



A CHANGE OF ERA OR AN IRREVERSIBLE END OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION ON ANVIL? A VIEW POINT FROM SPIRITUAL AND SCIENTIFIC PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

Globally, we live in a materialistic culture which obstructs the cultivation and development of human values. Our future, which very intricately depends on moral or ethical values and understanding that a soul takes birth according to resolves (sanskars) which go with it during the whole journey in the world cycle, will be more certain and secure when each of us takes up the challenge to bring values back into our daily lives. Values are linked with meditation as meditation leads to the growth and development of values. God is the sustainer of all souls of all religions, races and cultures. God is also the never ending source of all qualities, virtues, values and wisdom. These treasures are transferred to souls through meditation. Spiritual emptiness causes material desires and many weaknesses in the human soul, whereas spiritual restored brings inner strength and power to the soul. Either transformation of present era or complete annihilation of the world is on the cards in coming years according to two versions of spirituality and science respectively. We have discussed these aspects in this article.

Keywords: Soul, Supreme Soul, Rajyoga Meditation, Soul Qualities, Spiritualism, World Cycle.

Introduction

Today's society is facing numerous problems in almost all areas of life. The daily Newspapers and T.V news channels remain full of negative news i.e. rape, murder, theft, dacoity, terrorism, naxalism and religious fanaticism. Terrorists groups like ISIS, Boko Haram, Al Qaida, Jaish-e-Mohammed, Hakkani network, Hizbul Muzahiddin etc are playing havocs in different countries. The dictator ruler of North Korea may push world in to third world war any time. Nuclear weapons are being used by countries as arm twisting measures against others. By and large, moral, spiritual and ethical value system today is in doldrums. These values have taken back seat while illegal and immoral practices have become common. Society, by and large, has become materialistic and consumerist in nature. Population of the world has grown to a level which can be hardly called sustainable with respect to available resources. These all are symptoms of acute Kaliyuga (Iron age). There are four epochs in the world cycle (kalpa) of 5000 years - **Satyug (Golden Age), Tretayug (Silver Age), Dwaparyug (Copper Age) and Kaliyug (Iron Age), each of 1,250 years. The last part of Kaliyug is known as the Confluence Age or Sangamyug**, when the Iron Age ends and the Golden Age is about to dawn. Now the humanity is passing through Confluence Age, when sorrows and sufferings of people are at the peak. The present paper deals with the two aspects of the future of humanity in the world i.e. from spiritual point of view and science point of view. Both of them are unanimous that present sort of world cannot pull on for a long and a change is bound to take place. The change or shape of things expected to come in future, has been discussed in the article To go through the spiritual point of view regarding the future of humanity, a few concepts are

required to be understood.

Concept of soul, mind, intellect and resolves

A human being is a soul in a physical body. The physical body is composed of five elements of matter and consists of flesh and bones, nerves, muscles and various other organs including the brain. The soul is a non-material, extremely subtle entity having various faculties namely mind, intellect and resolves (sanskars). The soul is seated in a position in the centre of the forehead, just behind the pituitary gland, at the base of the hypothalamus. The mind is a non-physical faculty of the soul, where thoughts are constantly in play. It is said that we create around 75,000 to 80,000 thoughts in a day. The intellect is the discriminating and judging faculty of the soul, which takes decisions based on past stimuli already stored in and present stimuli currently being received by the mind. The resolves consist of the resultant impressions, generated by every deed, word, thought or dream upto a given point of time, which are then responsible for triggering or producing fresh thoughts. Therefore, resolves give birth to thoughts which emerge in the mind, and if accepted by the intellect is translated into action, which in turn creates new impressions. This forms a cyclic pattern. Just as a driver of any vehicle sits in the vehicle, but is separate from it, so also the soul who is the driver of the human body is separate from it, although residing within it. In other words, soul is the charioteer driving the chariot of this body. According to divine instructions, we must perform actions in the consciousness of being a charioteer and then we would be able to shed our body consciousness. Through Rajyoga meditation it is now possible to experience that the soul is separate and distinct from the physical body. This enables the self to operate at

its optimum potential and allows a person to experience total fulfillment and contentment in life.

Today stress is very common in the society. It has an impact on our physical and emotional well being. Targets, pressures, deadlines, exams are natural but stress is our choice. Mentally and spiritually it can be defined as pressure (situations) divided by resilience (inner strength). The situation outside is not in our control most of the times but inner strength (of soul/mind) totally depends on a person. Inner strength of the soul is increased due to its improved qualities like peace, purity, joy, love and bliss, which are the original qualities or sanskars or impressions of every soul. Picking up quarrels with others is also very common now-a-days. If other people are behaving in a reactive manner, at that time for me to remain stable internally, is my strength and hence peace is strength not weakness. One must remember that every THOUGHT (like anger or resentment) is followed by a FEELING. One's feelings over a period of time, created on the basis of his thoughts, develop his/her ATTITUDE-about people, situations, work place or about society. We carry out our ACTIONS based on our ATTITUDE and any action done repeatedly becomes our HABIT. All my habits put together becomes my PERSONALITY. At every step in life this personality determines my DESTINY. Therefore, if we change our thoughts, words and action will change. Hence personality transformation begins with our thoughts.

The more, members of society develop their spirituality, morality and ethical sense, the more they live in harmony with others and with nature. Spirituality means to be free from sensuality and concerned with the human spirit. The practice of spirituality means to understand one's identity as a spiritual being or as a soul, to consider all others as spiritual brothers and sisters and focus on one's collective and original qualities of peace, purity, love and light. It also means awareness of the incorporeal. Spirituality means not just to know that 'I am a soul', but to 'Be the soul', i.e. to be with everyone in the consciousness of a soul while interacting with another soul. Spirituality is natural, simple and a very practical way of living. It is not doing things or becoming someone, it is about just being who we truly are. Soul consciousness or true consciousness prompts spiritual qualities and values to occupy a dominant position within the awareness of any individual. On the other hand, body consciousness or false consciousness prompts the reverse. Individual awareness is then dominated by negative qualities and the tendency to give greater emphasis on material values. By practicing soul consciousness, one can achieve a stage of detachment, maturity and emotional balance.

1. How Mental pollution leads to environmental pollution:

Thoughts about committing violence, consuming alcohol, smoking tobacco, taking drugs and other such kinds of thoughts (or vices explained below) first originate in the MIND, are then accepted by the INTELLECT and when translated in to action, get recorded as RESOLVES, thus

gradually polluting the soul. When such thoughts are translated in to actions, the physical body also gets polluted owing to indulgence in impure actions. Since the soul is in direct contact with the physical body, the material body is influenced by the impurity of the soul and also becomes impure, leading to various disorders and malfunctions. Similarly the physical body is in direct contact with the environment and constantly interacts with the five elements of nature through the constant and incessant process of ingestion and egestion. After a prolonged period of time this eternal process gradually pollutes the external environment. Mental pollution, therefore, pollutes the environment directly through the physical body and also indirectly through the projection of negative thought vibrations (Hassija, 1991). Ultimately mental pollution weakens the mind and intellect as well as the physical body. In turn, this has a detrimental effect on the environment, which in turn influences the human mind more adversely, leading to an overall vicious circle.

Various factors, mainly called vices, contribute to mental pollution. These are:

Sex lust, including impurity, immodesty, sensuality, sexual perversion and aberration.

Violence, including murder, suicide, anger, wrath, fury, assault, hatred, impatience, intolerance and frustration

Greed including gluttony, covetousness, possessiveness, desire, jealousy and envy

Attachment, including inequality, narrow mindedness, cowardice, selfishness and carelessness

Arrogance, including rigidity, destructive mentality, pride, vanity and conceit.

The consequential results of mental pollution are:

Overpopulation, leading to overexploitation of natural resources

Over expansion, leading to environmental pollution

Communal disturbances leading to theft, dacoity, dishonesty, riots and law/order problems

Clinging to power sheet by ant possible means, leading to anarchy

Development of arrogant attitudes, leading to insecurity, fear, chaos, wars, destruction and finally total annihilation

All above situations developed due to mental pollution can be solved by spiritual awakening. By inculcating the divine virtues of purity, peace, contentment, equality and a positive/constructive attitude, major problems of society can be easily resolved. A mind full of divine virtues, peace, happiness and love can be compared to a tree abounding with leaves, blossoming with flowers and blooming with fruits, providing shade, solace and sustenance to everyone associated with it. In short, the problems created by mental pollution can be solved by spiritual awakening. Human mind can work with much greater speed, efficiency and accuracy, when it is in constant contact with the supreme source of spiritual energy – the supreme soul.

2. *GOD, the supreme soul - source of values, his abode and qualities:*

God is pure spirit and incorporeal, which means that God does not have any human or animal form. The supreme is like a radiant, invisible star of blissful light. Meditating on the Supreme Soul is a very effective way to develop values because God is the source of all values, virtues, qualities and powers. The unchangeable perfection of God is also given importance because it is the ideal focus for concentration and inner stillness. That one remains ever pure, even the ocean of love, peace, power, knowledge and bliss. By contrast, human souls and material world are in a constant state of flux or movement, plus they deteriorate and decline. A human soul can regain its original high levels of purity, peace, bliss and love through meditation and yoga with God. Here yoga means to link your mind with God in remembrance and love. When one achieves this, he/she automatically and positively influence the material world. The material or natural world reflects the state and condition of humanity at any given historical period. At this time, negative thinking is very strong which has caused negative activity to reach very high levels of physical, emotional and psychological suffering. This negativity has also led to humans damaging the natural environment.

God is called the selfless, altruistic, giver of virtues and values to all people of the earth of all religions and cultures. There are many names used for incorporeal God. Some are: Ishwar, Allah, Prabho, Lord, Jehovah, Yahweh, Om. Each name has a particular meaning which refers to an aspect of God. Brahma Kumaris use the name Shiva, the Supreme father of all souls. The word Shiva means point (the form), seed (the content) and benefactor (the attitude). Sada Shiva means always permanent. When we think of God as our mother/father, it invites us to come into relationship with one who will give us an inheritance of all the qualities and wealth of knowledge, peace, love and bliss. God cannot be seen by our eyes, but is recognized by the heart.

The point energy form of the GOD, the Supreme Soul, has been recognized by various religions. For example:

1. CHRISTIANITY: I have come in to the world as light: Holy Bible
2. ISLAM: Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth: Holy Koran
3. AFRICAN FAITHS: God is the sun beaming light everywhere: Tribal African
4. SIKHISM: God, being truth, is the one light of all: Adi Granth
5. JUDAISM: The lord is my light, whom shall fear? Psalms
6. Brahma Kumaris: I am the immortal changeless blissful point of light, dwelling eternally in the world of light: Gyan Murli
7. Buddhism: The radiance of Budha shines

ceaselessly: Dhammapada

God dwells in the incorporeal dimension of light, beyond the material universe, a place of total silence. This is a timeless, spaceless, measureless location beyond the dimensions of matter and thoughts. It is the purest most supreme region. In meditation, one carries thoughts into that world of perfect peace and quiet to rest, refresh and recharge of one's inner being. Whenever a person is in prayer or meditation, God feels his/her loving thoughts or his/her frustrations and responds with waves of love and peace from the non-material dimension.

3. *Empowering the soul:*

Soul becomes weak over time and there is significant loss of moral and ethical power. We need to take power from God, who is truth and the ocean of purity, in order to make our good intentions real and practical. When sun rays pass through a lens and paper is placed at the focal point. The concentrated heat and light of the sun will set fire to the paper. In the same way when you focus your mind and intellect on the light of God, you catch the concentration of the Supreme Being's qualities, light and might. In that silence and stillness of perfect concentration, impurities are burned out of the soul. After such a meditation, one feels fresh, clean, renewed and lighter. The purifying effect of fire occurs when bold containing alloy is placed in a crucible and put over a hot fire. It melts the gold and burns out the impurities, leaving only pure gold. In the same way when you have intensive meditation, it burns out all your negativities and character defects, leaving only your pure, original, inherent qualities like love, peace and bliss.

Our values are demonstrated by our actions. Actions begin as thoughts, feelings and emotions. The Prajapita Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya (PBKIVV) or in short Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University provides in depth teachings about the concepts of soul, Supreme soul, difference between these two, law of karma, soul consciousness and body consciousness. This University was accorded the award of Peace Messenger by the United Nations Organisations in the year 1987 (International Year of Peace) in recognition of its significant contribution to the programme and objectives of establishing peace, love and universal brotherhood in the world. According to them, people fail to differentiate between souls and the Supreme Soul. They say that all are brothers, so they should live like brothers. In today's world one moment they are living together in harmony and the next moment they are violent towards each other, because they do not know about spiritual relationships. The ongoing task is to consider yourself to be a soul. Avoid getting trapped in false ego, which is also called body-consciousness. The prime obstacle in developing and cultivating human values is that globally we live in a materialistic culture in which almost all individuals are strongly habituated to body-consciousness.

The Brahma Kumaris' teachings indicate that the slow degeneration of the soul over time is the reason for current crisis of values. Attention is given to the process of

transformation or restoration of consciousness to its original complete, pure and powerful condition. Brahma Kumaris elders and senior teachers and students have found that values are only cultivated when there is regular Rajyoga meditation. Raj yoga is the term given for the entire process of meditation, spiritual development, practices and discipline, cultivation of values, virtues and powers. A Rajyogi (student practicing Rajyoga) rises earlier than usual and practices exclusive meditation in the early morning hours to recharge the soul. After bathing the physical body, he then attends a spiritual class in order to cleanse his true self, the soul. This forms a strong base to enable him to continue the practice of meditation throughout the day – while eating meals, while traveling to and fro from work, as well as while working, till he returns home and retires for the day. Before sleeping, he reviews the day's activities and draws energy from the Supreme to enable him to continue to maintain an elevated stage of soul consciousness even while asleep. A student of Raj yoga focuses on four differentiated areas:

- Meditation practice
- Study of spiritual knowledge
- Inculcation of virtues and values
- Spiritual service

One important key to the successful development of values and spirituality is to practice shifting one's consciousness from body consciousness to soul consciousness repeatedly. This is an ongoing effort. Matter is everything that exists in the physical universe; it is the physical universe. Science has established that matter can neither be created nor destroyed. The quality of matter degenerates, known as process of entropy, due to the effect of time and motion. The degeneration of the quality of matter also corresponds to the degeneration of the quality of human souls.

World cycle or Shirishti chakra: Spiritual angle

In our life, we observe number of physical phenomenon which are repetitive, cyclic and follow a definite time duration. Few examples are: The most evident physical repetitive phenomenon is that of the solar cycle, caused by the rotation of the earth around its own axis. This cycle is most evident because of its short duration. The revolution of the earth around the sun is a much longer cycle and determines the period of one year of time, and also governs the four repetitive seasons of autumn, winter, spring and summer. Since we are very much accustomed to these phenomena, it is easy to readily accept them without raising an eyebrow. Likewise, the heat of the sun causes water from the ocean to evaporate to form clouds, which shed their water over land and mountains forming springs, streams, rivulets, tributaries and rivers, which ultimately find their way back to the ocean, to once again repeat the cycle.

Apart from these evident cycles, the least apparent are the human and absolute time cycles. To comprehend the human cycle with degree of clarity, it is essential to comprehend that the physical body is a constantly

changing mass of material elements, while the soul is eternal. The soul takes a body just before birth and plays its part as a baby, infant, child, adolescent, youth, adult, elder and then leaves the body to take up another body to go through a similar cycle once again.

Just as there are four seasons, so also the absolute time cycle or world cycle has four ages which repeat identically every 5000 years, as revealed by the Supreme soul. The four ages or eras are Golden, Silver, Copper and Iron. Each age is of 1250 years duration, making a complete world cycle of 5000 years. Presently we are at the end of the Iron Age where sorrow and sufferings are at their peak due to intense body consciousness. The Golden age is once again being established on this planet by the Supreme soul by way of his teachings in the form of Gyan Muralis (God's or Supreme soul's daily versions, through an elderly lady Dadi Hridya Mohini at Mount Abu) and through Rajyoga meditation. Just as physical phenomenon are cyclic in nature, so also are human and time cycles. The cyclic aspect of time is part of the teachings of Rajyoga and provides insight into why science and spirituality must be brought together to create a stable and prosperous world or to usher in an era of perfect peace, prosperity and happiness.

The first half of this drama, comprising Satyug and Tretayug, is called Rama- Rajya, heaven or the deity world. The second half (Dwaparyug and Kaliyug) is called Ravan-Rajya, hell, or the demonic world. Rama Rajya is also known as the Day of Brahma, and Ravan Rajya as the Night of Brahma.

Explaining the value of time in the Confluence Age, God says it is the only period when souls learn directly from Him. He gives spiritual knowledge only once in a kalpa. If this opportunity is lost by human souls, it is lost forever. God Shiva says that by following His teachings sincerely, one can acquire all divine qualities and become worthy of taking birth in heaven or the Golden Age. To become a deity from a human, one must practise purity in thought, speech and action during the Confluence Age. As the thoughts, so will be the speech and actions. By making this effort, one can leave one's mark in human history, written on the pages of time, for others to get the inspiration and zeal to strive to become a deity in Satyug.

Views of Scientists and thinkers on current world's scenario

Eminent scientists like Stephan Hawking, the Cambridge University professor, astrophysicist and author of "A brief history of time" an international bestseller, in latest BBC documentary "Expedition New Earth" has predicted that going by current challenges of climate change, epidemics, nuclear war danger, water crisis, asteroid strikes and over population; the humans will need to colonize another planet within 100 years. Time period for the end of humanity over earth has been reduced to 100 years which was 1000 years as per November 2016 estimate of Stephan Hawking (Strudwick, 2017; Sosa, 2017). According to SIR Isaac Newton, the famous scientist whose

analytical mind worked out the laws of gravity and unraveled the motion of planets, declared that the Apocalypse (final end of world) would come in 2016 – exactly 1200 years after the foundation of the Holy Roman Empire (E.S, 2007).

The World Health Organization estimated that the warming and precipitation trends due to anthropogenic climate change of the past 30 years have already claimed over 1,50,000 lives annually (Patz et al 2005). Climate change impacts on food security will be worst in countries already suffering high levels of hunger and will worsen over next few years. There is a big question as to “how can we possibly feed 9.6 billion people by 2050?” Extreme weather events are likely to become more frequent in future and will affect the global food system adversely (Wheeler and Braun, 2013).

Environmental problems on the earth are posing a danger of global collapse. Overpopulation, overconsumption of natural resources and use of outdated, environmentally damaging technologies may cause end of civilization (Ehrlich and Ehrlich, 2013). Other threatening issues relate to land degradation and land use change, wide spreading presence of toxic compounds, ocean acidification and eutrophication, resource wars and depletion of scarce resources (Heinberg 2007, Klare, 200 and 2012, Gleeson et al 2012).

Now coming to central theme of the article i.e. change of era or end of human civilization in near future? According to Brahma Kumaris philosophy, the end is near. However the exact date has not been given in God’s daily versions (Gyan Muralis) to avoid anxiety among humans. But according to their theory, the last portion of Kaliyuga is called Confluence age (Puroshottam Sangamyuga) which is of 100 years duration. This Confluence age started in the year 1936 when the Almighty Lord Shiva adopted soul of Dada Lekh Raj (in Sindh provenance of Pakistan at that time) to deliver God’s daily versions. Going by this logic, 100 years of Confluence age would be over by 2036 i.e. maximum 19 more years from now. Whereas according to Stephan Hawking (the famous astrophysicist of Cambridge university), the end will be within next 100 years for which possible reasons have been given above. According to SIR Isaac Newton, it is in the year 2060. Reasons given by Lord Shiva are also almost same as given by the scientists i.e. outbreak of nuclear war, extreme weather events (associated with Climate change theory of today), social wars, incurable diseases, water crisis etc. According to God’s versions, human souls would go to their original place (Param dham or Shanti dham) like millions of mosquitoes being massacred. The current population of world is about 7.50 billion, whereas only 9 lakhs or 0.9 million will come in Sat yuga i.e. period of Heaven on earth where the world Empress and Emperor would be Shri Lakshmi and Shri Narayan respectively and all other religions would be vanish. These religions would appear again in third era of the world cycle i.e. Duapar yuga or Copper age. But scientific version is silent about this change of era i.e. dawn of Satyuga (Heaven on earth)

after the Confluence age, which is going on presently. However, the common point in spiritual (Brahma Kumaris version) and scientific (Stephan Hawking’s and Newton’s forecast) angles is end of today’s world. Time and again, God mentions in daily Godly versions about peace seminars, workshops, conferences etc. being organized in different parts of world but peace can never be established by these means until there is a change of era and the process of this change of era is going on when followers of Lord Shiva or Brahma Kumaris organization are empowering themselves (i.e. their souls) with positive vibrations from the Supreme soul so as to take birth in Satyuga.

Conclusion

Science has enabled humankind to achieve material progress and a comfortable life but people are far from experiencing the true mental peace and contentment. Science, the word used in general sense is natural science, and technology is the two wheels of the vehicle of development; they provide us material benefits but not cultural and higher values of life. Achievement of the ultimate goal of living a full life cannot come without help from the other source, i.e., spirituality which emphasises the moral and ethical values of life (Joglekar, 2001). Therefore, in today’s environment, society needs both science as well as spirituality. It is increasingly felt that besides science, we need social, moral and spiritual values. We also need some discipline, such as Meditation and Ethical education, for promotion of the spiritual and humane aspects of our personality. Blind faith, irrational and rigid dogmas that cause violent conflict in the society need to be discarded. Albert Einstein had once remarked “Science without religion is blind and religion without science is lame”. In other words, science without spirituality and spirituality without science are like a blind man and a lame man respectively endeavouring to accomplish a common task separately and such an endeavour would hardly meet effective success (Hassija, 1991; Joglekar, 2001). According to Mahatma Gandhi, the father of Indian nation, science and spirituality have to work together in an integrated manner to solve our planet’s problems which are in plenty. Sustainable development is the need of hour but it is possible only with coordination of science and spirituality (Dadage, 1998). Max Planck (1858-1947) the German physicist and Nobel Laureate, originator of Quantum theory, states in his article ‘Where is Science Going?’-- “There can never be real opposition between religion and science; for the one is the complement of the other. Every serious and reflective person realizes, I think, that the religious element in his nature must be recognized and cultivated if all the powers of the human soul are to act together in perfect balance and harmony”. People rightly say that religion (now-a-days mostly pseudo-religion or religious fanaticism) has been responsible for a lot of bloodshed. Science too has been used by some people for nuclear devastation and destruction. But when both science and spirituality join together to form a single unit, the common task of

achieving peace, prosperity and happiness can be accomplished quickly and effectively. The working of these two in conjunction with each other will certainly ensure progress. This definitely would lead to the development of a perfect world, called Golden age (or Satyuga) in ever repeating World cycle of five thousand years.

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