

## **Our take on beliefs**

Most of us are quite comfortable to lead a life nestled in beliefs. Our politicians paint a world for us and we are asked to share that world purely on trust, on belief that it is the correctly described world. And how we had been shortchanged throughout the history!

Our religions ask us to believe in the world each of them subscribes to, and again, in the name of religion, in the name of truth, in the name of God almighty, we are soon into it dividing ourselves as Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, etc, raping others, killing others, burning others who are different from us. Most of the wars and serious episodes of violence that the world had to endure so far are based on beliefs on ideas. You aren't like me; you have a different religion; you have a different approach to life – THEREFORE ...

That this "Therefore" insists on a grammar that doesn't rely on reason or impersonal logic but purely on my collective (and, therefore, an unexamined) understanding of "my belief" robs me my "individuality". I lose my identity. I become one of the countless adherents to a set of beliefs, be it proffered in politics, business, religions, education, or whatever we think our existence has meaningfully endorsed. My brain, that is composed of billions of neuron cells, pick up only those triggers it is comfortable with and then fire predictably along the same set of synapses storing them as memory, retrieving them again and again every time it responds to memory. As a result, my brain is no different from yours; we are no different from the rest of our neighbors, we all react more or less on similar notes with similar resignation or outrage. I cease to become an "individual" with a capacity to think beyond what the society thinks. I resign to what we fondly call the "norm of the society" with its own list of ethics (the dos and the don'ts).

Say, I believe in God. Why do I believe in God? Perhaps, I'm afraid. Perhaps, I don't know how to die simply without making it a crisis. Perhaps, I've needs that I cannot fulfill, and I assume that God will fulfill these needs for me. How do I know that there is or isn't a God that would take care of (in a sense defined by me) me? Well, haven't our rishis of the past, our sacred texts, and our traditions told us in so many ways the existence of God, of deities, of angels of mercy, etc? Why do you believe them? Why not discover the truth of God yourself? After all, if it does exist and it was revealed to others, why not to you as well?

But we'd like to believe. I'm worn out, I don't have any energy left for any enquiry, and therefore, I surrender to others: to my tradition, to my party, to my society, to my religion to complement me.

Fine, fair enough! But is living just being alive like an animal, or is it a process of a continual discovery that I am? When I personally discover in the depth of mine a Yamon Kalyan, is it the same as hearing all kinds of wonderful comments and critical reviews of Yamon as a rag? Do I see the immense difference between the two?

How do I get out of living style that is securely hinged on a belief-mode? Even if I'm wrong, even if I'm the only one opposing a popular stand, can I come out of all these intelligently (not as another belief, but intelligently)? Can I say NO to any shallow conclusion unless I SEE it logically diving with it to its natural depth assuming nothing, excluding nothing? Am I honest enough to say: This won't do! I need to know more, I can only move if and only if logic and reason dictate my movement?