

God Plays an Important role in man's life

“IF GOD DOES NOT EXIST IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO INVENT HIM”

Whether God is a reality, concept or myth is difficult to decide. Those who try to find a tangible proof, fail to find any but those who start with faith, find Him in every atom and every creation. There is ultimate reality, if we take our reasoning to its logical conclusion; there is the final truth, if we pursue the idea of basic truth behind appearances, to final end. A scientist, without admitting God to be reality, concedes His presence by reducing Him to some inexorable and unchanging and ultimate laws; a mathematician may call Him infinite; a religious pundit finds in Him some invisible power which is omnipresent, omniscient, benevolent and just, and embodiment of moral virtue, all powerful, controlling the natural phenomenon of the Universe; and aesthete considers Him ultimate Beauty. Theists, despite their unflinching faith, may entertain doubts about His existence and atheists, despite their disbelief perceive the glimmer of belief behind it. If God is a concept, it is clever, ingenious stroke of imagination because many systems of metaphysical philosophies, many moral principles have direct or indirect bearing upon the idea of God. If God is a myth, it underlies the story of man's adventure, man's search for a better life, man's relation with man and Nature. If God is a reality, it is to be discovered by science, perceived through senses, tested with reason and verified with facts. Perhaps that stage will never be reached; if the mystery is unraveled man may change into another Satan to claim equality and consequently will meet Satan's fate. Whether concept, myth or reality God's significant role in man's life cannot be discounted.

In the earlier times man was leading the life of savages; reasoning faculty was stunted and subordinated to physiological needs. Sympathy was limited to personal self and there was no society, no laws, no code of conduct and nothing else but animal desires and personal demands. In such a state of affairs-we will have to subscribe to Hobbes's belief-life was 'poor, nasty, brutish and short'. The dawn of reason, in the case of a few, made them to formulate a code of conduct through the idea of religion. A man, who was terrified by the forces of Nature, like rain, floods, earthquakes, reposed unqualified faith in the discovery or invention of God. Fear of life after death, the idea of hell or heaven (even if God is a reality, heaven or hell seems to be an idea only) the realisation that sinners are punished and saints are rewarded made people God-fearing and the relations were regulated according to the moral principles. It is impossible to trace the history of the origin of the idea or reality of God but it played a significant role in

stabilising and improving community life. But for it, life upon earth would have come to an end. God was considered to be above man's petty troubles, selfish designs and earthly desires. His orders were obeyed without any demur. Moreover all-powerful God cannot be cowed down. His laws are inexorable and this made man to resign to his fate, which was God's agency to administer justice.

With the establishment of political organisation, the people in power found God a lever to wield power without encountering opposition and to retain power without any maneuvering. The concept of the Divine Rights of the kings elicited complete faith from the subjects. The king was supposed to carry out the wishes of God; he was supposed to commit no mistake because he executed the orders of the infallible God; disobedience, obviously, of the king meant defiance of God's law. Whatever harm the theory might have done, it was able to hold the people together and had created conditions for political organisation and for inculcating the sense of duty and obedience to the laws of the land. It was difficult to bring the people of different tribes under the one political authority without invoking the name of God. They owed their allegiance to king and indirectly to God. At a later stage idealists like Hegel and others considered state as a march of God upon earth and state is the highest ideal. This did not have much impact and perhaps reference to God was to emphasise perfection.

Coming down from the political and social advantages of the concept of God to the benefits reaped by the individuals, we have many to count. Life is a struggle, where the fittest survive and as such involves risks of failure. Apart from determination, courage and capability one should entertain hope to succeed. Once frustrated in one's effort, a person may give up the desire to carry on with it. It is the faith in God that keeps the spirits alive; a Christian repents over sins and hopes to get pardon because God is charitable; and optimist finds everything alright-when 'God is in heaven' everything is right with the world, sings the optimistic poet, Browning. Had this not been the case, sins would have been hanging heavy over the conscience of the individuals as was the case with Lord Jim, the hero of Joseph Conrad's novel. Such a person has a tendency to become indifferent to social obligations and becomes abnormal in behavior. Had optimism died out there would have been no contribution to the deliberately managed social effort. Tennyson correctly thinks: "More things are wrought with prayer than the world dreams of." Of course prayer gives confidence, and confidence, in its turn, gives sharper edge to efforts. Man works because he believes he is to be blessed; the moment man starts disbelieving God's benign attitude he will lose zest to work. Hope sustains life and the struggle of life. An atheist's attitude will be inimical to effort and a pessimist's wings are often

clipped by his melancholy. So the belief that God exists keeps us alive in terms of spirit, effort and confidence.

Realisation of the existence of God, as a superintending power, awakens the conscience of man and makes him God-fearing. Spiritual enlightenment, which follows meditation over God, brings higher realities to light. Gautam Buddha discovered the futility of this life and the significance of other worldliness. Non-attachment with earth kills anti-social activities, makes one to feel that earthly life is a preparation for another life, which is higher, ultimate and everlasting. People undergo penance, do good deeds, acts of charity and what not just to enjoy a better life in the other world. Meeting God is the sublimation of the self and obedience to Him, the highest duty. Blind Milton may feel much handicapped to use 'one talent', which is 'death to hide' yet he consoles himself by saying-

They also serve who stand and wait.

It is a complete resignation to God's will and such an attitude, in no case, generates hatred for life. Fatalism, with all the inherent and implied defects, never saps the energy to forge ahead.

Shaw, the famous English dramatist, propounded the theory of Life Force, which is working, in more or less, an impersonal manner. Perhaps he discovers it as a scientific minded man's substitute for God. His unconventional attitude makes him to decry the conventional concept of God when he says-"Beware of the man whose God is in the skies." If God is not in the sky man will lose faith in Him because it is the mystery which surrounds the concept of God and keeps man's interest alive. Similarly Tennyson's Lotus Eaters think that God from his watch towers is enjoying the tragic, sense of 'sinking ships and praying hands' Even here the concept of God makes one to realise the futility of man's arrogance, conceit and misplaced confidence. Taking Wordsworth's words, out of their context, we may say: God is the "anchor of our purest thought" and the "soul of moral being". Fear of death loses its power to shake, zest for life gets newer sharpness, community life becomes more disciplined, desire to move ahead never becomes full if God is the presiding deity of our thinking and actions. While passing through sorrows and sufferings, wails and travails one needs some booster for depressed feelings, some support to lean upon, some pole-star guide over the stormy sea and that is God whether concept, myth or reality.