

## Chapter - IV

### Conclusion

Both Hermann Hesse and Yann Martel have aimed to find the meaning and goal of human life through their novels. They both have presented a universal theme in their novels. Although, thirst for physical and mental comforts differ from person to person; yet the spiritual quest for true knowledge is universal. This ultimate goal of true or real knowledge can be attained by following certain principles and beliefs. In the selected novel, the noble human characteristics are found as - the protagonist's innate thirst for true knowledge, the virtue of being calm and tolerant, the art of listening, patience, continuity after sufferings, faith in almighty, conscious about inner voice, dreams. Even after having these virtues, there is always a need of spiritual guru to uplift man's spiritual desires, because the soul of human being is easily get trapped into delusions and get affected by Maya. But realizing the ultimate goal of life makes man free from these delusions. The ultimate goal of man's life is self-realization or God-realization. The goal can be attained through several paths, as observed in the selected novels- Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha* and Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*.

Although, both Hesse and Martel are European and Canadian writers respectively yet they were greatly influenced by Indian philosophy. A part of Hesse's childhood was spent in India, whereas Martel has also taken some trips to India. In spite of being foreign writers, they both chose India as the background of their novels. According to RadhaKrishnan, "The one doctrine by which Indian culture is best known to the outside world is that of '*tat tvam asi*'. The eternal is in one's self. The real which is the inmost of all things is the essence of one's own soul

(Religion 100). Both the novels show not only the spiritual journey of the protagonists but through their novels both Hesse and Martel also try to search their own real self. Thus, both the novels are autobiographical in nature.

The central characters of both the novel starts their spiritual journey at a very young age. They both have unquenchable thirst for ultimate knowledge. Though they both chose different paths to quench their thirst yet the destination is same. Both Siddhartha and Pi have to go through this chaotic world to reach their destination. As the novels develop and the characters mature, the protagonists realize the fact that this world is contradictorily designed for a reason and with a purpose. With the passage of time both Siddhartha and Pi accept this fact and decrease that dividing line which differentiates the binary nature of world. Siddhartha realizes it when he gets indulged into the sansara where as Pi realizes it when he tries to survive in the ocean. These circumstances show the concept of completeness and unity of the world.

In both the novel, the central figures are shown in restless position as the novels open. In *Siddhartha*, we can see that though Siddhartha is all's favorite in his family as well as in the society, he has very well learned Vedas and Upanishads and has learned the art of contemplation yet he is unhappy and restless and longs to find or realize God. He gains confidence and sees a ray of hope with the arriving of Samanas which finally gets detached him from the family and takes him into the forest where he lives the life of an ascetic. In *Life of Pi*, Pi is also stressed and confused firstly because of his name and then about religion. Not only Pi but Martel himself is in despair as it is shown in the 'Author Note' that his earlier books were proved failure and he is in desperate need of success. Pi's restlessness sets in when he shortens his name from Piscine to Pi and proves his rationality through irrationality. His confusion about religion also removed when he learns that all religious are true and man is free to occupy any of them.

At the next phase; it is quite easy to notice the restoration of spirituality that enables the protagonist to resume their journey. It is an inner counsel that keeps them going with conviction on their journey. The inner-voice plays an essential role in both the novels. In *Siddhartha*, it is his inner-voice which motivates him to leave the materialistic life when he is just ten year old. This inner voice guides him time to time and helps him to make right decision on every path of life. Even when he is filled with the sense of guilt and tries to commit suicide, it is his inner voice which awakes him.

In *Life of Pi*, Pi too is guided by his inner voice. It is inner his voice which does not let his hope down and keeps his alive for 227 day into Pacific Ocean. When he is surrounded by various difficulties, he is guided by dreams also. His dreams motivate him and fill him with the courage and also restore his faith in God.

The protagonists are revealed about their future through visions or dreams. Siddhartha's dream about the bird warns him as it symbolizes his spiritual death. Pi's day dreams make him forget about the sufferings and pains of life. Time is presented as an illusion by both Hesse and Martel. In *Siddhartha*, the central character realizes the illusive nature of time and totality of space through the symbol of river. In the hours of enlightenment Siddhartha envisions in the flowing river's water where every face from past, present and future mingle into one. He sees the faces from his father to his son. He also hears several kinds of voices of the world which mixed well and emerges as a perfect sound- Om that shows the unity of space. His friend Govinda too experiences the same timeless unity at the time of his enlightenment. To Pi also, time is an illusion that only makes people pant. Pi's survival is the evidence that he has forgotten the very notion of time.

The central figures of both the novels has outstanding attributes such as determination, patience, calmness, acceptance and adjustability in life, anguish rescued by faith, faith in own self as well as God, faith in the law of Karma and remorse. Finally the faith wins and ego is smashed.

In the First chapter of *Siddhartha*, the small boy Siddhartha stands before firmly before his father to get the permission of leaving home. His determination and patience has made him physical weak yet he keeps on standing. Thus, his success is the result of patience as well as determination. He doesn't become panic when he has a loss in business; he remains very soft-hearted and patient. Even when his son runs away he bears this pain too. After living a life as a sansari, a sense of guilt surrounds his soul and leads him to commit suicide but his inner voice save him. He very well has understood the reason of his son's leaving him. He knows that it is the law of Karma as he left his father at very young age so is happening with him.

In the novel *Life of Pi*, Pi's determination can also be seen at a very young age when he makes his classmates and teachers train through continuous repetition for whole day. The following of three religious at the same time shows his faith in the unity of all things. Even after teasing or opposing his father and brother he is clang with all three religions. Love is the driving force for Pi. He bears the loss of his family. He remains calm and patient with Richard Parker. These characteristics of his nature keep him alive and help to survive him.

In both the novels, the guru-disciple bond is apparent. It is a universal symbol. Each and every human being needs a guru or teacher on his spiritual journey who has already gained the ultimate reality of life. Though, in the beginning Siddhartha rejects the teaching of his teachers, but that it is not possible to gain anything without the teacher. Kamala is his first guru who makes his learn the art of love. After leaving the materialistic world, Vasudeva becomes his

spiritual guru who is already an awakened soul. Through Vasudeva Siddhartha Govinda gains the ultimate truth. In *Life of Pi*, Pi is also motivated by his two teachers named Mr. and Mr. Kumar. Their motivation leads him towards zoology and theology. He specially pays his gratitude towards his teachers. Father Martin, like a guru, shows him the right path of Christian religion.

In both the novel, the importance of meditation has been shown by Hesse and Martel. During meditation human's mind remains calm and rests on peace. Meditation or contemplation is one of the best tools to attain self-realization, that's why it is given more importance by all spiritual gurus. Siddhartha learns this art of meditation through Vedas and Upanishads. For Pi, it is the time of meditation when he does prayer. This is the power of meditation which keeps him calm in such horrifying situations. The use of meditation signifies that it is the medium to enter in the spiritual world.

Both Hesse and Martel have used journey as motif. Siddhartha's spiritual journey encompasses Brahmanism, Shamanism, Buddhism, and Sansara, recognition of vices, shattering of his ego and ultimately gaining true knowledge. Pi's journey also encompasses Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, animalized face of his character, return to humanity, remorse, attaining the meaning of life. Both the characters are on their spiritual journey to realize the Self and ultimately and consciously they realize the unification of self or atman with Brahman in their journey. Thus, both Hesse and Martel spread out the secrets of life and make a conclusion that attaining the true meaning of life makes life complete.