



MEI@ND

Journal of Indo-Judaic Studies

VOLUME 17 | YEAR 2020

THE JOURNAL OF INDO-JUDAIC STUDIES

Number 17

2020

Contents

From the Editors

Articles

Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Buber: Two Approaches to Non-violence
by *Braj M. Sinha*

Varieties of Mystical Nothingness: Jewish, Christian and Buddhist
By *Daniel C. Matt*

Torah-Hindu Parallels in the Narratives of Five Persons
by *Bharat Jhunjunwala*

Israel and Pakistan: Between the State and Non-State Players
by *Joseph Hodes*

Book reviews

C. B. Divakaruni, *The Palace of Illusions*
reviewed by *David R. Blumenthal*

Shalom Salomon Wald and Arielle Kandel *India, Israel, and the Jewish People*
reviewed by *Navras Jaat Aafreedi*

Ithamar Theodor and Yudit Kornberg Greenberg, eds. *Dharma and Halacha – Comparative Studies in Hindu-Jewish Philosophy and Religion*
reviewed by *Nathan Katz*

Obituaries

Zaithunchchi
by *Nathan Katz*

Rabbi Ezekiel N. Musleah
by *Steven Heine*

Sarah Cohen

by Ellen S. Goldberg

Communications

Emergence of Kolkata as a Center for Jewish Studies in India`

by Navras Jaat Aafreedi

Three tin ingots of Haifa shipwreck with Indus (Sarasvati) hieroglyphs reinforces the Meluhha rebus reading *ranku dhatu mûh*, ‘tin mineral-ore ingot’

by S. Kalyanaraman

JOURNAL OF INDO-JUDAIC STUDIES

Founding Editors

Nathan Katz, Florida International University, Emeritus

Braj Mohan Sinha, University of Saskatchewan

Managing Editor

P R Kumaraswamy, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Editorial Board

- Navras Jaat Aafreedi, Presidency University
- S R Bhatt, Delhi University
- Alan Brill, Seton Hall University
- David R Blumenthal, Emory University
- Ranabir Chakravarti, Jawaharlal Nehru University
- T S Devadoss, University of Madras
- Arthur Green, Hebrew College of Boston
- Barbara A Holdrege, University of California at Santa Barbara
- Boaz Huss, Ben Gurion University of the Negev
- Alan Mittleman, Jewish Theological Seminary of America
- David Novak, University of Toronto
- Tudor Parfitt, Florida International University
- Anantanand Rambachan, St. Olaf College
- Joan G Roland, Pace University
- L N Sharma, Benares Hindu University,
- Frank Joseph Shulman, College Park, MD
- Mahavir Singh, Gautam Buddha University
- Priya Singh, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies
- Ithamar Theodor, Haifa University
- Shalva Weil, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- Brian Weinstein, Howard University
- Heinz Werner Wessler, Uppsala University

In Memoriam: Founding Editorial Board Members

- Shlomo Deshen, Tel-Aviv University
- Daniel J Elazar, Bar-Ilan University
- M L Sondhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University
- D Venkateswarlu, Osmania University
- Bibhuti S. Yadav, Temple University

Back issues (in print) are available. Manuscripts and books for review should be sent to:

JOURNAL OF INDO-JUDAIC STUDIES
4545 Royal Palm Avenue
Miami Beach, FL 33140
USA
katzn18@gmail.com

Since 2019 *Journal of Indo-Judaic Studies* is published by the Middle East Institute, New Delhi, India, and all the issues, including past issues, can be accessed at <http://www.mei.org.in/jijs-listing>

Cover design: Sajid Imandar

Editorial Assistant: Minakshi Sardar

Copyright © 2020, Middle East Institute, New Delhi (www.mei.org.in)

MEI@ND

Torah-Hindu Parallels in the Narratives of Five Persons

Bharat Jhunjunwala

Abstract: The contemporary theological constructs of the Biblical and Hindu religions are quite dissimilar. However, we find that 75 percent of the narratives of Five Persons—namely, Adam, Cain, Noah, Abraham and Moses of the Biblical religions and Swayambhu Manu, Indra, Vaivaswat Manu, Rama and Krishna of the Hindu religion—are parallel. More importantly 82 percent of the theological understandings at the time of these Five Persons are also parallel. The parallels suggest that these two religions had a connection at some remote time. They have evolved in different directions and today may look different. We can enrich the contemporary theological understandings of these religions in the sense of having a common heritage by examining their theological understandings at the time of these Five Persons in the light of each other. This can be the first step towards developing a deeper understanding between the religions.

Key words: Adam, Cain, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Swayambhu, Indra, Vaivaswat, Rama, Krishna, Parallelomania, Bible, Genesis, Exodus, Vayu Purana, Rig Veda, Mahabharata, Ramayana, Bhagwata Purana.

How I got here

I have grown up with the Bhagwad Gita—the teachings given by Krishna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. He speaks of the One All-pervasive Monist God. His teaching is bereft of idol worship and focussed, in my reading, on the need to undertake action in tune with the Will of God. I felt that although the concept of the All-pervasive God was distinct from the Monotheistic God of the Torah, the common understanding was of abjuring idol worship and the writ of One God.

Then, while I was reading the Torah, I happened to also read the descriptions of Mount Meru in the Hindu texts. The Hindu texts say that four rivers flowed in four directions from here and Brahma the creator lived here. I could not miss the parallel with the Biblical Garden of Eden. The frequently noted parallels between the flood narratives of Noah and Vaivaswat Manu further increased my curiosity. As I delved deeper, I found remarkable parallels between the narratives of Five Persons mentioned in the Torah, namely, Adam, Cain, Noah, Abraham and Moses; and the narratives of five persons mentioned in the Hindu

religion, namely, Swayambhu Manu, Indra, Vaivaswat Manu, Rama and Krishna. We refer to Swayambhu Manu as Swayambhu and Vaivaswat Manu as Vaivaswat in this paper for brevity.

The common belief in One God and the parallels in the narratives of the Five Persons made me wonder if the two religions may have some deeper connection in the remote past. This paper is the result of that exploration.

The present state of humankind has lent a sense of urgency. We are today embroiled in conflicts that often have roots in religious understandings: Hindus against Muslims and Christians in India; Buddhists against Muslims in Myanmar; Muslims against Jews in West Asia and so on. There is a sense of separation—“me” versus “you”—underlying these conflicts. I intuitively felt that this separation was not rooted in the scriptures. I felt the need to understand the Torah and Hindu texts so that the perceived distinctions in their theological understandings could be discussed with a sense of friendship and, if possible, resolved to move towards a common understanding. The narratives of the Five Persons as given in the Torah is acknowledged by the Abrahamic Religions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam; while the holiness of the Five Persons is acknowledged, with certain exceptions, by the Hindus, Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs. We use the terms “Biblical” and “Hindu” to denote the above two sets of religions. Tracing the connections between the narratives of the Five Persons could, therefore, help establish a dialogue between these two religions. The theological beliefs of the Hindus, for example, could be enriched by looking at the parallel teachings of the Torah and vice versa. I am aware that tracing the parallels is not likely “solve” the conflicts. Yet, it can anchor a dialogue with a sense of love and oneness as between “me” and “us” instead of “me” versus “you.” The purpose of this paper is to lay the foundations of such a dialogue between the Biblical and Hindu religions—anchored on the narratives of the Five Persons.

The narratives took place in the past. We are not delving into the historical authenticity of the narratives. It does not matter for the purpose of this paper whether Adam lived in Turkey or Iraq, whether he lived at all, or whether the same pattern is found in other primitive myths. The fact remains that his narrative lays the foundations of contemporary theology of the Abrahamic and Hindu religions. We can build building bridges between the contemporary theology of these religions irrespective how the parallels may have arisen. Our objective is to examine the present-day understandings of the past narratives.

For example, Abraham and Rama lay the foundations of the present theological understandings of the Biblical and Hindu religions. For example, we can examine the theological understanding about the nature of God as given in the narrative of Rama in the light of the theological understanding about the nature of God as given in the narrative of Abraham. We need not delve into the question whether they were historical persons or not.

Road Travelled so far

We follow an illustrious line of predecessors who have taken major steps in tracing the parallels in the Biblical and Hindu religions.

William Jones

Sir Williams Jones was a judge at the Supreme Court at Calcutta (now known as Kolkata) and the founder of the Asiatic Society. He traced the parallels between certain Biblical and Hindu persons in the Presidential Address given to the Society in 1788 titled “On the Chronology of the Hindus.”¹ He suggested that Biblical Adam was parallel to Hindu Swayambhu who were both born, in his reckoning, in 4006 BCE; Biblical Noah was parallel to Hindu Vaivaswat who both were born in 2949 BCE; and Biblical Raamah was parallel to Hindu Rama who both were born in 2029 BCE.

He noted that Adam and Swayambhu were the first human beings and that Noah and Vaivaswat lived at the time of the Flood in the two religions. However, he considered Biblical Raamah, son of Cush, to be parallel to Hindu Rama apparently on etymological considerations alone. He did not draw any parallels between the narratives of Raamah and Rama. He also did not discuss the parallels between Cain and Indra; and between Moses and Krishna. Further, he did not discuss the theological parallels between these persons.

T W Doane

Thomas William Doane was a pioneer of free thought. He published his sole literary work *Bible Myths and their Parallels in other Religions* in 1882.² He drew parallels between the narratives of the Bible and the Hindus but did not look at the genealogies, similarities of names and theologies. The non-

¹ Jones, William, *The Works of Sir William Jones in Six Volumes*, Vol I, G G and J Robinson, London, 1799, page 313.

² Doane, T W, *Bible Myths and their Parallels in other Religions*, J. W. Bouton, New York, 1882, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/31885/31885-h/31885-h.htm>, Retrieved July 22, 2020.

consideration of genealogies made it possible for him to draw a parallel between narratives at different genealogical positions. Yet he made some fine parallels.

He drew a parallel between Adam and Swayambhu on the strength of both living at a place with four rivers;³ and Noah and Vaivaswat on the basis of the Deluge.⁴ These parallels are same as suggested by us. However, there are numerous cases where he jumps the genealogical position. We give two examples.

He associated the Tree of Life mentioned in the narrative of Adam with the Soma plant mentioned in the narrative of Indra.⁵ He ignored the statement in the Hindu texts that Indra lived in the fourth generation from Swayambhu—whom we show was more likely parallel to Adam.⁶ Thus there is a gap of four generations between the Tree of Life and the Soma Plant.

Second, he associated Abraham with Harishchandra on the basis of both having offered their son in a failed sacrifice.⁷ However, the main narrative of Abraham—going to the south, wife being taken to the Pharaoh, separation from Lot, and expelling Hagar have no parallels in the narrative of Harishchandra. There is no parallel between the names Abraham and Harishchandra either. Thus, while Doane furthered the study of the parallels, the specific parallels outlined by him left much to be desired.

Mircea Eliade

Mircea Eliade was Professor at Universities of Bucharest and Chicago. He published *Patterns in Comparative Religion* in 1958 and his seminal work *Myth and Reality* in 1968.⁸ In these books he brought together narratives from across the world and shew that underlying them were certain common patterns. Like

³ Doane, *Bible Myths*, page 26.

⁴ Doane uses the name Satyavrata for Vaivaswat, *Bible Myths*, page 37.

⁵ Doane, *Bible Myths*, page 26. Soma is mentioned early in the Rig Veda which eulogizes the deeds of Indra and does not mention Swayambhu or his creator Brahma even once (Griffith, Ralph T H, *Hymns of the RgVeda*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1973, 1:2:1).

⁶ Please see subsection “Genealogy” in the section “Cain-Indra” below.

⁷ Doane, *Bible Myths*, page 52.

⁸ Eliade, Mircea, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, Sheed & Ward, New York, 1958; Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1963.

Doane, we find that, in the context of Biblical-Hindu parallels, those drawn by him did not often match with the genealogical positions.

He said, for example, that the creation of Eve from Adam's ribs was parallel to the primeval pair of Yama and Yami described in the Rig Veda.⁹ He ignored though that Adam and Eve married while Yama and Yami did not marry. Eliade did not examine the parallel between Adam and Eve, and Swayambhu and Shatarupa. The creation of these primeval couples is associated with splitting of the body and they were the progenitors of the human race in both the religions.¹⁰

Like Doane, Eliade too associates the Tree of Life described in the Bible with the Soma plant mentioned in the Rig Veda.¹¹

Joseph Campbell

Joseph John Campbell was a professor of literature at Sarah Lawrence College in New York. He was influenced by Indian philosopher Jiddu Krshnamurti. He traced the parallels in the Hindu and other world narratives in *Oriental Mythology* published in 1962 which is part of his trilogy of *Primitive-, Oriental- and Occidental Mythology*.¹²

Unlike Doane and Eliade, Campbell rightly drew parallel between the making of woman from man's ribs in Genesis and the splitting of the primeval being into husband and wife as described in the Hindu texts.¹³

A number of other examples, however, face a chronological problem. Campbell identified the Tree of Knowledge of the Bible with the pipal tree (*ficus religiosa*) at the time of Buddha.¹⁴ However, the two mentions are separated by three millennia. Campbell did not explore the possible parallel between the Tree of

⁹ Eliade, *Patterns...*, page 423.

¹⁰ *Vayu Purana*, Editor, Ram Pratap Tripathi Shastri, Hind Sahitya Sammelan, Prayag, Samvat 2007, 10:7-8.

¹¹ Eliade, *Patterns...*, page 290.

¹² Campbell, Joseph, *The Masks of God: Oriental Mythology*, Secker & Warburg, London, 1962.

¹³ *Bible*, Genesis 2:21-22; *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, Samvat 2058, 1:4:3-4; Campbell, *Oriental...*, page 9-10. The same narrative is found in *Vayu Purana* 10:7.

¹⁴ Campbell, *Oriental...*, page 167.

Knowledge or the Tree of Life and the Kalpa-vriksha or “wish-fulfilling tree” that is mentioned at the time of Swayambhu.¹⁵

He drew a parallel between the Biblical narrative of the Deluge¹⁶ and the Rig Vedic narrative of Indra killing Vritra and releasing waters that were held up by Vritra.¹⁷ Campbell ignored that Noah would have been mighty happy if the pent-up waters had been released and the Deluge abated. The clear parallel to the Biblical Deluge is available in the Fish Incarnation at the time of Vaivaswat which Campbell ignored.

These chronological problems notwithstanding the patterns delineated by Campbell indeed appear to be valid. However, we are looking for one-to-one parallels—as distinct from patterns—between the five persons in the Biblical and Hindu religions.

Our Small Step Forward

Our predecessor scholars do not place the parallels in a genealogical time frame with William Jones being the exception. They also do not consider the distinctions between two allegedly parallel narratives. Further, the parallels are limited to Adam-Swayambhu, Cain-Indra and Noah-Vaivaswat.

Our small step forward is to examine the parallels *and distinctions* in the lives of each of the five persons on each of the five parameters. Our presentation is consistent with genealogy.

Methodology

Rabbi Samuel Sandmel had warned us against extravagance in tracing parallels. He has called for giving special attention to the contexts of- and distinctions between the narratives.¹⁸ Thus, we examine the parallels in three categories:

1. *Parallel.* We describe the parallels in the two religions.
2. *Distinct.* We describe distinctions in the two religions.
3. *Silent.* We note where a narrative is mentioned in one religion and not in the other religion.

¹⁵ *Vayu Purana* 8:93-94.

¹⁶ Campbell, *Oriental...*, page 182.

¹⁷ *Rig Veda* 4:19:2

¹⁸ Sandmel, Samuel, “Parallelomania,” *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 81, No. 1, March 1962, page 2.

A narrative is considered to be a Silence if it can slip into the other narrative smoothly. It is considered to be Distinct if it cannot slip into the other narrative smoothly. For example, the Hindu texts tell of Krishna participating in the Mahabharata War after his return for studies under Sage Sandipani, who we suggest was parallel to Priest Jethro. The Bible does not tell of such participation by Moses. However, the narrative can smoothly slip into the Biblical narrative. Moses may have participated in such a War between his return from Midian and leading the Exodus. Thus, we consider this to be a Silence in the Bible.

On the other hand, the Ramayana tells of Rama undertaking a war against Lanka after Sita was abducted by Ravana. The Bible does not tell of Abraham undertaking such a war. On the contrary, the Bible says that the Pharaoh treated Abraham well. Thus, the narrative of war does not slip smoothly into the Biblical narrative and we consider this to be a distinction.

We examine the parallels for five persons on five parameters. In order to condense this vast matrix, we take a cue from Todd Scacewater, Professor of International Studies at Dallas International University. In his discussion of exegetical fallacies, he mentions that in one study it was found that the parallels only overlapped in 7 percent of the points which, he says, suggested that the parallels were “dubious at best.”¹⁹ In order avoid such a trap, we adopt the following method:

1. At the end of each subsection, we give a Summary Table classifying the foregoing descriptions in the categories of Parallel (P) and Distinct (D). We have marked the distinctions in italics in this table to enable quick appreciation.
2. In last line of the table, we give totals of P and D. Then we give a “net” value which is the ratio of “numbers of parallels” and the “numbers of observations.” For example, if P=3 and D=2, then the number of observations = 5, and Net Parallel = 3/5. This number tells us how many parallels are obtained in the total numbers of observations.
3. We convert this net value into percentages for easy appreciation.

¹⁹ Scacewater, Todd, “Exegetical Fallacies: Word Studies, Part 2,” February 2, 2016, <http://exegeticaltools.com/2016/02/02/exegetical-fallacies-word-studies-part-2/>, Retrieved April 27, 2020.

4. In the last section of this paper, we summarize these net values from the 25 Summary Tables and arrive at a comprehensive net value for the parallels. This final figure gives us an overall estimate of the extent of the parallels.
5. We use the term “observation” to only include observations on which both religions have something to say. We exclude the silences because our objective is to establish dialogue between the two religions. Such dialogue is helped by looking at the parallels and distinctions. A Silence could hide either a Parallel or a Distinction, therefore, it would not be appropriate to classify it as either.

Five Parameters

Now, we briefly mention the methodology used for each of the five parameters.

An overarching issue here is of multiple interpretations. For example, as we shall show, Adam was created from “aphar” which means “dirt” as well as “soil.” The meaning “dirt” is parallel to the Swayambhu having been created from “darkness.” Thus, we accept the meaning “dirt,” ignore the meaning “soil” and classify this observation as a Parallel. In doing so, we are not asserting that the meaning “dirt” is correct and the meaning “soil” is incorrect. We are only saying that the meaning “dirt” is parallel to the Hindu texts among the multiple meanings and this meaning could provide an anchor for dialogue between the two religions. Our purpose is to build bridges between the contemporary theological understandings between these religions. Thus, the “true” meaning of “aphar,” if we can ever fathom it, is not relevant. It is sufficient that one of the many meanings in parallel to serve as an anchor for dialogue between the two religions.

Context and Age

We begin each narrative by comparing the context of the person *as given in the text*. We do not bring in any extra-textual information from archaeology, astronomy and other sciences because the validity of that information can be questioned. To repeat, this is not a work of pre-history or history. This is a work of contemporary theology. Our purpose is limited to looking at the context and the theological understanding as given in the text.

Genealogy and Time

The time of the Five Persons is reckoned variously on astronomical, archaeological, genealogical, genetic, and literary considerations. Only the genealogical considerations are “within” the texts. Thus, we have limited

ourselves to reckoning the time of the Five Persons from genealogical considerations alone. We recognize that ignoring other considerations reduces the robustness of the estimates.²⁰ On the other hand, the estimates become questionable if we bring in non-textual evidences because of the validity of the non-textual evidences.

Narratives

We have not delved into the question whether an observed parallel is “close” or “distant.” That would require setting the standards between different levels of the parallels and stretch this work. Perhaps that can be done in a sequel.

We consider the narrative to be simultaneously Parallel and Distinct in case the content of the narrative is parallel but it is placed at a different chronological order. In doing so we consider a chronological distinction at par with the distinction in the narrative.

Names

Governments nowadays use parallels in the names to identify duplicate persons;²¹ and search engines use the parallels to present a more precise search result.²² They have also been used to trace the origins of the Hebrew Language by matching the person- and place names in the Hebrew and Canaanite, Amorite, Akkadian and Egyptian languages.²³ We apply this method to trace the parallels between the person- and place names given in the Bible and Hindu texts.

²⁰ We are thankful to Paul Himes, Professor of Bible and Ancient Languages, Baptist College of Ministry, Menomonee Falls, WI, USA for drawing our attention to the limitations of reckoning time by genealogical method.

²¹ Karakasidis, Alexandros, Vassilios S. Verykios, and Peter Christen, “Fake Injection Strategies for Private Names,” Springer Link, https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-642-28879-1_2, Retrieved May 17, 2020.

²² Kant, Ranjan and Piyush Sagar Mishra, An Ensemble Approach to Large-Scale Fuzzy Name Matching, BCG Gamma, <https://medium.com/bcggamma/an-ensemble-approach-to-large-scale-fuzzy-name-matching-b3e3fa124e3c>, Retrieved May 17, 2020.

²³ Eytan, Eli, “Hebrew Language,” Encyclopedia.com, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/language-linguistics-and-literary-terms/language-and-linguistics/hebrew-language>, Retrieved May 17, 2020.

We have used the “Common Key Method,” which compares the sounds in the names; and the “Word Embedding Method,” which looks at the embedded meaning even though the words may be phonetically dissimilar. We have considered a name to be parallel if it is found to be so by either method. We have excluded the use of three other methods for the reasons given in the endnote.²⁴

Theology

Our objective is to enrich the contemporary theological understanding of the two religions. However, we have multiple theological understandings emerging from the same texts.²⁵ Let us say Abraham’s Yahweh could be described as a Monotheist or a Monist God; while Rama’s Brahman could only be described as a Monist God. In such case we consider their theological understandings to be parallel because the Monist God of Abraham and Monist God of Ram help create a dialogue between the religions.

Secondly, the theological understandings have evolved over time. Krishna, as we shall show, considers those persons worshipping idols to be like animals. Contemporary Hindu practice, however, engages in idol worship. In such a case we consider Krishna’s teaching to be parallel to that of Moses’ even though the contemporary understanding is distinct.

A Note on the Sources

We limit this study, in the main, to the books of Genesis and Exodus. Our study shows that the parallels between the Biblical and Hindu Texts are found until the Hebrews leaving on the Exodus in the narrative of Moses and until the Yadavas left Dwarka in the narrative of Krishna. Hence, we do not discuss the sources that describe subsequent events.

²⁴ The “List Method” is computationally intensive and does not work with names that the system doesn’t know about. The “Edit Distance Method” is useful if we were to look at different levels of similarity which is outside the scope of this work. The “Statistical Similarity Method” works across languages in contrast with specific names hence not suitable for our purposes (Rosette Text Analytics, An Overview of Fuzzy Name Matching Techniques, <https://www.rosette.com/blog/overview-fuzzy-name-matching-techniques/>, Retrieved May 17, 2020).

²⁵ We are thankful to Daniel Flores Albornoz for drawing attention to this aspect.

We have limited ourselves to the information given in the Bible. We have quoted from Net Bible translation.²⁶ We have ignored the Apocrypha unless the Bible is silent on the matter and it is especially brought to light by the Apocrypha.

No text gives the complete Hindu narrative at one place. We have had to, therefore, rely on multiple texts—Vayu Purana for Swayambhu, Rig Veda for Indra, Mahabharata for Vaivaswat, Valmiki Ramayana for Rama and Bhagwata Purana for Krishna. These texts could be considered to be like different books of the Bible. They are mostly consistent with each other.

There exists a disconnect in the context and composition of the Hindu texts. This can be explained by an example. The Vayu Purana gives the narrative of Swayambhu—first among the Five Persons—in greatest detail among the Hindu texts. The relevant chapters were composed before 200 BCE, probably in the late 1st millennium BCE.²⁷ The Rig Veda gives details of Indra—the second person among the Five Persons. It was composed in the 4th millennium BCE.²⁸ Thus, the earlier narrative of Swayambhu is available to us in a later text; and the later narrative of Indra is available to us in an earlier text. This disconnect does not create a difficulty in our assessment. The narrative of Swayambhu could have been transmitted orally for a much longer time and composed later, while the narrative of Indra could have been composed at the time of the events themselves. The long-time oral transmission of the narrative of Swayambhu does not falsify it. Our purpose, once again, is to create a contemporary theological dialogue between the two religions. The contemporary Hindu

²⁶ *Net Bible*, <http://classic.net.bible.org/bible.php>, Retrieved May 21, 2020.

²⁷ The *Vayu Purana* is among the earliest of the Puranas (Hazra, R C, *Studies in the Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1975, page 13, 174-175). The list of chapters added after 200 BCE does not include Chapters 8-10 that we have relied, in the main, to examine parallels with the Bible hence these may be from a period before 200 BCE (Page.

²⁸ Linguist Koenraad Elst says Vedic culture was incipient from the early 4th millennium (Elst, Koenraad, The Vedic Harappans in writing, koenraadelst.bharatvani.org/articles/aid/vedicharappans.html, Retrieved July 16, 2015). Greek scholar N Kazanas places the events of the Rig Veda in 4th millennium BCE (Kazanas, N, Final Reply, www.omilosmeleton.gr/pdf/en/indology/Final%20Reply.pdf, Retrieved July 16, 2015, Page 29). Sanskrit scholar O P Bharadwaj says Rig Veda is to be placed before 3000 BCE (*Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India*, Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi, 1986, Page 34).

religion honors the narrative of Swayambhu as given in the later texts. That is sufficient for us to examine parallels on the basis of this text.

With this methodological preface we now trace the parallels in the narratives of the Five Persons.

Adam-Swayambhu

Context: Food Gathering (Stone Age)

The context of Adam-Swayambhu in both religions is that of the food-gathering stage of the Stone Age in human evolution. God commanded Adam: “You may freely eat fruit from every tree of the orchard...”²⁹ The Vayu Purana in parallel says that in the beginning “People used to roam here and there. They ate the vegetation, fruits and roots of plants growing from the earth.”³⁰

After being expelled from the Garden of Eden, Adam started to till the ground.³¹ Likewise the Vayu Purana says that “the trees began to die at one time. The people meditated on the matter. Then trees began to grow again in their homes.”³² Use of the word “meditation” followed by “trees began to grow” indicates some human effort akin to tillage. Metals, as we shall show, are first mentioned later in the narratives of Cain and Indra. Hence, we assume this was homestead tillage with stone implements that were used in the Stone Age.

Summary Table 1.1: Adam-Swayambhu: Context.

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Food gathering	Food Gathering	P
2	Tillage	Homestead Tillage	P
	Summary: P=2, D=0, Net=2/2, 100 percent.		

²⁹ Bible, Genesis, 2:17.

³⁰ Vayu Purana 8:47-48, 57. The description is of the Krita Age in which Swayambhu lived.

³¹ Bible, Genesis 3:23.

³² Vayu Purana 8:83-90. The section from 8:74 to 8:179 describes the Treta Age that comes after the Krita Age that has been described by us till this point. Therefore, there is chronological continuity while there is discontinuity in the position in the text which we ignore.

Genealogy and Time: First Man

The Bible says Adam lived for 930 years.³³ The Hindu texts are silent on the life span of Swayambhu.

Bishop Ussher had arrived at a time for the birth of Adam on genealogical considerations at 4004 BCE.³⁴ Without ascribing this date to the creation of man, this gives one estimate of time for Adam. The Hindu texts are silent on the time of Swayambhu, however, as mentioned above, William Jones has estimated his time at 4006 BCE which is close to that suggested by Ussher for Adam.

Summary Table 1.2: Adam-Swayambhu: Genealogy and Time

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	4004 BCE	4006 BCE	P
	Summary: P=1, D=0, Net=1/1, 100 percent.		

Narratives: Creation of the Earth

The Bible says that at the earliest time “the earth was without shape and empty... but the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the water.”³⁵ The Vayu Purana in parallel says: “Brahma assumed the form of wind in that darkness when the entire earth was covered with waters and [Brahma] kept roaming here and there.”³⁶ The “Spirit” mentioned in the Bible could be parallel to the “wind” mentioned in the Vayu Purana.

The Bible tells of God dividing the waters by a firmament.³⁷ The Vayu Purana is silent on this point.

The Bible then tells of appearance of dry ground.³⁸ The Vayu Purana in parallel says that “the Lord entered the undifferentiated matter and... established [the earth] above the waters.”³⁹

³³ Bible, Genesis 5:5.

³⁴ *The Open Bible*, The New King James Version, Thomas Nelson Publishers, New York, 1985, Page 1.

³⁵ Bible, Genesis 1:2

³⁶ Vayu Purana 8:2-3.

³⁷ Bible, Genesis 1:6.

The Bible tells of creation of vegetation immediately hereafter.⁴⁰ The Vayu Purana is silent on this. However, the Purana tells of the creation of humankind a few verses later hence we may safely assume that vegetation had been created before this time. However, we consider this to be a silence in view of absence of an explicit statement in the Purana.

The Bible tells of the separation of the day from the night.⁴¹ The Vayu Purana in parallel tells of the creation of moon, sun and other planets at this point of the narrative.⁴² “Day and night,” and “moon and sun” are two facets of the same creation hence we consider this to be parallel.

The Bible then tells of the creation of fish and birds followed by cattle.⁴³ The Vayu Purana is silent on this.

Then Bible says God made humankind.⁴⁴ At this point, the Vayu Purana says that Brahma created four sets of 1000 couples each from his mouth, chest, hips and feet, followed by the creation of nine mental sons.⁴⁵ All these creations could be subsumed in the “humankind” mentioned in the Bible.

The Bible says that there was no man to cultivate the ground.⁴⁶ The Vayu Purana says: “In this way Brahma made many populations but for some reason those people did not engage in the path directed.”⁴⁷ The Purana tells that subsequently those people started cultivation by ploughing.⁴⁸ We assume, therefore, that the “path directed,” which the earlier populations did not follow, included undertaking cultivation. Hence, the Bible’s saying that there was no

³⁸ Bible, Genesis 1:9.

³⁹ Vayu Purana 8:7-8.

⁴⁰ Bible, Genesis 1:11-12.

⁴¹ Bible, Genesis 1:14.

⁴² Vayu Purana 8:16-17.

⁴³ Bible, Genesis 1:20, 24.

⁴⁴ Bible, Genesis 1:26.

⁴⁵ Vayu Purana 8:37-40, 9:18, 67-68.

⁴⁶ Bible, Genesis 2:5.

⁴⁷ Vayu Purana 10:1.

⁴⁸ Vayu Purana 8:159. This verse is placed earlier in the text but describes the situation of a later period hence there is no chronological distinction.

man to cultivate the ground is parallel to those populations not engaging in the path directed.

The Bible says that God formed the Adam from the soil of the ground.⁴⁹ The Hebrew word for soil is “aphar.” It means “dust, dirt, ashes, dusty, debris, dirt-covered, scabs, grave” (88 times) as well as “soil, ground, earth, plaster and siege ramps” (22 times).⁵⁰ These two sets of meanings read together give sense not merely of “earth” but of “dirty earth.” In parallel, the Vayu Purana says that Brahma had three qualities—goodness, passion and darkness.⁵¹ Brahma divided his body of darkness into two parts—woman and man.⁵² The woman was Shatarupa and she married Swayambhu.⁵³ The creation of Adam and Shatarupa-Swayambhu are both related to a “low-quality”—“dirty” in the Bible and “darkness” in the Vayu Purana.

The Bible tells of God placing Adam in the Garden of Eden where one river parted into four rivers.⁵⁴ The Vayu Purana tells in parallel that Brahma lived where “one sky-flowing river fell on four mountaintops... of Meru and began to flow dividing into four.”⁵⁵ However, the Bible tells of Adam being placed at this place while the Vayu Purana tells of Brahma—the creator of Swayambhu’s wife Shatarupa—being placed at this place. However, Vayu Purana does not tell of Shatarupa-Swayambhu living at another place hence we assume they lived at the same place as Brahma and consider this to be a parallel.

God told Adam that he could eat freely eat fruit from every tree of the orchard but not from the Tree of Knowledge.⁵⁶ The Vayu Purana is silent on this.

⁴⁹ Bible, Genesis 2:7.

⁵⁰ Strong’s 06083.

⁵¹ Monier Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Southern Publications, Madras, 1987, page 863.

⁵² Vayu Purana, 10:6-8.

⁵³ The Vayu Purana does not explicitly say that the man created from splitting of the body was Swayambhu. Vayu Purana 10:7-8, 13.

⁵⁴ Bible, Genesis 2:10.

⁵⁵ Vayu Purana 34:46-96, 42:25-35. This description is placed later in the text. However, the Purana discussed all geography separately hence we do not consider this to be a chronological distinction.

⁵⁶ Bible, Genesis 2:16-17.

The Bible then tells of creation of Eve from the body of Adam.⁵⁷ This is parallel to the creation of woman and man from splitting on Brahma's body of darkness mentioned above. The distinction is that the Bible first tells of the creation of Adam; followed by the creation of Eve from Adam's body. In distinction, the Vayu Purana tells of the creation of Shatarupa from the body of Brahma and mentions Swayambhu later. Hence there exist one parallel and two distinctions here. The parallel is of the creation of woman from the body of another. The first distinction is that Eve was created from Adam while Shatarupa was created from Brahma. The second distinction is that Adam was created before Eve while Swayambhu is mentioned after the creation of Shatarupa.

The Bible tells of the snake inciting Eve and she, luring Adam into eating of the forbidden Tree of Knowledge.⁵⁸ The Vayu Purana is silent on this.

The Bible tells of God cursing the snake: "On your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life."⁵⁹ At this point of the narrative, the Vayu Purana says that Brahma created numerous mental descendants including the demons. Then, seeing that unpleasant creation, "his hair got separated... It took the shape of a snake and it started to climb upon Brahma. It moved in a slanted way. Its place of residence was directed to be the part of the earth where the rays of moon and sun did not reach."⁶⁰ The snake was cursed to go on the belly in the Bible while it was cursed to live in the "earth where sun did not reach" in the Vayu Purana. This part is parallel. However, this event is mentioned after the creation of Eve in the Bible but before the creation of Shatarupa in the Vayu Purana hence there exists a chronological distinction.

The Bible says that God cursed the woman "to bring forth children in pain."⁶¹ The Vayu Purana says that previously women used to have the capacity to bear children only towards the end of their lives and they were prone to death.⁶² The phrases "in pain" and being "prone to death" both indicate a difficult physical situation and are parallel.

⁵⁷ Bible, Genesis 2:21-22.

⁵⁸ Bible, Genesis 3:4, 6.

⁵⁹ Bible, Genesis 3:14.

⁶⁰ Vayu Purana 9:24, 34-36.

⁶¹ Bible, Genesis 3:16.

⁶² Vayu Purana 8:43-44.

The Bible says that the man shall rule over the woman.⁶³ The Vayu Purana is silent on this.

At this point the Bible says that Adam was sent to till the ground.⁶⁴ The Vayu Purana, as mentioned in the subsection “Context” above, says that the trees began to die at one time. Then the people meditated on the matter and the trees began to grow again in their homes.⁶⁵ The term “meditate” could hide the tilling. Though these descriptions are parallel we do not give any points to here because this parallel is already counted in the subsection “Context.”

The Bible says God made tunics of skin and clothed Adam and Eve.⁶⁶ The Vayu Purana says that the people began to obtain clothes from the trees and began to make houses to save themselves of the pain from cold and heat.⁶⁷ The Bible is silent on the making of houses.

Summary Table 1.3: Adam-Swayambhu: Narrative

Sl	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Earth was without shape	Five elements were not separated	P
2	Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the water.	Brahma was wandering here and there.	p
3	Dry ground appeared.	The Lord established the earth above the waters.	P
4	Separation of day from night.	Creation of moon, sun and other planets.	P
5	God made humankind.	Brahma created nine mental sons.	P
6	There was no man to cultivate the ground.	Human beings did not engage in creation.	P
7	God made (only) <i>man</i> from dirty earth.	Brahma made <i>male and female</i> from his body of darkness.	P, D
8	God placed the man where one river parted	Brahma lived where “one sky-flowing river began to flow dividing into four.	P

⁶³ Bible, Genesis 3:16.

⁶⁴ Bible, Genesis 3:17-18, 23.

⁶⁵ Vayu Purana 8:87-89.

⁶⁶ Bible, Genesis 3:21.

⁶⁷ Vayu Purana 8:96.

	into four.		
9	Adam was created first followed by the creation of Eve from the body of Adam.	Shatarupa was made from the body of Brahma and Swayambhu is mentioned later.	P, D=2
10	God cursed the snake to eat dust. This is said <i>after the creation of Eve</i> .	Brahma directed the snake to live in the earth where the rays of moon and sun did not reach. This is said <i>before the creation of Shatarupa</i> .	P, D
11	Woman to bring forth children in pain.	Women were prone to death in bringing forth children.	P
12	God sent Adam to till the ground.	People meditated and trees began to grow in their homes.	Nil
13	God made tunics of skin.	People began to obtain clothes from the trees.	P
Summary: P=12, D=4, Net=12/16, 75 percent.			

Names: Adam-Manu, Moriah-Meru

The Bible begins with the verse: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”⁶⁸ The Hebrew word for “created” in this verse is “bara.”⁶⁹ Nahum M Sarna, author of the JPS Torah Commentary says, “The Hebrew stem *b-r-* is used in the Bible exclusively of divine creativity.”⁷⁰ The Vayu Purana says: “Having spent the night of 1000 time-periods, desiring to create at the end of the night, Brahman acquires the form of Brahma.”⁷¹ The name Brahman contains the same stem “B-r-” hence we consider this as parallel.

We shall show in the next subsection that Biblical Yahweh is parallel to Hindu Brahma. It suffices here to note that these names are distinct.

Adam was the first man mentioned in the Bible. The name “Swayambhu” means “self-created,” or the first man. The embedded meaning is parallel.

⁶⁸ Bible, Genesis 1:1.

⁶⁹ Strong's 10254.

⁷⁰ Sarna, Nahum M, *Genesis, JPS Torah Commentary*, The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1989.

⁷¹ Vayu Purana 8:1.

The name Eve, Hebrew “Chavvah,” means “life” or “living.”⁷² Shatarupa is also addressed as “Tanu.” Its variant Tanu-krit or “made by Tanu” means “forming the person, preserving life.”⁷³

The Bible does not disclose where Abraham went to till the ground after being banished from Eden. However, the Targum, a secondary Biblical text, says that Adam “went and dwelt on Mount Moriah.”⁷⁴ This suggests that Eden was located near Moriah. The Mahabharata in parallel says that Brahma’s seat was located at Mount Meru.⁷⁵ Thus, in absence of any information to the contrary, we consider that Brahma’s son Swayambhu also lived here. The names Moriah and Meru are parallel phonetically.

Summary Table 1.4: Adam-Swayambhu: Names

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	The creativity of Elohim is written as “B-r-.”	The name Brahman contains the stem “Br.”	P
2	<i>Yahweh</i>	<i>Brahma</i>	D
3	Adam was the first man.	Swayambhu was self-created.	P
4	Eve or “Chavvah” means “life.”	Shatarupa or “Tanu” means preserving life.	P
5	Adam dwelt on Mount Moriah.	Brahma’s seat was located at Mount Meru.	P
Summary: P=4, D=1, Net=4/5, 80 percent.			

Theology: Creation by God

The first verse of Genesis says, “God created the heavens and the earth.”⁷⁶ The Vayu Purana in parallel says Brahman takes the form of Brahma with the desire to create.”⁷⁷

⁷² Strong’s 02332.

⁷³ *Vayu Purana* 10:9, Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 435.

⁷⁴ *Targum Pseudo Jonathan*, Genesis 1-6, <https://juchre.org/targums/pgen.htm>, Retrieved September 24, 2017.

⁷⁵ *Mahabharata*, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, Samvat 2067, 9:38:13-14.

⁷⁶ *Bible*, Genesis 1:1.

⁷⁷ *Vayu Purana* 8:1.

The name “Elohim” is used for God in Genesis 1:1 through 2:3. Hereafter, the name “Yahweh Elohim” or “Lord God,” or, later, stand-alone “Yahweh” is used. The Jewish Encyclopedia explains that name “Elohim” is used as the name of the “One” God of Israel while Yahweh is used as a “personal name” of the God of Israel.⁷⁸

The Hindu system proceeds in two steps in parallel. The name “Brahman” is used in Vayu Purana 8:1. It means “the Self-existent, the Absolute, the Eternal.”⁷⁹ The name “Brahma” is used from verse 8:2 through Chapter 10.⁸⁰ Brahma undertakes the creation of the material world. In the subsection “Theology” of section “Abraham-Rama” we shall show that Brahma gave boons to specific persons. In other words, Brahma is a personal God. In this way, the Supreme Power has a twofold nature in both the narratives. Elohim is parallel to Brahman—they are One God or Absolute. Yahweh is parallel to Brahma—they are personal God.

In the JPS Torah Commentary, Nahum M Sarna described the serpent as follows: “The serpent emphatically contradicts the very words God used in 2:17 [do not eat of the Tree of Knowledge] ... It then proceeds to ascribe self-serving motives to God, thus undermining His credibility in her eyes.”⁸¹ Sarna, therefore, portrays the serpent in a negative sense. The Vayu Purana in parallel says, the serpent “moved in a slanted way.” The word “apsarpana” used for “slanted” means creeping, crawling, a demon, a tribe of the Mlechha [those who speak indistinctly].⁸² Thus, both texts portray the serpent in negative terms.

The major theological issue is that of Adam eating of the prohibited Tree of Knowledge. There are a number of interpretations of this event. The Jews believe man enters the world free of sin, who yet sins because he is not a perfect being.⁸³ Saint Irenaeus, who lived towards the beginning of the first millennium

⁷⁸ Jewish Encyclopedia, “Names of God,” <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/11305-names-of-god>, Retrieved June 10, 2020.

⁷⁹ Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 738.

⁸⁰ Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 738.

⁸¹ Sarna, *The JPS...*, page 25.

⁸² Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 1184, 837.

⁸³ Kolatch, Alfred J. *The Jewish Book of Why/The Second Jewish Book of Why*, NY: Jonathan David Publishers, 1989, quoted in “Issues in Jewish Ethics: Judaism's Rejection of Original

BCE, held that although Adam sinned, this was a necessary step for the education of mankind.⁸⁴ Saint Augustine believed that the sin incurred by Adam is inherited by all mankind.⁸⁵ All these interpretations are in agreement that Adam did disobey God. The Vayu Purana, however, describes Swayambhu entirely in a positive sense: He, “having got Shatarupa as wife, began to roam with her. They begot two sons and two daughters. This entire population has been born from these two daughters.”⁸⁶ The Bible portrays Adam as a sinner while Vayu Purana portrays Swayambhu as a beneficent person. This is a distinction.

Summary Table 1.5: Adam-Swayambhu: Theology

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	God created.	Brahman took the form of Brahma, the creator.	P
2	The serpent contradicted the words of God.	The serpent is portrayed as a demon.	P
3	Adam <i>committed sin</i> by eating of the Tree of Knowledge.	There is <i>no indication of sin</i> done by Swayambhu.	D
Summary: P=2, D=1, Net=2/3, 67 percent.			

Cain-Indra

Context: Metals (Beginnings of the Bronze Age)

The context of the narrative of Cain in the Bible is of the beginning of settled agriculture as distinct from mere tillage. Archaeological studies indicate that

Sin,” <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/judaism-s-rejection-of-original-sin>, Retrieved July 28, 2020.

⁸⁴ Zimmerman, Anthony, “Evolution and the Sin in Eden: A New Christian Synthesis, Chapter 12: Irenaeus on Original Sin,” http://www.lifeissues.net/writers/zim/ev/ev_01evolution_sin13.html, Retrieved July 28, 2020.

⁸⁵ St Augustine says, “And lo, there was I received by the scourge of bodily sickness, and I was going down to hell, carrying all the sins which I had committed, both against Thee, and myself, and others, many and grievous, over and above that bond of original sin, whereby we all die in Adam.” (The Confessions of Saint Augustine, Translator: E. B. Pusey (Edward Bouverie), Project Gutenberg, EBook #3296, Release Date: June, 2002. www.gutenberg.org).

⁸⁶ *Vayu Purana* 10:12-16.

civilization progressed from food gathering to tending non-domesticated nut-bearing trees and then to settled agriculture.⁸⁷ Adam could have tended non-domesticated nut-bearing trees while Cain may have started settled agriculture with bronze implements. Thus, the Bible says that Cain was tiller of the ground while Abel was keeper of the sheep.⁸⁸ The advent of Bronze implements places this narrative towards the beginning of the Bronze Age.

Indra, like Cain, was an agriculturist. The Rig Veda tells of him working with corn and barley, and undertaking ploughing, threshing, and yoking of animals.⁸⁹ On the other hand, the relative killed by him, Vritra, practiced animal husbandry. The Rig Veda says that Indra had captured Vritra's cows, meaning that the latter was a herdsman.⁹⁰

The word "Cain" means a spear or a lance in Hebrew and is associated with metalworking.⁹¹ The characteristic weapon of Indra too was the spear made of metal.⁹² The Rig Veda also speaks of a smeltery.⁹³ Thus both narratives tell of the metals—heralding the Bronze Age.

Summary Table 2.1: Cain-Indra: Context

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Beginning of settled agriculture.	Indra was an agriculturist.	P

⁸⁷ Encyclopedia Britannica, Origins of agriculture: How agriculture and domestication began, <https://www.britannica.com/print/article/9647>, Retrieved April 19, 2020.

⁸⁸ Bible, Genesis 4:2.

⁸⁹ On crop cultivation, please see *Rig Veda*, 1.140.13, 10.131.2, 1.117.21, 4.38.1, 4.57.4-8, 10.48.7. On yoking of animals, please see *Rig Veda*, 10.101.3, 8.21.3 10.149.4.

⁹⁰ Indra's colleagues "cleaved open the stall of cows;" Indra won the "spoil of cattle;" they "busted the cow-stalls;" and Indra found out the "stable of the milk giving cows" (*Rig Veda* 2:23:3, 3:31:20, 4:16:8 and 5:30:4).

⁹¹ The word "Cain" derives from the Hebrew word "qayin" which means spear or lance (Strong's 07014, 07013). The Jewish Encyclopedia says that descendants of Cain invented the art of working bronze and iron (Jewish Encyclopedia, Kenites, 1906, <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/9279-kenites>). Wenham notes the possible association of Cain with metalworking but says there is too little information to be sure about the original meaning of the name (Wenham, Gordon J, *Word Biblical Commentary, Genesis 1-15*, Word Books, Waco, Texas, 1987, Page 101).

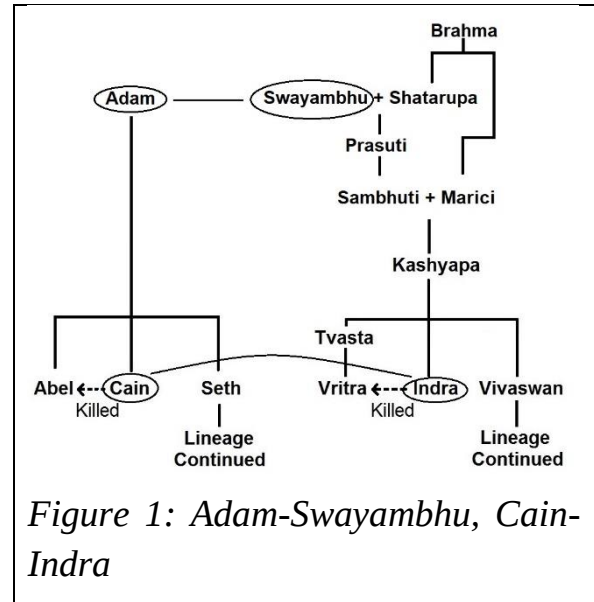
⁹² *Rig Veda* 1:52:8, 6:18:10.

⁹³ *Rig Veda* 4:2:17, 5:9:5, 10:72:2.

2	Metalworking.	Smeltery.	P
	Summary: P=2, D=0, Net=2/2, 100 percent.		

Genealogy and Time: Descent from Adam-Swayambhu

The Bible says that Cain, Abel and Seth were biological sons of Adam.⁹⁴ Three brothers or cousins—Indra, Vritra and Vivaswan—are mentioned in the Hindu texts as well. However, their descent from Swayambhu is more involved as shown in Figure 1. Swayambhu and Shatarupa begot Prasuti, who begot Sambhuti, who begot Kashyapa father of Tvasta, Indra and Vivaswan. Vritra, who was killed by Indra; and who, we suggest, was parallel to Abel, was son of Tvasta. Thus, the three persons in the narrative of Cain-Indra all descended from Adam-Swayambhu. The details are given at the endnote.⁹⁵



The narratives of Abel, Cain and Seth run parallel to those of Vritra, Indra and Vivaswan. The distinction is that the killed person Abel was brother of the killer Cain in the Bible; while the killed person Vritra was nephew of the killer Indra in the Hindu narrative.

Hereafter the lineage continued from the third brother who was not involved in the conflict—Seth in the Bible and Vivaswan in the Hindu texts.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Bible, Genesis, 4:1.

⁹⁵ Brahma created nine mental sons. One of these was Marici (*Vayu Purana* 9:67). Brahma subsequently created a woman named Shatarupa who accepted Swayambhu as her husband (*Vayu Purana* 10:8, 11). Shatarupa gave birth to daughter Prasuti who, in turn gave birth to daughter Sambhuti (*Vayu Purana* 10:16, 27). Sambhuti married Marici (*Vayu Purana* 10:27-29). This couple gave birth to son Kashyapa who, in turn, had three sons Tvasta, Indra and Vivaswan as shown in Figure 1. Tvasta had a son named Vritra (*Mahabharata* 1:65:15-16).

⁹⁶ Bible, Genesis 5:3pp. Vaivaswat was born from Vivaswan (*Mahabharata* 1:95:7).

The time suggested for Cain on genealogical considerations is 3900-3200 BCE.⁹⁷ William Jones has estimated the number of generations between Vivaswan and Buddha as 118.⁹⁸ The mean length of generation for the Medieval Indian Kings has been estimated at 27 years and the mean length of reign has been estimated at 19 years.⁹⁹ The upper- and lower number of years between Buddha and Vivaswan is thus estimated as 3186 and 2242 years. Buddha was born in 470 BCE.¹⁰⁰ Thus, time for Vivaswan is estimated to be between 3656 to 2710 BCE. The Biblical and Hindu estimates have the common range of 3656 to 3200 BCE. Hence, we consider these to be parallel.

Summary Table 2.2: Cain-Indra: Genealogy

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Cain, Abel and Seth were <i>biological sons of Adam</i> .	Vritra, Indra and Vivaswan were <i>descendants of Swayambhu</i> .	P, D
2	Cain was <i>brother</i> of Abel.	Vritra was <i>nephew</i> of Indra.	D
3	The lineage continued from the third person Seth.	The lineage continued from the third person Vivaswan.	P
4	Time is 3900-3200 BCE.	Time is 3656 to 2710 BCE.	P
	Summary: P=3, D=2, Net=3/5, 60 percent.		

Narrative: Agriculturist Killed the Herdsman

The Bible says that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground while Abel brought an offering of firstlings of his flock to the Lord.¹⁰¹ The Lord respected the offering of Abel and not the offering of Cain. This made Cain angry and he killed Abel.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ Bible History, Noah & the Flood, The Bible Timeline, <http://timeline.biblehistory.com/period/noah-and-the-flood>, Retrieved January 26, 2020.

⁹⁸ Jones, *The Works...* Vol I, Page 297, 302 and 304. He estimated the numbers of generations from Vaivaswat to Buddha as 117. Accordingly, the numbers of generations between Vivaswan and Buddha would be 118.

⁹⁹ Trautmann, Thomas R, Length of Generation and Reign in Ancient India, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1969, 89:3 Pages 564-577, Table 1.

¹⁰⁰ Violatti, Cristian, The Dates of the Buddha, *Ancient History Encyclopedia*, <https://www.ancient.eu/article/493/the-dates-of-the-buddha/>, Retrieved March 18, 2020.

¹⁰¹ Bible, Genesis 4:3.

¹⁰² Bible, Genesis 4:8.

Indra too killed Vritra but the provocation was that of kingship.¹⁰³ As said above, Tvasta was brother of Indra. He had a son named Viswarupa (not shown in Figure 1). Indra was afraid that Viswarupa may take over his throne and he killed Viswarupa while he was engaged in penance. Then Tvasta created Vritra to take revenge against Indra. However, Indra kill Vritra as well.¹⁰⁴

The narratives are parallel in the agriculturist—Cain-Indra—killing the herdsman—Abel-Vritra. The distinction is of the killed person being a brother in the Bible versus a nephew in the Hindu texts. This distinction has already been noted in the section “Genealogy” hence it is not counted here.

The Bible tells of Cain living at the land of Nod after killing Abel.¹⁰⁵ The Mahabharata says Indra took shelter in the Mansarovar Lake after killing Vritra.¹⁰⁶ The parallel is leaving the scene of killing and settling elsewhere.

Summary Table 2.3: Cain-Indra: Narrative

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Cain the agriculturist killed Abel the herdsman.	Indra the agriculturist killed Vritra the herdsman.	P
2	Cain lived at Nod after killing Abel.	Indra took shelter at Mansarovar after killing Vritra.	P
	Summary: P=2, D=0, Net=2/2, 100 percent.		

Names: Spear and Vajra

The name Cain means “spear.”¹⁰⁷ The spear is also referred to as “thunderbolt” which was the weapon of Indra.¹⁰⁸ The embedded meaning of the two names is parallel.

Origin of the name Abel is from Hebrew “hebel.” It means “vapour, breath.”¹⁰⁹ Indra released the waters after killing Vritra.¹¹⁰ The, Sanskrit word for “waters”

¹⁰³ Mahabharata 5:9:7.

¹⁰⁴ Mahabharata 5:9:47-48, 10:39.

¹⁰⁵ Bible, Genesis 4:16.

¹⁰⁶ Mahabharata, 12:342:42.

¹⁰⁷ Hebrew “Qayin” (Strong’s 07014) means “possession.” Its origin is Hebrew “qayin” (Strong’s 07013) meaning “spear.”

¹⁰⁸ Rig Veda 1:33:13, for example.

is “apah” which means “water, air, the intermediate region.”¹¹¹ Therefore, the name of the killed person has a connection with vapour in both the religions.

The names of the third person, Seth or Vivaswan, are distinct.

The names Nod and Mansarovar where Cain and Indra went after the killing are distinct.

Summary Table 2.4: Cain-Indra: Names

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	“Cain” means spear.	Indra’s weapon was the spear.	P
2	“Abel” means vapour.	Indra released the waters after killing Vritra.	P
3	“Seth”	“Vivaswan”	D
4	“Nod”	“Mansarovar”	D
Summary: P=2, D=2, Net=2/4, 50 percent.			

Theology: Sinner

The Lord banished Cain after he killed Abel indicating that he was a sinner.¹¹²

The Hindu texts give two different perspectives on this matter. The Ramayana says: the “killing of faultless Vritra was not justified.”¹¹³ In other words, Indra made wrong in killing Vritra. However, the Rig Veda eulogizes Indra’s killing of Vritra.¹¹⁴

The Biblical portrayal of Cain as a sinner is parallel to the Ramayana saying that Indra made wrong in killing Vritra hence, we consider this to be parallel despite the Rig Veda averring the opposite.

Summary Table 2.5: Cain-Indra: Theology

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
----	----------	-------	--------

¹⁰⁹ Strong’s 01892.

¹¹⁰ *Rig Veda* 1.80.4.

¹¹¹ Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 47.

¹¹² *Bible, Genesis* 4:11.

¹¹³ *Ramayana, of Shri Valmiki*, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, Samvat 2044, 7:84:4, 6, 85:15.

¹¹⁴ *Rig Veda* 1:52:6.

1	Cain was a sinner.	Ramayana says Indra made wrong in killing Vritra.	P
Summary: P=1, D=0, Net=1/1, 100 percent.			

Noah-Vaivaswat

Context: Expansion of Population

The context in both the narratives is that of expansion of population. The Bible says that humankind began to multiply on the face of the earth.¹¹⁵ The Vayu Purana says that at the time of Vaivaswat, “rains began to take place... fruits, flowers and roots began to grow... people of that time lived happily... the fourfold population of Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra came into being.”¹¹⁶

The sense of lawlessness is told of in both the narratives. The Bible says that “the Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind had become great on the earth...”¹¹⁷ The Vayu Purana says that those people captured areas, mountains, trees and plants according to their strength.¹¹⁸

Summary Table 3.1: Noah-Vaivaswat: Context

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Humankind began to multiply.	Fourfold population came into being.	P
2	Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind.	People captured areas, mountains, trees and plants according to their strength.	P
Summary: P=2, D=0, Net=2/2, 100 percent.			

¹¹⁵ Bible, Genesis 6:1.

¹¹⁶ Vayu Purana 8:131, 134, 135, 139. These developments are told to have taken place in the Treta Yuga. Vaivaswat Manu lived at this time (Mahabharata 12:348:51).

¹¹⁷ Bible, Genesis 6:5.

¹¹⁸ Vayu Purana 8:136. This is said in reference Treta Yuga in which Vaivaswat was born.

Genealogy and Time: Descent from Seth-Vivaswan

We have mentioned in the previous section “Cain-Indra” that the lineage continued from Seth or Vivaswan. According to the Bible, there were eight generations between Seth and Noah.¹¹⁹ On the other hand, the Hindu texts tell of Vaivaswat being the son of Vivaswan.¹²⁰ The parallel nevertheless is that Noah-Vaivaswat descended from Seth-Vivaswan. The distinction is that the Bible tells of eight generations between the two while Hindu texts do not tell of any intervening generations.

The Bible says that Noah had three sons—Shem, Ham and Japheth. The lineage continued from Arphaxad, son of Shem.¹²¹ The Mahabharata, on the other hand, tells of 10 sons of Vaivaswat. The lineage continued from one of these named Ikshwaku.¹²² The Parallel is that the lineage continued from one of the descendants of Noah-Vaivaswat. The first distinction is that Noah had three sons while Vaivaswat had 10 sons. The second distinction is regarding the genealogy of Arphaxad, who we suggest in subsection “Names” of this section, was parallel to Ikshwaku. Arphaxad was grandson of Noah while Ikshwaku was son of Vaivaswat.

The time for Noah suggested by Gerhard F. Hasel, Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Theology at Andrews University on the basis of genealogy is between 3402 and 2462 BCE.¹²³ As discussed in the subsection “Genealogy” in section “Cain-Indra,” the number of generations between Vivaswan and Buddha at have been estimated as 118 by William Jones. Thus, the numbers of generations between his son Vaivaswat and Buddha would be 117. The mean length of generation and reign, as suggested previously, has been estimated at 27 and 19 years respectively. Thus, the upper- and lower years between Vaivaswat and Buddha are estimated as 3159 to 2223 years. Taking the birth of Buddha at 470 BCE, the time for Vaivaswat is arrived at 3629 to 2693 BCE.

¹¹⁹ Bible, Genesis 5:6-29.

¹²⁰ Mani, Vettam, *Puranic Encyclopedia*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1979, Page 879.

¹²¹ Bible Genesis 5:32, 10:22.

¹²² Mahabharata 1:75:15.

¹²³ Hasel, Gehrard F, “The Meaning of the Chronogenealogies of Genesis 5 and 11,” 1980, <https://www.grisda.org/origins-07053>, Retrieved August 16, 2020.

The range from 3402 to 2693 BCE is common to both the estimates and we consider this to be parallel.

Summary Table 3.2: Noah-Vaivaswat: Genealogy

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Noah was descendant in 8 th generation from Seth.	Vaivaswat was son of Vivaswan.	P, D
2	Noah had <i>three</i> sons.	Vaivaswat had <i>ten</i> sons.	D
3	Lineage continued from Arphaxad, <i>grandson</i> of Noah.	Lineage continued from Ikshwaku, <i>son</i> of Vaivaswat.	P, D
4	The time for Noah is suggested at 3402 to 2462 BCE.	The time for Vivaswan is estimated at 3629 to 2693 BCE.	P
	Summary: P=3, D=3, Net=3/6, 50 percent.		

Narrative: The Flood

The Bible says that the sons of God saw that the daughters of humankind were beautiful. Thus, they took wives for themselves from any they chose.¹²⁴ The Hindu texts are silent on this.

God told both Noah and Vaivaswat about the impending flood. God Himself spoke to Noah.¹²⁵ The Mahabharata tells a longer story. A fish sought the protection of Vaivaswat while he was taking a dip in the river. Vaivaswat decided to give protection to the fish and brought it home. The fish soon grew large leading Vaivaswat to put it in the sea. At this time the Lord in the form of the Fish told Vaivaswat about the impending flood.¹²⁶ The foretelling of the Flood is parallel. We do not consider the manner of telling to be distinct because the Bible is silent on this.

The Bible says that God asked Noah to make an ark in which he should enter with his wife, his three sons and their wives and two of every kind of living creature.¹²⁷ The Mahabharata says that the Fish Incarnation told Vaivaswat to make a strong boat in which he should sit with seven sages and all types of

¹²⁴ Bible, Genesis 6:2.

¹²⁵ Bible, Genesis 6:17.

¹²⁶ Mahabharata 3:187:28-32.

¹²⁷ Bible, Genesis 6:18-19

seeds.¹²⁸ The parallels are that eight numbers of persons climbed on the boat with the seed of other creatures.

The Bible says that the waters prevailed over the earth for 150 days and the ark came to rest on mountains of Ararat in the seventh month.¹²⁹ The Mahabharata says that the boat floated the waters for many years and came to rest on the Himalaya Mountain.¹³⁰ The long period of floating and the resting on a mountain are parallel. We do not consider the 150 days mentioned in the Bible to be a distinction because “many years” is amenable to multiple interpretations of time. We consider the distinction in the name of the mountain in the next subsection.

The Mahabharata tells of the Lord pulling the boat of Vaivaswat in the form of Fish Incarnation during the Flood.¹³¹ The Bible is silent on this.

The Bible tells of Noah drinking wine, uncovering himself, his son Ham seeing his nakedness, his sons Shem and Japheth covering his nakedness, and lastly Noah cursing Ham to be a slave to his brothers.¹³² The Hindu texts are silent on these events.

The Bible tells of the descendants of Noah spreading over the earth. The Mahabharata in parallel says that “Vaivaswat started the work of creation after the Flood. He began to make creation as it was previously.”¹³³ The Gita addresses Vaivaswat as “Father of Mankind.”¹³⁴

The Bible tells of descendants of Noah having a common language, of them making a tower, and the Lord confusing their language.¹³⁵ The Hindu texts are silent on these events.

Summary Table 3.3: Noah-Vaivaswat: Narrative

¹²⁸ *Mahabharata* 3:187:31-32.

¹²⁹ *Bible*, *Genesis* 7:24, 8:4

¹³⁰ *Mahabharata* 3:187:44-47.

¹³¹ *Mahabharata* 3:187:44.

¹³² *Bible*, *Genesis* 9:21-25

¹³³ *Mahabharata* 3:187:56-57.

¹³⁴ *Gita* 4:1.

¹³⁵ *Bible*, *Genesis* 10:32, 11:1, 4, 7.

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	God told Noah about the impending flood.	The Fish Incarnation told Vaivaswat about the impending flood.	P
2	God told Noah to make an ark.	Fish Incarnation told Vaivaswat to make a strong boat.	P
3	Noah entered the ark with his seven close relatives and two of every kind of living creature.	Vaivaswat entered the boat with seven sages and all types of seeds.	P=2
4	The waters prevailed over the earth for <i>150 days</i> .	The boat was floating on waters for <i>many years</i> .	P, D
5	The ark rested on a mountain.	The boat rested on a mountain.	P
6	Descendants of Noah spread over the earth.	Vaivaswat is addressed as “Father of Mankind.”	P
Summary: P=7, D=1, Net=7/8, 87 percent.			

Names: Noah-Manu

Noah’s Hebrew name “Noach” and the name “Manowach”—both have a common origin from the Hebrew word “nuwach.”¹³⁶ The two names are connected though their common root. In turn, “Manowach” is parallel to “Manu.” Both names have the common sounds “M,” “n” and “w/u.”¹³⁷ Thus Noah is related to Manowach, which is related to Manu.

1 Ur Chaldea	U	r (C)	h			a (l)	d	ea
	↑	↑	↑			↑	↑	
2 Arphaxad	A	r (p)	h (a)	x		a	d	
	↑			↑		↑	↑	
3 Ikshwaku	I			ksh (w)		a	k	u
	↓			↓		↓	↓	↓
4 Ikshumati	I			ksh (um)		a	t	i

¹³⁶ “Noach” (Strong’s 05146), “Manowach” (04495), “nuwach” (05118), “nuwach” (05117) and “manowach” (04494).

¹³⁷ I am thankful to a friend on Facebook who drew my attention to this parallel. However, I miss the name.

The Bible does not explicitly tell where Arphaxad lived. However, his descendant Terah had migrated from Ur Chaldea. Therefore, we assume that Arphaxad too lived at Ur Chaldea. This assumption is supported by the Jewish Encyclopaedia saying that the name “Ur Chaldea” could be derived from “Arphaxad.”¹³⁸ The common letters are “a/u,” “r,” “h,” “a,” and “d” as shown at Lines (1) and (2) in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Arphaxad and Ikshwaku

The names Arphaxad and Ikshwaku carry the same sounds “a/i,” “x/ksh,” and “a” as shown at Lines (2) and (3) in the figure.¹³⁹

The Ramayana does not tell where Ikshwaku lived. It does say though that Dasaratha’s grandfather and forefathers lived at a place named Ikshumati.¹⁴⁰ In absence of any information to the contrary, we assume that Ikshwaku lived at Ikshumati. The similarity of the two names, as shown at Lines (3) and (4) in Figure 2, lends credence to this assumption. Thus, Ur Chaldea is related to Arphaxad (Lines 1 and 2 of Figure 2); Arphaxad is related to Ikshwaku (Lines 2 and 3 of Figure 2); and Ikshwaku is related to Ikshumati (Lines 3 and 4 of Figure 2). Additionally, the names Ur Chaldea, Arphaxad and Ikshumati carry the same sounds “d/t” as shown at Lines (1), (2) and (4).¹⁴¹ Thus, we conclude that Ur Chaldea is parallel to Ikshumati, and Arphaxad is parallel to Ikshwaku.

The Bible says that the ark came to rest on the Ararat Mountain while the Hindu texts says the boat came to rest on the Himalaya Mountain. The names of the mountains are distinct.

Summary Table 3.4: Noah-Vaivaswat: Names

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Noah, written as Noach is related to Manowach.	Manowach is related to Manu	P
2	Ur Chaldea, Arphaxad	Ikshumati, Ikshwaku	P=2

¹³⁸ Arpakshad is the same as ‘Ur of the Chaldeans’ (*Ur-kasdim*). Both names agree in the consonants except one...” Jewish Encyclopedia, Arphaxad, <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/1817-arphaxad>, Retrieved July 4, 2017.

¹³⁹ The similarity between “x” and “ksh” is demonstrated in the name of the goddess being written as either Laxmi or Lakshmi.

¹⁴⁰ *Ramayana* 2:68:17.

¹⁴¹ “d” or “ड” and “t” or “ट” belong to the same phonetic group in Hindi.

3	Ararat	Himalaya	D
Summary: P=3, D=1, Net=3/4, 75 percent.			

Theology: Covenant

The Bible says: “Noah was a godly man; he was blameless among his contemporaries. He walked with God.”¹⁴² The Mahabharata says Vaivaswat was engaged in penance on the banks of Cheerini River.¹⁴³ Walking with God and undertaking penance suggest that both were connected with- or trying to connect with God.

Noah made an altar to the Lord and offered burnt offerings on the altar after the ark resting on land at the end of the Flood.¹⁴⁴ The Mahabharata says that Vaivaswat created many types of sacrificial fires though it is silent on time when these fires were created.¹⁴⁵ The undertaking of burnt offering or sacrificial fire is parallel.

The Lord said to Noah after the Flood, “Whoever sheds human blood, by other humans must his blood be shed...”¹⁴⁶ We find an echo of such a social arrangement at the time of Vaivaswat in the Mahabharata: At one time “the people destroyed each other just as strong fish eats up the small fish... Then the people went to Brahma, the creator, who ordered Vaivaswat to rule upon them.”¹⁴⁷ The phrases “shedding blood” and “just as strong fish eats up the small fish...” both indicate people killing each other. Just as God prohibited such killings, the Mahabharata says Vaivaswat was appointed king to prevent such “eating” of the small by the big.

At this time God made a covenant that never again will all living things be wiped out by the waters of a flood.¹⁴⁸ The Hindu texts are silent on this.

Summary Table 3.5: Noah-Vaivaswat: Theology

¹⁴² Bible, Genesis 6:9.

¹⁴³ Mahabharata 3:187:6

¹⁴⁴ Bible, Genesis 8:20.

¹⁴⁵ Mahabharata 3:221:23.

¹⁴⁶ Bible, Genesis 9:6.

¹⁴⁷ Mahabharata 12:67:17, 21, 23-25.

¹⁴⁸ Bible, Genesis 9:11.

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Noah was a godly man.	Vaivaswat was engaged in penance.	P
2	Noah offered burnt offerings.	Vaivaswat created many types of sacrificial fires.	P
3	Lord said that one must not kill another.	Vaivaswat rules upon the people to prevent people destroying each “other just as strong fish eats up the small fish...”	P
Summary: P=3, D=0, Net=3/3, 100 percent.			

Abraham-Rama

Context: Kingship and Trade

The socio-political context in both the narratives is that of kingship. The Bible tells of the “Pharaoh” ruling upon Mitsrayim.¹⁴⁹ Rama too “ruled” over Ayodhya.

The Bible tells of Abraham being wealthy in livestock, silver, and gold.¹⁵⁰ Trade is also indicated when Hamor offered Jacob to live in his land, “travel freely in it, and acquire property in it.”¹⁵¹ Likewise, the Ramayana says that after Rama had left for the south, “there was no hustle and bustle in Ayodhya since businesspersons had closed their shops.”¹⁵² During the southward travels of Shatrughna, brother of Rama, he was accompanied with “businesspersons who establish shops of different types of goods.”¹⁵³ Thus, both narratives tell of trade.

Summary Table 4.1: Abraham-Rama: Context

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	The Pharaoh ruled upon Mitsrayim.	Rama ruled upon Ayodhya.	P
2	Abraham’s family engaged in trade.	Traders inhabited Ayodhya.	P
Summary: P=2, D=0, Net=2/2, 100 percent.			

¹⁴⁹ Bible, Genesis 12:15, 21:27, 40:11.

¹⁵⁰ Bible, Genesis 13:2.

¹⁵¹ Bible, Genesis 34:10.

¹⁵² Ramayana 2:48:35.

¹⁵³ Ramayana 7:64:3.

Genealogy and Time: Descent from Arphaxad-Ikshwaku

The line of Noah continued with Arphaxad-Terah-Abraham.¹⁵⁴ The line of Vaivaswat continued with Ikshwaku-Dasaratha-Rama in parallel.¹⁵⁵

Archbishop Ussher had arrived at year 1996 BCE for the birth of Abraham on genealogical considerations.¹⁵⁶ As discussed previously, taking the mean lengths of generation and reign as 27 and 19 years respectively; the generations between Buddha and Abraham are estimated to be 61 numbers by William Jones. Taking the birth of Buddha at 470 BCE, the upper- and lower years for Rama are estimated as 2117 to 1507 BCE. The Biblical year 1996 BCE falls within the Hindu range thus we consider this to be a parallel.

Summary Table 4.2: Abraham-Rama: Genealogy

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Arphaxad-Terah-Abraham	Ikshwaku-Dasaratha-Rama	P
2	Ussher has suggested the year 1996 BCE for birth of Abraham.	The years for Rama are estimated as 2117 to 1507 BCE.	P
	Summary: P=2, D=0, Net=2/2, 100 percent.		

Narrative: Travel to the South

The family of Abraham and Rama both descended from a place carrying the parallel names Ur Chaldea and Ikshumati as shown in the previous section “Noah-Vaivaswat.” Terah migrated from Ur Chaldea to Haran along with his family and Abraham travelled onwards to Ai.¹⁵⁷ In parallel, Dasaratha or an earlier ancestor of his migrated from Ikshumati to Ayodhya.¹⁵⁸ We shall show in the subsection “Names” of this section that the names “Ai” and “Ayodhya” could be parallel. Thus, the origin of the line at Ur Chaldea-Ikshumati and the

¹⁵⁴ Bible, Genesis 11:10-26.

¹⁵⁵ Ramayana 1:70:20-21, 39-43.

¹⁵⁶ Pierce, Larry, “The World: Born in 4004 BC? Ussher and the Date of Creation,” *Answers Magazine*, April 28, 2006, <https://answersingenesis.org/bible-timeline/the-world-born-in-4004-bc/>, retrieved May 19, 2020.

¹⁵⁷ Bible, Genesis 11:31.

¹⁵⁸ Ramayana 2:68:17.

destination at Ai-Ayodhya are both parallel. A distinction is that Terah did not travel to Ai while Dasaratha travelled to Ayodhya.

The Bible says Terah begot Abraham, Nahor and Haran at Ur Chaldea. Haran's son was Lot.¹⁵⁹ The Ramayana says Dasaratha begot four sons—Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna at Ayodhya.¹⁶⁰ Both narratives revolve around four sons-or-grandsons of Terah-Dasaratha. One distinction is that the four are born to Terah at Ur Chaldea while they are born to Dasaratha at Ayodhya. Second distinction is that the Bible tells of three sons and one grandson while the Ramayana tells of four sons.

Abraham was a rich herdsman as described above in the subsection "Context." On the other hand, Rama was a king. Both being powerful persons is parallel while one being a herdsman and another being a king is distinct.

The Bible says that there was a famine that led Abraham to sojourn in the south.¹⁶¹ The Ramayana tells of a palace intrigue that led Rama to sojourn in the south.¹⁶² The sojourn and the south direction are parallel while the provocation leading to the sojourn is distinct.

Abraham travelled to the south with his wife Sarah and nephew Lot.¹⁶³ Rama travelled south with his wife Sita and brother Lakshmana.¹⁶⁴ Travel of three persons is parallel while the accompaniment is distinct. However, we have already flagged this distinction in the subsection "Genealogy" hence, we do not count this distinction here.

The Ramayana tells of Rama crossing the Yamuna and Ganga Rivers, halting at Chitrakuta, visiting a number of hermitages and finally settling at Panchvati.¹⁶⁵ The Bible tells of this long journey in one half verse: "Abraham went down to Egypt" and is silent on the details.¹⁶⁶

¹⁵⁹ Bible, Genesis 11.27.

¹⁶⁰ Ramayana 1.18.

¹⁶¹ Bible, Genesis 12:10.

¹⁶² Ramayana 2:18:33.

¹⁶³ Bible, Genesis 13:1.

¹⁶⁴ Ramayana 2:2:34.

¹⁶⁵ Ramayana 2:55, 2:56, 3:5, 3:7, 3:12, 3:15.

¹⁶⁶ Bible, Genesis 12:10.

Abraham asked Sarah to tell the people of the South that she was his sister.¹⁶⁷ Later Abraham clarified that Sarah was his father's daughter, but not his mother's daughter.¹⁶⁸ The Ramayana does not disclose the parents of Sita. However, the Malayan Legend of Rama says:

As Ravana was visiting his first wife Sekanda Maya, Dasaratha slept with the pseudo-Mandodari. He then disappeared through the air... The horoscope (of Sita, the child thus born) was drawn up but with the shake of his head Bibu Sanam related that whoever marries this child would kill his father and rule over the four worlds. Ravana is naturally unhappy at this prophecy and wanted to kill the girl immediately, but the mother suggested that it should be put into an iron box and thrown into the sea and so it happens.¹⁶⁹

This legend says that Sita was the daughter of Dasaratha and Mandodari, wife of Ravana; and she became Rama's wife. Thus, Sita was Rama's father's daughter but not his mother's daughter. This narrative is supported in the Ramayana to the extent that Sita was born in Lanka in the house of Ravana though it says she was born from a lotus flower.¹⁷⁰ Thus, Sita was half-sister of Rama from the father's side just as Sarah was.

The Bible says that the people of the South took Sarah to the Pharaoh.¹⁷¹ The Ramayana says that the Ravana, King of the South, abducted Sita from Panchvati and took her to his palace.¹⁷² Thus, Sarah-Sita was taken to the palace of the king of the south in both the narratives. The term "took" used in the Bible could hide within it an abduction hence we do not consider this to be a distinction.

¹⁶⁷ Bible, Genesis 12:13.

¹⁶⁸ Bible, Genesis 20:12.

¹⁶⁹ Stutterheim, Willem, "The Malayan Legend of Rama" in *Rama-Legends and Rama-Reliefs in Indonesia*, Indira Gandhi Centre for Arts, New Delhi, Page 33. We have used the names for these persons in the Hindu narrative: Dasarata=Dasaratha; Mandu Daki=Mandu Dari=Mandodari.

¹⁷⁰ *Ramayana*, 7:17:35-36.

¹⁷¹ Bible, Genesis 12:15.

¹⁷² *Ramayana* 3:49.

The King of the South treated Abraham well for the sake of Sarah.¹⁷³ On the other hand, the Ramayana tells of continuous conflict between Ravana and Rama. Rama made an alliance with Sugriva; crossed the sea; attacked Lanka and killed Ravana.¹⁷⁴ This narrative is distinct.

The Bible says that the Lord struck Pharaoh because of Sarah.¹⁷⁵ The Ramayana says that Rama killed Ravana because of Sita.¹⁷⁶ The term “struck” could also mean killed, hence we do not consider this to be a distinction.

While returning Sarah to Abraham, the Pharaoh, according to the King James Version, said: “I might have taken Sarah for wife.”¹⁷⁷ Thus, according to this version, the Pharaoh had not touched Sarah. Ramayana says in parallel that Ravana said to Sita “I will not touch you till you want me.”¹⁷⁸

The Pharaoh returned Sarah to Abraham while Rama retrieved Sita after killing Ravana. In both cases the wife was got back.¹⁷⁹ Then the couple returned to Ayodhya in both narratives.¹⁸⁰ However, the Ramayana gives this return travel in considerable detail while the Bible is silent on the details.¹⁸¹

There arose a conflict between the herdsmen of Abraham and Lot after their return from the South and the two decided to separate. Lot went to live at Sodom.¹⁸² A separation of Rama and Lakshmana is also indicated in the Ramayana but both the context and chronology are distinct. At one time Rama had appointed Lakshmana as the doorkeeper and instructed him not to let any

¹⁷³ Bible, Genesis 12:16.

¹⁷⁴ Ramayana 4:5, 5, 6:22, 6:108.

¹⁷⁵ Bible, Genesis 12:17. The Net Bible translates this as struck “with severe diseases.” The word for struck is “nega” (Strong’s 05061) which is translated as “infection.” Its origin is “nega” (Strong’s 05060) which means “to touch, to strike” and could be used for a war.

¹⁷⁶ Ramayana 6:108:21.

¹⁷⁷ Bible, Genesis 12:19. The Net Bible translates this as “I took.” We rely here on KJV since it is parallel to the Ramayana.

¹⁷⁸ Ramayana 5:20:6.

¹⁷⁹ Bible, Genesis 12:19; Ramayana 6:118.

¹⁸⁰ Bible, Genesis 13:3; Ramayana 6:122.

¹⁸¹ Ramayana 6:122.

¹⁸² Bible, Genesis 13:12.

person intrude in the secret conversation he was having with the representative of a particular Sage. At this same time, another Sage named Durvasa wanted to meet with Rama immediately. Lakshmana allowed Durvasa to meet with Rama despite the latter's prohibition. Then Rama broke off his relations with Lakshmana for the latter having committed this indiscretion.¹⁸³ Subsequently, Lakshmana went to the riverfront, held his breath, and died. While the main event of separation is parallel, we see two distinctions here. The separation was due to a conflict between their herdsmen in the Bible while it was due to an indiscretion in the Ramayana. Secondly, the Bible tells of this event taking place before the death of Sarah while the Ramayana tells of this taking place after the death of Sita. Thus, chronology is also different.

The Biblical narrative of Lot continues with a battle between four and five kings. The King of Sodom, for whom Lot was fighting, was defeated and Lot was taken captive. Abraham came to know of this. He attacked the victorious kings, defeated them and liberated Lot. Abraham then met with Sage Melchizedek.¹⁸⁴ The Hindu narrative is silent on these events.

Hagar, the maid-wife of Abraham, fled since she was dealt harshly by Sarah. However, she returned at the advice of an Angel and gave birth to Ishmael, Abraham's first son.¹⁸⁵ Subsequently Sarah gave birth to Isaac after Abraham had travelled to Gerar.¹⁸⁶ Yet later, Abraham took Keturah as a concubine and begot five sons from her.¹⁸⁷ Thus, Abraham had two "principal" sons, and three women partners among whom he had expelled one for a time. The Ramayana says that Rama expelled his only wife Sita who gave birth to the two sons Lav and Kush in a hermitage.¹⁸⁸ However, the Jaina religion tells us that Rama had four wives—Sita, Prabhavati, Ratibha and Sridama.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸³ *Ramayana* 7:106:14.

¹⁸⁴ *Bible, Genesis* 14:16-18.

¹⁸⁵ *Bible, Genesis* 16:15.

¹⁸⁶ *Bible, Genesis* 21:1.

¹⁸⁷ *Bible, Genesis* 25:1.

¹⁸⁸ *Ramayana* 45:16, 66:1. We shall discuss the birth of Kush subsequently.

¹⁸⁹ *Paumcariyam of Vimalsuri*, Edited by Herman Jacobi, Prakrit Granth Parishad, Ahmedabad, Samvat 2062, 91.18.

The two parallels here are that there were two “principal” sons; and that one-woman partner was expelled. We can see three distinctions here. One, the two “principal” sons were born to two wives in the Biblical narrative while they were born to the only wife in the Hindu narrative. Two, these two sons were born when the mother was living with Abraham in the Biblical narrative while they were when the mother was living away from Rama in the Hindu narrative. Three, there were three women partners in the Bible against one- or four in the Hindu narrative.

The Bible tells of the destruction of Sodom and the escape of Lot to the mountain where his daughters were pregnant with him;¹⁹⁰ Abraham travelling to Gerar in the south; Sarah being taken to King Abimelech there;¹⁹¹ and Abraham attempting to offer his son in sacrifice.¹⁹² The Ramayana is silent on these events.

The Ramayana tells of Shatrughna, brother of Rama, travelling west to conquer the Land of Mathura;¹⁹³ Rama undertaking a sacrifice; his sons Lav and Kush coming to the sacrifice as bards;¹⁹⁴ and Bharata travelling west to conquer the Gandharvas.¹⁹⁵ The Bible is silent on these events.

The Bible says that Abraham came to mourn for Sarah when she died and she was buried in a cave.¹⁹⁶ Abraham’s *coming* to mourn for Sarah suggests that he was living away from her at the time of her death. The Hindu narrative says Rama had expelled Sita and she was living in a hermitage. Then Rama summoned Sita at a sacrifice he was undertaking, and she was carried into the earth at this time.¹⁹⁷ The parallels here are that the wife was living away at the time of her death, and she was buried in the earth. As said in the previous para, the Bible is silent on Abraham undertaking such a sacrifice.

¹⁹⁰ Bible, Genesis 19:24, 30, 36.

¹⁹¹ Bible, Genesis 20:1.

¹⁹² Bible, Genesis 22:10.

¹⁹³ Ramayana 7:65:4.

¹⁹⁴ Ramayana 7:93:5.

¹⁹⁵ Ramayana 7:101.

¹⁹⁶ Bible, Genesis 23:2.

¹⁹⁷ Ramayana 7:97:20-22.

The Bible says that Lot lived at Zoar in isolation, away from Abraham. We presume he died there. As said above, the Ramayana says that Lakshmana came to the riverfront, held his breath and died after Rama broke relations with him.¹⁹⁸ The parallels are that both died away from Abraham-Rama in not so favorable circumstances. We have already counted the distinction in the events leading to the separation and the same is not counted here.

Abraham had settled at Gerar in the south. Isaac too had settled at Gerar after the death of Abraham.¹⁹⁹ The continuity of residence of Abraham's family at Gerar suggests that Abraham died there—away from Ai, in the south. The Ramayana tells of Rama leaving Ayodhya for good towards the end of his life. He entered the Sarayu River which he saw facing west.²⁰⁰ The Ramayana does not tell when and where Abraham died. The parallel is that both died away from Ai or Ayodhya. We do not consider the direction of “south” and “west” to be a distinction since both could be used to denote the southwest direction.

Jacob settled at Mitsrayim in the south.²⁰¹ Kush in parallel was anointed as the King of South Kosala.²⁰² A possible distinction is the Jacob was only an immigrant into Mitsrayim while Kush was king of South Kosala. However, Jacob's son Joseph was Minister of the Pharaoh and was given the title Zaphenath-Paneah.²⁰³ Thus Joseph's father Jacob would have been highly respected person as well. Thus, both Jacob and Kush were highly respected persons in the south hence we do not consider the kingship of Kush to be a distinction.

The Bible gives the subsequent events in the lives of Jacob and Joseph in great detail culminating with the death of Jacob at Mitsrayim. The Ramayana is silent on these events.

Summary Table 4.3: Abraham-Rama: Narrative

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
----	----------	-------	--------

¹⁹⁸ *Ramayana* 7:106:15-17.

¹⁹⁹ *Bible, Genesis* 20:1, 26:6.

²⁰⁰ *Ramayana* 7:110:1.

²⁰¹ *Bible, Genesis* 46:26.

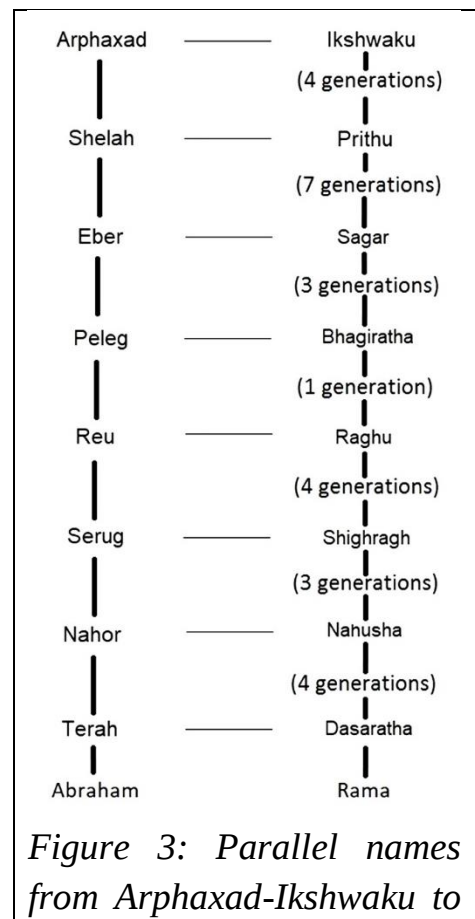
²⁰² *Ramayana* 7:107:17.

²⁰³ *Bible, Genesis* 41:45.

1	Terah migrated from Ur Chaldea to Haran <i>and Abraham went onwards to Ai.</i>	<i>Dasaratha</i> , his father or grandfather <i>migrated</i> from Ikshumati to Ayodhya.	P=2, D
2	Terah begot Abraham, Nahor and Haran at <i>Ur Chaldea</i> ; and <i>Haran's son was Lot.</i>	Dasaratha begot <i>four sons</i> Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna <i>at Ayodhya.</i>	P, D=2
3	Abraham was a powerful <i>herdsman.</i>	Rama was a powerful <i>king.</i>	P, D
4	<i>Famine</i> led Abraham to sojourn in the south.	A <i>palace intrigue</i> Rama to sojourn in the south.	P=2, D
5	Abraham travelled south with his wife Sarah and Lot.	Rama travelled south with his wife Sita and Lakshmana.	P
6	Sarah was Abraham's father's daughter but not his mother's daughter.	Sita was Rama father's daughter but not his mother's daughter.	P
7	People of the South took Sarah to the Pharaoh.	King Ravana of Lanka abducted Sita.	P
8	<i>The Pharaoh treated Abraham well.</i>	<i>Rama attacked Lanka.</i>	D
9	The Lord struck Pharaoh because of Sarah.	Rama killed Ravana because of Sita.	P
10	The Pharaoh did not touch Sarah.	Ravana did not touch Sita.	P
11	Pharaoh returned Sarah to Abraham.	Rama retrieved Sita after killing Ravana.	P
12	Abraham returned to Ai.	Rama returned to Ayodhya.	P
13	Abraham and Lot separated due <i>conflict between their herdsmen; before</i> the death of Sarah.	Rama and Lakshmana separated <i>due to an indiscretion</i> on the part of Lakshmana; <i>after</i> the death of Sita.	P, D=2
14	The two "principal" sons were <i>born to two wives</i>	The two sons were <i>born to one wife</i>	P, D
15	The two <i>mothers were living with Abraham</i> when the two sons were born.	The <i>mother was living away from Abraham</i> when the two sons were born.	D
16	One-woman partner (Hagar) was expelled;	One-woman partner (Sita) was expelled;	P

17	there were <i>three women partners</i> .	There were <i>one or four women partners</i> .	D
18	Abraham was living away from Sarah at the time of her death; and she was buried.	Rama was living away from Sita at the time of her death; and she was taken in by Mother Earth.	P=2
19	Lot died away from Abraham in not-so-favorable circumstances.	Lakshmana died away from Rama in not-so-favorable circumstances	P=2
20	Abraham left Ai and died in the <i>South</i> .	Rama left Ayodhya and entered the Sarayu <i>facing west</i> .	P, D
21	Jacob settled in the South.	Kush settled at South Kosala.	P
Summary: P=22, D=12, Net=22/34, 65 percent.			

Names: Abram-Rama



The numbers of generations between Arphaxad and Abraham was eight, while the numbers of generations between Ikshwaku and Rama were

Abraham-Rama

33. Despite this difference, we find remarkable parallels between the names of seven descendants of Arphaxad and the names of seven of the 33 descendants of Ikshwaku. The parallel names along with the numbers of intervening generations are given in Figure 3. The names of the first three of these seven descendants of Arphaxad are parallel to certain descendants of Ikshwaku on the basis of the embedded meanings. The son of Arphaxad was “Selah” which word means “to sprout.”²⁰⁴ He could be parallel to Prithu. The Hindu texts say, he “milked all the cereals from the earth”²⁰⁵ that is, he made the seeds of the cereals sprout. The embedded meaning “to sprout” in the name Selah is parallel to Prithu having made the seeds of the cereals sprout.

The son of Selah was “Eber” which means “the region beyond.”²⁰⁶ He could be parallel to Sagar who extended the ocean’s boundaries.²⁰⁷

The son of Eber was “Peleg,” the origin of which name is “peleg,” which means channel or canal.²⁰⁸ He could be parallel to Bhagiratha who brought the Ganga River from the mountains and the river got divided into seven channels.²⁰⁹

The names of the latter four generations are parallel on phonetic matching: Reu could be parallel to Raghu with the common sounds “r” and “u;” Serug could be parallel to Shighrag with the common sounds “s,” “r” and “g;” Nahor could be parallel to Nahusa with the common sounds “n” and “h;” and Terah could be parallel to Dasaratha with the common sounds “r” and “h/th.”

The parallel names continue in the family of Abraham. The early name of Abraham was Abram, which can be written as “Ab”-Ram meaning “Father-

²⁰⁴ Strong’s 07974.

²⁰⁵ *Vishnu Purana*, <http://hinduonline.co/Scriptures/Puranas/VishnuPurana.html>, Retrieved August 19, 2020, 1:1:8.

²⁰⁶ Strong’s 05677.

²⁰⁷ *Ramayana* 5:1:89.

²⁰⁸ Strong’s 06389 and 06388.

²⁰⁹ *Ramayana* 1:43:12.

Ram” since father is written as “Ab.”²¹⁰ Thus, the name “Rama” is embedded in Abraham.

The names Sarah and Sita are phonetically similar with the sound “s” and “a.”

The names Haran and Bharata both mean “mountaineer.”²¹¹

We do not find parallels in the names Nahor-Shatrughna, Lot-Lakshmana, Esau-Lav and Jacob-Kush. We also do not find parallels to the names Hagar, Keturah, Prabhavati, Ratnibha and Sridama—the wives other than Sarah-Sita in the two religions. We consider these names to be distinct.

The names Ai and Ayodhya have much in common. Ai is also written as Ayath.²¹² The names Ayath and Ayodhya have common letters “a,” “y” and “th/dh.”²¹³ Further, both “Ai” and “Ayodhya” both mean fortified places.²¹⁴

The place names Mitsrayim and Lanka are distinct.

The Hindu texts are silent about a large number of places mentioned in the Bible such as Haran, Shechem, Sodom, Gerar and Hebron. The Bible is silent about a large number of places mentioned in the Ramayana such as Sringeripur, Chitrakuta and Kishkindha.

Summary Table 4.4: Abraham-Rama: Names

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	“Selah” means “to sprout.”	King Prithu milked the cereals from the earth.	P
2	“Eber” means “the region beyond.”	Sagar extended the ocean’s boundaries.	P
3	“Peleg” means channel.	Bhagiratha divided the Ganga into seven channels.	P

²¹⁰ Strong’s 0001.

²¹¹ Strong’s 02039, Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 747

²¹² *Bible, Isaiah* 10:28.

²¹³ “Th” or “थ” and “dh” or “ध” belong to the same phonetic group in Hindi.

²¹⁴ The Hebrew word used for Ai in Joshua is “ryi” (*Bible, Joshua* 7:2). The meaning of this word “is a fortified site” (Briggs, Peter, “Testing the Factuality of the Conquest of Ai Narrative in the Book of Joshua,” Academic Monograph Series No. AR-2, Institute of Archaeology & Biblical History, April 12, 2004, Page 8). The meaning of Ayodhya is “unconquerable” that too indicates a fortified city (Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...* Page 86).

4	Next four generations are: Reu, Serug, Nahor and Terah.	Next four generations are: Raghu, Shighrag, Nahusa and Dasaratha.	P=4
5	Abraham was called Ab-Ram	“Rama” is contained in Ab-Ram.	P
6	Sarah	Sita	P
7	<i>Hagar, Keturah</i>	<i>Prabhavati, Ratinibha and Sridama</i>	D=2
8	Haran means “mountaineer.”	Bharata means “mountaineer.”	P
9	<i>Nahor, Lot, Esau and Jacob.</i>	<i>Shatrughna, Lakshmana, Lav and Kush.</i>	D=4
10	Ai is also written as Ayath.	Ayodhya.	P
11	<i>Mitsrayim.</i>	<i>Lanka.</i>	D
Summary: P=11, D=7, Net=11/18, 61 percent.			

Theology: Monotheism and Monism

The Bible says that Terah worshipped “other gods.”²¹⁵ Terah thought there were gods other than the One God. The same is indicated in the Hindu narrative. The Ramayana says that Lord Vishnu was invoked and appeared at the Yajna undertaken by Dasaratha for begetting a son.²¹⁶ Vishnu could be one of the “other gods” worshipped by Terah.

An apparent difference in the two narratives is that Abraham was a human being while Rama is considered to be an Incarnation of God (Avatara) in contemporary Hinduism. However, Rama did not see himself as an Incarnation. When the gods said to Rama that the latter was the “creator of the Universe,” Rama replied, “I consider myself to be son of Dasaratha [only].”²¹⁷ This statement is followed by Lord Brahma again telling Rama that he was Brahman-in-person but Rama remaining silent on this.²¹⁸ Thus, Abraham and Rama both considered themselves to be human beings.

The theological understandings of Abraham and Rama both suggests two levels or manifestations of God, as shown in Figure 4. It appears to us that Biblical

²¹⁵ Bible, Joshua 24:2.

²¹⁶ Ramayana 1:15:26.

²¹⁷ Ramayana 6:117:11.

²¹⁸ Please see subsection “Theology” in section “Adam-Swayambhu” for parallels of Elohim, Brahman, Yahweh and Brahma.

Elohim and Hindu Brahman could be Monist, while Biblical Yahweh and Hindu Brahma could be Monotheist. These are not watertight compartments, however, and there may be overlaps at different points. We use these terms as explained by Theodorus P Van Baaren, Professor of Science of Religions, State University of Groningen: for Monism “there is only a single kind of reality” while for monotheism “there are two basically different realities: God and the universe.”²¹⁹ Our understanding is that God can be conceptualized as vapour-cloud in the sky. The vapour is an all-pervasive entity as in Monism, while the cloud and the sky are two realities as in Monotheism. The Monist God, in turn, has two qualities—all-pervasive and creative. We discuss these from the Biblical and Hindu standpoints below.

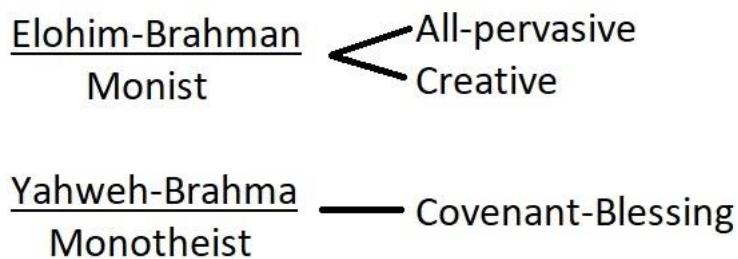


Figure 4: Monist and Monotheist understandings of One God.

Elohim-Brahman. Monist. All-pervasive. The first verse of the Bible says: “In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth.” The first part of this verse implies that in the beginning only Elohim was. There was nothing other than Elohim. The Psalms elaborates on this point: “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there!” Although figurative terms like “wind,” “face” and “spread out” are used for God here, the reference is to an all-pervasive God. The same all-pervasiveness of Brahman is told in the discourse given by Sage Vasishtha to Rama. It is available to us in the text named Yoga Vasishtha: “This entire vision is quiet and immaculate Brahman.”²²⁰

²¹⁹ Van Baaren, Theodorus P, “Monotheism,” in Encyclopedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/monotheism/The-spectrum-of-views-monotheisms-and-quasi-monotheisms>, Retrieved August 2, 2020.

²²⁰ *Yoga Vasishtha*, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, Samvat 2053, 3:13, Page 111.

Elohim-Brahman. Monist. Creative. The second part of the first verse of the Bible says: “Elohim created the heavens and the earth.”²²¹ In parallel, the Yoga Vasishtha says: “This Brahman obtains to growth in-itself by-itself.”²²²

Yahweh-Brahma. Monotheist. Covenant-Blessing. The Bible says, “Yahweh made a covenant with Abram...” and again “I (Yahweh) will confirm my covenant between me and you...”²²³ Here Yahweh is described as an entity distinct from Abraham. The Ramayana does not tell of Brahma making a covenant with Rama. However, it tells of Brahma giving blessings. At one time Vishrava, father of Ravana (who we suggest was parallel to the Biblical Pharaoh), was engaged in penance. At that time Brahma appeared to him and said: “I am very satisfied with your penance. Please ask for a boon.” Vishrava replied: “I want to become sustainer of people.”²²⁴ Then Brahma said: “Very good. You will become sustainer of people.”²²⁵ Here Brahma and Vishrava interact with each other in the sense of “me” as distinct from you” just as Yahweh interacted with Abraham. A distinction here is that Yahweh made covenants with Abraham while Brahma gave boon to Vishrava, not Rama.

Rama was a firm believer in rebirth if we are to rely on the discourses of Yoga Vasishtha. In one of the stories narrated in the text, Princess Leela says, “I am clearly able to remember 800 of the various births I have had till now. I was once wife of a celestial king. Then I was born as a tribal woman using leaves as clothes...”²²⁶ The Bible does not explicitly tell of such rebirths taking place in the narrative of Abraham. However, the Kabbalists believe in rebirth.²²⁷ Further

²²¹ Bible Genesis 1:1.

²²² Yoga Vasishtha 3:13, Page 111.

²²³ Bible, Genesis 15:18 and 17:2.

²²⁴ Lokpal. Lok=people, pal=protector or sustainer.

²²⁵ Ramayana 7:3:15-17.

²²⁶ Yoga Vasishtha 3:27, Page 134.

²²⁷ “Ramban, one of the greatest commentators on the Torah (and on the Talmud), and a seminal figure in Jewish history, hints several times that reincarnation is the key to penetrating the deep mysteries involved in the mitzvah of yibum (the obligation of the brother of a childless, deceased man to marry the widow). In his explanation of Gen 38:8, he insists that Yehudah and his sons were aware of the secret of reincarnation, and that this was a major factor in their respective attitudes towards Tamar” (Yerachmiel Tilles, “Judaism and Reincarnation,” https://www.chabad.org/kabbalah/article_cdo/aid/380599/jewish/Judaism-and-Reincarnation.htm, Retrieved August 25, 2020); “The kabbalists, on the other hand, do

study is needed to ascertain whether the Jews believed in rebirth or not at the time of Abraham. We consider this to be a silence in view of the silence of the Bible on this question at the time of Abraham.

Abraham's grandson Jacob had set up a sacred stone and poured oil on top of it.²²⁸ Rama, in parallel, established an idol of Lord Shiva during the war of Lanka.²²⁹ To clarify, Shiva is worshipped in form of a cylindrical stone not having a human image. It could be similar to the stone worshipped by Jacob.

Abraham's grand daughter-in-law Rachel had stolen the household idols of her father.²³⁰ This indicates prevalence of idol worship, at least, among some of the Abraham's descendants. We do not find an explicit description worship of idols having a human form in the Ramayana hence we consider this to be a case of silence. We would like to draw attention here to the double disconnect with the situation at present. The Bible tells of idol worship at the time of Abraham while the contemporary Biblical religions decry this practice. The Ramayana does not tell of worship of idols of human form at the time of Rama while the contemporary Hindu practice is deep into this. These disconnects underscore the need to look at the theological understandings at the time of the Five Persons and not to extrapolate those to the present.

Summary Table 4.5: Abraham-Rama: Theology

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
----	----------	-------	--------

believe in reincarnation. The Zohar [the great 13th-century kabbalistic text] refers to the doctrine in a number of passages (e.g. ii. 94a, 99b). Nahmanides [1194-1270], in his commentary to the Book of Job (Job 33:30), speaks of reincarnation as a great mystery and the key to an understanding of many biblical passages" (Rabbi Louis Jacobs, "What Judaism Says About Reincarnation," My Jewish Learning, <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/reincarnation-the-transmigration-of-a-jewish-idea/>, Retrieved August 25, 2020); "So when someone passes away, we pray that their soul find rest in heaven, because that's where the already-used part of the soul is found. As for the unused part of the soul, it will come back down for another go-round. Source: Arizal, Shaar ha-Gilgulim, chapter 14" (Aron Moses. Do Jews Believe in Heaven or Reincarnation (or Both)? Chabad.org, https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/4216494/jewish/Do-Jews-Believe-in-Heaven-or-Reincarnation-or-Both.htm, Retrieved August 25, 2020);

²²⁸ Bible, Genesis 28:18.

²²⁹ Ramayana 6:123:19.

²³⁰ Bible, Genesis 31:19.

1	Terah worshipped “other gods.”	Rama saw “places” of the elements like Fire, Air and Water...	P
2	Abraham was a mortal man.	Rama says he was only son of Dasaratha.	P
3	Elohim is all-pervasive and creative.	Brahman is all-pervasive and creative.	P
4	Yahweh made covenant with Abraham.	Brahma gave boon to Vishrava.	P, D
5	Jacob set up a sacred stone and poured oil on top of it.	Rama established (cylindrical stone) idol of Lord Shiva.	P
Summary: P=5, D=1, Net=5/6, 83 percent.			

Moses-Krishna

Context: Drying Rivers and Oppression

The climatic context in both narratives is that of stagnant rivers. The first plague brought by Moses was of the water of the river becoming “blood.”²³¹ The Hebrew word for “blood” also means “silent or still.”²³² The plague, therefore, could be that of the water of the river becoming still or stagnant. In parallel, the Yamuna River appears to have stopped flowing at the time of Krishna. The Bhagwata Purana says that the water of a *pond* in the Yamuna had become poisonous because of a snake.²³³ Again, during the travel of Krishna to Mathura, the Bhagwata Purana says that Akrur, who was accompanying him, took bath in a *pond* of the Yamuna.²³⁴ The making of a “pond” indicates that the river had stopped flowing. Hereafter we have referred to Bhagwata Purana as Bhagwata for short.

²³¹ Bible, Exodus 7:20.

²³² The word “dam” is derived from the word “damam” which means “to be dumb..., to stop; to perish; to cease, to be cut down, to rest, to be silent, to be still...” (Strong’s 01818, 01826).

²³³ This is likely to be a pond in the Yamuna River because the word used in the Hindi translation is “in the Yamuna” (*Bhagwata Purana*, Gita Press Gorakhpur, Samvat 2053, 10:16:4).

²³⁴ *Bhagwata Purana* 10:39:39-40.

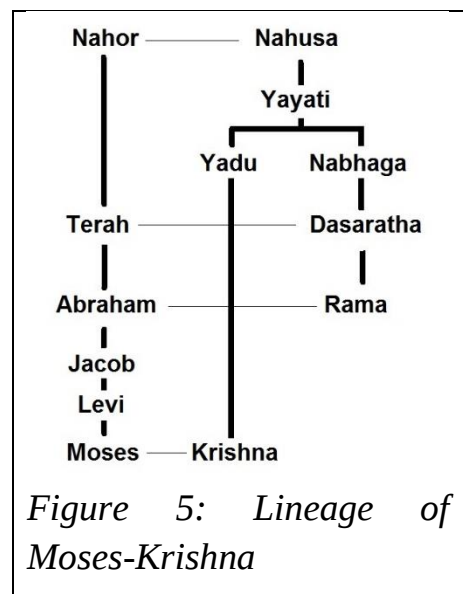
The oppression of the Hebrews in Mitsrayim is too well known to be repeated here. The Bhagwata says that the earth was groaning under the weight of arrogant kings.²³⁵ It also tells of Nanda, the foster-father of Krishna, coming to Mathura to pay the annual taxes to Kamsa, the King of Mathura.²³⁶

Summary Table 5.1: Moses-Krishna: Context

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Water of the river became still.	Ponds formed in the Yamuna.	P
2	Oppression of Hebrews.	The earth was groaning under the arrogant kings.	P
Summary: P=2, D=0, Net=2/2, 100 percent.			

Genealogy and Time: Descent from Nahor-Nahusa

We have shown in the section “Abraham-Rama” that Nahor occupies the same position in the genealogy of Abraham as Nahusa occupies in the genealogy of Rama. The Biblical narrative tells of a single line of descendants of Nahor that included both Abraham and Moses as shown in Figure 5.²³⁷ The Hindu narrative, on the other hand, tells of two lines of descendants from Nahusa. Rama was born in the line of Yayati and Nabhaga,²³⁸ while Krishna was born in line of Yayati and Yadu.²³⁹ The descent of Moses-Krishna from Nahor-Nahusa is parallel. The distinction is that Moses descended from Abraham while Krishna did not descend from Rama.



²³⁵ *Bhagwata Purana* 10:1:17.

²³⁶ *Bhagwata Purana* 10:5:20.

²³⁷ *Bible, Genesis* 29 :34, *Exodus* 1 :2, 2 :1.

²³⁸ *Ramayana* 1 :70 :39-43

²³⁹ Mani, *Puranic...* Page 889.

The Bible says that Moses' father Amram married his (Amram's) father's sister Jochebed.²⁴⁰ The Bhagwata says that Krishna's father Vasudeva married Devaki who was his cousin at the 10th generation on father's side as shown in Figure 6.²⁴¹ The marriage of Amram-Vasudeva with a relative on father's side is parallel while the precise relationship with the said relative is distinct.

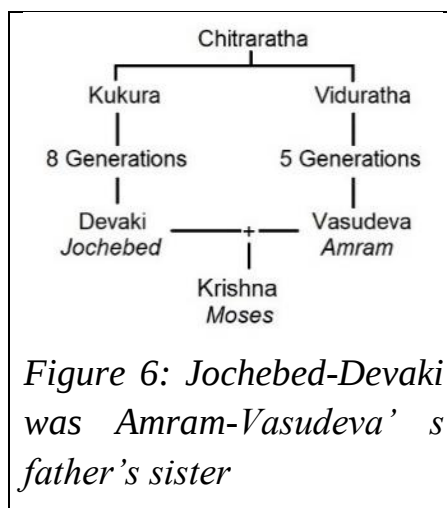


Figure 6: Jochebed-Devaki was Amram-Vasudeva's father's sister

Archbishop Ussher has suggested the date of 1491 BCE for the Exodus on genealogical considerations.²⁴² Moses was 80 years old at that time hence would have been born around 1571 BCE.

The number of generations from Krishna to the extinction of the Lunar Dynasty—in which he was born—have been estimated as 32 by the living Mudiraj Community belonging to that Dynasty.²⁴³ As said previously, the mean length of generation for the Medieval Indian Kings has been estimated at 27 years and the mean length of reign has been estimated at 19 years. That would make it 864 to 608 years from Krishna to the extinction of the Lunar Dynasty. The Mudiraj Community believes that the Lunar Dynasty became extinct in 4th century BCE.²⁴⁴ Thus, Krishna would have lived, on the higher side, 864 years from 400 BCE or around 1210 BCE. Given the uncertainty regarding the numbers of generations, the length thereof, and the time of extinction of the Lunar Dynasty, we consider the time of 1571 BCE for Moses and the high estimate of 1210 BCE for Krishna to be parallel.

²⁴⁰ Bible, Exodus 6 :20.

²⁴¹ Vasudeva was born in the 8th generation-, while his wife Devaki was born in the 10th generation from Chitraratha, Mani, *Puranic...* page 889, 804, 210.

²⁴² Pierce, op cit.

²⁴³ The Dynasty became extinct in 4th century BCE, 29 generations from Janmejaya, or 32 generations from Krishna (Brief History of Mudiraj (Koli Samaj), http://mudirajseva.com/main/about_us, Retrieved August 23, 2020). Jones estimates these to be 30 generations (*The Works...*, Page 303-304). However, we rely on the statements of the Mudiraj Community to maintain consistency.

²⁴⁴ Brief History of Mudiraj...

Summary Table 5.2: Moses-Krishna: Genealogy

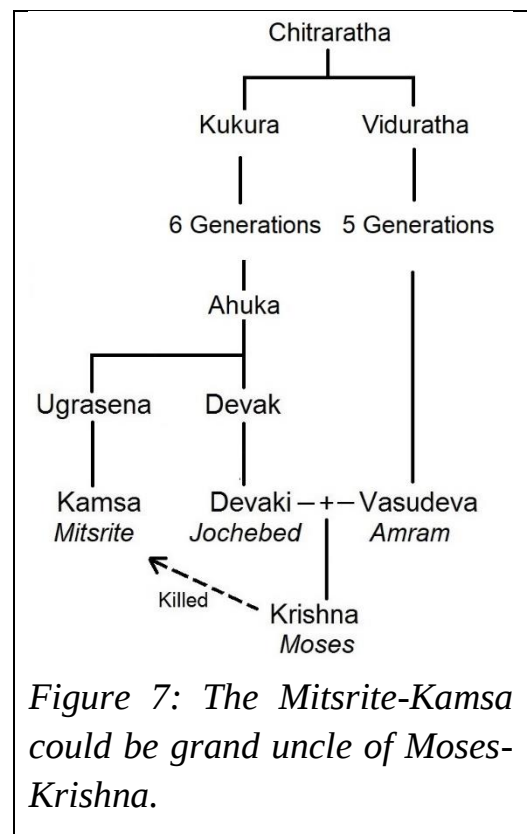
No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Descendant of Nahor <i>from Abraham.</i>	Descendant of Nahor <i>not from Rama.</i>	P, D
2	Moses' father Amram married his father's sister Jochebed.	Krishna's father Vasudeva married his <i>cousin at the 10th generation</i> Devaki.	P, D
3	Moses's birth at 1571 BCE	Krishna's birth at 1189 BCE	P
	Summary: P=3, D=2, Net=3/5, 60 percent.		

Narrative: Exodus

We have shown that Vasudeva wed his cousin Devaki in Figure 6 above. Now we give more details in that picture to show that Kamsa, the King of Mathura, too was a cousin of Devaki as shown at Figure 7.

Kamsa was driving the chariot carrying his newlywed cousin Devaki to her husband's home. A voice from the sky said at this time that the eighth son of Devaki would kill Kamsa. Thereupon, Kamsa wanted to kill Devaki immediately so that his future enemy would not be born at all. However, Vasudeva persuaded Kamsa to let Devaki live since he faced threat from her eighth son, not from her. Thereupon, Kamsa imprisoned Vasudeva and Devaki. He killed the first seven sons of Devaki. The Bible is silent on these events.

Jochebed gave birth to Moses in secrecy. She was not able to hide him from the Mitsrites for a long time, however. Thus, she put him in a basket and laid the basket by the bank of the River of Mitsrayim.²⁴⁵ Moses' sister stood watching to see what happened to the basket. It so happened that the Pharaoh's daughter



²⁴⁵ Bible, Exodus 2:3.

recovered the basket. Then Moses' sister approached the Pharaoh's daughter and suggested she might get a wet nurse from among the Hebrews to bring up the infant. The Pharaoh's daughter agreed to the suggestion. Moses' sister then brought her mother Jochebed to the Pharaoh's daughter, who gave infant Moses to Jochebed to wet nurse for her. In this way, Moses' biological mother brought up her own child by posing as his foster mother.²⁴⁶

The Bhagwata says that Devaki gave birth to Krishna in the jail, as said above, after her seven sons were killed by Kamsa. Vasudeva managed to come out of the jail with infant Krishna. He crossed the Yamuna River, laid Krishna on the bed of Yashoda at Gokul across the River, came back with Yashoda's newborn daughter and lodged himself back in the jail as if Devaki had given birth to the girl. Krishna was then brought up by his foster mother Yashoda.²⁴⁷

Three parallels that can be seen here. One, infant Moses-Krishna faced a threat to his life from the Pharaoh-Kamsa. Two, he was flown in- or taken across a river to save his life. Three, he was brought up by a foster mother. Three distinctions too can be seen here. One the Bible suggests that Moses' mother was *not* lodged in a jail, unlike Devaki. Two, Moses was flown in the river while Krishna was taken across the river. Three, Moses was brought up by his biological mother posing as his foster mother while Krishna was brought up by a foster mother who was not his biological mother.

The Pharaoh ordered the Mitsrite midwives to kill all the newborn sons of the Hebrews at Goshen.²⁴⁸ Kamsa in parallel ordered the demoness Putna to kill the male children of the Yadavas at Gokul. The Bhagwata says she "used to roam in the villages and settlements of the cowherds to kill the male children."²⁴⁹

After becoming an adult, Moses killed a Mitsrite who was beating a Hebrew.²⁵⁰ The Bible is silent on the identity of the Mitsrite. The Bhagwata, however, tells of Krishna killing Kamsa, the King of Mathura, who was oppressing the

²⁴⁶ Bible, Exodus 2 :9.

²⁴⁷ Bhagwata Purana 10 :3 :8, 47-51.

²⁴⁸ Bible, Exodus 1 :16.

²⁴⁹ Bhagwata Purana 10 :6.2.

²⁵⁰ Bible, Exodus 2 :12.

Yadavas.²⁵¹ The parallel is that of Moses-Krishna killing an oppressive resident of Mitsrayim-Mathura.

Moses fled and joined the household of Jethro the Priest at Midian after killing the Mitsrite. Krishna, in parallel, went to study with Sage Sandipani at Avantipur after killing Kamsa.²⁵²

The Bible says that Moses married Zipporah, daughter of Jethro, at Midian. In distinction, Krishna married eight women after returning from Avantipur—none of whom were daughters of Sage Sandipani.²⁵³

While staying at Midian, Moses took the flock of Jethro to Horeb. He had an encounter with God here and God told him to return to Mitsrayim.²⁵⁴ The Bhagwata is silent regarding any such encounter.

Moses returned to Mitsrayim after he had spent considerable time with Jethro since the latter said to Moses: “all the men who were seeking your life are dead.”²⁵⁵ Krishna, however, returned to Mathura quite soon. The wives of the deceased Kamsa were alive at this time.²⁵⁶ The return to Mitsrayim-Mathura is parallel while the time elapsed is distinct.

Moses was accompanied by his wife Zipporah and son Gershom when he returned from Midian to Mitsrayim.²⁵⁷ The Bible is silent on the whereabouts of his family after the return. They are mentioned again only during the Exodus. At this time they came from Midian to Mount Sinai and joined Moses on his way to Yisrael.²⁵⁸ This suggests that Zipporah and Gershom lived at Midian, away from Moses, during, at least, part of this intervening period.

The Bhagwata suggests the same though in an involved manner. A demon stole Krishna’s 10-day old son Pradyumna and cast him into the sea.²⁵⁹ A fish

²⁵¹ *Bhagwata Purana* 10 :44 :38.

²⁵² *Bhagwata Purana* 10 :45 :12, 31.

²⁵³ *Bhagwata Purana* 10 :53-58.

²⁵⁴ *Bible, Exodus* 3 :10.

²⁵⁵ *Bible, Exodus* 4 :19.

²⁵⁶ *Bhagwata Purana* 10 :45 :49, 10 :50 :1.

²⁵⁷ *Bible, Exodus* 4 :20.

²⁵⁸ *Bible, Exodus* 18 :2.

²⁵⁹ *Bhagwata Purana* 10 :55 :3.

swallowed the boy. A fisherman caught the fish and offered it to the same demon who had stolen the boy. The cook of the demon found the child alive in the stomach of the fish and gave him to the housemaid of the demon.²⁶⁰ The housemaid brought up the boy and married him after he became an adult. Then Pradyumna killed the demon and joined his father Krishna.²⁶¹ The parallel is that the son lived away from the father for some time. The Bible is silent on the son being swallowed by a fish. The Bhagwata is silent on whether Rukmini was living away from Krishna for some time and whether she joined him after he had left Dwarka.

The Hindu texts tell of a number of events that took place after the return of Krishna to Mathura: Jarasandha attacked Mathura; Krishna left Mathura and settled at the island of Dwarka;²⁶² he abducted and married his first wife Rukmini; he married seven other women; and he participated in the Mahabharata War.²⁶³ Thereafter he left Dwarka in an unknown direction, as we shall show shortly.

The Bible is silent on these events that may have taken place between the return of Moses from Midian and his leaving on the Exodus. However, the Biblical narrative suggests that considerable time may have elapsed in this time. Verse 4:29 of Exodus says that Moses brought together all the Israelite elders on his return from Midian. Two verses later, Exodus 5:1, says “*Afterwards* Moses went to Pharaoh...” and asked that the Hebrews be released to hold a feast to the Lord in the desert. The Hebrew word for “afterwards” is “*achar*.” It is used elsewhere to denote a long passage of time such as in Genesis 17:7: My covenant “will extend to your descendants *after* you throughout their generations.”²⁶⁴ Thus, it is possible that considerable time may have elapsed between Moses’ return from Midian his leading the Exodus and the events told to have taken place in the Hindu texts in this period may have indeed taken place but not recorded in the Bible. Hence, we do not consider these to be a distinction.

²⁶⁰ *Bhagwata Purana* 10:55:6.

²⁶¹ *Bhagwata Purana* 10:55:25.

²⁶² *Bhagwata Purana* 10:52:23.

²⁶³ *Bhagwata Purana* 10 :79 :28.

²⁶⁴ Strong’s 0310.

We again find parallels hereafter. The Bible says that the Lord brought ten plagues of the river becoming still, frogs, lice, flies, disease, boils, hail, locusts, darkness and death.²⁶⁵ Then the Pharaoh allowed the Hebrews to leave. The Bhagwata also tells of natural troubles: “Krishna saw that great disturbances were taking place in the earth, sky and space.” He said to his fellow Yadavas: “See great upheavals are taking place at Dwarka. These are indications of coming of the Deity of Death.”²⁶⁶ Then the Yadavas left Dwarka. We may note three parallels in this narrative. One, troubles of natural events took place. Two, the last of these troubles was that of death. Three, the Hebrews-Yadavas left their home. The Hindu text is silent on the nine plagues before that of death and the permission granted by the Pharaoh allowing them to leave. The distinction is that these events take place at Mitsrayim in the Bible while they take place at Dwarka in the Hindu texts.

The Hebrews undertook the feast of the Passover, put blood on the doorposts and left Mitsrayim. The Hindu texts are silent on these events.

Then the Hebrews crossed the sea on dry land;²⁶⁷ while the Yadavas crossed the sea on boats.²⁶⁸ The parallel is of crossing of a water body. Distinction is of crossing on dry land or on boats.

The Bible then tells of the Hebrews living off manna, drawing water from a rock at Horeb, defeating Amalek and camping at Sinai.²⁶⁹ The Bhagwata is silent on these events.

The Hebrew were encamped at Mount Sinai after crossing the sea on dry land. Here, Moses went atop the mountain to worship and delayed coming down. At this time Aaron molded a calf of gold and the Hebrews began to dance around it. Moses was angered when he saw the calf and the dancing on his return.²⁷⁰ He took the calf, burnt it in a fire, ground it to powder, mixed the powder in water and made the Hebrews drink it.²⁷¹ Then Moses said to them:

²⁶⁵ Bible, Exodus 7-11.

²⁶⁶ Bhagwata Purana 11 :30 :5.

²⁶⁷ Bible, Exodus 14 :22.

²⁶⁸ Bhagwata Purana 11 :30 :10.

²⁶⁹ Bible, Exodus 16 :24, 17 : 6, 16, 19 :1.

²⁷⁰ Bible, Exodus 31 :18, 32 :4, 32 :19.

²⁷¹ Bible, Exodus 32 :20.

Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, kill his companion, and every man his neighbour.²⁷²

The Bhagwata says that the Yadava youth played a prank on the sages at Dwarka. The sages then pronounced a curse that a particular iron pestle would lead to the destruction of their clan. The Yadavas ground the pestle to powder and dispersed the powder into the sea in order to avoid such a fate.²⁷³ They abandoned Dwarka soon thereafter and were camped at Prabhasa located at the confluence of the Saraswati River and the sea.²⁷⁴ Here they drank liquor and a terrible quarrel arose among them. Then:

Son killed father, brother killed brother, nephew killed uncle, grandson killed grandfather, friend killed friend... When their arrows were exhausted and weapons were broken, they started pulling out reeds from the seacoast. This grass grew out of the powder of the pestle.²⁷⁵

Four parallels can be seen here. One, an unruly act took place. The Hebrews made a calf of gold while the Yadava youth played a prank on the sages. Two, a metal object was ground into powder and mixed with water. Three, the powder-in-water became the instrument of the killing. Four, brothers killed one another.

The Bhagwata is silent on Krishna having gone atop a mountain to worship.

Three distinctions can be seen here. One, a golden calf was found in the Biblical narrative, while an iron pestle was found in the Hindu narrative. Two, the Biblical killings took place near a mountain, while the Hindu killings took place on the seacoast. Three, Moses “asked” the Hebrews to kill each other, while they did this due to intoxication in the Hindu narrative.

The Bible hereafter tells in great detail about the journey of the Hebrews from Sinai to Israel including travels through Kadesh, spending 40 years in the wilderness and entry into Israel. The Bhagwata is silent on these onward journeys. It is only told that after the killing at Prabhasa, Krishna left towards an

²⁷² Bible, Exodus 32 :27.

²⁷³ Bhagwata Purana 11 :1 :13-21.

²⁷⁴ Bhagwata Purana 3:4:3, 6. Skanda Purana, Sankshipt, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, Samvat 2064, 437:1224.

²⁷⁵ Bhagwata Purana 11:30:13, 19-21.

unknown direction.²⁷⁶ The leaving from Sinai or Prabhasa for a distant place is parallel.

Aaron, the elder brother of Moses, died at Mount Hor while Moses was alive.²⁷⁷ Balarama, Krishna's older brother died at Prabhasa while Krishna was alive.²⁷⁸ We do not count the distinction of the place of death here since the distinction between Prabhasa and Sinai has already been counted above.

Moses died at Moab after the death of Aaron. The Bible says, no one knows of his grave to this day.²⁷⁹ The Hindu narrative points in the same direction in a round-about way. Krishna was sitting on the ground under a tree after the death of Balarama. A hunter saw his red colored feet, shot an arrow thinking it was mouth of a deer, and killed him.²⁸⁰ The Bhagwata, like the Bible, is silent on the place of death.²⁸¹

Summary Table 5.3: Moses-Krishna: Narrative

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Infant Moses faced a threat to his life from the Pharaoh; he was born <i>not in a jail</i> ; he was <i>flown</i> in a river; and was brought up by his <i>natural mother</i> posing as his foster mother.	Infant Krishna faced a threat to his life from Kamsa; he was <i>born in a jail</i> ; he was taken <i>across</i> a river; and was brought up by an <i>unrelated</i> foster mother.	P=3, D=3
2	Pharaoh ordered midwives to kill newborn sons of the Hebrews at Goshen.	Kamsa ordered demoness Putna to roam the villages to kill the male children at Gokul.	P
3	Moses killed a Mitsrite.	Krishna killed Kamsa.	P
4	Moses fled and joined the household of Jethro the Priest.	Krishna went to study with Sage Sandipani.	P
5	Moses married Zipporah,	Krishna married eight women	D

²⁷⁶ Mahabharata 16:6:17, 24-25.

²⁷⁷ Bible, Numbers 33:39.

²⁷⁸ Bhagwata Purana 11:30:26.

²⁷⁹ Bible, Deuteronomy 34:6.

²⁸⁰ Bhagwata Purana 11:30:33, 46.

²⁸¹ Hindu living religion says he died at a place named Bhallak in Gujarat. We ignore this because we are considering only the textual information in this paper.

	<i>daughter of Jethro.</i>	who were <i>not daughters of Sage Sandipani.</i>	
6	Moses returned after spending <i>considerable time</i> with Jethro.	Krishna returned after spending <i>a short time</i> with Sandipani.	P, D
7	Son Gershom lived away from Moses for some time.	Son Pradyumna lived away from Krishna for some time.	P
8	Moses brought nine natural plagues; followed by the tenth plague of death; and then left <i>Mitsrayim</i> .	Natural disturbances took place; followed by the coming of the Deity of Death; and then Krishna left <i>Dwarka</i> .	P=3, D
9	The Hebrews crossed the sea on <i>dry land</i> .	Yadavas crossed the sea on <i>boats</i> .	P, D
10	An unruly act of molding the <i>golden calf</i> took place; a metal object was ground and mixed with water; the powder-in-water became the instrument of the killing; and <i>Moses asked</i> the brothers to kill one another <i>near a mountain</i> .	Yadava youth played a prank on the sages; <i>a pestle</i> was ground and mixed with water; the powder-in-water became the instrument of the killing; and the <i>Yadavas got intoxicated</i> and killed one another <i>near the sea coast</i> .	P=4, D=3
11	Moses journeyed from Sinai to Israel.	Krishna left from Prabhasa for an unknown direction.	P
12	Aaron died while Moses was alive.	Balarama died while Krishna was alive.	P
13	No one knows of Moses' grave to this day.	The Hindu texts do not tell of Krishna's place of death.	P
	Summary: P=19, D=10, Net=19/29, 67 percent.		

Names: Mitsrayim-Mathura

Moses' father's name was "Amram," which means "exalted people."²⁸² Krishna's father's name was "Vasudeva." The root "vasu" means "excellent,

²⁸² Strong's 06019.

good, beneficial” while the suffix “deva” means god.²⁸³ Thus “Vasudeva” means “excellent gods”—which is similar to “exalted.”

Moses’ mother’s name was “Jochebed” which is derived from “Jehovah” or God.²⁸⁴ Krishna’s mother’s name was “Devaki” which means “daughter of Devak,” which name, in turn, means “celestial, divine, god, deity.”²⁸⁵ Both names have a close association with God.

The etymological root of the name Moses is not clear.²⁸⁶ Yet we find a possible parallel in the color of Moses’ skin. During his encounter with God at Mount Horeb, God asked him to put his hand into his robe and when he brought it out it was “leprous like snow.”²⁸⁷ This suggests that the natural color of his skin was dark. In parallel, the name Krishna means “dark.”²⁸⁸

The name Jethro means “abundance, excess.”²⁸⁹ The name Sandipani derives its meaning from the root “sandeep” meaning to “kindle, flare, arouse.”²⁹⁰ Both meanings suggest growth or increase. However, the meanings are only implicitly similar hence we treat this as a silence.

The names Aaron and Balarama have common sounds “A,” “r” “n/m.”

We do not find parallels in the names Zipporah and Rukmini, and Gershom and Pradyumna. These are distinct.

The place names Mitsrayim and Mathura have common sounds “M,” “t” and “r.”

The name Midian means “strife, contention, quarrelsome.”²⁹¹ The name Avantipur, where Krishna went at this same time, is derived from the root “av”

²⁸³ Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 930

²⁸⁴ Strong’s 03115 and 03068.

²⁸⁵ Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 495.

²⁸⁶ Huddleston, John, “Was Moses’ Name Egyptian? Bible Odyssey, <https://www.bibleodyssey.org/en/people/related-articles/was-moses-name-egyptian>, Retrieved May 19, 2020.

²⁸⁷ *Bible, Exodus 4 :6.*

²⁸⁸ Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 306.

²⁸⁹ Strong’s 03500 and 03499.

²⁹⁰ Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 1143.

²⁹¹ Strong’s 04080 and 04079.

which means “to drive, impel, animate as a car or horse.”²⁹² The energetic meaning of the word is common though Midian indicates conflict while “Avantipur” is neutral hence we classify this both parallel and distinct.

Sinai, where the killings took place, means “thorny.”²⁹³ However, Moses had his encounter with God in form of a burning bush here. The name Prabhasa means “shine, glitter, brilliant, irradiate, illuminate, enlighten.”²⁹⁴ Thus, the contextual meaning of the name Sinai and the etymological meaning of the name Prabhasa are parallel.

One finds a large number of names on which one or the other text is silent. We have ignored them in this discussion.

Summary Table 5.4: Moses-Krishna: Names

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	Moses’ father’s name “Amram,” means “exalted people.”	Krishna’s father’s name “Vasudeva” means “excellent gods”	P
2	Moses’ mother’s name “Jochebed” is derived from “Jehovah” or God.	Krishna’s mother’s name “Devaki” means “celestial, divine, god, deity.”	P
3	Moses’ skin color was dark.	The name “Krishna” means “dark.”	P
4	Aaron	Balarama	P
5	<i>Zipporah, Gershon.</i>	<i>Rukmini, Pradyumna.</i>	D=2
6	Mitsrayim	Mathura	P
7	The name Midian suggests energetic and <i>quarrelsome</i> .	The name Avantipur suggests energetic but <i>neutral</i> .	P, D
8	Sinai was the place of the burning bush.	Prabhasa means “shine, glitter, brilliant, irradiate, illuminate, enlighten.”	P
Summary: P=7, D=3, Net 7/10, 70 percent.			

²⁹² Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 96.

²⁹³ Strong’s 05514.

²⁹⁴ Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit...*, page 684.

Theology: Laws*Eternal God*

God in form of the burning bush atop Mount Sinai said to Moses: “I am that I am.”²⁹⁵ Sarna explains: “Either it expresses the quality of absolute Being, the eternal, unchanging, dynamic presence, or it means, “He causes to be.”²⁹⁶ The difficulty is that if God is “unchanging” then he cannot “cause to be” because that would mean a change. For this reason, perhaps, Sarna says it is one or the other. Krishna resolves this difficulty in his discourse given during the Mahabharata War known as Gita by saying: “My nature is eternal, supreme and imperishable. Yet less intelligent persons consider Me to have accepted a material form.”²⁹⁷ Thus, the Lord, or the Essence of creation is unchanging though the creation itself is considered to be changing. The intelligent focus on the unchanging Essence while the less intelligent focus on the changing creation. We could render both the Bible and Gita as follows: “I am the unchanging who pervades the changing world.” Thus, we consider these statements to be parallel.

The Ten Commandments

Now we consider the Ten Commandments that God gave to Moses at Mount Sinai.²⁹⁸ The First Commandment is “I am your God.” Now, God is obviously everyone’s God, including Moses’. The purpose of God saying this was to get Moses to recognize God’s underlying omnipresence which God wanted Moses to recognize. To bring attention to this same point, Krishna says: “Mentally resigning all deeds to Me, regarding Me as the Supreme, resorting to mental concentration, do thou ever fix thy heart in Me.”²⁹⁹ We suggest that “I” in “I am your God” is parallel to “Me” in “fix thy heart in Me.” A distinction here is that the Bible portrays God as external to Moses while Krishna uses the term “Me” the sense of an all-pervasive Reality: “Know that to be imperishable by which all this is pervaded.”³⁰⁰

²⁹⁵ Bible, Exodus 3:14.

²⁹⁶ Sarna, *The JPS...*, Exodus 3:14, Page 17.

²⁹⁷ *Gita, The Bhagwad*, Translator, Alladi Mahadeva Sastry, Samta Boos, Madras, 1977, 7:24.

²⁹⁸ Bible, Exodus 20:2-17.

²⁹⁹ *Gita* 18:57.

³⁰⁰ *Gita* 2:17.

The Second Commandment states: “You shall not make for yourself a carved image... You shall not bow down to them or serve them.”³⁰¹ In parallel, Krishna spoke to the Sages: “Only watery pilgrim places are not pilgrim places and only idols of mud or stone are not gods... those persons who consider objects of mud, stone or wood as gods and watery places as pilgrim places and not the wise Sages—such person is an animal though a human being.” Hearing this deep talk, the Bhagwata says, the “Sages remained silent. They could not understand what the Lord was saying.”³⁰² This narrative indicates a tension between the worship of idols, as probably practiced by the Sages, and Krishna who considered such persons to be like animals. Perhaps, just as Aron made a golden calf, the sages may have worshipped objects of mud, stone, or wood.

We are unable to find explicit statements in the Hindu texts that may be parallel to the Third Commandment, “Do not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord;” the Fourth Commandment: “Keep the Sabbath;” and the Fifth Commandment: “Honor your parents.” We consider these to be silences.

The Sixth Commandment is “You shall not murder.”³⁰³ This is exemplified in the narrative of Balarama, brother of Krishna. At one time Balarama killed a particular Sage because he was, in Balarama’s opinion, wrongly occupying the seat of the Principal Sage. The other Sages then told Balarama that he had done wrong in killing the Sage without provocation. They asked him to undertake penance for his act—which he did.³⁰⁴ The undertaking of penance indicates acceptance of the dictum “you shall not murder.”

The Seventh Commandment is “You shall not commit adultery.”³⁰⁵ Krishna said in parallel: “To be astray in adultery is in all cases something contemptible: it harms the reputation, creates fear, and gives trouble.”³⁰⁶

We are, again, unable to find explicit statements in the Hindu texts that may be parallel to the Eighth Commandment: “Do not steal,” and the Ninth Commandment: “Do not bear false witness”. We consider these as silences.

³⁰¹ Bible, Exodus 20:4-5

³⁰² Bhagwata Purana 10:84:11-14.

³⁰³ Bible, Exodus 20:13.

³⁰⁴ Bhagwata Purana 10:78:28-33.

³⁰⁵ Bible, Exodus 20:14.

³⁰⁶ Bhagwata Purana 10:29:26.

Sarna says that the Tenth Commandment “Do not covet” “does not signify the general human proclivity for acquisitiveness and cupidity, rather it always focuses upon a specific object of desire.”³⁰⁷ Krishna’s approach is more focused on the general human acquisitiveness: “There are three paths to reach Me—worship, thought and action. Those who, bereft of these, are driven by the senses keep wandering in this world.”³⁰⁸ Thus, while the Tenth Commandment focuses on specific objects, Krishna focuses on general acquisitiveness. We consider this as distinct.

Fire

God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses speaking through the burning bush. There exists, therefore, a spontaneous connection of God and fire. Thus, the sacred fire has a central place in the Mosaic religion.³⁰⁹ The parallel is found in the Hindu narrative of Vasudeva, father of Krishna. At one time Vasudeva asked the sages: “Please tell me by which rituals it is possible to attain salvation?” Thereupon, the sages replied: “The best way is to undertake fire sacrifice, charity, study and giving birth to children.” Then it is told that Vasudeva undertook fire sacrifice—indicating that this was the preferred method among the many.³¹⁰

Reincarnation

Two types of rebirth mentioned in the narrative of Krishna require separate attention. First, is rebirth of all living beings. The Gita tells of this quite clearly:

For, men of wisdom cast off the fruit of action; possessed of knowledge (and) *released from the bond of birth*, they go to the place where there is no evil (italics supplied).³¹¹

We have already mentioned in the subsection “Theology,” in section “Abraham-Rama,” that the Kabbalists believe in rebirth, and it requires further study whether the Jews at the time of Moses believed in it. We consider this as a silence in view of the silence of the Bible on this question.

³⁰⁷ Sarna, *The JPS...*, Exodus 20:14, page 114.

³⁰⁸ *Bhagwata Purana* 11:21:1, 3.

³⁰⁹ Wellhausen, Julius, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, 1885, <https://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/cv/phai/index.htm>, Chapter 4.

³¹⁰ *Bhagwata Purana* 10:84:29, 35, 38-39, 43.

³¹¹ *Gita* 2:51.

The second type of rebirth is the Incarnation of Krishna as God. In an oft-quoted verse Krishna says: “Whenever there is decay of religion, O Bharata, and an ascendancy of irreligion, then I manifest Myself... I am [thus] born in every age.”³¹²

Here, Krishna is speaking of His being Incarnated as God or Avatara. This verse is to be understood in the light of Krishna’s other utterances. In a discussion with his father Vasudeva, he says:

We [Krishna and Balarama] are only your sons. Yourself, myself, brother Balarama, all residents of Dwarka, entire universe—all this we must understand as form of Brahman. O Father! The soul is only one. It imbibes qualities and although being without qualities, it appears as with qualities... Therefore, what I am, that alone is everyone.³¹³

Hare Krishna is explaining two facets of his incarnation. As son of Vasudeva he has taken rebirth just as all other living beings. As the soul being only One, he is propounding the Monist philosophy. Thus, when Krishna says, “I manifest Myself in every age” he is simultaneously saying that he was born as the son of Vasudeva as any other person while at the same time He is manifestation of the One Soul.

We have already discussed that the Torah is amenable to a Monist interpretation in the section “Abraham-Rama.” However, Moses does not claim to be part of the One Soul and he also does not deny this. Therefore, we consider the utterance of Krishna to be a silence in the Bible.

Summary Table 5.5: Moses-Krishna: Theology

No	Biblical	Hindu	Points
1	God said to Moses: “I am that I am.”	Krishna said, “My nature is eternal, supreme and imperishable.”	P
2	<i>God is external to Moses.</i>	<i>The Reality is all pervasive.</i>	D
3	First Commandment: “I am your God.”	Krishna said: “Mentally resigning all deeds to Me... do thou ever fix their heart in Me.”	P
4	Second Commandment: “You	Krishna said, those who consider	P

³¹² Gita 4:7-8.

³¹³ Bhagwata Purana 10:85:23-25.

	shall not make for yourself a carved image.”	objects of mud, stone or wood as gods [are] an animal[s].	
5	Sixth Commandment is “You shall not murder.”	Balarama admitted doing wrong in killing a Sage without provocation.	P
6	Seventh Commandment is “You shall not commit adultery.”	Krishna said: “To be astray in adultery is contemptible.”	P
7	Tenth Commandment: Do not covet <i>specific objects</i> .	Krishna said: Do not be driven by the senses <i>generally</i> .	P, D
8	God spoke to Moses through the burning bush.	Vasudeva undertook fire sacrifice.	P
	Summary: P=7, D=2, Net=7/9, 78 percent.		

Overall Assessment

We now bring together the 25 tables of the five persons and five parameters in a 5x5 matrix. However, we have varying numbers of observations in each cell of this matrix as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Numbers of Observations by Persons and Parameters

Sl	Person	Context	Genealog	Narrative	Names	Theology	Total
1	Adam-Swayambhu	2	1	16	5	3	27
2	Cain-Indra	2	5	2	4	1	14
3	Noah-Vaivaswat	2	6	8	4	3	23
4	Abraham-Rama	2	2	34	18	6	62
5	Moses-Krishna	2	5	29	10	9	55
6	Total	10	19	89	41	22	181

We have total 181 observations that are distributed unequally between the persons and parameters. For example, the parameter “Context” has only 10 observations while the parameter “Narrative” has 89 observations.

There are two methods of putting the parallels together. First method is to give equal weight to each parameter irrespective of the number of observations therein. In this case the 10 observations in “Context” are given the same

importance as 89 observations in “Narrative.” To give an example, we give equal importance to the five legs in a table irrespective of the strength of each leg.

Second method is to give equal importance to each of the 181 observations, which would mean that we are giving less weight to the parameter “Context” and more to the “Narrative.” This would be like giving importance to the five legs in proportion to their strengths. We think both methods are justified. Hence, we are given calculations below by both methods.

We have taken the percent figures from each of the 25 Summary Tables in the subsections and put them together in the Table 2 below. In doing so we have ignored the different numbers of observations lying behind each figure and thereby we have given equal weight to each parameter.

Table 2: Equal Weight to Parameters

Sl	Person	Context	Genealog	Narrative	Names	Theology	Average
1	Adam-Swayambhu	100	100	75	80	67	84.4
2	Cain-Indra	100	60	100	50	100	82.0
3	Noah-Vaivaswat	100	50	87	75	100	82.4
4	Abraham-Rama	100	100	65	61	83	81.8
5	Moses-Krishna	100	60	67	70	78	75.0
6	Average	100	74.0	78.8	67.2	85.6	81.0

The last column of this table tells us that the parallels between the Five Persons Adam-Swayambhu etc.

are 84.4, 82.0, 82.4, 81.8, and 75.0 percent respectively. The similar numbers suggest that the parallels in all Five Persons are equally placed. There is no imbalance here as would have been the case, for example, if Adam-Swayambhu gave 20 percent parallels and Moses-Krishna gave 95 percent parallels.

The last row of this table tells us that the five parameters (Context, Genealogy, Narrative, Names and Theology) show 100, 74.0, 78.8, 67.2 and 85.6 percent parallels, respectively. Here, we continue to ignore the difference in the numbers of observations lying behind each of these figures. The average of these five numbers is 81.0 percent. This is the overall level of parallels if we give equal importance to each parameter.

Next, we have taken the numerator and denominator from the last line of each of the 25 Summary Tables in the subsections and put them together in the Table 3 below. Then we have added the numerators and denominators separately and given these in the second-last column and the second-last row both titled “Total.” These column and row give us the total numbers of parallels as a ratio of observations for each person in the second-last column, and for each parameter in the second-last row. Then for easy comparison we have converted these figures into percentages in the last column and row.

Table 3: Equal Weight to Observations

Sl	Person	Context	Genealogy	Narrative	Names	Theology	Total	Percent (of row)
1	Adam-Swayambhu	2/2	1/1	12/16	4/5	2/3	21/27	77.8
2	Cain-Indra	2/2	3/5	2/2	2/4	1/1	10/14	71.4
3	Noah-Vaivaswat	2/2	3/6	7/8	3/4	3/3	18/23	78.3
4	Abraham-Rama	2/2	2/2	22/34	11/18	5/6	42/62	67.7
5	Moses-Krishna	2/2	3/5	19/29	7/10	7/9	38/55	69.1
6	Total	10/10	12/19	62/87	26/39	18/22	-	72.9 (average of above)
7	Percent (of column)	100.0	63.2	71.1	66.7	81.8	76.6 (average of left)	74.7 (average of above and left)

The last column of This table tells us that the parallels between the Five Persons, Adam-Swayambhu etc. are 77.8, 71.4, 78.3, 67.7 and 69.1 percent respectively. These figures are less in four out of five persons, excepting Abraham, when compared to Table 2. The reason is that there are large numbers of observations with lesser numbers of parallels in the parameters “Narrative” and “Names.” This lowers the final figures. Yet, the similar numbers when

compared with Table 2 suggests that the parallels in all Five Persons are equally placed by both methods.

The last row of this table tells us that the five parameters (Context, Genealogy, Narrative, Names and Theology) show 100.0, 63.2, 71.1, 66.7 and 81.8 percent parallels, respectively. Here we have implicitly ignored the differences in the numbers of observations in each parameter. The average of these five numbers is 74.7. This is the overall level of parallels if we give equal importance to each observation irrespective of the variation in the numbers of observations in each parameter.

In conclusion, we find 81.0 percent parallels if we give equal weight to parameters and 74.7 percent parallels if we give equal weight to observations. Thus, on the conservative side, 74.7 percent of the narratives of the Five Persons in the Biblical and Hindu narratives are parallel.

We find that 85.6 percent of theological understandings are parallel if we give equal weight to parameters and 81.8 percent are parallels if we give equal weight to observations. Theology has highest level of parallels except for “Context” in both the reckonings. This finding is encouraging. It suggests that the two religions share a similar theological understanding even though the narratives have more distinctions.

Conclusion

Our journey had been triggered by the conflicts that often have roots in theological understandings of different religions: Hindus and Muslims, and Hindus and Christians in India; Buddhists and Muslims in Myanmar; Muslims and Jews in West Asia and so on. There is a sense of separation—“me” versus “you”—in these conflicts. The parallels in the narratives of the Five Persons could help establish a dialogue between these religions with a sense of “me” and “us.” Thus, the theological beliefs of the Hindus could be enriched by looking at the parallel teachings of the Five Persons in the Torah and vice versa. That is the task ahead of us.

Our study has been confined to the parallels between the Torah and the Hindu texts. However, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—all accept the authority of the Torah; and Buddhism and Jainism are both offshoots of Hinduism and share much affinity with it. Thus, in establishing the parallels between the Torah and the Hindu texts, we have implicitly established parallels between the Abrahamic Religions and Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.

We are not delving into the historical authenticity of the narratives in either religion. It does not matter for the purpose of this paper whether Adam lived in Turkey or Iraq or India or whether he lived at all; whether the parallels fit into patterns found in other primitive myths; or whether the Torah borrowed the narrative from the Hindu texts or vice versa; or there was yet another common origin such as the Sumeric Civilization which is known to have affinities with both the religions. The fact remains that the narratives and theological understandings of the Torah and Hindu texts are parallel.

We have tried to place the facts before the reader as dispassionately as we could. The distinctions and silences notwithstanding, we feel that the parallels warrant a deeper examination of the possible connections of the Biblical and Hindu Religions in the remote past. We place this paper before the reader not as a “proof” but only to underscore the need to undertake such an examination.

We are aware that tracing the parallels is not likely “solve” the conflicts. Yet, it can anchor a dialogue, to repeat, with a sense of “me” and “us.” The purpose of this paper is to take a small step towards establishing such a dialogue.

Acknowledgements: I would heartily thank Alan Brill, Paul Himes, Asangla Parveen, Brian Ridolfi and Sara Winter for providing very helpful comments on earlier version of this paper.

About MEI@ND

Formally launched in February 2010, the Middle East Institute, New Delhi seeks to promote the understanding of contemporary Middle East. It is India-based and not India-centric and its main research focus is geopolitical dynamics of the Middle East including, but not limited to, military matters, economy, energy security, political system and institutions, society, culture and religion, and conflicts in the region. The institute also encourages research on burgeoning Asian interest in and engagements with the Middle East. MEI@ND documents bilateral relations amongst the Middle Eastern states and strives to produce updated analysis of the region's changing strategic landscape.

MEI@ND