

## **Thinking Allowed – September 2023**

### **As Human Beings, do we need to believe in something beyond ourselves?**

From what we understand of our earliest ancestors it seems that there was always a focus outside ourselves. Early cave paintings seem to indicate that there was a reverence for something beyond, possibly in the spirits of certain animals. There is one such cave relief depicting a full size giraffe with a long rope leading to a stick man which has been interpreted that the man was the less important. In one cave in southern France there is a stick man with the head of a bird painted alongside beautifully drawn paintings of horses and bison, indicating to some interpreters that the animals were superior to man.

We do not know what these people thought so long ago, but around the world there are creation myths that tell of both gods and goddesses that held sway over the people of their countries. They often tell the same story of the earth being created. There is a Samoan legend about the God Tagaloa who lived in the universe. He created everything. There was no heaven and no land there was no water, no rock, neither sea nor earth. His name means 'Origin of Growth'. This is very similar to the God of the Old Testament.

I would hypothesise that these myths, handed down for millennia came from the same source but well before anything was or could be written down.

Does this mean that humans need to know where they come from, and if they have a myth to hold on to, they are more secure in themselves? Does it mean, that the huge dissatisfaction we see today in the young of the westernised world have lost their way? Are they creating their own myth?