

Chapter - II

Historical Development of Religion; Primitive
to Universal Religion — Universal Religion,
▲ New Humanistic Approach.

Section - I

Primitive, National And Universal Religion.

We have already seen that religion being deeply rooted in man satisfies his greatest need in life related to his development of personality for a journey towards the Infinite. Thus man is not for religion but religion is for man. Human needs change and develop with socio-political and cultural situation. In the history of culture there is a transition from savagery to modernism, and here in this course of development, we find that the primitive culture may not be abandoned as it contains the rudiments of successive developed stages. Wilhelm Dupre rightly says, "Primitive culture became the cornerstone for modern cultural anthropology."⁽¹⁾ Hence religion which fosters culture of mankind

1. Wilhelm Dupre. Religion in Primitive Culture. P.-16.

and satisfies human needs is also dynamic in nature developing day by day. It grows from primitive to universal religion along with the transition from materialistic to spiritualistic need of man. So, in the historical survey, the growth of religion from primitive stage to modern age, may not be ignored. Today's spiritualistic religion is not an accident, but is the grown up tree with fruits and flowers of modern new thoughts from the same plant planted many days ago. Actually the rudiment of religion has been manifested in different stages of development in different ways. In comparison to national and universal religion, primitive religion was very simple and unsophisticated.

The feeling for something great, feeling of love, idea of sacredness and union with the Infinite — all are essential elements of modern religion which have been found in primitive religion only in an undeveloped stage.

The primitives were dominated by animal characteristic and though they had their sense of life-values in themselves like desire for success, for happiness and for long life expressed in some other ways. ⁽¹⁾ The savage did not rise above the materiali-

1. Paul Radin. Primitive Religion. P.-6.

stic wants as their interests were determined by the constant struggle for existence, the search for food and the need of protection from the enemies. So religion was also concerned with man's material interest. People at this stage felt themselves very much insecured from the enemies and they were not happy for their disturbed life caused by natural calamities. In a word they became the victim of nature and their inherent spirit was almost suppressed by their intense physical needs. In this situation they started to believe in some supernatural powers which had a control over the whole universe and which could be man's ally in his struggle for existence. So here we find that man conceived the idea of something beyond, something which could be of help for material existence. The primitives had no conception of the Infinite but they realised that there is something beyond more powerful and something that is mysterious. With this vague conception of 'something beyond' they believed in a host of spirits and framed different forms of religion which may not be overlooked for their historical value. Edward Wrightly says, "The historical development of religion begins with the belief in a host of spirits wielding mysterious

power, which can be influenced by certain rites duly performed." (1)

The word mana, used by the Melanesian, means compelling powers everywhere around of man helping him in his battle of life. (2)

The first stage of advancement is marked when the vague conception of mana develops into that of living spirits analogous to the spirit of which man is conscious within himself. The next advancement is made when those spirits, first regarded as bound to each object like stream, rock, tree etc., now come to be regarded as free spirits. They are regarded as free because they may leave the objects in which they belonged according to their will. Here we find that there is a recognition of some spirits or powers beyond natural objects which are conceived as supernatural. On this ground animism develops into spiritism. (3)

Another form of primitive religion is fetishism. A belief in spirit in many objects gives birth to this form of religion. It is to be noted here that in the course of development of religion fetishism was not at all progressive. But it

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1. D. Miall Edward D. D. The Philosophy of Religion. P.-96.
 2. Ibid. P.-53.
 3. Ibid. P.-97.

may not be overlooked as it fairly contained spiritism at its background, "Fetishism is a doctrine of spirits embodied in or attached to certain material objects through which the spirits are believed to act and as a result of which each separate object being now treated as having personal consciousness and power is worshipped or ill-treated with reference to its past or present behaviour to its votaries." (1) It is a lower form of religion and pragmatic in practice as stated by Edward. It is pragmatic because men used to worship the odd looking objects like stone, stick, claw etc. and they never hesitated to throw them away when they realised that they were no more benefited from them. (2)

On the ground of the belief in 'Fetishes' primitive religion may be called polydaemonism which believes in worship of many spirits. People at that time believed that the world was thickly populated by innumerable spirits who at any moment made their presence felt to man's advantage or disadvantage.

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1. P. S. Deshmukh. The Origin and Development of Religion in Vedic Literature. P.-26.
 2. Edward. The Philosophy of Religion. P.-99.

These spirits which peopled the world were divided into three categories — (a) spirits belonging to the material objects like river and lake, mountain and sea, tree and rock, bird and snake etc., (b) spirits of the dead and (c) thirdly, spirits belonging to the Great Nature Objects — like the sky, the sun
(1)
and the moon etc.

From this it is clear that in whatever form they believed in religion either in animism or fetishism or ancestor-worship, they got the inspiration to worship the spirits or supernatural powers from their feeling of awe. Thus along with the conception of something beyond the primitive religion is based on the feeling of awe. The feeling of awe originated from fear of man for the being overwhelmed, overpowered and man's restlessness and intense desire to be rescued from these powerful
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beings. However feeling is the important element of religion along with its cognitive and conative aspects as observed by many eminent thinkers of all ages. The feeling of awe of the primitives has been developed into the feeling of love in modern

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1. Edward. The Philosophy of Religion. P.100-101.
 2. Paul Radin. Primitive Religion. P.-8.

religion. Awe of wonder and overwhelming admiration for supernatural objects developed into obedience and love of God as found in modern religion. So here we find a development of a feeling of closeness to God. He is the glorious father of heaven. He is the ruler of the Universe. Hence there is a relation of fraternity.

Next the idea of sacredness is the important element in modern religion which has also been found rooted in the crude consciousness of the primitives. To the primitive people sacredness is the first sign of religious significance. Any object, person, place, ritual or event has been clearly regarded as sacred with a distinctive attitude uniting respect and caution. The sacred possesses such significance that the primitives never used to deal with it carelessly. Thus this idea of sacred gives rise to the feeling of awe, reverence and serious (1) treatment of religious activities. The modern conception regarding the origin of religion from the root of sacredness inherent in man thus has been developed from the primitive religion. According to Huxley, religion comes from two basic

1. J. B. Noss. Man's religion. P.-14.

sources — one is man's concern with his destiny and other is sacredness. Like Rudolf Otto, Huxley says that the sense of sacredness is such an experience where feeling of wonder, awe and fascination are blended. It spontaneously arises in man in a certain stage of his tranquil mood.⁽¹⁾

Again worship in primitive religion was purely external. Worship was the method of attaining the spirit dwelling in external objects. They paid devotion to any spirit dwelling object thinking that these sacred objects might cause harm to them if they were not propitiated. The primitives had the vague idea about the supernatural or of reality beyond the world. Rituals played a very important part and they aimed at the propitiation of the supernatural powers through the method of worship for their security and material achievements. Thus they realised the need of communication with the spirit but they were too simple and undeveloped to realise that the communication should be internal. Thus the conception of the external communication with the Deities regarded as spirits of supernatural powers has become changed and developed into the conception of

1. Ed. Paul Edward. Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Vol.7.
PP.146-147.

the union with the Infinite. The distinction of subject and object which has been found prominent in the external mode of worship is also demolished in modern conception of spiritual union with the Infinite which is no more external but purely internal way of attaining perfection. In this way the conception of God as pure transcendental in old age has been developed into the conception of spiritualistic value in the life of man.

Spiritualism of modern mind developed from the spiritism of the primitives. C. P. Tiele has rightly said, "Spiritism has awakened the consciousness that in the adored beings their spirit is the essential thing, the permanent element throughout all their changes; and it has thus paved the way for that religious spiritualism which culminates in the beautiful saying, 'God is a Spirit, and who so even worships Him, must worship Him in spirit and in Truth.'⁽¹⁾

Besides, the idea of a great God was not uncommon among the savages. Because the movement towards a monotheistic

1. C. P. Tiele, The Science of Religion. (Glifford Lectures : 1896) Vol. i, P.-74.

faith began vaguely to manifest itself at a certain low stage of culture. Andrew Lang, in his *Making of Religion* (1898) expressed, "While the savage peopled the universe with spirits in accordance with his general animistic outlook, by another channel, through a kind of intuition, he placed an All-Father or Maker of all in the supreme place far above the world of spirits, and not himself envisaged as spirit at all."⁽¹⁾ This idea of an 'All-Father or Maker of all is the central idea of later developed religion like Christianity. Jesus Christ says, "One is your Father, and ye are all brethren."⁽²⁾ Thus in Christianity we find the idea of one supreme God and this idea has its dim background in the primitive mind.⁽³⁾

From all these it may be pointed out that though primitive religion is not at all sophisticated and rational yet it contains in rudimentary form the fundamental elements of religion. Thus from the vast background of primitive religion there is a

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1. Edward. The Philosophy of Religion. P.-101.
 2. Ibid. P.-130.
 3. Ibid. PP. 101-102.

further evolution of religious consciousness of man. The next development is found in what is known as national religion.

A nation was formed when a number of tribes were mixed together for some unavoidable circumstances. The stronger conquered the weak and sometimes a few tribes were fused together willingly in order to have a good protection from their common enemies. The formation of nations and the development of national religion from primitive religion involve a widening of man's mental horizon and a distinct growth of his personal consciousness. Through interaction with other-selves within a nation man makes progress in individuality and knowledge of himself. Consequently religion gains ethical character transcending the old naturalistic and materialistic limitations.

The development from primitive to national religion was accompanied by the transition from the polydaemonism to polytheism. The nature-spirits worshipped by the primitives had no personal character and individual name. So they were not regarded as Gods. But now these nature spirits were

anthropomorphized and were attributed with their personal characters and particular names. So the nature-spirits were elevated to the status of Gods and polytheism took place when many Gods were worshipped instead of many vague and formless spirits. In the word of Edward, "the Gods, now ethicized and humanized, became patrons and heads of certain departments of life or of the state, such as war, love, agriculture, art, fate."⁽¹⁾

When the Gods are humanized, they are regarded as persons. And from this stage the personal relationship between God and man begins which was not found in primitive religion.

Secondly, the national values and ideals are expressed in the name of Gods and the characters attributed to Gods give a clue to the character of a citizen. Gods are not only humanized but they are also idealised. Because they are now regarded as the representatives of human excellence — of valour, wisdom or beneficence.

1. D. Miall Edward. D. D. The Philosophy of Religion. P.-105.

Thirdly, here we find the element of supernaturalism as people at this stage think that the Gods should not be regarded as belonging to the materialistic world but Gods belong to the super-mundane world and hence they are supernatural Beings. Thus man gradually enters into the spiritual realm overcoming the mundane status of God and this approach paves the way for further developed stage of religion. (1)

Besides these we find two important characteristics of national religion, moralization of the Gods and the movement in the direction of monotheism. And these have a profound impact in the religious consciousness of modern age.

In national religion the moral qualities are attributed to God for the first time. Gods are regarded as moral agents and guardians for moral order. For this reason Gods will either punish or reward the people according to their wrong or right actions. "The Gods became ethical powers, patterns of conduct, and protectors of an ethical world order. They came to stand forth as the champions of the highest values with which men were

1. George Galloway. The Philosophy of Religion. First edition. PP. 123-124.

acquainted." (1) Thus religion and morality are regarded as inseparable. This idea of moralization of God has culminated into the idea of God as value as is held by some modern thinkers. God is neither regarded as spirit dwelling objects as primitives believed; nor it is regarded as external deities existing beyond this physical world detached from man's life. But God is now very close to man. He is man's ideal of life. He is what we want to be.

Further in national religion there is a tendency towards monotheism. Sometimes one God is regarded as the monarch of all Gods. Here one supreme God is recognised along with other Gods. Sometimes worshipper concentrates on one particular deity as the supreme power absorbing all the Gods and sometimes Gods are regarded as different appearances of one and the same God. (2)

The universal religion is the developed form of national religion as it is characterised by monotheism. Again in national religion, religion is the responsibility of a state. The citizens

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1. Edward. The Philosophy of Religion. P.-110.
 2. Ibid. PP. 113-114.

are bound to follow the rules of the State for religious activities. At this stage religion is not private and personal. With the development of religious consciousness it was felt that religion should not be limited by rules and regulations or it should not be imposed upon man by any external source. But religion is the fact of internal realisation. It is the movement of man's inner soul. Thus realisation of God in one's innermost consciousness was regarded as more fundamental than worship of anything external to man. In this way gradual shifting of man's attention from the external objects of religion to the internal states of consciousness gives birth to universal religion. Edward says, "When religion is a matter of internal state of mind and heart, and not a matter of birth right or external ritual, it is already incipiently universal."⁽¹⁾

Man's conception of religion changed when he realised the inner experience as the essence of religion. There was an external relationship between God and man in primitive age, but now God is the spiritual goal of man.

1. Edward. The Philosophy of Religion. P. 126.

Thus we conclude with Galloway that "Universal religion is the kind of religion which emphasises on spiritualistic aspect of man. The religious end is not achieved by external religious system but only by the upliftment of a man's spirit. Moreover it is not an individualistic religion stating the way of one's own salvation but man's aim being related to society is converted in to universal goal. Universal religion is the religion of humanity and another main feature of it is that it always develops."⁽¹⁾

Galloway however holds that of all religions Christianity can claim to be the universal religion. In his words, "The religion of Jesus emphasises on active will. Man overcomes the world by the power of spirit and through faith and purified affections, man makes the things of earth as the stepping stone by which he mounts upward to its super-mundane goal. Christianity does not seek to save man from the world but from the sin which is the deepest source of human misery and degradation. And the deliverance from sin is a spiritual process, it does not depend on external force. The last word of Christianity is not pessimistic but optimistic. By its full and fair outlook on human nature

1. Galloway. The Philosophy of Religion. P.147.

and human life, christianity has the best claim to be the
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universal religion."

Here it may be pointed out that at present no traditional religion can claim to be universal religion. It is true that Christianity has elements of universal religion to a large extent. But in that case it may be said that such elements are found in more or less degree in all religions from rudimentary to highly developed stage. Christianity in order to be universal religion must leave its special dogmas, creeds or ritual. Religions differ from each other in their particular theology, mythology and modes of worship as expressed in different rituals. But these as we have seen are only superficial and external aspects of religion, have not much to do with the essential core of religion which is spiritual realisation. A religion to be universal should be concerned with spiritual consciousness of man and on the practical side it will be connected with those actions and behaviour which will enhance man's spiritual progress.

1. Galloway. The Philosophy of Religion. PP.145-146.

Moreover man's spiritual realisation is not an isolated phenomenon of his life but it is intimately connected with his intellectual and moral life. Religion is a process of self-realisation. It is the embodiment of truth in life. Religion is the vision of Truth by man with all his faculties — cognitive, emotional and conative. It is a response of total personality. It will be wrong if we regard Truth as mere intellectual in character which enlightens human reason. But truth is also something which has an enlivening and elevating effect on human personality, satisfying conative and emotional aspects. Thus religion is a living experience which elevates the total personality of man. Growth of critical intelligence in the present scientific age has played an important role in the religious awareness of modern mind. As a result we find that on the one hand many of the theological dogmas and creeds are not acceptable to modern critical mind and on the other hand a new significance of religious consciousness has been realised by it. These new features of religion as accepted by modern scientists can not be excluded from universal religion. Galloway overlooks these aspects of religion as considered by modern scientists. More-

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over he has overlooked the Indian standpoint of religion.

Truth is one but its facets are many. Universal religion not only harmonises ancient and modern-outlook but it should harmonise the western and eastern point of view.

Religion of modern age can be called humanistic religion. Some eminent scientists do not believe in supernatural and transcendental God but they do believe in religion. Religion according to them has nothing to do with the supernatural. Its essence lies in realising those values which make man a man in the true sense of the term. Value is the ⁽¹⁾ new divinity for the scientific mind.

The universal religion is concerned with man irrespective of place and time. The germs of universal religion has also been found from the very beginning of Indian philosophical thought starting from the Vedas and the Upanisads are found its culmination in the religious teaching of Ramakrishna.

1. Huxley. Essays of a Humanist. P.-223.

Therefore, in the context of universal religion we shall first discuss the main features of humanistic religion as realised by modern scientific mind; next we shall discuss the development of humanistic religion from Indian standpoint of view. Then in the next chapter we shall elaborate the teachings of Ramakrishna who was one of the pioneers in the history of religion proclaiming that religion must be universal. According to him all religions are complementary and not contradictory and the essence of religion lies in man's realisation of his true self that is in the realisation of his spiritual values in and through all aspects of his life. In short, universal religion being essentially humanistic, we find in it a happy blending of spirit and nature, soul and body, sacred and secular.

Section - II

Main features of Humanistic Religion as realised by scientific modern mind.

Modern mind is very critical about religion and highly dependent on science. It is because of its intellectual approach to reality and its innumerable contributions making the life of man more comfortable, science occupies the highest position in modern mind. In spite of this people to-day are not fully satisfied as present spiritual crisis of our civilization has been realised by them. Civilization to-day stands on the cracked foundation of morality which may fall down at any moment. Progress of civilization not only depends on scientific socio-economic development of man but also on his spiritual and moral growth. But man's moral and spiritual progress has been totally stopped for the evil influence of science which makes men demons to utilise his intellect not to save but to kill the humanity, to spoil society with extreme mechanical way of living, to destroy civilization and to resist the development of spiritual side

of man increasing in them selfishness and malice. Varieties of maladies and individual and social distortion are increasing. Severe frustration of the Youths to-day, the misuse of their energies, the lack of conscience in most of the people and their moral degradation are obstacles to the progress of modern civilization. Science has made the society mechanised and people the machines who have lost their sense of solidarity of man and all other finer faculties of his life to love others and to realise oneness with all. Instead, he is only the member of an economic unit in this age of industrialism being engaged in a large scale production as Science has made the whole world an economic unit. (1) Besides in this mechanised society man has lost his individual development of personality which usually begins from the passionate hunger of spirituality. In the word of Prof. Radhakrishnan, "The power with which a mechanised society endows him collectively, diminishes his individual reality. Most of us are groping, nervous, spiritually disinherited, passionately hungry for we know not what." (2)

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1. Bertrand Russell. The future of Science. P.-9.
 2. Radhakrishnan. Religion in a Changing World. P.-46.

As science has given communities more power to indulge their collective passions, it makes a division between the strongest and the weakest. The strong becomes rivalry directed towards other groups and for this reason science threatens us to cause the destruction of our civilization. ⁽¹⁾ People to-day instead of being happy and contented, are afraid of their destruction in war. The use of atomic energy for destruction is mainly aimed at instead of reconstructing new civilization. The acute feeling of uncertainty of life and frustration is making man restless. We are passing through the age when we have lost our humanness. Prof. Radhakrishnan says, "Our humanness is destroyed by ⁽²⁾ regimentation."

So far we have discussed the evil influence of Science upon Society which has created a spiritual crisis in mankind. The anti-religious attitude of modern scientific mind is another important factor for this critical situation of our civilization. With the discovery of laws of nature by modern science man's

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1. Russell. The Future of Science. P.-53.
 2. Radhakrishnan. Religion and Society. P.-16.

faith in the supernatural has been rudely shaken. Many of the religious theories regarding for instance, the origin of the world or creation of man etc., are no longer accepted by modern science. With the establishment of materialism by modern science as a theory of ultimate reality and ultimate value two tendencies are prominent in modern age. One group of thinkers believes in the full domination of science in our life and completely deny religion. Another group thinks about the humanistic religion which is not incompatible, rather acceptable to a scientific mind. Therefore, in modern age we find that either there is an outright denial of religion as we find in Marxism or there is an attempt to exclude the supernatural from religion and reevaluate religion in modern light as we find in the writings of Huxley, Einstein etc.

The failure of traditional religion to prove the spirit of religion which is one and universal, has caused the antireligious attitude of people developing day by day. Traditional religion was regarded as dogmas and creeds and the superficial aspects of religion like rituals and ceremonies were more

emphasised than the spiritual practice of realisation of Truth which is common to all ages. Besides the notion of God was very much confusing and was regarded as purely transcendental. "God is incredible and dispensable and emotionally he is superfluous. If anything, God is a dangerous illusion which prevents us from facing realities and shouldering responsibility. He is neither a refuge nor a compensation for miseries, which we should fight by our own effort, scepticism and a moral passion for betterment are (1) enough for many."

Besides traditional religion can not satisfy our intellectual integrity and moral conviction. It is a mere belief on some authority and has not been accepted by science which appeals to the evidence of senses and depends on observation and experiment. (2) Traditional religion wrongly identifies itself with creeds and dogmas and as a result sectarianism begins to prevail in the society. The spirit of religion has been totally ignored and in the name of religion people became — acquainted with the superstitions.

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1. Radhakrishnan. Religion in a changing world. P.-36.
 2. Russell, Bertrand. Religion and Science. P.-16.

Thus traditional religion was not at all accepted by scientific modern mind for its defects, rather it has been severely criticised. And it is also the fact that science alone can not be the guide in the life of man for its incapacities in some important cases. "Science does not include art or friendship, or various other valuable elements in life."⁽¹⁾ "Science has nothing to say about values and can not prove such propositions as "it is better to love than to hate" or "kindness is more desirable than cruelty". Science can tell us much about the means of realizing our desires, but it can not say that one desire is preferable to another."⁽²⁾

In the words of Rabindranath Tagore, "Science urges us to occupy by our mind the immensity of the knowable world; our spiritual teacher enjoins us to comprehend by our soul the Infinite Spirit which is in the depth of moving and changing facts of the world."⁽³⁾ Science analytically gives the statement of facts and religion points out the root, the source, from

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1. Russell, Bertrand. Religion and Science. P.-175.
 2. Bertrand Russell. Science and Religion. PP. 175-176.
 3. Tagore. Religion of Man. P.-132.

which all these facts and phenomena have been manifested.

This means, penetrating into the deepest level of spirituality in man religion points out one truth, one reality which is the background of all both internal and external aspects of life. In a word it tries to prove that the whole universe is the manifestation of Infinite in different ways.

The need of spiritual and moral values in the life of man and man's direction of thought to inner depth of his consciousness in order to realise the presence of all pervading consciousness within him inspires the modern scientific mind to find out a way which along with science will give the mankind a safe shelter, the residence of peace. That is why the need of a humanistic religion has been realised by the modern people which will control the present situation of moral degradation and will build up the foundation of our civilization strong with the pillar of love and beneficence to all mankind. This humanistic religion is somehow different from traditional religion and here the confusing notion of God as supernatural has been changed into the idealistic conception of values and religion here is the pursuit of truth

in a direct realisation. A thorough study of the basic features of humanistic religion will show that religion in the true sense of the term has no contrast with science, rather it is very close to science.

Religion is value centric. Huxley rightly observes that in modern mind there is a transition from the theocentric to value-centric religion. In his own words, "Divinity is the chief raw material out of which Gods have been fashioned. To-day we must melt down the Gods and refashion the material into new and effective organs of religion enabling man to exist freely and fully on the spiritual level as well as on the material."⁽¹⁾ Religion to-day is no more based on the worship of God purely transcendental but it is the way how to establish the dignity of man. Man is ever free as he is spiritual being or is the embodiment of all pervading consciousness. He loses his freedom coming in contact with the external forces of Nature and Sometimes he becomes ■■■ slave or worshipper of the power to which his life is small thing. When he remains involved in worldly affairs and

1. Julian Huxley. Essays of a Humanist. P.-223.

aims at material satisfaction he is under the veil of ignorance and also because of his spiritual nature he may not rest satisfied with the material objects. Religion helps a man to be renewed with the awareness of his spiritual nature and makes him convinced that he is the spirit himself and he has freedom of thought and belief. Thus God in modern religion has been taken quite in a different way than that of traditional religion. "God is deep within us, around us, below us, above us and beyond us. It is a being mighty and terrible and yet intimate and near." ⁽¹⁾ God is not an object of worship being external to man but is the ultimate principle, the highest manifestation of the spirit in the highest degree to be attained by man for his fulfilment or perfection. More clearly, God is both internal and external, spiritual and material or all pervading conscious being which is very similar to man's nature only differing in degree. Really Gods have been melted and refashioned into the values in the life of man. Religion is the pursuit of values to-day. It establishes the loyalty of world-community and fellowship of men and this aim of religion is based on the important factor, that is, the realisation of values in man's life.

1. Radhakrishnan. Religion in a Changing World. P.-105.

Truth, beauty and goodness are the chief values in man's life and religion aims at the realisation of these values. An eminent scholar says, "Religion is the realisation of an ontology of aesthetic, moral and spiritual values. It stresses the discipline of our life in terms of self-expression."⁽¹⁾

Man is not a mere biological being but he is a self-conscious being and he has the moral, aesthetic and religious aspiration in his life. We have already seen that he not only lives but wants a noble living. Therefore, human life is essentially dynamic and man is evertrying to realise values in and through his life. In other words he is evertrying to realise his true self. He grows more and more to attain fulfilment in his life.⁽²⁾ Russell says, "To abandon the struggle for private happiness, to expect all eagerness of temporary desire, to burn with passion for eternal things — this is emancipation, and this is the free man's worship."⁽³⁾ Emancipation will be

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1. Dr. Vishwanath Prasad Verma. "Religion and National Integration." The Vedanta Kesori, Sri Ramakrishna Matha, Madras. Feb. 1981. Vol.LXVIII No.2. P.-58.
 2. Radhakrishnan. Religion in a changing world. P.96.
 3. Bertrand Russell. Mysticism and Logic And Other Essays. P.46.

attained by a man when his animal nature becomes suppressed under the burning passion for higher and eternal in his life and such a remoulding of his nature is co-related with his realisation of values in the life of man. More and more one realises value he will be spiritually elevated to proceed to truth. Thus religion alone gives us the message of redemption which is not at all theoretical or rather it is concerned with the practical application of the chief values in the life of man. Man spreads himself to the vastness of the universe from his limitations of finitude. At the revelation of his religious consciousness in man the essence of religion realised by him is that it is the discipline which enlarges and widens the experience of inner world. It is an attempt to apprehend the highest values and to realise them in actual life. It is the most sincere effort to feel and realise one's identity, continuity and kinship with the vast universe. It helps us to live in a tune with the Infinite. (1)

1. B. L. Atreya. "Religion, Philosophy and Science - An Attempt at Synthesis." Darshan. An Internal Quarterly. Moradabad, India, Oct. 1961. Vol.1. P.-18.

In this way religion is no more identified with either a ~~real~~ dogma or a creed or a ritual. Prof. Radhakrishnan says, "The dogmas which once were paths to divine life, but are now hinderances, should not be allowed to interpose a barrier between man and God and spoil the essential simplicity of spiritual life."⁽¹⁾ The most important element in religion is the attainment of self-knowledge by an individual. Meditation and not mere knowledge of dogmas or ritualistic piety, is the way to self-knowledge. Heaven belongs to man in his spiritual being. Religion emphasises on the revelation of inner spiritual side of man to attain harmony and to attain perfection through love, compassion, forbearance and service to others.⁽²⁾

Another important feature of humanistic religion is that it originates from the idea of 'sacredness' which is deeply rooted in man. In the words of Rudolf Otto, "The

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1. Radhakrishnan. Religion and Society. P.-42.
 2. Radhakrishnan. Religion in a changing world. P.-104.

feeling of it may at times comes sweeping like a gentle tide, pervading the mind with a tranquil mood of deepest worship. It may pass over into a more set and lasting attitude of the soul, continuing as it were, thrillingly vibrant and resonant, until at last it dies away and the soul resumes its 'profane' non-religious mood of everyday experience."⁽¹⁾

The urge for redemption comes from within. So religion is the discipline related to the profoundest depth in man. Reason alone can not reach there. Reason analyses facts of the external world but can not bring the message of redemption from the deepest level of man. In the rational interpretation of facts subject always remains apart from the object, but intuition is an immediate insight, the direct experience where truth is revealed in a flash. In the words of Bergson, "The first implies that we move round the object the second that we enter into it."⁽²⁾ The Absolute is never reached by reason but may be reached by intuition. Because intuition is the synthetic way of apprehending

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1. Rudolf Otto. The Idea of the Holy. 1931. PP. 12-13.
 2. Bertrand Russell. Mysticism and Logic And Other Essays. P.-17.

the total aspect of reality. There is only one Reality that is self which may not be attained by simple analysis but we seize it from within by our intuition. (1) Intuition is a total response to Reality. (2) In the words of Sri Radhakrishnan, "Intuition is not an emotion but the claim to certain knowledge. It gives us a sense of divine reality as a thing immediately certain and directly known." (3) Reason is the inevitable factor for the investigation of truth no doubt, but it should be associated with intuition. Intuition is the fusion of mental thoughts. It assumes the indivisible oneness of human life. Here it should be pointed out that religion is the science of spirituality and though it is mainly based on intuition, it never opposes to reason. In the words of Sri Radhakrishnan, "To be spiritual is not to reject reason (4) but to go beyond it."

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1. Bertrand Russell. Mysticism and Logic And Other Essays. P.18.
 2. Radhakrishnan. Religion in a changing world. P.-82.
 3. S. Radhakrishnan. Religion and Culture, P.-23.
 4. S. Radhakrishnan. Eastern Religion and Western Thought.P.-25.

As we have already seen that religion which is not credal, ritualistic or dogmatic must be spiritualistic. Mysticism is the important characteristic of humanistic religion because of its special way of approach to truth which science can not follow. Science may not oppose it too as mysticism is not unwarranted belief or overwhelming emotions. But what it signifies is the revelation of Truth in an inner vision of the seer. The mystic thinker not only knows the reality but sees it. He has the direct vision of Truth. Scientific knowledge is based on the experiments and observation of facts and so demands the observer's normal eye sight. But a mystic changes the view point of the observer of Truth helping him to withdraw his mind from the external world, to turn his vision to the inner truth, and to give him a comprehensive direct experience of Reality. ⁽¹⁾ The mystics are absorbed in an inward passion of Truth and almost lose his interest of outer world and in his utter loneliness of the deepest depth of consciousness he experiences the soul in a ⁽²⁾ direct vision.

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1. Bertrand Russell. Religion and Science. P.-187.
 2. Bertrand Russell. Mysticism and Logic And Other Essays. P.-14.

Mysticism is the important feature of modern humanistic religion as it believes in unity and refuses to admit opposition or division any where. (1) Just this is the aim of religion to establish oneness of all religions penetrating into the deepest level of fusion of thoughts where all contradictions cease to exist under one truth. Mysticism is the inner core of religion as intellect and intuition, reason and faith are blended here. Religion in the mystic sense does not mean a mere speculation or reason or a feeling of dependence or a mode of behaviour. It includes total aspect of life. It means something which our entire self is, feels and does. It fulfils our logical demands for abiding certainty, the aesthetic longing for repose and the ethical desire for perfection. (2)

In mystic religion God is not a logical concept but is a real presence, the ground and possibility of all knowledge and values. (3) Avoiding all kinds of contradictions of thoughts and approaches, breaking the barriers of good and bad a mystic tries

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1. Bertrand Russell. Mysticism and Logic And Other Essays. P.-15.
 2. Radhakrishnan. Eastern Religion and Western Thought. P.-63.
 3. Ibid. P.-63.

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to be united with the Infinite.

From all these features of humanistic religion, it is clear that religion is more akin to science. Both are the organs of the same organism which serve the purpose of life — co-operating each other. The combination of scientific intellectualism and humanistic religion of spiritualism is the most essential fact to-day because what science contributes religion can not give and what religion thinks about science can not penetrate to that deepest level of consciousness. The question of value to which religion is mainly concerned, is beyond the domain of scientific knowledge and also mankind knows the facts which science discovers alone. In the words of Russell, "Whatever knowledge is attainable, must be attained by scientific methods; and what science can not discover, mankind can not know."⁽²⁾ Yet science can not give us the message of our soul for attaining perfection in a dynamic process of spiritual growth of mankind. To attain

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1. Russell. Mysticism and Logic And Other Essays. P.-15.
 2. Russell. Science and Religion. P.-243.

perfection man must grow physically, mentally and spiritually and spiritual aspect of man gradually develops in religious consciousness. Because religion is the vision of soul and in comparison to science it is the apprehension of truth in the process of self-manifestation.

Both science and religion serve important roles in their own fields and both of them are fundamentally one regarding their aim and perspective. Both of them are pursuit of truth and are in search of one ultimate principle. What religion calls oneness of spirit, science knows it as ultimate principle with the help of which all the general laws can be explained, because science is no more satisfied with the analysis of particular facts with general laws only. It thinks that there is an ultimate principle behind all these general laws. Thus blending of these two, science and religion, will produce much more effective result for the utilisation of the scientific discoveries at the full benefit of man. An eminent scholar says, "Religion should give us those secrets of the universe which are not open to the eyes of

science and are not ganged by the intellect of philosophy and through their deeper insight should change us into a better being than we are at present. If science has proved to be the eye of humanity and philosophy its brain, let religion be the heart of it. Religion is capable of opening the gates of soul and thus of bringing to us the vision of the vast inner world into which science and philosophy can not probe."⁽¹⁾

The Sages of the Upanishads have realised this fact that Science and religion should be blended. One of the verse in Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad saying :

Śrīvantu Viśve amṛtasya Putrāḥ,
 āye dhāmāni divyāni tasthuḥ;
 Vedāhametaṁ purusaṁ mahāntam
 āditya varanaṁ tamaṣaḥ parostāt.

1. B. L. Atreya. "Religion, Philosophy and Science — An attempt at synthesis". Darshana. An International Quarterly. Moradabad, India. Oct. 1961. Vol.1 P.-17.

Man is not only the texture of cause and effect determinism like all physical nature, but he is also spiritual by nature. Now modern science is in search of the solution of the problem regarding the controversy of man's nature whether he is a texture of a cause and effect determinism or he is spiritual. We find this solution in our Upaniṣadic conception of man where it is declared that man is the son of immortality, son of spirit. Thus our tradition composes a science of spirituality which is the blending of science and religion. (1)

Swami Vivekananda also realised this universal spiritualistic conception of man proclaimed by the Upaniṣads. He also said that man is not the cause effect determinism. In his ward, "Is man a tiny boat in a Tempest, raised one moment on the foamy crest of a billow and dashed down into a Yearning chasm the next, rolling to and fro at the mercy of good and bad actions — a powerless, helpless wreck in an

1. Swami Ranganathananda. Science and Religion. P.-134.

ever-raging, ever rushing, uncompromising current of cause and effect; a little moth placed under the wheel of causation which rolls on crushing everything in its way and waits not for the widow's tears or the orphan's cry? The heart sinks at the idea, yet this is the law of Nature. Is there no hope? Is there no escape? Was the cry that went up from the bottom of the heart of despair? It reached the throne of mercy and words of hope and consolation came down and inspired a vedic sage, and he stood up before the world and in trumpet voice proclaimed the glad tidings. "Hear, ye children of immortal bliss! even Ye that reside in higher spheres! I have found the Ancient one who is beyond all darkness, all delusion; knowing Him alone you shall be saved from death over again." "Children of immortal bliss — what a sweet, what a hopeful name! Allow me to call you, brethren, by that sweet name — heirs of immortal bliss — yea, the Hindu refuses to call you sinners. Ye are the children of God, the scholars of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye Divinities, on earth — sinners! It is a sin to call a man so; it is a standing

libel on human nature. Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusions that you are sheep; you are souls immortal, spirits free, ~~■~~ blest and eternal; ye are not matters, ye are not bodies; matter is your servant not you the servant of matter."⁽¹⁾

Vivekananda once again tried to convince man about his spiritual nature. Man should realise that he is not the body, not the mind alone, but he is the soul immortal. Man belongs to the topmost level of creation as he is the spirit eternal and for this reason there should not be any conflict regarding matter and spirit. Only they are the manifestations of the same Reality varying in degree. Religion helps men to realize his own nature and so it is humanistic. Here also the problem regarding the nature of man raised by contemporary neurological and brain research all over the world, has been solved.

1. ^{1A2} Completeworks of Vivekananda. Vol.1 PP.10-11.

Science will stop its further progressive approach when it will reach to perfect unity. Because science is in search of this unity. And religion will be successful when it will find out one life in the universe of death, one who is the basis of an ever-changing world. This soul is one of which all souls are manifested. Thus religion also is finding out the same unity in and through multiplicities. Religion aims at the truth which is also the goal of all sciences. (1)

"Manifestation and not creation is the word of science to-day" (2) All these thoughts of Vivekananda are the reflections of the teachings of his master . Ramakrishna though elaborated in his own fashion.

Thus being convinced about the nature of religion as proved and taught by Ramakrishna we shall no more hesitate to think about a new disciplined world where scientific discoveries will aim at reconstruction of the civilization and where religion as a way of life will be more scientific

1. ^{3ke} Complete works of Vivekananda. Vol.1. P.15

2. Ibid.

finding out value in man's life. Being the great experimenter of Truth he showed that religion is scientific as well as humanistic. It is scientific because truth can be directly known by the experimenter and religion is the direct realisation of truth. Again it is humanistic in nature as it is the manifestation of soul, realisation of the divinity in man.