

**PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE AND STRUGGLES TO SURVIVE IN YANN  
MARTEL *LIFE OF PI***

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The perspective of life is a philosophical question concerning the sublimity of life. Everybody has a specific present and future. The Quest of knowing that what we are and for what we are here. Many a times we think about it and discuss. But as time passes, these assurances become challenged and entangled in the many webs of our peers, co-workers, and our own mind. An alternative, humanistic approach poses the question "What is the meaning of *my* life?" The value of the question pertaining to the purpose of life may coincide with the achievement of ultimate reality, or a feeling of oneness, or even a feeling of sacredness. It may be defined and expressed in these questions or different forms, such as "Why are we here?", "What is life all about?", and "What is the purpose of existence?". There have been a large number of proposed answers to these questions from many different cultural and ideological backgrounds. Life is meant to be lived according to unity and forgiveness. It is up to each of us to look deep within our own beliefs, our own soul and our own life to see the wonderful creation of self, of God, of family and of nature and take back what is rightfully ours – life, love and the pursuit of happiness. In other words, the meaning of life is in the philosophical and religious conceptions of existence, social ties, and borders on many other issues. Science also studies and can provide recommendations for the pursuit of well-being and a related conception of morality.

The protagonist seems a religious character as well as scientific one. In the first part of the novels description of Pi's studies at the universities of Toronto and Pi's belief's and values. I attended the University of Toronto and took a double major Bachelor's degree. My majors were religious studies and zoology. My fourth-year thesis for religious studies concerned certain aspects of the cosmogony theory of Isaac Luria, the great sixteenth-century Kabbalist from Safed.<sup>1</sup>

The introductory part of three religions is highly appreciable and the reaction of protagonist about it all. He has different perspectives of religion. He says:

A number of my fellow religious-studies students—muddled agnostics who didn't know which way was up, who were in the thrall of reason, that fool's gold for the bright—reminded me of the three-toed sloth; and the three-toed sloth, such a beautiful example of the miracle of life, reminded me of God.<sup>2</sup>

The Performance of the protagonist was highly appreciable and he got many awards in his studies. These lines state his achievement. Overall the first part of the novel is based on faith and protagonist mantel development and his study.

I was a very good student, if I may say so myself. I was tops at St. Michael's College four years in a row. I got every possible student award from the Department of Zoology. If I got none from the Department of Religious Studies, it is simply because there are no student awards in this department (the rewards of religious study are not in mortal hands, we all know that).<sup>3</sup>

Novel is set in Pondicherry Protagonist's home town and in Canada but the action of the novel takes place in sea on which Pi survive. Numbers of struggle are being faced by the protagonist. Protagonist faces them all by his inner strength, faith and other qualities while facing all these difficulties he was sure that God will take care of him.

I love Canada. I miss the heat of India, the food, the house lizards on the walls, the musicals on the silver screen, the cows wandering the streets, the crows cawing, even the talk of cricket matches, but I love Canada. It is a great country much too cold for good sense, inhabited by compassionate, intelligent people with bad hairdos. Anyway, I have nothing to go home to in Pondicherry.<sup>4</sup>

In the beginning of the novel the protagonist highly influenced. The conflict among the three religions was a matter of great discussion and the force of three religious people to adopt their religion is also a matter of discussion. The question of the boy and his faith regarding mixture of three religion was highly appreciable as his plane, he want to pray in church in the manner of Namaj and he is highly influenced by the religious books he talks about Gita and bible, he provide money for publishing Bibal in more quantity and for the sake of marvelous act.

The priest broke it when he said, with pride in his voice, "Piscine is a good Christian boy. I hope to see him join our choir soon." My parents, the pundit and the imam looked surprised. "You must be mistaken. He's a good Muslim boy. He comes without fail to Friday prayer, and his knowledge of the Holy Qur'an is coming along nicely." So said the imam. My parents, the priest and the pundit looked incredulous. The pundit spoke. "You're both wrong. He's a good Hindu boy. I see him all the time at the temple coming for darshan and performing puja."<sup>5</sup>

Later protagonist says that Mahatma Ghandi was also in favour on religious unity. "He said, 'All religions are true.' I just want to love God," I blurted out, and looked down, red in the face.<sup>6</sup> The perspective of protagonist regarding religion is undoubtly mind blowing. He states:

Religion is more than rite and ritual. There is what the rite and ritual stand for. Here too I am a Hindu. The universe makes sense to me through Hindu eyes. There is Brahman, the world soul, ..... with our poor words we sew a suit for it—One, Truth, Unity, Absolute, Ultimate Reality, Ground of Being—and try to make it fit, but Brahman nirguna always bursts the seams.<sup>7</sup>

Being a boy he is not interested playing cricket and others children's work but he is highly engaged in the study of religious books while visiting mosque he create mistake and fear to scold but mullah ji didn't scold him but saying nothing except a smile that is the case the

protagonist join namaj and also attend worship of temple and visit church too. In this way he realizes that there is no differences among the religion but all are one and one goal oriented. That's why the novel is highly appreciated in the perspective of religious discussion. But religious guru complaint about him they say;

“What is your son doing going to temple?” asked the priest. “Your son was seen in church crossing himself,” said the imam. “Your son has gone Muslim,” said the pundit.<sup>8</sup>

Protagonist also says about his own religion. He forces to that I am a Hindu only because of my appearance and nothing else he says;

I am a Hindu because of sculptured cones of red kumkum powder and baskets of yellow turmeric nuggets, because of garlands of flowers and pieces of broken coconut, because of the clanging of bells to announce one's arrival to God, ..... because of bhajans being sweetly sung, because of elephants standing around to bless, because of colourful murals telling colourful stories, because of foreheads carrying, variously signified, the same word—faith.<sup>9</sup>

In the 15 th chapter, while visiting a house protagonist describe the all the details of house which were the mix up of three religion.

Upstairs in his office there is a brass Ganesha sitting cross-legged next to the computer, a wooden Christ on the Cross from Brazil on a wall, and a green prayer rug in a corner. The Christ is expressive—He suffers. The prayer rug lies in its own clear space..... The word God in Arabic. The book on the bedside table is a Bible.<sup>10</sup>

The description of lord Krishna story of rash (night dance) is highly appreciable in the perspective of love. The moral lesson of lord Krishna is only based on spiritual love that can't be denied. Pi describes:

But we should not cling! A plague upon fundamentalists and literalists! I am reminded of a story of Lord Krishna when he was a cowherd. Every night he invites the milkmaids to dance with him in the forest. They come and they dance. .... But the moment the girls become possessive, the moment each one imagines that Krishna is her partner alone, he vanishes. So it is that we should not be jealous with God.<sup>11</sup>

In 25 chapter protagonist states: “religion is about dignity not for our depravity”. protagonist's conversation over the way of prayer that “why can't be a Christian praying like Muslim” .protagonist was very much fascinated by the Muslim religion in the perspective of physical fitness .the atmosphere of mosque open air and the way of prayer attracts protagonist a lot he describes about mosque:

I came to Mullah Street. I had a peek at the Jamia Masjid, the Great Mosque, being careful to stay on the outside, of course. Islam had a reputation worse than Christianity's—fewer gods, greater violence, ..... Above, two slim, fluted minarets rose in the air before a background of soaring coconut trees. There was nothing evidently religious or, for that matter, interesting about the place, but it was pleasant and quiet.<sup>12</sup>

A controversial statement was given by the protagonist that shows his mental status and highly influential way of talking about mix up of two religions. He doesn't hesitate to say that "I want to pray to Allah. I want to be a Christian. You can't be both. You must be either one or the other." "Why can't I be both?"<sup>13</sup>

He also discuss about church. He visits church and says the good qualities of the church. He discuss about the status and marvelous scene and cleanness of church and the mantel status of priest.

I walked away and I dared. I entered the church. My stomach was in knots. I was terrified I would meet a Christian who would shout at me, "What are you doing here? How dare you enter this sacred place, you defiler? Get out, right now!" There was no one.<sup>14</sup>

Further protagonist describes inner side of the church and said:

There was no one and little to be understood. I advanced and observed the inner sanctum. There was a painting. Was this the murti? Something about a human sacrifice. An angry god who had to be appeased with blood. Dazed women staring up in the air and fat babies with tiny wings flying about. .... revealing kneecaps that were fire engine red. It was hard to connect this torture scene with the priest in the rectory. The next day, at around the same time, I let myself IN.<sup>15</sup>

Father told him basics of Christianity and the importance of life and death. He realizes so many things here. Whenever he thinks about thing conversation he feels somewhat special about life.

If God on the Cross is God shamming a human tragedy, it turns the Passion of Christ into the Farce of Christ. The death of the Son must be real. Father Martin assured me that it was. But once a dead God, .....Why not leave death to the mortals? Why make dirty what is beautiful, spoil what is perfect? Love. That was Father Martin's answer.<sup>16</sup>

Protagonist seems friendly with the conversation over religion. He was highly influenced by all three religion and their books he says many stories about lord Krishna and Bali and others. It looks just like he is a good preacher and so on. In the story of lord Krishna he discusses his universality and his universal power in these lines:

There is the story of baby Krishna, wrongly accused by his friends of eating a bit of dirt. His foster mother, Yashoda, comes up to him with a wagging finger. "You shouldn't eat dirt, you naughty boy," she scolds him. "But I haven't," says the unchallenged lord of all and everything, in sport disguised as a frightened human child. "Tut! Tut! Open your mouth," ..... not a pebble, candle, creature, village or galaxy is missing, including herself and every bit of dirt in its truthful place. "My Lord, you can close your mouth," she says reverently.<sup>17</sup>

Protagonist of this novel seems open minded and true hearted and away from all the boundaries of religion. He seeks good qualities from all religion and enjoys them as well as follows them toward the main achieving goal god. The differences of the religion is highly expressed by priest, pundit ji and Mullah ji the question of God when Pi says that all religion should be only one goal that should be achievement of God and the path of achieving god is

love. There is no religion oppose of god and humanity then why is argumentation is over the religion basis in that state nobody was able to speak a single word.

Second part introduce next character of the novel Richard Parker, in the beginning he fears but later on he loves him as protagonist adopt new situation and he displays great faith, hope and perseverance. Novel is based on inner strength of the protagonist and the introduction of second character Richard parker. He is symbol of fear but Protagonist Pi faces him boldly only because of his inner strength.

Between my feet, under the bench, I beheld Richard Parker's head. It was gigantic. It looked the size of the planet Jupiter to my dazed senses. His paws were like volumes of Encyclopaedia Britannica.<sup>18</sup>

Human being, living Isolation is a curse for oneself. The requirement of someone is essential for him. So he desire some one nearby him this is the case with the protagonist Pi, being ferocious, he thinks about saving of time he made many plans but no plan was exalted by him because of isolation at last the decision was very strong. He decided not to kill the tiger. Human mentality and humanism is also seems in this novel .the protagonist provide food as a fish to Bengal tiger and oneself enjoy he fears but only because of inner strength but he fell better by saving such a mighty creature.

Richard Parker has stayed with me. I've never forgotten him. Dare I say I miss him? I do. I miss him. I still see him in my dreams. They are nightmares mostly, but nightmares tinged with love. Such is the strangeness of the human heart. I still cannot understand how he could abandon me so unceremoniously, without any sort of goodbye, without looking back even once. That pain is like an axe that chops at my heart.<sup>19</sup>

During the voyage of 227 days, a mighty journey is being completed by him by the name of God and during his each step he thanks about God and realize the aspect that God will save him whenever this journey was over he reaches on a beach. The tiger jumps from the boat and run in the forest it was his farewell for the protagonist. Nobody is able to trust over the story of protagonist but he is satisfied by such great experience.

Within a couple of days I could stand, even make two, three steps, despite nausea, dizziness and general weakness. Blood tests revealed ..... I could wear shoes if I didn't lace them up. My skin healed, though I still have scars on my shoulders and back.<sup>20</sup>

In a nut shall we may say that this novel is highly appreciated because of its qualities and lifelike description of Protagonist faith in God and respect for religion. He says himself a man of universe because of his different perspective in religion next aspect that is inner strength, being a boy he posses inner strength. On the basis of that being alone he lives and saves after 227 day mighty journey. His mighty voyage proves protagonist inner strength. Yann Martel proves his quality in the 1<sup>st</sup> person narrative description and his own outlooks over religion. The novel proves itself one of the best novels over the theme of religion and inner strength.

## REFERENCES

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