

THE OTHER END OF PRAYER COMMUNICATION - GOD.

SOME MATERIALS FROM DIFFERENT RELIGIONS AND MYSTICISMS.

PARSIS! BREAK THE SPELL OF WESTERN STUDIES.

Prayer is a communication between ourselves at one end and our God at the other.

Who are we? We, the non-saintly humans have, within us two interwoven elements: one good, other evil. The aim of life on this earth is to dissolve as much evil as we can, transmute it to the good and merge it with the already existing good. The Path of Dharma, Daenaa, Din, as prescribed by the Divine Messengers of Ahura, leads us to our aim. A very essential requirement of the way of life ordained by Daenaa is Prayer, and the Prayer through Manthra is its best form.

We now delve a little into the other end of our communication; viz. God, Ishwar, Allah, Ahuramazda. All the divine Messengers have universally declared that God cannot be thought out by our limited intellect. He has to be experienced within us. Any attempt to intellectualise God leads to atheism. If all the concepts and notions, images and impressions, about God taught in various Religions and Mysticisms, are collected at one place, nothing but confusion emerges. The picture becomes extremely muddled and jumbled, and appears to us to be too inconsistent and irreconcilable to get into our common sense. One of the most momentous instances is of Narendra Nath Datta, a brilliant student of philosophy, who following Mill and Spencer called himself agnostic, until Ramkrishna by his touch led him to "the lighting of a thousand sons in his mind," and transmuted him to the great Swami Vivekanand! (1863-1902).

Gods of Hindus, Non-God of Buddhists?

Hinduism is said to believe in God, sometimes formless (Niraakaar), sometimes having form (Saakaar, like Ram or Krishna), sometimes several and numerous Gods. Buddhism and Jainism are said not to accept a Creator or believe in God. It is difficult, nay impossible to reconcile all these seemingly contradictory concepts and to believe that all can be right as emerging from the Divine Teachers. That is why Sri Aurobindo says, "... the intellect is incapable of knowing the Supreme Truth." Mind cannot arrive at Truth. (Letters on Yoga, Vol 2. page 157). Father Bede Griffiths (1906-1993), who was a catholic monk living the life of an ascetic in his own Ashram at Shantivanam few miles west of Tiruchir-apalli, when asked about Buddhism not having a God at all in the usual sense, gave a stunningly beautiful reply:

"Now that raises an interesting questions. We use a word like God and think it's got some definite meaning; but actually the word God has infinity of meanings and none of them is adequate. A word like that is pointing to something **which is beyond words and beyond things**. Therefore Buddha did not want to name it because once you begin to name God you get an idol and then you idolise the concept." ("Dialogues with Scientists and sages" by Rene Weber Arkana (1986) - Page 168)

You follow the Eight Fold Path I am prescribing for you; all other things shall follow; don't bother about the Creator or God - that is Lord Buddha's Divine Message to the souls under his jurisdiction. A Buddhist is not therefore wrong or away from Truth if he says there is no God. Let him say so and follow his Divine Teacher: all will then be added to him in good time.

His Holiness Dalai Lama does not at all object to the belief in creator God. He says that **if all men and women are the children of one Creator, all are brothers and sisters, and all are therefore in duty bound to love each other, to serve each other, to live in peace and harmony with each other. "Since God created mankind, if we serve mankind we serve a part of God."** (ibid page 129-30). When mother Theresa and her serene sisters nurse a leper, they do so with the conviction that they are serving Jesus and through Him Our Father in Heaven. What a beautiful feeling!

What is an Idol? What is Fire?

When a Hindu worships a holy idol, he attunes himself with the Light of God elevated in it and therefore with God. We Parsis pray before and worship the consecrated Holy Fire, wherein the Light of Ahura is brought to the level of an "Aalaat", the absorber and transmitter of the Divine Energy of Ahura, "Athro

Ahurahey Mazdaao Poothra." Kanchi Shankaracharya says, "The idol is meant for worshipper to offer one-pointed devotion and he adores it with the conviction that the Lord who is present everywhere is present in it also". ("Hindu Dharma", Bhavan (1995), page 40.). The special procedures are adopted to establish a "Moorti" (idol) or to consecrate the Holy Fire in Atash Beheram and Aderaam, so that the Divine spark within is brightened to a higher Energy level. There is absolutely no sense in saying I worship one God and you worship many, therefore I am right and you are wrong or that I am superior and you are superstitious. Faith is not to be judged by the limited intellect. All that the intellect can do is to arrive at Faith and then BELIEVE. "BE NOT FAITHLESS BUT BELIEVING" - is a beautiful gem from the Divine Word of Jesus!

The Jews and the Muslims

In the Jewish Religion and its mysticism, God is termed as "Ain sof", and this is regarded as "something utterly beyond human comprehension..., ... completely transcendent of human language." ("Path of the Kabbalah" by David Sheinkin, Paragon House (N.Y.) 1986, page 37).

The Muslim belief about the existence and nature of God is narrated by Imam-al-Gazali, the famous Sufi of Persia in his book "Maqsadu'l asnaa" wherein the following words occur:

"He - Glory to His Name - is not a body ended with form, nor a substance circumscribed with limits or determined by measure Neither is He a substance, neither do substances exist in Him..."

Again Something which refuses to go in our "common sense", and seemingly contradictory to the other versions.

Elephant in the Dark

The situation is aptly illustrated by the mystic masters - from the sufi saints to Ramkrishna - through a story. An exhibition of animals arrived in a town. One of the animals was an elephant. Nobody in the town had ever seen an elephant. Four residents went to see it. When they arrived at the room in which the elephant was kept, it was total darkness. 'Now that we have come to see, let us go in and at least feel the elephant,' they said, and entered the room. The elephant was totally invisible. One man touched its trunk and declared, "This creature must be like a hosepipe." The other who felt its ear said, "Oh no! it is like a big fan." The third feeling the leg cried "What are you talking? Clearly this animal is like a pillar." The fourth, whose providence was to touch the huge back, said, "Fools that all of you are! This is like a big throne, rather hard and vertically erected." They started quarreling, each sure about himself, until somebody brought a light, when they realised that they all the four were right and wrong at the same time. Each of them was looking only at one part. The whole was completely different. The whole was the sum of its parts all right, but its form was unimaginably different; something the four could not have seen in their wildest dreams. In the absence of light, all that they could do was to feel a part and compare it in their imagination with the things they already knew, the things of their experience. But their knowledge and experience were so inadequate that but for the light they would have never arrived at the truth. If instead of quarreling, they had compared their feelings in the dark, they could have at the most concluded that there is a hosepipe at the left and a rope at the right and four pillar with a throne in the middler and two huge fans at each side....

That is what we humans are doing with God and fight about Him - What is He? Where is He? Why is He? How is He?

Why All This?

You, my reader, must be wondering why I am taking you in all this. We are trying to have some glimpse of the other end of our prayer-communication viz. God, Ahura. The first Truth about Him is that our mental equipment is too inadequate to have even a faint idea about Him. He is to be experienced and not thought out. Manthra-Prayer is Asho Zarathustra's prescription to experience Him, stage by stage.

There is one another reason for my presenting to you the different notions about God from different Religions and Mysticism. We, Parsis, are very much lured by the western studies of our Religion. They have

infused in our scholars and scholastic priests some vague ideas about Monotheism and Polytheism, which are stuck to them like pest. This spell is required to be broken to pieces. **We must wake up to the situation that the western studies, by their very nature, have no spiritual and mystical foundation. They have germinated from the materialist and Godless paradigms of Descartes, Darwin, Laplace.** "We do not need the hypothesis of God in understanding the universe" was a statement made by Laplace to Napoleon. Darwinism produces an intellectually satisfied atheist, says a close minded, paradigm stuck scientist, Dawkins. This 'progressive intellectualism' - the thinking that man's intellect is capable of fully understanding Nature and that man is on a march towards "progress" through his superior intellect - is entirely inconsistent with all Religions, all mysticisms, all the teachings of all the Saints, Sages, Rishi, Sufis, Abeyds. The western thinking by its very nature leads to athiesm. It does talk of God amongst the 'scholars' of Religions, but their undercurrent is the same, "progressive intellectualism." Some of them say, the concept of God arose from the fear of primitive man; that leads to Godlessness. But some who talk of God also try to intellectualise Him and all their big scholarly equations ultimately arrive at the answer $x=y=z=0$. "This", so and so, was the concept of God at one time, it traveled from place A to place B; it was modified at B, amended at C and contradicted at D. That is how they explain God's word uttered through His Prophets and Founders of Religions. For them Religion is just a historical and philological exercise; mysticism has no place in it. They pick up the alleged disputing points about God from different Religions and pompously apply some surface logistics to them, without having the least idea about the mystic truth lying beyond. They would even try to find out contradictions from the same Religion, as they have done with the Parsi Religion, by throwing out the muddled idea that Zarathushtra's God was different than God of "later" Avesta; former was monotheistic, the latter polytheistic. These vicious wheels of one God and many Gods and the Gathic god and non-Gathic Gods have resulted in a huge loss of faith in Parsis and the bells of extinction are ringing.

My dear reader, I am going to give you some idea about what is Ahoo, Ahuraa, Mazdaa, Ahuramazda as taught in our Religion; but before I do that I want to dispel your lure (if any) for these western studies and to caution you that any reliance on them will lead you astray. That is why I have devoted this article to God and Gods. **It is a not Just "mono" and "poly" - theism. It is a personal affair concerning you and your daily life. It is not history, geography, philology, etymology, and such other uncertain and speculative "logies". It is your Faith, Devotion, Love towards Him and His creations, your spiritual evolution on this planet and your preparation for death and after.**

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