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## Box 08, Folder 13 - (Indian Twilight?) "Hinduism" (E.M.S.)

Edwin Mortimer Standing

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Have approached the subject from many different angles  
Now reached a point where we can make a sort of summing up  
let us start from the idea of God

The Christian God . is a Person - is in fact as we have seen  
three persons in one Nature .

Infinite , self existend , eternal -was in existence before  
the world was created .

Exists in complete and eternal happiness - of that everlasting  
society the Holy and Eternal Trinity .

There was no need for God to create the universe - his joy  
was -is and always will be complete .

Yet in the exuberance of His love He created the Universe  
and Man the highest creature in it - so that they could  
share his life .

Science ( Geology , physics , palaeontology , anthropology etc )  
tell us that this creation was spread out over millions of years  
and that Man is the summit of that long development - Man the heir  
of all the ages in the foremost ranks of time " - man Built in  
Gods image

The bible tells us .... Let us make man in our image .  
Man was created with a spiritual soul - an immaterial element -  
with power to think in abstract ideas and act with real freedom of  
will . And what was the purpose in Creating man .... Simply an act  
of generosity - for the purpose was to create man so that eventually  
man could share in Gods eternal life . As the catechism says  
Who made you God . Why did God make you . To love and serve him  
in this life and live for ever with him in the next .

But because man was created free to obey or disobey God  
And right early on the first human beings Adam and Eve sinned  
against God and human the development of the human race went off the  
lines . But God did not abandon them as he might very well have

done .And so to put things right God - is the second person of the Trinity - without ceasing to be the Infinite God at a particular moment in History took to himself ( through the Virgin Mary ) a human body - a human nature .But - and this is the most important thing to remember the Person who operated through that human body and human nature was not a human person : it was the everlasting , infinite Second Person of the Blessed and Eternal Trinity .

Thus we may say that in the Blessed trinity there are Three Persons but one Nature --God ; in Christ there is One Person ( the second person of the Everlasting Trinity and TWO natures - so that He actually was God and Man .All other people who have lived on earth are and have been and will be human persons . But Christ had not a human person : he had a human Nature . This divine and everlasting Person assumed , took to himself this human nature in order to function through it - and communicate directly with the human race he had created .And not only to communicate and teach that human race but in a mysterious way take upon Himself through his sufferings on the Cross the sins - or if you like the Karma - of the whole human race in the supreme act of sacrifice on Calvary .

Jesus summed up the interest that God has for us miserable human beings by describing him as OUR FATHER .; but it was his action - his passion and suffering for our sakes that proved for ever the fact that God loves and cares for the creatures he has made .

In Mt. Father's house said Jesus to his disciples there are many dwelling places in Mt. Father's House and I am going to prepare a place for you where I am . Then I will take you to myself so that you too can be with me where I am .

Jesus and the Father are one in Nature - both God . Once when one of the disciples Philip asked Jesus "Lord let us see the Father that you have talked about so much " Jesus replied What I have been here with you all this time and you have not recognised me .

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father .... I and the Father are one I am in the Father and the Father is in me

And the whole aim of human existence is to prepare ourselves for that life in one of the many mansions in His Father's House -- that is in Heaven .

There is you will see no shadow or suggestion that after death the disciples will be any one else but their own same personalities.

When Christ was on the Cross one of the thieves who were being crucified on each side of Him , realising who Christ was , inspired of his humiliating position on the Cross of shame said "Remember me Lord when thou comest into the Kingdom . And Christ from His cross replied "The day shalt thou be with me in Paradise ". No question of change of personality , or re- incarnation in any other form .

The whole Christian doctrine of the Communion of Saints in which we on earth pray to the saints in Heaven to intercede for us depends upon and takes for granted that after death the life of each individual goes on in the next world in complete continuity . There is no hint that after death these dear personalities -- like St Peter, St Mary Magdalene , St Paul , St Barbara --- and so forth ever going to cease being themselves and turn into some other form of life after returning to earth . When a Catholic prays to St Anthony to ask him to pray for him to find some lost object he knows he is praying to the intimate friend and follower of St Francis of Assisi to whose order he belonged . All Catholics as a matter of course pray for the souls of their dear departed because they know that they are still the same persons that they knew and loved on earth .

Perhaps it might be well - at this point - to say a few words on the Catholic Doctrine of Purgatory ; for it really bears on our general discussion . Most Catholics and I think most Hindus would agree on this point that the majority of persons who die on this earth are not

Most Catholics and probably most Hindus would agree that the majority of persons who die on earth are not sufficiently advanced in their spiritual development to enter Heaven of Nirvana straight away. The Hindu answer to this would be that these souls would therefore have to come back to earth and go through more purifying experiences before they were ready for the reward of Nirvana. The Catholic answer to this problem is that because these souls are not ready for Heaven they have to go through a further purification through suffering till (as the Ghost in Hamlet says ( 2" till the crimes done in the state of nature are burnt and purged away ) Protestant by the way do not believe in Purgatory and this is one of the reasons why Catholicism appeals more naturally to Hindus since the doctrine of Purgatory appears more in line with the doctrine of Karma.

In any case the final consummation of Christian soul is to dwell for ever - raised to a state of glory - in the Society of the Blessed living for ever in a state of perfect happiness. We ~~may note~~ too that the Christ

We should pause for a moment to note how different are the ideas with regard to the nature of matter and the whole material universe in the eastern and western philosophies. For the Buddhist the whole material world is as it were a mistake - and illusion Maya : but in the Christian outlook, the whole material universe was created by God and is the vehicle of man's spiritual soul - the medium in which it develops rising ~~xxxx~~ to ever more spiritualised forms of matter. Most important of all Xy teaches that the eternal God came down from Heaven and ( without ceasing to be God ) took to himself a material body. In this Body he lived and worked and taught and suffered on the Cross and died. But that was not the end of the story. In the same body he rose again from the dead and He still

has that human body and will have it forever. And this great historic fact of the resurrection of Jesus in his human body is the foundation of the Catholic Christian teaching of the general resurrection -- the belief that at the Last Day our own material bodies will be restored to us - perfect and without possibility of any suffering - and our souls and bodies thus united will last for ever in "heaven".

So in Christianity - just because God took on human flesh in Jesus and still has it the whole material universe has been as it were lifted on to a higher plane and the material world purged of evil and the effects of sin - will all be restored in Christ at the Pleoma - that complete fulness of unification with itself and with God towards which the whole planetary ~~universe~~ <sup>of humanity on this planet</sup> is proceeding.

This raising of matter to the divine level is the very heart and soul of the Catholic religion - the centre of which, as most people know, is the daily Mass which is said by thousands of Catholic Priests all over the world. For the essential mystery about the Catholic Mass is that - after the words of consecration by the Priest (This is my Body This is my Blood - the bread and wine on the altar cease to be bread and wine and are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ - in a real but incomprehensible manner).