

## *Book Review*

### **THE SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY**

**Gauri Shankar Gupta, LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, Mauritius (2017), ISBN-10: 9786202071635; ISBN-13: 978-6202071635; Page 96, Price USD 19.**

H. E. Gauri Shankar Gupta is a very humble, down to earth, having deep insights of the most difficult aspects of life. We admire his great qualities of head and heart and consider ourselves to be fortunate to listen about his books and deep insights directly from him – a great Soul.

The title of the wonderfully written small book is very attractive as it deals with the aspects which are considered to be the two ends which are not likely to meet is the opinion of many people. The book deals with the most intriguing questions of life and provides answers based on ancient wisdom.

“Mysteries of life have always challenged human mind. What is this universe? How did it come into existence? Who am I? What is the purpose of human life? Does God exist? If so who created Him? These are perennial questions. Some sort of divine presence emerged as a human answer to these unintelligible riddles of our existence which were interpreted and named differently by different societies giving birth to multiple religions and scriptures. Ironically these very religions also promote blind faith and intolerance impeding human quest for the truth.”

The author has made an attempt “to rise above these narrow religious walls and rituals to explain the spiritual - a profound science that enables us to understand the power of the insensible and unintelligible. Most of these thoughts form part of the ancient Vedic writings of India. Given growing religious intolerance, mad race for consumerism, degradation of environment and ever-increasing mental stress and ailments these thought are more relevant today than ever before.”

The book has been organized in six chapters and the first chapter deals with the spiritual foundation of Indian Civilization. “The ancient India writings go into precise science of the fundamental questions posed earlier. They explain the origin of the nature and life and millions of different life forms.”

“Vedas consider the entire human race as one single family, therefore, universal brotherhood, non-violence and harmonious living form an integral part of Indian spiritual foundation.”

“Vedas go a step further and pronounce the entire universe as one single entity harmoniously interconnected, like the space, air and energy. All physical entities and the living species constitute one single harmonious entity forming the universe.”

The second chapter deals with science and spirituality. As per the author, the core of modern science is based on systematic methodology, physical observations, empirical studies, evidence, experimentation, induction and critical analysis based on human perception and reasoning. Whereas, “Spirituality is nothing but a highly advanced science that enables us to understand the self, nature of creation,

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functioning of the universe, nature and power of consciousness, nature and meaning of life and relationship between man and nature. Spirituality goes beyond the obvious and the physical in search of truth and enables us to discover the power of subtle and insensible existence.”

The third chapter provides insights about the spiritual science of the self wherein the author has cited many verses from Bhagvad Gita, Kathopanishad, Mahabharat, Mundakopanishad, Shvetashvatara Upanishad, along with their English translations in a very lucid manner to explain constitution of a human being and the existence of soul. The author states that “according to ancient Indian writings, the body is made of five basic elements constituting nature – Space (Ether), Air, Fire, Water and Earth.” He further writes that, “It’s like hardware in a computer which cannot function without software and electric power. This gross body is controlled by five senses of perception and five senses of action.” The author then takes us to the journey from gross to the subtle and proves that subtle is more powerful than the gross which one can see and touch.

The fourth chapter provides Vedic interpretation of defining God. This chapter has discussed the concepts of beginning and end, infinity, universal consciousness, sans attributes, sources of knowledge and bliss, followed by contradictions and conclusion.

The fifth chapter is on Swami Vivekananda and Interreligious harmony. Swami Vivekananda was one of the great souls who was a saint, a master and a hero. “Cutting across countries, cultures and societies he urged the humanity at large that the religions must rise beyond the mentality of a frog that lives in a well. Religions are expected to guide the humanity to the path that nurtures love, harmony, tolerance, forgiveness, and compassion leading to equality and unity of human race.”

The last chapter is on religions and spirituality which very rightly raises the issues related to the role and purpose of religion. The author writes that “if we follow this Vedic wisdom the challenges of climate change, degradation of biodiversity and other man made ecological disasters will disappear. Harmony between man and nature is as important as harmony within human race. Let us therefore follow the path of individual freedom, scientific reasoning, critical thinking, unity, oneness, love and tolerance replacing rigid religious structures based on blind faith and hatred for others. Live and let live.”

Overall it is an excellent piece of wisdom that has been written in a very lucid manner so that even a common man can understand and appreciate the deepest aspects of life and universe. We, strongly recommend this book as a must read book for one and all. It was a treat for us to go through this book and it is great pleasure with which have recommended this book as a must read book.

***– Professor Ajay Kumar Singh and Ms. Mani Goswami***