



**BOOK
REVIEW**

“Dancing With God For A Sustainable World”

Dr. Mathew Koshy Punnackadu and Dr. Anne Susan Koshy

Prakash K. George

‘Dancing With God For A Sustainable World’ is a resource and devotional book that highlights the grave ecological crises and seeks creative responses to the challenges we face today as an earth community. This volume enables us to understand the environmental problems and challenges we face today deeply and invites us to be part of God’s restoring process by participating in God’s life as the Trinity.

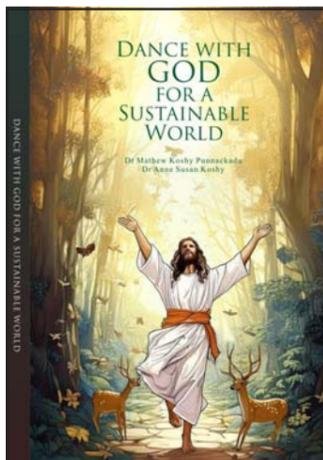
The authors argue that this participation is a continuous dance with God and the surrounding community of love. **The book is firmly rooted in the Bible and calls us to take a theological and critical stance in the wake of drastic climatic changes and ecological disasters.**

The reflections in this book attempt to re-read the two great scriptures, the Bible and Nature, through ecologically sensitive lenses. In this God-created universe, everything from the stars above us and the soil beneath our feet participates in the divine rhythm. By participating in this rhythm of nature, we partake in the harmony of creation. Each reflection in this volume summons the reader to heed the music, experience the rhythm of the cosmic dance, and align with it. The reader is also repeatedly reminded that humankind’s disrespectful and rebellious posture (depletion of resources, pollution of land, and consumerist lifestyle) could disrupt the harmony of nature, causing ecological, social, economic and spiritual crises.

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The book has five major sections under the theme ‘Cosmic dance’. Most of the chapters in these sections re-read and re-imagine Biblical stories in the context of contemporary society. They include stories from the Old Testament and the New Testament, especially the parables of Jesus and life stories from different parts of the world, including the recent landslide in Wayanad, Kerala. They affirm the deep connection between human life and the environment. The last section reflects on the testimonies of the ‘panchabhoothams’ (five elements). Most of these reflections attempt to connect these issues and concerns meaningfully with the Biblical stories of insights.



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Each reflection is also an invitation to join the cosmic dance

by living in harmony with creation and the will of the creator God. It is argued that Jesus embraced this rhythm, and the Holy Spirit demonstrated it uniquely on Pentecost. Human beings can align with this rhythm by upholding the values of the kingdom of God. The life of Jesus, the parables of Jesus, and the celebrations of Sabbath and Jubilee are all re-read to affirm this rhythm in nature. Our social, moral and spiritual responsibility is to care for the earth with reverence. The stories related to contemporary natural calamities are retold to caution those who presume to be safe and capable of protecting themselves with their planning and strategies. It is affirmed that they are also

vulnerable and are called to change their attitudes and lifestyles.

The authors attempt to re-read the Bible as they deal with ecological challenges confronting us today and look into the Biblical text for a meaningful and relevant response. There are, however, some reflections where ecological motifs may be inserted into the text to underline issues or find solutions to contemporary challenges.

The authors are to be appreciated for their commitment and honest effort in their search for an alternative world where all the world’s inhabitants live in harmony, sharing God’s blessings.

Rev. Dr. Daniel Rathnakara Sadananda has blessed this book with a befitting foreword which provides ecological insights and theological underpinning to the themes developed in this volume.



Rev. Dr. Prof Jerry Pillay, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, released the book on 9th February at the Maramon Convention Nagar. Mr. Saji Cherian, Minister of the Kerala Government, received the first copy of the book. Subsequently Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos, President of Mar Thoma Evangelistic Association, Rt. Rev. Thomas Mar Theethos, Chairman of New Vision Magazine Editorial Board, Dr. Mathews George Chunakara, President of Christian Conference of Asia, received the book from Rev. Dr. Jerry Pillay.



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Economic gains to the instigator of a proxy war

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explore closer economic co-operation. **The U.S. realised that Russia could not be crushed as expected, and that restoring friendship with that country could bring economic and security benefits for her.** It can be found that the U.S. also seeks to build friendly relations with Russia for diluting the gravitation between Russia and China to serve her strategy to confront with China.

Sudden change in the strategy of the U.S is a windfall gain for Russia. Russia has been demanding denial of NATO membership to Ukraine as a condition for stopping the war. In the context of change in the approach of the US, Russia raised an additional condition – control over the territory she captured. To the surprise of all, it

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appears that the U.S. agreed to end war on two conditions. Agreeing to end this war without the participation of Ukraine and European Union, the chief ally of the U.S. is quite unethical.

The more unethical aspect of the role of the U.S. in the war is her demand to surrender the valuable mineral wealth of Ukraine in return for the aids the former gave to the latter. The U.S. has been insisting on Ukraine to sign a mineral deal to leave control over her mineral wealth valued at \$500 billion in exchange for \$119.8 billion war aid she received. Zelenskyy who agreed to sign the agreement to allow the U.S. access to Ukraine’s rare

earth minerals used in the aerospace, defence and nuclear industries refused to sign it following the Acrimonious interaction between him and Mr. Trump at the Oval office at Washington on 28 February. Before Zelenskyy’s scheduled meet with him in Washington, President Trump said: “Ukraine could forget about” joining NATO. **No war is a “just war”**

During the pre-modern periods, kings fought wars against the neighbouring countries either to capture the queen of that country or the wealth in the palace and temples. In the modern period, aggressors

used to propagate that they wage just wars to liberate people from evil rulers and evil ideologies, and people have been believing this. **The media that play fiddle to big powers have been glorifying and praising the killing efficiency of “just wars”.**

The war in Ukraine has proved to be the most dirty and treacherous war in the history of wars. One, it is a proxy war between the U.S. and Russia, in which Ukraine is made only a scapegoat to lose the life of nearly 80,000 persons, and destruction of the entire infrastructure of that country. Two, apart from making a scapegoat, the U.S. insulted Ukraine by agreeing to Russia to

end the war without giving a seat to Ukraine on the negotiation table. Three, Ukraine is forced to sign an agreement giving control over her mineral wealth to the U.S. Such loss and humiliation to any country is unheard of, in the history of wars. Help for the rebuilding of Ukraine is another source of business, the U.S. aims at from this treacherous game.

This is not an isolated example of oppression and exploitation of less powerful nations and people, meted out through games of big powers, people by and large come in support of the big powers. People who witness this treacherous game by the U.S. are bound to discern truth, and change their mind-set and understanding.