

Comparison Of The Incarnation Of God From The Christian Perspective (The Word) With The Incarnation From The Hindu Perspective (Avatar)

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ABSTRACT

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This study analyzes the concept of Jesus as the Word who became flesh in the Christian tradition and compares it with the concept of divine manifestation (avatar) in Hinduism. The background of this research is based on the importance of a deeper understanding of the core doctrines of Christianity, particularly regarding the incarnation of Jesus Christ, in the context of a pluralistic society with diverse religious beliefs. This comparative study also aims to examine the similarities and differences in understandings of God's presence in human life based on the theological perspectives of each religious tradition. The results of the study indicate that, from a Christian theological perspective, Jesus Christ is understood as the Word of God who became flesh through the event of incarnation. This incarnation is believed to have occurred once and for all as a manifestation of God's love for humanity and is the primary basis for human salvation from sin. The presence of Jesus in history is understood not merely as a temporary appearance or manifestation, but as the presence of God in the person of Jesus Christ, who has both divine and human dimensions. Thus, the incarnation holds a very important position in the Christian teaching of salvation. On the other hand, in Hindu belief, the concept of avatar refers to the manifestation or incarnation of God, especially Vishnu, in various forms and shapes to restore cosmic balance, uphold dharma, and overcome adharma. These divine manifestations can occur repeatedly according to the needs and conditions of the world. Although there are fundamental differences in the number, form, nature, and purpose of divine incarnations, both concepts share a common understanding that God is not seen as entirely passive towards human life. Both depict the active involvement of the divine in history and human life with the aim of bringing salvation, order, moral restoration, and goodness. However, these similarities do not eliminate fundamental theological differences, particularly regarding the uniqueness of the incarnation of Jesus in Christianity and the recurring nature of the avatar concept in the Hindu tradition.



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Introduction

Jesus Christ plays a central role in the Christian faith. In the Apostles' Creed, He is called the "only begotten Son of God" by God the Father and "our Lord" to humanity. This designation emphasizes the special relationship between Jesus and God and His central role in the lives of humanity. This Creed also

includes a series of events experienced by Jesus, such as his conception by the Holy Spirit, birth of the Virgin Mary, suffering, crucifixion, and so on.¹

The terminology of the Word becoming flesh refers to the incarnation of Christ in human flesh. This concept explains how Jesus, who is the Word of God, became a human being (Jesus of Nazareth). ²In John 1:1, it is stated that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Then, John 1:14 affirms that the Word "became flesh and dwelt among us." These verses show how God took the initiative to be directly present in human lives through Jesus Christ in order to save His people.³

In Hindu tradition, there is a similar concept known as *avatar*, the incarnation of a god in human or other form to restore *dharma* and protect the world from destruction. While differing in belief systems and doctrines, both concepts reflect a belief in divine intervention in human life to bring renewal and salvation. Therefore, this paper aims to systematically explain the concept of the "Word made flesh" so that doubts in the Christian faith can be more clearly and profoundly answered.

Method

This study uses a comparative analysis method of Christian theological understanding of Jesus Christ as the Word who became flesh, as stated in the teachings of the Bible, especially in the Gospel of John and the writings of the apostles with the concept of avatar in the Hindu tradition, namely the incarnation of the divine into human form or other creatures to maintain the cosmic order (*dharma*). The comparative analysis in this study is carried out by identifying, describing, and comparing the main concepts contained in both religious traditions. The comparison is directed at aspects of the nature of the divine presence, the purpose of the incarnation, the form of divine manifestation, the relationship between God and humans, and the meaning of salvation and restoration contained in each concept.

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research. Data were obtained through a search of various relevant written sources, such as the Bible, particularly the Gospel of John, the epistles of the apostles, Christian theological literature, books on Christology and the doctrine of incarnation, and academic sources discussing Hinduism and the concept of avatar. These sources were used to gain a deeper understanding of the theological and philosophical foundations of the concept of the Word becoming flesh and the concept of avatar in Hindu tradition.

In analyzing the concept of the Word becoming flesh, this study pays special attention to biblical texts that explain the identity of Jesus Christ as the Word of God. The Gospel of John is one of the primary sources because it explicitly explains the relationship between the Word, God, and Jesus Christ, especially through John 1:1 and John 1:14. In addition, the writings of the apostles and various theological studies are used to enrich understanding of the incarnation, the divinity and humanity of Christ, the work of salvation, and the relationship of Jesus Christ to God the Father.

Meanwhile, the study of the avatar concept in Hindu tradition was conducted by examining religious and academic literature explaining divine manifestations, particularly those related to Vishnu and his various avatars. The analysis focused on understanding the avatar's purpose in upholding *dharma*, overcoming *adharma*, maintaining cosmic balance, and protecting life. Thus, the research not only examines avatar as a concept of God's incarnation but also understands the philosophical and religious background that shaped the concept in Hindu tradition.

The analysis phase was conducted through several processes: source collection, identification of key concepts, data interpretation, grouping by theme, and comparison between the two concepts. Concepts with relationships or similarities were placed in the same analytical category, while fundamental differences were explained based on the theological context of each religion. This comparison encompasses aspects of the understanding, nature, purpose, form of divine presence, relationship with humans, and the orientation of salvation or restoration contained in the concepts of incarnation and avatar.

This study does not aim to equate the concept of incarnation in Christianity with the concept of avatar in Hinduism, but rather to objectively and academically identify their similarities and differences. A

¹GC Van Niftrik and BJ Boland, *Dogmatics of the Present* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2017), 226.

²GC Van Niftrik and BJ Boland, *Dogmatics Today*, 226.

³Witness Lee, *A Study of the Crystallization of the Gospel of John* (Jakarta: Yasperin, 2024), 6-7.

comparative approach is used to demonstrate that although both traditions share the idea of divine involvement in human life, each has a distinct theological basis and interpretation. In Christianity, the Word made flesh is closely linked to the person of Jesus Christ and the work of human salvation, while in the Hindu tradition, avatars are linked to divine manifestations to uphold dharma and maintain cosmic balance. Through this method, the research is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of the concept of the Word becoming flesh in Christian theology and the concept of avatar in Hindu tradition. The results of the analysis are expected to clarify the points of similarity and difference between the two concepts and provide a deeper understanding of the uniqueness of the doctrine of incarnation in the Christian faith. Furthermore, this research is expected to contribute to the study of comparative religion, particularly in understanding how each religious tradition explains the relationship between divine reality, humanity, salvation, and life on earth.

Basis of Thinking

3.1 The Word became the Incarnation of God

The Word, who appeared in human form, also had a primary purpose: to bring salvation to humanity. This salvation was realized through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Philippians 2:6-7 describes how Jesus, though in the form of God, willingly humbled Himself and took the form of a servant. This act is called kenosis, or self-emptying, in which Jesus did not assert His divine rights but willingly lived as a human being obedient to the will of the Father, even to the point of death on the cross. The cross was the culmination of His work of salvation, in which He bore the penalty for humanity's sin and paved the way for reconciliation between humanity and God.⁴

The incarnation of Christ also serves as the foundation for Christian faith, that God is not a distant and unreachable figure, but rather a near God who understands human suffering and empathizes with their weaknesses. This provides comfort and hope for believers, for they have a Savior who not only gave laws and teachings but also experienced human life with all its challenges. Thus, Jesus, as the Word incarnate, is not merely a theological doctrine, but the very essence of God's love and salvation for the world.

Athanasius of Alexandria, in his work *On the Incarnation*, emphasized that the incarnation is a manifestation of God's infinite love, in which God unites with humanity to restore humanity, alienated by sin, to its original state, namely living in communion with Him. The concept of theosis, or the restoration of humanity to the image of God, according to Athanasius, reveals how the incarnation becomes a means of spiritual transformation that enables humans to experience inner restoration and rejuvenation.⁵ The incarnation is a dramatic divine journey in which the Son of God descends to earth as a reflection of profound love and a means of reconciliation between God and humanity; through His self-abasement in birth, life, and death, God is glorified, so that the complete revelation of His trinitarian love enables humanity to experience eternal salvation.⁶

3.2 Manifestations of God in Hinduism

Hinduism has a unique view of the relationship between God and the world. One of the fundamental concepts in Hinduism is divine manifestation, known as *avatar*. This concept refers to the belief that God can appear in the world in various forms to uphold *dharma* (cosmic truth and order) and protect humanity from evil and chaos.⁷

God's manifestation in this world is primarily associated with Vishnu, one of the principal deities in the Hindu Trimurti (Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva). Vishnu is believed to be the preserver of the universe, descending in various avatars to restore balance to the world whenever evil threatens *dharma*.⁸

⁴Santo Sagala, FX Marmidi, "Putting on the Mind that is in Christ Jesus (Exegetical Analysis-Theological Reflection on Phil 2:1-11)," *Rajawali Journal*, 10.54367, (August 2023): 70.

⁵Athanasius, *On the Incarnation of The World* (Grand Rapids: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, MI), 2.

⁶Veli-Matti K ä rkk ä inen, *Trinity & Religious Pluralism* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2017), 22-23.

⁷Mohammad Nuh, *Hindu Religious Education and Character Education: Teacher's Book/Ministry of Education and Culture* (Jakarta: Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014), 21.

⁸Karen Armstrong, *History of God: The Story of 4,000 Years of Searching for God in Human Religions* (Bandung: Mizan, 2011), 107.

In Hindu scriptures, such as the Bhagavad Gita and various Puranas, *avatars* are described as a form of God's compassion towards living creatures. God not only silently watches over the world, but also actively descends to restore harmony when the balance between good and evil is disturbed.⁹

Some scholars, such as Pandey and Parrinder, state that *avatara* refers to the manifestation of the Divine in human form. Etymologically, Burnett explains that the word *avatara* comes from two roots: "*ava*," meaning to descend, and "*tr*," meaning to cross. Burnett examines the development of this term and finds that the concept of *avatar* evolved from other terms such as *rupa* (form), *vapus* (having beautiful form), and *tanu* (living being with a material body) to become *pradurbhava* (appearance).¹⁰

4. Comparative efforts to bring together the two concepts

4.1 God's Involvement in the World

From a religious perspective, both the concept of *avatars* in the Hindu tradition and the concept of the Word becoming flesh in the Christian tradition convey the understanding that God is truly present in the world in some form. Both views emphasize that divinity is not abstract or distant from human life, but rather descends to earth to provide guidance, guidance, and salvation for humanity.

According to scholars such as Raimon Panikkar, divine presence is not merely a metaphorical concept but is manifest in human history. Panikkar emphasizes that divine manifestation is a concrete manifestation of God's love and concern for His creation. In the Christian tradition, this is reflected in the presence of Jesus Christ as the Word united with humanity. ¹¹According to Thomas Aquinas, God's presence in humanity through Jesus is a concrete manifestation of God's love and wisdom. Aquinas argued that Jesus' presence in the world was not a coincidence, but rather an integral part of God's predetermined plan of salvation, enabling humanity to know and attain salvation through true faith.¹²

In the Protestant tradition, the idea of God's presence through Jesus Christ also receives deep emphasis. Karl Barth, a leading theologian in the Reformation tradition, asserted that Jesus is the pinnacle of God's revelation to the world. According to Barth, through Jesus, God reveals Himself totally to humanity, so that salvation is not achieved through human effort but through the grace and truth conveyed through the Gospel. ¹³John Calvin, another key figure in the Reformation tradition, emphasized that Jesus' presence as the Word made flesh provides direct access to God's grace, ultimately freeing humanity from the bondage of sin. ¹⁴Both figures agree that through Jesus, humanity gains a more intimate and direct understanding of the divine nature and experiences a fundamental spiritual transformation.

In Hindu tradition, the concept of divine manifestation is manifested through *avatars*, meaning the incarnation of God into the world for a specific purpose. Hindu philosophers and theologians have varying views regarding the purpose of *avatars*. For example, Shankara and Ramanuja, two important figures in Hindu philosophy, argued that the primary purpose of *avatars* is to restore dharma (righteousness or moral duty), punish evildoers, and teach the path to liberation. Shankara emphasized that this liberation is taught in the Bhagavad Gita through jnana (knowledge) and karma-sannyasa (renunciation of attachment to action), while Ramanuja emphasized bhakti (devotion) expressed by a loving and compassionate God.¹⁵

⁹Amrutur V. Srinivasan, *Hinduism For Dummies*, 112.

¹⁰I Nyoman Ananda, "Avatara in the Mahabharata," *Journal of Hindu Religion Research*, 10.37329/jpah.v7i4.2036, (October 2023): 496.

¹¹Enrico Beltrami, *The Unknown Christ of Christianity: Scripture and Theology in Panikkar's Early Writings* (New York: Peter Lang, 2020), 19.

¹²Raidin Sinaga, "Cur Verbum Capax Hominis: The Reason for the Incarnation of the Word According to St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)," *Journal of Philosophy – Theology*, 10.54367/Logos.v6i2.1834, (June 2008): 90 – 91.

¹³Madé Nopen Supriadi, "Theological Evaluation of Karl Barth's Views on General Revelation," *Journal of Philosophy – Theology*, 10.38091/man_raf.v6i1.111, (October 2019): 80 – 81.

¹⁴Lolan Lewi Pongdatu, Alfri Tandi, and Lisa Lewi Pongdatu, "A Theological Study of Infant Salvation from the Perspective of John Calvin and Its Implications for Toraja Church Members," *Journal of Religious Education and Theology*, 10.59581/jpat.widyakarya.v1i3, (September 2023): 40.

¹⁵Robert W. Stevenson, "The Concept of Avatāra in Ancient and Modern Commentaries on the Bhagavadgītā," *Religious Traditions: A New Journal in the Study of Religion*, DOI, (November 2018): 76.

God didn't simply create the world and leave it to its own devices, but rather descended into human history. In the Christian tradition, the presence of Jesus as the Word made flesh provides a concrete example of how God becomes one with human life and conveys the message of salvation through His life, death, and resurrection. Meanwhile, in the Hindu tradition, *avatars* appear in various forms, whether human, animal, or a combination of both, to restore the natural order and ensure the continuity of dharma.

4.2 Rescue Objectives

The purpose of salvation or guidance also serves as a point of intersection between the two perspectives. Jesus Christ came to save humanity from sin, as affirmed in Christian teachings, where salvation is the result of His grace and sacrifice. In this context, Jesus serves as an intermediary who restores the relationship between humanity and God.¹⁶ Meanwhile, in Hindu tradition, *avatars* appear to provide moral and spiritual guidance, helping humanity navigate life by adhering to the principles of dharma, so that they can ultimately achieve liberation (*moksha*) from the cycle of rebirth.¹⁷

Furthermore, both concepts emphasize that God demonstrates a profound concern for the world. Thomas Aquinas wrote that through the presence of Jesus, God demonstrated His indifference to human suffering, but instead chose to engage directly in human history to realize justice and love.¹⁸ On the other hand, S. Radhakrishnan described *avatars* as concrete evidence that God constantly monitors and responds to the dynamics of the world, descending to earth to resolve chaos and establish truth.¹⁹

4.3 The Role of Salvation and Spiritual Transformation

The concept of *avatars* in Hindu tradition and the concept of the Word of God incarnate in Christianity share fundamental similarities as divine manifestations descending to earth to save humanity and facilitate spiritual transformation. Both *avatars* and the concept of the Word of God incarnate are believed to emerge to address humanity's spiritual, moral, or existential crises. *The avatar's purpose* is to restore *dharma* and liberate humanity from the shackles of *adharma* (darkness),²⁰ while in Christianity, Jesus is seen as the incarnation of God who came to atone for humanity's sins through self-sacrifice. Both serve as "saviors" who connect humanity with transcendent reality, offering a way out of suffering through their teachings and life examples.²¹

Furthermore, *avatars* and incarnations of God serve as models of behavior that inspire inner transformation. Krishna, through his teachings of *karma yoga* and *bhakti*,²² and Jesus, with his emphasis on love, forgiveness, and service, offer practical guidance for attaining enlightenment or union with the Divine. Both concepts convey universal truths that transcend time and culture, such as the importance of unconditional love, self-sacrifice, and surrender to divine will. They also serve as intermediaries between humanity and the Almighty, presenting divinity in accessible forms. Although transcendent, they assume human form to empathize with human suffering, such as Krishna's life as a prince or Jesus' experience of birth, temptation, and death.

Both concepts also emphasize divine grace as the key to spiritual liberation. In the Hindu *bhakti* tradition, devotion to an *avatar* is believed to pave the way to *moksha* (liberation),²³ while in Christianity, faith in Jesus as an incarnation of God is considered the path to salvation.²⁴ Both affirm that divine love and sacrifice are the forces that transform human limitations into a higher consciousness. Furthermore, *avatars* and incarnations of God symbolize victory over death and physical limitations. Jesus, through his

¹⁶ Saint Sagala and FX Marmidi, "Putting on the Mind that was in Christ Jesus (Exegetical Commentary-Theological Reflection on Phil 2:1-11), 70.

¹⁷ Amrutur V. Srinivasan, *Hinduism For Dummies*, 112.

¹⁸ Raidin Sinaga, "Cur Verbum Capax Hominis: The Reason for the Incarnation of the Word According to St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)," 91.

¹⁹ Aloysius Michael, *Radhakrishnan on Hindu Moral Life and Action* (Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1979), 127.

²⁰ Amrutur V. Srinivasan, *Hinduism For Dummies*, 112.

²¹ J. Verkuy, *I Believe: An Explanation of the Gospel and the Call to Believe*, 49 – 50.

²² Swami Mukundananda, *Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 3: Karm Yog*.

²³ Amrutur V. Srinivasan, *Hinduism For Dummies*, 112.

²⁴ J. Verkuy, *I Believe: An Explanation of the Gospel and the Call to Believe*, 49 – 50.

resurrection, and Krishna, who continued to exist in spiritual form despite the disappearance of his physical body, imply the immortality of the soul and the superiority of divine reality over death.

Overall, both the concept of the Word becoming flesh in the Christian tradition and the concept of *avatars* in the Hindu tradition convey the message that God not only created the universe but also continues to be actively involved in human life. Referring to the views of theologians, it can be concluded that divine manifestation through a tangible presence in the world is the highest expression of God's love and care. This manifestation aims to guide humanity toward truth, salvation, and cosmic balance, and pave the way for a profound relational experience between God and His creation.

5. Differences between the Two Concepts : Number and Form of Divine Manifestations

One of the main differences between the Hindu concept of *avatars* and the Christian concept of the Word incarnate lies in the number of manifestations of God who descend to earth. In Hinduism, God is believed to descend multiple times in the form of *avatars*, each with a specific task to maintain the balance between good and evil in different ages. This concept suggests that the divine presence is both recurring and continuous, depending on the conditions of the world. While many Hindus believe in more than one God-man, they also recognize Jesus Christ as the God-man. This is understood to be because the manifestation of God came in human form so that humanity could understand and relate to the divine and shape their lives according to His example.²⁵

In Christianity, the Word made flesh refers to Jesus Christ as prophet, messiah, savior, and ultimately God-man. He was sent by the Father in heaven as the embodiment of grace and salvation and as a means of God's revelation. In Protestant theology, this incarnation is unique and once-for-all, affirming that God's plan of salvation was fulfilled in a single, perfect and eternal event. Christian doctrine states that the Son of God took on human nature, so that Jesus possesses two natures: human and divine. He alone is called *Deus-Homo*.²⁶

Protestant theologian Martin Luther's view of the Word made flesh emphasized that, from Genesis 1 onward, God created all things through the Word. According to Luther, this Word was not a created being, but was of one essence with God. He distinguished between the First Person (the Speaker) and the Second Person (the spoken Word), yet both remained one in divinity. In Luther's view, Jesus as the Word was not only the creator, but also the preserver and savior of creation. As the Word made flesh, Jesus took on human form to save humanity, so that the human body, including skin, hands, feet, and all its being, could have a place in heaven with God. Luther linked this understanding with Chalcedonian Christology, in his own unique way, namely understanding the full communication of attributes (*communicatio idiomatum*) between the two natures of Christ, divine and human, without losing the characteristics of each. He rejected the philosophical principle that denied the perfect union of the divine and human natures, in line with²⁷Luther's Ockhamist view of the reality of the Creator.²⁸

On the other hand, thinkers in the Hindu tradition, such as Sri Ramakrishna²⁹ and Sri Aurobindo³⁰, argue that the presence of God through *avatars* is part of a continuous cosmic cycle. According to them, the plurality of divine manifestations reflects the diversity of God's nature and role in creating and maintaining the order of the universe. Each *avatar* comes with a specific purpose to address a particular problem of its time, so that the existence of *avatars* is not seen as a single event but as an eternal dynamic in the relationship between the divine and the world.

²⁵Daniel E. Bassuk, *Incarnation Hinduism and Christianity: The Myth of The God-Man* (United Kingdom: Macmillan 1993), 2.

²⁶Daniel E. Bassuk, *Incarnation Hinduism and Christianity: The Myth of The God-Man*, 2.

²⁷The Ockhamist view refers to the philosophical views of William of Ockham (a medieval theologian and philosopher). In his thinking, reality must be understood in a very simple and direct way. He rejected the creation of unnecessarily complex concepts. His famous principle is called Ockham's Razor.

²⁸Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther and the Enduring Word of God* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2016), 49 – 50.

²⁹Jeffery D. Long, "A Complex Ultimate Reality: The Metaphysics of the Four Yogas," *Article Religions*, 10.3390/rel11120655, (November 2020): 11.

³⁰SP Suresh Kumar and U. Sumathi, "Universalizing the Concept of Avatarhood: Sri Aurobindo's Discourse in Comparing Krishna, Christ, and Buddha," *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Culture*, DOI, (March 2017 2020): 2.

The fundamental difference between the two concepts lies in the number and form of manifestations. In the Hindu tradition, God appears repeatedly through various *avatars* that adapt to the conditions of the times, whereas in the Christian tradition, especially from a Protestant perspective, God's manifestation through Jesus Christ is a unique and eternal event that is the basis for the salvation of humanity. This comparison reflects the differences in how the two traditions understand the relationship between God and His creation and how they interpret the role of divine salvation in human history.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the discussion regarding the comparison of the incarnation of God from a Christian perspective as the Word who became flesh with the concept of incarnation from a Hindu perspective as an avatar, it can be concluded that both religious traditions have an understanding of the involvement of divine reality in human life, but have different theological foundations, forms, purposes, and meanings. From a Christian perspective, the incarnation is understood as the event when the Word of God became flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. This concept is specifically emphasized in the Gospel of John, especially John 1:1 and John 1:14, which explains that the Word was with God, the Word is God, and the Word has become flesh and is present in the midst of human life. The incarnation of Jesus Christ is understood as God's act of taking the initiative to reveal Himself to humans and carrying out the work of salvation.

In Christian faith, the incarnation is unique and unrepeatable. Jesus Christ is understood not simply as a human being who attained divine status, but as the Word of God made flesh. His presence is closely linked to humanity's salvation from sin and the restoration of humanity's relationship with God. Therefore, the incarnation is inseparable from the life, ministry, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. These works constitute a vital part of the Christian understanding of God's love and the salvation of humanity.

Meanwhile, from a Hindu perspective, the concept of avatar describes the manifestation or incarnation of the divine in various forms, both human and other creatures. This concept is primarily related to the manifestation of Vishnu, whose purpose is to uphold dharma, overcome adharma, maintain cosmic balance, and protect life. Unlike the Christian incarnation, which centers on a single person, namely Jesus Christ, the concept of avatar allows for the divine presence or manifestation to occur in various forms and under various circumstances according to the need to restore balance to the world.

The comparison reveals similarities between the two concepts, which describe the active involvement of divine reality in the world and human life. Both the incarnation in Christianity and the avatar in Hinduism demonstrate the belief that God or the divine reality is not fully understood as something separate from human life. Both are associated with ideas of restoration, order, and goodness in life. However, these similarities do not mean that incarnation and avatar are identical concepts. Fundamental differences lie in the nature of incarnation, the purpose, the frequency of divine presence, and the meaning of salvation in each tradition.

Thus, the concept of the Word becoming flesh in Christianity has a theological uniqueness that cannot be fully equated with the concept of avatar in Hinduism. The incarnation of Jesus Christ is fundamental to the Christian faith because it is directly related to Christ's identity as the Word of God and the work of human salvation. Meanwhile, avatars in the Hindu tradition are primarily oriented toward maintaining dharma and cosmic balance. These differences demonstrate that each religion has its own way of understanding the relationship between God, humanity, and the world.

This comparative study also demonstrates the importance of understanding religious teachings based on their respective sources and theological context. The comparison between incarnation and avatar is not intended to eliminate differences or assert that the two concepts are identical, but rather to gain a more objective understanding of their similarities and differences. In a pluralistic society, such an understanding can form the basis for developing a more academic, open, and respectful interfaith dialogue.

Ultimately, this study confirms that the incarnation as the Word from a Christian perspective and the avatar from a Hindu perspective both demonstrate a concern for the relationship between divine reality and human life, but both have different theological frameworks. The Christian incarnation centers on Jesus Christ as the Word of God made flesh and is closely related to the work of salvation, while the Hindu avatar relates to the divine manifestation to uphold dharma and restore cosmic balance. Therefore, a critical and comparative understanding of both concepts can enrich theological and comparative religious studies while strengthening appreciation for the uniqueness of each religious tradition.

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