

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 R. K. Narayan and his Literary World

R. K. Narayan was born in Madras in 1906. From his early childhood, Narayan was firmly set in a disciplined track as his grandmother taught him Sanskrit verses and told stories from epics. He got proper supervision in his study. Migration from Madras to Mysore became one and only significant step of Narayan to enter into the world of literature.

Mysore was very different from Madras with much natural and manmade beauty, and Narayan rambled around a good deal and tried writing poetry, which was appreciated by his friends. Narayan got an opportunity to study in the library in his father's school. He read mostly the British and American magazines, which his father had thoughtfully ordered. He enjoyed his study and spending time with his brothers. Narayan was never a good student. He failed both in high school and intermediate examinations. He graduated from Maharaja College, Mysore, in 1930.

His first novel was *Swami and Friends* (1935). The novel became really creditable for the first attempt. From his very first novel, he chose Malgudi as a common place. Two more of Narayan's novels *Bachelor's of Arts* and *The Dark Room* appeared in quick succession. He started to write one book every two years. His famous novel *The English Teacher* (1945) was followed by *Mr. Sampat* (1949), *The Financial Expert* (1952) and *Waiting for Mahatma* (1955). *The Man Eater of Malgudi* (1962), *The Vender of Sweets* (1967), *The Painter of Signs* (1976), *A Tiger of Malgudi* (1983), *Talktive Man* (1986) and *The World of Nagraj* (1990) are his major fictional works.

Narayan is the creator of southern Indian town Malgudi near Madras where the actions of his novels take place. He is the highly acclaimed Indian author of his

generation writing on English. Declaring Narayan as simply the novelist, William Walsh in his book *R. K. Narayan: A Critical Appreciation* writes: "His writing is a distinctive blend of western techniques and eastern materials and he has accepted it in a remarkable way in expressing an Indian sensibility and home in English in his fictions, Narayan exhibits his interest in the different points of view to suit the stuffs of his novels" (6).

There is combination of form and theme in his novels. The technique or the form is the most suitable device of developing theme. It explores the possibility of subject and prepares the ground for evaluation. A. Hariprasanna emphasizes upon the theme of Narayan's novels in his book *The World of Malgudi: A Study of R. K. Narayan's Novels*:

One of them is man's susceptibility to self-deception due to entertaining illusions. It is the most recurrent and it provides an excellent field for Narayan's comedy. The others themes are: the renunciation, generational disaffiliation, conflict between tradition and modernity, the east-west encounter, education etc. Narayan's method is to treat his themes, not in abstract or in didactic terms but in terms of individuals in flesh and blood and their experience. And hence the universal appeal of his novels, although they confine themselves to a narrow region in south India. (9)

Narayan is not only the greatest novelist, but also leading writer of short stories in English. During 1939-1949 he did not publish novels because of the shocking domestic tragedy and the horror of the Second World War but he published many short stories. Narayan has chosen the middle class society which has similarity with his own class. His memorable characters are of all middle class. Upper class

characters and characters belonging to the lowest sections of society were outside his range and so they are seldom introduced, with any success, in his works. Narayan says about him in his book *My Days* “My focus is on the character, if his personality comes alive, the rest is easy for me” (9). His essential ironic vision bestows upon his art of characterization in a spirit of detachment and good-humored acceptance of incongruities of life in the world of Malgudi. Narayan does not have any difficulties and hesitation in handling the English.

Even when he covers a wide field as in *The Guide* and *Mr. Sampath*, these domestic relationships are still explored and delineated. He depicts men in the relation to each other than in relation to god, or some other abstract ideas, nor ever politics. Politics even contemporary struggle for independence was outside of his range. He had never meddled with it; he had no first hand knowledge of it, and so kept it out of his novels. It is only in *Waiting for the Mahatma* that the freedom struggle is brought in with disastrous consequences. The introduction of Mahatma is certainly melodramatic. However, his Indianism includes use of Sanskrit and Hindi words at places in his novels. As he moves towards the complex issues of life, his style gains maturity to convey his thought.

Through the use of imaginary town Malgudi, Narayan has tried to represent tradition ridden Indian sentimentality in almost all his works. Even if his mother language is Tamil, he wrote purely in English. In his novels, we find human relationship- relationship within the family circle and relationships centering round sex and money. We learn from them how to establish right relationship with other. Life must be accepted and lived, despite its many shortcomings, follies and foibles. This may be said to be the Narayan’s message but it has to be gleamed by each reader according to the light that is in him.

In the book *R. K. Narayan: A Critical Appreciation* William Walsh observes Narayan's novels as: "Narayan's novels belong to a different genre, the serious comedy" (79). Narayan's outlook is essentially coming that of a man who believes in the affirmation of life with leaving all its oddities and imperfections, follies and foibles. This comic realism makes Narayan capable of weaving an intricate web pattern of life where each minute detail and event however significant and absurd it may seem on the superficial level, turns ultimately to be meaningful.

Gentle irony pervades all his writing with underlying recognition that the follies of ordinary human beings can be accepted and looked at with amused tolerance and sympathetic reality. There is a realization towards the end that the discomfiture of individual's life of his own doings, a direct realization or result of his absurd aspirations and ambitions in a world where the individual loses his importance and merges the wider system. All this is done through a deep sense of horror rooted in the incongruities of life. Moreover, Narayan not only presents his protagonist's constant struggle with the unfriendly world but also the oddities and absurdities of other men and women in the various walks of life. Thus, Malgudi becomes the real town and stands for reality based on certain stable social values. It unfolds all these irregularities, passions and emotions of life. Narayan's novels are flexible enough to be used in a variety of ways. His fictional work ranges from the tragedy to comedy to tragic-comedies. His fictions explore ideas and ideologies spread messages as simply a mirror of life drifting into fantasy and present a slice of life to some extent romantic image. Bulk of Narayan's fictions are domestic comedies rather than tragedies.

Narayan neither exploits perversions of sex nor brings it in controversial politics. Narayan is a master of comedy who is not unaware of the situation of human tragedy. He is neither an intolerant critic of Indian ways of life and modes nor their

fanatic defender. Narayan is on the whole content to snatch Malgudi life's little irony, knots of satiric circumstances and tragic-comedies of mischance and misdirection. At his best he represents smile and tears together, smiling through tears in eyes and glimpsing the rainbow magnificence of life. In Narayan's novels, there is generally a flight, uprooting, a disturbance of order followed by return, a renewal a restoration of comedy. Lesley Henderson observes *The Guide* and finds its characters with an ironical presentation of human nature. He says, "Narayan's *The Guide* deals with the quintessential irony of what man can make of himself and of the entire business of living" (695).

As a novelist, Narayan is very much interested in human beings. His consideration of family, personal relationships and renunciation in relation to everyday life and experiences of men and women presented in concrete terms. His imaginary town Malgudi is the locale for all his novels, and the family provides manageable and convenient context to study different types of people, human relationships and human behavior. Narayan tries to present Malgudi as a representative society or microcosm of Indian town and limit himself on the middle class society. His comic quality provides a healthy corrective to the melodramatic, the sentimental and narrowly satirical perspectives. Rather than making any concession to any human weakness and follies, we find Narayan implicitly affirming certain values of life. These values are traditionally juxtaposed with modern and Indian, in a setting of Malgudi town to represent Indian society as a whole.

Narayan in his recent novels reflects comic gestures and the miracle of faith enacting its own mysterious sunrise in the minds darkened and deadened by galloping herds of sickness of modern life. In his writing, modern urban character are in clash with ancient tradition but ultimately tradition values triumph and normally return after

chaos. Narayan reflects human relationship and ironies daily life in almost all of his writing.

1.2 Criticism on *The Guide*

R. K. Narayan's *The Guide* is the novel which is written about a man who is turning into a Swami from ordinary people. Narayan was impressed by the reality and had written the novel. Narayan himself was on the opinion that his novel gave him popularity. This novel has been published into several languages and filmed also. Narayan expresses in his intention to write his novel *The Guide* in his memoir *My Days* as:

At this time I have been thinking of a subject for a novel about someone suffering enforced sainthood. A recent situation in Mysore offered a setting for such a story. A severe draught had dried up all the rivers and tanks. As a descriptive measure the municipal council organized a prayer for rains. A group of Brahmins stood knee deep in the water (produced a great cast) on the dry bed of Kaveri, fasted, prayed and chanted certain mantras continuously for eleven days. On the twelfth day it rained, and brought relief to countryside. This was really the starting point of *The Guide*. (131)

The Guide is a novel which has different examples of spirituality in different levels. The significant changes as Sadhu is similar to the belief of the Indian people toward the transmigration of a Mahatma who is more than any ordinary man because he is destined to perform the work for the welfare of the common people. Raju's returned from the jail and no way out compel him to be a saint. The Sadhu is a highly respected person in the Hindu society. The Sadhu is a person who not only renounces his personal property but also does great work of welfare for the people. He is the

entirely public figure so he is of the villagers. Neither he has self nor does he work for his property and personal desire.

In *The Guide* Raju has also different stages of life. His changes in the different stages are significant in the Hindu society as well. His change from a general guide to lover of Rosie is not only for the love of art but for the sexual desire, which becomes the economic prosperity. Economic prosperity not only increases the prestige in the society but also compels one to maintain the status in the society so a man is ready to do any kind of immoral work to maintain that status. Raju also can not be the exception of that fact so he does a forgery to save Rosie from the approach of her ex-husband Marco. As a result, he is imprisoned. After his release from the jail, he does not have choice but to choose to leave. He leaves the idea of returning to his village. He chooses to stay in a temple not because of his desire to be Sadhu but he does not like to be in the family and social tension. This is a myth of Hindu society that if one renounces his home, family and society, his status becomes higher than the ordinary people. Amitangshu Acharya also examines and finds that it presents a complex journey of the protagonist in which he passes his whole life. She writes: "In my views it is the story of one man's journey through a maze of illusions to the achievements of universal truth" (40).

The people have enormous respect of such people and they categorize them second to the God because they work for the welfare of the people and they are sacred. They have some supernatural power which is beyond the ordinary people. When Raju becomes Sadhu, many people have faith upon him, as a Sadhu as in the Hindu society. There are so many Hindu myths which are concerned with the Sadhus and changes occurred in their life.

Myth of draught and fast for the rain is found in Hindu religious books. The draught in Mangal is very severe so the villagers' expectation upon Raju, compels him for the fasting to get rid off the draught. The spiritual realization rain is also a part of Hindu myth. His change is from an ordinary Atma to Mahatma which status in the Indian society is respected and of great responsibility to people. People believe that they can do greater works than the ordinary people.

There are so many writers, scholars and critics who have differently viewed this novel, yet it needs to be a research work again. Unless and until it remains incomplete, if we do not analyze it from the social and cultural point of view. In spite of the variation in their views Narayan gets a lot of supports from them to justify this novel as a social criticism.

Meenakshi Mukherjee points out that the role of a pretended holy man, Raju, fits in the general pattern of life. She writes in *The Twice Born Fiction*, "Raju in *The Guide* drifts into the role of a Sadhu willy-nilly, and once he finds himself cast in that role of an ascetic. He attempts to perform the act with gusto, partly for the sake of self-preservation partly because it suits his personality wonderfully" (141).

N.N. Sharan shows the strange transformation of protagonist from material into spiritual one, though he is not a real swami except a fake one. Moreover, he also depicts the moral crisis in the life of the protagonist. He admires this novel and writes: "The title of the novel is very significant. It seems to sum up in one word the strange transformation of 'Railway Raju' into 'Swami Raju'. It also clearly indicated the all-pervading irony which influences the entire action by showing the moral crisis in the life of protagonist" (200).

Comic irony also covers a bit space in *The Guide*. The irony is focused on the performances Raju performs in his final phase of his critical life. N. N. Sharan writes:

On the first day he gets a chance to eat the stale food which he had preserved for himself. Next, deprived of all food, he thinks only about eating. After sometime he is convinced that food is not coming to him and he must shun the idea of eating. His argument: If by avoiding food I should help the tree bloom, and the grass grow, why not do it thoroughly? (13)

Furthermore, falsity governs upon Raju's activities that he performs by his own intention in the beginning and he is enforced later. What is supposed by the credulous and ignorant villagers from the protagonist is particularly false. He attempts to shun his role of the Swami because it has become a great task having no foods for many days. Therefore, A. Hariprasanna views the novel differently. He shows Raju's view that portrays what type of the protagonist he really is: "The protagonist finds himself in a remote village where he is mistaken for a holy man by a credulous rustic who unwittingly imposes that role on him" (118).

Moreover, it is obvious that the protagonist has not performed the role of the Swami by his own intuition, rather he is enforced sainthood. The society is completely selfish that Raju is requested, honored and worshipped to perform fasting-unto-death. Finally he is enforced, though he has no desire to perform the constant fasting, to fulfill the certain desires of them. It is because they have some problems like a drought. A question arises here that how a false and sinful person Raju who is supposed to be the Swami can solve their problems. A Hariprasanna again observes the novel to justify Raju's 'enforced sainthood':

Raju's self-indulgent mood does not last long, and when he opens his eyes at nightfall, the several gifts left by the villagers send a spear through his heart and make him unhappy. He realizes that they are gifts for a counterfeit exchange. His conscience pricks him, for he has practiced a fraud on the gullible and credulous villagers. He feels abashed. As an indication of this realization, he moves away from the gifts, and even blows out the lantern as not deserving the light. This significant gesture makes another turning point in his life. He learns that self-deception of this kind he has indulged in his no answer to the problems of his life. (109)

The study is divided into four chapters. The first chapter gives an introductory outline of the study with a brief introduction of the novel. This chapter will give a clear view of the entire work, accomplishments and relevant information about the writer and his writing. The second chapter develops the theoretical modality in this research work. It will establish the relationship between literature and spirituality. The third chapter of the research is an analysis of the textual framework. It will examine some extracts from the text to prove the hypothesis of the study. This chapter will serve as the core of this work. The final chapter will give a synoptic overview of the study. On the basis of the analysis of the text, it will conclude the explanations and arguments put forward in the preceding chapters. In this manner this will justify Journey from the Physical to Spiritual World in *The Guide*.

Chapter 2: Spiritualism

2.1 Concept and Meaning

The term spiritualism basically refers to the spirit or belief which is related to religion. It indicates the matter which adds the information about morality, ethics and so many religious aspects. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*:

“Spiritualism means the belief that people who have died can send message to living people, usually through a medium (a person who has special power)” (1475).

Spiritualists believe on God. They do seek contact with those who have crossed the border dividing the material world from the spiritual. Those who have died are still alive according to spiritualists' belief, but in different form.

The basis of spiritualism is the conviction that spirit is the essence of life and that it lives on after the body dies. Spiritualists' belief that the souls of the dead can make contact with the living, usually through a medium.

Spiritualism is commonly understood as the practice of religion in the prevailing environment of competitiveness, hatred, self promotion, material prosperity and usurpation of authorities. Spirituality, in a narrow sense, concerns itself with the matter of the spirit, a concept closely tied to religious belief and faith, a transcendent reality, and one or more deities. Spiritual matters are thus those matters regarding human kind's ultimate nature and purpose, not only as material biological organism, which is confined to worldly things, but as beings with a unique relationship to that which is perceived to be beyond both time and material world. Subjects dealing with matters are not spiritualism, and that the concept is incapable to say about the nature of the Supreme Being, or the cosmic and universal forces.

The entire philosophy of spiritualism as considered by many distinguished modern thinkers is a thought which accepts the existence of the reality beyond

material world. The truth as such accepted is beyond sensual perception of human being. The acceptance of infinity, morality, the god, immortality, soul is common concepts to all spiritual thinkers. So, spiritualism is the idea of immaterial identities which includes cosmic forces and universal mind. The practice of spiritualism is beyond sensual as well as material reach. George Lawton in his essay "Spiritualism A Contemporary American Religion" opines, "Spiritualism is not only a belief in spirits but in spirit as well. It arose to combat Materialism and is to be looked upon as part of the post Kantian idealistic movement in philosophy" (53). As such, the spiritual is contrasted with material, the temporal and worldly. A perceived sense of connection forms a central defining characteristic of spirituality-connection to metaphysical reality greater than oneself, which may include an emotional experience of religious awe and reverence or such states as Nirvana. Equally important, spirituality relates to matters of sanity and of psychological health. Spirituality is the personal, subjective dimension of religion, particularly that which pertains to liberation or salvation.

Spiritualism has also been understood as organized religion which believes that spirits of the deceased survive bodily death and communicate with the living usually via a media by means of messages. It is sometimes understood as the communication as dead and alive. Kantibhushan Chakrabarti in his book *Spiritual Life* writes, "The concepts of spiritualism is understood as a dead interacting with the living being, an intangible and immaterial spirit dealing with the living persons, dealing with the spirit something immortal and separable from the body at death, occult communication with the departed soul" (11).

George Lawton also has similar type of view. Spiritualism like all religious system is biased on inveterate reluctance of human beings to admit that death is the extinction of their own or their loved one's personality. For him, since the death of the

person is not the extinction of his soul, he can interact with the living one. In his essay "Spiritualism: A Contemporary American Religion" George Lawton further writes:

The chief business of spiritualism is the transmission of message from the dead. These people say that spiritualism is a science which may be utilized by anyone regardless of his particular religious creed or lack of it. Fortune telling has no more to do with spiritualism than it has to do with merchandizing, to communicate with loved ones in spirit and to receive the teaching that come from spirit is the purpose of spiritualism.

(48)

Spiritualism lies as an essence of eastern culture; which says to achieve spirituality scarifying material procession is the most. Westerns run after material quest and prosperity. They generally do not understand the core spirit of spiritualism which the eastern find in the sacrifice of material possessions and the practice of altruism.

Oriental concept of spiritualism is the observance of wisdom. It is termed as *Adhyatmikata*. The practice of control, compassion and charity is the key to the gate of spiritual life and the key is possessed through the gradual realization, which is practice of "*Adhyatmikata*". In understanding the Sanatana principle of spiritualism it is pertinent to comprehend the basic truth of the universe. Whosoever succeeds in such achievements of realizing the networks of the creation, the threads of the same and the threads of the threads, he realizes the supreme lord.

The spiritualism here begins with the aspirations and the inquisitiveness to acquire knowledge; the knowledge about Chaitanya and Jada, that is mind and body, consciousness and matters, discriminations and interactions amongst them. Origin of the soul and its passage and the destinations or the finality, Para-Vidya the science of

ultimate reality, the knowledge of the creator and Apara- Vidya, the mundane knowledge, the knowledge of the created. It is however instant and continuous with the formation of life in the human organs since the organs acquiring sensory capabilities commence of functioning with the anything in contact with. Chakrabarti further writes:

Spiritualism also deals with the traits of desire, vasana, sense-gratification, passion, repression and restraints, false ego accepting the body as the self, false ego accepting the soul as the self, aging process, ailments, materialistic living and balance living. At higher and advanced level it deals with the attainment of knowledge about absolute truth, the Brahman, the paramatma, the super soul. In this process Apara- vidya which is about temporary and ever changing elements relevant to illusion, false existence and unstable matter. (17)

As the spiritualism begins with the aspirations and inquisitiveness to acquire knowledge, it also deals the organic and inorganic elements functional in the process, discrimination of Sat and Asat, the knowledge of leading to ignorance and the knowledge leading to Enlightenment.

The understanding of these discriminated truth and illusion is the comprehension of spiritualism. And this understanding begins from the deep contemplation of the phenomena of the world. In his book *Japanese Spirituality* Daisetz Suzuki writes, “The working of spirituality begins from deep contemplation of the phenomena of the world, progressing finally to a desire to grasp the eternally constant something that is beyond the world of cause and effect” (75).

Spirituality may involve perceiving or wishing to perceive life as more important, more complex or more integrated with one’s world view; as contrasted

with the merely sensual. It deals with the actions, deeds and the outcomes thereof, the practices and methods of conducting the living process to acquire wisdom, to get freedom from the cycle of life, the birth and the death and materialistic existence. Many spiritual traditions accordingly, share a common spiritual theme; the path or tradition of perceiving and internalizing one's true nature and relationship to the rest of existence and of becoming free of the lesser egoic self in favor of being more fully one's true self.

So, to follow the dictums of conscience in the contemplations, actions, acquisition of knowledge, sustaining and conducting temporary existence of life and for achieving the ultimate goal is spiritualism.

2.2 Spiritual Quest

The spiritual quest is simply an attempt of few pioneer men to become aware of their spiritual selves. It is dedicated to find out who am I? The very idea of quest involves a passage, a definite movement from one place to another. Here of course, the passage is really from one state to another. For Paul Brunton spiritual quest is a clarion call to man to seek his true self. In his famous book *Essays on The Quest*, Paul Brunton writes:

Spiritual quest is the deliberate and conscious dedication to the search for the ultimate truth, freedom or awareness. It is a call to those who want inner nourishment from real sources, not from fanciful or speculative ones. It calls them away from things, appearances, shows, and external to show their inward being, toward reality. And such quest not only begins from heart but also ends there too. (4)

It is a brave struggle for freedom, a noble refused to be the ego's puppet of the animal self's victim, a fine resolve to win strength from weakness. In fact it is a movement in character from animality to purity, from egoism to impersonality.

What we can find here is, the person who is searching for spiritual life does not give any importance to his egoic self. One's quest for spirituality is his excessive desire to dissolve his or her ego. And there is no doubt that dissolving ego is the outcome of being free from inward bondages and attaining super-conscious. In his book *Essays on The Quest* Paul Bruton writes:

Spiritual quest is the continual effort of self-release from inward oppressions and self-deliverance from emotional obstructions. This is an adventure as well as a journey: a work to be done and a study to be made, a blessing which gives hope and a burden of disciplines which cannot be shirked. Here is a goal for men and women who can bring them the fulfillment of their best purposes, the happiness of being set free from their inward bondages and the calmness of knowing their own soul. (7)

So, the quest means disciplined emotions and disciplined living, sustained aspiration and nurtured intuitions. It is a method, a teaching and an ideal combined for those who seek a genuine life of the spirit.

Since the journey is about to discover the 'self', Hindu thinkers traditionally identify three yogas as paths to realization: karma-yoga, the path of ethical living and cultic ceremonies; Jnana yoga, the way of understanding and study, frequently involving active contemplation and Bhakti yoga, the route of loving devotion and service. Despite personal preferences, it is usually maintained that no one of these

ways is “better” than the others, and most practicing Hindu combine aspects of all three.

However, whatever the ways may be the desire of spiritual fulfillment is really the search for fuller and more lasting share in the divine peace; the true heaven which awaits us in the end whether in the freedom of so called death or in the confines of physical flesh. So, the desire to uplift our conscience beyond the world of cause and effect is the spiritual quest. It is an endeavor to lift to a higher plan and expand to a larger measure, the whole of his identity. It brings in the most important of him being essence consciousness.

The spiritual quest is a holy journey. The person who engages on spirituality is truly a pilgrim. He stands on the threshold of this path. It is the last and greatest journey of all. It continues to the end of person's days. After its starting there is no turning back. On the way, a person can encounter many journeys, difficulties, fatigues, obstacles, displays and allurements. In his book *Essays on the Quest* Brunton writes:

There will be certainly being dangers, pitfalls, oppositions and enmities too. Despite such hurdles, his intuition and reason, his experience and earnestness will constitute themselves as his guide upon it. When he happens to face such dangers on the way there is the possibility of deviation in our purpose as well. There is also the danger to the receiving soul of mistaking its momentary emotion for real religious earning. These momentary emotions are thus mistaken that continuous, real want of the soul will not come, and he will not find the transmitter. (10)

The difficulties on the way towards spiritual perfection appear in the form of doubt as well. When the aspirant becomes too doubtful, in such situation he may need

a teacher as a guide. He must join a particular group of attach himself to one teacher. The inner work must then proceed by the guidance of his own intuitive feeling together with the pointer given by outer circumstances as they appear. However, our first duty ought to be looked into our souls and find whether we really want the truth. Purity in every way is absolutely necessary.

When an aspirant is devoted in his quest he can fulfill it either the grace of God or his self-effort. These two schools of thought one of which says that spiritual attainment depends on self- and the other that it depends wholly upon the grace of God do not really clash if their claims are correctly and impartially understood. When a man begins his spiritual quest it is solely by his own striving that he makes his initial progress. The time comes, however, when this progress seems to stop and when he seems to stagnate. He has come to the end of a stage which was really a preparatory one. The stagnation indicates that the path of self- effort is no longer sufficient and that he must now enter upon the path of reliance upon Grace.

This is because in the earlier stage, the ego was the agent for all, his spiritual activities, whilst it provided the motives which impelled him into these activities. But the ego can never be really sincere in desiring its own destruction, nor can it ever draw from its own resources the power to rise above itself. So, it must reach this point where it ceases self- effort and surrenders itself to the higher power which may be variously named God or the higher self, and relies on that power for further progress. But because the aspirants is living in a human form, the higher power can reach him best through finding a living outlet which is also in a human form. So, it bestows its grace upon him partly as a reward and partly as a consequence of his own preparatory efforts by leading him to such on outlet, which is none other than a master or guide in the flesh. No man is wholly saved by his own effort alone nor can any master save

him if he fails to make effort. Thus the claims of both schools are correct if introduced at the proper stage.

However, fulfilling the spiritual quest in either way is not a romantic or dramatic adventure, but a stern self- discipline. It is continued effort of self- release from inward operations and self-deliverance from emotional obstruction, it is a homeward journey.

2.3 Monastic Discipline

The term spiritual is very loosely used nowadays. It includes in its domain but is not limited to certain state of mystical consciousness, certain religious mantel experiences, high moral attitudes and non worldly emotional reactions. Thus one man may be called highly spiritual although he may not have had any mystical experiences, that is, when he is highly moral. So, monastic discipline is not essential part for a person while searching spiritual awakening. Paul Brunton in his book "Essays on the Quest" also focuses on this fact and says that living a moral life is more important than embodying oneself within monastic discipline. According to him, a person without following monastic discipline too can achieve spiritual perfection in his life. He writes in *Essays on the Quest* that:

It is less important whether or not we live under rules than whether we live faithfully in the purpose which prompted those rules to be formulated. Whether a man stays within the household and secular society or whether he enters the monastic or ascetic one, his enlightenment is neither guaranteed by the second watcher, be he laymen or hermit he can defile or purify himself in either estate, grasp the grasp the truth or miss the point whether active in the world or enclosed in a religious order, ashram or temple. (129)

So, the purification of mind may be accomplished at home or it may be accomplished in an ashram-monastery. The point is that holiness is not necessarily limited to hermits and monks; it may also belong to householders. It is immeasurably more important to have inner detachment than to wear a monk's robe. Detachment from the world is an absolute necessity for the man who seeks authentic inner peace, and not its imagined counterfeit. But renouncement of the world is not necessary to any except those who have an inborn natural vocation for the monkish life.

2.4 Spiritual Enlightenment

Besides consciousness in the animal world (perception and action), and self-consciousness in the human (intelligence and will), we have spiritual consciousness or super consciousness, a level of experience at which new aspect of reality reveal themselves. At the spiritual level the individual becomes aware of the substance of spirit, not as an object of intellectual cognition but as an awareness in which the subject becomes its own object, in which the timeless and space less is aware of itself as the basis and reality of all experience.

When a person attains super consciousness, the soul of the present is unified with the super soul and becomes one with the eternal spirit. S. Radhakrishnan says such men discovering their 'self' attain super- consciousness and becomes eternal. In his famous book *An Idealist View of Life*, he writes, "The awakened man draws back from his mind, life and body and all else that is not his true being and knows himself to be one with the eternal spirit which is the soul of all phenomena" (302).

Spiritual enlightenment or awakening is the primary goal of almost all spiritual practices, traditions and religious and for any spiritual seeker. It is the truth seekers' goal in life. When the goal is achieved or when a person realizes his 'self', the enlightened life of the person begins. When one can live in the state of pure bliss

and carry on in the midst of his daily round activities he has become a jivan-mukti (a liberated person). This state is the “eternal present”, in which personal consciousness is transcended permanently. For such a person there is neither ego nor world nor other persons. In his book *Spiritual Discipline in Hinduism Buddhism and the West*, Harry M. Buck opines such man is free from the present, past and future. In his book *Spiritual Discipline in Hinduism Buddhism and the West* he writes that:

A liberated person is devoided of ideas of “I” or “mine”; he looks on the body as a mere shadow, an outer sheath encasing the soul. He does not dwell on the past takes any thought for the future and looks with indifference on the present. He has the power to know present, past, and future at the same time. He is the super human attaining super-conscious in his life. (18)

Such a person surveys everything in the world with an eye of equality. He is no longer touched by the infinite variety of phenomena; he no longer reacts to pleasure and pain. When the wall between his little ego and the infinite variety of phenomenon; he no longer reacts to pleasure and pain. When the wall between his little ego and the infinite being collapses, he is said by some Orientals to have entered Nirvana, the void and by others to have joined his soul to God.

This is the spiritual climax of one’s life, the dramatic moment when consciousness comes to recognize and understand itself. He will know that this is the day of his spiritual rebirth that struggle is to be replaced henceforth by serenity that self-reproach is to yield to self-assurance, and that life in appearance is transformed into life in reality. At last he has emerged from confusion and floundering and bewilderment. He is able to experience the blessed satisfaction, the joyous serenity of an integrated attitude wholly based on the highest truth.

The divine presence has now become to him an immediate and intimate one. Such man can perform some miracles which seem to be uncanny in general life. The person knows present, past and future at the same time. He is the master of two worlds like the Jesus. Paul Bruton in his next book *Enlightenment mind, Divine mind* opines:

It is natural as well as inevitable that one who has entered onto the larger life of the over self should show forth some of its higher powers. Such an individual's thoughts are informed by a subtler force, invested with a diviner element, pointed by a sharper concentration, and sustained by a superior will then are those of the average person. He has a better capacity to enjoy life and a truer expression of happiness than those who delight only in ephemeral pleasures and sense satisfaction. (73)

This is the condition in which a person becomes one with the ultimate entity and attains super consciousness. Now the person becomes god- like. As the god has no desires, the person also has no further desire after fulfilling his quest. It is the state of eternity, the ultimate truth or reality. The Hindu thinkers affirm the reality of life eternal or release from rebirth. S. Radhkrishan in his book *An Idealist View of Life* opines this state of awakening as:

It is the supreme status of being in which the individual knows himself to be superior of time, to birth and death. It is not a life merely future or endless but a new mode of being, a transfigured life, her and now. It transcends individualism to raise superior to the phenomena of time and thus escape from rebirth. Now the person need not face the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. (304)

Thus, Nirvana is considered as the highest form of spiritual practice which leads person beyond the state of death and rebirth. Therefore it is parallel of immortality. Sir Aurobindo in his famous book *Essays on the Gita* shares same type of view about the characteristics of liberation and says it is timeless, shapeless and beyond cause and effect. In *Essays on the Gita* he writes:

Nirvana means the extinction of the ego in the higher spiritual inner self, that which is forever timeless, space less, not bound by the chain of cause and effect and that changes of the world mutation, self blissful, self illuminated and forever at peace. He becomes the Brahman; he is unified in consciousness with the immutable divinity of the eternal self which is imminent in his natural being. (225)

So, Nirvana, the spiritual consciousness is the condition of being merged of soul and super soul, the state of attaining seperative consciousness, the destruction of extinction of limited seperative consciousness and it is the whole original and eternal and final truth.

It is a new dimension altogether, dealing with things eternal. This piece of Nirvana is reached when all the mental consciousness is perfectly controlled and liberated from desire and remains still in the self; when motionless like the light of a lamp in a windless place, it ceases from its restless action, shut in from its outward motion, and by silence and stillness of the mind, the self is seen within, not disfigured as in the mind, but in the self seen within, not disfigured as in the mind, but in the self seen, as it is mistranslated falsely or partially by the mind and represented to us through the ego, but self perceived by the self. Then the soul is satisfied and knows its own true exceeding bliss, not that untranquail happiness which is the portion of the

mind and the senses, but an inner and serene felicity in which it is safe from the mind's perturbations and can no longer fall away from the spiritual truth of its being.

It is the putting away of the contact away of the contact with pain, the divorce of the mind's marriage with grief. The firm winning of this inalienable spiritual bliss is the divine union; it is the greatest of all gains and the treasure beside which all other lose their value.

2.5 The Sanyasi in Spiritualism

The Sanyasi is especially, the word which is related with Hindu religion where a person leaves the family and renounces his all kinds of family responsibilities as well and he goes in the total solitude. There is hardly a society or religion, ancient or modern who does not honor or cherish the memory of one who has given up his all for the sake of strive for a noble goal. But perhaps it is India that renunciation has been given an especially exalted place in the Hindu view of life and accommodated in the system of values developed in this country. Respect for this ideal has percolated to all levels of the society cutting across all social Distinction of class and caste. It has been continuously an operative force in everyday life, both private and public. Such is the veneration, the man of renunciation- as ascetic or sanyasi- enjoys in the Indian society, that he finds an important place even in the realm of active politics, which is notorious for its restless struggle for temporal power. That is why Meenakshi Mukharjee says, "Renunciation has always been an Indian ideal, be it renunciation of worldly goods and possessions or the renunciation of selfish motives, passions and emotional bondages" (97). Ashramdharma, which is an important part of the traditional Hindu view of life, takes a comprehensive view of human nature and human needs. It offers a pattern of organizing one's life which aims at being physically, psychologically and spiritually satisfactory. Hindu tradition envisages four

ashram or stages in one's life of which sanyas, the stage of renunciation is the fourth and final. The other three stages are Brahmacharya (the stage of young celibate student), Grihasthya (the stage of householder) and Vanaprasthya (the stage of forest-dweller or hermit), in the order of succession. Each stage meets the needs of the individual belonging to it. Therefore, they are not set up in the opposition to one another. One is expected to move on, graduating as it were, from one stage to another after he has fulfilled the obligations of the stage he has been in. Explaining the rationale behind the four ashrams, Radhkrishnan says, "Every stage is necessary and in so far as it is necessary it is good" (65).

From the beginning of the novel, there are so many hints related to spiritualism. When the novel starts, Velan meets Raju at the temple who is sitting with sadhu's dress. As a sadhu, Raju persuades him that there is no man who has not problems in the world. Raju's mother worships everyday to the god. She suggests Raju not to go with girls. In the temple Raju always does worship. By the help of the one of the teacher of the village, he starts to teach village's boys'. There he delivers speeches related to Adhyathmabada, Ramayan, Mahabharata and so many religious books. Sometimes they sing good songs and chanting. In the opinion of Raju by praying the god men gets freedom and knowledge. Sometimes Raju cures children who are suffering from psychological diseases or other types of diseases by enchanting mantras and magic words. While the village suffered from drought, the swami starts fast for twelve days without eating anything in order to save the country. Raju's this type of powerful strength came from belief on spiritualism. So, by observing the novel from top to bottom there are so many facts related to the spiritualism.

Spiritualism is related to spirits or beliefs. It is related to religion. Spiritualism helps us to be moral and optimistic. In spiritual world man becomes hopeful, enjoyable and lovable. According to spiritual ideas, man gets lots of things which are important to live in the challengeable life. Spiritualism in a common sense is religion, one of the knowing and living. We accept all truths and endeavors to prove their validity. Spiritualists believe that the souls of the dead body can make contact with the living, usually through a medium or during abnormal mental state such as trances. It begins with the aspirations and the inquisitiveness to acquire knowledge. We can say that right understanding, right action, right thoughts, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration are indications of spiritualism. Actually spiritual fulfillment is really the search for fuller and more lasting share in the divine peace.

Chapter 3: Journey from Physical to Spiritual World

3.1 Material Life of Raju

The Guide, one of the best novels of R. K. Narayan, is about spiritualism because the protagonist turns into spiritual guide, taking up the job of a tourist guide. Once he is hired by a tourist couple and falls in love with the lady. He is able to rid the girl off her husband and helps her to become a dance star at the local level. But one day due to some forgery he is sent to the jail. When he is released he finds that he has lost all that he had and there is nothing left for him in the world. He wanders off aimlessly and comes across a village where the people start to believe him to be a blessed soul and idolize him as a semi god calling him Swamiji.

The trouble comes when the village is hit with drought and people are not having drop of water to drink. They turn to their Swamiji who knows he is helpless but nevertheless moved by the emotion and faith of innocent villagers, keeps a fast to please the rain gods. On the last day of the fast the protagonist experiences god and dies while at the very same instance the village is blessed with rain. At that time, Raju says to Velan, "It's raining in the hills. I can feel it coming up under myfeet, up my legs" (247).

During time when he is a tourist guide he loves with Rosie, who is dancer and departs from her husband. When her husband leaves, she comes to stay with Raju. Rosie wants to promote her skill of dancing but Raju starts loving her very badly even he becomes ready to renounce his mother and relatives as well. The real change comes in life of Raju when Rosie enters in his life. As a promoter and helper of Rosie in her dancing, he earns whatever he had never imagined in his life. His reputation, earning and relation with Rosie ends when he commits a forgery. When he is imprisoned, there comes the change in his life. He starts to act as an ideal prisoner so

he says: “I was considered a model prisoner. Now I realized that people severally thought of me as being unsound and worthless not because I deserved the label, but because they had been seeing me in the wrong place all along. To appreciate me they should really have come to the Central Jail and watch me” (226).

His activities, during time when he is inside the jail are really appreciable. He finds a kind of transfiguration in his life from a criminal to a very intelligent and obedient prisoner though he says that the place where he is at that time is totally wrong place for him. He might have been somewhere because he deserves the quality to be appreciated. His achievements in the jail have really brought the change in his life. He has very good relationship with the superintendent of that jail so he works in his office as a personal servant.

After getting released from that jail he makes his mentality not to return to his old place. He wants to say, “I am here because I have nowhere else to go. I want to be away from people who may recognize me” (8). Because of his desperate compulsion he can not return his home. He does not want to renew his past life so he decides not to go back his family life. So when he decides to stay there in the temple not because he wants to be great Swami but because he has nowhere to go and nothing to do. Hindu people believe that when one man renounces his family and society and stays in a temple he becomes a Sadhu which theory does not work in his case. His renunciation is not for the sacred work but he himself is unaware about the decision of leaving his home.

His meeting with Velan really brings the greatest change in his life. Velan, one innocent villager, comes to realize that the person who is in front of him is really a great redeemer. He thinks that Raju is a great saint and the villagers are lucky enough to get him there in that place. When Raju knows that Velan thinks him as a great saint,

a clever idea emerges in his mind that he will also start acting like swami because that is the only one way to solve his hand- mouth problem. So he says himself: “I shall be rewarded for this profound service to humanity. People will say, “Here is the man who knows the exact number of stars. If you have any trouble on that account, you had better consult him. He will be your night guide for the skies” (16).

His intention to be guru or swami to guide villagers towards the eternity of final truth emerges not from his conscious mind but through his unconscious choice. He starts to think himself as a great swami who can bring great change in the life of those innocent villagers. He determines to act as a great savior to them. Raju himself does not know whether he is changing him into swami or he is changed by the situation. He does not know he is trapping himself in a trap from where he can not escape easily. So he says, “Have I been in prison or in some sort of transmigration” (22). When he compares himself as a prisoner, it clearly shows that he is there for the job that he does not like to do from his own desire but from his compulsion.

3.2 Raju's Journey towards Spiritualism

The faith of the villagers starts to increase upon him when he solves the problem of Velan’s sister. He makes that obstinate girl ready to marry and obey whatever her family members tell her to do. The girl says with everyone, “He does not speak to anyone but if he looks at you, you are changed” (30). The girl believes that Raju has the magical power that he can change the condition of those people by only single look. That very belief of Velan’s sister indicates that Raju as really a great savoir to the villagers, though Raju does not know whether he deserves such quality or not. That indication proves that his change into a great Swami is paradoxical because he himself does not know what he is doing but other people believe that whatever he does he does intentionally. In the Hindu Spiritualism the sadhus are

prophet as well. They solve the problem of the people and forecast as well. He is also the same Sadhu for the people but he himself does not believe that he has such capacity which itself is a paradoxical.

Once, when he wants to test the opinion of the people towards him, he hides himself. He listens the reactions of the people. They say: "He is a big man, he may go anywhere; he may have a thousand things to do.... We won't have to fear anything more; it is our good fortune that this great soul should have come to life in our midst. It would be our misfortune if he went away" (32).

The villagers have great faith upon him so they say that it is great fortune that such a great soul is there in their place. His image among the people is a great swami who has responsibility to change the life of the people. They want to keep him at any cost because they believe that he can bring something more important in their life. Then the next evening the villagers do not come there and he feels the scarcity of food. He finds it is very difficult to return his place and fight for his livelihood. He prepares his mentality to be there and acts as swami. He does not have the capacity to face the reality of his own. So, he creates his own next reality though that is fraud for him as well. He cheats himself and those gullible villagers and decides to be a swami for his easy and prestigious survival. He can not redeem him from his daily responsibility but decides to redeem the people from their tensions. Meenakshi Mukherjee says: "The collective faith of people transforms Raju from what he really is into a worthy object of its devotion. Towards the end Raju loses the feeling of an actor performing an act becomes reality, the mast mask becomes the man and Raju the guide turns into a Guru." (qtd. in Tilak 142)

The sense of fear is aroused in him when he believes that the villagers will not return there. He seems to be worried not because of the problems of the villagers but

because of his food. His desperate need to find someone to take the message that he is there in the temple is fulfilled when a boy comes there. Raju gives him a banana, which is his last thing to eat which makes the boy to tell his message. The banana works as a miracle. After giving the banana the villagers start to gather there as usual. His confidence starts to develop more and more. He starts to give lecture to the villagers. He starts to focus upon spiritualism. So the narrator says:

He spoke to them of godliness, cleanliness, spoke on Ramayan, the characters in the epics; he addressed them on all kinds of things; he was hypnotized by his own voice; he felt himself growing in stature as he saw the upturned faces of the children shinning in the half light when he spoke. No one was more impressed with the grandeur of the whole thing than Raju himself. (47)

Through the preaching he starts to accept and respect himself as a swami. His self-confidence, to do the things that a swami does, has increased tremendously. His ability is to do the things to make villagers believe that he can help them for the godliness. He believes that all the villagers are impressed by his speeches. He can talk about many mythical anecdotes and so many things to follow and not to gallow as general.

His self-respect and love also are the example of hypocrisy. In Hindu myth the Sadhus are taken as the people who talk a lot about myth, god and truth of life. He follows the same way but he himself is unable to think what he is saying and doing. His pretension to have enough knowledge in the epics itself is a great cheating to the villagers.

The villagers demand to give them discourse because they think that they can get more wisdom through his discourse. But he does not have that much things to say

so he feels a kind of compulsion and says, “I have to play the part expected of me; there is no escape” (51). There is no choice but to choose to be a swami. He has no other ways. His interest is not so keen to be a swami but he convinces himself to save life physically and spiritually. That very choice to be a swami does not look like a renunciation rather than to gain knowledge and purify his soul. The attraction towards his life makes him swami.

In the demand of the discourse he feels very uncomfortable and finds him in great difficulty because he has nothing to say in his mind as a swami does. He starts to think it very seriously. He does not have the capacity to speak more in other subjects but he can speak well about his jail life but that does not work there. Raju instructs the villagers to reflect and recall every word they have uttered since the day break. But when someone asks with him about the significance of doings, he does not have complete, genuine and practical answer in his mind. So he says, “If you do it you will know why” (52). He mystifies his answer because the essence of sainthood seems to lie in one’s ability to utter mystifying statements. The villagers are incapable to understand what he means to say and they are not able to question about the reliability of the thing what he says. Again he says, “Until you try, how can you know what you can or can’t do?” (52). He drags those villagers deeper and deeper into the bog of unclear thought. He himself does not know the importance of his own instructions to the villagers but the way he has said is itself a mystery. So the innocent and gullible villagers understand it and can not raise any question in his reliability. He starts to develop his authority upon them and that very authority helps him to rule the villagers. Bhagwat Goyal interprets the novel in terms of the transformation of protagonist. He says: "The main theme of this novel is a sort of spiritual transformation. It deals with

the story of a Picardo who finds himself transformed onto a pilgrim, a criminal changed into a saint." (qtd. in Tilak 142)

His determination to be a swami has come into his mind so he decided to have long beard and hair. So the narrator describes:

Raju soon realizes that his spiritual status would be enhanced if he grew beard and long hair to fall on his nape. A clean shaven, close haired Saint was a anomaly. He bore the various stages of his make-up with fortitude, no minding the prickly phase he had to pass through before a well- authenticated beard could cover his face and come down his chest. By the time he arrived at the age of stroking his beard thoughtfully, his prestige had grown beyond his wildest dreams. His life had lost its personal limitations; his gatherings had becomes so large that they overflowed into the outer corridors and people sat right up to the river's edge. (53)

He determines to grow long hair and beard to be reliable among the people because there is the deep-rooted belief among the people that a Swami must have long beard and hair. Even the person does not have the required qualities to be a Swami, he can be the Sadhu easily when he grows long hair and beard. That person can be taken as a great Sadhu. The respect of the people towards the person who has long hair and beard and stays in the temple and starts talking so many mysterious things increase so rapidly. Raju is also well- aware of that fact so he also starts to do so.

Physical appearance is great proof to prove somebody a Sadhu. Raju also follows the same way and proves himself as a great Sadhu. A person can be authentic Sadhu when he has long beard and long hair. If a man renounces his family and stays in temple for his total renunciation but does not have long hair and beard, he can be

treated as fake Sadhu. So many people start to gather there because they believe upon him. M. K. Naik takes Raju's transformation as the central issue of the novel. He says: "The title *The Guide* seems to sum up in one word the tremendous significance of the strange transformation of the protagonist from a tourist guide into a transcendental guru; from 'Railway Raju' (as popularly known during his avatar as a tourist guide) into recluse Raju; from a forger into a fakir and a picaro into a pilgrim, and from a fake sadhu into a famous martyr" (54).

With the exception of Velan and few others, Raju never bothers to remember faces or names or even to know whom how talks because he thinks that he can be great and he has so many people to address and talk. He is belonged to the world now. His influence is unlimited. He not only chants Holy verses and discourses on philosophy, he even comes to the stage of prescribing medicine; children do not sleep peacefully at night are brought to him by their mothers; he pressed their bellies and prescribes a herbs. Though he does not have enough knowledge about the sickness and disease, he goes on healing the people. His fraud and fake authenticity has been established only because of the blind belief of the villagers. No one bothers to doubt upon his authenticity of the treatment and teaching. He says, "If he still gets no relief, bring him again to me" (54). He looks like a doctor or a traditional healer as well. It is believed that when he strokes the head of a child, the child improves in various ways as if he has such magical power.

His responsibilities are now unlimited. He acts as if he is only the responsible for any kinds of difficulties in their life. People believe that Raju can make very good decision so they bring him their disputes and quarrels for the decision over the division of ancestral property. He is a great public figure who has to perform so many roles. He has to set apart several hours of his afternoon for these activities. He can

hardly afford a private life now. He gets great relief when all the visitors leave him and he goes to sleep. He is doing all those things not because he deserves that capacity but because he has to survive. In his book *R. K. Narayan The Guide* Raghukul Tilak says : "Raju is spiritually regenerated .He is a changed man by the end of the novel. The fraud or picaro is thus metamorphosed into a saint or Mahatma" (139).

3.3 Challenges of Raju's Sainthood

The test of Sainthood has come when there is a great draught in Mangal. People believe that the rain god is disappeared so there can not be the rainfall. One incident or meeting of Velan's brother with him brings a great challenge in his life. There is fight between two villages and so many people are injured in that fight. But they do not like to give the message to the swami because they are afraid with the swami. They think that the swami can be disappointed with them for their brutal fight. Velan's half-wit brother goes there for the first time and informs about the brutal fight among people. He says everything what the villagers do not like to tell him. He explains each and every incident what had happened among the people. The condition of the village is totally brutal so Raju says with the boy, "Tell your brother, immediately, where he may be, that unless they are good I'll never eat" (100). The boy gets surprised and asks again with swami's purpose. He does not understand what the swami does not want to eat and why. The swami again repeats and says, "I'll not eat. Don't ask what I'll not eat till they are good" (100). He declares that he does not eat anything till they are good. He wants to say that they should be in peaceful condition. This good condition indicates the stop of war and brutality but the boy understands it in another way. He misinterprets swami's declaration. The boy returns in his village with a great news for the villagers. The draught has been severe problem

for them. They have no easy escape from the brutal grip of that draught so they are discussing about the draught when he returns from the temple. He says among the villagers, “The Swami, the swami does not want foods any more. Don’t take any food to him. Because, because it doesn’t rain” (101). The boy connects the rejection of swami’s food with the draught. The gullible and innocent villagers believe that the swami has taken the responsibility of bringing rain by doing fasting. The villagers believe that they have a great redeemer to redeem them in the form of swami. One of the villagers says:

This Mangala is blessed country to have a man like the swami in our midst. No bad thing will come to us as long as he is with us. He is like mahatma. When Mahatma Gandhi went without food, how many things happened in India! This is a man like that. If he fasts there will be rain. Out of his love for us he is undertaking it. This will surely bring rain and help us. (102)

The villagers feel a very great relief when they know that the swami himself has taken part in their problem. They compare the swami with Mahatma Gandhi. As we know that Gandhi was the greatest figure as a savior of India. He has brought a really great change in India. They believe that they can not suffer because they have a great savior in the form of swami. Mahatma Gandhi’s denial of food and swami’s denial of food are similar for them because both of them are the betterment of the people and both of the cases people are in trouble. They want a great relief and it is possible when there is a great soul to do so. The villagers have the belief that if a great soul fasts then that fasting brings rain.

In the Hindu myth we find same kind of incidents where a man either stays in a fasting for the rain or people sacrifice animals to bring peace in the society which is

a paradoxical. The difference between the understanding of the villagers and decision is really significant in the fasting.

But Raju is totally unaware about the factor what is running in the mind of the villagers. They have felt a very great relief when they get the news of his fasting for rain from Velan's brother. On the other hand Raju is in need of food. When the villagers come there and start to express their devotion to him, he is confused with their behaviour. Velan compares with Mahatma Gandhi and says, "Your penance is similar to Mahatma Gandhi's. He has left a disciple in you to save us" (107). They take him as a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi savior of the people. In their own rugged idiom in the best words they could muster and thank him. Sometimes they begin a sentence and can not get through with it. He understands that they speak with feeling. They speak restfully although their speech sound is bombastic and the babble is confusing but their devotion to him is unquestionable. There is so much warmth in their approach that he begins to feel it was but right they should touch his feet: as a matter of fact it seems possible that he himself might bow low, take the dust of his own feet, and press his eyes. He begins to think that his personality radiated a glory. He himself has a deep impression of his own personality. He realizes that he has a great soul of a Mahatma which can bring great fortune in the life of other people.

The villagers believe that Raju is in fasting for rain but Raju is not aware about that. So, when Velan asks him, he replies it as a normal man does. Velan asks him, "Do you expect it to rain tomorrow sir?" (108). His question is there to be sure whether Raju's fasting makes the rain or not. But Raju does not know the expectation of the villagers so he says, "Who can say? It's God's will. It may" (108). It was then Velan moves nearer and gives account of what his brother has told them and its effect on the population around. Velan gives a clear account of what the savior is expected

to do- stand in knee- deep water, look the skies and utter the prayer lines for two weeks, completely fasting during the period- and the rain will come down. The man who performs that is of pure soul and a great soul. The whole countryside is now in a happy ferment because a great soul has agreed to go through the trail. In *R. K.*

Narayan The Guide Dr. Raghukul Tilak says: "This is an act of supreme self- sacrifice in the noblest Hindu tradition of social and individual morality. The rain which Raju sees falling on the distant hills may be taken to symbolize the spiritual bliss which follows such an act of self- effacement. He dies but his death is his spiritual birth" (153).

Velan is mentally prepared to be a servant of swami though he knows the past history of his swami who is criminal. Instead of hating Raju, Velan encourages Raju to continue his fasting and bring rain in that place. Raju knows that there is not such an easy escape. He tells every detail of his life but that does not work. Velan's faith upon Raju makes his escape impossible. Raju thinks as if he is in very great difficulty and obligation so he says, "This man will finish me before I know where I am" (223). Raju wants to escape from that difficult situation. On the other hand Velan is there to oblige Raju to be there and perform the duty what the villagers have expected from him. At the moment of departure Velan says, "I'll go back to village to do my morning duties. I will come back later. And I will never speak a word of what I have heard to anyone" (233).

Velan accepts him as a powerful Sadhu who can bring real solution of the problem. We can see that there is no bad impact of the story of Raju upon Velan. Velan declares that he will not tell that secret to anyone. That very decision brings Raju into a great compulsion. Raju finds him on a hot tin roof from where there is no easy escape. His expectation has been wrong.

Slowly and gradually public interest starts to rise. The newspapers start to pay special attention towards him. Everyday of the fasting to be special and new day for villagers. He is named 'swami' by everybody. The newspaper describes the scene where Raju is present as:

How the Swami come to river's edge faced its sources stood knee-deep water from six to eight in the morning, muttering something between his lips, his eyes shut, his palms pressed together in a salute to the gods presumably. It had been difficult enough to find knee- deep water, but the villagers had made an artificial basin in sand and, when it didn't fill, fetched water from distant wells and filled it, so that the man had always knee- deep water from distant wells and filled it, so that the man had always knee-deep to stand in. (233-234)

The swami's secret activities start to be published among the people. Now Raju is compelled to do whatever is decided by the villagers. He is found there in knee-deep water chanting different mantras though he does not know what will be the result of his own works. The newspaper further writes:

The holy man stood there for two hours, then walked up the steps slowly and lay down on a mat in the pillared hall of the temple, while his devotees kept fanning him continuously. He took notice hardly anyone though there was a big crowd around. He fasted totally. He lay down and shut his eyes in order that his penance might be successful. For that purpose he conserved all his energy. When he was not standing in the water he was in deep mediation. The villagers had set aside their entire normal avocation in order to be near this great soul all

the time. When he slept they remained there, guarding him and though there was a fair-sized crowd it remained totally silent. (234)

Raju starts complete fasting for the rain and follows every step whatever is followed by a person who follows while fasting for the rain according to the Hindu mythology. He acts a like a real sadhu and does not like to notice anyone though a great crowd is there in front of him. He starts to believe that his penance will be success. When he leaves the water we find him in very deep meditation. Each and every moment he is surrounded by the villagers. The villagers are there for guarding him but they believe that their sound can disturb the meditation of the swami.

On the other hand, Raju has very difficult life to live without food because fasting is not choice. He can not deny the request of the villagers and also he can not run away from that place so he is acting. There are two realities one is inside the temple and another is outside the temple. On the one hand, Raju is supposed to be a real savior of the people and on the other hand he suffers from hunger in the absence of food. His fasting is fraud but the people who have enormous faith upon him go on believing whatever Raju says and does. Up to first fourth day when he gets chance to be alone during the time of night he enters inside and diarchies the left food. Even though he gets the food, he can not eat it openly. He does not want to leave any trances of doubt for the villagers in the reliability of his penance. The narrator narrates the moment when Raju enters inside and has his food in his way:

People all the watching and staring lynx-eyed as if he were a thief! In the inner sanctum he briskly thrust his hand into a niche and pulled out his aluminum pot. He sat down behind the pedestal, swallowed his food in three or four large mouthfuls, making as little noise as possible. It was stable rice, dry and stiff and two days old; it tested awful but it

appeased his hunger. He washed it down with water. He went to the back-yard and rinsed his mouth noiselessly- he didn't want smell of food when he went back to his mat. (235)

His desperate desire and needs to have food show that his life is depended upon food. His love toward his life has compelled him to cheat the villagers and eat the food hiding. Though the food is stale and stiff he eats it. He wants his life rather than that sacrifice what the villagers have expected from him. After finishing his food, he does not want to leave any kind of sign of his cheating from where villagers know his reality and kick him away from there.

Raju knows that if he does not declare that he can not act as a savior because they may be taken it as a great joke. He has his back to the wall, there is no further retreat. This realization helps him to get through the trail with a little more realization on the second day of his penance. Once again he stands up in the water muttering with his face to the hills, and watching the picnic group's enjoying themselves all over the place. The narrator very clearly narrates the desperate desire of his food in this way:

At night he left Velan for a while and sneaked in to look for leftover food in his Aluminium vessel- it was really an act of desperation. He knew full well that he had finished off the vessel the previous night. Still he hoped, childishly, for a miracle. He felt weak. He was enraged at the emptiness of his larder. He wondered for a moment if he could make a last desperate appeal to Velan to let him eat- and if only he minded how he could save him! (236)

He even thinks that Velan must know that he is not a savior but a common man like him because he was told the every detail or reality of his life without even a single omission. Then in frustrated and irritating manner, he bangs down the Aluminum

vessel and goes back to his mat. This shows that there is no such kind of devotion from him for the sake of great task. If there were food he would eat and pretend that he was there in fasting for the sake of the people. His activity as a Sadhu in terms of Hindu mythology is totally contradictory. He seems to be totally selfish and compelled rather than devoted from his heart. His abnormal activity like throwing the vessel shows that he has not that much maturity to conduct such a great work of fasting and saving the people from that drought.

After returning from his personal room he meets Velan who is really waiting a miracle and Raju asks a question about the noise that he made while throwing the empty vessel. He replies, “An empty vessel makes much noise” (236). That is the reality and says in the desperate need of the expression of his anger and frustration due to lack of food. He wants to cry and say that he is not the savior that these people are thinking about him. But on the other hand, Velan interprets that saying as a really great teaching for him because he thinks that whatever the swami speaks that is far beyond of his understanding and that carries real philosophical meaning. Velan says, “How many good sentiments and philosophies you have gathered in that head of yours sir!” (236). Velan deviates the reality into an ideal state of philosophy. Raju wants an easy escape from Velan so wishes that a crocodile should get eat Velan. But his wish can not be fulfilled because it has been a myth not a reality.

Velan remains around the great man because he believes that the great man is on the way of great and sacred work. He is ready to provide whatever is need for the success of that man except food. A storm of desire of food rises in his mind but when he gets no way to get food, he determines to be away from that food thought. So he says, “I’ll chase away all thought of food. For the next ten days I shall eradicate all thoughts of tongue and stomach from my mind” (237). The self convincing

declaration of learning the food and fasting comes not because of the sacred work but because of there is no way to get food. He convinces him and determines to be in fasting for ten days. That resolution gives him a peculiar strength. So he says quite confidently, "If by avoiding food I should help the trees bloom, and the grass grow, why not do it thoroughly?" (237-238) For the first time in his life he makes an earnest effort; for the first time he learns the thrill of full application, outside money and love; for the first time he does a thing in which he is not personally interested. Now he is ready to do something for the welfare of those people who have enormous faith upon him. He realizes him and he convinces himself so that very strength will help him in his great and sacred work. After that decision a dramatic transformation occurs in his life. His transformation has been described by the narrator in this way:

He felt suddenly so enthusiastic that it gave him a new strength to go through with the ordeal. The fourth day of his fast found him quite sprightly. He went down to the river, stood facing upstream with his eyes shut, and repeated the litany. It was no more than a supplication to the heavens to send down rain and save humanity. It was set in a certain rhythmic chant, which lulled his sense and awareness, so that as he went on saying it over again the world became blank. He nearly lost all sensation, except the numbness at his knees, through constant contact with cold water. (238)

Lack of food has caused him physical weakness but that can be overcome by his mental strength. He starts to enjoy which he has chosen for the protection of humanity. Though lack of food has created physical weakness, he enjoys the entire situation so he says, "This enjoyment is something Velan can not take away from me"

(238). Now he enjoys his condition and duty and feels superior to other people because he feels that he is only one capable person to do such a great and sacred job.

With the fasting of the swami the flows of people start to increase very rapidly. The hardly known place becomes the center not only for Indian but it also attracts the attention of the people from the entire world. Many people from the different parts of the country start their journey toward Mangal for the Darshan of Swami. Attention of the government has been caught for the protection of swami. The place remains as a center of transportation, communication, trades and business.

The magic of the fasting is powerful. Everyone who visits there likes to have Darshan of swami. They like to be in touch with swami for a long time. Velan is the in-charge of the security of Swami. When the people come near the swami and do not go away from there he says, "Please go away. The Swami must have fresh air. If you have had your Darshan, move on and let others have theirs" (240). People start to accept him as an incarnation of god rather than an ordinary man. People think that they can be lucky to get a chance of Darshan such a great soul.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

4.1 Willpower of Raju: Medium for Spiritual Journey

R. K. Narayan's *The Guide*, by presenting the story of a man turning into a Swami, unearths the false social and cultural values that exist on Indian soil. By observing the rustic credulous society, Narayan makes Raju, the protagonist perform certain rituals. *The Guide* reflects the realities of a small imaginary town, Malgudi, which stands for Indian society as a whole.

The Guide conveys how the Indian people continue with the superstitious values even now. The Malgudi community is very rude and forces Raju to perform the role of a swami though he has already declared that he is an ordinary man just like anybody else, not a holy man or a swami. Raju makes the people fool in a comical way but later on he is entrapped by his false promise to the people that he will bring rain through constant fasting.

Raju was ex- shopkeeper, ex-tourist guide and ex-husband. The unfortunate circumstances of his life transferred him into Swami from general man. During the time when he is a tourist guide he falls in love with Rosie, he commits a forgery. So he is imprisoned and starts to act as an ideal prisoner. After getting released from jail, he makes his mentality to go away from people who may recognize him. That is why he decides to stay there in the temple not because he wants to be great Sadhu but because he has nowhere to go and nothing to do. Actually his renunciation is not for the sacred work but for being saved from sight of society.

The faiths of the villagers start to increase upon him when he solves the problems of Velan's sister. He makes that obstinate girl ready to marry and obey whatever her family members tell her to do. When the villagers do not come to temple, Raju feels the scarcity of food. He prepares his mentality to live there and acts as

Swami. Raju starts to deliver lecture to the villagers focusing upon spiritualism. Through the preaching, he starts to accept respect as a Swami. Sometimes he feels very uncomfortable and finds him in great difficulty because he has nothing to say in his mind as a swami does. After a long contemplation, he determines to be a Swami having long beard and hair. Raju starts to work like a traditional healer as well. It is believed that when he strokes the head of a child, the child improves in various ways as if he has such magical power.

Gradually people believe that Raju can make decision. So they bring him their disputes and quarrels for the decision over the division of ancestral property. The test of swamihood has come when there is a great drought in Mangal. All the villagers have the belief that if great soul fasts then that fasting brings rain. They expect that swami will take fast for their living. But Raju is unaware about that. Because of the villagers' belief, he lies in very great compulsion to take fast. He is named Swami by everybody. The Swami's secret activities start to be published among the people.

Raju feels very difficulty to live without food because fasting is not his choice. He can not deny the request of the villagers and also he can not run away from that place. So he is acting as a Swami. His fasting is fraud but the people who have enormous faith upon him go on believing whatever Raju says and does. Up to first fourth day when he gets chance to be alone during the time of night he enters inside and diarchies the left food. After finishing his food, he does not want to leave any kind of sign of cheating from where villagers know his reality.

Raju's activity as a Sadhu in terms of Hindu mythology is totally contradictory. He seems to be totally selfish and compelled rather than devoted from his heart. His abnormal activity like throwing the vessel shows that he has not that much maturity to conduct such a great work of fasting and saving the people from that drought.

Towards the last days when he does not find any food for eating he is ready to do something for the welfare of those people who have enormous faith upon him. He realizes him and he convinces himself so that very strength will help him in his great and sacred work. After that decision a dramatic transformation occurs in his life and he starts spiritual journey from his will power.

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