

LESSON 1

The Existence of God

Objective : To believe in God is not against the views of science and reason.

Bible Portion : Job - 38

Memory Verse : Job 11:7,8

“Can you search out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limits of the Almighty? *They are* higher than heaven—what can you do? Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?

Introduction:

Have you ever met atheists and felt that they have sufficient knowledge of God? They are not in good position about their knowledge of God. They remain unreasonable and foolish. It is a sign of pride for many to not believe in God and learn in Bible. So, we must learn the topic existence of God very seriously.

Various Views

Men began to think about God even before pre-historic age. Thus a lot of views related to the existence of God began to emerge. The term God is derived from the Greek route ‘Theos’ and Latin term ‘Deus’. The major fields of the study of the existence of God are Theism or Deism, Atheism, Agnosticism, Skepticism and Naturalism.

1. Theism: It believes in the existence of deity or deities. Monotheism is the belief in one deity where as polytheism is the belief in more than one deity. It usually includes belief in the existence of a specific pantheon of distinct deities. This process of worshipping had been derived from ancient Greece and Rome. It was believed that each clan has separate gods. We see in the Bible, ‘Dagon’ for Philistines and ‘Komeshe’ for Moabites. It is known as Henotheism. It is utterly against

our view of God as omnipotent, eternal, omnipresent and omniscient. Monotheism is the Jewish Christian view. Islam also follows it. Later we will learn how one can experience the existence of God.

2. Atheism: Atheism is the absence of belief in the existence of deities. There is no creator behind the formation of the universe. Atheists hold the view that one does not believe in the things which cannot be perceived with five senses. They go on with the view that God didn't create man in His likeness. Instead, man created God in his image. It emerges from materialism. Materialism is the belief that the universe is ordered invisibly by the matter that can be understood by our senses. Even Karl Marx did not find it reasonable. So he made a philosophy in the form of Dialectical Materialism, and also had to approve the theory of Evolution to substantiate it. Darwin's theory of evolution is unable to be proved scientifically. In his last days, Darwin had confessed the hollowness of his theory. The views of atheists are unreasonable and unscientific. One who professes that something is missing should examine everything at a time. It can be done by omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient God. Who can say that there is no God since atheists and scientists are not omnipresent? There is a reason behind everything. They profess that the living and non-living things are created naturally. Is it unreasonable to claim that there is no power of intellect behind the systematic creation of universe? They deny the reality which cannot be perceived by the senses. Do they not consider 'love', 'goodness', 'faithfulness' and 'sacrifice'? They are without matter. Electricity is a power. Though it is invisible to us, its results can be seen in the devices. Like, this, God is invisible and one who keeps a close relation will be received with God-given blessings. Psalms 34:8. In order to understand the foolishness of atheists, we should read 'Yuktivadam Shanidhasayil'?

3. Agnosticism: Agnostics are not sure whether God exists or not. They hold the view that there is nothing to think or act in that area. Jewaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India was an agnostic. Ingersoll was an agnostic and he denied the existence of God. It is foolish only to deal the temporariness of life and not to think of eternity. 'Although they claimed to be wise, they become fools' (Rom. 1:22, Ps. 14:1).

4. Skepticism: Skepticism is generally a questioning attitude towards God and the universe. So they cannot believe in anything and

have no opinion about anything. They lead an unhappy life after being fairly led to realize God and the universe through their knowledge. Man is unable to understand the mysteries of God (Job 11:7,8). Due to sin man became spiritually blind and deaf. Men's doubts will be clarified when they will be humble and go near to Jesus for the deliverance from sins.

5. Naturalism: It is nature that creates controls and rules the universe. In modern ages, nature controls the men. But it is not reasonable. They also hold the view that nature is God. The heart of men always thirsts for an eternal God who is above all the powers of the universe (Rom.2:21-32).

Advaita Vedanta :

One cannot differentiate God from men and nature. God is everywhere. All is God. This idea of thought is called advaita vedanta. The sinful nature of men reveals the truth that goodness is not present in them. Paul says that there is no goodness abides in him (Rom. 8:18). 'For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God' (Rom. 3:23). It is clear all over the world men become sinful in nature. How can each individual be considered as God? There is a need of repentance in everyone and should put on the new self (Eph. 4:22-24).

You have learned some of the thoughts related to God. We are the creatures of eternal God, and cannot perceive God through our knowledge. We will be greatly blessed as we confess our sins and humble ourselves before God. Thus we will receive the revelations of God. What is your spiritual experience?

Questions

1. Which are the major views related to God?
2. Define Monotheism, Polytheism and Henotheism?
3. What is atheism? Which are the theories behind its teachings?
4. Elucidate that atheism is contrary to reason and science?
5. Define Agnosticism and skepticism?
6. Define Naturalism and Advaita Vedanta? Establish that both are meaningless.