

॥ Shri Hari ॥

Why Must We Believe in God? (Hum Ishvar ko Kyon Maane?)



Tvameva Maata Cha Pita Tvameva
Tvameva Bandhusa Sakhaa Tvameva
Tvameva Vidyaa Dravinam Tvameva
Tvameva Sarvam Mama Deva Deva

Swami Ramsukhdas

Why Must We Believe in God?

Question: Why must we believe in God?

Answer: God IS, therefore believe.

Question: Whether God is there or not, how is one to know?

Answer: There is a someone or the other who is the creator behind everything that is seen in the world, because without an originator there is nothing that comes into being. Similarly, surely someone has created the ocean, earth, moon, sun, wind, stars etc., that we see. The originator of these is not an ordinary man like us, the originator can only be the Almighty Lord. Another point, the ocean remains within its limits and boundaries, the moon and the sun also follow the timely principles and laws of rising and setting etc., then there has to be someone to establish the guiding principles and laws for regulating their activities. The one to institute the governing principles is the Almighty Lord Himself.

Question: The ocean, the earth, the moon etc. is formed and operating under an eternal order through the divine force of "Nature" (*Prakriti*). Everything that is happening is only through the living force of Nature (*Prakriti*). Rather why must we believe God to be the power, intelligence behind the eternal order and creation?

Answer: The question I ask of you, is whether this Nature (*prakriti*) is '*jada*' (inert, matter, lifeless) or '*chetan*' (sentient, conscious, awareness, intelligent) ? i.e. does it have '*gyaan*' (Knowledge, intelligence, wisdom) or not ? If you consider this Nature to have '*gyaan*' (knowledge, intelligence, wisdom)

then I consider Nature itself to be God. In our scriptures, the power, the living energy force (*Shakti*) has also been described as a manifestation of God. Rather in yours and my belief there is only a difference due of semantics, i.e. difference in words. There is no difference in the "*tattva*" essence. If you believe that Nature is '*jada*' (inert, matter, lifeless), then through that '*jada*' (inert) Nature, intelligent activities cannot be performed. Creation of various beings, and the eternal principle or order deciding on the outcomes of various activities, would not taken place through Nature, because smooth functioning and proper arrangement of all beings in this life could not take place without knowledge. In inert Nature, there are constant changes, but Nature does not have the power or capability of illuminating these activities with knowledge and intelligence. Therefore we will have to believe "God" as the illuminator.

One side says there is no God and another side says that there is. If it turns out that there was no God, then both the believers and non-believers will remain unharmed. In other words, the believers will not be injured. If "God Exists" was proven to be true, then the believers will realize God and the non-believers will be entirely deprived. Therefore it is better for all to believe there is God. However, one should not become satisfied simply by knowing there is God. God Realization must take place, because this capability to realize God is present in all of mankind. (to be continued)

Anything can only be negated, or given up after being accepted, acquired or attained first - "**Praapyau santyam nished.**" No one says that a female horse, does not lay eggs; because that which does not exist, there is no need of negating it. Similarly if God is non-existent, then such

discussions would not arise. Such conversations, would occur when there is God. Rather by saying "God does not exist" also affirms and acknowledges that God does exist.

A man who believes in the English language, he will make an effort to learn it; he will try to study it and in due time he will learn the language. But that man who does not believe in the English language at all, why would he even attempt to learn it? Just like if a telegram arrives written in the English language, then one who understands the English language upon reading it, will come to know that a certain individual is very ill. On going to visit the person, he will know that the message was true, and that the man is certainly very ill. Rather, at first he had to believe that there is such a thing as the English language, and therefore whatever was written in the telegram was true. It is the same with those that are occupied and engaged in God with a simple and true heart. One can see something extra-ordinary in them, as compared to those who do not believe in God. There is peace in their association, in their words of wisdom. Not just human beings, but also animals and birds, feel at ease and at peace in their presence. And compared to others, there is something special, something divine about those that have attained God Realization. If there is no such thing as God, then where did the divinity, "*chetan*" come from? Therefore one will have to believe that there is God.

Human beings at large, experience a void, a feeling of incompleteness within themselves. If there was no such thing to satisfy this feeling of incompleteness, then this feeling would not arise in man. Just like when a man is hungry, then it is a proof that there is something to satisfy that hunger. Rather, if there was no such thing as food, then a man would

not experience hunger. Similarly the fact that we feel thirsty is proof that there is something that exists to quench that thirst. If there was no such thing to quench the thirst, then man would not be thirsty. Similarly, the fact that a man experiences a feeling of incompleteness within is an obvious proof that there exists somewhere that element of perfection. That element of perfection "*poorna tattva*" is itself called as God.

One desires to acquire those things that exist. But that thing which does not exist at all, there is no desire to acquire it in the least bit. Just like no man desires to pluck the fruits from the sky and eat it or to smell the flowers in the sky; because fruits and flowers do not grow in the sky.

All human beings desire to live forever (to never die); to gain perfect knowledge (to never be ignorant); and to remain happy at all times (to never experience sorrow). This desire to live forever, is the desire for "IS" 'Existence' (Real, Truth, *Sat*); this desire for perfect knowledge, is desire for consciousness, complete knowledge and illumination (*Chit*); and this desire for eternal happiness, is desire for bliss (*Anand*). It is proof that there is such a thing as Existence, Perfect Knowledge and Bliss Absolute, which human beings desire to attain. That very essence (*Sat, Chit, Anand*) is called God.

Anyone that considers anyone else as greater than himself, has as such acceptance of God, because wherever that greatness ends in terms of heritage and ancestry, there itself is God - **"Poorveshaamapi Guruh kaalenaanavechedaat."** (Patanjali Yogdarshan 1:26). When there is a person, then there is a certainty that he had a father at some time and that father also had some father. Wherever

this ancestry, this father-son chain ends, there is God - **"Pitaasi lokesya charaacharasya," (Gita 11:43).**

If there is a strong person, and there is another who is even stronger than him; that wherever the strength ends that is God; because there is no One greater in strength than God. If some one is very knowledgeable, then there exists someone more knowledgeable than him. Wherever this chain of even greater knowledge ends, that is God, as no One is more knowledgeable than God - **"Gurugariyaan" (Gita 11:43).**

The point here is that strength, intellect, knowledge, capabilities, glories, beauty, and many wonderful qualities and characteristics, wherever the chain stops (i.e. where no one greater is found), There itself is God; because there is no one like Him - **"na tvatsamosta bhyadhikah kutonyah" (Gita 11:43).**

In reality, God is only a subject of belief, not one of intellectual inquiry. Inquiry is only possible where there is inner inquisitiveness and quest for knowing and this inner quest to know is only on a subject that we may know a little bit about and may not know the other aspects. But that subject that we know absolutely nothing about, on that subject there is no quest to know, there is no inquiry on that thing. Regarding such subjects, it is mostly about belief, and **we are independent in whether we believe or we don't believe.** Just like this world that we are able to perceive with our senses, but in essence what is this world, we do not really know. In other words, this world is a subject of inquiry as we may know a little bit about it and there is quest to know. But God is not known at all through our senses, thus, **God is not a subject of inquiry; God is subject of belief (faith).**

Through our scriptures, and through listening to the saints and great souls who have realized God and seen God, we can believe in Him. Even the scriptures and saints are also subjects of only belief. Just like the Vedas, Puranas etc are believed by the Hindus and not the Muslims, similarly some believe in the saints and great souls, but some others do not believe. Rather they consider them to be like ordinary persons.

Question: Can one be benefited even without believing in God? Can he be released from the bondage of this world?

Answer: Yes, he can. There are such groups that do not believe in God. If man sincerely and diligently engages in the practices that are prescribed by these groups, he can be freed and released from worldly bondage, however he cannot attain divine love (that is ever increasing and blissful). If they are not averse or opposed to God nor insistent upon their own ways and beliefs then they can also attain divine love whether they believe in the Lord or not. **The point is that whosoever has love for his principles and is not opposed or averse to other's ways and principles and remains unshaken and firm on the path, then on attaining liberation, he can also acquire divine love. There is no such possibility in God that only those that believe in Him will attain Him, or else they will not.**

In reality, the main obstacle in liberation is only the attraction towards perishable things. **If man becomes entirely detached, free of attraction for perishable objects, then he will be liberated, freed i.e. his dependency will go away.**

Question: God has been described in how many different forms in the Gita?

Answer: God has been described in three different forms in the Gita - “*sagun-sakar*” (with attributes and form), “*sagun-nirakar*” (with attributes and without form) and “*nirgun-nirakar*” (without attributes and without form). The point is that if one believes in “*sagun-nirakar*” then the “*sagun*” will have two parts - “*sagun-saakar*” (with attributes and with form) and “*sagun-nirakar*” (with attributes, without form). And “*nirgun*” will be “*nirgun – nirakar*” (without form or attributes). If we consider God to be “*sakar or nirakar*” (form or formless” then “*Sakar*” will have God with form and attributes and “*Nirakar*” will be “without form, but with attributes” and “without form and without attributes”. In Gita Chapter 7-29 and 7/30, in Gita 8/8-16 and Gita 11/18 there is elaboration of all three of these - *sagun saakar, sagunnirakar, nirgun-nirakar*.

Question: Some people find *Ishvar* (God) to be “*Mayamai*” (Unreal, Wondrous). They believe that devoid of *maya* (a world perceived by senses), there is that attributeless-formless (*nirgun-nirakar*) *Brahma* alone. *Ishvar* (God) is endowed with and possessed of *maya* (supernatural powers) '*maya-yukt*'. How appropriate is it to think like this?

Answer: Gita does not believe so. Gita believes that *Ishvar* (God) is the Lord, Master (*adhipati*) of *Maya* (A world perceived by the senses). *Maya* remains within the control of *Ishvar* (God). *Bhagwaan* (God) has said that I keep Nature within my control and through My '*Yogamaya*' (divine potency, creative power of the Supreme Spirit), I manifest. (Gita 4/6). The point here is that *Ishvar* (God) accepts His *maya* (supernatural powers) and takes birth in the form of an

'Avatar' (incarnation, appearance in the world) out of His own will, just to educate those beings (*jeev*) that are trapped in His *maya* (illusory nature) .

Just like an Englishman who does not know hindi, then one who knows both hindi and english will take the hindi writings and translate and relay it to him in english. In other words the one who is the translator, he is not dependent on the English language, it is for explaining to others he uses the english language. For himself he has no need for the english. Similarly those souls that are trapped in *maya* (illusory nature) to educate them, *Ishvar* (God Himself), taking Nature (*prakriti*) under His power, in His control (*vash mein*), He manifests as an "Avataar" (incarnation, appearance in the world) and comes face to face with *Jeev* (beings).

Compared to other paths, the significance of the Lord, *Ishvar* (God), who is the Master of "*maya*"(illusory and divine potency) has been clearly emphasized in the Gita. All the six main paths - *Nyaaya*, *Vaisheshik*, *Yog*, *Sankehya*, *Poorvameemaamsa*, *Uttarmimaamsa* are only for benefit and salvation "*kalyaan*" of the "*jeev*" (embodied soul). In "*Nyaaya darshan*" it is stated that whatever takes place, it happens by the Lords will alone. In this manner, there is reverence for the Lord, but in liberation it does not consider the Lord to be essential. It only express that one can gain freedom from twenty-one different types of sorrows and suffering. In the "*Vaisheshik darshan*" the Lord is not required for *Jeev*'s benediction (*kalyaan*), and rather it states more the end of three different types of sorrows – "*adhyaatmik*" (*spiritual*), "*adbidainik*" (divine intelligence) and "*aadhibhoutik*" (*material, of the world*). In "*Yog darshan*" there mostly talks of "*chittvrutti*

nirodh". By "*chittvrutti nirodh*" one becomes established in the "self" (*swaroop*). Yes, in "*chittvrutti- nirodh*" there is also a path of refuge in the Lord, *Sharanagati* (*ishvar paranidhaan*). But there is not much importance given to the part about refuge in the Lord. In "*sankhya darshan*" and in "*poorvameemaamsa darshan*" the need for God is not recognized at all for. In "*uttarmimaamsa*" (Vedantdarshan), talks of God have not been stated with much weight, only great emphasis has been given to the oneness of the "*jeev*" and "*Brahma*". Even the "*Vaishnavaachaarya*" have talked about God "*Ishtar*" in a grand manner, but it is not as is stated in the Gita.

In Gita, devotion to Lord (*Ishtar-bhakti*) has been given much emphasis and significance. Devotion has been shared in an extra-ordinary manner. Until Arjuna does not take shelter in the Lord, till then the Lord does not give His sermon (divine message). When Arjuna takes refuge in the Lord and asks about what is for his good and for his *kalyaan* (salvation), it is only there after that the Lord begins to share the message of the Gita. Even at the end of His divine message, God says "**Maamekum sharanam vraj**" (Gita 18/66) Take refuge in Me alone. He says that taking refuge in Me is supreme, utmost, the highest and best of all secrets. To this Arjuna said "**karishye vachanam tava**" (18/73) and saying so fully accepted the refuge of the Lord.

In the Karma yoga of the Gita too, there is significance of the Lord in the form of the Lord's commands; just like "**karmanyevaadhikaaraste maa phaleshu kadaachan**" (2/47); "**Yogastha kuru karmaani**" (2/48); "**niyatan kuru karma tvam**" (3/8); "**kuru karmai tasmaatvam**" (Gita 4/15) etc. Similarly in Gita's Jnana yoga also there is

“avyabhicharini bhakti” has been shown as the spiritual discipline for path of knowledge (Gita 13/10; 14/26)

By study of the main Gita chapters, one will get to know that for “*kalyaan*” (benediction) of the “jeev”, God is without any doubt essential and of utmost importance!

God being the master of Maya “illusory powers of the Lord” has been clearly stated time and again in the Gita, just as it has been said that -

- Though being the Lord of all “*Jeevas*”, He manifests Himself. (Gita 4/6);
- According to the mode of Nature (*gunas*) and the various duties, the four orders of society (*varnas*) are created by God (*Ishtar*) (Gita 4/13);
- The devotee who worships the Lord in a disinterested spirit “*sakaam bhaav*”, the Lord provides full security and personally attends to their needs (Gita 9/22);
- In final dissolution, all beings enter the Lord's *Prakriti* and at the beginning of creation, the Lord sends them forth again (Gita 9/7-8)
- All the births that take place in any wombs, the Lord's Primordial Nature (*Prakriti*) is like the mother, and the *Ishtar* (Lord) Himself is the father (Gita 14/3-4)
- God (*Ishtar*) abides in the hearts of all beings, causing them to revolve according to their nature. (Gita 18/61).

Just like a goldsmith who uses tools to make gold jewellery, but the goldsmith is not subservient to the tools. Because it is only for the jewellery that he uses the tools.

Similarly, *Ishvar* (God) accepts Nature "*Prakriti*" only for the creation and establishment of this world.

He Who Himself is bound, how can he help relieve others from bondage? He cannot do so. Beings themselves are bound, therefore how can they free others from bondage? But *Ishvar* (God) is devoid of bondage, therefore *Ishvar* can free those that are trapped in bondage (if they so desire), and free them from their sins. (Gita 18/66).

By worshipping those that are trapped in illusory nature (*maya*), the one who is worshipping cannot be freed from bondage, but by devotional service and worship of *Ishvar* (God) one can certainly be freed from bondage. The main point is *Ishvar* cannot become a *Jeev* (being) and *Jeev* (being) cannot become an *Ishvar*. Yes! through exclusive devotion, being can become inseparable (*abhinna*) with *Ishvar* (God), he can blend (become one) with *Ishvar* (God), but he cannot be God.

Question: What is the specimen of God?

Answer: *Jeevaatma* (Embodied soul) is a specimen of God, because God is also eternal and without any modifications and "*jeevaatma*" is also eternal and free from modifications. However, "*jeevaatma*" comes under the influence of "*prakriti*" (Nature) and God has never been under, is presently not, and will never be under the influence of "*prakriti*",

All can experience their existence that "I am" In this there is no doubt, that do I exist or not? There is never any test of your existence, nor does one ever feel the lack of their existence (non-existence). The body was not there before and will not be there later on, but by paying attention to one's

existence one does not ever experience that “I do not exist”, Yes ! we can say we do not know about this subject, but “I was not there” (non-existent – this no one can say; because our existence, no one has experienced their own non-existence (lack of presence). At present too this body is continuously moving towards not-existing, towards perishing. It is separating from us, but no one can experience that I am going towards non-existing. Rather one experiences, that the body is going towards not existing. Only he can experience the non-existence, who is ever existent. The knower of the “not-existent” can only be in the form of “Is” - i.e. existent. Thus from this it is proven that the the “self”(swayam, jeevaatma) is the real, existent, in the form of IS-ness, and the knower of the body moving towards non-existence.

Whatever is seen, heard, understood in this world, was not there at first, will not exist in the future, and is also at present moving towards non-existence. As the world was yesterday, it is not so today and also today, as it was an hour ago, it is not so right now. Therefore, this world is every moment moving towards non-existence, towards “IS-NOT” But the support or the base of this ever changing world, such an illuminator, a supporter, the almighty “tattva” divinity, in which there is never any changes. In this world, in any place, time, things, individual, situation etc, whatever is changing, that all happens in Just as in the empty space in the sky, clouds are formed, from the clouds there is rain and there may be thundering and lightening, rain drops fall, sometimes there is hail and snow; however even though all is happening, the space (sky) remains as-is (unchanging). There are no changes in the sky. Similarly God is like the space (sky). In God, all activities are taking place, creation and destruction, in space, time, objects, individuals, situations and

circumstances etc that are all changing, but that Lord (God) remains unchanging AS-IS, free of any modifications.

From "Hum Ishvar ko kyon maane ?" in Hindi pg 14-19 by Swami Ramsukhdasji

Narayana! Narayana !! Narayana !!!

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