Dialogue on Religion and Love for Humanity

Excerpt from the chapter *My initiation into Layayoga* in the book **Layayoga** by Sri Shyam Sundar Goswami (Inner Traditions).

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Master said: "…..so long as God is sought for in terms of philosophic thought and reasoning alone, He will appear to be far way from us.'

I said: 'In that case, even religion does not help us very much. The priests have worshipped God ritualistically for hundreds of years in the temples, but how many often have known God. The One-God conception has been the ideal of many who go to the churches for the absolution of their sins and to be in contact with God; but they hear only words—empty words, and come back with that. Those who join in the mass prayers in the mosques tell us the same story. How many of them have real love for humanity? All these things show the failure of religion.'

Master: ' We have to go deep to understand the role of religion in human life. First of all, the rishis of ancient India have declared that Dharma—you may call it religion if you like—is perpetual. It is not made by man but remains as an intrinsic part of the cosmic world and in the lives of all beings—eternally. It is the grand support of the universe and all beings. It is Brahman—God who sustains everything. Therefore, the awakening of God within us and seeing God in the universe is religion.'

I said: 'How can religion be perpetual when a particular religion originates from a spiritual leader? And in all such religions there are great diversities. One says God is one; the other says God is many. One thinks God is without form, while the other thinks God has forms. One is of the opinion that, love for God is the means while others consider that divine wisdom leads to God. There are also prayers, ritualistic worship and many other means. Where does the solution lie?'

Master: 'First of all, you have to understand that religion in its real spiritual form cannot be created by a man. Religion is the natural spiritual principle, divine in character, which operates along with the principle of "cosmosity" in which the original creativity is manifested. It is the spiritual aspect of the Supreme Power which is all God. Therefore, it perpetually exists without any interruption. Consequently, it cannot be man-made. The *rishis* did not make any religion, but explained different aspects of religion which are always in existence. Neither did any "incarnation" found any individual religion, but expounded and strengthened religion which is eternally existing.'

I said: 'But what about Buddhism, Christianity or Islam? Were they not founded by men?'
Master: 'Long time after Krishna left our earth, Goutama Buddha came to this world. He can be considered as the first spiritual leader in India whose name has been associated with the introduction of Buddhism. Buddha revived yoga by his own example—yoga which had become corrupted and abused by that time. In his life, he showed how to reach the final stage of spiritual yoga. He showed how, by making our consciousness void—free from all

mundaneness, we could realize directly the ultimate reality where everything else is non-being. This is nirwana.'

I said: ' What about Jesus Christ? About Mohammad?'

Master: 'Jesus Christ was a great spiritual leader in Western Asia at that time and is regarded as an incarnation. He manifested his spirituality in that high degree, where his consciousness, raised above all worldliness, and in a state of concentration which contained God alone, became godly, and finally, the divine consciousness was reabsorbed in God. It was possible for his intimate disciples, who realized God in Christ and in themselves, to develop Christianity, through which, being spiritually inspired, they wanted to give the essence of spiritual truth to man for his salvation. `Mohammad also realized God within, in concentration, and wished to communicate the spiritual truth to man.'

I said : 'If such great spiritual persons as Buddha, Christ and Mohammad are the founders of the great religions, why are they not effective?'

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