

CONCEPT OF GOD: GANDHIAN PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of Nation, was a man who always lived in the presence of God. He had no life apart from God. His religion and Non-violence are so intimately related. His way to reach in God was not but Non-violence. Faith in the living God is the light leading the non-violent person. That means, the person who practices non-violence should have a deep faith in God. Non-violence is a path to God or in other words a Non-violent person automatically becomes the servant of God. Gandhiji identified Non-violence with Truth and Truth with God. His thoughts and principles have a perennial value.

Keywords: Non-violence, Truth, Cosmology, Reformer, Satyagrahi

INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi was a man of Greatness and Goodness. His unique and towering personality had many facets. He was a great thinker, teacher, preacher, nationalist, internationalist, humanist and an enlightened sole. The essence of Gandhism includes in Truth and Non-violence. He identified Non-violence with Truth and Truth with God. He was also an apostle of Peace. He was a complex personality. He was at once a saint, and a revolutionary, a position and a social reformer, an economic Satyagrahi. He had an unshakable faith in God, and pledged that people should have faith in Him.

GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF GOD

Gandhi had deep faith in the existence of God and believed in His mysterious force.

In speaking about God he used both personalistic and impersonalistic terms. He used the term Ultimate Reality - God. This ultimate Reality, namely God, is beyond human understanding and description.

This Ultimate Reality governs the universe and the morality of human actions. In his own words, "God is ethics and morality, God is fearless. God is source of life and yet he is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He transcendent speech and reason. He is a personal God to those who need his touch. He is the purest essence". For Gandhi the only method of realizing God is through non-violence, ahimsa and love.

NATURE OF GOD

If we admit that God does exist, we shall have to answer the question? - "what is the nature of that God? For some, God is the abstract, infinite Being. According to Gandhi, God is not a person for him God is Truth and, Love, God is ethics and morals. He is the source of light and life. He is Omniscient and patient. And Omnipotent and patient

DIFFERENT NAMES OF GOD

They are different names of God in different religions. But a limit remedy is one and same. According to Gandhi God is one. We are all children of the same God. He sees the same God in the Bhagavad Gita as he sees in the Bible and the Quran. Even though, God has many names, the different names do not indicate individuality but attributes, indescribable, immeasurable. For some God is Omniscient, Omnipotent, and Benevolent. To others God is the creator, Allah etc. So Gandhi especially says that even though there are different names, God is one.

PROOFS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

According to Gandhi it is not possible to prove the existence of God through reason, because he is beyond our reason. Even though God is beyond our reason, there are several arguments offered for the existence of God, they are ontological, Cosmological, Teleological moral etc. Among these theories, the most important theory is the theory of causality or cause - effect theory. According to this theory every action or effect has a cause. But in the case of God there are no exclusive proofs but only supportive proofs.

Basing on the causality theory Gandhi gives four arguments to prove the existence of God. They are the following:

A. COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

According to this theory the cosmos itself is the best proof for the existence of God. Because in the universe we can see an order in everything and in every being. It functions smoothly. It is not a blind law. This perfect order presupposes an order giver or lawgiver. That law giver is God. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, we can see an order, harmony and discipline in the universe. This implies that there must be a supreme intelligent and

wise designer who has created the universe That supreme cosmic designer can only be God and nothing else. Gandhi explains cosmological argument through examples. For example, in this universe there is an order. Millions of stars in the sky behave in an orderly manner. There are thousands of nerve cells functioning properly in the complex living organism. So also there is order in the life of plants and animals. The above instances imply the existence of a wise designer of the world. In short, the cosmological argument holds that the contingent things imply the existence of a necessary Being. That necessary beings is God. He must be the infinite first cause of the cosmos.

B. MORAL ARGUMENT

Some religions had to the teach that there God is the power things the creation. God created man in His own image and likeness, even though he is created. In his own image and likeness, in every man there is an inner voice or inner conscience is supposed to be the voice of God. Everyone who wills can hear this voice.

C. THE PROOF FROM AUTHORITY

It is also called historical proof. According to this theory history itself is the best example to prove the existence of God. Because in the history, there were teachers, Preachers, wise men etc. Who believed in God, offered sacrifices to God and taught about God, from their own experiences. If there is no God is would be meaningless. So according to Gandhi testimony of the worthy persons cannot be false and unreliable.

D. PROOF FROM THE ARGUMENT OF CONTIGENCY

It is also called metaphysical proof. According to this theory to the world everything is in a state of flux, ever changing, and ever dying. But underlying all that change and flux, "there is a living power that is changeless, that creates, dissolves and re-creates". This indefinable mysterious power pervades everything. That living power or spirit is God.

CONCLUSION

Gandhi had full faith in the existence of God and pleaded that people should have faith in Him. Even though there are several arguments to prove the existence of God, Gandhi admits that he has no arguments to prove the existence of God through reason. According to him the belief in God has to be based on faith which transcends reason. In his opinion nothing in this world is certain but only God. The only method of realizing God is through non - violence, ahimsa and love.

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