



« Fullness, Emptiness, and Abba: A New Comparative Vision of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christ »

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Introduction

The spiritual traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity are often presented as fundamentally different paths.

Hinduism speaks of Atman and Brahman.

Buddhism speaks of emptiness and non-self.

Jesus speaks of God as Abba, Father.

Yet these traditions may be exploring different dimensions of the same mystery.

Hinduism investigates ultimate reality.

Buddhism investigates the nature of the self.

Christ reveals the relationship between the two through the discovery of divine purpose.

Hinduism and the Discovery of Fullness

The Upanishadic sages sought the ultimate foundation of existence.

Behind the changing world they discovered Brahman, the infinite and eternal reality.

Brahman is fullness (Purnam).

It is complete, self-existent, eternal, and lacking nothing.

The realization of Atman as Brahman reveals the substantial reality underlying all appearances.

The spiritual movement is from the unreal to the real, from the transient to the eternal, from ignorance to knowledge.

"Lead me from the unreal to the Real."

In Brahman there is no lack, no incompleteness, and therefore no purpose in the ordinary sense.

Purpose belongs to becoming.

Brahman is already fullness.

Buddhism and the Discovery of Emptiness

The Buddha approached the question from a different direction.

In his time many thinkers held that an individual self (Jeevatman) was eternal and passed through repeated reincarnations until liberation.

The Buddha challenged this assumption.

He observed that everything we experience as self is changing.

The body changes.

Thoughts change.

Emotions change.

Memories change.



What is changing cannot be eternal.
 What depends on causes and conditions cannot be self-subsistent.
 The Buddha therefore declared that the phenomenal self is not eternal and not substantial.
 In this sense, the Buddha may be understood as correcting a misunderstanding.
 If Jeevatman requires liberation, then it cannot already be eternally free.
 What is truly eternal does not need liberation.
 What requires liberation is precisely that which is conditioned, impermanent, and incomplete.
 The Buddha's doctrine of non-self therefore points to the unsubstantial nature of the egoic self.
 Emptiness (Shunyata) means that the phenomenal self possesses no independent essence.
 Like fullness, emptiness has no inherent purpose.
 It simply reveals the way things are.
 Compassion emerges as the natural fruit of awakening, but purpose is not the central category of Buddhist thought.
 The Limitation of Fullness and Emptiness
 Fullness and emptiness are often seen as opposites.
 Yet they may be complementary insights.
 Fullness reveals the nature of ultimate reality.
 Emptiness reveals the nature of the phenomenal self.
 The problem is that neither concept fully addresses the question of purpose.
 Fullness simply is.
 Emptiness simply is.
 Neither explains why creation exists, why consciousness evolves, or how human life participates in a meaningful destiny.
 The question remains:
 What is the relationship between fullness and emptiness?

Christ and the Discovery of Divine Purpose

The contribution of Jesus lies precisely here.
 Jesus introduces the category of purpose.
 He experiences ultimate reality not merely as Absolute Being but as Abba, Father.
 Father is not simply another name for God.
 It signifies a living source possessing intention, meaning, and purpose.
 When purpose is recognized within fullness, fullness becomes Father.
 When purpose is discovered within human existence, the human being becomes Son or Daughter of God.
 This is the distinctive nature of Christ's vision.
 Reality is not merely fullness.
 Reality is not merely emptiness.
 Reality is purposeful communion.
 The central prayer of Jesus is:
 "Thy will be done."
 This prayer reveals the bridge between fullness and emptiness.
 The Union of Fullness and Emptiness
 The ego is empty.
 It possesses no independent existence.
 Yet it is not meaningless.
 Its purpose is to become a vehicle of divine life.
 When emptiness discovers its true purpose, it ceases to be merely an isolated self.
 It becomes Son or Daughter.
 When fullness is experienced as the source and goal of this purpose, it becomes Father/Mother.
 The relationship between Father and Son, Mother and Daughter is therefore not primarily biological or metaphysical.
 It is existential and spiritual.



It is the relationship between divine purpose and conscious participation in that purpose. Jesus expresses this perfectly when he says:
 "The works that I do are not mine, but the Father who dwells in me does his works."
 The human instrument is empty of self-assertion.
 The divine fullness acts through it.
 This is neither the dissolution of the human person nor the exaltation of the ego.
 It is communion.

A New Understanding of Christ

In this perspective, Jesus is neither merely a metaphysical exception nor merely a moral teacher.
 He is the person in whom fullness and emptiness become perfectly united through obedience to divine purpose.
 His uniqueness lies in the completeness of this union.
 His consciousness is entirely aligned with the will of the Father.
 Thus Jesus reveals humanity's vocation.
 The goal is not merely to know Brahman.
 The goal is not merely to realize emptiness.
 The goal is to become a conscious participant in the divine purpose.
 The prayer "Thy will be done" becomes the meeting place of fullness and emptiness.

Conclusion

Hinduism reveals fullness.
 Buddhism reveals emptiness.
 Christ reveals purpose.
 Fullness without purpose remains impersonal.
 Emptiness without purpose remains directionless.
 Purpose unites fullness and emptiness in a living relationship.
 When fullness is recognized as purposeful, it is experienced as Abba, Father.
 When emptiness discovers its divine vocation, it becomes Son or Daughter of God.
 The life of Jesus reveals the union of these two realities.
 The Father works through the Son.
 Fullness expresses itself through emptiness.
 The divine purpose becomes incarnate in human life. This world is a stage where divine purpose is shared in relationships.
 Thus the highest realization is not simply fullness, nor emptiness, but conscious participation in the will of God: "Thy will be done."

