

Role modelling God

WHY CAN'T WE
BEHAVE LIKE
GOD DOES?

by Suma Varughese

One of the issues that engages my mind all the time is how to behave like God, based on what we know of His conduct.

For instance, the one thing we know is that He has given us freedom of will. No matter how heinous our conduct – rape, murder, enslavement, violence and so on – it is never taken away.

We, on the other hand, never seem to be able to extend the same laissez-faire to others. Perhaps advisably so in the case of bandits and rogues (though as Christ said resist not evil is fundamental good sense), but surely we could at least borrow a leaf from God's book in determining our conduct with those around us? Most of us find it impossible to refrain from telling people what to do. And if we don't have that authority, then we sit in judgement on their acts. Why can't we accept as God does, that we are a work in progress and we will not only make mistakes but are entitled to do so, and that mistakes often teach us what nothing else can. God is willing to wait for us to unite with Him voluntarily even if it risks destroying the planet. We could extend a little of this faith and trust to our fellow human beings.

Imagine how much negativity would leave this planet if we could do this. Do-gooders trying to change how the other lives or thinks are responsible for a major part of the world's suffering. Recall the infamous white man's burden, which justified white invasion all over the world and conversion into their religion and culture. In retrospect the cultures that they forced to change – like ours, for instance – are proving to be so much higher than their own, ironically enough.

Secondly, God forgives. Infinitely. There is nothing that we can do that is beyond his forgiveness because such forgiveness is already inbuilt in his agenda to enable us to find Him voluntarily. Can we do this too, not just to others but to ourselves too? How difficult we find the act of forgiveness, especially to ourselves. I know that for a long time I had completely written myself off. I was incorrigible, beyond redemption, I

believed. And then I had a powerful spiritual awakening. What that experience taught me was that though I had lost faith in myself, God had not. God believed in me. That knowledge helped me to rekindle my lost faith in myself, and to forge along the path. If we could stay aware of God's infinite forgiveness, would it not be easier for us to forgive ourselves and others too?

Third, I am fascinated by the way God creates, which, if I have it right, is to allow creation to happen through Him. The way I see it is that there He is in bliss, just totally in a state of being, and such is His creative potential that creativity of the highest kind just keeps streaming out of Him. He does not orchestrate it – He just sets the space for it. Creativity happens. Can we also not approach creativity in that way – as a function of being rather than doing?

Fourthly, God keeps growing. The Universe, we are told, is expanding. There's no such thing as stasis. Evolution too can be explained as God's progressive path of growth from amoeba all the way to man. And who knows what's going on in other planets and galaxies? We too could model ourselves along God's line and use everything that happens to us as an instrument of growth.

And finally, God is ever in bliss. When you think of the mess we have made of our freedom of choice, one would think that God would be in tears, wringing His hands. But no matter what the situation, God's state of bliss is undisturbed. It's another thing, of course, that karma metes out an exact consequence for every action, but God is undisturbed. Imagine if we could cultivate such insouciance in the face of the terrible suffering each of us is witness to in the course of our lives. To take the cue from God, one simply accepts all that happens as indications of works in progress, and reaches out with love and compassion, without reactivity or judgement, ever in bliss, ever trusting and forgiving. And like God, where we can, we help create something good out of the bad. Here's a goal worth aspiring for. ☺



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