

(MAX WEBER : PROTESTANT ETHICS AND THE SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM)

The most important contribution of Max Weber is 'Sociology of Religion'. He studied many great religions of the world. His study is in the form of three big texts. In his study, he has tried to show the relationship between religion and economic and social events. Parsons wrote, "There is no doubt that Weber was an exceptionally prolific social and economic historian in all relevant fields, and therefore could easily devote the rest of his academic life to a great historical study, but in doing so Instead you turned to a completely different field of study and devoted yourself to a purely comparative study of the existing relations between the religious ethics of all the great world religions and the social and economic organization associated with them. Through this comparative study, you have tried to prove that what are the elements in the social structure as a whole which are of central importance.

Weber spent his sociological life in expressing his ideas about economics and he also made important contributions about law, ethics and social history, but Weber's ideas about the sociology of religion are considered to be the most important. Weber made a detailed study of the major religions of the world and tried to know what is the relationship between religion and economic-social events. He published his study in three major volumes. On the basis of his study, he tried to show that why modern capitalism came first only in western countries, why not in other countries? For this, he made a comparative study of the religious bases found in different religions and analyzed their relationship with economic and social organizations. You have published the study of the relationship between religion and economic life in the book 'The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism'. Like Marx, Weber also believes that economic factors are important in social structure and social life, but like Marx, he considers economic factors as the only factor determining the social, political, religious, literary, artistic and philosophical life of man.

Weber's Intellectual View-Point of Weber *

Weber's religious views are mentioned in his famous work 'The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism'. In this work he raises the question of what is the origin of the idea prevalent in Western societies that "the duty of man lies in earning his livelihood given by God." This problem is related to religion and society in different civilizations. On the basis of his investigation of religion, Weber explained how the ability to justify economic life increased due to the influence of some religious principles and decreased due to the influence of others.

Weber started the study on the following three main problems in the sociological discussion of religion, they are:

- (1) The influence of major religious views on the secular policy and economic behavior of an average follower.
- (2) The influence of religious thought on the composition of the group.
- (3) Western civilization after comparing the causes and effects of religious civilization in different civilizations

Deciding on the elements of To find out the explanation of these problems, Weber studied the development of Western capitalism. He tried to know what is the pattern of religious attitude among

the capitalist people. Weber found in his study that in all societies there is a moral imagination in the minds of big businessmen that gods expect a person to do good deeds and also give him appropriate rewards and the person is punished for bad deeds. . According to Weber man acts according to religious beliefs. So that he may prosper and live long. In this study, Weber has considered religious factors as variable elements and its effect on economic and social events, it has been analyzed on the basis of causality. Weber believes that the causal effect of a factor can be judged only by studying examples similar in some sense and different in other sense. Keeping this in mind, Weber studied the six great religions of the world.

Weber, through his deep methodological insight, traced the ethos of Protestant religion that developed the soul of modern capitalism. He considered religion as a transformative element and showed how religion affects the social and economic life of human beings. your study

Based on this, Weber made the following conclusions about the sociology of religion:

(1) Religious and economic events are mutually related and interdependent. It is not fair to consider any one of them as the deciding factor of the other. In fact, these two keep influencing each other.

(2) We should not adopt one-sided approach in the analysis of events, we should not discuss an event only on economic or religious grounds, but also keep in mind the influence of other factors.

(3) Provided that any one of these factors may be considered as the basis of the method of study. A can be considered a variable element. Considering the religious factor as a variable factor, Weber tries to find out its effect on economic and other social events.

(4) Weber did not mention all the elements of all religions but only mentioned their ideal types. Similarly, the ideal types of economic factors were also known. It is clear that Weber has used the concept of ideal-type in his study of religion.

Weber studied the world's six major religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Islam and Judaism) to know the relationship between religious and economic factors, and took information about the economic ideas found in each religion. affect the economic and social life of the people concerned. Based on his study, Weber revealed that only Protestantism contained some of the economic practices that gave rise to modern capitalism, although other factors have also been responsible for this. Weber says that Pujaism did not flourish when Roman Catholicism was prevalent in Europe, but when Protestantism emerged due to the Religious Reformation, modern Pujaism also emerged.

Weber, in his book "**The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism**", has given special importance to 'capitalism' and 'Protestant policy' in the discussion of religious ideas, so it is necessary to discuss them briefly here.

Essence of Capitalism

His most famous and controversial book "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" was published on the basis of the articles that Weber wrote in 1904 and 1905 to explain the religious

influences on human economic behavior. has highlighted the problem of how the policies of Protestant religion affect the development of capitalism.

In his family life, Weber found a unique blend of individualism and morality associated with economic conduct. Weber's uncle Carl David Weber was the founder of an enterprise that was based on the village household industry. Weber observed that his way of life was characterized by hard work, lack of pretentiousness, kindness and reasonableness, which were reflected in the great entrepreneurs of the early part of modern capitalism. This led Weber to believe that capitalism was a special kind of morality in which the inclusion of many ideas could be seen.

According to Weber, one of the characteristics of the modern industrial man is that he must work hard. In his words, hard work is a duty and its fruit lies in it. A man should do well in his business, not because of the feeling that he has to do it, but because he also wants to do so. This is the basis of man's modesty and personal satisfaction. There is a famous saying in America – “If one is capable of doing the work, then it should be done in the best way.” According to Weber this proverb is the essence of capitalism because this concept is related to the success that a person gets in economic life. .

To explain the essence of capitalism, Weber compared it to another economic activity which he named 'traditionalism'. Traditionalism in economic activities is the situation in which the individual works less and wants more returns, prefers more rest during work, does not wish to adapt to new methods of work, gets satisfied with less income, tries to get profits suddenly and accumulates wealth irrationally. is. All these characteristics are contrary to the essence of capitalism. Modern capitalism is such a complex of interrelated institutions whose basis is rational economic effort and not speculative efforts. Capitalism includes a legal form of business rules, organized exchange centers, a system of public lending in the form of government debentures, and associations of enterprises whose purpose is to produce goods on a rational basis, not to trade them. Weber considered the economic activities of the privileged groups of Southern Europe, Asia, the Chinese officials, the Roman aristocracy and the landowners east of the Albi River as activities of sudden profit because they lacked moral considerations and rational efforts for economic gain, Therefore they cannot be equated with capitalism.

Weber is of the opinion that the essence of capitalism is not the only quality of Western societies, there have been people in other societies who worked hard to run their business smoothly, who used their savings to grow the business. and whose life was without pomp. However, the capitalist features that have been mentioned above are more common in Western societies. In Western societies, it became a common way of life, not a personal trait. Thus, hard labor, business ethics, public debt system, continuous investment of capital and voluntary tendency towards labor are the essence of capitalism, on the contrary, trying to get sudden economic benefits, running away from it as a burden and curse, is unprincipled. Accumulating capital and being satisfied with simple income for living, normal economic conditions or 'traditionalism'.

Protestant Ethics

After explaining the essence of capitalism, Weber Presented the reasons on the basis of which their origin can be traced to the ideas of religious reform movements. Before Weber, Petty, Montesquieu, Buckle, Kcats, etc. had expressed their views on the relationship between the development of Protestant religion and the commercial trend. Weber asked one of his students, Baden, to study

religious relations and the choice of education in the state. The conclusion of Baden's study was that Protestant students were more likely to enroll in educational institutions that were associated with industrial life than Catholic students. Another reason for this was also that some minority groups in Europe had made up for their social and political losses by hard economic labor while the followers of Catholicism could not do so. For these reasons, Weber concluded that religious policy

A correlation is found between and economic activities. Weber also observed that the regions and cities that accepted Protestantism were promoting efforts for economic gain. Weber also explored how the policies of Protestant religion became a source of inspiration for those who were in favor of logically seeking economic benefits. Protestantism is the religious ideology that does not accept the absolute authority of the Pope and in which the element of conscience is especially found. Moralistic outlook Collective tendency, honesty, loyalty to labor, all these are the main elements of Protestant religion, which led to the special development of capitalism in different countries of Europe.

As a policy of Protestant religion, this command of St. Paul was widely accepted - "The person who does not work, he will not eat bread ... and the rich, like the poor, also want to increase the glory of God to someone- Must be involved in some business. In this statement, the Protestant religious people have been inspired to work hard. There are other such sentences as Richard Baxter said, "For the sake of action alone God protects us and our actions, labor is the moral and natural purpose of man.....only It is through hard work that the highest service and respect of God can be achieved." St. John Bunyan also said, "It will not be said what you believed, only whether you worked hard, or were only talkative." In this way, in Protestant religion, active life, diligence, good use of time, talking in vain, not sleeping too much and working in the place of meditation of God, etc. have been kept under the rules of life of a person, which can be called Protestant policy.

Weber also mentions the economic ethos found in Protestantism that gave rise to modern capitalism. Benjamin Franklin has mentioned the teachings and teachings of modern capitalism which are necessary to become successful businessmen and capitalists. They are—"Time is money", "Money is earned by money", "Saving a penny is earning a penny", "Honesty is the best policy", "Early to bed and early to rise make a person healthy, wealthy and wise." creates", "work is worship", etc. Weber compared the ethos of Protestantism to that of other religions in the world and came to the conclusion that only Protestantism is the one whose economic consequences are more obvious and far-reaching. This religion insists on people to be honest and enthusiastic, to work hard, to be frugal and to save money which is necessary for the development of capitalism. If these principles and teachings were not there then even modern capitalism would not be possible. We are Protestant religion here. Explain the ethos that influenced economic life in Europe.

(1) **Work is Worship**—Working is considered good in Protestant religion, on the contrary, earning hard work in Catholicism is sin and punishment. The saga is prevalent in Catholicism in this context. When Adam and Eve were in heaven, God forbade them to eat the fruit of a tree. By eating the fruit of this tree, one gets the knowledge of good and bad. One day both of them ate the fruit of that tree, then God got angry and expelled them from heaven and sent them to earth and cursed that Eve and her daughters would have children from the suffering and Adam and his letters worked hard, sweating, bread and bread. Will earn It is clear from this that working hard in Catholicism is not a good thing but a punishment. Whereas Protestant religion considers karma to be a paja and one can attain God through

hard work. Thus Protestant religion emphasizes labor which has contributed to the development of capitalism.

(2) **Calvinism** - Calvinism Protestant religion believes that only on the basis of the professional success and failure achieved in one's life, it can be said that after death his soul will go to heaven or hell, so every person This moral education is given to him that he should work hard and achieve professional success. This pleases God, heaven is free and not just by going to the church. This Protestant ethos also facilitated the development of capitalism, as hard work, enthusiasm and commercial success are essential to capitalism.

(3) **Exemption to charge interest**—In Protestant religion it is considered good to earn money from money, that is, a person One can also earn money by giving money on interest. On the contrary, taking interest in Catholicism and Islam is considered bad. In this way the acceptance of earning money by paying interest also gave a boost to capitalism.

(4) **Prohibition of alcoholism and promotion of honesty** - In Protestant religion, drinking alcohol and going to work after drinking has been considered improper and proper to act honestly. Working on a machine while intoxicated is life threatening. In this way, the capitalist system got a boost even after curbing alcoholism.

(5) **Prohibition on leave** - In Protestant religion, it is also considered improper to take leave in one's work for an unreasonable time. For the success of capitalism, it is necessary to work more and take less leave.

Weber has not only considered the above ethos of Protestant religion as the only factor for the development of capitalism, but has also given importance to other factors, so he can be called multifactorial. -

Weber gathered historical evidence from different countries of Europe to confirm his point. In Italy and Spain, where Catholicism has more followers, the development of capitalism was less than in England, America and Holland. There are more followers of Protestant religion in England, America and Holland. Weber studied religions practiced in non-Western countries such as Confucianism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism and said that the economic ideas of these religions lack the elements that would have given rise to modern capitalism. For example, taking interest is considered inappropriate in Islam. Hinduism lays more emphasis on spiritualism than on materialism. On the basis of the principle of karmavada, on the basis of the karma of the previous birth, the fruit in this birth is obtained. Similarly, the rigid rules of caste do not allow a person to give up the occupation of his caste and there is a profession fixed for each caste. Hinduism gives birth to a social system in which social mobility is not possible. In this way, Weber tried to explain the development of Protestant ethics and modern capitalism on the basis of causality and considered Protestant ethics as an influential factor for the development of capitalism. Although other factors have also been responsible for its development.

Relation of Capitalism and Protestant Ethics

From the study of 'the essence of capitalism' and 'Protestant policies', Weber found many dissimilarities in their grounds and on this basis he explained cause and effect. because of his Protestant policy

and considered capitalism as the result. Weber studied the impact of religious unions and changes in their beliefs on human behavior in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Initially, many religious associations considered the collection of money and material things as proper, but later it was kept in the category of irreligion and disinterest was justified. This notion of detachment also influenced the modern capitalist economy. Weber tried to explain on the basis of historical evidence that Protestant policies have been helpful for the beginning and development of capitalism in many countries in Europe. The moral teachings of the Protestant religion gradually became ingrained in the lives of all its followers and they began to consider hard work to earn a living and this belief played an important role in the development of capitalism.

Study of the Great Religions of the World

In order to find out the mutual relationship between religion and economic structure, Weber studied the six great religions of the world, Confucian, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism and Islam. He explained the main principles of these religions and the economic policies influenced by them. We are Confucian, Hindu by him and will briefly mention here the correlation of religion and economic structure in Jewish studies.

Weber has mentioned Confucius and Taoism in detail in his book 'The Religion of China'. In a part of it, Weber has clarified that due to the difference in the policies of Confucian and Protestant religions, the difference in economic attitudes prevailing in Chinese and Western societies is found. In Confucian religion, there is no tension between the moral need of God and human weakness, the need for sin and salvation, the conduct of the worldly life and the rewards of the transcendental life, religious duty and socio-political reality, etc. This religion stresses its followers only on adapting to the present form of the world and not on changing themselves according to any particular ideals. This religion also emphasizes on maintaining the traditional style of family relations. Thus it emphasizes on the people of the religion to be bound by tradition and custom and not to be free from them. This religion insisted on maintaining China's traditional political system, in which the emperor was treated as god-like. In contrast, in western societies, family relations were not given much importance and there was more emphasis on the observance of moral principles than on family duties. From an economic point of view, this means that the business reputation of a person depends on his moral characteristics. In the economic and political teachings of Confucian religion, the matter of public welfare has been exaggerated, but there is no such proper meaning in it. That there is no attitude that can serve the purpose of these religious policies. In contrast, labor in Protestantism

And the policies of karma, which promoted the accumulation of capital and rational thought, played an important role in the development of capitalism.

Weber gave another example of Hinduism. In the book 'The Religion of India' which was published after his death, Weber has mentioned those things of Hinduism due to which the new economy (capitalism) could not develop in India. Weber is of the opinion that Hinduism is actually a Brahmin religion which was founded and developed by those Brahmin priests, theologians and jurists who were proficient in diplomacy and knowledge of miraculous rituals. According to Weber, there are two principles in Hinduism - one of reincarnation and the other of karma. In these principles it is said that the actions of a man have an effect on the fate of his next birth and that the social position of every Hindu is tied in the caste system. With the help of these ideas, the Brahmins told that the liberation of a person is possible

only by fulfilling the duties prescribed by his caste. It is also clear from the religious policies that only brahmins are entitled to salvation because the virtues needed to attain salvation cannot be earned by other persons. The judicial system of Hinduism is also in favor of Brahmins, which prohibits atrocities on Brahmins and also rejects justice against Brahmins. Brahmins have been considered as sin-saviors and advisors in the society and it is they who developed the Indian caste system and made it effective.

Nowhere in the world did religious priests get as high a respect as in India and to confirm their high esteem. False arguments and proofs were not developed. The aim of the policies of Hinduism is to drive away from the world of senses and impulses, to liberate one from the hustle and bustle of life and to unite with God. The Brahman principles have not only spoken of running away from the sorrows, sins and imperfections of the world, but have also spoken of renouncing this fleeting world. Real salvation is to get rid of attachment to worldly things and the cycle of birth and death. Hinduism lays emphasis on being indifferent to worldly problems and doing penance and rituals, as well as it says to do karma according to one's own caste. Thus Hinduism also promotes caste discrimination. Due to all these characteristics, Hind got stuck in a lifestyle which he could not cross and enter the logical world. The caste system bound by these policies of Hindu religion prevented the economic development of India and only when the caste barriers were reduced, the rationality in economic activities increased. Thus Weber believes that the policies of Hinduism are hindering the economic and material development of India.

The book '**Ancient Judaism**' was published after the death of Weber. In this work Weber mentions the circumstances which have been responsible for the development of rationality in religion in Western societies. Judaism has a philosophy of active asceticism in which the ethical body was considered according to divine instructions. The monasticism of Christianity was in favor of renouncing all worldly things, but Judaism developed a morality in Protestantism that wanted to change the nature of the world.

Although Protestantism also believes in mortification, it, like Judaism, renounces the world in the sense that having fun and relaxing are temptations that hinder the pursuit of salvation. Jewish prophets consider the world to be created rather than eternal, which means that the world is a historical event created by God to establish a specified order. Based on this belief of the Jews that there will be a social and political revolution ordained by God in the future and that the attitudes of individuals should be determined accordingly, these beliefs led to the development of a highly rational religious ethics of conduct among the Jews. Weber states that this policy is still, to a large extent, an important basis of Middle-Eastern and European ethics. For example, Yahweh (worshiper of the Jews) described humility and obedience as the main qualities of man and made it clear that the hopes of good and bad luck and the need to do virtue are related to the near future. Thus Judaism is free from traditional systemic and mystical fantasies and values a religion that links man's daily life to the moral laws prescribed by God. Thus Weber believes that Judaism helped to build moral rationalism and developed attitudes that are consistent with the essence of capitalism.

It is clear from the above views of Weber that he was interested in knowing the effects of religious policies on economic activities. Not only did he explain the interrelationship between religious policies and economic activities, but he also found out the effects of religious thought on the social hierarchy. He told that the prophets, preachers and scholars of different religions, etc. had a special way of life and they tried to give a special form to social stratification and economic activities by propagating their

religious policies. Parsons states that Weber's important contribution to the interpretation of the sociology of religion is a systematic methodological insight by which he elucidated the causes and effects of various factors by separating them from each other.

Question

1. Write a note on 'The Essence of Capitalism'.
2. Write an article on Protestant ethics.
3. State the relationship between capitalism and Protestant ethics.
4. Explain Weber's views on the study of the great religions of the world.
5. On the basis of Weber's study of different religions, what is the relationship between religion and economic structure is found.