucified to me, and I to the world." **Gal. 4.14**

AUSTERITY OF THE BODY

"It is time for you to wake out of sleep, for deliverance is nearer to us now than it was when first we believed. It is far on in the night; day is near. Let us therefore throw off the deeds of darkness and put on our armour as soldiers of the light.. .give no more thought to satisfying the bodily appetites." **Rom. 13.11, 12, 14**

THE REAL CHRISTIAN CRUCIFIES THE FLESH

"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the lower nature with its passions and desires. If the Spirit is the source of our life; let the Spirit also direct our course." **Gal. 5.24-25**

RENUNCIATION OF FAMILY

“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, even his own life, he cannot be a disciple of mine. No one who does not carry his cross and come with me can be a disciple of mine.” **Luke 14.26–7**

“You must not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a son’s wife against her mother-in-law; and a man will find his enemies under his own roof. No man is worthy of me who cares more for father and mother than for me; no man is worthy of me who cares more for son or daughter; no man is worthy of me who does not take up his cross and walk in my footsteps. By gaining his life a many will lose it; by losing his life for my sake, he will gain it.” **Matt. 10.34–39**

“...anyone who has left brother or sisters, father, mother, or children, land or houses for the sake of my name will be repaid many times over, and gain eternal life.” **Matt. 19.29**

MATERIALISTIC PERSON CANNOT UNDERSTAND SPIRITUAL THINGS

“The sensual man perceiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God, for it is foolishness to him, and he cannot understand it.”

“A man who is unspiritual refuses what belongs to the Spirit of God; it is folly to him; he cannot grasp it, because it needs to be judged in the light of the Spirit.” **I Cor 2.14**

AUSTERITY AND RENUNCIATION

“The young man saith unto him (Jesus), All these things have I kept from my youth up: what Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect; go and sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shall have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.” **Matthew 19:20–21** This clearly says to give away everything you own and take up spiritual life, if you want to become perfect.

“And it came to pass, that as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee wheresoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but thou go and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home in my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” **Luke 9:57–62**

“Whosoever he be of you that foresaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” **Luke 14:33**

“Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” **Roman 8:12–13**

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is this world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.” **I John 2:15–17**

STATEMENTS SHOWING THE NECESSITY OF RENOUNCING THE FAMILY TO TAKE UP SPIRITUAL LIFE

“And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.” **Matthew 19:29**

8) “There is much I have to tell you...”

STATEMENTS SHOWING THAT THE BIBLE IS NOT THE ONLY OR FINAL WORD OF GOD

” I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” **John 16:12** Here it is clear that there is more knowledge to be had, but the disciples were not purified enough to receive it or understand it.

“These things have I spoken unto you in more to come, and that the disciples have not yet learned anything of God Himself, but that more teaching were to come that would describe God Himself clearly. **John 16:25** Here also Jesus is saying that there is more to come, and that the disciples have not yet learned anything of God Himself, but that more teachings were to come that would describe God Himself clearly.

“And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.” **John 21:25** Here it is shown that not all of Jesus’ activities are known; in fact, it is intimated that only a small fraction of them are known.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for proof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” **II Timothy 3:16–17** Here it is clearly shown that any bonafide scripture must be accepted, at least on the basis of instruction, even if it does not describe Jesus. Therefore, the Christians should all accept Bhagavad-gita.

“If you do not believe when I tell you of material things, how will you believe if I tell you of spiritual things?” **John 3:12**

9) Jesus And God May Be One But They Are Also Different

"I do nothing of myself." **John 14:2**

"My Father is greater than I." **John 14:2**

"The Lord our God is one Lord." **Mark 12:29**

"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" **Matt. 27:46**

"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." **Luke 23:46**

"As You and I are one, let them also be one in Us." **c.f. John 17:21** Thus, Jesus implies that his "oneness" with God is something that can be achieved by others.

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." **Mark 13:32**

It is also written of Jesus: "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen," **Matt. 12:18**

God...glorified His servant, Jesus." **Acts 3:13**

10) Miscellaneous

GOD IS NOT AN OLD MAN WITH A FLOWING WHITE BEARD

10 My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

11 His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven.

12 His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set.

13 His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; his hips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

14 His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl; his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.

15 His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold; his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

16 His mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend. **Song of Solomon** Compare to Brahma Samhita.

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENTS: TO LOVE GOD AND ONE'S NEIGHBOR

(It is thus also indicated that to love God and to love one's neighbor are two separate things) "Master, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' He answered, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind.'" That is the greatest commandment. It comes first. The second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Everything in the Law and the prophets hangs on these two commandments.' **Matt. 22.36-40**

SELF SURRENDER

"Father... Thy will be done." Matt. 26.42

CONTINUAL PRAYER

"Pray without ceasing." Thess. 5.17

THE SINFUL PERSON HATES GOD, TRUTH. HONEST PERSON OTHERWISE

"Here lies the test: the light has come into the world, but men preferred darkness to light because their deeds were evil. Bad men all hate the light and avoid it, for fear their practices should be shown up. The honest man comes to the light so that it may be clearly seen that God is in all he does." John 3. 19-21

ON THE UNPOPULARITY OF POTENT PREACHERS

"If the world hate you, know that it hated me (Jesus) before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the

world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” John 15:18–19

ON LISTENING TO GOD FROM WITHIN THE HEART (INSTEAD OF FROM AUTHORITY)

“Jesus answered them and said, My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man will do His (God’s) will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh His (God’s) glory that sent him, the same is true and no unrighteousness is in him. Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?” John 7:16–19 This clearly says that we must not follow our own ideas, but just obey the law and try to understand what the authorities say. This defeats the people who say, “Jesus speaks to me in my heart.”

11) Afterword

The merits of this pamphlet can easily be obscured by Christian exclusivity. Dogmatic denial of non-Christian religions seems to be a tenet of popular Christianity. Such prejudice is largely based on the following verse from the New Testament:

ego eimi ha hodos kai ha alatheia kai ha zoa; oudeis erketai pros ton patera ei ma di emou : “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me”. (Matt 14:6)

However, this is a rather slender peg on which to hang one’s religious intolerance. Especially since the original Greek renders the verse a bit differently than cited above – although the above translation is the one you would probably find in your Bible.

The Greek word erketai is extremely present tense. So, rather than “comes” as the word is rendered above, it would more accurately be “can presently come”. This, of course, changes the whole meaning. **Jesus is actually saying, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one can presently come to the Father except through me”. Thus, Christian exclusivity becomes absurd.** Unlike the interpretations pushed upon us by Bible-thumpers – who say that surrender to Jesus is the way presently, at that time, in Palestine – 2,000 years ago. Says Dr. Boyd Daniels of The American Bible Society, “Oh, yes. The word erketai is definitely the present tense form of the verb. Jesus was speaking to his contemporaries”.

The Codex Sinaiticus, our earliest existing Greek manuscript of the New Testament, can presently be found in the British Museum. Interestingly, this manuscript was written in the year 331 A.D. – just six years after the Council of Nicaea. We have no New Testament manuscripts from before this council.

Why is this interesting? Because history reveals that everything was rearranged at that council – and at the many councils that followed. No one knows what Christianity may have been like before this first ecumenical synod. And no one is ever likely to find out – for the Christian tradition has not been preserved. Rather, it has been subject to change and decay.

However one interprets the mass of data presented in this pamphlet, one must admit that the fortresses of the Occidental faiths are experiencing the most profound alterations in the history of religion. Church authority, for instance, is being challenged on a hundred fronts. Traditional creeds are being drastically revised. Hallowed canons are being shelved in the name of “progress”. Religious practices are daily changed. Church leaders are beleaguered by new, bold, and persistent demands – from their clergy no less from their congregations.

There is a remarkable erosion of consensus within the citadels of the Western religious tradition. Which of the original followers of Jesus, or the prophets, would have guessed that the path of true religion would eventually become diluted by emotional caterwaulers and fanatics? Or the militant participation of clergymen in civil rights marches; the reverberations of the Vatican II; the presence at Catholic altars of Protestants and Jewish clergymen during marriage ceremonies; “the God is dead” existentialist debate; the rise of desegregated congregations; the open campaign of homosexuals against anathematization; the taking of all references to God as “Him” out of the Bible by overly enthusiastic proponents of women’s rights. The list goes on and on. And it all only goes to prove one thing: that as long as spirituality remains dependent on speculation, man-made innovations, and unwarranted liberalism, the real essence will remain a million miles away, inaccessible to one and all.

And so we are in the eye of a storm, as it were. The velocity and power of that storm has surprised the most erudite scholar and the most sincere of the Western religionist. But, again, there should be no surprise. A tradition of speculation must be a tradition lost.

We must break through this storm. We must find a source of primeval spiritual truth – unchanged. We must, if we are to receive the truth on its pure state, somehow receive it as it was, as it was always meant to be...as it is. Clearly, the Judaeo-Christian tradition, as we have it today, does not give us a clear picture of the Absolute Truth. However, it does give us an inkling. For sincere seekers, the Vedic literatures as translated and commented upon by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada is herein recommended. These books will not only clear up any storm created by Biblical word jugglery, but they will take you out of the storm and situate you in the shining light of a new day.

For further interesting reading please visit: www.omjesus.net