

a) The abandonment of sacrifices and variety of gods :

The Hrangkhoh religion was animism and belief in a variety of gods and deities. They recognised the existence of 17 (seventeen) high gods (**Chung Pathian som hlei sari**). At the same time, they believed in spirits. Therefore, sacrificial worship was their religious obligations. Besides, offering of sacrifice to a big snake was also practised in early period. Its sacrificial ritual called 'simbak' was performed with fowl in a private place inside the house.⁴ After they embraced Christianity, they recognised only one God. Belief in **Pathian** (God) in traditional religion continued with a new connotation as the God of Christianity and belief in a variety of gods gradually disappeared. Christianity has brought a concept of one God, and a new concept of sin, of hell and heaven, of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. This belief that had been instilled in people's heart gave them a great impetus to accept Christianity.

The sacrificial ceremonies and rituals were generally performed at a sacred place called *boljol*, where sacrificial meats had to be served only for males. In offering of sacrifices the people waste their times and consumed much animals. For this purpose, they used to set aside castrated pig and fowl for sacrificial elements. When they accepted Christianity, the sacrificial places are supplanted by Christian churches where both men and women can go to worship one God. The sacrificial materials, generally called '**Pathian rua irbu**' and '**soibangki**' were also taken out from their houses and burned down.⁵ In Christian villages, none of sacrificial altars are seen any more. The religious books like Bibles, hymn books, etc. are kept in their houses instead. Christianity provides a freedom from the bondage of many gods and bloody sacrifices.

⁴ Interview with *Chonhuangril* of Michikhur, Dittokcherra, on 28th April, 1997.

⁵ Interview with *Luhinglong* of Kalimabong, on 24th April, 1997.