

The Christ-Being in the Present Age: Christ Seen from the Perspective of Mithraism

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Reverend Sun Myung Moon (1920-2012) diligently studied the Bible in his youth and the Divine Principle was written mainly for Christians in the framework of Christian theology. *The Exposition of the Divine Principle* has been the core textbook of the Unification Church for a long time; church leaders taught lectures based on Divine Principle and the Bible; in his early days, Rev. Moon himself spoke a great deal about Jesus and biblical stories.

However, in his latter years, Rev. Moon began to speak about God in a broader sense (e.g., the God of Night and the God of Day, in Hoon Dok Hae on April 10, 2011) and other religions beyond Christianity. One time, he referred to the Persian dynasty and said, "That was the absolute dynasty (which should have been realized on God's side) before the human fall" (in Hoon Dok Hae on October 10, 2011).

This article rediscovers the position of True Parents in the study of comparative religion by exploring the Christ-being from the perspective of Mithraism.

In the 21st century, we have the opportunity to meet "Christ" through guidance of the Holy Spirit as Sophia, who represents the motherhood of God. However, throughout Christian history, "Christ" has been identified with Jesus Christ, the only begotten son of God.



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In the ancient world, such as Judea, Egypt and India before Christianity spread, "Christ" appeared on earth in the form of supernatural phenomena and incarnation of the gods. Even after Christianity expanded, in the extensive region from the Hellenistic world to central Asia where people believed in Mithraism and Manichaeism (which was influenced by Mithraism), and Buddhism, etc., "Christ" was regarded as Maitreya Bodhisattva.

In explaining the etymology of "Christ," it is a title indicating a savior, messiah. The original word for "Christ" is the Greek "*Χριστός*, *Christós*," which means "the anointed one" who brings salvation to humankind. This "Christ" is a translation of the Hebrew "*מָשִׁיחַ*" (*Mašiah*, messiah) and originated in religious ceremonies in Judaism. However, there is a theory that "*מָשִׁיחַ*" (*Mašiah*, messiah) was used in the coronation ceremony of the ancient Egyptian Pharaoh, while Cyrus the Great, founder of ancient Achaemenid Persia, was called "the messiah" in the Hebrew Bible. A scholar of Mithraism, Masato Tojo, points out that "Mitra was taken as a messiah (savior) and incorporated into Judaism. The word 'Messiah' comes from the name Mithia in the southern Iranian dialect of Mithra."

As the Christ-being plays a crucial role connecting with God and man, we need to know where its ontological roots are. To that end, we can find some clues from the cosmogony in ancient religions (creation myths); we can make it clear who "Christ" was, contrasting the monotheistic creationism that starts from a single God with the polytheistic creationism that starts with multiple gods.

Monotheistic creationism is represented by Judeo-Christianity and Islam; their cosmogony depends on the common book of Genesis in the Old Testament. God as the Creator existed in the beginning, and this cosmos was created by the Creator God. This God is the Absolute Being and also the personal one; He is seen in the image of a masculine and father God.

In the creationism of polytheism, God as the first creator is not necessarily set, and several gods coexist. In Hinduism, Brahma, who is placed in line with the creator god, is triune with the god "preserver," Vishnu, and the god of "destroyer of evil and the transformer," Shiva. Even with other polytheistic creation myths, such as from Mesopotamia, Asia, Northern Europe, and Ancient Greece, the process and order of creation are thought much of rather than the first creator god.

Furthermore, as Buddhism, which emerged from Hinduism, aims to raise the human spirit and attain *nirvana*, there is no creator god, no transcendental beings, and no gods to be believed in. (Buddhism, however, began to have a polytheistic character as time passed after the death of Gautama Siddhartha -- Sakyamuni; those who were enlightened became subjects of worship as Buddha, and they were mixed

with Hindi gods in India and with indigenous religious gods in China and Japan.)

Since the Christ-being sent by the creator God is a spiritual being to save human beings, it obviously appears to be somehow refined in the monotheistic world. Meanwhile, if we explore the mysteries of ancient religions and the creation myths which affected the view of God and creation of Judeo-Christianity, we will find the Christ-being showed its original state before the Christ-concept in the Trinity was established by Christian theology.

According to Tojo, it is the Aryan (Indo-Iranian) original religion that has a great influence on the view of God and creation of Judeo-Christianity.



Ruins of the Roman Temple of Mithras in London

For example, in the creation myth of original Mithraism in ancient Persia, there is a creator God (the Root God) who is unique at the beginning, whence the God's child comes out like being born from the mother's womb; the God's child (Mitra) leads the seven gods (seven major angels) to create heaven and earth and rule the world. Tojo stated in his article, "Myth of Simorghian Mithraism":

"There was one Creator God who, like a father, had engendered the essence of the world, which was small, and contained in rock as an unborn child is contained in its mother's body. The world was small, without movement, without

light, floating in the ocean. On it was the prototypes of animals and plants, one bull and one plant. Then Mithra -- the Lord of Fire, the Sun, and Energy, who was to become the Lord of this world but who had been hidden in the rock -- came from the rock into the cave that held the embryonic world (as fire can spring from flint).Mithra, who was probably the head of a group of seven divine Beings who were appointed to take care to the earth, had thus delivered the world from its confinement by the first religious ritual, which involved killing a bull and pounding a plant."

Here is the prototype of the relationship between the Father God and Son God in Judeo-Christianity, but the fundamentally different point is that a creator God gives birth to a child of God through a mother God. The creator God is a pair of this mother God who was called the Great Goddess Div in ancient Persia and Great Goddess Aditi, whose name means "Infinity," in ancient India. Tojo notes:

"In Simorgh culture, Great Goddess Div is the root God and the Seed, which is one single hidden Life-Power-Wisdom. She is not a sole creator either commander in the monotheistic sense, however, She is truly the root-God, the Hakk, the Ultimate and the One. Also called Simorgh and Daênâ. Daênâ corresponds to Roman Diana. Div has the same word-root with Greek *Θεός* and Roman *Deus* both of which mean God. In Mithraism, Div is called Mother Zurvan, Mother of Life (Sophia), and Wu-ji-lao-mo." And Great Goddess Aditi is a Great Goddess who appears in Rig Veda. Her name means infinity in Sanskrit. Mother Goddess of the Âditiyas. She corresponds to Mother Zurvan." (from Masato Tojo, "Neo-Paganism of modern Iran and Mithrjja," Part I. Neo-Paganism of modern Iran , 3. Gods).

There was the tradition of worship of such a great Goddess since ancient times so that the deep-rooted faith in Sofia and the Virgin Mary as the motherhood of God can be seen in Judeo-Christianity.

In the establishment of the Trinity doctrine of Christian theology, the feminine aspect was removed from the Godhead in the Western Christian world but with the rise of modern Europe after the Reformation, the adoration of the motherhood of God has been restored in Christian theosophy by a German mystic, Jakob Böhme (1575-1624), and also in Sophiology by Russian thinker, Vladimir Solovyov (1853-1900), and so on.

As Michael Debus, a priest of the Christian Community, wrote in his book, *Mary and Sophia: The Feminine Element in the Spiritual Evolution of Humanity*, we understand that "the Divine Sophia" as the motherhood of God is created as the mirror of God and acts in spirit as the "Divine Feminine" only after she is paired with the fatherhood of God in forming a syzygy. The Father God is not the sole supreme one, but together with the mother God, Sophia, they create a child of God (logos). The child of God is equal to the Son God in Christianity, while in eastern Mithraism (Manichaeism), the sun god, Mitra, born of the Mother God, is a god with both sexes and exists prior to the creation of the world. This sun god, Mitra, holds a separated spirit, Mitra = Maitreya, who is called "Christ." This Christ is a spiritual savior sent from the sun god, Mitra, who is androgynous.

Modern Sophiology tries to understand the process of creation in forming a syzygy between the Father God and Mother God by translating the Trinity doctrine centered on the Father God into the original

creation myth of the sun god Mitra. A child of God as separated divine spirit can manifest not only as the begotten son, Adam, but also as the begotten daughter, Eve.

Today, the Christ-being as a proxy of Heavenly Parent must be manifested as the True Parents in whom perfected Adam and Eve are united.

Heavenly Parent created us,

Father God is in us and Mother God is in us,

We are united with you.

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