

OUR RELIGION

Happiness seems to be elusive. . . . for example. Somewhere along the line, we forgot what we were, and why we were sent on this earth! And to know, has problems of some kind why we were sent on this earth! And or other. Despite our sensational yet, there are times when each one material achievements and our tall of us feels the need to know the claims to progress, we cannot but answers to the innumerable questions accept that our problems have assumed, like why is there a need for not local, not racial, but planetary Religion? Why could not we have

proportions'. Perhaps our hectic and complex life, does not allow us to 'stand and stare'.

. . . . Stare and reflect about ourselves - over our purpose on earth,

just one Religion? What is the cause of so much suffering? If God is Omnipotent and Merciful, why does he allow the seeming injustice in this world? If God is the Source of all Creation, where did (Satan)

Ahriman come from? If one is religiously inclined, one wonders what were our Asho Prophet's original teaching and facts of His life? What are our Scriptures? Why do Scholars differ? How much of the Religion can one follow in these fast 'changing times' and how would you instill 'Parsipanu' in our children?

THE ANSWERS

The answers to these and many, many more questions demand an urgent call to serious study and reflection, and application of principles in one's life. After all, what is life all about? How do we unravel the Mystery and fathom the Unknown? Were we born for spiritual stagnation or for progress? Our rockets may have explored the Space and reached the moon, but we need to explore inner space with a spiritually awakened mind. Civilization in the true sense of the word, is now at a low ebb, but "a remarkable change is taking place in the intellectual climate of our time. The holistic world view is penetrating our consciousness and superceding the rational materialism which is surely proving inadequate to explain our fantastic Universe."

THE HOPE !

While on one hand our age is filled with alarming prophecies of destruction and devastation, we have the hope and promise of renewal and rebirth of a New Age. "Look up, for your redemption draweth nigh" It is time to draw the energies of life from the Ocean of Divine Intelligence to bring about the change. We live in such dynamic, exciting and challenging time, it falls in our

lot to remove layer after layer, from upon our conditioned minds and limited senses, to discover the Truths. The greatest and most perplexing Truths of the Universe are enshrined in symbolism and wrapped in mysterious esoteric, secret wisdom in all the Religions of the World. Hence, the different paths leading up to the same mountain. Our goal therefore is to reach the summit of the same mountain, but not all ways suit everyone. Each has a prescribed path to tread (the Religion of his birth) or he will be thrown into confusion. (Any deviation or short-cuts are dangerous, though). Some call it Nirvana, Mookti, God realization, etc. We call it FARSHOGARD.

THE SOLUTION

Now, then, if we are convinced about the purpose of this life on earth, how does one go about allowing it? The ordinary man is simply not capable of this ascent due to his limitations of the senses. He is therefore given special equipments (depending upon his path) by his prophet, to handle the revelations and overcome the obstacles. To illustrate this point, I shall narrate a fairytale in short.

THE STORY

Once upon a time there was a Prince who had been estranged from his beloved Princess. The Princess was imprisoned in a high tower far, far away. The Prince could not bear to live without her; but was unable to go and rescue her.

One day, when he was with grief, a fairy god-mother appeared and offered

to help. She said "I know the way is long and full of danger but if you must meet your beloved, you will have to do exactly as I say. Do not try to overcome obstacles on your own, or you will be doomed and destroyed, because you are not totally powerful in all ways. These things which have a magic spell will protect you against dangers which are grave and many." She took out a little bag of cloth in which were: a ring, a small key, a small bottle of liquid, a bird in a cage and a 'mantra' (magic words) written on a piece of paper. The Prince agreed to do so, thanked her, and courageously set out on his mission.

The first lap of his journey was long stretches of desert area. He

walked for 3 days and nights but it seemed there would be no end of the desert, and there was no water too. He remembered the bag of magic things, removed the ring and put it on. No sooner had he done that, than an oasis appeared where he refreshed himself and rested.

Then, came the mountains. Suddenly, he saw an ugly insect flying toward him and he tried to fight it off, but could not. The more he tried to struggle and hit, the bigger and wilder it got. It turned into a hideous creature like a dragon who was spitting fire. The Prince realized that because of the pride in his strength, he had not used the magic things. Immediately, he took out the tiny bottle of liquid and splashed the contents over the

creature, which then began to shrink and wither away. became one! And of course they lived happily ever after.

Once again, he proceeded on his journey, when all of a sudden he found himself surrounded by water, up to his knees. Big waves closed in from all sides and covered him till the neck. He was almost drowning when he took out the little bird from the cage. The bird turned into a giant sized eagle! Quickly he climbed on the bird's back and away they flew across the sky.

Up in the sky were dangers too. Huge black screeching bats would come flying out along with poisoned arrows. He warded them off by uttering the sacred formula written on that piece of paper. Tired and breathless from all this struggle, he spotted the Princess tower far, far away, but soon realized that he was being tossed and turned around by a cyclonic tempest. When he looked down, he saw a giant with a 1000 heads blowing from his 1000 mouths, causing this raging storm. He panicked because he had nothing left except the memory of the magical words. So he started to recite them. The winds calmed down and our Prince flew to the tower and alighted, just outside the tower.

That was not the end of his troubles. The tower was locked from all sides with what seemed to be like a 101 locks! Patiently and persistently the Prince opened all of these, although it took him 40 days and nights. He climbed up the tower which had 72 steps and beheld his beloved. Ah, his heart leaped with rapturous joy and ecstasy. He embraced her and

Now, the reason for fabricating this fairy tale is not because I am a Kindergarten teacher and love relating fairy stories to my children although I believe that these, build into the young souls, if only subconsciously, the certainty of its divine origin and spiritual destiny but there is a deeper significance. All over the world, myths and fairy stories tell in their thousand ways, the same great story of the soul's descent from higher worlds into the limitations of the material one. They impart a spiritual picture of life.

The hero and his goal in our story could be compared to man and his final aim - to meet his God - to be one with him. Once upon a time we were part of Him, got estranged. We cannot rest till we merge in Him. The journey full of hazards could be our sojourn on earth - Mark the limitations of the Prince's powers, that is the limitations of our senses and our intellect The perils are the temptations, evils and vices of this material world which constantly prevent us from progressing. It shows that a common Man is not able to - does not know how to go about, or is unfit to attain his goal completely on his own. Therefore he has to be guided by a definite course - RELIGION! Someone has to guide him - PROPHET! He has to be suitably equipped - THE TENETS, DOCTRINES, SPIRIT etc. interpreting-the bird could be compared to the Yazades and Ameshaspands that help in this world and the Spiritual one; the liquid to our Abezar or the Nirang; the key to the mystical key

of Staota Yasne or the Divine Law of Vibration on which is formed the entire creation, and which is the key to decipher the hidden meanings in the Avestan texts; the wearing of the ring to the wearing of sudreh kushti not a symbol but for a definite purpose of protection, the mantra or the magic words to our manthra or prayers; the 101 locks to the 101 attributes and names of Ahura Mazda; 40 days are required (usually) to recite a prayer for fulfilment of a wish; the 72 steps could be the 72 steps of ASHOI, or the 72 strands of our Kushti, or the 72 Ha Yazane Has and so on and on, I hope you get the picture.

Reinterpreting of the myths is a great and important channel for knowledge and so Prophets, Saints,

Sages have always spoken in a mystical language. It is not to be taken literally but to be reinterpreted to bag the prize of profound wisdom and knowledge. If that sounds interesting, let us then take a deep plunge into the Unknown, to the secrets revealed to us by our beloved Paegambar. Nothing worthwhile was ever handed down to us in a silver platter. Therefore, one must put in great efforts and dig deep.

I plan to expose you to the Spiritual side of the Religion, (for Spiritualism is the very breath of Religion) thereby establishing our relation to the living cosmos, which is entirely lost in our materialistic culture I am absolutely UNFIT to teach or preach; all I am trying to do is fan your

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faith and your devotion, thus strengthening my own.

It is blessed to light a candle than to curse the darkness. So my dear co-religionists, irrespective of our petty differences, let us join hands and be (in tune with) with each other, with Mankind and Nature, with the ravans of Asho Souls, the Yazads, the Ameshespands, with our Vakshure -- Vakshuran, Ramzgoj, Ahurana Asho Spitama Zarathushtra. COME, HELP US LIGHT THIS CANDLE TOGETHER!

-- Silloo F. Mehta

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The ignorants are like sheep;
The wise are their shepherds.

-- Jaamaasp