CHAPTER - XI

REASON AND FAITH

1) Basis of Faith - Perfect Reason
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CHAPTER XI

REASON AND FAITH

1. BASIS OF FAITH: PERFECT REASON:

Our discussion of beauty and ugliness is over and we have satisfactorily seen that this manifest world consists of five kinds of things which are experienced by the five human senses. It is amply clear now that all the five kinds of things do have the difference of good and evil. If things like sound, shape, taste, smell etc. are distinguishable as being good or bad, why is it then that human actions too should not have the same difference. We are now still more convinced that not only all external actions but even the inner ideas also have this difference of being beauteous or ugly, good or bad whatever degree and level.¹

As for the degrees and levels of inherent beauty or ugliness in things, these are beyond all counting. Among the living species like human beings, in spite of the unity of species among them, the individual features of one do not correspond to the other exactly, as every moment new features keep on making their appearance.²

¹. Taqrir-e-Dilpazir, p.96.
². T.D., pp.96-97.
In the same way every human individual does perform new deeds yet their continuation and uniqueness does not seem to have an end. No human being has the capacity to discover the details of all these actions and deeds. If human reason at all could be of any help in this, there would not have been the great differences and controversies which we see for example in the religious domain etc. It is certainly the result of following the defective reasoning that in spite of all unity of kind, the differences among the individuals and communities soon approach the level of hostility. Likewise, if the physical state of an individual cannot be discovered without an expert physician, the state of human actions with the implicit good or evil in them is harder still to be discovered without there being a perfect spiritual doctor.¹

It is therefore obvious that in such things any reasoning can be acceptable only when we are satisfied in the manner of $2 \times 2 = 4$ or the divisibility of four or the indivisibility of three. Therefore as regards the beauty and ugliness of human actions, relying on one's reasoning in discovering the precise truth is no better than relying on one's irrationality

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¹ T.D., p.97.
itself. For discovering the good and evil of actions or the details of beliefs and moral excellence is beyond all reason, as it cannot provide perfect satisfaction.\footnote{Ibid.}

Moreover there are to be found such great differences in individual capacity to reason as is seen in the light of a candle and the light of the sun. Even more perhaps. Further for perfect trust and for total compliance, not only a perfect reason is required \textemdash{} being as bright as the light of the sun \textemdash{} but it must not have also any dust of desire, which often dims or blinds the best of reasons even.

Moreover if at all there should be someone having such a perfect reason, we are aware at least of the limitations of our own reason. Therefore people like us have no other way out except to follow someone whose perfect reason must be established by a perfect evidence, so that he may be fully trusted and followed. This is an important question and needs some elaboration.\footnote{T.D., p.98.}

2. FALLACIOUS VIEW OF FAITH:

In every community there are certain persons who are known as devoted to their Faith and closely related with God.
Such people are trusted and largely followed. Every thing said by them is considered as almost said by God Himself.

As for the reality of this intimate relation with God, people speak variously. Some people consider them as most intimate to God and knowledgeable of His mysteries and claim that they are a medium through which the divine commandment are made known. Therefore they call them the prophets and messengers of God.¹

In some communities such persons are considered as the son of God or an incarnation of God — i.e. their relation with God is believed to be that of a body with soul. The soul is related to human body intrinsically and it affects the body in many ways such as a man becomes thinner in affliction and turns healthier in good fortune, red in anger and pale in fear as also the soul is affected by physical conditions such satisfaction in peace and distress in disease etc. According to this section of people, precisely the same kind of relation — that of body and soul — existed between such persons and God. For the same reason, the words spoken by them or the deeds done by them were all considered of divine origin and their commandments were heartily followed.²

² T.D. p. 100.
It needs no arguments to see the truth when we consider these various views that God can have with some human individuals the kind of relation of a soul with body. Where we stand in relation to God with all our limitations and neediness? Pained some times by hunger and thirst, forced at the other time by nature, exposed every moment to cold or hot weather, subjected to disease and death etc! We would like to have no relation with a God who is no different from us. If this is the definition of God then we too can be God. Such a view has nothing to do with wisdom, understanding or reason at all. God must be such as to have no neediness or subordination to elements or laws of nature. He must be All-powerful and Almighty and not subject to the tune of physical forces.

Whoever is in need of all these material things, he must be needy to their existence in the first place. For, all these things need existence first.

Someone who needs food in order to sustain his life will be in fact needy to the whole world. It will become then paradoxical if God Himself turns needy to the very existence of the universe rather than the other way round.

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
Obviously the one who has a borrowed existence cannot be God. God is the One who bestows existence on others and exists by Himself just like the sun which is bright in itself and gives away its light to others. On the other hand in case of accepting such a religion, one will have to accept from the very start such irrational and illogical beliefs as cannot be acceptable to even a simplistic person much less to an understanding one. Thus a faith which has but basically futile and unacceptable beliefs cannot have ahead also but the same irrational and wrong direction which leads nowhere.

This can be more clearly understandable by the fact that every action must have a fountain as its source which can be nothing but the knowledge of that action. For instance the fear of a lion issues forth from the knowledge of the lion's ferociousness. This implies that if someone mistakenly takes a lion for donkey, he will have no fear at all. In the same way if someone happens to attend a royal court and takes an ordinary noble for the king, showing all kinds of courtly duties to him, it will not change the reality and he will be pulled and punished for his wrongly directed actions.

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3. **CAUSES OF WRONG FAITH:**

Thus the evil of an action is two-fold: one which is original as in case of theft, adultery, murder etc. the second which emerges from mis-understanding as in case of a good action done at the wrong place or time. This is still worse, as we have seen in case of the person who took the lion for a donkey or the one who directed all courtly duties to an ordinary official instead to the king. In both examples the action was right but was done at the wrong time or place... This mis-understanding is nothing but the wrong faith. ¹

A deeper consideration with regard to the cause of a wrong faith, brings to the fore mainly two reasons.

The first is the misunderstanding leading to the belief of incarnation. This is produced mainly from certain supernatural deeds performed by those considered close to God. Here the human reason fails, not because it could not distinguish between the right and wrong for which it has been bestowed, but because it has not been simply put to use. As a result that which appears extra-ordinary gives rise to the irrational and futile belief that God has descended in human form to this...

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earth and performed all the super-natural acts which otherwise could not have been possible.¹

The second reason which helps lead ultimately to entertaining a wrong belief appears to be uttering of allusive words which have the implication of a claim to divinity and Godhead. Moments of profound spiritual experience or ecstasy sometimes lead to utter words implying a superhuman claim that cannot be explained by reason. It can be exemplified by the state of an iron which is burnt in fire to become red hot. At this moment if the iron claims to have become fire itself, it will only reflect the extreme state of a sense of identification --- where all distinction and awareness of self is eliminated. The truth however remains as it is. Iron cannot be fire.²

Thus if both the super-natural deeds as well as the allusive utterances are to be found together in some person, many people will be apt to lose track of all reason, more particularly if the faith system also is devoid of reason and rational basis.³

It is therefore obvious that religious leaders, too, sometimes speak out such words as may have some metaphorical meaning. Certain people due to their deep reverence of priestly personages particularly the ascetics, do not fully understand the inner idea and apply the words to their literal sense only. A claim therefore which is accompanied with miraculous act is enough to distract many a person to entertain irrational beliefs and unfounded conceptions. Little wonder then if the Christian beliefs or the similar belief among the Hindus do not merit to be called as rational estimations much less to seek in them any arguments. On the other hand, such a big claim as divine sonhood or incarnation essentially requires so consolidated an argument as may not have the slightest possibility of an anti-thesis. ¹

Thus if the miraculous deed of a person can prove in him divine power — though it may equally be regarded as a divine benevolence rather than divinity itself — even then there are innumerable human limitations which clearly deny all possibility of divinity in man. These limitations conversely speaking, are equally impossible to be found in God. The maximum that the Christian or the Hindus can say

¹ T.D., pp.113-16.
according to reason is no more than that their religious patriarchs were but the vice-gerents of God or that they were the loved-ones to Almighty God.¹

In fact, the metaphorical usage of words without any pointers to reality is bound to lead many people astray. For the same reason it is prohibited or disliked that a wife be called a sister --- or the servant a son, as obviously it may lead to create misunderstanding and hence conflicts. In times of prevalence of such mis-conceptions a spiritual doctor must do his best to check the improper usage of such words as have caused or many cause distortions and mis-understandings in the conception of truth.²

Prophecy : The Basis of Rational Faith:

In case however, we perceive certain persons as chosen by God, they still remain human beings. There remains in that case no room for any doubts of divinity in man. Thus, if we consider certain persons as chosen by God and as having attained to cognition of Truth, then any distortions introduced by the followers in the Faith, cannot be acceptable much less authentic.

But if the very basic faith of the followers has deteriorated in its fundamentals and the very conception of the basic beliefs has given way to superstitions, then nothing can come out from the actions of such followers. This is because the human actions after all reflect the inner faith — be it a perfect faith or a deficient or distorted one. It is therefore only rational to assume that in such imperfect religions, law and jurisprudence which are normally almost non-existent in them do not find a suitable environment where they could be rationally developed or even understood.¹

The belief however that the religious leaders of certain communities like Christian and Hindus were divinely chosen persons seems to be acceptable. This is in the light of the fact that something which is considered generally an established fact and has no arguments for being considered as impossible, is not normally held wrong.² So far as this close relation with God and the chosenness of certain persons is concerned, the majority of those who can think with reason, concede and endorse it. It is just like the existence of a city like Calcutta which though we may not have seen, cannot be regarded as non-existent by us, for it is reported and endorsed by the whole-world and has no reason for disbelief. In the same

way those selected few in every community known for their righteousness, piety, selfless service and God-fearingness are regarded as having reached God or attained to the ultimate truth.¹