CHAPTER V.

Necessity of Worship

Exposition: Worship is a purposive action and like all other voluntary actions, it points forward to an idea of an end, a desire to realise that end and the various modes of worship are the means to realise the end. In this chapter we shall deal with the end and the nature of the end which worship aims at in course of spiritual evolution.

Worship being a voluntary action includes three stages-
(a) the mental stage (b) the stage of execution or bodily stage (c) the stage of realization. The mental stage and its developments have been discussed in our chapters on "Origin and Historical basis of worship", and "Objective implications of worship". The bodily stage has been discussed in our chapter on - "Practical implications of worship". We deal in the present chapter with the stage of realisation or the results of the actions of the worshippers which bring changes in the external world and the worshipper himself. The change in worshipper or the agents may issue in two ways, here in quest of moral goodness and hereafter in quest of saving the soul.

In the rudimentary stage of religion the objects of worship are many, moreover the modes or ways of worship are various in nature. As there are various modes and objects of worship, the purpose and end become many. In primitive religion though there are various purposes or ends which people want to realise their main purpose or end is material gain. The achievement of moral ends and the higher thoughts of the immortality of the soul are totally absent in the savage society. The higher thoughts of moral
good ness and the salvation of the soul. come to the human society in course of spiritual evolution and perhaps when the religions reached the stage of monotheism.

The savage people worshipped various objects from the emotions of awe, wonder and fear. The purpose of worship was to attain material prosperity and to propitiate the supernatural agents, so that the supernatural beings might not do any harm to them. Stones, rocks, trees, animals, heavenly bodies were objects of worship, because they were the objects of awe and wonder and the various objects were considered as inhabited by spirits or gods. Sometimes the savage people appealed to spirits and supernatural beings for the provision for food or to save them from calamity or disease. The sex and sex symbols were objects of worship for the promotion of fertility in plants, animals and men. In one sense we can say that the worship of the savages was like a bargain. They wanted to give something in order to get something from the supernatural beings. In primitive society people went after material prosperity rather than moral gains, and the saving of the soul here and hereafter. The conception of the soul apart from the body brought a change in the history of religions. Moreover it was conceived that the human soul is a part of "Infinite Soul" or "God". Religious developments were made through various modes or worship when the modes indicated a mental culture and the unification with the deity rather than a material prosperity. The modes of worship in higher religions are nothing but modes of selfculture. Let us analyse sacrifice in the light of spiritual evolution. The piacular or propitiatory offerings were present in primitive times to avert the wrath of the supernatural agents.
Primitive people would make sacrifices to anything which were considered dangerous. The most common motive in primitive sacrifice was to avert evils. Piacular sacrifices meant for deliverance from sin or disease, etc., fall under the above category. Ancient Greeks, Hindus, Semites, Gauls sacrificed human beings in times of war in order to propitiate deities. According to biological - social law an individual is considered inferior to the society. So an individual can be slain for the sake of the society. Thus human sacrifice came into existence. With the progress of civilization substitution took place and animals were sacrificed instead of human beings. Even the eating of the sacrificial meal was considered as communion with the deity. The survival of the above is found when the Christians consider the taking of bread and wine as communion with Jesus Christ. Thus in course of spiritual evolution communion with the deity and self-culture took the place of material prosperity. With the progress of culture and civilization the purpose of sacrifice changed and the life-giving converted into self-giving or self-sacrifice by prayer, penitence and abstinence. What is known as self-sacrifice is another form of self-realization, it is the denial of "I-ness" and the absorption in the "Infinite".

The religious consciousness in men thrived through the society and the individual in two purposes of worship, namely objective and subjective worship. The type of worship which intends to produce effect upon the Deity or to have communion with the deity may be termed as objective worship and the type of worship which brings desired mood or attitudes in the mind of the worshipper may be termed as subjective worship. The primitive prayer, sacrifice fetishism, ancestor-worship, totemism, the
primitive worship of stones, animals, trees etc. may be called objective worship. In modern religions the objective worship is found in Catholic Churches, the Muslim congregation in Masjid for prayer and in Hindu temples, especially in regular pujās. The objective worship is meant only for pleasing the Deity or for gratifying the god with various offerings. In daily pujās, the priest anoints the devata or strews flowers before the image and mutters sacred words only to please the deity. The worship of the Vaiśṇavas with upachāras is an objective type of worship. In Catholic Churches objective worship is performed with acolytes, incense, music, candles etc. In such a type of worship one man can act on behalf of another. The subjective worship awakens the religious consciousness in man and it is an effect on the worshipper himself. One man cannot perform it on behalf of another man. Subjective worship is present in Indian yoga, Buddhism, Jainism and in Protestant churches. External worship with various materials is not a necessary factor in subjective worship. The necessary factor in subjective worship is the inner stage of the mind. In Buddhism or in Jainism there is no external worship of the deity with upachāras like the Vaiśṇavas. The materials necessary for such a worship are the proper religious attitudes of the mind.

Truly speaking, there cannot be subjective religious worship without objective belief in the deity. The subjective type of worship may be a true mental culture and absorption in the deity but it will fail to achieve the religious goal if there is no belief in the deity. In objective worship the subjective religious consciousness is also cultivated in an easy and spontaneous manner. The true necessity of worship which is the communion with the deity is achieved when worship contains both objective and subjective elements.
In course of spiritual progress and evolution material ends or purposes change to moral cultures and absorption in the Deity. The various modes of worship such as prayer, pilgrimage, yoga, mysticism, etc are direct or indirect forms of communion with the deity. The Brahma Jñāna of Hindu Philosophy is the absorption of the finite self in the Infinite Brahman. This is the sole end or purpose of human life according to Hindu religion. All the Upaniṣads and the Hindu religious śāstras aim at this sole purpose of life. This has been expressed in the Kena Upaniṣad - 2nd Ch. 5th sloka as - "This life becomes successful, if Brahman is attained in this life; if not, there is destruction and life results in circle of births and deaths. So the Jñānis by the attainment of Brahmajñāna stop the circle of births and deaths and attain Brahmacood in this life." The above is the result of Brahmajñāna and all the Upaniṣads aim at this purpose or end of life. For example the same purpose of life is again and again found in - Mundaka - 3/2/9, Isā 3, 6, Kena - 1/2, 4/9. In the Gita the same purpose of life has been indicated by work and tapasyā without hankering after fruits. In 17th Ch. 17th sloka (of the Gita) it is written that tapasyā becomes sāttvika when one performs bodily, verbal and mental worship with devotion and without hankering after the fruits. This is the true aim of worship. But others perform worship in order to get honour and material prosperity in this life and necessarily it does not bear any fruit after death. Such a worship is called rājasika tapasyā (Ch. 17 - 18th sloka). Again tapasyā becomes tāmasika when one performs worship by penance, being induced by improper desire or when it is meant for the purpose of destruction (Ch. 17 - 19th sloka - the Gita). Thus tapasyā or worship may be sāttvika, rājasika or tāmasika according to the choice of the
worshipper. But the sattvika worship is the true form of worship and leads one to Devaloka. While other forms of worship rajasika or tamasika which are performed for material prosperity lead one to the world of Fathers after death. This is again clearly stated in the Gita (3rd Ch. - 24th and 25th sloka) that the worshippers of Brahman are absorbed by Brahman after death, they go to Devaloka, and the worshippers who go to the world of Fathers enjoy a circle of births and deaths. Thus there are two alternative worlds where the souls migrate after death, namely the world of the Fathers and the world of the Devas. The former leads to the circle of births and deaths and the latter leads to Muktij or cessation of births and deaths (Vide- the Gita 8/26, 9/21, the Brahmasutra 3/1/6, the Prasna Upaṇiṣad - 3/7 and the Brihadāraṇyaka Upaṇiṣad - mantra 6/2/15 and 6/2/16). Thus rajasika and tamasika tapasayas lead to the circle of births and deaths while sattvika tapasyā leads to muktij or release. Muktij or release may be attained through various modes of worship and the various sects of India through various modes of worship aim at this sole ideal of life. The modes of worship of the different Hindu sects are different but the end is the same among all the sects of India. They say, true happiness is not possible here but in a further unworldly existence, which is not subject to change or liable to distress or harm, By "salvation", Hindu religion understands a release from the bondage or earthly passions, privations, earthly fetters, etc., in this life and the attainment of Devaloka after death (Br 6/2/15). All the sects maintain that muktij or salvation is possible only when one has been able to sweep aside the delusive will or avidya or ignorance.
The Hindu theory of salvation and life after death is based on the theory of causation. The theory of causation states that every effect must have cause and every cause must produce an effect unless there are opposite causes to counteract it. Thus there is a tendency in the cause to produce an effect. Hindu Philosophy maintains the human soul as a separate entity apart from the body. Earthly bondage belongs to the human soul and not to the body. After death the body is destroyed but the soul remains, being a separate entity apart from the body, and carries with it the earthly fetters (prārabdha karma) which become causes and produce effects, as there is a natural tendency inherent in the causes to produce effects (i.e., circle of births and deaths). Thus the soul transmigrates to Devaloka or to the world of Fathers according to fruits which the soul possesses.

In the Brihadāranyaka Upanisad it is stated - Mantra VI. 2. 15 -

"Those who know this thus, and those who in some forest (secluded pleasant spot) meditate, with faith, on Truth (i.e., Brahman) go (after death to) light, from light to day, from day to light half of the moon to the six months when the sun goes to the north; from that to the Devaloka, from the Devaloka to the sun, from the sun to Lightning. There is a high, the beloved of God (vīś, Vayu) leads them to the world of Brahma. The blessed one lives there eternally (for as many years as is the life of Brahma); of them there is no rebirth on this earth." - Sacred books of the Hindus Vol-XIV p-675 and mantra VI. 2. 16, is -

"One the other hand, those that conquer the worlds by means of sacrifice, giving away gifts, or by austerities, get to the world of smoke. From the world of smoke (they get to) the world of night. From (the world of) night to the world of the dark fortnight. From the world of the dark fortnight to the world those six months (called Dakshināyana), when the sun goes towards
the south. From the world of these months to the world of the Fathers. From the world of the Fathers to the world of the moon. Getting to the world of the moon, they become food just as in a sacrifice, the sacrificer drink the kind soma, saying "Do increase; do decrease", just in the same way, then the gods eat there (make them serve there), and (there the gods do make) them (eat, consume the fruits of their actions, telling them - "Do increase and do decrease"). When that (world) of their come to an end, then they get to this Ākāśa, from the Ākāśa they (get to) Vāyu; from Vāyu to rain, from rain to the earth; on coming to the earth, they become food. They again are offered in the fire of man; and then they are born in the fire of woman, ready to start again (into the world of creation), following the results of their deeds. On the other hand, those that do not know these two paths, become worms, flies, or those which bite (such as serpents, gnats, etc). " (Sacred books of the Hindus Vol - XIV page - 677). In India the soul is conceived as essential immortal. It is indestructible (The Gita - 2nd Ch. 17-18 slokas). It has no beginning, because beginning put at once things out of the class of eternal things. The Hindus maintain that the self is not born or is not destroyed by death. The self is known but it is not slain with the destruction of the body.

The Christian conception of salvation had its historic origin in Hebrew religion. Salvation according to Christian theology is a moral culture and a communion with God. Human beings want to be saved, man wants help hence we believe in God. The religious progress is a history of man and his struggle to save his soul. Jesus Christ has given us the message that
it is only God, Who can save us and man can save man by helping man. The teachings of Christ’s prayers are successful when one subordinates fully to the guidance of Divine will. Christ’s salvation is dynamic, it is the attainment of moral goodness here, and that life will necessarily succeed in achieving the perfect life hereafter. It is the creation of one’s own happiness with others. If each individual aspires after his own happiness and salvation, the society will thus naturally be perfected. Others or the society is the sum-total of the individuals. In this way the social progress will be possible by the individuals and the individuals will be profited by the society. Hence Christ’s salvation maintains that one is for all and all are for one. Thus the world can be saved and the kingdom of heaven can be established. The kingdom of heaven is not without but within, it is attained by self-culture and self-realization. Kingdom of heaven must be established because human beings want to be saved and there is no alternative way except Christ’s way of salvation. There is eternal Divine pain and discontent in human beings, therefore progress is inevitable. The Divine dissatisfaction is the root of Divine progress. Christ enlightens the Christians in His own thoughts by prayers, repentance, penitence, work and faith. The establishment of the kingdom of God within us is the identification of the human will with the Divine will. Resurrection in Christianity means a successful transition from one universe to the other and it is possible for those who believe and have faith in Christ and His modes of worship, Salvation is a successful death, a resurrection after death.
If such a death is achieved, both the soul and the world are saved. In order to actualise such an experience Christ has taught humanity to pray and repent. By salvation Christ meant the total destruction of the life-long fear of death. It is the source of joy, happiness, power, freedom in man. For this reason Christ teaches us to conquer pain and to save our soul.

In Muslim religion salvation is called "Wa¿ah". It is only once alluded in the holy Quran. The attainment of Wa¿ah is necessary because it is an escape from future punishment in hell. Khalas and Wa¿ah are equivalent terms. Khalas means deliverance from sin, so also Wa¿ah. Thus according to Muslim theology salvation is more a life hereafter than an escape from the power of sin in this life. Salvation can be attained according to Islam by performance of "the daily five duties of Islam", the sayings of the daily five prayers, fasting in the month of Ramdan, by pilgrimage to Mecca by means of Zakât and jihâd. Zakât is poor rate, which means a part of the income to be given to the poor and jihâd is a national duty. Among five duties, prayer is the first duty and then comes Zakât.

Muslim theology puts much stress on outward purities rather than on moral culture. Accordingly none is lost, if he believes in the holy Quran. A man may be guilty, but he will attain salvation after serious punishment. The necessity of worship according to Islam is not a present moral change but a question of receiving hereafter. It is the release in the next world from the punishment of hell. Though the moral culture is not obvious in the Muslim conception of salvation yet it naturally comes with the daily duties and prayer.
The salvation of the soul is a natural and necessary postulate of the worshipper. The worshipper after establishing the communion and relation with the deity wants to exist with the deity forever. He feels that his soul is immortal. He thinks that he has proceeded far towards perfection and his soul cannot be destroyed by such an imperfect thing like death. Reasonably viewed, we find that by the process of evolution everything is proceeding towards perfection and if we put an end to the human soul by death, then the development of the human soul does not appear to be complete. For this reason the Hindus believe in the theory of Karma. The theory of Karma is itself a theory of progress and evolution. The soul by the process of evolution is sure to pass through the circle of births and deaths until it is perfected and be absorbed by Brahman. The soul may obtain a lower birth, but in the long run by the process of evolution it should be perfected. But it is necessary for a human being to take up a mode of worship in order to put an end to his bondages of the soul, otherwise he is bound to suffer much, though he will be perfected automatically by the process of evolution (i.e. Karma). If a man does not perfect himself, then automatically he must wander on a circle of births and deaths through sufferings, losing at the same time the salvation of the personal soul and the salvation of mankind. The Divine life, the unity with God at once establishes the fact that the life is safe and eternal and it cannot be destroyed by a material thing like death. The Divine life cannot be exhausted here and the death of the body is irrelevant to the soul. Christ Himself cried and taught mankind to attain such a Divine life and put an end to the fear of death. Successful life after death or salvation can only be attained by a successful spiritual life in the world. It may be argued that if we believe in the immortality of the soul and if we know that there is a better life hereafter, then
naturally people would commit suicide in order to go the other world. But the scriptures always show a causal connection between the life after death. If a man is unable to lead a pure and chaste life here, how can he lead a holy life hereafter? Hence the life hereafter depends totally upon the life here and its effects. A chaste and a pure life means a life enriched by moral goodness. Hence worship has a pragmatic value. It aims at higher purposes of life and at the same time aims at moral goodness in the phenomenal world. A successful life is not attained here. The various modes of worship aim at the fulfilment of Divine life which is impossible if a moral life is not attained here. The Hindu Philosophy (Karmaśādā) maintains that by the sānchita karma (karma accumulating by the present works done here) the future life will be determined. Hence the present karmas should be performed in such a way that they may produce good fruits in future. Thus the Hindu modes of worship aim at a spiritual life which contains a moral life here and a Divine unification hereafter. The same thing is understood by a Jew by the term resurrection which means the culture of the soul. The culture of the soul includes a moral life or the attainment of highest good in this life and a blissful life after death is the natural outcome or the effect of the cause which is moral life in the phenomenal world. In the Amidah (prayer book) transmigration of the soul is written. The soul after death goes to hell or paradise according to sins done in the worldly life. "Olam Haba", is the Talmudic name for the future life or the world to come. In Old Testament it is written - divine acceptance is possible only by obedience to God, and sins are destroyed by repentance. Jews lay great stress on repentance and work, which is another form of returning to God. Repentance is another name for faith. Thus faith and work are the main
religious modes of worship in Jewish religion. This part of Jewish religion has been transferred to Christian religion by Jesus Christ.

The conception of salvation of the soul and the immortality of the soul are progressive ideas. The latter is the natural outcome of the former. When the soul is saved, then naturally it becomes immortal and when the soul is immortal, it is granted that it is saved. One idea involves the other necessary, unconditional, invariable idea. These conceptions are fundamental in the life of worshipper. This, the worshipper considers as sacred and vital just as they feel communion with the Deity. These ideas give new hopes and courage in the lives of the worshippers. This sort of new courage and faith gives pragmatic interests in the life of the worshippers. The more a worshipper progresses towards his spiritual ideal, the more he feels his eternal life with the Deity. This is a source of joy and happiness in the life of the worshipper. The various modes of worship aim at this blissful eternal life.

Such a life is supported by morality, at the same time it gives highest values in the life after death. This has been shown by Jesus Christ's urge for the establishment of the kingdom of heaven, which gives both worldly and spiritual values. The Hindu worshipper for the attainment of Muktì is found to destroy worldly fetters which is not possible without moral progress. The "Najah" of the Muslims when analysed, gives moral culture to the worshipper and saves the worshipper from great annihilation after death. In short, the various modes of worship aim at the highest form of worldly and heavenly peace and bliss (sānti). This is the
result of immanent reason which is already at the bottom of
spiritual evolution. At this stage of culture human society
saves and preserves its own existence reasonably and
spiritually. In order to attain such a holy and divine life
the worshippers unite at this point of culture. Such a stage
of perfection is the point where religion transcends morality,
moral culture does not perfect a finite self but shows a way
for the attainment of moral goodness. In morality, the supreme
ideal always remains an ideal whereas in religion the finite
self realizes that he is perfect. He is perfect and, therefore,
he is immortal. He is saved here and hereafter, the various
modes of worship aim at such a blissful divine life.