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SCIENCE AND

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WHAT do we mean by science or what is very difficult to answer this question directly because sciences, for many scientists, is something big, many-sided and far-reaching, rich with significance and potent in influence— and much more than it specific intellectual content. But both scientists and non-scientists are unabimous on the point that the term science has rariety of common usages.

Science, as it is commonly interpreted, is a body of organised knowledge. But this is only one usage. It, with equal emphasis, is spoken of as a way or method of knowing. It may also be viewed as an area of experience— experience with nature and experience in creativity. But this is not all. It may be taken as a certain attitude, point of view, or even, in a rich sense, as way of life. Sometimes it is identified with freedom of inquiry, critical thinking and the experimental approach in the attack upon problems. Therefore, without the due consideration of all these usages it would not be possible to tell the whole story about is and its nature.

After considering the different usages of science, we now come to the basic concepts of science.

It is but indispensable for the growth off science to have the three basic concepts :

(i) Belief in the one whole homogeneous universe. The universe should be one homogeneous whole. it must not be divided into different realms having their own divergent laws;

(ii) Belief in the law of the uniformity of nature;

(iii) Belief in the value of individual instance.

Uniformity in the laws of nature and the Unity of God

In the absence of any one of these concepts there can be no general scientific progress, though the possibility of the progress of science individually would remain open. The first two concepts are closely to each other. In fact these are the two sides of the same coin. Without the monistic universe there can be no universal law. If the nature of the universe is not uniform, how can there be any possibility for the uniformity of the laws which are operating there ? There are two ways by which the uniformaity of nature may be violated :

(i) By affirming the universe as the realm of different and perhaps reival gods who challenge one another's authority.

(ii) By dividing the universe into two distinct regions, the natural and the supernatural. It is but obvious that different laws will operate in different regions. With the lack of uniformity of nature there is no possibility of any Induction. And without induction no scientific law can be established and no growth in the scientific thought can be made. Therefore, the insistence on "one universe" is but an indispensable condition for the scientific grouth.

Not Monism but Polytheism was the creed of many primitive religions. Rival gods were recognised and separate functions and distinct regions were assigned to them. It is the unique characteristic of Islam which emphasised the unity of God in an uambiguous and unequivocal term: L'a il'aha illa-ll'an ("there is nothing to be worshipped except God") is the basic tenet of Islam. It remained immutable and unalterable from the Prophet Adam to the Prophet Muhammad and it is universal and everlasting in nature. The Qur'an declares: "Here is a message for mankind; let them take warning therefore, and let them know that He is (no other than) one God. Let men of understanding taken heed." (16 : 36). Each country and each nation had its own Prophet. Each Prophet in his own language the commandments of God according to the need of the time and the requirements of the age. But in all the preachings the fundamentals remained the same and these fundamentals are the, unity of God (Tauhid), belief in the prophethood, the divine scriptures and the resurrection. It is stated in the Qur'an: "Such of our revelations as we abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We being (in their place) one better or the like thereof. Knowest thou not that God is able to do things." (2:106). In sufi terminology it may be expressed that the Haqiqah remained the same but there was change in the Shari'ah.

Islam annihilated the distinction between the natural and the supernatural and this conception has greatly influenced the development of science. The Qur'an, in a number of verses, has emphasised the laws of God. Laws of God are operating throughout the universe. These laws are uniform in their application. It was commanded in the Qur'an: "God is He who raised the heavens without any pillars that ye can see; is firmaly established on the throne (of authority). He has subjected the and the Moon (to His law). Each one runs (its course) for a term appointed. He doth regulate all affairs, explaining the signs in details,, that ye may believe with certainty in the meeting with your Lord. (13:2).

There is no conception of superman in Islam. The prophet and the common man are equally subject to the laws of God. Here it would not be out of place to quote the tradition of the Prophet. The death of the only son of the Prophet coincided with an eclipse. The unbelieving Quraysh took it as a protent and wanted to accept Islam through superstitions fear. But the Prophet replied that the sun and the moon obey the laws of God and pay no heed to the sorrows and joys of either a Prophet or a common man.

Islam gives due recognition to the particular instance. It does not make any distinction between the transcendental and phenomenal realities or between Noumena and Phenomena in the Kantian terminology. It never recognises that nature or phenomenal realities are the copy of the supernatural world as it was asserted in Platonic Idealism of Maya (illusion) as it was declared by Advaita Vedantism, on the contrary, it asserts that the entire universe is the creation of God; It is real and actual, it is full of signs of the power and wisdom of God. The Qur'an describes: "And He it is who spreac out the earth, and set thereon moun tains standing firm, and flowing riv ers. And fruit of every kind He made in pairs, two and two: He drawett the night as a veil over the day Behold, verily, in these things there are signs for those who consider (13:3). Islam draws the attention o mankind towards the particular facts of the universe and through these facts invites humanity to ponde over the blessings and the bounties of God. Thus it becomes clear as crystal that Islam provides the basic concepts for science.

The Qur'an is scientific in nature

It would not be exaggeration if it was said that the very spirit of Islam is scientific in nature. Here by science we mean that freedom of enquiry, critical thinking and the experimental approach in the attack upon problems. When we recite the verses of the Qur'an, we find that most of the verses invite our attention for reflective thinking and stimulate us for the scientific inquiry. God, the author of the Qur'an, addresses mankind:

"This is a Book that We have revealed to thee, full of blessings, that they may reflect over its verses, and that those gifted with understanding may take heed." (38:30) Here are some of the verses in further support of the above contention:

"Seest thou not God sendeth down water from the sky and then earth becometh green upon the morrow ? Lo ! God is subtle. Aware.

(22:63).

"Unto Him belongeth all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. Lo ! God, He verily is the Absolute, the owner of the praise." (22:64).

"Hast thou not seen how God hath made all that is in the earth subservient into you ?" (22:65).

"And verily we have coined for mankind in this Qur'an all kinds off similitudes, that haply may reflect." (39:27).

"It is God who causeth the seed grain and the date-stone to split and sprout. He causeth the living to issue from the dead, and He is the One to cause the dead to issue from the living. That is God: then how are you deluded away from the truth." (6:95).

Here in this verse the terms "split" and "sprout" provide an extensive and a vast field for the botanists for their exploration.

"It is He who maketh the stars (as beacons) for you, that ye may guide yourselves. with their help. through the dark spaces of land and sea: We detail our signs for people who know." (6:96)

"He it is that cleaveth the day-break (from the dark): He makes the night for rest and tranquility, and the sun and moon for the reckoning (of time)." (6:97).

Evolution: the Qur'an and modern scientific knowledge.

The above verses provide the great astronomical universe such as the night, the day, the sun, the moon and the stars for the scientists and astronomers for their reflective thought. Giving these signs (Ayat) to mankind God says:

"Thus do We explain the signs by various (symbols): That they may say," Thou hast taught (us) diligently, and that We may make the matter clear to those who know." (6:105).

The Qur'an stimulates us not only to reflective thinking but it also brings home to us the experimental approach in the attack upon problems. Here, for illustrations, we would like to quote the problem of "resurrection" and the Qur'anic approach to the problem The Qur'an says:

"O mankind ! It ye have a doubt about the Resurrection (consider) that We created you out of dust, then out of a leechlike clot, then out of a lump of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed, in order that We cause whom We will to rest in the wombs for an appointed term, then do We bring you out as babies, then (foster you) that ye may reach your age of full strength; and some of you are called to die and some are sent back to the feeblest old age, so that they know nothing after having known (much). And further, thou seest the earth barren and lifeless, but when We pour down rain on it, it is stirred (to life), it swells, and it puts forth every kind of beautiful growth (in pairs). This is so, because God is the Reality: it is He who gives life to the dead, and it is He who has power over all things." (22:5-6).

The above illustration may be divided mainly into three: (i) the analysis of the human being— his origin and development, (ii) the analysis of the nature around the human being, and (iii) the conclusion. We would like to discuss here the first one, i.e., the analysis of the human being— his origin and development.

What a great psychological touch we find here. In addressing mankind God first of all addresses man directly and says:

"Think of yourself, I have created you out of dust," and then points out to him his development, growth and decay. How wonderful is the physical growth of the individual, from lifeless matter to seed, fertilized ovum, foetus, child, youth, old age and death. All the above stages are the experimental facts and these may be summarized under the broad term "evolution". We do not find in the illustration any vast experimental date in connection with it. We only find the different stages of growth of the individual, i.e., from inorganic to organic, from plant life to animal life; from animal life to human life Thus we notice that the growth is always on an ascending scale and it is from simple to complex. The second chief characteristic of this evoultion is that it is not mechanincal or spontaneous. God is saying categorically: "I am the Creator and it is I who have the all power."

Now let us examine in brief, simply in bare outlines, some of the important theories of evolution so that a comparative study may be possible.

Perhaps the first man who took up this problem of Evolution after the revelation of the Qur'an was a Spanish Philosopher, Iban Tufayl, in the twelfth century. He tried to present it through his allegory of Hayy Iben Yaqu'an. In this allegory he states the first version of spontaneous birth of Hayy Iban Yaqdhan. He says there was an island having a piece of low ground where some amass of earth got fermented in course of time. Due to the equable temperature of the place and perfect equilibrium of heat, cold, moisture and dryness that fermented mass became analogous to the human body and then was divided into two chambers by means of a thin partition and the a soul was joined to it by the command of God. After this Ibn Tufayl traces the different states of physical, mental and spritural growth of Hayy Ibn Yaqdhan and it culminates in the reconciliation between Philosophy and Religion.

Ibn Tufayl, in this allegory, attempts to show how from dust a human body was formed and then hastily comes to the proposition, "soul was joined to the body by the command of God". Thus he observes a complete silence in connection with the different stages of Evolution, i.e. from inorganic to organic,— plant, animal and human life.

Bergson.

Henry Bergson (1859-1941), a French Philosopher of evolution, a great opponent of materialism and mechanism, repudiated the Mechanical theory of evolution put forward by Darwin, Lamarck, Weissman, Devaries and others. He put forward the Creative theory of evolution and presented the concepts of "Duration" "Intuition" and "Elan Vital" for the explanation of his theory. He says; "Evolution regeals a struggle of the positive or active tendency, the vital impulse (Elan Vital) against the resistance offered by the negative or passive tendency and concludes that God is this central radiation of life", God thus defined, he says, has nothing of the already made. He is unceasing life, action, freedom. C. Lloyd Morgan (1852-1936), a distinguished English biologist and philosopher, in his book entitled Emergent Evolution says, "Evolution is a series of stages, in which there supervenes at each new level a new form of 'relatedness'— or as we should say, perhaps, a new structure or organisation— and from this new form of relatendness something new 'emerges' which is effective in determining the 'go of events' from that stage on. Thus, from matter emerges life— and from life, mind. The world is a pyramind with ascending levels."

But what causes the emergents to emerge ? What is the agency which lifts theworld, so to speak, from one level to the next ? Here Morgan definitely takes his stand on the necessity of affirming a power which he calls Activity, or Mind, or God, He even suggests that God acts from above as a drawing force. What a striking similarity we find in the expression of the Qur'an and the findings of C. Lloyd Morgan.

RELIGION