

CLASS 7th SUBJECT S.SCI

Ch:Devotional path to the Divine

(NOTE)

The Idea of a Supreme God

Prior to the emergence of large kingdoms, different groups of people worshipped their own gods and goddesses. With the growth of towns, trade and empires people were brought together and new ideas began to develop. The idea that every living thing passes through countless cycles of birth and rebirth performing good and bad deeds was widely accepted. Also, the idea that not all human beings are equal in birth as well gained ground. Many learned texts focussed on the belief that social privileges come from birth in a “noble” family or a “high” caste. Uneasy with these ideas, many people turned to the teachings of Buddha or the Jainas, which stressed on the possibility to overcome social differences and break the cycle of rebirth via personal effort. Some were also attracted to the idea of a Supreme God, who could deliver humans from such bondage if approached with devotion or bhakti, an idea advocated in the Bhagavad Gita. It grew more popular in the early centuries of the common era. Supreme deities to be worshipped using elaborate rituals include Shiva, Vishnu and Durga. Also, the gods and goddesses worshipped in various areas came to be identified with Shiva, Vishnu or Durga. Local myths and legends became a part of the puranic stories. Methods of worship recommended in the Puranas were introduced into the local cults. Puranas also laid down the possibility for devotees to receive the grace of God regardless of their caste status. The idea of bhakti became highly popular and even Buddhists and Jainas adopted these beliefs.

SUBJECT TEACHE Mukesh kumar