

Paper Title:

God is, the rest is not!

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Does God Exist

Author:

Mayur Nayak

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GOD is, the Rest is Not!

Come Priest, come, the water level is rising and soon the village would be submerged in water, exclaimed one of the villagers as torrential rains continued. However, the Priest replied, "No I have total faith in God, who would come to save me, you may please go." As the water level rose further, another man came to the Priest and requested him to join him to go to some safer place. Again, the Priest declined and said My God would save me. Finally, the water touched the roof and the Priest went on the terrace of the church. Even at that time, a villager came with a boat to take on the Priest. But, the Priest persisted and said, "I would wait for my God, who would surely come." And the Priest drowned. Upon reaching the Heaven, he complained to God as to why He did not turn up when he needed Him the most? God said, I came thrice, but you did not recognise me.

From time immemorial, we search God in our preconceived form. Little did we realize that if God existed, then He would be omnipotent and therefore, He can take on any shape, any form and manifest anywhere at will.

Our understanding of God is gross. Human race is evolving. In the past, whenever we did not understand any phenomenon, we attributed it to God. But, once we understood it, we stopped attributing it to Him. In ancient times, we used to call the lightening a manifestation of God, but we now know it for what it is. The more we seem to understand, the less we take course to God. From this perspective, God has become increasingly narrow in the minds of some people. However, when we start to sense the Spirit in all things-the essence behind each form-we find that the word "God" expands to encompass everything.

God as a concept:

From ancient times, God is believed to be some entity sitting in the sky and controlling the universe. Our scriptures and epics were built on this edifice. God was perceived as a judge who would punish wrong deeds and reward the good ones. People turned to fear God. Psychologically, it was easy for man to shirk from the responsibility of his karma and place it on God. Eventually, different Gods were conceived by different religions and sects. There is a competition today as to whose God is more powerful, merciful or benevolent. People are fighting with each other to prove the superiority of their religion over the others. Though intellectually, we all are agreed that God is one and that all religions lead to the universal goal, we are unwilling to shed our concept of God. We still search Him through our individual religions.

Being an ardent believer in God as an idol, I used to visit temples but after the retreat at Simultala, my understanding

of religion and spirituality underwent profound transformation. The subtle difference between my visits prior to Simultala retreat and now is that, I visited temples then more out of fear than love. Today, I do visit temples but with the full knowledge that the idol in front of me is the manifestation of the supreme energy I love. I, now relate God only out of love and devotion.

Where Does God Exist?

Human body is made up of oil, calcium, minerals, chemicals and various others substances which all are clinically proven. Yet, everything put together does not animate life, for, it is the enlivening factor – the soul (the energy-consciousness at the metaphysical level), which breathes life into this body. The degree of enlivening factor alone separates the animate and inanimate beings. Thus, it is the very energy which is pervading in all of us. The energy is the same everywhere but its receiving instruments differ. To illustrate, it is the

same energy that puts heat in a bulb, whereas it puts cold in refrigeration. The religious-minded know this energy as "God", whereas, the spiritually-inclined would know it as "Truth". Gandhiji said, "God, as Truth, is a treasure beyond price."

So where does God reside? Verily, God resides within, yet we search Him without. It reminds me of a story. A man, while on his way home, lost his valuable diamond ring on a dark night. He started searching the ring under a lamp post. A passerby asked him as to where he lost the ring? He pointed to a place away from the lamp post. Upon being asked as to why he was searching under the lamp post, he replied that the place where he lost the ring is dark. Howsoever the place of search illumined, he will not find the ring as he is searching at the wrong place. Our plight too, is somewhat similar, for we search God everywhere except where he actually resides, WITHIN.

Does that mean God resides only within?

No, that is too narrow an understanding of God. I am yet to find a place where God does not exist. When we reach to the higher plane of realization through journeying within, we would see God every where. When the veil of ignorance is pierced through the knowledge of the Self, one is awakened. Normally, a man dwells in either of three stages, namely, (i) Waking, (ii) Dreaming and (iii) Deep Sleep. A person who is illumined knows that:

“Brahma Satyam Jagat Mithya”

It means the world is illusion and Brahman, i.e. the universal consciousness alone is real. An awakened person considers the world as a dream. Each person perceives the world as per his mind. It means that each person lives in a world of his own. In his world, he is the sole subject and the rest all are objects. Now, if the world is real, it should be perceived

identically by one and all. However, that is not the case. Therefore, what is real is only the universal consciousness – call it God or Brahman. The rest is all illusion.

This is the ultimate truth, a matter of realization. Even if one understands this truth intellectually, it is of no use unless one realizes the same by oneself.

In the words of Sri Ramana Maharshi, “The world is not external. The impressions cannot have an external origin, as the world can be cognized only by consciousness. The world does not proclaim it exists. It is your impression. In deep sleep, the world is not cognized; and so it does not exist for a sleeping man. Therefore, the world is the consequence of the ego the source of which is to be found out – the final goal.”

How do we Reach God?

As narrated above, we all are part of that universal energy, in a way energy itself and therefore, technically we need not go anywhere to reach God. We are God. To quote P. Raymond Stewart from his book "Living as God":

"Being everything, you see that all you desire to attain, achieve, or acquire is already within you. You simply need to call it forth into your life. Everything is possible for those who know that all possibilities exist within them".

If we are God, then why don't we feel like God? Why do we feel sad and miserable and at times so powerless?

It is one thing to understand God intellectually, and quite another to actually realize Him (His energy). Describing God is like a salt doll in an ocean. When you experience that divine energy, you become part of it and there comes about

perfect unity. You lose your identity and your consciousness merges with the universal consciousness, just as body merges with the space outside upon death.

That state of being is ascribed as "*Nirvikalpa Samadhi*" by Paramahansa Yogananda in his book "Autobiography of a Yogi". Once a man attains this stage, he can at will go for trance (experience of unity) and return to his habitat. He becomes a yogi like Lahiri Mahasaya or Yukteshwar Giriji. It is at this stage, man becomes omnipotent like God. We have to undergo certain discipline (*sadhana*) to reach up to this stage, like fine tuning our instrument (mental faculty) such that we improve our capacity to match His frequency. The advantage is that by doing this we commune with Him. Our finite eyes may not be able to see the infinite, but we certainly can experience and commune with Him with our matched frequencies.

How do we fine-tune our frequencies?

Matching our frequencies with the universal consciousness is realization of the Self. It is a process of expelling ignorance from the self, for knowledge to shine out.

There are two clear steps to dispel the veil of ignorance and embrace knowledge. They are: Contemplation and Meditation. Through contemplation we reflect on our ego. We inquire about the cause and effect relationship and study the effects and go about tracing causation till we reach to the causeless cause, namely, one who is beyond cause. That is absolute consciousness – knowledge – the ultimate source. However, contemplation would help us understand this phenomenon only at an intellectual level, for we take help of our mind and intellect to understand it. However, in order to experience the absolute consciousness, we need to transcend our mind and intellect. To quote Sri Yogananda, "The human mind, like the phenomenal world that cognizes,

is in perpetual flux and can yield no finalities. Intellectual satisfaction is not the highest goal. The seeker of God is the real lover of *vidya*, the unchangeable truth; all else is *avidya*, relative knowledge."

We transcend our mind and intellect through meditation. We should cleanse/prepare ourselves for meditation for which the three commandments of "*Satsang*" are pertinent, namely, (i) I shall not lie; (ii) I shall not falsify and (iii) I shall not fall a prey to unethical temptations. Though I have miles to go, my journey begun after the spiritual retreat at Simultala where, I learnt powerful ways of prayer and meditation. In January 2007 I was initiated into "Kriya Yoga" which helped me penetrate deeper within. I am part of *Satsang* for more than a decade now. These expositions on the path of spirituality have made profound impact on my understanding of God.

The journey to reach / realise God, is a journey from the known to the unknown. To quote Aporesh from "The Science of Religion", "you cannot know one unknown through another unknown. You can know an unknown only through a known." We take help of our mind and intellect to understand scientifically the existence of God and once convinced, we dive within to experience the same with the help of meditation. Once we know the Self, we perceive His presence all around us. Thus, it is an inside-out approach.

Conclusion

So the moot point arises, Does God Exist? If yes, where, within or without?

As Aporesh puts it, "Anything He makes He has got the Master circuit. He made this world. He made human beings with the same circuit." That is we are all micro cosmic part of the same divine energy we call God. God is both within

and without. As beautifully put in -The Emerald Tablet, circa 3000 BC:

As Above, so below

As within, so without

In fact, there is no difference between God in a human being and God in an animal. You can impel God to take any form through your love and devotion. Narsi Mehta visualised Him in the form of a Krishna playing *Raas* with *Gopis*, whilst Sri Ramakrishna saw Him in the form of Goddess Kali.

Verily, God exist in every being. God is Truth, God is Love, God is consciousness, God is awareness, God is energy – a universal energy which encompasses everyone – living or non living. In that sense we are all inter-connected. Essentially, we all are of one spirit, and all things come from that collective consciousness entity we call God. And therefore, God alone is, the rest is not !!!