

HINDUISM

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Publishers Note

It is with great pleasure we place before you the first edition of "Hinduism" before you. This compilation contains three parts namely 1. A Handbook of Hindu Religion written by Dr. K.C. Varadachari, 2. Essentials of Hinduism which is a gloss on the various aspects of Hinduism. and the third part is a compilation of sayings by various famous personalities. These sayings have been classified according to the commandments and different qualities of spiritual development according to the system of Pranahuti Aided Meditation. All these sayings have been collected over a period of time by Sri K.C. Narayana and have been classified accordingly by Sri S.S. Reddy. We would like to extend our heart felt thanks to them for the same.

This compilation has been prepared keeping in view the necessity to have a clear cut understanding of hinduism vis-a-vis the system of Pranahuti Aided Meditation and we at Sri Ramchandra Publishers hope that this will help the trainers and abhyasis to have a collective view of the same.

Yours in the Service of the Master,

For Sri Ramchandra Publishers

R.Radhakrishnan

*A HANDBOOK OF HINDU
RELIGION*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Hinduism is one of the most important of living religions in the world; it is the oldest of all and is called *Sanātana Dharma*. No study of religion can be complete without taking its finest and highest forms as revealed in its sacred scriptures and as interpreted by its leading exponents and realised by its seers, sages and saints. Hinduism in a sense supplies the fullest material for the study of religion and can claim to be the one religion which is most comprehensive and universal.

It is not an historical religion, but it is a religion without any historic founders and it has eternal foundation. Historical religions base their doctrines and dogmas on the revelations of their prophets. Hinduism is based on the *Vedas*, the eternal scriptures revealed to the seers and sages and testified to by the *Smṛtis* and transmitted in an unbroken tradition. The *Veda* is the word of God and is God Himself and is therefore eternal or *nitya*. It is *apauruṣeya*, impersonal, not manmade. Hinduism is *sanātana* religion without beginning and end and is one continuous revelation consisting of the *Veda*, *Vedāngas*, *Smṛtis*, *Itihāsas*, *Purāṇas*, *Āgamas*, the hymns of the *Ālvārs* and the *Nāyanmārs*. It deals with eternal spiritual truths adopted to changing conditions and is therefore

fixed in essentials and flexible in non-essentials like rites and rituals.

The term Hinduism is of foreign origin and vague. The term *Sanātana Dharma* is therefore preferable to it and it has a rounded perfection and is comprehensive; but the name Hinduism is sanctioned by usage. *Dharma* applies to righteousness exemplified in practical life, individual and social, and implies also *mokṣa-dharma* or the nature of freedom from the ills of life or *Samsāra*. It is thus a way of life and a view of life and includes both theory and practice. The *Veda* is the chief authority or *pramāna* for Hinduism, and as aids to its practical understanding are the other scriptures like the *Smṛtis*. There are four *Vedas*, the *Ṛg-veda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Sāmaveda* and the *Atharvaveda*. Each *Veda* has three divisions, namely the *Mantra*, the *Brāhmaṇa* and the *Upaniṣad*. One who knows the inner meaning of the *Mantras* and the *Brāhmaṇas* is a *Mantra-dṛś*, who acquires mastery over nature, internal and external. It is wrong to say that the *Vedas* belong to the child stage of humanity. An ancient Vedic text which says that the *Sat* or God is one and the seers call it variously contains the keynote of Hinduism and its universality. The *Upaniṣads* or the *Vedānta* are the most sublime teachings of Hinduism and are called *Brahma Vidyā*, containing the wisdom of Brahman, by knowing which everything is known. They are the solace of life and death. Vedic knowledge is summed up in

the Vedāntic wisdom of Brahman enshrined in the *Praṇava* or *Aum*. Though the *Vedas* refer to the economical and ethical (the hedonistic) ends of life, the highest end is *mokṣa* or the realisation of Brahman. It is therefore called *Brahmavidyā*. The *Veda* cannot be known without aids or *angas* and there are six aids like phonetics, grammar and astronomy.

The *Smṛtis* like those of Manu bring out the ethics of the Hindus in their individual and social aspects. They deal more with duties and virtues than with rights or privileges. There are cardinal virtues like truth and *ahimsa* which are universally applicable and also relative duties or *yuga-dharmas* which are true only in certain periods. The *Smṛti* of sage Parāśara is meant for this age of Kali. The two *Itihāsas*, the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* describe the two *avatāras* of Viṣṇu, Śrī Rama and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. God incarnates into history at critical periods to restore righteousness and punish wickedness. Even such punishment is ultimately only for the reformation of the wicked man. There are eighteen *Purāṇas* of which the chief are the *Viṣṇupurāna* and the *Bhāgavata*. They are chiefly cosmic accounts dealing with the origin, the preservation and the destruction of the Universe. Their chief aim is to bring out the increasing purpose of God as *rakṣaka* or the maker of *muktas*. The *Āgamas* explain the way in which God comes down to the world of man in the form of *arca* or idol in

order to redeem him from his sinfulness. The hymns of the Nāyanmārs and the Ālvārs are mainly sung in praise of *arca* or idol in the temple for the bestowal of His redemptive grace.

The study of the *Vedas*, the *Smṛtis*, the *Itihāsas*, the *Purāṇas*, the *Āgamas* and the experiences of the Ālvārs and the Nāyanmārs reveal the inner truth of religion, viz., the gradual descent of God to the human level to lift him up to the Divine level. The *Brahman* of the *Vedas* becomes the *antaryāmin* of the Vedānta, the *Īśvara* of the *Smṛtis* and the *Purāṇas*, the *Avatāra* of the *Itihāsas* and the *arca* of the *Āgamas*, Ālvārs and Nāyanmārs. With God's grace man ascends from the animal and human through the spiritual stages to the divine stage of *mukti*. Thus all the scriptures have a unity of spiritual purpose suited to different types and persons.

Hinduism as Vedānta expounds this unity of import in a philosophic way. The six *Darśanas* or systems of philosophy were composed by different *Ṛṣis* with one single aim, namely, the removal of the ills of life to the attainment of *mokṣa*. *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* deals with the logic or *pramāṇas* and their categories of life. The *Sāṅkhya-Yoga* deals with *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* and the way in which the *puruṣa* frees himself from *prakṛti*. *Purvamimāṃsa* stresses the ethics of *dharma*. *Uttara-mimāṃsa* or the Vedānta is the

supreme philosophy of Brahman by knowing whom everything is known.

Each of these systems helps the *mumukṣu* or the seeker after Brahman to attain *viveka*, *vairāgya* and ethical purity respectively as essential steps to the attainment of Brahman.

The *pramāṇas* prove that Brahman is the highest object of knowledge. They affirm the reality of the supreme *puruṣa*. The highest *dharma* consists in attaining Him. This is the way of Vedānta as taught in the *Upaniṣads*, the *Gītā* and the *Brahmasūtras* which are called the three *prasthanas*. The *Upaniṣads* describe the direct experience of God by the *Ṛṣis*; the *Gītā* is the essence of the *Upaniṣads* and the *Sūtras* expound their philosophy.

The term *darśana* brings out the comprehensiveness of the *Sanātana Dharma* or Vedānta. *Darśana* ordinarily applies to knowledge gained through the senses or *pratyakṣa* as in the example, "This rose is red." It is real and not illusory though it is particular and fleeting. The knowledge gained through reason or *anumāna* is more stable as it gives us some insight into the universal laws which explain the particular facts given in sense-perception. It is thus *darśana* in the sense of reasoning, as in the example, "The earth goes round the sun, because it is a planet." Higher than inference is intuition or direct knowledge of God or

Brahman, as in the experience of mystics like Nammālvār. It is *Brahmadarśana* and is the supreme end of knowledge. Thus *darśana* is going from the physical sense organ to the inner eye of reason and finally to *Brahma-cakṣus* or the direct realisation of Brahman. In this way knowledge leads to the more of itself; it grows from sense-perception or *pratyakṣa* to reasoning or *anumāna*. Reasoning develops into direct realisation of Brahman as given in *Śāstra*. All these three ways are interconnected and complementary and there is no contradiction in their relation. *Veda* is not blind faith as it is a spiritual verity verified by the *Ṛṣis* and other seers of God. The best test of Vedic knowledge is in our direct intuition of God with the guidance of the *Guru* who has seen Him face to face. In this way *darśana* as sense-knowledge becomes *darśana* or seeing with the inner eye of reason and finally as direct *Brahma-darśana* or experience of God by the *Ṛṣis* and other seers of God. Thus the term *darśana* applied to Hinduism is all-inclusive. It accepts the reality of matter or the world of nature as described by science, but rejects materialism as the final view of life. It accepts the importance of reason but rejects rationalism as the final view of life. It accepts the importance of scripture or *sāstra* but rejects theology as blind faith. Hinduism gives a place to science, philosophy, and theology and reconciles them. It says that the best proof of the existence of God is the experience of God.

Hinduism is not a personal religion as it insists on the unity of life as a whole and the duties of each person to the other members of the society. But it does not accept the western view that God needs man's co-operation in the furtherance of His purpose. Man does his work as worship of God in the spirit of *kainkarya* in utter humility. Every act of social service is really the adoration of God as the inner self in all beings. There is no spiritual barrier between one *Jīva* and another.

Hinduism is thus coherent, synthetic and universal. It is coherent because it satisfies every *Pramāna* and sees no dividing line between reason and revelation. It is synthetic because it gives a place to every system of thought and every school of Vedānta. It is also tolerant because it recognises sects though it rejects sectarianism. It is universal because it affirms the truth that every man is a son of God and he can intuit Him directly. But it is not a mere hotch-potch or eclectic faith. It provides for different types of people but at the same time emphatically declares that the goal or aim is the same. Every one is *ātman* or spiritual, and there is one *ātman* in and beyond all; and every one can realise Him. The terms applied to Hinduism like *Sanātana Dharma*, *Vedānta* or *Darśana* and *Brahma-vidyā* are all synonymous. They all affirm the same truths in spirituality and service.

The chief topics that are dealt with in this work relate to the three reals or *tattvas*, the means of attaining God, including Hindu sociology and methods of worship and the nature of the supreme *puruṣārtha* or *mokṣa* and finally the value of Hinduism as a universal and catholic religion.

CHAPTER II

GOD

God in Hinduism is called by various names, like *Brahman*, *Īśvara*, *Bhagavān* and *Puruṣottama* and they all refer to the same Being. But many misleading views are held about His nature and qualities and they have to be corrected before the true meaning is explained. The most prevalent mistake is to say that the Hindu makes God in his own image; he worships stones, trees, animals and departed spirits and at best God is man as an excellent person. This view is absurd as it is not Nature but the God in Nature that is adored by him. Man is made in God's image and not God in man's image. It is wrong to say that the Hindu is a polytheist who worships many Gods as Devas. God or *Īśvara* is in all Gods as their inner ruler or *Devadeva* and therefore the Hindu is a monotheist who affirms that Brahman is the one without a second. Another mistake is that Hinduism is pantheistic as it holds that all is God and that God is all. God or *Īśvara* is in all beings as their ruler but is not equated with all beings. He is pure and perfect without any taint or imperfection. Still others say that the Hindu God is a mere abstraction or that it is nothing at all. But all Hindus are agreed that Religion is essentially faith in a personal God and the same is the highest Being of the philosopher. But the existence of God cannot be proved by

reason nor is it a blind faith. Every one can see God face to face directly if he eagerly seeks Him, and then he is sought by God and blessed. Just as man seeks God, God also seeks man and saves him from sinfulness and the sense of separation. This is His redemptive purpose and it is gradually realised in five aspects or stages. *Brahman* is beyond and is pure and perfect and He is called *Para*. Then He becomes *Īśvara* or the Infinite who is called the creator, preserver and destroyer of the Cosmos or the Universe or *Trimūrti*. Then He enters into the heart or all *Jīvas* as their inner ruler or *Antaryāmin*. Then on certain occasions of cosmic crisis, He incarnates into the world and these historic incarnations are called *Avatāras*. In the last stage, He is called *Arca* or permanent incarnation of love in the form of Idols. The one increasing purpose of God in all these stages or descents is the redemption of the *Jīvas* from their career of sin and ignorance. The Hindu scriptures with their infinite motherly tenderness reveal the gradual purpose as *Śruti*, *Purāna*, *Smṛti*, *Itihāsa* and *Psalms* in Tamil and other vernaculars. The *Upaniṣads* reveal his perfect nature as *Para* and *Antaryāmin*: the *Purāṇas* describe His nature as *Īśvara* doing his threefold cosmic function. The *Itihāsas* describe the redemptive acts of the *Avatāras*. The *Smṛtis* expound his moral and aesthetic excellences and lastly the *Psalms* describe His love and easy accessibility to all persons. *Brahman* assumes a bewitching form of beauty in order that He may

attract the *Jīvas* and annex them to Himself. His five aspects may be briefly explained as follows: *Brahman* is the God of the *Upaniṣads* and he is pure and perfect in the world beyond. His nature cannot be explained adequately but his essential qualities are mentioned in a way as *satyam*, *jñānam*, *anantam* and *ānandam*. *Brahman* is *sat* or reality, or truth itself and is eternal and changeless unlike *prakṛti*. He is ever self-luminous and is more effulgent than all the Suns, Moons and Stars. He is supremely good or *amala* and is free from all imperfections. He is by nature blissful or *ānanda* and love itself. *Brahman* is the one without a second, though He has many qualities and His chief quality is love by which He imparts His nature to the *Jīvas* and makes them like Himself. The whole universe has its being in Him and He is the supreme end of our life.

Brahman in relation to the world or cosmos is called *Īśvara* and it is He who creates it, sustains it and destroys it. He does the three functions of *sṛṣṭi*, creation, *sthiti*, preservations and *samhāra*, destruction in the three forms of Brahma, Viṣṇu and Śiva. This threefold function is described in detail in the eighteen *Purāṇas* of which the chief are *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*. The world consists of *Jīvas* and *Prakṛti* but they are eternal and not created out of nothing. Before creation they were in a latent stage in *Pralaya* like the seed before it becomes the tree. In creation they are given new

bodies by *Brahman* according to their previous *karma* and they get new opportunities of becoming free and perfect. In the state of *sthiti* they live and move in the three worlds, Earth, *Svarga* and lower world in accordance with their *karma*. They have freedom to make or mar themselves, and Viṣṇu the Lord, sustains them as their very life and He guides justly. Then there comes a time when the world is steeped in wickedness and sin and the Lord Śiva destroys it for the time being. The three functions are done by the same *Īśvara* out of his sweet and loving will and they are aspects of the one cosmic function, namely to redeem the *Jīvas* from their ignorance and evil. This process goes on endlessly in a circle till all the *Jīvas* attain *mukti*.

Antaryāmin

After creating the Universe, *Brahman* enters into it as its inner self or *antaryāmin*. The universe consists of the physical world or *acit* or *jaḍa* and also the world of *Jīvas*, subhuman, human and celestial. *Brahman* pervades the whole world of *acit* and *cit* as Vāsudeva and resides in the heart of every *Jīva*, plant, animal, man or *deva* as its inner self or *śarīrin*. Though He is in all inanimate things and *Jīvas*, He is not in any way affected by their imperfections. As their inner self, He gives them life, rules them from within and they all exist for His satisfaction, But His chief purpose in dwelling in their hearts is to free them from their sinfulness and make them into His image or likeness. One chief defect pointed out by

critics of Hinduism is that it is pantheistic because it says that *Brahman* pervades all beings and is the same as a stone, dog or dog-eater. That view is wrong because Hinduism says that God is in all beings as their inner ruler and is not identical with all beings. Inanimate things are different from *Jīvas* and God is different from both, and He enters into them with a view to be in intimate contact with them. As the Lord of love dwells in the heart of the *Jīva* or man called the lotus-heart of *hṛdayakamala*, the human body is extolled as the very temple of God or *Brahmapuri*. As the seat of *Divinity*, it is held sacred, not defiled as a filthy place of sin. God is love and He is in the *Jīva* in order that the *Jīva* may be made Godly.

Avatāra

The theory of *Brahman* as redeemer is clearly brought out by that *Avatāra* or Divine incarnation as revealed in the two *Itihāsas*, the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata*. It is fully revealed by the author of the *Bhagavad-gītā* who is the highest incarnation of God. As the Lord himself says in the *Gītā*, He incarnates into history when virtue or *dharma* declines and is threatened with destruction by *adharma* or vice. He comes down with a unique form of his own to punish the evil-doer and reward the virtuous man and restore the moral order of the world. The real motive of the incarnation is moral and religious as it consists in redeeming even the evil-doer from his ways of wickedness or sin and

blessing the devotee or *bhakta* by revealing His form made of love or *kṛpā*. Even punishment or *dandana* is *dāyākārya* as its real object is to reform the offender and not repress him. *Avatāra* is not descent from a higher place to a lower place with a physical body. It is spiritual descent into human and even subhuman planes and is due to divine love and accessibility or *saulabhya*. The *Itihāsas* refer to ten chief *avatāras* of Viṣṇu of which the most important are Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. The earlier *avatāras* like those of the fish, the tortoise, the boar and the man-lion and the dwarf or *Matsya*, *Kūrma*, *Varāha* and *Narasimha* and *Vāmana* were made on critical occasions in cosmic history to restore the cosmic moral and spiritual order and establish the kingdom of righteousness. Rāma was born to punish the evil-doers like Rāvaṇa and establish righteous rule or *Rāmarājya* based on the eternal rules of *dharma*. The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Gītā* refer to the *avatāra* as the very embodiment of Divine Love and they guarantee salvation or *mukti* to all *Jīvas* regardless of their birth and status, including even the subhuman species. The *Avatāra* is, therefore, extolled and adored as *sarva-loka-rakṣaka* or universal redeemer.

Arca

The worship of God as *arca* or *vighraha* made of stone, wood or copper is very popular among the Hindus as a permanent incarnation of Divine grace and love, sanctified by the hymns of the Ālvārs,

Nāyanmārs and other devotees. What appears a graven image to the critic or the materialist, is to the devotee with a spiritual eye a speaking Beauty radiating life and love. The so-called idol is not an idea or ideal; an image or symbol; but is the loving, all-pervading presence of the Lord who resides permanently as *arca* in response to the prayer of the *bhakta*. The image is only the embodiment of divine mercy and it is easily accessible to all who have eyes to see and ears to hear. The devotee seeks the Lord in a particular form as Viṣṇu, Śiva or Śakti and Divinity beyond all name and form incarnates into that form and he melts with love and is lost in the rapture of communion. The Ālvārs sought refuge at the feet of the Lord and preferred to be a stone step at the altar of Śrinivāsa to be trodden by the faithful to even *bhakti* and *mukti*.

Mother

The doctrine of Motherhood is a special feature of Hinduism as it brings out the tender love and mercy that is the special mark of divine mercy. The idea of *Īśvara* as the almighty and the holy draws out the quality of reverence and awe around in the worshipper as an unworthy creature. The prayer to God as the father in Heaven or *lokapati* is based on the doctrine that every man is made in the image of God or son of God. Even this view does not fully bring out the nature of divine love and mercy and it is only the fact of the motherhood of God that appeals to mercy and love as the very heart of

creation. God as ruler or law giver metes out justice to every one according to the strict rules of *karma* and *dharma*. It provides no hope of mercy for the persons who violate the rules and no man is so pure or sinless as to say that he walks in the ways of righteousness. But God as mother is forgiving and no sin is so sinful as not to merit mercy or *dayā*. Therefore every one seeks the grace of Lakṣmi or Pārvati or Śakti as the very embodiment of redemptive love. But mercy by itself may encourage favouritism and indulgence and the sinner may exploit the quality of forgiveness. The Hindus therefore worship divinity in the dual form of *Īśvara* and *Īśvari*. Law is severe and love is indulgent; but in God law and love are wedded together and they are really one though they function as two.

CHAPTER III

JIVA

The study of the *Jīva* or the *Ātman* holds a central place in Hinduism. Hinduism insists on the sacredness of life and the solidarity of all *Jīvas*. The *ātman* is to be reflected on and realised before God or *Paramātman* is reflected on and realised. The *ātman* is different from the body made of *prakṛti* and its 33 elements. It is different from the gross body consisting of the five elements, namely, earth, water, fire, air and ether, known as the *pañcabhūtas*. It is not the five *prāṇas* and is more than life. It is not the five sense organs, namely the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue and the organ of touch. The *ātman* is to be distinguished from the subtle body or *sukṣmaśarīra*, consisting of *manas*, *buddhi*, *citta* and *ahaṅkāra* or the mind, reason and egoity. Hinduism regards the mind and reason as part of the body and the *ātman* as different from the *sukṣmaśarīra* and the *sthulaśarīra* or mind-body. The bodies come and go but the *ātman* never changes and it is eternal or *nitya*. It is beyond birth and death and beyond all mental changes, like the waking state, dream and deep sleep. It is a changeless entity by itself.

The *Jīva* is thus different from its quality of *jñāna* or consciousness. The *jñāna* or quality undergoes changes and not the substance or *ātman*. In the *jāgrat* or waking state, the *Jīva* is conscious of the

external world, and its five sense organs are active. It sees things with the eyes, hears sounds with the ears, has the sensations of smell, taste and touch through the nose, the tongue and the skin. Therefore sensations are in the *Jīva* and the objects which cause them are in the external world. In the dream state or *svapna*, the *Jīva* does not perceive things but is only mentally active and enjoys pleasure and pain. In deep sleep or *suṣupti*, the *Jīva* is at perfect rest and its consciousness does not work. Though it is not active, it is not non-existent; it is in a latent state.

The *ātman* is by nature self-effulgent, active, joyful and eternal. It is a mode or *aṁśa* of God and though it exists as an eternal entity, it is not separate from Him. It is not born and it does not die. It is beyond the past, the present and the future and is thus beyond time and it is beyond space. The *ātman* is essentially self-conscious and it has the quality of *jñāna* by which it thinks, feels and wills. It is a knowing subject and is not *jaḍa* or inert. It has moral freedom and it is not passive. It is joyful and is not miserable or sick-minded. In this way it abides in its own spiritual nature and is different from *prakṛti* and God. *Ātman* has its own dignity, intrinsic worth and autonomy. It is not a thing or physical substance like a stone or piece of wood which is *acit* or *jaḍa*. It is not subject to *prakṛti* and its *guṇas* and is free from the instincts, like lust, anger, hatred, jealousy and it has self-mastery. Thus it is a spiritual

personality which is free and eternal. It is a knower, a free agent and is joyful. The *ātman* that subjects itself to the evils of *Samśāra* or the bondage of *karma* is called *baddha-jīva*. It somehow, owing to *avidyā* or ancient ignorance which cannot be explained, mistakes itself for the body made of *prakṛti* and suffers from the series of births and deaths. It is like the prince who exiles himself from his father's throne and joins the wild hunters in the forest, marries a hunter girl, begets children by her and thus gets immersed in savage life. The *ātman* somehow deserts its divine home, enters into the body made of *acit*, wallows in sense life and is caught up in the wheel of births and deaths. Why or how it lapses from the divine heritage and suffers from *avidyā*, *kāma* and *karma*, is a mystery. But the *jīva* alone is responsible for the evils and ills of worldliness and not any outside agency. *Avidyā* makes it identify itself with *prakṛti* and its *guṇas*; *kāma* makes it seek the pleasures of the senses and suffer from the pains of animal life and *karma* subjects it to the endless series of births and deaths. But the *Jīva* does not suffer from original sin or unmerited suffering. Though the origin of *avidyā*, or *saṁsāra* cannot be understood, it can be destroyed by *jñāna* and the *ātman* can go back to God and return no more to *saṁsāra*. But as long as its true nature is concealed by *avidyā* it is bound by *karma* and is subject to the rounds of births and deaths.

Karma

The law of *karma* occupies an important place in Hindu Ethics, and it alone solves the problem of the inequalities of life and unmerited suffering. Why does the wicked man prosper in life and the good man suffer from all kinds of misery, physical, mental and social? and why does the new-born child suffer for the sins of its parents and from untold evils and why should there be evil and misery at all if there is a good God? These problems are as old as humanity itself. But of all the solutions offered, the theory of *karma* is the least objectionable. Evil and suffering no doubt exist but each man is responsible for the ills of life he undergoes and not God or the Devil. The theory of *karma* is the law of causation applied to moral life and each man reaps what he sows. The effect of *karma* or action done by thought, word and deed (or *manas*, *vāk* and *kāya*) is never lost; it is conserved in the mind-body or *śarīra*. The present *karma* is the effect of the past and is the cause of the future. In this way all *karmas* are connected as cause and effect and they form a series without any beginning. The law of causation operates uniformly without any exception and it is the moral law of retribution. If a man does good deeds or *puṇya-karma* he is rewarded and he enjoys the effect of his deeds, like health, longevity of life, prosperity, power and glory; but if he does bad deeds he is punished and he suffers for his bad acts and they lead to disease, poverty and misery. Good

and evil thus lead to pleasure and pain and there is a mathematical ratio between virtue and pleasure and vice and suffering. In this way every man is accountable for his good and bad deeds.

Transmigration

The laws of rebirth and transmigration of *Jīvas* follow as the consequence of *karma*. No child is born out of nothing; it is not born with an empty mind. It does not evolve from the parents and follow the laws of heredity. Every child is born with certain predispositions or *vāsanās* which are retained in the subtle body, as the effect of no deed is lost. When a person dies, the gross body alone is dissolved but the subtle body of the *Jīva* remains, retaining all the effects of its *karma*. The *Jīva* then enters into a new body suited to its past *karma* and is born again. Thus every birth is the result of past *karma* and is the cause of a new body and birth. Just as a man throws away worn out garments and puts on new garments, the *Jīva* throws away worn out bodies and puts on new bodies. Just as there is continuity in a man's life from infancy to old age and personal identity, so there is continuity of the same *Jīva* in the series of births and rebirths and personal identity. There is identity in spite of numerous births and this is due to the eternity of the *Jīva*.

The adventures of the *Jīva* in the world of *saṁsāra* are not confined to this earth alone. It migrates from

body to body according to its *karma* in the cosmic spheres known as the three *lokas* ranging from *Brahmaloka* or *Satyaloka* above to the *Pātālaloka* below. In the celestial worlds above, starting with *Svarga*, the quality of *sattva* is dominant and the *Jīva* enjoys pleasure. In the nether regions, starting with *Atala*, the quality of *tamas* is dominant and *Pātāla* is the lowest region of darkness and the *Jīva* suffers from pain. But the middle region called *Karma Bhūmi* is influenced by *rajas*. It is the moral world of man and it is here that he does good deeds and bad deeds and their effect is reaped in the worlds above and below. There are other *Brahmāṇḍas* like this and they are countless like the stars and they are ruled by *Īśvara* according to the *karma* of the *Jīvas*. The worlds have no spatial meaning but they have hierarchical moral values. Good men ascend to higher regions according to their *karma* and enjoy celestial pleasures and when the effect is exhausted, they come down again and are born in different bodies, sub-human and human. Likewise wicked *Jīvas* suffer from pain and when it is exhausted, they have a new chance and are born again in this moral world.

Freedom

The scientific view of *karma* in terms of cause and effect is open to the objection that it leads to fatalism and pessimism and that it does not provide any hope of bettering the future. Since every man reaps

what he sows, he has to submit meekly to what happens without any moral freedom. He has to endure what cannot be cured and is a slave of circumstances. But the scientific view is only one aspect of *karma* as the more important side is the assertion of the moral freedom or freedom of the will. It says that every man can control his inclinations like anger, fear, lust, hatred and jealousy and that he can control his future. The scientific theory applies only to *prārabdha-karma* and not to *sañcita-karma*. The former refers to the *karma* that has already happened, like the birth of a person, and which cannot be changed. But the latter refers to the future which is in our hands. Everyman is the master or architect of his destiny and not even a God can alter it. If a man has a conflict of desires, like the choice of a career, he has the moral freedom to decide for himself which career he can choose. He can control his passions, like anger or hatred and attain moral victory. But if he chooses the way of the animal, then he once again is chained to the wheel of *Sarṁsāra*. But he too will one day begin to realise the futility and pain of choosing the animal way of life and turn towards the higher path of freedom through self-control. In either case freedom is inherent in every soul to choose the higher or the lower. A soul has freedom to choose but not the power to get the results of what it chooses as it likes. The results depend on the laws of the worlds and causation (*karma*).

CHAPTER IV

PRAKṚTI

Every religion deals with the nature and function of the three ultimate entities - Nature, Self and God and their relation. But, it is Hinduism that makes the study exact by calling them *acit*, *cit* and *Īśvara* or *Prakṛti*, *Puruṣa* and *Puruṣottama* or *pāśa*, *paśu* and *pati* and defining their relative positions. The meaning and value of Nature or *prakṛti* will be just considered. Nature refers to the objects in the world, like houses trees, rivers, seas and mountains. It also includes the sky, the Sun, the Moon and the stars. The scientist is interested in studying the phenomena of nature in all their details. While the Chemist seeks to know the various metals and non-metals that compose the world, the Astronomer enquires into the nature of the heavenly bodies, like the Sun, the Moon and the stars. The Biologist desires to understand the nature and function of the body. While the scientist observes the phenomena of nature and tries to know the general laws underlying them, the religious man seeks to know Nature and distinguish it from the *Jīva* and God. His primary interest is the knowledge of God who is the creator of the world and his mind goes from the created over to the creator.

We perceive the world around us through the five senses, namely, the eye, the ear, the nose, the

tongue and the hand. In perceiving a rose, for example, we see its red colour through the eye, we pluck it from the plant by the hand and smell its fragrance by means of the nose; we taste its sweetness by the tongue and so on. In the same way, we perceive all other things in the world like trees, houses, lakes, rivers and hills. The world above consists of the sky, the Sun, the Moon and the stars. Geography teaches us that the Earth in which we live consists of countries, continents, seas and oceans and it is a planet which goes round the Sun. India, the country in which we live, is a big country with large rivers like the Ganges, mountains like the Himalayas, trees like the banyan and it is very sacred to us as the land of spirituality. The Sun is the centre of heat and light round which six other planets like Jupiter and Saturn move, and the Moon goes round the Earth. The whole is called the Solar system and every star is said to be a sun with its own planets and moons.

The study of Astronomy impresses us with the vastness of the solar and stellar systems, contrasted with our own smallness. Light travels at the rate of 182,000 miles a second and it takes 31/2 years for the light of the nearest star to reach us. From these we know the greatest mystery, and imagination is staggered by the infinity of space. What is true of space is also true of time. While space refers to co-existence of things, time is a succession of events.

The object of studying *prakṛti* or *acit* is to know that our body is made of *prakṛti* and that we are different from it. The body is made of earth, water, fire, air and ether and it has five sense organs, and is called the gross body or *sthūlaśarīra*. There is a subtle body called the *sūkṣmaśarīra* and it consists of *manas*, *buddhi*, *citta* and *ahaṅkāra*. Though in western Psychology they are classed as mind different from the body made of matter, Hinduism treats them as physical changes in a subtle form. *Ahaṅkāra* is *egoity*, *buddhi* is determination, *manas* and *citta* are particular perishing changes in the mind. *Śarīra* is thus subtle and gross and may be called psycho-physical. Nothing is really lost and there is only change from one state to another.

Prakṛti, as Sāṅkhya philosophy says, consists of twenty-four *tattvas*, namely, *mahat* (*buddhi*, *citta*) *ahaṅkāra*, the five *jñānendriyas*, the five *karmendriyas* making the body, and the five elements or *pañcabhūtas* and their earlier subtle conditions known as *pañcatanmātras* which make up the body and the world. *Prakṛti* has three qualities, namely, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, Godness or Purity, action and inertia. These three qualities are present in varying proportions in all the twenty-four *tattvas*.

CHAPTER V

DARŚANAS

It is very difficult to draw a hard and fast line of distinction between religion and philosophy, especially our religion and philosophy. The former deals with doctrine and rituals and the latter with the ultimate problems of life, like the nature of the world, the soul and God and their interrelations. The one is practical and the other is theoretical. But our ancestors were of a philosophic bent of mind from the beginning and they translated their philosophy into practice. Our religion and philosophy are intermixed and so in an exposition of religion, philosophy legitimately comes in. Our people identify the ultimate reality of philosophy with the highest Godhead of religion and give a theistic colouring to their philosophy. So our religion supplies the spiritual needs of our people and at the same time satisfies the mental wants of a high order. In one isolated school of philosophy this distinction is maintained, and naturally it did not appeal to the majority of the nation. There is therefore much discrepancy between their mode of life and their speculations. It may be all right for highly intellectual and gifted people but for the ordinary man, it is of no use.

Philosophy, as we have said, discusses the nature of the three ultimate entities, matter, soul and God

and their interrelation. It also treats of another question which is intimately connected with the relation between soul and God, namely, the life after death, the condition of the soul after its separation from the material body, i.e., the nature of *Mukti*. If the soul travels from this world to another the path taken by it also comes under its purview. This leads to the question of rebirth or transmigration and its cause, *karma*. All these and some related topics come under discussion in philosophy and these problems have been solved differently by different seers. In this way different schools of philosophy have arisen in our country, the chief of which are six, called *darśanas*.

The chief authority for the acceptance of the existence of God is the *Veda*, because He cannot be realised by the senses, nor can His existence be inferred from any known facts. There are some schools of philosophy which do not accept the authority of the *Veda* and mainly depend upon perception and inference. As they do not recognize the *Veda*, there can be no place for God in their philosophies. They are the atheistic schools of Cārvākas, Bauddhas and Jainas. They are called *Nāstikas*. We need not consider them here.

Ancient systems

The six *āstikadarśanas* are: 1. *Sāṅkhya*, 2. *Yoga*, 3. *Vaiśeṣika*, 4. *Nyāya*, 5. *Pūrvamīmāṃsa* and 6. *Uttaramīmāṃsa* or *Vedānta*.

Sāṅkhya and Yoga are similar in their central teaching and so they go together. *Prakṛti*, or *Mūlaprakṛti* as it is called, is independent of *Puruṣa* or soul and is the cause of this world. *Puruṣa* is eternal, *caitanya* or intelligence. *Prakṛti* is composed of three *guṇas* called *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. In the state of *Pralaya* the *guṇas* are in equilibrium; in *śṛṣṭi* they are unequal. *Buddhi* is a product of *Prakṛti* when it is near *Puruṣa*. It is also called *mahat* and *antaḥkaraṇa*. *Puruṣa* imagines the activity of *buddhi* to be own and thus becomes *ātman*. This attribution is *saṁsāra*. From *buddhi* through *ahaṅkāra* are produced the ten senses and their objects (*bhūtas*) and *tanmātras*. *Puruṣa* has no qualities other than *caitanya* and it is eternal. There are innumerable *Puruṣas*. The realization of the distinction between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* puts an end to *saṁsāra*. This is *mukti*. *Sāṅkhya* philosophy does not accept God (*Īśvara*). The Yoga philosophy accepts God but attributes no powers of creation, etc. to Him. *Mukti* is the state of *kaivalya* or independence from Nature (*Prakṛti*).

The Yoga system recommends certain practices to control the mind, which lead to the recognition of the distinction between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*. They are *yama* (control of senses), *niyama* (purification of mind and body), *āsana* (convenient posture), *prāṇāyāma* (control of breath), *pratyāhāra* (control of the mind), *dhyāna* (meditation), *dhāraṇā* (concentration) and *samādhi* (attainment).

Nyāya and *Vaiśeṣika* similarly agree in their essentials and so can be treated together. The world is made of atoms. The world is created by *Īśvara* and is real. The souls are infinite in number. The Naiyāyikas establish *Īśvara* by inference. The world is composed of parts and is therefore the effect of a cause like a pot. Everything that is produced must have a producer who knows its causes and uses. So there must be a being who produced this world. He must be superior to souls whose knowledge is limited and who are bound by *karma*. The souls are undergoing the pleasure and pain of *sarṁsāra* from the eternal course of *karma*. Some *ātmans* who perform the prescribed duties, without any object in view, simply to please God, attain power to perform Yoga by His grace, and by its means attain perpetual freedom from pain, which is *mokṣa* according to these Schools of thought. There will be no more pleasure or pain or knowledge. So this sort of salvation is styled *pāṣāṇa-mukti* by others.

The true value of the Nyāya system lies in the extraordinary method of critical enquiry developed in the modern school. The modern Nyāya relegated the discussion of the problem of the ultimate entities to the background and developed into a science of correct knowledge. The discussion of the *pramāṇas* or means of correct knowledge acquired prominence in it. Even here inference is discussed in its minutest detail and in the most comprehensive

manner. To the Naiyāyika the *Veda* is authoritative, not because it is eternal but because it is the word of *Īśvara*, and therefore is infallible.

The School of Pūrvamīmamsā lays stress on *dharma* or performance of the acts enjoined by the *Veda*. As the course of *karma* is eternal, *saṁsāra* too is eternal. There is no creation, no destruction. Those who perform acts prohibited by the *Veda*, are born as worms and insects or go to hell. Those who perform *karma* for attaining some desire will be reborn again and again. If the *dharma* enjoined in the *Veda* is performed for its own sake, without desiring any benefit, it produces what is termed *apūrva*, which in its turn destroys the connection with *karma* and makes the soul realise itself. This is *mokṣa* according to this school. Then the soul enjoys eternal bliss. This school accepts no separate God or *Īśvara*, who will dole out the fruits of the acts.

The Sāṅkhyas, the Yogas and the Pūrvamīmāṁsakas accept an infinite number of *Jīvas* who are eternal and who are found in everything; but they do not accept an *Īśvara* who is capable of fulfilling their desires. To the Pūrvamīmāṁsakas, the *Vedas* are eternal and impersonal. The omission to perform the prescribed duties results in sin.

The most popular of the *darśanas* is the Uttaramīmāṃsā or Vedānta as it is also called. Although the others are as much *darśanas* or schools of thought as this, still they are now only of academic interest and there is no class of people who specifically follow any of those views in their daily life. It can therefore be called the living philosophy of the day and when we hear of Indian philosophy nowadays, our mind generally comprehends only the varieties of Vedānta and nothing more. As its name Vedānta implies, its teaching is based mainly on the *Upaniṣads* which form the concluding portion of the *Veda*. While the Pūrvamīmāṃsā, which stresses on *dharma*, is based on the former portion of the *Veda* called the *Brāhmaṇa*, the Vedānta is based on the latter portion. Hence the names *Pūrva* and *Uttara-Mīmāṃsā*. There is the school of philosophy which affirms that the two *darśanas* are supplementary to each other and really form one *darśana*. There is no wonder then if the *Uttaramīmāṃsā* also adopts the view that the *Veda* is eternal and impersonal and that the *dharma* taught in it should be followed in practice. The *Bhagavadgītā* in the *Mahabharata* contains in a nut-shell the teachings of the *Upaniṣads* in very simple language without their illustrative stories and esoteric methods. For this reason, it has become the most popular handbook of our religion in recent times, especially with the laymen who cannot drink deep in the *Upaniṣadic* springs. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the light of the world, teaches

the ways of *Karma yoga*, *Jñāna Yoga*, *Bhakti Yoga* and *Prapatti Yoga* to Arjuna on the battle field of Kurukṣetra and makes him fight the battle of life without *rāga* and *dveṣa* and attain His feet by *prapatti*.

The teachings contained in the Upaniṣads have been systematised and stated in an aphoristic manner by Bādarāyana or Vyāsa in his *Brahmasūtras*. This is the main text-book of Vedānta. This is interpreted in different ways by different commentators and thus arose several schools of Vedānta. The most important of these are Viśiṣṭādvaita, Advaita, Dvaita and Pāśupata. Śankarācārya is the chief exponent of Advaita philosophy, Rāmānujācārya of Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy, and Pūrnaprajñācārya of Dvaita philosophy and Śrikantha of Pāśupata philosophy.

According to Advaita philosophy, *Brahman* alone is real and everything else, like the self (knower) and *Īśvara* and the world (knowable) and knowledge, is unreal; *Brahman* is *nirviśeṣa* and pure consciousness. *Nirviśeṣa* means undifferentiated. Three kinds of differences are possible; difference between similar things, like the individuals of a class; difference between things of different kinds and difference which exists in the thing itself i.e., between it and its qualities. There is no difference between *Brahman* and the *Jīvas* which are both of the form of *cit*. *Īśvara* is *Brahman* reflected in *māya*

or cosmic illusion and *Jīva is Brahman* reflected in *avidyā* or subjective illusion. *Brahman* is eternal and by its concealing and perplexing powers, it makes the *Jīvas* unable to realise their real nature and produces different kinds of illusions in them. Still as it is false, there is no question of difference between it and *Brahman*. As *Brahman* itself is consciousness, bliss and truth, there can be no qualities like consciousness, bliss and truth, apart from *Brahman*, and so there can be no difference between *Brahman* and its qualities. *Samsāra* is delusion of *Jīvas* by *avidyā* and the disappearance of *avidyā* at the rise of *jñāna* derived from the mahāvākyas of the *Upaniṣads* is *mokṣa*. The stock example for the delusion of *Jīvas* by *ajñāna* is the rope or the crack in the ground mistaken for a snake. The false snake-idea is attributed to the real rope (or crack) and the illusion is dispelled on realising the truth of the rope (or crack). A man who desires to attain *mokṣa* or release, must have four qualifications, namely *viveka*, *vairāgya*, possession of *śama*, *dama* etc., and sincere desire for release; that is to say, he should know that *Brahman* alone is real and the world is false, renounce everything, have self-control and have thirst for release. *Jñāna* is the only means to *mokṣa* and *karma* and *bhakti* are only aids to *jñāna*. When once the *jñāna* emerges, he becomes a *mukta* even in this body and he is then called a *jīvanmukta*. This is the peculiarity of Advaita. The other schools do not admit *jīvanmukti* and say that *jīva* attains *mokṣa* by

casting off this mortal body which is a real product of *karma*.

There are two other schools which go by the names of their founders, Bhāskara and Yādavaprakāśa. Bhāskara says that *Brahman* is *saguṇa*; there are *Jīvas* and the world which are also real. By the limiting power of *Brahman* he becomes different and has forms like *buddhi*, senses, body, etc. Parts of *Brahman* having these limitations are called *Jīvas*. Although *Brahman* is indivisible like space, still just as space limited by a pot acquires the name of pot-space, so *Brahman* with the above limitations is separately termed a *Jīva*. *Saṁsāra* is the limitation caused by the *upādhis* or limiting adjuncts of *Brahman*. The *upādhis* are dispersed by true knowledge caused by incessant meditation on *Brahman* after attaining the knowledge of the unity of *Brahman* and *Jīva* by means of Vedic *karma* and *jñāna* together. *Mokṣa* is the union of *Brahman* and *Jīva* on the disappearance of the limitations.

Yādavaprakāśa says that *Brahman* transforms itself into the forms of *cit*, *acit* and *Īśvara* by real *parināma*. *Cit* is *jīva*; *acit* is body, senses, etc. *Īśvara* is the ordainer of every thing. *Jīva* does not know his unity with *Brahman* and this sense of difference is *saṁsāra*. The fetters of *saṁsāra* can be shaken off by performing good deeds and by God. True knowledge leads to union with *Brahman* and attainment of *mukti*. Even then there is unity as

well as difference between *Brahman*, the *Jīva* and the world.

According to Viśiṣṭādvaita, soul (*cit*), matter (*acit*) and God (*Īśvara*) are real. Of these *cit* and *acit* are the special qualities, *prakāra*, of *Īśvara*, and *Īśvara* is the possessor of these qualities or modes (*prakārin*). A *prakāra* is that by the help of which its substratum is known. *Prakāra* cannot exist without the *prakārin*; therefore *Brahman* possessed of *cit* and *acit* is termed one. As *prakārin* and *prakāra* are intrinsically different, there is difference in their nature. *Acit* is of three varieties, like *śuddhasattva*, *miśrasattva* and *sattvaśūnya*. *Śuddhasattva* is self-effulgent. It is called *Paramapada*. Time is *sattvaśūnya*: but it is also eternal like space. *Miśrasattva*, being subject to *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, develops in the form of the 24 *tattvas* called *prakṛti*, *mahat*, *ahaṅkāra*, the subtle elements, senses, etc. It also forms the body and *ahaṅkāra* of *Jīvas* according to their previous *karma*. *Saṁsāra* is the cycle of repeated births and deaths of embodied souls brought about by *mamakāra* or egoism and *ajñāna*. In the cycle of *karma* and *avidyā* the sins of some persons are destroyed by their virtues. Then they pray to God for redemption. They realise the true knowledge of the Śāstras by the instruction of a good teacher attained by God's grace or *dayā*. They duly practise the obligatory and optional duties according to their station in life and acquire the enriching spiritual qualities of *śama*, *dama*, *tapas*,

śauca, kṣamā, ārjava, bhaya, abhaya, sthāna, viveka, ahimsā, dayā, etc. They surrender themselves to God and due to *bhakti* recollect and reflect on Sāṣtra and meditate upon His qualities and get rid of ignorance (*ajñāna*) by His grace. They practise *bhaktiyoga* and attain *mukti* by *prapatti* and God's grace when they leave the body. *Mukti* is of two kinds, *kaivalya* and reaching *Īśvara*. *Kaivalya* is the enjoyment of the pleasure of the realization of *ātman*. The other is attaining *Īśvara in Paramapada* and enjoying his *svarūpa* and eternal bliss. *Īśvara in Paramapada* has His own form or *rupa* of divinely beautiful body. He is one with His beloved ones, Śri, Bhū, and Nilā who are His concrete *krpa*, and with *nityasūris* who are eternally free like Ananta, Garuda and Viṣvaksena, and the freed souls or *muktas*. His chief *lilā* consists in releasing the other *Jīvas* also from *karma* and making them into his likeness.

Viśiṣṭādvaita says that the absolute *Brahman* is the same as Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva, or Venkateśvara. He incarnates on historic occasions in different forms to redeem mankind. In response to the prayers of his devotees, He incarnates permanently as idols or *arca*, owing to His infinite love. So according to Viśiṣṭādvaita, Viṣṇu or Vāsudeva Himself has His home in the temple of Tirumalai. Out of His infinite love for the erring mortals of Kali, the Infinite has incarnated permanently in Tirumalai and the mortal becomes immortal by utter surrender to His grace. So there is

no exaggeration in the statement that Tirupati is Kaliyuga Vaikuṅṭha. Just as the relation between body and soul is *śarīra-śarīri bhāva*, so the relation between soul and *Īśvara* is the same. So *Īśvara* is the inner soul of everything in this world and every name and form ultimately applies to *Brahman* or Śrinivāsa, the self of all selves.

According to Dvaita philosophy, soul (*cit*), world (*acit*) and God (*Īśvara*) are different *tattvas*. God is only the instrumental or efficient cause of the world. He is Viṣṇu himself. He possesses all the auspicious qualities and has a beautiful body made of *jñāna*, *ānanda* etc. The souls and the world depend on Him. The souls are infinitesimal in size and are different from each other. They are of three kinds according to their *guṇas*—*tamoyogyas*, *nityasamsārins* and *muktiyogyas*. The first class of *Jīvas* dwell in Hell for ever. The last class are eternally free and dwell in *Viṣṇulōka*. The second class of *Jīvas* attain direct cognition of God by their practices beginning with renunciation of the results of their actions and ending with meditation on Viṣṇu and enjoy the pleasures of *muktas*, according to their nature. If they are free from impressions (*vāśana*) of hatred etc., they attain *mukti* and enjoy supreme pleasure. The relation between God and soul is that of *svāmin* and *dāsa* (master and servant). So the *summum bonum* of life, according to this school is service to God, here in this world and beyond.

According to *Pāśupata* there are three eternal entities, God (*pati*), Soul (*paśu*) and Nature (*pāśa*). God is the supreme *pati* or *Parameśvara*. He is only the instrumental or efficient cause of creation while the atoms are the material cause. The *Jīva* (soul) is different from *Īśvara* and matter but is self-conscious. It is like a crystal and assumes the form of that with which it comes in contact. When caught up in *pāśa* which is made up of ignorance, inertness and desire (*ānava*, *māya* and *kāmya*) it undergoes *Samsāra* like *pāśa*. When the *Jīva* contacts *Pati* it becomes like Him. The *Jīva* attains *mukti* by following certain practices which free it of its ignorance etc. *Mukti*, according to this system, is *Śivasārūpya* (likeness to Śiva) and not *Śivaikya* (identity with Śiva). Śiva, it says, is love itself and by His grace (*arul*), He makes the *Jīva* free from its impurities. The highest form of *jñāna* consists in service to Śiva and His devotees. Śaiva and Śakta philosophies are both comprised in *Pāśupata*. In Śakta, Śakti or Devi (called *Caṇḍī*) is supreme. She is worshipped in three forms. Kālī, Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī. Owing to the love of Śakti, the world emanates from Śiva and merges in Him. By means of *jñāna* and *bhakti*, the *Jīva* attains *mukti* and becomes one with Śiva. Certain sects of Śaktas engage themselves in non-Vedic practices, like worshipping God in a wine-pot, smearing the body with ashes from the burning ground, etc.

Medieval Schools

The Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy with its doctrines of *bhakti* and *prapatti* and emphasis on the equality of all *bhaktas* and *prapannas*, irrespective of caste or sex, appealed to the minds of all people and it soon spread all over the country. Many pious people came forward in Northern India to propagate the faith. But their teachings were coloured by their temperamental bias. The theistic tinge which Viśiṣṭādvaita assumed in the identification of *Brahman* (*Paramātmān*) with Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu) caught the imagination of these saints and they identified Him with those particular forms of Nārāyaṇa which attracted their minds. In whatever form He is adored, He appears in that form and accepts the devotion.

Rāmānanda was the first of these teachers. He taught that *Īśvara* resides in every *Jīva* and He is Rāma, the righteous. The force of his personal attraction and teachings of Rāmānanda can be judged from the fact that even Muslims became his disciples. Kabir followed his teachings and incorporated them with Islam and evolved his School of Kabirpanthis.

Vallabha taught that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was *Brahman*. His form is made of spiritual love and it is Rādhā- Kṛṣṇa. He sports with the *Jīvas* in Gokula. Creation is the *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa. *Bhakti* is the only means of attaining

Kṛṣṇa. *Bhakti* is irrepressive love or *puṣṭi*. On release from the body the *bhakta* goes to Gokula, which is beyond *Vaikuṇṭha*, and enjoys the bliss of communion with Kṛṣṇa.

Caitanya taught the Radha Kṛṣṇa cult. The absolute *Brahman* is Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is eternally sporting with Rādhā, his beloved 'other'. He has a bewitching form of beauty and he attracts the *Jīvas* to him by his entrancing beauty. *Bhakti* or *prema* is the only means of attaining the bliss of Kṛṣṇa. The saint taught a number of *bhāvas* in the love towards Kṛṣṇa, like those of God as ruler, master, mate, etc., of which the best is the *bhāva* of Kṛṣṇa as spiritual bridegroom. The love of Kṛṣṇa exceeds the pleasures of *Vaikuṇṭha*.

Modern Religious movements

Brahmosamaj, Aryasamaj and Ramakrishna Mission are effective reactions to the proselytising influence of alien religions. They are movements in response to their ideas of the needs of the age.

CHAPTER VI

LITERATURE

The *Vedas* form the fundamental basis of our religion. They are the words of *Brahman* and are said to be *Brahman* itself. These were littered by great ṛṣis (Seers). They are the oldest literary specimens of the world. Their language is an ancient form of Sanskrit. The *Vedas* are four in number called the *Ṛgveda*, *Yajurwda*, *Sāmaveda* and *Atharvaveda*. Each Veda comprises two parts, called the *Karmabhāga* and the *Tattvabhāga*--the portion that treats of action (*karma*) and the portion that treats of reality (*tattva*). The conduct to be followed by those who aspire to acquire *puṇya* or virtue is detailed in the former portion and the eternal truths of life are described in the latter portion. *Brahman* is that by knowing which everything is known and so the portion of the *Veda* which treats of *Brahman* is the most important portion. It is called the *Vedānta* or the *Upaniṣad*. The former portion may again be divided into two parts called the *Mantra* part and the *Brāhmaṇa* part. The *Brāhmaṇa* portion refers to the details of the ritual and indicates the particular mantra to be recited in each ritual act; the *Mantra* portion supplies the mantras. The two parts are mixed up in the *Kṛṣṇa yajurveda*; in all the other *Vedas* they are found separate.

Although the *Rṣis* first uttered Vedas, we should not think that they composed them. The Vedas, according to Hinduism are eternal. They have been existing for all time and are beyond time. It is said that even the world is created by Brahman in accordance with the Vedas. The Vedas are transmitted to the men in different ages either by God himself or through sages inspired by Him. So the sages, by the grace of God, visualised the Vedas and transmitted them to us. As they are not composed by men, the Vedas are infallible. The minds of men are fallible and so whatever a man does is liable to error. But the Vedas are not so. There can be no mistake in them and they compel recognition and response. They are eternal, spiritual imperatives which require to be spiritually obeyed. In accordance with the above view, the language of the Vedas is called the *Devabhāṣā* or Divine language. The linguistic evidence is in favour of the high antiquity of the Vedas and its eternal holiness. The age of the Vedas cannot be historically determined as they are beyond history and are super-historical, not merely pre-historical.

Though the last portion of every Veda is the *Upaniṣad* or Vedānta, still *Upaniṣads* are not all attached to the Vedas. A large number of the *Upaniṣads* arose on the model of the Vedānta. The *Aitareya*, the *Kauṣītaki*, the *Kaṭha*, the *Taittiriya*, the *Iśa*, and the *Chāndogya* are the last portions or Vedānta of the respective Vedas. Besides these there are some more *Upaniṣads* which are as

important and authoritative as the above. They are the *Brhadāraṇyaka*, the *Śvetāśvatara*, the *Muṇḍa* and the *Maṇḍūkya*, the *Maitrāyaṇiya* and the *Kena Upaniṣads*. Of these the *Brhadāraṇyaka* belongs to the *Śukla yajurveda*, the *Śvetāśvatara* and the *Maitrāyaṇiya* belong to the *Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda*, the *Kena* to the *Sāmaveda* and the *Muṇḍa* and the *Maṇḍūkya* to the *Atharvaveda*. Excluding the *Śvetāśvatara* and the *Maitrāyaṇiya*, the remaining *Upaniṣads* are generally termed as the *Ten Upaniṣads*. They are the authorities for our Vedānta system and are frequently quoted by our Ācāryas in support of their views. Besides these, there are nearly a hundred other *Upaniṣads* which underlie our sectarian practices and symbols.

It should not be supposed that every *Upaniṣads* gives a succinct account of any one system of philosophy. They are rather discussions on different topics comprised in the systems. The whole body of *Upaniṣadic* literature has been studied, and the contents have been systematised and expounded by Bādarāyana or Vyāsa in his *Uttaramimāṃsā Sūtra* or *Darśana*. The *Sūtras* and the *Upaniṣadic* statements or *śrutis* on which they are based are differently interpreted by different Ācāryas according to the system of philosophy advocated by them. In this way different systems of Vedānta arose, like *Advaita*, *Viśiṣṭādvaita*, *Dvaita*, *Śaiva* etc. Most of the Ācāryas wrote commentaries on the important *Upaniṣads* in accordance with their systems of philosophy.

The next authority for our religion is the *Dharma Śāstras*. They are of two categories, the *Sūtras* and the *Smṛtis*. The *Sūtras*, as their name indicates, are in the form of aphorisms and the *Smṛtis* are in metrical form. If *śruti* is what is directly revealed to the Ṛṣis, the *Smṛti* is what is recollected by them and recorded afterwards. The *Dharmaśāstras* give the code of conduct applicable to each section of society and to the whole society in common. All that is contained in the *Dharmaśāstras* is said to be taken from the *Vedas* which teach fundamental ethical truths and they claim to teach nothing new. If there is any explicit contradiction between what is laid down in the *Vedas* and what is taught in the *Dharmaśāstras*, the former are to be followed in preference to the latter, as they are absolutely and universally true. If there is anything new in the *Dharmaśāstras* and there is nothing corresponding to it in the available *Vedas*, we have to suppose that the corresponding portion of the *Veda* is now extinct but was available to the authors of the *Dharmaśāstras*. We should not discard what is laid down in the *Dharmaśāstras* on account of this accident. But when the *Dharmaśāstras* of two Ṛṣis prescribe different courses of conduct with regard to the same subject, we should not reject either or both as wrong, but it should be understood that we are at liberty to follow either course at our option. But if there is tradition in our family with regard to one of the courses, we should follow that alone as such a

tradition perpetuates an ancient Dharma practised by the rest.

The *Dharmaśāstras* are the concluding portions of the *Kalpasūtras*. The *Kalpa* is one of the six *Aṅgas* of the *Vedas*. They are *Śikṣā* or phonetics, *Vyākaraṇa* or Grammar, *Chandas* or prosody, *Nirukta* or derivation and *Kalpa* or procedure. The whole *Kalpa* teaches us all the procedure for the Vedic rites, domestic rites and duties to humanity in general. But all *Dharmasūtras* that we inherit are not the concluding portions of *Kalpasūtras*. Some Ṛṣis have written complete *Kalpasūtras* while others wrote only particular portions. To the former class belong the *Dharmasūtras* of Āpastamba, Hiranyakeśin, Bodhāyana and Vaikhānasa. The *Dharmasūtras* of Gautama and Vasiṣṭha are independent works and no *Kalpasūtras* by the same authors are available.

The traditional number of *Smṛtis* or law books is eighteen. They are (1) *Manusmṛti*, (2) *Parāsarasmṛti*, (3) *Vasiṣṭhasmṛti*, (4) *Śaṅkhasmṛti*, (5) *Likhitasmṛti*, (6) *Atrisṁṛti*, (7) *Viṣṇusmṛti*, (8) *Hāritasmṛti*, (9) *Yamasṁṛti*, (10) *Aṅgirassmṛti*, (11) *Uśanassmṛti*, (12) *Samvartasmṛti*, (13) *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, (14) *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, (15) *Dakṣasmṛti*, (16) *Vyāsasmṛti*, (17) *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* and (18) *Sātātāpasṁṛti*. All these *Smṛtis* are equally authoritative but the *Manusmṛti* has commanded universal respect from the authors of all other *Smṛtis* and authors of the

Itihāsas and *Purāṇas* because it is the most comprehensive and the most elucidative or clear. The *Parāsarasmṛti*, is considered to be the standard work for this *Kali* age. It enumerates exhaustively the special rules for the *Kali* age. It is said in the *Manusmṛti* itself that Manu's laws apply to the *Kṛtayuga*, Gautama's laws to the *Tretāyuga*, the laws of Śaṅkha and Likhita to the *Dvāparayuga* and those of Parāśara to the *Kaliyuga*.

There are some other works which are written by the Ṛṣis like the *Dharmaśāstras* and which are considered as equally authoritative although they do not strictly come under the category of *Dharmaśāstra*. These are *Itihāsas*, *Purāṇas*, *Āgamas* and *Tantras*. The *Itihāsas* describe how the duties taught in our *Smṛtis* are discharged by different individuals, how men should act when there is apparent conflict of duties, and thereby create in the minds of people a desire to follow *dharma* and to shun *adharma*. The *Purāṇas* describe how the incarnations like those of Rama and Kṛṣṇa come down to the level of man in order to elevate men to the divine level and reveal to us the mighty power of God by describing the course of creation and destruction and the right and wrong manner of governing the people. The *Āgamas* contain rules for the construction of temples and shaping of *arcas* and the consecration and worship of the latter. The method of pleasing the Gods in an easy manner and thereby attaining advantages in this and the next

world of *svarga* and finally *mokṣa* by following the Yoga is described in the *Tantras*.

The *Itihāsas* are the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata*. The *Rāmāyana* teaches how the conduct of the people towards different persons is to be regulated by upholding ideals for each case through the story of Rāma and Sitā. The *Rāmāyana* is as much a story of Rāma as of Sitā and teaches *stridharma* also. The way in which a son should obey his father, the manner in which the brothers should love each other, the way in which the wife should obey her husband, the manner of the devotion of a servant towards his master, how friends should love each other and work for mutual good; how men and women should conduct themselves towards each other, the feminine virtues of gentleness and love and several other principles of our religion are taught through the life and adventures of Rāma and Sitā. It also brings home to all people the principle that people should be honoured for their moral worth and not for their birth and that pious creatures too deserve respect and service. Above all the *Rāmāyana* is termed a *śaraṇāgatiśāstra* and teaches the cardinal principle of our religion that a man who sincerely seeks another for protection should never be abandoned. God as redeemer is anxious to save mankind even if they at least once pray for His mercy. The book also illustrates the principle that God incarnates Himself here in times of historic crises in different forms

when the world is filled with vice, for the purpose of saving the virtuous and punishing the wicked. Punishment is only an act of kindness to redeem the wicked from their career of vice and every effort is made to reform them. This last principle is better illustrated by the other great *Itihāsa* the *Mahābhārata*. Several other principles of our religion are taught in this work through its episodes such as truthfulness, godliness, purity of women, mercy towards supplicants, forbearance, penance and so on. So many principles of our religion are illustrated in this work that it is termed a *Dharmasāstra* itself and is even called the fifth *Veda*. Whole chapters in it are devoted mainly to teach *dharma* incidentally in the course of the story for the time being. The *Mokṣadharmā*, the *Viduranīti*, the *Sanatsujātīya*, and the *Anugīta* are some such important sections. But the most important of these which has acquired universal reputation is the *Bhagavadgīta* (the Lord's song or teaching) in eighteen chapters of about 700 stanzas. Although a chapter in the epic, it has acquired independent recognition by virtue of the highest teaching enshrined in it. At the commencement of the Great Battle, Arjuna feels doubt as to the course of conduct he should follow and seizing the occasion, a sermon on conduct has been taught to him and through him to the world. *Karmayoga*, *Jñānayoga* and *Bhaktiyoga* are taught in all their detail in the first, second and third sextants of the work. The fundamental principles of our religion which are of

universal appeal have been clearly taught in this work. The general principles that none should shrink from doing his duty in whatever difficult position he is placed, that everyone who sincerely worships God, in whatever form it may be, will certainly be saved, that the mercy of God alone can save humanity from their sins and the like taught in it have made it the universal text-book of all religions and secured for it world-wide recognition. Our people have recognised it as one of three basic authorities of our religion and philosophy by including it in the *Prasthānā-traya*. There are innumerable commentaries on it and translations of it. Everyone should read it and put the principles taught in it in practice.

The *Purāṇas* describe the history of the world. They describe how the world is created, how it is preserved and governed and finally how it is periodically destroyed. The world of *cit-acit* is eternal; it is subtle in *pralaya* and gross in *sṛṣṭi*. They show how the morality of the world is preserved by God, how the wicked are punished and then redeemed and the virtuous saved. They describe the different methods and incarnations of God at critical periods in the world to maintain its moral and spiritual order. They teach the principles of our religion through their episodes. They also proclaim the glory or *vibhūti* of the *arcāvatāra* of God through their descriptions of the power of the different *kṣetras* and they also describe the holy

tirthas in our country. They describe the methods of penance and devotion to God to attain salvation. They therefore form one of the important class of text-books for our religion. The most important of them are eighteen in number. They are divided into three classes called *Sātvika*, *Rājasa* and *Tāmasa* according as they extol the glory of Viṣṇu, Brahma or Śiva.

There are an equal number of *Upapurāṇas* which mostly deal with the glories of different Gods.

The *Āgamas* are treatises by sages on the practical side of religion. They contain rules for the construction of the temples, making of *arca*, consecration of the temples and idols, worship of the *arca* and expiatory ceremonies for acts of commission and omission. Incidentally they treat of town planning to show the place of temple in a planned town and the qualifications of the worshipper. The various incarnations of God are also represented in *arca* and different kinds of *arca* are consecrated for different purposes of worship. These *Āgamas* are two-fold, the *Vaiṣṇava* and the *Śaiva* according as they treat of the temples, *arca* and worship of the different forms of Viṣṇu or Śiva. The *Pancarātra* and the *Vaikhānasa* are the *Vaiṣṇava* āgamas. The former is said to be taught by Nārāyaṇa Himself, while the latter is taught by Saint Vikhānas. The ancient work on the *Āgamas* are called the *Samhitas*. They are *Pādmasarṁhita*,

Paramasarṁhita, Sattvatasarṁhita, Kapinjalasarṁhita, Iśvarasarṁhita, Parāśarasarṁhita, haradvajasarṁhita, Ahir- budhnyasarṁhita and Viṣṇutilaka. The Vaikhānasa Sarṁhitas are said to be four composed by the four Ṛṣis; Atri, Marīcī, Kāśyapa and Bhṛgu. All the works by these authors have not survived to us. Śaiva āgamas are said to be twenty-eight in number.

Each *Āgama* has four sections in it called (1) *Caryā* (2) *Kriyā* (3) *Yoga* and (4) *Jñāna*. The first treats of the daily duties; the second of the worship of God; the third of the practices tending to the control of the senses and for the meditation of God. The last treats of the nature of God, the constitution of the body and *mukti*.

Tantras are practical treatises of religion. By means of worship of *arca* or *yantras* by means of repetition of *mantras* or mystic utterances, by means of *upāsanas*, they provide courses for developing the hidden power in man leading to the realization of God. These are also used for the attainment of worldly desires.

All the above literature is in the Sanskrit language. But besides this, there is a large body of religious literature in Tamil which is considered to be equally authoritative in Viśiṣṭādvaita and Śaiva siddhanta. They are works of the Vaiṣṇava Ālvārs and Śaiva Nāyanmārs. They are a class of highly gifted saints

who, by their wisdom and conduct, have realised God and had communion with Him. Their works are the outpourings of their religious consciousness. The Vaiṣṇava religious hymns consist of four thousand stanzas and are collectively known as the *Divyaprabandham*. The Ālvārs or Vaiṣṇava saints are twelve in number and their works, as they are collected in the *Divyaprabandham*., are as follows. The first three Ālvārs, Poygai Ālvār, Bhutat Ālvār and Pey Ālvār have each 100 stanzas to their credit in *Iyarpa*. Tirumaliśai Ālvār has to his credit 96 stanzas in *Iyarpā* and *Tiruccandaviruttam* (120 stanzas) in *Mudalayiram*. Nammālvār, the greatest of the Ālvārs, has four compositions and the famous *Tiruppāvai* (30 stanzas) of Āṇḍāl are also included in the *Mudalāyirarn*. The above poems along with the *Irāmānujanūttandādi* of Tiruvarangattamudanār constitute the 4000 stanzas of the *Divyaprabandham*. Highest philosophical truths are embodied in these Tamil hymns of the gifted Ālvārs and so these are considered as important for Vaiṣṇava religion as the *Upaniṣads*; and the two, the Tamil *Divyaprabandham* and the Sanskrit *Upaniṣads* are styled *Ubhayavedānta*. But the most significant point about the literature in the vernacular is that it reveals the greatness of the *arcāvatāra* or idol-worship. It embodies the spiritual experiences of the Ālvārs in the different temples. In this manner Śrinivāsa has been extolled by nine of the Ālvārs. The Śaiva religious hymns in Tamil are collectively known as the *Tirumurais*. They are twelve in

number. The *Tevāram* of Tirujñānasambandar, Tirunāvukkarasu (Appar) and Sundarmurti constitutes the first seven *Tirumurais*. *Tiruvācakam* and *Tirukkovayār* of Mānikyavācakar form the eight. *Tiruvicaippā* and *Tiruppallāṇdu* of different authors form the ninth. Tirumular's *Tirumantram* is the tenth. The eleventh consists of 40 poems by 12 authors. *Periyapurānam* (otherwise called *Tiruttoṇḍar purānam*; of Sekkilar constitutes the 12th. Here too the glory of the *arcāvatāra* of Śiva is mainly described. The Tamil hymns are designed to inspire feelings of veneration and love towards God besides presenting valuable truths. The devotional songs of Tāyumānavar and Pattinattār addressed to Śiva are as popular amongst the Śaivites as the psalms of the Nayanmārs.

Śaivism is embodied in the philosophic system known as Śaiva Siddhanta and Śaiva Siddhanta is therefore called the philosophy of Śaivism and it is traced to the *Upaniṣads* like Vaiṣṇava Siddhānta. It is chiefly contained in *Śivajñānabodham* by Maikaṇḍan *Śivajñānasiddhiyār*.

There is a large body of similar religious hymns in the Sanskrit language also. These constitute the stotra literature. They are small hymns consisting of from one to 100 stanzas in praise of a deity, describing the devotee's absolute surrender to God, admitting his sinful nature and his utter helplessness to attain *mukti* unless the Deity out of His natural

and immense mercy pities his condition and redeems him from his career of sins. They reveal the *bhakti* or devotion of the devotee and his earnest desire for union with God. The number of these devotional hymns is very large and only a few important and early ones can be mentioned here to serve as examples. The stotras by Śankarācārya are significant as they are composed by a philosopher who held that *Brahman* was formless and attributeless. The *Stotraratna* of Yamunācārya comprises 65 stanzas and embodies high philosophical truths. The *Gadyatraya* of Rāmānuja is an equally important triplex. In the first he seeks the mercy and protection (*Śaranāgati*) of God. In the second he prays to Śrīranganātha of Śrīrangam. In the third he prays to God to accept himself. The *Mukundamāla* of Kulaśekhara Ālvār is another famous hymn of forty stanzas. The importance of *bhakti* or devotion and the mercy of God are clearly brought out in this hymn. *Śrīguṇaratnakośa* is another important hymn of 61 stanzas. Then there are poems praising several *arcāvatāras* like, *Śrīrangarājastava*, *Sri Varadarājastava*, etc. The *Nāmāvalis* may also be mentioned here as they help us to meditate upon God by repeating His various names.

The devotional songs of Tyāgarāja in praise of Rāma deserve special mention. The songs of Annamācāryulu on Sri Venkateśvara are full of high devotional fervour.

CHAPTER VII

VARNAS AND ASRAMAS

Although our religion and philosophy consider *mokṣa* (beatitude) as the primary object of our desire, still they recognise three other objects which are to be attained consistent with the primary one. They are *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*. These three are collectively known as *Trivarga* and along with *mokṣa*, as the *caturvarga*. These are not only ends in themselves but are also means to the principal object, *mokṣa*. *Dharma* is the practical method by which *mokṣa* can be attained. It regulates the conduct of a person who aims at *mokṣa*. It may be called a code of Ethics. The underlying principle in our code of Ethics is that one should prefer what is good or meritorious (*śreyas*) to what is pleasant or pleasurable (*preyas*). The man who prefers the latter is called ignorant while the man who prefers the former is called wise. The wise man knows that the pleasures of the world are transitory and perishing and that everlasting pleasure is only *mokṣa*. Even the joys of *svarga* and *Brahmaloka* which are gained by sacrifices and *tapas* are only transitory. So if a man has to attain everlasting joy, he must control his senses and realise his self. This is possible by following the course of *dharma*, When we follow *dharma*, we must follow it without any object in view, i.e. for its own sake, dedicating it to God. Then only will it contribute to our good or

śreyas. Again *dharma* includes not only rules of conduct but also principles of character. The latter are more important and produce better results than the former. The former without the latter are ineffective.

Dharma regulates the conduct of man in all aspects of life—religious, social, political and healthy. It is divided into two categories *varṇa-dharma* and *āśrama-dharma*. Our religion has divided the society into four classes or *varṇas* according to the nature and aptitudes of its members and prescribed *dharma* for each class. Again it has divided man's life into four stages or *asramās* and prescribed *dharma* for each stage. The division of the society into four classes or *varṇas* is peculiar to our country. For that reason, it need not be declaimed or discouraged. It is based on the principle of social economy. So it is prescribed as one of the duties of the king to maintain the *varṇa-dharma* and *āśrama-dharma*. If a king is not able to maintain *dharma* properly, he is described as an incompetent king. He is given power to punish people who do not follow the *dharma* of their class and state in society.

It is not possible to mention all the *varṇa-dharmas* and *āśrama-dharmas* here but a few important ones will be noticed. It is the duty of the Brahman to study and teach the *Veda*, to perform sacrifices for himself and for others, and to give and receive gifts. The first in each pair of duties enumerated above is

also prescribed for the Kśatriya and the Vaiśya. The special duty of a Kśatriya is to protect the people and their *dharma*. Agriculture, cattle rearing and trade are assigned to the Vaiśya. The only duty assigned to the Śudra is to help the other castes in carrying on their duties. In this way, the *varṇas* specialise in religion, politics, economics and labour according to their station in life, whatever its nature.

In addition to the above social duties, certain religious duties are enjoined, most of which are common to all the castes. These are comprehensively known as the *saṁskāras*. They are *Garbhādhāna* or ceremony for conception; *Puṁsavana* or ceremony of wishing a male child; *Sīmantonmayana* or ceremonial parting of the hair; *Jātakarma* or birth rites; *Namakarana* or naming; *Annaprāśana* or giving solid food to the child; *Caula* or tonsure; *Upanayana* or investiture with the sacred thread; and *Vivāha* or marriage. After *Upanayana*, the study of the *Veda* is prescribed and at the end of the Vedic study five more *saṁskāras* are prescribed. So to the Hindu life itself is a sacrament from birth to death or conception to cremation. Every act is an adoration of God including the smallest details of life relating to birth, food, study and duties of the family.

In addition to the above *saṁskāras* which are enjoined once for a life time, there are some others which are to be performed daily or at regular intervals. The daily duties are the performance of

the five *mahāyajñas* viz., *brahmayajña* or reciting the *Veda*; *pitryajña* or oblation to the *pitrs* or forefathers; *devayajña* or worship of God; *bhūtajajña* or offering *bali* or food to all creatures; and *manuṣyayajña* or feeding the guests. The aim of these *yajñas* is to bring out the solidarity and unity of all living beings, human, super-human and sub-human and the obligations of the house-holder to the world in general owing to his birth and station in life. Then there are the twenty-one sacrifices— 7 *pāka-yajñas*, 7 *haviryajñas* and 7 *somayajñas*— which may be performed some at specific times and others at suitable times, but all at the option of the doer. But *śrāddha*, one of the *pākayajñas*, is considered as essential and one who omits it is counted as a *patita*, because every one owes his life to the parents and progenitors.

The object of these *saṁskāras* is to make the life of a man spiritual. Our people are of the opinion that man is not on an animal level and should not be guided by the animal instincts of self-preservation and multiplication and feelings of anger, fear and jealousy. Being endowed with mind and reason, he should rise above the animal level and feel that he has come from God and has to return to God and that he should make himself fit for it. He is morally free and not bound by instincts like animals. So he must live and move in a spiritual world and his dress, food and acts must have a spiritual meaning. Every *saṁskāra* is intended to be an act of purification

making the soul more and more fit to approach God. So *Upanayana* is considered to be the most important *saṁskāra* as, in it, the man is initiated into the worship of God by means of Vedic stanzas and is invested with the sacred thread in token whereof. Worship of God is the essence of religious life. Marriage is also a spiritual act which enables a man to perform Vedic rites which exalt him spiritually and to continue the race which redeems him from his debt to the fore-fathers. By these *saṁskāras* one's life becomes living in and for God.

For this purpose our religion teaches not only the above *saṁskāras* but also detailed rules of conduct which are ethical aids to spirituality. Some of these will be defined below. 1. *Śauca* or *śuddhi* is keeping the mind, speech and body clean. Keeping the mind clean is to prevent it from lapsing from *sattva* into *rajas* and *tamas*. Keeping the speech clean is not to utter lies or words calculated to cause pain to other beings. 2. *Viveka* is discrimination between good and bad, between body and soul. 3. *Ārjava* is identity of purpose between body, speech and mind. 4. *Samatva* is feeling pleasure and pain at the pleasure and pain of others. 5. *Tusti* is being satisfied with what one has. 6, 7. *Śama* and *Dama* are controlling the mind and the senses from being attracted by undesirable objects. 8. *Dāna* is giving to others what one has. 9, *Tyāga* is renouncing what is not good to oneself. 10. *Daya* is pity or sympathy for the suffering of others. 11. *Mārdava* is

association with goodness. 12. *Lajja* is moral sensitiveness. 13. *Kṣamā* is the spirit of endurance or ability to bear pain caused by others, or by extreme cold or heat. *Kṣānti* and *titikṣā* are synonymous with this. 14. *Dhairya* is courage to do one's duties even in the face of extreme danger. 15. *Śraddhā* is reverence to the elders. This is otherwise called *Āstikya*. 16. *Tapas* is physical exercise to make the body fit for religious duties. 17. *Sthairya* is the will to do one's duty. 18. *Vairāgya* is the renunciation of sense inclinations. The practice of these good qualities is given preference over the above-named *saṁskāras*. Even though a man undergoes all the above *saṁskāras*, it is of no avail if he does not possess these qualities. If, on the other hand, a man possesses these qualities, it does not matter even if he does not undergo all the *saṁskāras*.

Hinduism not only insists on the practice of these virtues but also on the avoidance of vices of which the chief are given below. 1. *Kāma* is the desire for sensual pleasures. 2. *Krodha* is anger causing pain to others. 3. *Lobha* is the instinct of possession. 4. *Mōha* is delusion or mistaking one thing for another. 5. *Mada* is conceit arising from egoistic enjoyment and it causes moral confusion. 6. *Mātsarya* is envy or jealousy at other's prosperity. 7. *Dambha* is self-advertisement. 8. *Māna* is the feeling of superiority to others and insulting them. 9. *Pāruṣya* is conduct leading to other's displeasure.

10. *Ajñāna* is ignorance of what is good and what is bad. 11. *Ahaṅkāra* is egoism expressed in terms of self-elation and the feeling of superiority to others. It includes identification with the body. 12. *Mamakāra* is the sense of possession or mineness. 13. *Pramāda* is perversity due to ignorance. 14. *Īrṣyā* is envy. 15. *Asūya* is attributing evil to good people. Of these the first six, viz., *kāma*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada* and *mātsarya* are the chief and are called *arisadvarga* or the six inner enemies of spirituality. Of these again the first three, *kāma*, *krodha* and *lobha* are considered to be more baneful than others. Lastly *kāma* is the worst of all the enemies as it is the source of all the other vices.

A man's life is divided into four parts and each is called an *āśrama*. The four *āśramas* are stages in the pilgrim's progress to God or stages in the process of spirituality. They make the man given to secular life turn his mind towards spiritual life and finally lead to the realization of the supreme Self. The first *āśrama* is *brahmacarya*. A man enters *brahmacarya* at the age of seven or eight. It is the period of study and the whole attention of the student should be absorbed in study at the residence of his teacher (*gurukula*). *Brahman* is the *Veda* as the source of spiritual knowledge and so *brahmacarya* is the study of the *Veda*. The highest of all studies is Vedic study. The object of the study is to attain mastery over animal nature. The *Brahmacārin* has to lead a well-regulated life,

practice self-control and observe celibacy. He should be moderate in his food, speech and conduct. He should beg his food and partake as much of it as his teacher prescribes for him. He should avoid excess of salt, acid and pungent substances. He should avoid meat and intoxicating drinks. He should not use scents and flowers. He should not sleep in the daytime. He should not indulge in toilet. He should not drive in carts or coaches. He should not use footwear. He should shun objects that cause *kāma*, *krodha* and *lobha*. He should act with *viveka*. He should not indulge in music or dancing. He should not find fault with others and should not himself commit faults. He should regularly perform the *sandhyāvandana* or the worship of God in the Sun as the light of lights. A student is not required to pay for his studies. The *Guru* is maintained by the state and the tuition is free. He has to acquire knowledge and culture through service and devotion to his teacher. The most essential duty of the student is reverence to the teacher.

Then the student enters into the married life, the stage of his life called *gārhasthya*. He should select a fair and suitable bride of a different *gotra*. Marriage is a sacrament meant for spiritual life and not for sexual and sensual satisfaction and his partner should participate in his pursuit of *dharma*. Every man is a member of the social organism. He owes his body and mind or psycho-physical make-

up to his forefathers, *ṛṣis* and gods and so he has to repay his debt of gratitude to them. The *Gṛhastha* has to do his duties and not assert his civic rights. The duty to the fore-fathers consists in the performance of *śrāddha* to them and the continuance of the species worthy of the race. The duties to the *ṛṣis*, lie in the study of the *Vedas* as they are the Vedic seers of God. The Gods are pleased by Vedic sacrifices and worship. The first and the third can be accomplished only with the assistance of a wife. So marriage is a religious sacrament, according to our people and not a civil affair to satisfy our senses. Not only the above three functions, but also the remaining two of the *pañch-yajñas* can be performed only with the assistance of a wife to look after the house. So our people assigned domestic work as the primary duty to the wife. It is also the duty of a *gṛhastha* or *householder* to feed all people who are in need of food, the *brahmacārin*, the other *gṛhasthas* who approach him for food, the *sannyāsin* who has neither home nor relations, and even the *vānaprastha*. So every other *āśrama* depends upon the *gṛhasthāśrama* for its support as the children depend upon their mother. As a *Gṛhastha* has to offer *bhūta-bali* also, even the birds and insects derive support from him. So a *Gṛhastha* is the mainstay of the society and his *āśrama* is the most humanitarian and therefore the best of the *āśramas*.

Pañca-yajñas are thus based on the idea of life as an opportunity for service and self-sacrifice and not for sense-enjoyment. It is giving back to the universe what a man has taken from it for self-maintenance.

The next is the *vānaprasthāśrama*. When a man reaches old age and is subject to dotage and is blessed with a grandson, he should leave the *grhasthāśrama* and retire to the forest either with or without his wife, after transferring the management of the family to his son and spend his life in contemplation. Retirement to the forest is only for inner spiritual quiet. His food consists of roots, fruits and similar forest products. He practises ascetic self-control by fasts and enduring sufferings. He should also perform the five *mahāyajñas*. This *āśrama* is only a training period for the next or *sannyāsāśrama* or the life of renunciation and contemplation.

The *Sannyāsin* gives up all sense attractions and attachments and even the celestial pleasures of *Svarga*. Though he lives in solitude he may enter the city and seek alms for the sustenance of his body. He has no attachments or aversions.

He returns love for hatred and lives for others. He is one with God and sees all things in God and God in all things. He is a veritable God on earth. This *āśrama* is the fruition of the other *āśrama* and the

fulfilment of life. The life of dutifulness ends in the deified life; it is attitude that matters and not the detailed acts. As the *Gītā* says, whatever a man's station in life, he can get freedom or *mukti* by doing his prescribed duty without attachment and absolute devotion to God.

Thus though the *āśramas* appear to be different stages in the spiritual development of man, starting with *brahmacarya* and ending with *vānaprastha* it is held in a larger sense that each *āśrama* is an end in itself. A man can attain *moksa* by performing his prescribed duties well and without desiring any fruit in any *āśrama*. Purity of soul, detachment from worldly objects and absolute devotion to God will secure salvation to a man in any stage of life. There are relative duties due to birth, birthplace and social environment and these duties should not be inconsistent with obligatory or optional duties. Every duty is really a worship of the Deity who is the real actor or *kartu*. He is the act and the actor.

Now coming to the rights and duties of women, there is fundamental difference in our *Śāstras* between *puruṣadharmā* and *stridharma*.

Women are always dependent upon men and can never be independent. Women have their share of duties but they are not allowed to discharge them independently- Men too cannot practice *dharma* independently of women, but the difference is if a

man begins to perform a rite, his wife has to cooperate and help him; a woman, on the other hand, cannot undertake to do a work without the permission of her husband. If she does anything against the wishes of her husband, it will turn fruitless. The upshot of all this is that the primary duty of a wife is to follow the wishes of her husband (*pativratā*). According to our *Śāstras* marriage is a sacrament (*sam̐skāra*) and not a civil or social affair, and so the marital tie is unbreakable. A woman, once married, cannot desert her husband even if he were addicted to vices or devoid of good qualities. Conversely a man cannot abandon his wife and if he does so he is publicly censured. Husband and wife should be attached to each other for life, and love and be contented with each other.

Although independence has been denied to women in religious duties, she is the mistress of the house. All domestic duties are in her charge and she commands equal respect with her husband in the family—nay more. It is said that the father deserves hundred times more respect than the teacher and the mother thousand times more than the father. A man may abandon his father but he should, under no circumstances, abandon his mother. The wife also deserves equal respect because our *sāstras* say that a man is born in the form of his son through his wife. As he is born in his wife, she is called his *jaya*. Where women are respected, there the Gods rejoice; any rite becomes fruitless if it is done in a place where women are not respected; a woman is

the light of the house; she is prosperity incarnate;so says our *sāṣṭra*.

As there are good deeds to be performed, so there are also bad deeds to be avoided. So the *sāṣṭra* not only commands us to do certain duties but also prohibits us from committing certain other acts. Just as the good deeds are calculated to produce merit, so the bad deeds or prohibited actions cause sin. Our seers were not only wise enough to lay down certain rules of conduct but were also prudent enough to warn us from doing- wicked deeds. These deeds are either harmful to ourselves or to the society. One who does not want to lose his merit or acquire sin, should avoid them. A *Grhastha* should not covet another man's wife. No man should cause *himsa* or harm to another. A man of one caste should not encroach upon the duties of another caste, except in cases of dire necessity. One should not utter a lie. There are various prohibitions with regard to food. Generally food which is *rājasic* and *tāmasic* should be avoided. It should not excite the senses and animal instincts. It should not lead to slothfulness and apathy. Liquor and stealing are strictly prohibited.

When there are injunctions and prohibitions, it is natural that there should be omissions and commissions, as to err is human. These have to be rectified and this is done by *prāyaścittās* or self-purifications. The underlying principle is repentance

for lapses and sin. A man should feel repentance for what he has done and should benefit by experience. This is brought about by means of the *prāyaścittās*. The most common form of purification is penance and fasting or physical mortification leading to the purification of the soul. The derivative meaning of *prāyaścittā* is penance and determination (not to repeat the act). These expiatory ceremonies purify the mind of the person and prevent his spirituality from being lowered by the omissions and commissions. The *prāyaścittāa* are prescribed for slips or unintentional mistakes but not for willful misdeeds or omissions. There is no atonement for willful wickedness. The man is doomed for life. In our daily round of duties, we may unwittingly omit some details and we may not be aware of it. In order to ward off the evil effects of such omissions, it is usual to perform an act of atonement for them at the end of every ceremony. Our people are very scrupulous in the discharge of their duties and want to make sure of the merit of the actions. Remorse is vital to virtuous life.

Our system of fasts (*vratas*) and festivals are calculated to help us in self-purification and development of the *sattva* character. If *sattva* increases, we will be free from egoism and resign ourselves to the will of God and attain salvation by His mercy. Fast reduces the force of the material body and enables the spiritual nature to attain ascendancy. Festivals are not simple feasts or

dinners. They remind us of the advents of God on earth or commemorate the mighty deeds of God undertaken to purify the world by destroying the wicked and protecting the good, for the redemption of humanity. They are the outward expressions of our gratitude to God for His immense and constant mercy. If we do not express our gratitude to God, we will be guilty of ingratitude for the trouble that He has taken to make us approach Him. *Dīpāvali*, for instance, is a day of rejoicing and remembrance of the good that Śrī Kṛṣṇa did to the world by killing the cruel demon, Naraka, on the previous day. *Saṅkrānti* commemorates the release of the world from the clutches of the demon Bali whom Viṣṇu drove away by His prowess. It also demonstrates the immense mercy of the Lord who pardoned him in spite of his wickedness because he supplicated and who even took upon himself the burden of protecting him so long as he lived. Another class of festivals is the celebration of the birthdays of the *avatāras* of God and of saints who have bequeathed to us their wisdom of the things of this world and the worlds beyond.

Note to Chapter VII

WOMANHOOD

The home is the unit of Hindu society and the nursery of its ethical and spiritual life, and the Hindu woman is the pivot of the home, its source and sustenance. If man is the *grhastha* or the householder, woman is the *grhiṇī* or the owner or maker of the home. There can be no home without a wife or mother. She is the ministering angel of man and the very cradle of family life. Hinduism thus honours the woman as wife and mother as no other religion does.

Marriage is a sacrament and not a civil contract. It is not lust and the gratification of animal instinct but love that links the male and the female as *pati-patnī*. Wedlock brings out the spontaneity and reciprocity of love, its constancy and irrevocability and the value of spiritual partnership. The domestic life of the woman is not a drudgery but an inner delight arising from her ministering to the husband's needs and the upbringing of the children. As *sahadharmacāriṇī*, the wife, with her feminine sweetness and grace, co-operates with her husband in the maintenance of the family as the foundation of the corporate life of the community. She willingly shares the duties of the husband in the performance of his fivefold duties involving gratitude to the forefathers and hospitality

to the poor and the needy. Her domestic life is not one of mere passivity and dependence due to feminine receptivity and responsiveness, but she is the queen or mistress of the home and its mainstay and prosperity or Laksmī incarnate. As *patnī*, she often leads the *pati* in sweetening his masterful will.

Her life of love is enriched by the advent of motherhood. Her instinct of self-sacrifice and service are fully brought out in the bearing and rearing of the children, worthy of the *gotra* and the spiritual tradition. It is motherhood that elicits the infinite spirit of self-denial and affectionate solicitude and is manifested in the fostering of the child by endless privations and patience bordering on martyrdom. The forgiving nature of the mother increases with the prodigalities of the children even if they happen to be prodigal.

Wifehood is, therefore, extolled in Hinduism as the symbol and embodiment of Divine Love. The *Īśvara-Īśvari* relation of Godhood is a dual-non- dual relation of *Pārvatī-Parameśvara* or *Sriyaḥpati*. *Īśvara* rules by law and *Īśvari* by love and the two are glued together as one. It is Divine Motherhood that is the operative grace of God which consists in forgiveness and the redemption of the sinner from his ways of wickedness. The mother's love is spontaneous and the Divine Mother forgives sins by Her overflowing love.

The love shown by the *pati* to the *patnī* is the real property of the woman and it is richer and more enduring than earthly property and material welfare. The work of the woman is not confined to the fostering of domestic felicity as she often takes a leading part in social service like feeding the poor, healing the sick and rearing children and rejoicing in devotional activities. But her feminine nature is essentially suited to the founding of the home and her fundamental right is the right of love which rules the home and society.

CHAPTER VIII

WORSHIP

Ardent *bhakti* cannot rest satisfied with silent meditation and *upāsanā* especially when it overflows and expresses itself in the form of tears, tremors and trance and as bridal mysticism. Vedic offerings to gods are reinterpreted as Vedāntic offerings to Brahman. Brahman is beyond space and time and is formless. But He has a formless form of His own to respond to the needs of the worshippers and their prayers and praise. Though *bhakti* is for *bhakti's* sake, the worshippers often pray for earthly and celestial boons and *Bhagavān*, as Providence, answers -their prayers. Contemplation on the inner self is supremely desirable but it is not what is actually possible for the average man of common sense. He wants something concrete to fix his mind upon. In His infinite mercy and love, God descends into humanity as *arca* or idol. *Arca* is not metal or stone symbol but is the permanent incarnation of God and the concretion of His *krpā*. In *arca* God is easily accessible to all at any time or in any place. God-hunger for man is more than man's hunger for God and as *arca*, He longs for communion with the devotee whom He regards as His very *ātman* or self. *Bhakti* and worship or *pūja* are the inner and the outer expressions of man's love of God. In His infinite love, He comes down and the mystic

ascends to Him by *Karma Yoga*, *Jñāna Yoga* and *Bhakti Yoga*. *Arca* is the most accessible form of God for expressing our love through *pūja* or worship. Worship can be offered in a variety of ways. We can worship Him by inner meditation or *dhyāna*. We can again worship Him by offering: flowers, incense, food and drink. We can also worship Him by simply uttering His names. The first method is difficult to practise as it implies the turning of the vision inward. The second is easy and lies within the reach of all people. The third is the easiest and the most efficacious of all. The worship of the idol or *arca* is really the worship of the living all-pervading presence of the Lord. The Deity responds to our *bhakti* and out of His grace, reveals His nature in and as *arca*. While *avatāras* are historic incarnations of God that come and go, *arca* is the permanent incarnation of God and He is ever accessible to the mystic. God comes to stay in the idol out of His grace and by virtue of our devotion and prayer.

There are two primary methods in the worship of God as Nārāyaṇa, namely, the *Pāñcarātra* and the *Vaikhānasa*. The *Pāñcarātra Āgama* is the word of Nārāyaṇa Himself and it is a *sāttvika* religion based on the practice of love. The *Vaikhānasa* is also of divine origin. The *Śaiva Āgamās* are traced to Siva. The *Āgamas*, therefore, claim the same validity as the *Itihāsas* and the *Purāṇas*.

Worship of God as *arca* or image is of two kinds, namely, temple and domestic worship. The former is meant for all and has continuity. It is conducive to the good of the community as a whole. Domestic worship is, however, confined to the householder and his family. Again, there will be *homa*, *bali* and *utsava* in temple worship which are absent in domestic worship. Further there will be multiple images in temple worship.

The *Āgamas* refer to 96 varieties of temples of which 18 are prescribed for Viṣṇu and the remaining types are meant for other Gods. The essential parts of a temple are the *garbhagr̥iha* or the *sanctum sanctorum*, the *mukha maṅṭapa* or the pavilion in front and the *prākāra* or the walls surrounding the *sanctum* for going round it or *pradakṣiṇa*. The *garbhagr̥iha* is surmounted by a *vimāna* or tower and the *prākāra* is provided with a gate or *gopura*. The *prākāras* may vary from one to seven according to the grandeur of the temple.

Five kinds of images are prescribed for temple worship of which *dhruva* the static aspect, and *utsava*, the dynamic aspect, are the most important. The images are of three types, the *sthanaka* or the standing posture, the *āsana* or the sitting posture and the *sayana* or the lying down posture. Each of these kinds may be of the *yoga* or the serene type, the *bhoga* or the blissful and the *vira* or the heroic.

The *Āgamas* furnish detailed instructions regarding the planning and construction of temples as regards position, size and the measurements of the *vimāna* and other parts of the temple. Just as the body is a living temple of God and the heart is His shrine, so the town is modelled on a spiritual plan with the temple at the centre. In addition to the temple to the *ādimurti* or the chief God there may be temples for the other incarnations of God, the *Ālvārs*, *Nāyanmārs* and the *Ācāryas*. The whole temple is pervaded by a religious atmosphere in which work is elevated into worship and worship is raised to the philosophical and spiritual level.

The festivals conducted in a temple are for the benefit of the community as a whole and they are of two kinds, the periodic and the occasional. While the devotee seeks the *mūlavar* or the God within, the *utsavar*, as the giver of grace, seeks the devotees outside and bestows His blessings on them. In addition to the periodic festivals like those at the time of the full moon or the equinoxes, festivals may be performed at any time out of devotion or desire to ward off evils in times of drought or cosmic calamities. The duration of the festivals may vary from one to 15 or 30 days. A flag is hoisted in the temple to indicate the course of the festival; and it is lowered at the end of the same. Once the flag is hoisted, none may leave the town until it is lowered. This indicates that the festival is for the benefit of the people. It is laid down that

devotional festivals should be performed in the afternoon.

Great care is taken for maintaining the purity or sanctity of the temple. God is pure and perfect. Expiatory ceremonies are prescribed for the slightest act of impurity. The underlying idea is that God who is essentially pure and free from all kinds of taints, withdraws His presence from places polluted in the slightest degree as unfit for His stay. The devotee should go into it with pure body and mind. Cleanliness leads to godliness and only the pure in heart can reach God. Certain ceremonies are performed to purify the atmosphere of the temple if it is made impure. Expiatory ceremonies are prescribed for the entry of impure persons and animals into the temple. Even the appearance of fungus and anthills inside the temple is considered to be a fit occasion for expiation. Expiatory ceremonies are also described for portents which forestall evil to the country.

Bharata Desa is the birthplace of universal religion and is the holy land of the *avatāras*, ṛṣis, Ālvārs, Nāyanmārs, Ācāryas and other seers of God. The birthplace of *avatāras* and godly men is called a *kṣetra* or sacred place sanctified by their advent in the interests of spiritualising humanity. Mother India has infinite capacity to produce godly men and is therefore worshipped as perpetually young though she has given birth to a countless number of sages

and saints through the ages. The Vedāntins seek Brahman as the supreme Deity or *sat* or as the cosmic Lord or *Īśvara*; the mystics seek Him as the indwelling Self but all religious people adore the *avatāra*, historical or permanent, in the *kṣetrās* of which seven are said to be the chief. Ayodhya is the birthplace of Sri Rama; Mathurā, Gokula and Bṛndavana are associated with the *līla* of Sri Kṛṣṇa. Kāsi is the heart of spiritual India. Kāsi is held sacred as the chief salvation giving city of India.

Arca is worshipped in five forms of which the most important is *svayamvyakta* like Tirupati.

The Lord in His infinite mercy incarnates here and is the very embodiment of redemptive love for all *Jīvas*. He summons all *Jīvas* from the hill-top to seek His feet and attain His grace. Other *kṣetras* are Śrīrangam, Puṣkaram, Melkote and Naimiśam. Kanci is a *divyakṣetra* to Varada consecrated by Brahma. Trivellore is an *ārṣakṣetra* consecrated by a *ṛṣi*. A *mānusa kṣetra* is established by a good man. Temples whose origin is not thus known are called *purāna kṣetras* and most temples come under this heading, *Śaiva kṣetras* also conform to type and *Śiva* dwells as the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether of which the most important is Chidambaram, permeated by *cit*. The pilgrim's progress, external but symbolical to the Vaiṣṇavites and the Śaivites, is from Badarināth and Kedāranāth in the north, to Kāsināth, Mathurānāth and

Ayodhyanāth in the centre, to Pandarināth and Dwarakānāth in the west, to Jagannāth in the east and to Venkatanāth, Kāncināth, Ranganāth and Ramanāth in the south. The pilgrim then enters into the inner shrine and ascends to eternity.

Tirthas are tanks or rivers, the waters of which are considered to be holy on account of their association with some holy place or saint. Physical cleanliness is next to spiritual purity and godliness. Every *kṣetra* has a *tirtha* attached to it, a bath in which is said to cleanse our sins. Our Śrinivāsa *kṣetra* has in it *Svāmīpuṣkarini*. All should bathe in it and purify themselves before approaching the presence of God. The Ganga is holy because it is said to have descended from Heaven and issued out of the feet of Viṣṇu. It was brought down by the severe penance of King Bhagiratha to remove the sins of the ten thousand sons of Sagara and send them to Heaven. The Godāvāri and the Kāveri are equally sacred. Pilgrimages to holy places are symbolic of the pilgrimage of the soul to God. The end and aim of our life is the pilgrimage of the soul to God, the home of all eternal values like truth, goodness and beauty. Pilgrimages to *kṣetras* enable the devotee to shed his prejudice due to the accidents of birth and station and long for His soul-sight. He attains *vairāgya* or the virtue of self-renouncement by minimising his wants and acquiring *sāttvic* endurance and patience. Contact with holy men fosters the spirit of human kinship and the kinship of

souls leading to spiritual service. The great Ālvārs, Nāyanmārs and Ācāryas, therefore, took to pilgrimage from the Himālayas to the Setu to promote devotion in themselves and others.

CHAPTER IX

SADHANAS

The *puruṣārthas* or chief ends of life outlined in the next chapter have a religious value. *Dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* are not ends in themselves; they lead to the supreme end called *mokṣa puruṣārtha*. *Mokṣa* is freedom from *avidyā* and *karma* which bind the *ātman* to the world of *saṁsāra*. The *ātman* really belongs to God but somehow he has identified himself with the body made of twenty-four *tattvas* of *prakṛti* from time immemorial. Owing to this materialistic view he is subject to the changes of *prakṛti* and therefore to the cycle of births and deaths, pleasures and pains. At long last he comes to know that he has given up his permanent home in God, banished himself from God, became a wanderer in *saṁsāra* and therefore he longs to return to his home. God as the self and the saviour of souls also longs for reunion. It is in this light that the teaching of the *Gītā* as the book of yogic *sādhana*s is to be understood. Yoga is union with God and each yoga stresses this union. The chief yogas are *Karma yoga*, *Raja yoga*, *Jñāna yoga* and *Bhakti yoga* including *Prapatti*. They are generally arranged as steps in a ladder and every sect or system has its own way of attainment. There is another view that each yoga is independent and leads directly to *mukti*. In this work, the view of Śrī Vaisnavism is adopted and *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti*

are treated as different stages in the pilgrimage to God. The will is first disciplined, then thought and finally feeling as *bhakti* is stressed. *Prapatti* is the easiest way to God as He Himself becomes the way and the end and *mukti* is thus attained by the grace of God.

Karma yoga is a moral discipline by purifying the will. Its object is to change *kāmya karma* into *niṣkāma karma* or duty for duty's sake. No man can be without doing *karma* and *karma* includes thought, speech and overt action. Every man as a bodily self ordinarily follows his animal inclination or desire for sense-objects. He not only seeks sense-pleasures but also desires some outside ends like success (*jaya*), profit (*lābha*) and name and fame. These are called *kāmya karmas* because they are based on the desire of the person in sense-objects and sense-pleasures. Such ends are not desirable morally as they make the person the slave of sensibility. Besides, *kāma* leads to *krodha* or anger when the desire is not achieved; anger leads to confusion and moral death. Therefore, the *Gītā* prescribes the way of *niṣkāma karma* as the way of moral life. *Karma* is done because it is impossible to be without doing it. But it ought to be done without caring for the fruits or consequences, as *niṣkāma karma*. It is duty for duty's sake. Then the *karma yogin* is not a slave of the senses, but is a victor thereof. Every man has a station in life and some duties pertaining to it. He ought to do them as duties irrespective of the

consequences. He may succeed or fail, derive pleasure or suffer from pain; he should not care for them.

Karma has three meanings. In the scientific sense, every *karma* is an effect and it follows from a cause or set of causes. It also determines the future action. In this way it becomes a continuous series; and the theory may lead to fatalism. No man can escape his past and he is the slave of destiny. In a higher or moral sense, *karma* is the action of a *kartā* and the *kartā* is morally free: he has the will to shape his future, according to his conviction. But when once the action is done, he cannot escape its consequences. What a man sows, that he reaps and the moral law of retribution works with mathematical precision. Good deeds are never lost, so also bad deeds, and it is the deeds that determine a man's character. But if *karma* is done by him as *niṣkāma karma*, he is free as he does not care for the fruits. The law of *kāmya karma* does not bind him. Virtue is its own reward; it has its own intrinsic values and character shines by itself. In a still higher sense, namely, the religious sense, every *karma* is the worship of God and then *karma* is done as *kaiṅkarya* or work dedicated to Him. The *karmayogin* now says: "Not I, but Thou, O Lord" and does his work as worship of God, "*sarvam Kṛṣṇārpaṇam*". *Īśvara* is the real *kartā* or actor in individual and social life. No doubt, the body, the senses, the mind and the soul more than all

contribute to *karma*. But *Īśvara* is the ultimate agent and is the means and the end. In this sense, *karma yoga* is a direct way to *mukti*, but it is developed only in the final stage of religious life.

Rāja Yoga is mind-control (*cittavrtti nirodha*) and is a royal path to Brahman or God. The mind is ordinarily fleeting and frittered and it is the aim of the *yoga* to collect it and centre it in God. It is therefore a psychological method as different from the moral method of *karma yoga*. This *yoga* consists of eight stages, namely, *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyama*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇa*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*. Purity of body and mind are essential to the practice of this *yoga*. The first four stages refer to the cleansing of the body and breath-control. The next four stages refer to mind-control. At last, the mind expands, attains *samādhi* and *śānti* or peace. This expansion is explained in two ways both physically and mentally. It is the ascent of spiritual energy in the centres of the body from *mulādhāra* in the lowest part of the spinal cord to *sahasrāra* in the brain. From the mental point of view there is expansion of consciousness from the lowest stage to the highest state. There is expansion from the unconscious to the sub-conscious and the conscious to the super-conscious state of *samādhi*. The Yogin can acquire *siddhis* or miraculous powers like entering into the bodies of others and acquiring control over nature. But such *siddhis* are real obstacles to spiritual life and union with God, and they should therefore be

given up. The chief value of this *yoga* is that it teaches us the way to self-knowledge and self-sovereignty.

Jñāna yoga is the philosophic method of enquiry into the nature of the *Ātman* and its relation to Brahman. It is not merely an intellectual but also a spiritual enquiry based on *viveka*, *vairāgya* and *abhyāsa*. By means of *viveka*, the *yogin* or philosopher distinguishes between the *ātman* that is eternal and the bodily self that is fleeting. By *vairāgya* he renounces the false feeling that he is the body and tries to give up egoity or *ahankāra*. *Abhyāsa* consists in practice of contemplation on the *ātman*, he attains *ātma jñāna* or self-realisation; attains *santi*. But such *Jñāna* is only a start and not a stopping place. It should lead to *Brahma jñāna* or God-realisation. Advaita has a different meaning to *jñāna 'yoga* and gives the highest place among the *yogas*. It says the *jīva* and *Īśvara* are identical and the consciousness of this identity is *jñāna*. But in religious path, *bhakti* is higher than *jñāna*.

Bhaktiyoga is the practice of devotion of God or *Bhagavan*. God is super-personal and impersonal or *nirguna* or *arupa*. As Ramanuja says in the beginning of his *Bhasya* to *Brahma Sūtras*, Brahman is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe and He is the ruler. The Brahman of the *Upaniṣads* is Lord Śrinivasa who is divine as *daya*. The practice of *bhakti* according to him consists of seven stages, namely, *viveka vimoka*, *abhyasa*,

kriya, kalyāna, anavasada ai anuddharsa. Briefly explained, they consist taking *sattvic* food, giving up desires for objects of the senses, practice of the presence God, performance of the duties as ordained *vara*, practice of virtues like truth and hospitality and freedom from the extreme feelings of elation and depression. The *bhakta* is initiated by the *guru* into *upāsana* or meditation on Brahman as Śrīyahpati or Lord and Śrī in the light of the *mūlamantras*. *Bhakti* then becomes intense as *paramabhakti* and it becomes a thirst for divine union as in the case of Nammālvar. The *bhakta* may be a servant of God or *dāsa* like Hanumān, a friend of God like Arjuna; he may cherish motherly love as Yaśoda or Perīālvār did for the divine child Kṛṣṇa, or may yearn for love like a *nāyaki* for her Lord as Āndāl did.

Bhakti yoga is Love lit by *jñāna* and a rigorous path which only the twice-born can follow. An easier method is adopted by Śrī Vaiṣṇavism and it is called *prapatti*. *Bhagavan* is Śrīyahpati, the Lord of redemptive grace. He has incarnated as Rāma and Kṛṣṇa and is *sarvalokaśaranya*, the redeemer of all *Jīvas*. He is *rakṣaka* or *śaranya* as taught in the classic text of *prapatti* "Renounce all *dharmas* and take refuge at My feet. I will release you from all sins." Six conditions are laid down for *prapattiyoga*. The *yoga* consists on the whole in deathless faith in the saving grace of God and absolute surrender to Him in a spirit of contrition and humility and inner purity. Grace is said to be got by him whom God

chooses as self surrender is not of the nature of a cause. Whatever it *is*, *prapatti* is for all irrespective of caste, creed, sex or profession and is therefore universal. The chief *mantra* for *prapatti* is *dvaya* which means refuge at the feet of Lord and Śrī. The classic example of *prapatti* is that of Nammālvār, the *super-prapanna* of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism who surrendered himself to the mercy of Śrinivasa with Śrī as His heart, and was blessed with *mukti*. All sects in India are, as it were, pilgrims to the Divine *dayā* in the holy Hill of Tirumalai. The Hill is sacred to the followers of Madhva who insist on service to Viṣṇu as the chief means and end of religion.

The Śaivite defines Śiva, his supreme God, as Love and refers to four ways, *cariya*, *kriya*, *yoga* and *jñāna* as means to the attainment of Śiva. They correspond to the four *yogas* of Vedānta. Even the followers of Śankara accept the existence of a Personal God for all practical purposes and the need for His grace. Thus all Hindus have faith in Brahman as personal God and seek with the aid of a *guru* His mercy to attain *mokṣa* or *sayujya* which is outlined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X **PURUSĀRTHAS**

Every animal pursues an end but man alone is conscious of the end. Man has reason or *hetuka* and he is also morally free and a *kartā*. His consciousness of the end or purpose is called *puruṣārtha*; it is his aim of life or goal. Man's physical needs are food, water, fire, air and clothing, i.e., they are for the preservation of his body. He seeks pleasures and their continuance and avoids pains. Hinduism has analysed all the chief ends of life and classified them into four broad kinds. They are called *dharma*, *artha*, *Kāma* and *mokṣa*. They may be rendered in English as the ethical, the economic, the hedonistic or pleasure-seeking and the religious ends of life. They are not, however, exclusive. They all lead to the super-end of life, namely, *mokṣa*.

Dharma or righteousness is the ethical end of life. Hinduism gives the practice of *dharma* the first place among the *puruṣārthas* as no man can take a moral holiday. Right conduct is the whole of life and the other ends of life should also be righteous. Buddhism and Jainism also insist on the need for the practice of *dharma*. But they do not recognise and realise that goodness has its final meaning only in godliness. God is good by nature and the highest good is godliness, to be attained through the *Śāstra*. So morality or *dharma* has its full meaning in religion

or *Śāstra* which prescribes the duties that ought to be done. They are called *nidhis*. They are righteousness in practised acts. *Dharma* is righteousness in action and is the essence of duty and it consists in reverence to parents, teachers and sages; truthfulness, charity, courage and kindness to all creatures. It includes the performance of the five *yajñās* or sacrifices to the *devās* and *pitṛs* above, to men and lower animals. It brings out the solidarity of the universe and the need for mutual helpfulness. The violation of these duties is *adharma* and entails sin or *pāpa*. *Adharma* includes evil and sin; it is evil in the moral sense and sin in the religious sense as it is the violation of a Divine Law. By doing the acts of *dharma*, the general attitude of *dharma* or righteousness is attained. A man then becomes a *dharmavan* like Dharmaputra and is like Rāma, the very incarnation of righteousness on earth. Śrī Rāma practised truthfulness (*satya*) devotion to vows, kindness to all creatures and self-control. He subordinated *artha* and *Kāma* to the discipline of *dharma*. *Dharma* is thus the very essence of duty for duty's sake.

Artha is an end of life which is both desired and desirable. A student who finishes his studies or academic life should enter on the life of a householder or *grhastha*. He ekes out his livelihood by doing hard and honest work for the maintenance of his family and others. Wealth is not an end in itself and the miser who hoards his wealth for the

sake of wealth is rightly condemned as an *adharmavan* and anti-social. The householder should be hospitable, helpful to the needy and do his duty to the *devas* and *pitṛs* as the whole world is one. There is really no difference between individual and secular or *laukika* duties and special or spiritual or *vaidika* duties as every duty is finally an offering to the Deity. *Karmas* are of three kinds, viz., *nitya karmas* or daily duties like *sandhya*, *naimittika karmas* or occasioned duties like ceremonies to *pitṛs* and *kāmya karmas* or optional works. While the first two are obligatory, the third is optional.

Kāma is the attainment of the pleasures of life and is the third *purusārtha*. When a man desires children, health or wealth, he does certain *karmas* or *yajñas* to please the *devas* and gets the desired boons. People pray to God for boons and He grants their prayers. *Kāmya karmas* are on the whole for enjoying the pleasures of life here and in Svarga. But they are trivial and transcient. Therefore a wise man should renounce these pleasures and seek eternal happiness which is only in *mokṣa*.

Kaiṅkarya or social and spiritual service to all *Jīvas* is work raised to the level of worship of God. The great devotees of God like the Ālvārs and the Ācāryas sought God in all beings and all beings in God and raised the idea of service to the level of *kaiṅkarya*. Self-surrender to God is the highest *purusārtha* or supreme end of conduct. God is the fulfilment of all the *purusārthas*, as He is *sarvakāma*

or all-desire and *sarvaśarṇya* the refuge of all.

The *mumukṣu* who seeks *mukti* by following *sādhana*s or *yoga*s at last attains it. The term *mokṣa* means freedom from *samsara* or the ills of life due to *avidya* and *karma*. It is freedom from the cycle of births and deaths to which the embodied *Jīva*, or *baddha* as he is called, is subject. The word *mukti* is negative as it means that there is no return to this world of *Sarṁsāra*. But it has also a positive meaning as it refers to the ascent of the freed *Jīva* to the world of Brahman beyond space and time. *Mokṣa* is the attainment of Brahman by knowing whom everything is known. According to Rāmānuja, following the *Upaniṣads*, the *Sūtras* and the *Gītā*, the *mukta*, freed from the body, ascends gloriously by the *arcirādi* path or *devayāna*, led by a Divine guide to *Vaikuṇṭha* beyond this world and the world of the *devas*. When the body dies, the *mumukṣu* has a glimpse of the *Brāhmanādi*. This *nādi* throws light on the path and he soars gloriously to *Vaikuṇṭha*, through the shining regions of *Indra*, *Śurya* and other *Devas*, crosses the river *Virajā* and goes beyond. He is freed from *avidya* and *karma* and the subtle body by bathing in the purifying waters of *Virajā*. Then he reaches *Vaikuṇṭha*, sees Brahman face to face, attains union with Him and enjoys eternal bliss. Though the language used by the *Upaniṣad* in this ascent and attainment is the earthly language of space, time and sensibility, it is really beyond human description. *Vaikuṇṭha* is beyond space and time, mind and body and Brahman has a formless form, is eternal, ever self-shining and

blissful. The *mukta* becomes one with Him and is immortal and ever blissful. He no longer returns to this world of *karma* and is no longer bound by *prakṛti* or *kāla*. In the state of bliss he is one with Brahman though he exists as a distinct entity. The *muktas* are spiritually united and as they are free, their desires are at once fulfilled. They may serve the Lord without any taint of egoity and serve each other and fulfil the redeeming purpose of the Lord who longs to make the other bound *Jīvas muktas*. On the whole it is impossible to describe the bliss of Vaikuṇṭha. He who experiences it alone can explain it. The followers of Madhva separate good from evil and assert that the good *jīva* or devotee of Viṣṇu goes to Vaikuṇṭha and serves Him there for ever and that the wicked is hurled into , everlasting Hell. The Śaivite has faith in Śiva as the supreme good and by following the saint's path, he attains, after death, the world of Śiva or Kailāsa, The Advaitin says that *mukti* is possible even in this life and it is *Jīvanmukti* or identity of *jīva* and *Īśvara*. He, however, admits gradual release by ascending to the world of Viṣṇu.

All Hindus have faith in the four yogas and freedom from *saṁsāra* with the grace of God.

CHAPTER XI
RELIGION AND SOCIETY

Man is a social creature as well as an individual seeker. He is therefore a person who seeks the four *purusārthas* as an individual, and as a social creature he participates in the strivings of all the rest of the community. He has social ties which he cannot shake off. There are natural instincts of social activity such as co-operation and working for group unity and welfare. Hinduism recognizes both the individual and the social aspects of each person within the community even as it recognizes the physical and the material and the spiritual aspects of every individual. Just as his efforts are to be for the realisation of himself as spiritual, so also his social activities must be directed towards his realisation of unity or brotherhood with all the members of the community.

Hinduism is most catholic. Its one-pointed effort has always been towards the realisation of social unity amid differences. Through its formulation of the metaphysical principle of one *Īśvara* who is worshipped in different forms and names, it had kept up the ideal of religion as the realisation in the life of each of its members of the *Īśvara* so as to create a common or one Humanity. Hinduism does not appeal merely to the heart or to the head but to something more valuable. It appeals to the soul, the

spiritual nature in each individual. It appeals to the godhead concealed in the heart of every creature. It teaches the Life Divine, which is the dwelling in God and for God in His world. This is the goal of Hinduism. This promises for each individual the triple aims of the spiritual life, a life of liberty, a life of righteousness or law, and a life of love for all creation that verily belongs to God.

Hinduism is a supreme socialising and divinising force. It is not anti-social or unsocial like some religions. It has meaning for man here in this world. It treats the world as a great field of God's play in which all individuals must take part and act with understanding according to rules or *dharma* prescribed in the play to each part.

The Hindu religion has carefully analysed the structure of society, its divisions of functions and periods of maturation, growth, development, and ripening of each individual. In other words, its division of castes depends upon the functions and its division of *āśramas* depends upon the stages of man in a society. It is true that these are given a fuller and profounder significance in some cases, though it is a fact that these divisions cannot be treated to be water-tight compartments. Pure types and pure functions are difficult to find in any society. The individual in religion discovers a new set of values for the terms liberty, law and love, (*mokṣa*, *dharma* and *kāma*), meanings which are impossible

to get in the purely political society. A society composed as it is of various degrees of intelligence and capacity and personality, does not grasp the full significance of this discovery of religious consciousness. None the less, religion does help to integrate or unify the triple goals of liberty, law and love. To the lower nature these mean license, power and lust for things. But sublimated by Religion they become wonderful expressions of the nature of the soul or spirit.

The social life of man becomes transfigured and civilised by the sublimated direction given to all the activities of the ordinary man. The teachings and the practices of the masters of Hinduism are directed to the civilising of man, by taming his lower nature which revels in egoism and competition, jealousy and greed, violence and hatred. Religion being a higher power or force of the new dimension of the personal and social life seeks mastery over the past vital life of man. In Hinduism it is sought in full conformity with the triple principles of liberty, law and love. That it has not been successful in Hinduism in a larger measure than we would like it to be only shows that generally there has been a stepping down of the ideals of religion everywhere. Religions become rigid and tend to repeat the mistakes of passion and greed of the lower levels on the higher levels of social and spiritual action and thus step down the force of the true impulse.

Hinduism unlike other religions which took up the competitive path, has sought to tame even the enthusiasm of the knowers of other religions by its wide catholicity in spirit to the truths expounded by them. It has disarmed them all, both within India and without by means of its peaceful approach. The twin-notes of Hinduism, struck not once only in the history of India, are peace (*Sānti*) and knowledge (*jñāna*), peace through knowledge and knowledge through peace. A social life which is based on these two principles or ideals, would tend to exhibit a higher state of civilisedness and culture than one based on comfort or security or even salvation.

The individual must be re-made in the spiritual manner. This requires on the part of every individual the recognition of the world as a divine world, a world not based on chance or chaos but a cosmos. A lawful world is the ideal of a rational creature. As we have seen *dharma* is the conception of the law behind the world and all actions or *karmas* which are performed properly and selflessly and without seeking fruits are individually emancipating and socially good. Good performance of actions or *karma yoga* itself leads to *Brahmānubhāva* or God-experience. By moral action Hinduism means all such actions as are done without seeking fruits and according to *dharma* laid down by tradition, spiritual insight and great seers. Such actions have the characteristic of social good, because the socially evil actions are mostly self-seeking and egoistic

actions. It is true that Hinduism also pleads for the performance of actions which are neither personally good nor socially good, neither personally evil nor socially evil but only actions which have the sanction of God (*dharma*), for human individuals and societies have not yet arrived at a knowledge of what is their good or evil. It is above their comprehension. Faith in the *Śāstras* alone matters in duty, for it leads to the transcendental good which is ultimately both personal and social good.

The political life of a people reflects the moral and social qualities of its members. A society in the full sense of the term is a political society with its State and other organisations which ensure freedom for the members and rights of each. In modern times the State has taken over the organisations which have to cater to the needs of the members. Socialisation and Nationalisation of the organisations which have previously been run by individuals is not a little due to the awakening of men to their social and spiritual needs of liberty and rights and duties. This awakening is really due to the religious teachings of great men, who had taught reverence for life and rights of each member. It is religion in India that taught the triple truths of liberty of the individual as a goal, of law which is administered equally, that is, in the interests of the poor and the rich alike, the high and the low, and love for all, love which is expressed by acts of

kindness and protection, in times of disease and distress, famine and drought.

The grand truths of religions alone inspired the great work of social amelioration of the conditions of life. The social dynamics of modern States is inspired, whether in a materialistic or socialistic State, by the spiritual principles of *dharma*, *mokṣa* and *kāma*, law, liberty and love, and *karuna* or sympathy. The practical idealism of religion in Hinduism would extend this to the animals also. Humanitarianism extends to animals also which form part of the economy of the State. The aim of true religion as Hinduism, is to make individual who would in all their secular activities or even in secular matters bring to bear the triple principles or apply them as standard to conduct. Similarly to apply these principles to social or political legislation is the natural extension of *rāja-dharma*. *Rāja-dharma* must improve and make possible the *svadharma* of its members. It may correct and quicken the pace of transformation of the lower and selfish qualities by socializing man and bring the restraints of law to bear on the unlawful or otherwise not-real nature of the individuals. But it ultimately exists for the realisation of real *mokṣa* and *svarājya*.

The modern State endeavours to fulfil all the functions of Religion because it has taken over the ideals of religion as its own ends. But while it may help the conditions for the growth and happiness of

all its members, while it may give them a sense of freedom from want and restraint in matters particularly physical and social, it cannot compel men to be good except on pain of punishment. It can instil fear and by this threat many members are likely to be restrained from doing unsocial activities. There is however a great danger in this development. Force hinders rather than helps self-growth. A state taking over the functions of the spiritual evolution may defeat it. Instead of being a hindrance to hindrances it may tend to become a great hindrance. Religion is helpful positively and not merely negatively. It makes for a change of heart. Men of religion are sought after for the solution of personal problems, which are not capable of being attended to by psychiatrists and doctors of medicine. Human problems go beyond the temporary social and personal life. Peace is sought after and spiritual men who have found peace within and comprehended the truths of both the here and the hereafter help to secure peace within. Man is more than a social and physiological creature. His problems of death and life baffle the intellect and no state or its organisations can help to solve these problems. Religion alone promises to solve them and it does it in its own unique way. These problems are not social problems except indirectly. The State must know its limitations in this direction. Any state that attempts to dismiss the connection of these fundamental problems which harass the souls of its members by edicts of the kind that have been

issued in countries dominated by purely national, socialistic or materialistic ideologies, is bound in the long run to break up the State itself. The State or even Society cannot become God or the sole object of loyalty because it cannot satisfy the deepest impulse of the soul for the knowledge of itself completely. Real *mokṣa* is sought after and it means not liberty for getting goods and satisfactions or the liberty before the eye of law and right to equal opportunity but the liberty to be freed from the cycle of births and deaths and the terror of constant birth and death.

Religion supplies this and it alone can supply this. Spiritual pain is verily different from all other kinds of pain and fear. It cannot be assuaged by any offer of worldly wealth, or divine pleasures of even the rigid life of *dharma*. Great men have thrown away empires for the sake of freedom from all these. The *artha* and *kāma puruṣārthas* are *tuccha*. A world dominated by them is a delusion, a snare. Man should seek to get out of them, free himself from them. But such a freedom is difficult without the opening of the soul to real light. Teachers of religion know how to help these men. The preservation of religious texts and institutions facilitates the seeker of liberation on his path. Inner illumination or desire needs the support of the religious literature and methods. The company of the good or knowers of the path of inner discovery shower peace and prepare the conditions for one's own growth.

Freedom becomes meaningless to a soul that has need of solace and peace. This peace is granted by God and one feels free in His presence freed from the pains and struggles and conflicts of his personality and community. Temples and Maths offer this atmosphere, but then these must have men who have devoted themselves and are devoting themselves to their self-discovery and God-realisation. Love or sympathy pervades the atmosphere of the *aśramās*, the retreats of the good men of spirit. These too serve mankind. Though a *Yogin* or religious man is one who retires from the world, yet does he serve those who need his company by his very peace, the inward peace which no State can ensure for him. Hinduism realises that all types of men should have freedom for this realisation. It does not believe in one universal panacea for all diseases of the body and brain and heart or soul. The religious man or spiritual saint and mystic is an important person, who, though not of the world lives and moves and has his being in God, casts peace on all mankind, gives to those who can listen the nectar of spiritual peace, and a sanctuary for the haunted soul, afraid and sorrowing. Love begins to be available to all whoever feels that the world is a terrible place to live in. He shows the new way of transformation of a world diseased. Wherever he is, because of his universal nature, he begins to inspire all with faith and love and hope.

The spiritual activities which are the special province of Religion and religious associations can never be taken over by the State as part of its general functions. A secular State or a welfare State may seek to distribute equitably the goods of the world on the principle of greatest happiness of the greatest number. The qualitative distinction of the spiritual good can indeed never become part of the quantitative goods of the social and economic or hedonistic order (*artha* and *kāma*). It is true in these spheres the right distribution which is equitable distribution between all the members of the world society or nation is the legitimate method. Equitableness of the distribution of the goods however, is only part of the right or *dharma* with which a State is charged. There are and have been other criteria of rightness than equitableness of distribution. Freedom can never be distributed though security can perhaps be. Even a theocratic state (such as Pakistan in modern times) cannot but create conditions of freedom or growth to happen in a particular manner. But in attempting this there happens the socialisation of the religious consciousness which is not always an unmixed good. But it helps the awareness of the need for greater and greater enlightenment in matters pertaining to personal liberty. An ordered or self-disciplined liberty is the aim of liberty, or else *mokṣa* would become meaningless. There is in every soul an elemental need for the inner discovery of God which has most often been achieved in spite of

outside social action and society. This need is other than the peace, the comfort and the security that man gets out of the socialisation of human action. There is great truth in the dictum that the individual is greater than the society to which he belongs, though he is inseparable from it. But he belongs to something greater than humanity itself, namely to God, for the goal of man is the eternal and the immortal sense of existence which nothing less than God can grant. God is the Ultimate goal, transcendent to the goals of the world and the State, and all others have meaning and value only in relation to Him.

The ideal of a secular State does not mean that the state is to be or ought to become anti- religious. It is the affirmation of the principle that the State does not seek to take over the functions of religion, organized or unorganized, institutionalised or non-institutionalised. This does not mean that the State permits the religious institutions to do what they please. In those activities which interfere with the sound canons of social life and peace, the State is the authority; in matters of proper administration of religious institutions even the State holds itself free to legislate within the limits of its competence, though this is a difficult pose.

The one truth that we learn from religion and philosophy is that though we can distinguish aspects in human behaviour and can even investigate those

aspects and form different sciences, we can never separate them. They are organic to each other. There are people or rather scientists who discovered the economic man, the political man, the religious man, the aesthetic man and so on. On the basis of this, sciences such as economics, sociology, political science, religious science and aesthetics have come into being; very useful within limits, they always tend to apply their laws or hypotheses beyond limits as if man was exhausted by each one of them. This has led in modern times to very lopsided developments. Man has been forgotten by the sciences. Man is more than all that the different sciences have made of him. These several aspects are properties of man's rationality, that quality or *dharma* or *guṇa*, which realises itself in the several activities in which he engages. Thus the organization of this personality is the aim of his own life; but it is not possible through any particular mechanism of any social order or the State. The State should remember that the individual is more than the sum of his social and economic and legal life. Religion also should remember that its serious purpose is the discovery of the inward reality in each individual which it must help by giving it freedom and flexibility and the environment necessary for such a great thing as individual realisation, which is also the fulfilment of the society of which he continues to be a member. The State must protect the sanctity of the environments of those who have out of their own will chosen the path of discovery of the self and help

them to go on, even as it has striven to keep the theoretical and investigating scientists free from the common gaze. The realisations of saints would not be, as the past history of culture has shown, less influential and beneficent than the contributions of scientists to society. Protection then of the religious spirit, even an ardent effort to keep the seekers from the daily interference in their lives on one plea or other, would greatly help the very nature of the individuals. But its violation ultimately would threaten the solidarity of the society. The greatness of the State lies in its serving the diverse interests of the individuals, and religion is as profound and basic impulse and need for each individual at some period or other as any other.

Hindu Religion is a force that makes for culture and social cohesion based on love and not on brute might or social coercion. It is something that makes life livable. It is not an escapist phenomenon, but a profound influence or tendency which makes man strive to know what he is. Helped by philosophical thought which it sets into action, it seeks clarity and fulness for all. But it is necessary to weed out its extra-religious activities, which could well be attended to by the State. Religion can influence the State only through the lives of its members, or the persons who constitute the Government, who imbued with religions principles would put into practice these principles through the social apparatus and organisation. The State by itself

must remain secular, not taking sides with religions which have different loyalties. Herein comes a distinction, which it is necessary to draw, between religion and religions. Mankind is yearning for Religion but not for religions. Institutional religions serve religion but slightly. The goal is the religious spirit. No religion does this so well as Hinduism. It has institutions but not an institution which can speak for Hinduism. Hinduism lives in its members, in and through the practice and tradition of its saints and seekers. The grand catholicism of Hinduism is evidenced by the living interest in the cultivation of all *sādhana*s and *yoga*s among its people. Śrī Vaiṣṇavism of Śrī Rāmānuja has absorbed the religious and mystic traditions of all the best so that the individuals may grow through the inner tradition of religion and mysticism. It too tried to leaven the life of the society by the eternal assurance of divine presence among men, in the form of the *Arcāvatāra* of Śrī Veṅkateśvara. All great thinkers and saints have accepted this fact that the world must be made fit for the residence of God, and the Kingdom of God on earth. Reform of the earth life, and the social life of its individuals, if need be a revolution in the ways of social life, were envisaged by St. Śaṅkara in his divine Hymns, the *Tiruvāymoḷi*. The goal of religion is the transformation of man from the seeker of wealth and desire without restraint into a man who is the knower of law, liberty or true freedom, and secondly to make the society which is at present competitive and restrictive, into a divine society

where all relationships would be based on love that is born out of the wisdom that all are children of the one Supreme Lord and that it is the real expression of one's nature.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

Hinduism is a universal religion because it affirms the existence of God as not only God beyond the world but as the inner Love in all *Jīvas*. Every one can seek Him and see Him face to face. The great ṛṣis, Ālvārs and Nāyanmārs sought God and saw Him face to face. The existence of God is proved by the experience of God. *Sāṣṭra* is not opposed to science as its method of knowing God is scientific and it can be verified by personal experience. God is *satya* and *amala*, true and pure. Therefore, only the pure in heart who follow the *sāttvik* way can reach Him. Since the end is pure, the means also must be pure. Hinduism, therefore, insists on purity of conduct in thought, word and deed as the essential requisites for religious life. It is more a personal religion aiming at inner purity of life than on institutional loyalty and uniformity of faith.

No two persons are alike in temperament or station in life. Hinduism provides for every kind of *adhikārin* or aspirant and he is allowed to choose the path that is suited to his spiritual growth. A man may worship God in whatever form; He reveals Himself to him in that form. But he should seek Him with a pure heart. Though Hinduism thus aims at unity in variety, it still follows an ancient tradition bequeathed from father to son and from *guru* to *śiṣya* and insists on

satsanga. The *āśrama* is a spiritual community of the *sādhus* and as *satsanga* it provides an inspiring social ideal.

The atmosphere of the temple in the centre of civic life is a perpetual reminder to the Hindu that God is in the centre of all his activities and is the real actor. The family, the *vidyāśāla*, the temple and the state offer facilities for mutual understanding and service. The family is the unit of social life spiritualised on the model of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The temple affords every scope for the practice of the all-pervading presence of the Lord as Vāsudeva. Since rituals are only righteousness in details, they should be performed correctly in the interests of moral and spiritual discipline. Every righteous work is a worship of God; it is a dedication to Him in the spirit 'Not I, but Thou oh Lord' or *Brahmārpaṇa*. There is really no barrier or compartment between one person and another as all are persons or spiritual entities in whose hearts God dwells as *antaryāmin*. A community of good souls or *sātviks* promotes the religious ideal of communion between God and man. Hinduism is known for its tolerance. Differences of opinion and even worship are tolerated. There is no compromise in the matter of conviction and purity of moral life. In addition to universality and tolerance, Hinduism is the only religion that recognises the immanence of Brahman in all *Jīvas* as their *antaryāmin* and the redemptive purpose of the *avatāras*, the similarity of all *Jīvas* and the need for *kaiṅkarya* and the

salvability of all souls or *Jīvas*. It promotes the spirit of propaganda and insists on religious education. But it is definitely opposed to the methods, of coercion and proselytisation.

The spread of Hinduism by adapting it to modern needs without in any way giving up its essentials is its most urgent need today. This is achieved by the creation of proper teachers by affording them all facilities for the promotion of Hindu ideals. They should embody in their life all the ideals that they preach to others; religious education has no meaning if theory and practice do not coincide and if precept is not backed up by the purity of the personal conduct of the educators. The mutts in India may maintain their own tradition but they can pool their resources to fight irreligion and anti-Hindu influences from within and without. Tirumalai as the home of God and His eternal values offers the best social climate of physical and spiritual purity and may be the headquarters of this missionary effort.

Essentials of **Hinduism**

Essentials of Hinduism

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Essentials of Hinduism

- Sri K.C.Narayana

I. Introduction

Like most Hindus, I often find myself perplexed when called upon to explain to others what Hinduism is. I find that the major difficulty a modern Hindu faces in defining Hinduism to others stems from his difficulty in defining it to himself. This is especially the case with the "educated Hindu" who has unconsciously acquired the habit of looking at himself and his civilization through Christian eyes. As a result, his reaction is invariably defensive, and he mumbles something like "essential truth in all religions," or Sarva dharma samatva, or some such equally meaningless platitude. But this habit-of measuring something with alien values is a very serious limitation if anyone wants to understand what Hinduism is about.

The problem has to be studied in depth. The vision and vocabulary of a revealed religion like Christianity and Islam are fundamentally unsuited to describe Hinduism, for Hinduism is an evolved and not a revealed religion. The problem is not just lack of sympathy; it is the severe limitation of the concept of religion as the revelation of a book or a prophet. Trying to understand Hinduism in terms of a revealed belief system or creed is like trying to understand quantum mechanics through Newton's laws of motion. It just cannot be done. One must try

to understand Hinduism on its own terms, not in terms of the internal and external features borrowed from other creeds.

I try to approach this task objectively and not as a "true believer." Though born in a traditional Hindu family, I am not by any means a dogmatic Hindu. I am only an example of the freedom of choice that Hinduism grants me in matters of ritual and practice. My interest in Hinduism stems from my work in Psychology and Philosophy. I discovered that the concept of mathematical proof can be traced to yogic principles described in the famous Yoga sutra written by the legendary Sage Patanjali. This greatly intrigued me. The most rational of the rational sciences has religious and mystical roots! It will no doubt come as a surprise to many to learn that "rational thinking", something we all praise so highly, has mystical roots. Both Patanjali and the Greek Pythagoras were mystics, and yet they laid the foundation for the rational processes on which our own civilization depends. This is what made me look deeper into the religious thought of the Hindus. Briefly, here are the five basic features of Hinduism I found in my study.

1) It has no historical beginning. The Rig Veda, the oldest of the Hindu scriptures, is stated to be eternal and to have always existed. Speaking as a rational person, I find this claim hard to accept. But there is no period in time which we can definitely point to and say, "This is when the Rig Veda began to be

composed." Unlike Christianity and Islam, which are historical religions, we cannot find a specific date or even a century or millennium when Hinduism began.

2) It is not a revealed religion. It has no single authority or book. "Veda" simply means "knowledge that was discerned by the Vedic seers." It is not a Theology or a belief system that everyone is required to acknowledge. A Hindu is free to question any or all of the scriptures. He does not cease being a Hindu for doing so. Hindu scripture is meant to be a guide.

3) Hinduism recognizes no prophet as having exclusive claim over religious truth. This is undoubtedly the greatest difference between Hinduism and revealed religions. A Hindu who believes in the existence of God (or Gods) is not required to acknowledge an intermediary as a prophet or as the chosen agent of God. Every Hindu man, woman and child has the same direct access to God through his or her own efforts.

4) Hinduism does not recognize claims of exclusivity or a clergy. Exclusivity divides the world into believers and non-believers, which Hinduism does not. As a result, Hinduism has no clergy to monitor and enforce belief.

5) The only "dogma" of Hinduism is freedom of choice and conscience. Hindu religious literature is concerned mainly with the knowledge and method necessary to learn the truth about God. Any

accommodation of a belief system that denies one's freedom of choice and conscience is fundamentally incompatible with Hinduism. Hindus feel that it is their duty to defend this precious freedom and preserve and pass it on to future generations.

Hinduism is essentially an Indian phenomenon. It is the dominant faith of India, practiced by over 80% of the population. Since religion is a way of life in India, Hinduism forms an integral part of the entire Indian tradition. Here is a brief summary on the basics of Hinduism.

Definition

It is not easy to define Hinduism, for it is more than a religion in the Western sense.

Uniqueness

Hinduism can never be neatly slotted into any particular belief system.

Basic Tenets

Hinduism is not a unified system of beliefs and ideas- its basic spirit of tolerance weaves through all aspects of Hindu life.

Origin

According to historians, the origin of Hinduism dates back to 8000 or more years.

II. Some basic concepts

II.1 Concept of Brahman

Brahman of the Vedas

This is a Unique Concept of the Absolute. Let us look at what Hinduism holds to be the Absolute. The ultimate goal and Absolute of Hinduism is termed "Brahman" in Sanskrit. The word comes from the Sanskrit verb root "brh", meaning "to grow". Etymologically, the term means "that which grows" (brhati) and "which causes to grow" (brhmayati). Brahman is not "God"

Brahman, as understood by the scriptures of Hinduism, as well as by the 'acharyas' of the Vedanta school, is a very specific conception of the Absolute. This unique conception has not been replicated by any other religion on earth, and is exclusive to Hinduism. Thus to even call this conception of Brahman "God" is, in a sense, somewhat imprecise. This is the case because Brahman does not refer to the anthropomorphic concept of God of the Abrahamic religions. It transcends all empirically discernable categories, limitations and dualities.

What is Brahman?

In the 'Taittiriya Upanishad' II.1, Brahman is described in the following manner: "satyam jnanam anantam brahma", "Brahman is of the nature of truth, knowledge and infinity." Infinite positive

qualities and states have their existence secured solely by virtue of Brahman's very reality. Brahman is a necessary reality, eternal (i.e., beyond the purview of temporality), fully independent, non-contingent, and the source and ground of all things. Brahman is both immanently present in the realm of materiality, interpenetrating the whole of reality as the sustaining essence that gives it structure, meaning and existential being, yet Brahman is simultaneously the transcendent origin of all things (thus, panetheistic).

The Nature of Brahman

As the primary causal substance of material reality (jagatkarana), Brahman does not arbitrarily will the coming into being of the non-Brahman metaphysical principles of matter and jivas (individuated consciousness), but rather they are manifest into being as a natural result of the overflowing of Brahman's grandeur, beauty, bliss and love. Brahman cannot but create abundant good in a similar manner to how Brahman cannot but exist. Both existence and overflowing abundance are as much necessary properties of Brahman as love and nurturing are necessary qualities of any virtuous and loving mother.

Brahman is the Source

One can say that Brahman Itself (Him/Herself) constitutes the essential building material of all reality, being the antecedent primeval ontological

substance from whence all things proceed. There is no ex nihilo creation in Hinduism. Brahman does not create from nothing, but from the reality of Its own being. Thus Brahman is, in Aristotelian terms, both the Material Cause as well as the Efficient Cause of creation.

The Final Goal & the Final Cause

As the source of Dharma, the metaphysical ordering principles inherent in the design of the cosmos, Brahman can be viewed as the Formal Cause. And as the final goal of all reality, Brahman is also the Final Cause. Being the ontological source of all reality, Brahman is the only substantial real that truly exists, all other metaphysical categories being either a) contingent transformations of Brahman, having their very being subsisting in attributive dependence upon Brahman, or else b) illusory in nature. These views about the nature of Brahman are in general keeping with the theological teachings of both the Advaita and the Vishishtadvaita schools of Hinduism.

Brahman is the Ultimate Reality

All reality has its source in Brahman. All reality has its grounding sustenance in Brahman. It is in Brahman that all reality has its ultimate repose. Hinduism, specifically, is consciously and exclusively aiming toward this reality termed Brahman.

II.2 Concept of Time

Most of us are accustomed to living life according to linear beliefs and patterns of existence. We believe everything has a beginning, middle and an end. But Hinduism has little to do with the linear nature of history, the linear concept of time or the linear pattern of life. The passage of 'linear' time has brought us where we are today - at the dawn of a new century and a new millennium.

Cyclical Time

Hinduism views the concept of time in a much different manner, and there is a cosmic perspective to it. Hindus believe the process of creation moves in cycles and that each cycle has four great epochs of time, namely Satya Yugaa, Treta Yugaa, Dwapara Yugaa and Kali Yugaa. And because the process of creation is cyclical and never ending, it "begins to end and ends to begin".

Time is God

According to the Hindu theory of creation, time (Sanskrit 'kal') is a manifestation of God. Creation begins when God makes his energies active and ends when he withdraws all his energies into a state of inactivity. God is timeless, for time is relative and ceases to exist in the Absolute. The past, the present and the future coexist in him simultaneously.

Kalchakra

God creates the cycle of time, called Kalchakra, in order to create divisions and movements of life and sustain the worlds in periodic timeframes. God also uses time to create the 'illusions' of life and death. It is time, which is accountable for old age, death and dying of his creations. When we overcome time, we become immortal. Death is not the end of the line, but a gateway to the next cycle, to birth. This is also true of the universe itself and akin to the cyclic patterns in the rhythms of nature.

Four Yugaas

According to Hindu scriptures, all mortal beings are destined to pass through four great epochs in every cycle of creation and destruction. This divine cycle turns full-circle at the end of what is known as kalpa. A kalpa is a period of 10,000 divine years or 10 million years, and is divided into four ages or yugas (Sanskrit Yuga = age/epoch).

The four great epochs in Hinduism are: Satya Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dwapara Yuga and Kali Yuga. Satya Yuga or the Age of Truth is said to last for four thousand divine years, Treta Yuga for three thousand, Dwapara Yuga for two thousand and Kali Yuga will last for one thousand divine years. It is also believed that three of these great ages have already passed away, and we are now living in the fourth one. What these ages exactly mean, and why this division, it is hard to explain, because they

appear too unrealistic to be true for the rational mind.

These epochs of time are classified on the basis of the degree of loss of righteousness in the world. It says, during Satya Yuga only truth prevailed (Sanskrit Satya = truth), Treta lost $\frac{1}{4}$ truth, Dwapara lost $\frac{1}{2}$ truth and Kali is left with only $\frac{1}{4}$ truth. Evil and dishonesty has replaced truth in the last three ages or yugas.

II.3 Scriptures

Two types of sacred writings constitute the Hindu scriptures: heard (Sruti) and memorized (Smriti).

II.4 Gods & Deities

Hinduism believes that there is only one supreme Absolute called Brahman. It also believes that there are several deities each one identified for a particular function, but it does not advocate the worship of any one particular deity.

III. The Ceremonies of Hinduism

The ritual world of Hinduism, manifestations of which differ greatly among regions, villages, and individuals, offers a number of common features that link all Hindus into a greater Indian religious system and influence other religions as well.

The most notable feature in religious ritual is the division between purity and pollution. Religious acts presuppose some degree of impurity or defilement for the practitioner, which must be overcome or

neutralized before or during ritual procedures. Purification, usually with water, is thus a typical feature of most religious action. Avoidance of the impure--taking animal life, eating flesh, associating with dead things, or body fluids--is another feature of Hindu ritual and is important for repressing pollution. In a social context, those individuals or groups who manage to avoid the impure are accorded increased respect.

Another feature is a belief in the efficacy of sacrifice, including survivals of Vedic sacrifice. Thus, sacrifices may include the performance of offerings in a regulated manner, with the preparation of sacred space, recitation of texts, and manipulation of objects.

A third feature is the concept of merit, gained through the performance of charity or good works that will accumulate over time and reduce sufferings in the next world.

IV. Life-Cycle Rituals

A detailed series of life-cycle rituals (Samskara, or refinements) mark major transitions in the life of the individual. Especially orthodox Hindu families may invite Brahman priests to their homes to officiate at these rituals, complete with sacred fire and recitations of mantras. Most of these rituals, however, do not occur in the presence of such priests, and among many groups who do not revere

the Vedas or respect Brahmans, there may be other officiants or variations in the rites.

IV.1 Pregnancy, Birth, Infancy

Ceremonies may be performed during pregnancy to ensure the health of the mother and growing child. The father may part the hair of the mother three times upward from the front to the back, to assure the ripening of the embryo. Charms may serve to ward off the evil eye and witches or demons.

At birth, before the umbilical cord is severed, the father may touch the baby's lips with a gold spoon or ring dipped in honey, curds, and ghee. The word vak (speech) is whispered three times into the right ear, and mantras are chanted to ensure a long life.

A number of rituals for the infant include the first visit outside to a temple, the first feeding with solid food (usually cooked rice), an ear-piercing ceremony, and the first haircut (shaving the head) that often occurs at a temple or during a festival when the hair is offered to a deity.

IV.2 Upanayana : The Thread Ceremony

A crucial event in the life of the orthodox, upper-caste Hindu male is an initiation (Upanayanam) ceremony, which takes place for young males between the ages of six and twelve to mark the transition to awareness and adult religious responsibilities. At the ceremony itself, the family priest invests the boy with a sacred thread to be

worn always over the left shoulder, and the parents instruct him in pronouncing the Gayatri Mantra. The initiation ceremony is seen as a new birth; those groups entitled to wear the sacred thread are called the twice-born. In the ancient categorization of society associated with the Vedas, only the three highest groups - Brahman, warrior (Kshatriya), and commoner or merchant (Vaishya) - were allowed to wear the thread, to make them distinct from the fourth group of servants (Shudra). Many individuals and groups who are only hazily associated with the old "twice-born" elites perform the Upanayanam ceremony and claim the higher status it bestows. For young Hindu women in South India, a different ritual and celebration occurs at the first menses.

IV.3 The Marriage Ceremony

The next important transition in life is marriage. For most people in India, the betrothal of the young couple and the exact date and time of the wedding are matters decided by the parents in consultation with astrologers. At Hindu weddings, the bride and bridegroom represent the god and the goddess, although there is a parallel tradition that sees the groom as a prince coming to wed his princess. The groom, decked in all his finery, often travels to the wedding site on a caparisoned white horse or in an open limousine, accompanied by a procession of relatives, musicians, and bearers of ornate

electrified lamps. The actual ceremonies in many cases become extremely elaborate, but orthodox Hindu marriages typically have at their centre the recitation of mantras by priests. In a crucial rite, the new couple takes seven steps northward from a sacred household fire, turn, and makes offerings into the flames.

IV.4 Death and funeral

After the death of a family member, the relatives become involved in ceremonies for preparation of the body and a procession to the burning or burial ground. For most Hindus, cremation is the ideal method for dealing with the dead, although many groups practice burial instead; infants are buried rather than cremated. At the funeral site, in the presence of the male mourners, the closest relative of the deceased (usually the eldest son) takes charge of the final rite and, if it is cremation, lights the funeral pyre. After a cremation, ashes and fragments of bone are collected and eventually immersed in a holy river. After a funeral, everyone undergoes a purifying bath. The immediate family remains in a state of intense pollution for a set number of days (sometimes ten, eleven, or thirteen). At the end of that period, close family members meet for a ceremonial meal and often give gifts to the poor or to charities. A particular feature of the Hindu ritual is the preparation of rice balls (pinda) offered to the spirit of the dead person during memorial services. In part these ceremonies are seen as contributing to

the merit of the deceased, but they also pacify the soul so that it will not linger in this world as a ghost but will pass through the realm of Yama, the god of death.

V. Hindu Marriage

V.1 Ideals of a Hindu Marriage

In Hinduism, man and woman represent the two halves of the divine body. There is no question of superiority or inferiority between them. However, it is a scientific fact that the emotional side is more developed in women. This does not mean that intellectually, women are inferior. Hindu history is witness to the super-women, like Gargi, Maitreyi and Sulabha, whose faculty of reasoning was far superior to that of ordinary mortals. But owing to organic differences in their physical and emotional constitutions, women are temperamentally more emotional than men.

V.2 Duties of a Hindu Woman

Having recognized this fact, Hindu scriptures (Sastras) have allotted certain specific duties to Hindu women. These duties include maintaining domestic peace, adjustment of social relations and attainment of spiritual perfection.

V.3 The Idea of Marriage

The idea behind the institution of marriage in Hinduism is to foster, not self-interest, but love for the entire family. Practice of self-restraint is the ideal

of marriage in Hinduism. It is the love and duty cultivated for the entire family that prevents the break-ups.

Men by nature are less capable of self-restraint than women. That is why, after marriage the Hindu women lead the men by keeping the lustful propensities under control. While married, thought of any other man does not enter the mind of a Hindu lady until she loses her faith in her husband due to his consistent misbehavior and 'don't care' attitude.

V.4 The Sanctity of Marriage

The present-day Hindu husbands fail to recognize the sacrifices and lofty ideals of Hindu wives, and thus compel them to follow the worst of the West. During the nuptial ceremony in a Vedic marriage, both the bride and the bridegroom take oath for the practice of self-restraint, to work together for the welfare of the family and to help each other to attain spiritual peace. This lofty ideal of sanctity is a great gift of Hinduism to the world at large.

V.5 Protecting the Institution of Marriage

It should be a matter of great concern that we have begun to ignore the ancient and lofty ideals of Hindu marriage and are anxious to follow in the footsteps of cultures that do not value these ideals. No wonder, the number of divorce suits filed by Hindu couples is on the rise. Instead of strengthening the traditional ideals, which for thousands of years have helped us prevent marriage and family break-ups,

we are misdirecting our energies towards promoting the ideal of sense-enjoyment and self-interest. In my opinion it is still not too late to be proactive to protect the sanctity of Hindu marriage.

VI. Worship

VI.1 Domestic Worship

The home is the place where most Hindus conduct their worship and religious rituals. The most important times of day for performance of household rituals are dawn and dusk, although especially devout families may engage in devotion more often. For many households, the day begins when the women in the house draw auspicious geometric designs in chalk or rice flour on the floor or the doorstep. For orthodox Hindus, dawn and dusk are greeted with recitation from the Rig Veda of the Gayatri Mantra for the sun--for many people, the only Sanskrit prayer they know. After a bath, there is personal worship of the gods at a family shrine, which typically includes lighting a lamp and offering foodstuffs before the images, while prayers in Sanskrit or a regional language are recited. In the evenings, especially in rural areas, mostly female devotees may gather together for long sessions of singing hymns in praise of one or more of the gods.

Minor acts of charity punctuate the day. During daily baths, there are offerings of a little water in memory of the ancestors. At each meal, families may set aside a handful of grain to be donated to beggars or

needy persons, and daily gifts of small amounts of grain to birds or other animals serve to accumulate merit for the family through their self-sacrifice.

VI.2 The Worship of Personal Gods

For the vast majority of Hindus, the most important religious path is bhakti (devotion) to personal gods. There are a wide variety of gods to choose from, and although sectarian adherence to particular deities is often strong, there is a widespread acceptance of choice in the desired god (ishta devata) as the most appropriate focus for any particular person. Most devotees are therefore polytheists, worshiping all or part of the vast pantheon of deities, some of whom have come down from Vedic times. In practice, a worshiper tends to concentrate prayers on one deity or on a small group of deities with whom there is a close personal relationship.

VI.3 Hindu Gods and their Vehicles

Aditya - seven horses

Agni - the ram

Brahma - seven swans

Durga - the lion

Ganesha - the mouse

Indra - the elephant

Kartikeya - the peacock

Lakshmi - the owl

Saraswati - the swan or the peacock

Shakti - the bull

Shani - the crow
Sheetala - the donkey
Shiva - Nandi, the bull
Varuna - seven swans
Vayu - a thousands horses
Vishnu - Garuda, the eagle & Adi Shesha, the
serpent
Vishwakarma - the elephant
Yama - the male buffalo

VI.4 The 'Puja' or Worship

Puja (worship) of the gods consists of a range of ritual offerings and prayers typically performed either daily or on special days before an image of the deity, which may be in the form of a person or a symbol of the sacred presence.

In its more developed forms, puja consists of a series of ritual stages beginning with personal purification and invocation of the god, followed by offerings of flowers, food, or other objects such as clothing, accompanied by fervent prayers. Some dedicated worshipers perform these ceremonies daily at their home shrines; others travel to one or more temples to perform puja, alone or with the aid of temple priests who receive offerings and present these offerings to the gods. The gifts given to the gods become sacred through contact with their images or with their shrines, and may be received and used by worshipers as the grace (prasad) of the divine. Sacred ash or saffron powder, for example, is

often distributed after puja and smeared on the foreheads of devotees. In the absence of any of these ritual objects, however, puja may take the form of a simple prayer sent toward the image of the divine, and it is common to see people stop for a moment before roadside shrines to fold their hands and offer short invocations to the gods.

VII. Temples

Introduction

Unlike other organized religions, in Hinduism, it is not mandatory for a person to visit a temple. Since all Hindu homes usually have a small shrine or 'puja room' for daily prayers, Hindus generally go to temples only on auspicious occasions or during religious festivals. Hindu temples also do not play a crucial role in marriages and funerals, but it is often the meeting place for religious discourses as well as 'bhajans' and 'kirtans' (devotional songs and chants).

VII.1 Worship in Temples

In the Vedic period there were no temples. The main object of worship was fire that stood for God. This holy fire was lit on a platform in the open air under the sky, and oblations were offered to the fire. It is not certain when exactly the Indo-Aryans first started building temples for worship. The scheme of building temples was perhaps a concomitant of the idea of idol worship.

VII.2 Location of Temples

As the race progressed, temples became important because they served as a sacred meeting place for the community to congregate and revitalize their spiritual energies. Large temples were usually built at picturesque places, especially on river banks, on top of hills, and on the sea shore. Smaller temples or open-air shrines can crop up just about anywhere - by the roadside or even under the tree.

VII.3 Temple Architecture

The architecture of Hindu temples evolved over a period of more than 2,000 years and there is a great variety in this architecture. Hindu temples are of different shapes and sizes – rectangular, octagonal, semicircular – with different types of domes and gates. Temples in southern India have a different style than those in northern India. Although the architecture of Hindu temples is varied, they mainly have many things in common.

The 6 parts of a Hindu Temple:

1. The Dome and Steeple: The steeple of the dome is called 'shikhara' (summit) that represents the mythological 'Meru' or the highest mountain peak. The shape of the dome varies from region to region and the steeple is often in the form of the trident of Shiva or the Sri Chakra of Vishnu.
2. The Inner Chamber: The inner chamber of the temple called 'garbhagriha' or 'womb-chamber' is

where the image or idol of the deity ('murti') is placed. In most temples, the visitors cannot enter the garbhagriha, and only the temple priests are allowed inside.

3. The Temple Hall: Most large temples have a hall meant for the audience to sit. This is also called the 'nata-mandira' (hall for temple-dancing) where, in days of yore, women dancers or 'devadasis' used to perform dance rituals. Devotees use the hall to sit, meditate, pray, chant or watch the priests perform the rituals. The hall is usually decorated with paintings of gods and goddesses.

4. The Front Porch: This area of the temples usually has a big metallic bell that hangs from the ceiling. Devotees entering and leaving the porch ring this bell to declare their arrival and departure.

5. The Reservoir: If the temple is not in the vicinity of a natural water body, a reservoir of fresh water is built on the temple premises. The water is used for rituals as well as to keep the temple floor clean or even for a ritual bath before entering the holy abode.

6. The Walkway: Most temples have a walkway around the walls of the inner chamber for circumambulation by devotees around the deity as a mark of respect to the temple god or goddess.

VII.4 Temple Priests

As opposed to the all-renouncing 'swamis', temple priests, variously known as 'pandas', 'pujaris' or

'purohits', are salaried workers, hired by the temple authorities to perform daily rituals. Traditionally they come from the Brahmin or priestly caste, but there are many priests who are non-Brahmins.

VIII. Gurus & Saints

Since at least the seventh century A.D., the devotional path has spread from the south throughout India through the literary and musical activities of saints who have been some of the most important representatives of regional languages and traditions. The hymns of these saints and their successors, mostly in vernacular forms, are memorized and performed at all levels of society. Every state in India has its own bhakti tradition and poets who are studied and revered. In Tamil Nadu, groups called Nayanmars (devotees of Shiva) and Alvars (devotees of Vishnu) were composing beautiful poetry in the Tamil language as early as the sixth century. In Bengal one of the greatest poets was Chaitanya (1485-1536), who spent much of his life in a state of mystical ecstasy. One of the greatest North Indian saints was Kabir (ca. 1440-1518), a common leatherworker who stressed faith in God without devotion to images, rituals, or scriptures. Among female poets, Princess Mirabai (ca. 1498-1546) from Rajasthan stands out as one whose love for Krishna was so intense that she suffered persecution for her public singing and dancing for the lord. **A recurring motif that emerges from the poetry and the hagiographies**

of these saints is the equality of all men and women before God and the ability of people from all castes and occupations to find their way to union with God if they have enough faith and devotion. In this sense, the bhakti tradition serves as one of the equalizing forces in Indian society and culture.

IX. History of Hinduism

It has been pointed out by Dr. Arnold J. Toynbee, in A Study of History, that the principal civilizations of the world lay different degrees of emphasis on specific lines of activity. Hellenic civilisation, for instance, displays a manifest tendency towards a prominently aesthetic outlook on life as a whole. Indian civilisation, on the other hand, shows an equally manifest tendency towards a predominantly religious outlook. Dr. Toynbee's remark sums up what has been observed by many other scholars. Indeed, the study of Hinduism has to be, in a large measure, a study of the general Hindu outlook on life.

Receptivity and all-comprehensiveness, it has been aptly stated, are the main characteristics of Hinduism. Since it has had no difficulty in bringing diverse faiths within its ever-widening fold, it has something to offer to almost all minds. The strength of Hinduism, lies in its infinite adaptability to the infinite diversity of human character and human tendencies. It has its highly spiritual and abstract

side suited to the philosopher; its practical and concrete side congenial to the man of the world; its aesthetic and ceremonial side attuned to the man of the poetic feeling and imagination; and its quiescent contemplative aspect that has its appeal for the man of peace and the lover of seclusion. The Hindus are Spinozists more than 2,000 years before the advent of Spinoza, Darwinians many centuries before Darwin, and Evolutionists many centuries before the doctrine of Evolution was accepted by scientists of the present age. No civilisation anywhere in the world, with the probable exception of China, has been as continuous as that of India. While the civilizations of Egypt, Babylon and Assyria have disappeared, in India the ideas emanating from the Vedic times continue to be a living force.

European scholars of Sanskrit noted similarities in the languages, terminology and substances of Indian scriptures with those of Greece and Rome. Even a superficial study convinced them that, while the language of the Vedas is a great critical instrument in the construction of the science of philology, the Vedic hymns constitute a compilation of most Indo-European myths in their primitive form. Max Muller went so far as to say that the Vedas are the real theogony of the Aryan races, Homer and others having given a distorted picture of the original image.

The excavations at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro and those in Saurashtra have disclosed the existence of

a highly evolved culture long before the Aryan immigration, perhaps dating back to 3000 B.C. or later. Among the remains discovered are three-faced prototypes of Siva seated in a yogic posture, representations of the Linga, and a horned goddess associated with the pipal tree. These symbols, evolved by a very ancient civilisation, were assimilated by the Aryan immigrants in slow stages-their earliest literary work, the Rig-Veda, almost overlooks these aspects. The Vedic Aryans, it has been suggested, partly assimilated and partly destroyed the earlier culture.

IX.1 Vedic Aryans and Zoroastrianism

It seems clear from the hymns of the Rig-Veda and the Persian Gathas and Avesta that the Vedic Aryans and the Zoroastrians had a common origin. The languages in which Zoroaster preached and the Rsis sang their hymns are almost identical, and Vedic meters are re-produced in the Avesta. Evidently, the two groups of Aryans separated after a violent quarrel, so that several deities of one group - Indra or Jindra, Sarva and Nasatya - were transformed in the other into evil spirits. It is, however, to be noticed that Mitra, Aryama, Vayu and Vrtraghna are divine in both the systems. A period of unity was probably followed by civil war, as envisaged in the fight between Asuras and Devas.

The Vedic Aryans were warlike, while the Avesta reflects an abhorrence of war. In the period when

the ancestors of the Iranians and the Hindus had lived together, Asura had been a term of honour; and the Zoroastrian Ahura Mazda was Asura Mahat, the great Asura. The .Rig-Veda (III-55-11 & 15) cites several Asura qualities of the Divinities. Varuna, Mitra and several other gods were called Asuras. Later, when differences were accentuated between the two communities, Asura became equivalent to a spirit of evil and Sura came to signify a good spirit.

The undivided Indo-Iranians must have passed a long time in their Central Asian home. The Indo-Iranian culture and religion have been reconstructed, at least in part, by comparing the Vedas with the Avesta. Before the occupation of Iranian high lands by tribes from the Indo-Iranian original home, the plateau was the seat of a culture that was probably matriarchal, and the people worshipped snake-gods in the manner of India's primitive non-Aryans. It is likely that the pre-Aryan cultures of North- western India and Iran were alike in origin and spirit.

This ancient cultural link between pre-Aryan Iran and pre- Aryan India, instead of getting strengthened by Aryan migration into the two countries, as could be normally expected, was to all appearances completely severed. Also, there is nothing to show that the Vedic Aryans of India maintained an active cultural relation with their brethren in Iran.

In the earliest days, while the Aryans of India must have been connected with the Aryans of Iran as

friends or as foes, actual historical contact cannot be asserted with any degree of probability. The two peoples turned their backs upon each other, as it were, and developed their distinctive civilizations apparently without the least mutual influence, although in language, culture and religion their similarity in the earliest period had been little short of identity. When, later in history, under the Achaemenids, Greeks, Bactrians and Sakas, the Iranians and the Indians were forced to meet as citizens of the same empire, they met as complete strangers, not as cousins or as scions from the same stock.

The earliest literary productions of the Aryan settlers in India were the Rig-Veda, Sama Veda (consisting of chants), Yajur Veda and the Atharva Veda (a composite religious and magical compilation) The Vedas comprise Mantras (hymns), Brahmanas (ritual and ceremonies), Aranyakas (forest speculations) and the philosophical Upanishads. In the context of this commonly accepted interpretation of the Vedas, it may be recalled that European Orientalists have too often considered them mainly from the theological, anthropological and sociological points of view. A study of the material in its religious aspect is difficult, since even the great commentary of Sayana is in terms of the ideas of his own age. On the presumption that the Vedas originated in primitive times, the Rig-Veda hymns were regarded as the outpourings of child-like nature

worship. John Dawson in his Hindu Classical Dictionary observed: "The Aryan settlers were a pastoral and agricultural people, and they were keenly alive to those influences which affected their prosperity and comfort. They knew the effects of heat and cold, rain and drought, upon their crops and herds, and they marked the influence of warmth and cold, sunshine and rain, wind and storm, upon their own personal comfort. They invested these benign and evil influences with a personality; and behind the fire, the sun, the cloud, and the other powers of nature, they saw beings who directed them in their beneficent and evil operations. To these imaginary beings they addressed their praises, and to them they put up their prayers for temporal blessings. They observed also the movements of the sun and moon, the constant succession of day and night, the intervening periods of morning and evening, and to these also they gave personalities, which they invested with poetical clothing and attributes. Thus observant of nature in its various changes and operations, alive to its influences upon themselves, and perceptive of its beauties, they formed for themselves deities in whose glory and honour they exerted their poetic faculty."

IX.2 Vedic Concepts

On a careful analysis of the Vedas it would be apparent that the Vedic view is more subtle and deeper in concept. The One Being whom the sages

call by many names (Ekam-sat) is referred to in the neuter gender, signifying divine existence and not a divine individual. The monotheistic God stands in relation to man as a father and a patriarch, while in a Rig-Veda hymn to Agni he is called "my father, my kinsman, my brother and my friend". Monotheism, it has been aptly stated "contemplates the Divine in heaven and polytheism contemplates the Divine in the universe. Polytheism believes in the assembly of gods, each possessing a character of his own. Max Muller coined the word henotheism for indicating the tendency of the Vedic seers to magnify the importance of the particular deity they are praising in a hymn at the expense of the other Gods. This has been described as "opportunist monotheism". One deity is identified with another or different deities are identified with one Divine entity, indifferently described as Ekam (one) and Tat Sat (the reality).

Apart from the above concepts there are two basic ideas underlying the Vedas - Satya (truth) and Rta (eternal order); and every God or Goddess exemplifies and represents these two ideas. Vedic theism is based on moral values which (also in the case of Buddhism) may be upheld in a non-theistic way. In India it is not the atheist who is denounced but the person who repudiates Dharma, moral law. The Rig-Veda states that the earth is sustained not by the will of God but by truth, and of This truth God is the supreme exponent, revealing Himself through Rta or eternal order. Examining the Vedic hymns as

a whole, one discovers a doctrine, not of oneness, but of one divine substance pervading all. It is stated that the One Being is contemplated by the sages in many forms: Ekam santam bahudha kalpayanti. It may also be observed that the Vedic ritual or Yajna is a uniform ceremonial; whatever deity is worshipped the ritual is the same.

The universality of the Vedas is not often realized. The Rig Veda asserts that God is the God of Dasa as well as of Arya - "Lord God is he to whom both Arya and Dasa belong". There is a special prayer for the forgiveness of sins against the foreigner (Rig-Veda). According to the Atharva Veda, God is of the foreigner (Videsya) no less than of our own land (Samdesya). There are mantras which extend This principle to all living beings (sarvani bhutani) so that we come to a grand conception of universal peace and serenity - the harmony with Nature (sarvam santhi)

IX.3 Many schools of thought

Panini is one of the worlds' earliest as well as the greatest of scientific grammarians. The consensus of opinion fixed his date not later than the 5th century B.C. At that period Yajna or sacrifice and the worship of various deities were current and popular, and theistic devotion to particular divinities, generally expressed by the term Bhakti, had become prevalent. Panini refers to Vasudev as the object of devotion, and Paramatma Devata Visesa, a form of

the One Supreme Divinity. The doctrine which assumed great importance later - that custom has the force of law - is also exemplified by the twofold meaning, in Panini's Astadhyayi, attached to Dharma. Dharma is not only equivalent to Rta, primordial law, but also denotes custom (achara) as in the later Dharma Sutras.

Already in Panini's days different schools of thought had arisen, both theistic and non-theistic. A non-theistic doctrine, which is described in Buddhist philosophy as the doctrine of non-causation and also as the doctrine of Yadrcha, or Adrshta- (fortuitous accident), was current in Panini's time. That all existence was the result of chance was the doctrine of the Ahetuvadins. The Svetasvatara Upanishad which advocates the doctrine of the supreme spirit refers to other varieties of thought like those of the advocates of Svabhava or materialistic philosophy. Orthodox thought was later developed in the Samkhya philosophy and attained its climax in the Vedanta Sutras. Panini refers to Parasara Sutra, one of the earliest of the Vedanta treatises, and also to the atheistic school, known later as the Lokayata. There is mention also of Nihshreyasa which, in the Upanishads, denoted supreme bliss as also of Nirvana , possibly associated with Buddhism. From all these examples it is clear that, in the times of the Buddha and Panini, practically all the varieties of speculation which have flourished in India had already evolved.(that is by 500 B.C.)

Philosophical discourses and pursuits were at first specially developed by the Ksatriyas, but they soon became the prerogatives of the Brahmins. The Chandogya and Kausitaki Upanishads illustrate these successive stages. A solution of the ultimate problems of life is outlined in the early Upanishads, and it takes the form of Monism, absolute (according to Sankaracharya) or modified (according to Ramanuja).

Filled with zeal for 'This doctrine of the Unity' or Interdependence of all life, a social order was founded. It is the considered opinion of historians that the great Epics represented the desired social order as having actually existed in the golden past; they put into the mouths of their heroes not only the philosophy but the theory of its application in practice. This is evident, above all, in the long discourse of the dying Bhishma in the Santiparva of the Mahabharata. The heroes themselves made ideal types of character for the guidance of all subsequent generations; for the education of India has been accomplished deliberately through hero-worship. In the Dharmashastra of Manu and the Arthashastra of Chanakya(perhaps the most remarkable sociological documents the world possesses) they set forth the picture of the ideal society, defined from the stand point of law. By these and other means they accomplished what has not yet been effected in any other country, in making

religious philosophy the essential and intelligible basis of popular culture and national polity.

The view of life of the Hindu may be explained as the inseparable unity of the material and spiritual world. It is the foundation of Indian culture and that determines the whole character of Indian social ideals. Later Hindu thought is founded on the rhythmic nature of the world process, including evolution and involution, birth, death and rebirth, srsti and samhara. Every individual life, mineral, vegetable, animal and human has a beginning and an end. This creation and destruction, appearance and disappearance, are of the essence of the world process and equally originate in the past, present and future. According to this view, every individual ego (jivatman) or separate expression of the general will to life (icchatrsna), must be regarded as having reached a certain stage of its own cycle. This is also true of the collective life of a nation, a planet or a cosmic system. It is further considered that the turning- point of this curve is reached in man and hence the immeasurable value which Hindus (and Buddhists) attach to birth in human form. This would enable us to conclude that Indian philosophic thought developed in several stages during the Vedic period which is generally placed between 2500 B.C. and 600 B.C.

IX.4 The Upanishads

The Upanishads are diverse in character and outlook. They recognize intuition rather than reason

as a path to ultimate truth. They also represent a strong reaction against the merely ritual and sacrificial duties on which stress had been laid earlier. The Upanishads are supposed to be 108 or more in number. Twelve of them are generally recognized as the principal units.

The Isa Upanishad begins with the statement that whatever exists in this world is enveloped by the Supreme. It is by renunciation and absence of possessiveness that the soul is saved.

In the Kena Upanishad, the Goddess Uma Haimavati in the form of Supreme Knowledge expounds the doctrine of the Brahman or Supreme Entity.

The Katha Upanishad embodies the aspiration of Nachiketas, who declined his father's offer of property and went into exile, making his way to the region of Yama, the God of Death. Nachiketas, in his dialogue with Yama, declines all the worldly possessions and dignities offered by Yama and asserts that all enjoyments are transient and the boon he asks for is the secret of immortality. In this Upanishad occurs the famous saying "The knowledge of the Supreme is not gained by argument but by the teaching of one who possesses intuition"

In the Mundaka Upanishad occurs the verse which is the germ of the Bhagavad-Gita. People who perform actions and are attached to the world are

pursuing a futile path, and this Upanishad accordingly declares: "Let the wise man, having examined the world and perceived the motives and the results of actions, realize that as from a blazing fire sparks proceed, living souls originate from the indestructible Brahman and return to Him. All doubts disappear and the attachment to work subsides when the Supreme Being is cognized."

These basic doctrines are further expounded in the Taitiriya Upanishad, which contains this famous verse repeated in other Upanishads: "May we both (teacher and disciple) be protected; may we both obtain sustenance; let both of us at the same time apply (our) energies (for the acquirement of knowledge); may our reading be illustrious; may there be no hatred (amongst us). Peace, peace, peace.

In the more recent Svetasvatara Upanishad is found a summary of the main Upanishadic doctrines, and the idea of devotion to a personal God is also developed.

The Chandogya Upanishad, one of the earliest, states that the main doctrines of the Upanishads were first expounded by the Kshatriyas and not by the Brahmins.

Later, as is evident from the Kausitaki Upanishad, the Brahmins took up the intensive study of philosophy. The contrast which is often drawn

between Brahmanism and Hinduism is therefore not based on a right appraisal of the facts.

IX.5 The Epics

The period of the Epics succeeded the period of the Upanishads. In the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, philosophical doctrines were presented in the form of stories and parables. In these poems of the heroic age recounting the qualities and exploits of exalted individuals the Vedic gods are no longer supreme. Some have disappeared altogether. Indra retains a place of some dignity; but Brahma, Siva and Vishnu have risen to pre-eminence. Even of these three, the first becomes subordinate. Vishnu and Siva become the out-standing entities and are alternately elevated to supreme dignity and very often their ultimate oneness is proclaimed. Vishnu in the Vedas was the friend and companion of Indra and strode over the universe in three paces; in the Epics he often becomes the great deity of destruction as well as of renovation. Each of these two gods in his turn contends with and subdues the other; now one, now the other, receives the homage of his rival; and each in turn is lauded and honored as the greatest of gods.

IX.6 The Avatars

The Avatars, incarnations of Vishnu, assume a prominent place in the Epics, and more so in the Puranas. The first three, Matsya (fish), Kurma

(tortoise) and Varaha (boar) of the Puranas have a cosmic character and are foreshadowed in the hymns of the Vedas. The fourth incarnation, Nrsimha (man-lion), seems to belong to a later age, when the worship of Vishnu had become established. The fifth, Vamana (dwarf), whose three strides deprived the Asuras of the domination of heaven and earth, is in character anterior to the fourth Avatara and the three strides are attributed to Vishnu in the Vedic text as Urukrama. The sixth, seventh and eighth avatars Parasurama, Ramchandra and Krishna, are mortal heroes whose exploits are celebrated in these poems so fervently as to raise the heroes to the rank of gods. The ninth Avatara, the Buddha, is the deification of a great teacher. The tenth, Kalki, is yet to come.

The system of religious thought propounded in the Vedas and the Epics and especially in the Bhagavad-Gita (a part of the Mahabharata) survived the Buddhist impact which led to a renunciation of much ritual and metaphysics on the part of a sizable proportion of the population. Buddhism was absorbed into the parent religion within a few centuries and Hinduism, as the Vedic religion had come to be called, adopted the theory of the Avataras or incarnations according to which the Buddha himself was accepted as Avatara. Jainism also became, in essence, a doctrinal modification and adaptation of the Vedic religion. Thus we find that in response to an ever more insistent craving in

Indic souls to apprehend the unity of God, the myriad divinities gradually dissolved and coalesced into one or other of the two mighty figures of Siva and Vishnu. Historians are agreed that this stage on the road towards the establishment of the unity of god was attained at least 2000 years ago.

IX.7 Buddhist Influence on Hindu thought

We now come to the greatest contribution made by the Buddha to Indian thought and world culture. Dr. Radhakrishnan, in his edition of 'Dhammapada' (which embodies Buddhist teachings), has stated that, judged by intellectual integrity, moral earnestness and spiritual insight, the Buddha is undoubtedly one of the greatest figures in history. The same scholar pointed out that, although there were different streams of thought operating on men's minds in the 6th century B.C. philosophic thought was agreed at that time on certain fundamentals. Life does not begin at birth or end at death; it is a link in an infinite series of lives: each of which is conditioned and determined by acts done in previous existences. Relief from the round of births, resulting in life in eternity is the goal, indicated by such terms as Moksha (deliverance) and Nirvana (union with the Brahman). The means of attainment are prayer and worship; ritual and sacrifice; and Vidya (realization by knowledge).

Even though the Buddha accepted the doctrines of Karma and rebirth and the non-reality of the

empirical universe, he declined to speculate on Moksha and on the doctrine of the Atman and Paramatman . He laid stress on the supremacy of the ethical aspect, and his outlook was definitely practical and empirical. In fact, the Buddha did not tolerate any doctrines which, he thought, diverted the mind from the central problem of suffering, the cause of suffering and its removal, and the urgency of the moral task.

He rejected the doctrine of the Vedanta that the ego is permanent and unchanging. At the same time, he did not countenance the view that, at death, it is destroyed. As Dr. Radhakrishnan says, the Buddha came to the conclusion that interest in the supernatural diverts attention and energy from the ethical values and the exploration of actual conditions: Karma builds the world and Dharma is an organic part of all existence.

IX.8 The Bhagavad-Gita

Every variety of Hindu philosophy has its source in the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras of Badarayana or Vyasa and the Bhagavad-Gita which forms a part of the Mahabharata. It was as a reaction to the tendencies exhibited by Buddhism and Jainism that the orthodox schools of Indian philosophy (Indian Philosophy is broadly classified as Orthodox and Heterodox. The Six darshanas are all Orthodox while Buddhism, Jainism and Charvakas are

Heterodox) had their origin and the Bhagavad-Gita is their epitome.

This work contains the essence of Indian teaching about the duties of life as well as spiritual obligations. Everyone has his allotted duties of various kinds. Sin arises not from the nature of the work itself but from the disposition with which the work is performed. When it is performed without attachment to the result, it cannot tarnish the soul and impede its quest. True Yoga consists in the acquisition of experience and the passage through life in harmony with the ultimate laws of equanimity, non-attachment to the fruits of action, and faith in the pervasiveness of the Supreme Spirit. Absorption in that Spirit can be attained along several paths; and no path is to be preferred exclusively and none to be dismissed as useless. These doctrines have been interpreted as marking a movement which lays stress on the personality of God and His accessibility to devotion. While following the Hindu ideal of the Ashramas, the Gita emphasizes the importance of knowledge, charity, penance and worship, and does not decry life as evil. It states that the embodied beings cannot completely relinquish action and says that he, who relinquishes the fruit of action, is a true relinquisher.

IX.9 The Dharma Sastras

Treatises on ethical and social philosophy known as the Dharma Sastras were compiled about the same

period. They deal systematically with the proper conduct of life and describe social, ethical and religious obligations. The Sutras, of which the Brahma Sutra is the chief, are brief aphorisms or maxims. They contain interpretations of philosophic systems and refutations of opposing beliefs. It is remarkable that all philosophical systems in India are known as Darshanas, literally meaning calling insights or points of view. In the well known Sarvadarshanasangraha compiled by Madhavacharya, a great successor of Sankaracharya, the Charvakas or atheistic school, Buddhism, Jainism, the Vaishnavism philosophy of Ramanuja and Madhva, the Saiva system and several other doctrinal variants, are all described as Darshanas and as legitimate developments of Hindu thought. There are Sutras dealing with the Logical Realism of Nyaya, the Atomistic Pluralism of Vaisesika, the Evolutionism of Samkhya, the technique of Mind-control or Yoga, the ritualistic philosophy of Purva-Mimamsa and the metaphysics of Vedanta.

IX.10 The Puranas

The Puranas cast in the form of parables and narratives, became the scripture for the common people. Apart from their religious and often sectarian significance, they furnish a picture of social, political and cultural life and comprise an astonishingly varied repertory of folklore and information regarding diverse topics including philosophy, ethics, legal

institutions, popular festivals, and several arts; they deal even with subjects like grammar, prosody, rhetoric, archery and care of horses and elephants; many of them also describe places of pilgrimage. At one time their historical value was discounted but it is now being gradually appreciated.

IX.11 Fusion with non-Aryans

The Aryans marched en masse, guided by a leader who was often a poet, and came into contact with the Dasas and the Dasyus. The point to be noted is the speedy fusion of the Aryans with the non-Aryans. The process had three phases: (1) The elevation of non-Aryans and aboriginals by intermarriages with Aryans. (2) The incorporation of non-Aryans into Aryan society in various other ways. (3) Social reactions by which forms of life and modes of thought of the two groups under went a kind of osmosis, intensified by the Buddhist reformation.

The Aitareya Brahmanas gives an example of the manner in which progressive leaders of the Aryans facilitated the assimilation of other communities. A Rsi was performing a sacrifice on the banks of the Saraswathi; and to this sacrifice was admitted one Kesava, a Shudra, whose learning is stated to have put all the Brahmins to shame. The Vajasaneyi Samhita condemned intercommunal marriage, but it is narrated in that work that a Sudra was the lover of an Arya woman. By the time of the Mahabharata such great personages as Vyasa and Vidura were

described as the offspring of the connection of the Aryans with other groups. The story of Santanu and Satyawati, the vow of Bhisma as well as the story of Ambika and Ambalika and the birth of Vidura, also illustrate the above process.

Again, in the Mahabharata, it is narrated that Bhima married Hidimbi, a non-Aryan woman, and Arjuna married a Naga girl, Uloopi. A new class of Aryans called Utkrsta came into existence, and was admitted to the privileges of sacrifice. By the time of the Satapathabrahmana Shudras became incorporated in the polity - a notable instance being the Nisadas. It is a curious fact that we find in the Panini's Grammar, there is mention of non-Aryan Brahmins as well.

Parasara, one of the great sages of India, married Satyawati, a fisher girl, who became the mother of Vyasa, the compiler of the Mahabharata and the Puranas. Such intermarriages or unions were frequent all through Indian history. Emperor Chandragupta Maurya who belonged to a lower caste, married Kumara Devi of the Licchavi clan, who was either a Brahmin or a Kshatriya, and she was the grandmother of Asoka.

It should be remembered that the groups which crystallized later into the Indian castes were initially not based on any gradation of superiority, the difference being functional rather than racial or communal. These groups, moreover, had their

analogues in the Avesta, and the Iranian names do not suggest the idea of colour or superiority. Co-operation of all the classes was needed for administration, and a passage in the Mahabharata indicates that the King's Council included representatives of all classes of the people.

The current rigidity of the rules relating to intermarriage as also inter-dining among the Indian castes is a comparatively recent innovation. The Puranas state that the great sage Vasishta was born of a divine courtesan, but by austerity and penance he made himself recognized as a Brahmin. The transforming process was attained by self-improvement. Also they say, Vyasa was by birth a fisherman, Parasara was born in a dog-eating tribe, and we find that many born non-dvijas have attained Brahmanhood by their merit. The Bhagavad-Gita affirms: "Castes developed according to the differentiation of Guna and Karma", i.e., disposition or temperament and inherited instincts or aptitudes.

Both among the Old Iranians and the Aryans of India the original caste system of three classes based on the practical distribution of functions was in existence. The Iranians, however, did not develop another class as the Hindus did - the Shudra. Clearly, the three Hindu caste divisions were not unalterably rigid.

IX.12 Cultural synthesis

In their great trek to India the colonizing groups of Aryans encountered races who professed a firm belief in the doctrine of transmigration. It has indeed been suggested that this doctrine of metempsychosis itself, the cult of serpent worship, the worship of Ganesa, of Uma or Durga, of Skanda or Subrahmanya (the hunter-god) were all adopted by the Aryans from earlier settlers in India. Even the incarnation of Krishna, it has been said, was an adaptation from an aboriginal deity; his life is an instance of the mingling of the Aryans and the Yadavas. In any case, it seems clear that there was a good measure of synthesis of the thoughts and beliefs of the Aryan and pre-Aryan races.

There are widespread traditions of the southern migration of the Vedic sage, Agastya, the reputed author of several hymns of the Rig-Veda. His ashrama was located south of the Vindhya; and he is said to have introduced the Vedic religion and literature in the South in his capacity as a unifying factor between the Sanskrit and Dravidian tongues and ideals. When the Aryan colonizers in the wake of Agastya penetrated to the South, they found an advanced civilisation. The Ramayana describes Madurai as adorned with golden jewels. The grammarian Katyayana mentions the Pandyas and the Cholas. Asoka's Buddhist missions were sent to the Pandya and Chola countries as far as the Tamraparni River in the Tirunelveli District. An

extensive commercial and cultural inter course grew up between the Aryans and the Dravidians, as also between the Dravidians and countries to the east and west of India.

The close contact between the Aryan and Dravidian elements continued all through history and manifested itself in every aspect of life. There is strong ground for the supposition that the importance of Siva, Shakti and Skanda was due largely to Dravidian influence, since the cult of An (Siva), Amma (Shakti) and Anil (Muruga or Skanda) was a cardinal belief from the beginning of Dravidian history.

These facts illustrate the composite character of Hindu civilisation. The Sama Veda spoke at length of the Vratyastoma (a particular sacrifice or ritual) by which non-Aryan Vratyas were admitted into Aryan society. The equalization of castes and communities was, of course, brought to a head by Gautama Buddha, though he was no opponent of the Brahminical civilisation. Both he and Mahavira, the expounder of Jainism, while admitting that the Brahmin ideal is the right one, led a crusade against certain aspects of Brahmin culture. Hindu civilisation itself adapted for its use many ideals and precepts of Buddhism and Jainism. For instance, among many communities, offerings of rice and ghee took the place of animal sacrifice, a compromise with the Vedic ritualism. The early Aryans had, of course, been meat-eaters, but probably under the influence

of Buddhist and Jain ideas many groups of Brahmins as well as non-Brahmins became vegetarian.

IX.13 Vaishnavism in the South

At a later period arose the fully organized Bhakti movement leading to Vaishnavism and Saivism. The ancient Vaisnava mystics and saints in the South were known as Alwars, and the Vaishnavism teachers as Acaryas. They had a powerful exponent of these views in Ramanuja, who attacked the Advaita interpretation of the Upanishads and gave recognition to three ultimate realities, God, Soul and Matter, the last two being dependent on the first.

As early as the 2nd century B. C. the renowned Besnagar Column had been erected by a Greek named Heliodorous, who had been converted to the Bhagavata or Vaisnava faith of which the Pancharatra doctrines then formed an integral part; its scriptures were Satvata Samhita, the Mahabharata, and the Bhagavata and Vishnu Puranas. The origin of the Pancharatra doctrines which form the basis of Srivaishnavite culture has been traced further back to the well known Purushasukta of the Rig-Veda. The Satapatha Brahmana refers to the Pancharatra sacrifices performed by the primeval Narayana, the idea of Nara and Narayana (Primordial man and the deity Vishnu) being an integral part of ancient Indian thought. There are more than a dozen Vaishnava

Upanishads. It was in the period from the 10th century up to the 17th that many Vaishnava works were produced. The Vaisnavas regard the Pancharatra literature as equal to the Vedas.

The Vaishnava Samhitas and other works insist on knowledge of and devotion to, the supreme Godhead rather than on Vedic studies or sacrifices. It is worthy of note that in the Bhagavata Purana (11th Skanda) the Alvars were prefigured or adverted to; several great devotees of Vishnu, the Purana states, would appear on the banks of the Tamraparni, Krtamala (Vaigai), Payasvin (Palar), Kaveri, and Mahanadi (Periyar).

The Alvars lived between the 5th and the 12th centuries. The first group included Saroyogi or Poygaiyalwar, Bhattayogi or Bhutattalwar, Mahadyogi or Peyalwar and Bhaktisara or Tirumalisai-Piran. Nammalwar or Satakopa, who came in the next group, was perhaps the greatest of the Alvars. Others in this group included Madhurakaviyalwar, Kulasekhara Perumal, Vishnuchitta (or Periyalwar) and Andal, his adopted daughter. In the last of the groups were Bhaktanghrirenu (Tondaradippodiy Alwar), Yogivahana (Tiruppanalwar) and Parakala (Tirumangaiyalwar). The Divya Prabhandha constitutes the collection of the Alvars' compositions in the Tamil language.

IX.14 The advent of Sankara

The next important milestone is the advent of Sankara. In his short but marvellously active life, he travelled all through the country, refuting atheistic and materialistic systems of thought, wrote commentaries on the Upanishads, on the Brahma Sutra and on the Gita. He interpreted these scriptures and built up his thesis with wonderful clarity and depth of exposition. He remoulded Indian thought and destroyed many dogmas. His great capacity for deep feeling and emotional expression was combined with relentless logic. Sankara's contribution to philosophy is his blending of the doctrines of Karma and Maya, which culminated in a logical exposition of the idea of non-dualism. The entire universe consisting of Namarupa, names and forms, is but an appearance; Brahman, infinite consciousness, is the sole reality. Its attainment and the annihilation of the great illusion of the universe called Maya, by a process of realization, were the objects of Sankara's quest. He revived the doctrines of the Upanishads. His Advaita doctrine is still a living force in India. Sankaracharya established several mutts in India to propagate the Vedantic or Advaita doctrine and the successive heads of these mutts as well as later scholars like Madhusudana Saraswathi and the great Appayya Diksitar have produced important treatises, elucidating the Vedanta as propounded by Sankaracharya.

Sankara's outlook was based strictly on philosophical thought and logic; but even he has, in numerous compositions, described the supreme entity in a personal aspect as savior, helper, friend and guide. He wrote poems dedicated to Nrsimha, Sri Krishna, Laksmi, and Annapurna, and there is his celebrated lyrical homage to Parvati or Durga - the Soundaryalahari.

Sankara was followed by Ramanuja, Madhva and others who called themselves commentators but were indeed creators of new systems. Ramanuja's philosophy was termed qualified monism and Madhva's was a dualistic system. The three major forms of Vedanta developed respectively by Sankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva are distinct philosophies, although each professes to have stemmed from the same three sources – the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutra and the Gita.

IX.15 Ramanuja

Ramanuja, of course, was concerned much more with the personal aspect. His teachings may be regarded as a reaction against the tendency to view religion on the intellectual rather than the emotional plane. He assimilated many beliefs of the Dravidian civilisation and helped to encourage and promote temple worship and public festivals. Born early in the 11th century, Ramanuja was deeply influenced by the Tamil saints and Alvars - their ideas coloured his interpretation of the Upanishads and the Brahma

Sutra. He put forward a theistic view of the Vedas as against the rigid Advaita point of view of Sankara. Basing his thoughts on Bodhayana and the theistic Upanishads, the Mahabharata (including the Bhagavad-Gita), Vishnu Purana as well as the compositions of the Alwars and Acharyas, Ramanuja produced a number of works culminating in the Sribhasya. He proclaimed the doctrine of salvation through Bhakti or faith. His earlier followers came to be known as Vadagalais. About two centuries later the Tungalais appeared; they, unlike the Vadagalais, did not concentrate on Sanskrit scriptures and traditions and regarded Tamil scriptures as equally canonical.

There were several points of difference between Ramanuja and early Vaishnava teachers like Nadamuni and Yamunacharya. One was the importance attached to Swami Krpa, Grace of God. According to one school, this is spontaneous, not depending on any effort or merit of the devotee. The other school asserts that Grace also depends on the devotee's virtuous action. The religious approach of Ramanuja was mainly based on self-surrender, which must result in universal charity and sympathy, and friendliness even to an enemy. He insisted that the performance of scriptural duties alone was not enough for salvation. Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga, according to the Ramanuja School, only purify the mind in preparation for Bhakti Yoga or devotion. Ramanuja's Saranagati Gadya is a notable

contribution to the gospel of self-surrender, but it does not rule out caste functions and duties, and the doctrine of Karma.

Vedanta Desika, the greatest successor of Ramanuja, and a strong opponent of Sankara's Advaita doctrine, wrote a very controversial work, Satadushani. Pillai Lokacharya, the famous exponent of the Tengalai School, advocated passive surrender (Prapatti) in preference to active faith (Bhakti), and the guidance of a spiritual preceptor. Manavala Maha Muni is the chief Saint of the Tengalais. This school built up a remarkable Tamil literature to which it ascribed an importance equal to that of the Vedas - it was called the Tamil Tirumurai or the Tamil Veda. In essence, however, there was no fundamental doctrinal divergence between the two sects. Differences in certain features such as caste marks on the forehead and temple ceremonials and usage became accentuated in later years.

IX.16 Successors of Ramanuja

As the ideas of Ramanuja spread through India, men like Madhvacharya, Vallabhacharya, Chaitanya, Ramananda, Kabir and Nanak came under their spell. Ramanuja and his followers opposed the doctrine of Maya and the interpretation of the world as purely phenomenal or illusory. They emphasized the distinction between the individual soul and the supreme Godhead and based their philosophy on

man's conviction of sin, his responsibility for sin and the importance of grace emanating from the divine. In other words, they believed that salvation comes not specially through Jnana (knowledge) or karma (action), but through Bhakti (faith) and Prasada (grace). The Bhagavata doctrine of complete resignation to God was one of the articles of their faith. God was viewed alternately as father, mother, child, teacher and friend, and even as the beloved. Ramanuja declared that caste had nothing to do with the soul's quality; some of the Alvars were in fact non-Brahmins. Ramanuja admitted even Harijans to the temple at Melkote. One of his later followers, Ramananda, who lived in the 13th century, not only protested against caste distinctions but enjoined that no man should ask any devotee about his caste or sect, whoever worships God is God's own.

Later followers of Ramanuja included a number of scholars who sustained his philosophic system through the centuries. While accepting the set rituals of initiation and worship, they admitted Jains, Buddhists, Shudras and Harijans into their fold. A celebrated successor of Ramanuja was Nimbarka, who lived about the same time as Madhvacharya. According to his philosophy, which is a type of Bhedabhedavada, that is, the theory of the Absolute as Unity-in-difference, Brahman or the Absolute has transformed itself into the world of matter and spirit. As the Life-force, Prana manifests itself in the various cognitive sense functions, and yet keeps its

own independence, integrity and difference, so the Brahman also manifests itself through the numberless spirits and matter, without losing itself in them. As the spider spins its web out of itself and yet remains independent of the web, so the Brahman splits itself up into numberless spirits and matter but retains its fullness and purity.

The reaction against Sankara's Advaitism reached its climax in Madhvacharya's dualistic philosophy. It resembles Ramanuja's doctrine to some extent but stands for unqualified dualism. Madhva, also known as Purnaprajna and Anandatirtha, was born near Udipi in South Kanara in the 12th century. He draws a clear distinction between God and the individual soul, God and matter, individual soul and matter, one soul and another and one variety of matter and another. Large groups in India follow this doctrine which bases itself on the feeling of absolute dependence on God and love for Him.

Madhvacharya attacked Sankara vehemently on the ground that his philosophy was a disguised variety of Buddhism. It is well known that Sankara was strongly influenced by Gaudapada, who had great regard for the Buddhist philosophy, and it is unquestionable that, while Sankara was opposed to Buddhist thought in general, he was perhaps unconsciously influenced by some of its tenets. Madhva, on the other hand, objected to Advaita. It seemed to him presumptuous for the individual soul to claim identity with Brahman. According to his

doctrine, Vishnu is the only Supreme Being and Bhakti is the primary essential for liberation. Among his great disciples was Purandaradasa, reputed as a social reformer and one of the creators of the Karnataka system of music. Vadiraja, a renowned writer, was another Madhva philosopher.

IX.17 Vaishnavism in the North

One of the most influential Vaisnava cults was founded by Vallabhacharya, a Telugu Brahmin who lived in the 15th century. He migrated to the North and in his numerous works in the North he gave an interpretation of the Vedanta differing from that of Ramanuja, as also of Sankara. He called his doctrine Suddha Advaita, pure non-dualism. The world is real, and not an illusion. God is Nimitta Karana, the causative being. Discarding the Maya theory Vallabhacharya asserts that God cannot be described by negatives but only by his holy and gracious attributes, and is personified in Krishna. He is not only karta, creator, but also bhokta, enjoyer. Though he has no need to assume a bodily form, he often does so to please his devotees. Regarding Bhakti as the chief means of salvation and superior to Jnana (knowledge), Vallabha opposed all kinds of asceticism. The body is the temple of God, he said. The famous Upanishadic precept Tatvamasi was by an ingenious interpretation, modified by Vallabha as Atatvamasi, "That thou art not". Vallabhacharya doctrines were fully interpreted and expounded by his son Vittala.

Later in Northern India, there arose the Chaitanya movement. Nimbarka had already elevated Radha, the consort of Krishna, to the highest position. Jayadeva, the author of Gita-Govinda, and other poets like Vidyapati, Umapati and Chandidas, adopted the Radha-Krishna cult. Chaitanya, the great Vaisnava teacher of the 15th century transformed the Vaishnava faith and extended his influence in most parts of Northern India. He accepted converts from Islam, the foremost among them being Haridas, Rupa and Sanatana. Salvation, according to his doctrine, consists in the eternal experience of God's love. Chaitanya exercised great influence over later Indian thought.

IX.18 Shaktism

The cult of Shakti or the mother aspect of Godhead had its roots in the Vedas. The Rig-Veda describes Shakti as the embodiment of power and the upholder of the universe. Shakti is represented as the sister of Krishna and the wife of Siva. She is worshipped as Devi, who is one with Brahman. The literature of Shaktism, called the Tantra, gives a high place to women and reacts strongly against caste distinctions. According to the doctrines of the Shakta cult (embodied in 77 Agamas), Siva or the supreme entity is impersonal and beyond activity. Sankara in his Saundarya1ahari stated that, Siva is able to function when united with Shakti, otherwise he is inert. The Shakta cult and philosophy has had great

influence in Bengal and Assam, as well as in Malabar.

A variant of the Saivite philosophy, which developed in Kashmir, is known as the Pratyabhijna system. Here, Siva is the subject as well as the object, the experiencer as well as the experienced. As the consciousness on which all this resultant world is established from where it issues is free in its nature, it cannot be restricted anywhere. As it moves in the differentiated states of waking, sleeping, etc., identifying itself with them, it never falls from its true nature as the knower.

IX.19 Saivite sects

The development of Vaishnavism saw a parallel development of the Saiva theism. A distinctive philosophy of Saiva Siddhanta was evolved about the 11th century. The Saiva Agamas were based on the Vedic concept of Rudra. A large number of inspired writers in the Tamil country were headed by Manikkavasagar. All their works have been collected and are venerated by the South Indian Saivites. The first part of this collection, Tevaram, contains the hymns of Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar. The second part mainly comprises Manikkavasagar's Tiruvasakam. Sixty three Saiva saints are recognized and their lives are recounted in the Periya Puranam.

Saiva Siddhanta is one of the most influential and intrinsically valuable of the religious writings in India.

The Saiva Siddhanta recognizes three entities: God, the Soul or the aggregate of souls, and bondage (Pati, Pasu and Pasa). The expression Bondage denotes the aggregate of the elements which fetter the soul and hold it back from union with God. In one of its aspects it is Malam, the taint clinging to the soul. In another aspect it is Maya, the material cause of the world. The peculiarity of the Saiva Siddhanta doctrine which calls itself Suddhadvaita is its difference from the Vedanta Monism. God pervades and energizes all souls and, nevertheless, stands apart. This concept of the absolute is clear from the Tamil word for God, Kadavul, meaning that which transcends (kada) all things and is yet the heart (ul) of all things. When the absolute becomes manifest, it is as Force (Shakti) of which the universe is the product. The Dvaita system, on the other hand, insists on a radical pluralism, and at the same time relies on the complete dependence of the souls and the world on God.

One of the important Saivite sects known as Virasaiva was founded by a Brahmin named Basava, who was for some time the minister of a ruler in Kalyan. The Basava Purana outlines Basava's life. There are Basava's own writings in Kannada, describing the fundamentals of a doctrine based on rigid monotheism. Siva is regarded as the supreme, limitless and transcendent entity. Brahman is the identity of "being", "bliss" and "consciousness", and devoid of any form of differentiation. It is

limitless and beyond all ways of knowledge. It is self-luminous and absolutely without any barrier of knowledge, passion or power. It is in Him that the whole world of the conscious and the unconscious remains, in a potential form untraceable by our senses, and it is from Him that the whole world becomes expressed or manifest of itself, without the operation of any other instrument.

The Virasaivas, often called Lingayats, are distinguished by the Sivalinga and rudraksa on their person and they smear their bodies with ashes. They are strict vegetarians and abstain from drink. The Virasaiva doctrine has four schools, but the differences are of a minor kind. All believe in the efficacy of a Guru or preceptor. All assert the reality of the Universe and unity with Siva, the only ultimate reality. The Virasaiva doctrine is prevalent in Mysore and in the southern regions of Maharashtra.

IX.20 Cultural fusions in the South

Early Indian history cannot be viewed in its true perspective unless the institutions of the South receive adequate treatment. The unity of India transcends the diversities of blood, fusions in colour, language, dress, manners and sects. It is seen in the fusion of Brahminical ideas and institutions with Dravidian cults. This unity, however, has been limited by the later developments of the caste system in a manner different from the original

conception which was functional in character and elastic in scope.

A typical South Indian village almost invariably has a temple dedicated to Ayyanar or Hariharaputra or Hanuman or Anjaneya, or Ganesa. On many hill-tops there are shrines dedicated to the Devi (Chandi) or Kartikeya also named Subrahmanya. These exemplify the tolerant and assimilative outlook of the Aryans. In the context mention has already been made of the Vratyastoma (a particular sacrifice or ritual) by means of which masses of non-Aryans (Vratyas) were admitted into the Aryan society.

According to South Indian tradition, Tamil was first developed by the sage Agastya, to whom a grammar, a treatise on philosophy and many other works are ascribed. The oldest Tamil grammar now extant, the Tolkappiyam, is said to have been the work of one of his disciples. The Saivite and Vaishnavite revival due to the Brahmins in Southern India, since the 8th century, brought about a counter movement among the Jains. Early Buddhism in Northern India adopted the Prakrit or vernacular speech for its religious treatises. On the same analogy, Buddhism and Jainism in the South created works in the dialects of the people. The Dravidian Buddhists and Jains created a Tamil literature which was anti-Brahminical in sentiment and covered the period between the 9th and 13th centuries.

The Kural of Tiruvalluvar, dating not later than the 10th century A.D. is said to have been the work of a poet belonging to one of the depressed classes. It enforces the Samkhya philosophy in 1,330 poetical aphorisms based on three subjects: wealth, pleasure and virtue. To the sister of its author, the poetess Avvaiyar, are ascribed many compositions of the highest moral tone, and they have enjoyed perennial popularity in Southern India. The Jain period of Tamil literature includes works on ethics. In the same period a celebrated adaptation of the Ramayana was composed in Tamil by Kambar. This is a Tamil paraphrase rather than a literal translation of the ancient Sanskrit Epic.

Between this period and the 16th century, two encyclopedic collections of Tamil hymns, deeply religious in spirit, were gradually formed. One collection was the work of Saivite devotees and their disciples who sought to uproot Jainism. Vaisnavite apostles of the same period were equally prolific in Tamil religious songs. Their Book of Four Thousand Psalms, Nalayira Prabhandha, constitutes a hymnology dating from the early Christian era.

X. Great movements of reform

Side by side with these philosophical systems, a large body of devotional literature in the spoken languages of India has been developed. This was due to the advent of great reformers-Ramananda, Kabir, Nanak, Mirabai, Vallabhacharya, Chaitanya,

Tulasidasa, and Tukaram. Ramananda and his Muslim disciple Kabir emphasized the belief in a supreme deity and recognized no caste distinctions, although they accepted the doctrines of Karma and Samsara. Nanak founded the religion of the Sikhs. He was under the influence of Islam as well as of Hinduism and, like Kabir, he believed in Karma and Samsara, Maya and Moksha. He laid great stress on a personal God and a society of disciples not bound by caste or race restrictions. The militant character of Sikhism was a later development mostly due to Aurangzeb's intolerance and persecution.

The great saints of Maharashtra and Bengal created a wonderful literature of Bhakti based on the worship of Rama or of Krishna. Vallabhacharya, in particular, attacked Sankara's Advaita doctrine. He preached that by God's grace alone can man obtain release. Chaitanya, a contemporary of Vallabha, and his followers called Goswamis, were itinerant preachers whose sincerity of religious experience brought about a reformation in Bengal. The common features are:

1. Belief in one supreme God of Love and Grace.
2. Belief in the individuality of every soul, which is nevertheless part of the Divine Soul.
3. Belief in salvation through Bhakti.
4. The exaltation of Bhakti above Jnana and Karma and above the performance of rites and ceremonies.

5. Extreme reverence to be paid to the Guru.
6. The doctrine of the Holy Name.
7. Initiation through a mantra and a sacramental meal.
8. The institution of sectarian orders of Sanyasins.
9. The relaxing of the rules of caste, sometimes even ignoring all caste distinctions.
10. Religious teaching through the vernaculars.

It was out of these Bhakti cults that the Sikh group transformed itself into a military brotherhood. Bhakti cults gave rise to such works as the Ramayana by Tulasidasa, the Abhangas of Tukaram and the poems of devotees like Ramprasad of Bengal and Tayumanavar of South India and passionate outpouring of Mira Bai. All these helped to popularize the spirit of devotion and resulted in a great religious revival in many parts of India.

XI. Renaissance in Hinduism

In the 18th century religion suffered a serious decline mainly because the impact of a completely different civilisation. English education destroyed the isolation of India and brought about an active ferment. Many Indians of the time became either sceptics who leaned towards Christianity, or reactionaries who sought to preserve at any cost the ancient forms and institutions. Fortunately, at this time, enlightened Europeans like Sir William Jones, Sir Charles Wilkins, Colebrook, Monier-Williams and

Max Muller revealed by comment and by translation the treasures of ancient Indian wisdom. Their work was later supplemented by art lovers and art critics, who revealed the secrets of sacred and secular art-forms and concepts.

As an outcome of these influences and counter-influences, there arose a series of movements which have been rightly described as a renaissance of Hindu life and thought. Raja Ramamohun Roy was the most outstanding pioneer of these movements. He struck a note of universalism in tune with the spirit of the Upanishads. Born in Bengal in 1772, he studied Persian, Arabic and English. In 1803 he published a book in Persian, with a preface in Arabic, entitled *Tuhfat-ul- Muwahhidin*. It carried a protest against idolatry and sought to establish a universal religion based on the idea of the unity of Godhead. He started a controversy with the Christian missionaries and published a book in which he tried to separate the moral teachings of Jesus from the miracles described in the Gospels. Ramamohun Roy, along with David Hare, stressed the necessity of education in India on modern lines, in opposition to those who objected to English education and insisted on a return to the past. He repeatedly declared that he had no intention of breaking away from the ancestral religion, and wished to see it restored to its original purity.

XI.1 The Brahmo Samaj

In order to carry out his ideas, Raja Ramamohun Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj on the basis of theism. The Trust Deed of the Samaj lay down that "no graven image, statue or sculpture carving, painting, picture, portrait or the likeness of anything shall be admitted within the building."

Debendranath Tagore, the next great leader of the Samaj, formulated the Brahmopadesa, comprising tenets from the Upanishads and Tantras. His successor, Keshub Chandra Sen, sought to incorporate Christian ideals into the Brahmo Samaj movement. He began the compilation of a scripture including passages from the Holy Books of many religions - Hindu, Buddhist, Hebrew, Christian, Muslim etc. Then he went to England in 1870, he was welcomed by many Christian organizations. As the result of secessions in the Brahmo Samaj, three institutions arose: The Adi Brahmo Samaj; the New Dispensation of Keshub Chandra Sen; and the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj founded by dissenters from the Keshub Church. The Sadharan Samaj, led by Shivanath Sastry and Ananda Mohun Bose, gave a rational, monistic interpretation of the Upanishads, stressing the essential unity of the universal self and the individual self. The following doctrines, as noted in Renaissance of Hinduism are common to all these varieties and offshoots of the Brahmo Samaj:

1. They have no faith in any scripture as an authority.
2. They have no faith in Avatars.
3. They denounce polytheism and idol-worship.
4. They are against caste restrictions.
5. They make faith in the doctrines of Karma and Rebirth optional.

Another offshoot of the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj was founded by Justice Ranade in Bombay. Its programme included disapproval of caste, recognition of widow marriage, and the encouragement of women's education.

XI.2 The Arya Samaj

As a reaction against the influences typified by Raja Ramamohun Roy and Justice Ranade, the Arya Samaj was founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswathi. It attacked the Brahmo Samaj for its pro-European and pro-Christian attitude. A great Sanskrit scholar and a believer in the doctrines of Karma and Rebirth, Swami Dayanand sought to revive the Vedic ideals and laid stress on Brahmacharya and Sannyasa. He believed implicitly in the ancient scriptures, giving Puranic Hinduism in favour of Vedic Hinduism. The Puranic texts, he said, had no Vedic sanction. Holding the Vedas alone as authoritative, he stated that God and the human soul are two distinct entities, different in nature and attributes, though they are inseparable

from each other as the pervader and the pervaded. The doctrine of Karma and Samsara is accepted by the Arya Samaj. One of its main activities is Suddhi, a purification ceremony, by which non-Hindus are converted to Hinduism. The depressed classes and Harijans are entitled to be invested with the sacred thread and are given equal status with other Hindus. The Arya Samaj also reclaimed many Hindus who had been converted to Islam and Christianity. Sanghatan, organization of the Hindus for self-defence, is one of the main principles of the Arya Samaj, and it has played its part as the church militant in the Hindu fold.

XI.3 The Theosophical Society

The Theosophical Society, founded in 1875 by Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, co-operated with the Arya Samaj and tried for a time to organize Indian life on national lines and check the activities of Christian missionaries. Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky went later to Ceylon, declared themselves Buddhists, and took part in a movement for the revival of Buddhism. Dr. Annie Besant joined the Society after a period of militant agnosticism, side by side with notable social service, and political work amongst the Fabians in England. She became the head of the Theosophical Society in 1891. Claiming that she had been a Hindu in her former birth, Annie Besant worked throughout her life for the regeneration and activation of Hindu thought and Hindu life. She published a translation of the

Bhagavad-Gita along with Dr. Bhagavan Das and popularized Hindu ideals in her numerous publications and marvellously eloquent speeches. A defender of many orthodox ideals, she turned later to social reform, which included the partial modification of the caste system. . One of the main principles of Theosophy is the belief in a brotherhood of great teachers of the past who are supposed to be living still, watching over and guiding the evolution of humanity. The Theosophical Society under Dr. Besant's guidance spread the fundamental principles of the Hindu religion - Karma, Reincarnation, Yoga and spiritual evolution.

XI.4 Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda

Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, a great devotee and mystic, had a broad outlook of universalism. After accepting the discipline of Yoga and Tantric Sadhana, he underwent the discipline of the Vaisnava, the Christian and the Islamic ways of life. To rouse the religious feelings of the worldly-minded and re-affirm the ancient truths of Hinduism by an appeal to experience, he trained a devoted band of followers, the most outstanding of whom was Narendranath, who was later well known as Swami Vivekananda. Sri Ramakrishna's teachings were neither new nor heterodox. As Swami Vivekananda said on one occasion, Ramakrishna brought old truths to light. He was an embodiment of the past religious thought of India. Like other great religious teachers of the world, he projected his ideas through

parables or images. Questioned, for instance, on the problem of evil, Sri Ramakrishna said: " Evil exists in God as poison in a serpent. What is poison to us is not poison to the serpent. Evil is evil only from the point of view of man." In other words, from the absolute standpoint, there is no evil, but from the relative standpoint evil is a terrible reality. Ramakrishna preached that realization is the essence of religion and that all religions are paths leading to the same goal. He deprecated metaphysical subtleties and insisted on deep devotion. He claimed that through his intense devotion to the image of the Divine Mother in Dakshineswar that realization had come to him. Swami Vivekananda said: " If men like Sankara, Chaitanya and Ramakrishna found image worship helpful, there is no sense in declining it."

Ramakrishna's religion and the movement he founded by gathering around him a band of devoted workers were essentially practical. This aspect was expounded and universalized by Swami Vivekananda. Under the inspiration of Ramakrishna, he changed from scepticism to religious realization and travelled all over the world, preaching the essence of the truths of Hinduism. He dedicated himself to the service of India and particularly to the service of those who were starving, depressed, or beyond the social pale. The work for the uplift of the Indian masses was for him as important as meditation or Yoga.

At the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, Swami Vivekananda struck a note of universal toleration based on the Hindu belief that all religions lead to the same God. He also declared in Chicago that the religion of the Hindus is centred on self-realization; idols, temples, churches and books are aids and nothing more. Swami Vivekananda strengthened the Ramakrishna organization by founding monasteries and centres of Hindu teaching in India and abroad. He reinterpreted Hinduism and stated that the abstract Advaita must become living. All through his life and especially during his travels abroad, he insisted that the essential features of Hinduism are its universality, its impersonality, its rationality, catholicity and optimism. Above all, its authority is not affected by the historicity of any particular man. Swami Vivekananda told his countrymen that they had become weak and miserable because they did not bring their Vedanta out of the books into life itself. His great contribution to Hinduism lay in applying the Hindu creed to the elevation of the masses and abolishing India's isolation from the world, culturally, spiritually, and in many aspects of social life. He founded a great and worldwide organization, the Ramakrishna Mission, which is working for the spiritual welfare and multiform amelioration of the living conditions of the people of India and other countries.

XI.5 Sri Aurobindo

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, one of the latest exponents and interpreters of Hinduism, has described ancient Indian philosophy as follows: "an ingrained and dominant spirituality, an inexhaustible vital creativeness and gusto of life, and, mediating between them, a powerful, penetrating and scrupulous intelligence, combined with the rational ethical and aesthetic mind at a high intensity of action, created the harmony of the ancient Indian culture." Sri Aurobindo gave new interpretations of the Vedas and the Vedanta, and in his Essay on the Gita he expounded what he called "the integral view of life". His great work, The Life Divine, is a summing up of his philosophy of "the Descent of the Divine into Matter". The importance of Sri Aurobindo's work lies not only in his restatements of old ideals but also in his attempt to explain the true methods of Yoga as apart from mere asceticism and illusionism.

XI.6 Sri Ramana Maharshi

A recent example of transcendental spiritual experience manifested in life is Sri Ramana Maharshi, who passed away in 1950. A man of powerful personality, he taught as much by his silence as by his sermons. He had a directness of approach and a universality of outlook, which were products of true enlightenment.

XI.7 Sri Rabindranath Tagore

In the popularization of ancient Hindu ideals, Rabindranath Tagore has played a significant part. Tagore has made a suggestive interpretation of the Vedic religion and the substance of the Upanishads.

XI.8 Mahatma Gandhi

In the popularization of ancient Hindu ideals, Mahatma Gandhi has played a significant part. The teachings of Mahatma Gandhi have led to vast social changes and to the uplift of the backward and depressed classes. He has stated that his whole religion is based on surrender to the will of God, the spirit of renunciation as embodied in the Isa Upanishad, the Gita and the ideals of practical service. He has given a new interpretation to the doctrine of non-violence which is as old as Hinduism, and tried to adapt it by means of satyagraha to political and moral issues.

Mahatma Gandhi worked for the uplift of the depressed and backward classes and for the creation of national entity. Speaking in Travancore on the Temple Entry Proclamation enacted there in 1936, he said: "These temples are the visible symbols of God's power and authority. They are, therefore, truly called the houses of God, the houses of prayer. We go there in a prayerful mood and perform, first thing in the morning after ablution, the act of dedication and surrender. Scoffers and sceptics may say that all these are figments of the

imagination, that we are imagining God in the images we see. I will say to these scoffers that it is so. I am not ashamed of confessing that imagination is a powerful factor in life. Now you can easily understand that, in the presence of God, the Ruler of the Universe, who pervades everything, even those whom we have called the lowest of the low, all are equal."

XII. How Hinduism views pain and suffering

Suffering, both mental and physical, is thought to be part of the unfolding of karma. Suffering is seen as the consequence of past inappropriate action (mental, verbal, or physical) that occurred in either one's current life or in a past life. It isn't seen as punishment but as a natural consequence of the moral laws of the universe in response to past negative behaviour.

XII.1 Suffering Isn't Random

Hindu traditions promote coping with suffering by accepting it as a just consequence and understanding that suffering isn't random. If a Hindu were to ask "why me?" or feel her/his circumstances weren't "fair," a response would be that her/his current situation is the exactly correct situation for her/his to be in, given her/his soul's previous action. Experiencing current suffering also satisfies the debt incurred for past behaviour.

XII.2 Pain is a Reality

Suffering is seen as a part of living until finally reaching 'moksha' or the complete release from the cycle of rebirths. Until reaching this state, suffering is always present on life's path. Hindu tradition holds that as we are in human form on earth, we're bound by the laws of our world and will experience physical pain. Pain is truly felt in our current physical bodies; it isn't illusory in the sense of not really being felt.

XII.3 The Soul is Blissful

While the body may be in pain, the Self or soul isn't affected or harmed. Arjuna, the warrior and seeker of wisdom in the Bhagavad-Gita, is told that "The self embodied in the body of every being is indestructible..."

"Weapons do not cut it; fire does not burn it,
Waters do not wet it, wind does not wither it.
It cannot be cut or burned; it cannot be wet or
withered;
It is enduring, all-pervasive, fixed, immovable, and
timeless."

As the Self isn't affected, there need be no concern over temporary suffering. Those of us in pain may gain comfort by viewing pain as only a temporary condition and one that doesn't affect our inner Selves.

XII.4 Pain is Not Purely Bad

Pain and suffering aren't seen as solely bad, but as experiences that need to be viewed from multiple

perspectives. Hindu traditions hold that all things are manifestations of God or Brahman, so nothing is only good or bad; Brahman encompasses everything. Everything, including pain and suffering, is given by Brahman. To view suffering as bad is to see only one side of it. Suffering can be positive if it leads to progress on a spiritual path. Some even embrace suffering as a way to progress on his spiritual path, to be tested and learn from a difficult experience.

XII.5 Attachment and Detachment

"Attachment and detachment are concepts that in Hindu traditions relate to one's level of involvement in this world and to the power this world holds over one's state of mind. Attachment signifies over-involvement in this world, having desires for things that one does not have and clinging to things one has. Detachment is a positive state of objectivity toward this world, where relationships, objects, and circumstances hold no power over one's state of mind.

XII.6 Perfect Detachment Leads to Moksha

Attachment is a primary stumbling block to achieving Moksha (complete release from this world). Attachment perpetuates the "terrible bondage" that keeps a person in the cycles of samsara (rebirth). Only through recognition that the Self is not bound to this world of suffering can release be achieved. Perfect detachment creates a sense of equanimity

or an even disposition in the face of either happiness or sorrow. When someone achieves perfect detachment, no problem or circumstance, including pain, can cause that person to suffer. From the Bhagavad-Gita:

"Contacts with matter make us feel / heat and cold,
pleasure and pain.
Arjuna, you must learn to endure / fleeting things-
they come and go!
When these cannot torment a man / when suffering
and joy are equal
For him and he has courage / he is fit for
immortality."

XII.7 How to Achieve Detachment

It can't be simply an intellectual understanding that the Self is part of God. It isn't escapist, pretending that suffering doesn't exist. One part of achieving detachment is to follow dharma (appropriate action), but to be unconcerned with the outcomes of these actions. In the Bhagavad-Gita, a seeker of wisdom Arjuna is told:

"Be intent on action, not on the fruits of action;
Avoid attraction to the fruits and attachment to
inaction!
Perform actions, firm in discipline, relinquishing
attachment;
Be impartial to failure and success - this equanimity
is called discipline."

XII.8 Refocus Away from Pain

We who have pain are not to be passive and give up, and can continue to attempt to lessen our

suffering. The ultimate goal would be to become neutral in the face of whatever outcome occurs, to not desperately strive for pain relief. Most important, however, would be to refocus away from pain to Dharma.

XII.9 The Doctor's Dilemma

The guidance to seek detachment from outcomes would likewise apply to those who treat patients. The dharma for a pain practitioner would be to be the best practitioner possible, while accepting all outcomes. However, this wouldn't suggest becoming indifferent to patients' suffering. Hindu traditions would support still caring deeply for patients, but needing to recognize that physicians aren't in control of outcomes, nor know what's the appropriate outcome from the perspective of karma.

XII.10 Mantras, Meditation & Yoga Can Help to Refocus

Specific tools for achieving detachment also include meditation and yoga. These tools teach the understanding and control of one's mind, and seeing beyond one's mind to God. As the focus of one's life should be on God, priority is given to this inner journey, with less focus on the world. By becoming less attached to one's circumstances, including being in pain, a person can focus his life on God, not pain. Hindu traditions hold that all have a capacity to achieve this. Spiritual assistance and support are also to be found in God. One way to know God is

through devotion, the way of 'bhakti', which implies that God is accessible and knowable, in personal terms. A practice of some Hindus is to pray to ask for support in facing problems, believing that their suffering will be relieved and support will be provided.

XII.11 When Religion Becomes a Hindrance

Although religion can be a positive resource for some, there are times when religious coping can be ineffective. For Hindus, a first potential challenge may be the feeling of passivity or fatalism that may arise because of karma. A patient can feel hopeless or unable to change things because he feels that things are fixed by karma. Hindu traditions counter this by saying that a person can start in the present moment and go forward, living his life in a positive way by following dharma. If a patient currently experiences pain, change can occur by attending to present appropriate action.

XII.12 Acceptance is Not Inaction

Acceptance can be misunderstood as passivity. Hindu traditions do advise a focus on appropriate action, rather than outcome, but this doesn't mean inaction. People with pain can be encouraged to actively manage their pain and continue to seek improvement, but become detached from the outcome of these efforts. However, the process of trying is important, rather than a focus on a final goal of being detached. Patience with oneself is

encouraged. Patients can also try to learn as much as possible from their current situation, including their apparent failures.

Medical Studies on Acceptance as a Coping Skill
Acceptance, from a nonreligious perspective, has been studied in pain research. Although acceptance isn't unique to Hinduism, it's certainly central to the religion, and includes at least two aspects. Hindu traditions view acceptance as a logical attitude towards what one's life presents, including pain and suffering, because all is seen as the just working of karma. The practice of acceptance is also a means to a greater end, detachment. The process of accepting one's life lessens one's desire for things to be different than they are. As desires fall away, detachment is achieved. Related to pain, both painful and pain-free states would be accepted equally. Detachment from this world, to be focused on God, is a primary goal in Hinduism.

XIII. The spirit of tolerance

It may be noted that the comprehensive tolerance of Hinduism is exemplified remarkably in such instances as the following. In the temple of *Dharmasthala in Karnataka the chief personage is a Jain - he is regarded as a hereditary oracle whose arbitration is sought by members of all Hindu and even Muslim communities. The temple itself has the Sivalinga as well as the Salagrama, or symbol of Vishnu, the officiating priest being a Vaisnavite. In

the shrine at Udipi the worship of Siva and Vishnu alike is offered and the heads of the Udipi Math, although staunch Vaisnavites, are under the obligation to attend to two Siva shrines, in addition to officiating as the chief priests of the Krishna temple. It is believed that a person belonging to the Harijans community received special divine favour and attained union with God in the temple precincts. The tradition of Chidambaram is similar- the Pariah saint, Nandanar, who was refused admission by the Brahmin priests, became the object of divine favour and attained communion with God. In the temple of Jagannath at Puri, caste distinctions have been discarded. In Travancore there is a forest temple dedicated to Ayyappa or Hariharaputra. Here also, no caste distinctions are observed. Hindus, and even Muslims and Christians, perform vows in this shrine with belief in the efficacy of the god's protective help. It may be noted in this context that the usual invocation of Ayyappa, namely, Saranam Ayyappa, is reminiscent of the Buddhist prayer.

The Spirit of Indian philosophy has been described in these words: "Its chief mark consists in concentration on the spiritual aspect, belief in the intimate relationship of philosophy and life, the inseparability of theory and practice and the insistence on intuition coexisting with the acceptance of authority." Finally, it is the synthetic vision of Indian philosophy which has made possible

the intellectual and religious tolerance so pronounced in Indian thought throughout the ages. Recent squabbles between religious communities, born of political factionalism, are alien to the basic Indian mind and are indeed antagonistic to its unique genius for adaptability and tolerance.

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Spiritual Training

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- Spirituality is a sort of feeling or consciousness of the Highest. It is the doorway to enter into Divinity pure and simple i.e. the Highest Evenness all along. (SDG 157)
- The main purpose of training is that a man should begin to imbibe within him as much of godly attributes as possible. (BWS 231)
- The preliminary step in the right type of training is that the aspirant's tendencies of mind be directed towards God. (BWS238)
- The real spiritual training is that which makes our mind disciplined and regulated, restores moderation in senses and faculties and creates lightness of spirit. (BWS 241)
- Demolition of the Past is a chapter in Natural path (SDG 162)
- We should try only to build the future and not waste our time in thinking of the past. (SDG 38)
- I may say here that Reality is not the field for cowards. Lion-hearted men alone can dare approach Reality and men are made so, by Natural Path. (SDG 27)
- Under the Natural Path system of spiritual training, the action of senses is regulated in a natural way so as to bring them to their original state, i.e. just as it was when we

assumed the human form for the first time.
(SDG 11)

- The Natural Path provides a system in which, while living a normal worldly life in the way that all our actions may become penances themselves, we try to achieve our highest Goal - The Ultimate. (SDG 69)
- Our ancestors had sought their ways of realisation in the forests. We under the Natural Path system try to create such an atmosphere around us in our homes so that they serve the purpose of forests. (SDG 142)
- The training under Natural Path starts from Karan Sharir (causal body) where the impressions are in seedling form. (IPAM28)
- Under the system the dormant energies of the Centre and sub-centres are awakened so as to enable them to function properly.(SDG92)
- Subtle force is very strong, and if an abhyasi tries to go further by his own effort, he is pushed down because he cannot get at the subtle force. (SDG 51)
- The world will soon realise that no nation on the surface of the earth can survive without spirituality as its base. (SDG 84)
- The end of desires means the stopping of the formation of Samskaras. (BWS 201)
- Accepting turning towards the spiritual life is the beginning of life, and the highest state of it is 'Life in Life' which lies hidden in life itself. (SDG 104)

- A man should have the desire of drinking the whole river of spirituality. (SDG 36)
- Acquiring mastery over a certain condition is nothing but merging in it just like medicine which gets dissolved into the body of a man. (BWS 325)
- If we really want our transformation, for which we should come forward like a warrior in the field to test our own bravery for the task. (SDG 135)
- Whenever you think of anything, the idea comes first at 'A'. Whatever you think repeatedly, located at the point 'A', you will form your fate accordingly. (BWS 59)
- If the practice is systematically done on both these points (Pt.A and Pt.B), desires will soon begin to bid farewell. (BWS 60)
- The merits of a thing can be rightly judged only by direct experience. (SDG 139)
- It is really the practical experience only that can help one to realize himself. (BWS 73)
- The divine experiences are the perceptions of the conditions relating to Divinity. (SDG 27)
- Really the path nearest to yourself is the path nearest to God. (SDG 137)
- If the aspirant begins to feel himself lighter and lighter, it means he is progressing. (IPAM 58)

- Waiting is also a sort of intense remembrance which is greatly beneficial to spirituality. (SS 315)
- In our sanstha, Reality is infused at the first stroke of will which serves as the seed in the long run. (SS 312)
- I believe He can better be sought for in the midst of one's own heart. But for that purpose, the spirit of the Spartans is necessary. (SS 530)
- Let the light of the Real, shine in the heart of everyone so that we may rise up to the expectations of the Divine! (SDG 123)

Master

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- My Master Samarth Guru Mahatma Shri Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Fatehgarh (U.P.) India, has remodelled the 'Yoga' in a way that somehow you may come into contact with the Divine speedily. (SDG 151)
- The blissful time ushered in by His advent introduced a new era of spiritual awakening which promises a practical solution of the human problem of existence. (SS 10)
- My revered master, Samarth Guru Mahatma Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Fatehgarh, has rendered wonderful service to humanity in this respect by providing the easiest means of gaining the object of life. (SDG 137)
- Indeed our Great Master has boldly asserted that one can, for sure, attain liberation in this very life, nay, even in a part of it, provided one is really earnest about it and has the fortune of having a proper guide. (SDG 71)
- It was he (Pujya Lalaji Maharaj) who made it possible that a man could attain perfection in one life -rather a part of it- leading a just normal family life. (The Masters 17)
- Now since times are changing, as I have hinted at in 'Efficacy of Raj Yoga', only such means as introduced by our Revered Master Mahatma Ram Chandraji shall be in vogue throughout the world. (SDG 84)

- Under Natural Path the master, by the application of his inner powers, awakens to action and accelerates the dormant forces in the abhyasi and diverts the flow of Divine current towards his heart. (SS 34)
- Under the Natural Path, one has simply to connect one-self with the power of the master whose mind, senses and faculties are all thoroughly disciplined and regulated. (SDG 21)
- In our system a teacher takes out the hurdles in the progress of the seeker and side by side imparts the divine effulgence in him. (SDG 148)
- Guru is the connecting link between God and man. (BWS 213)
- The idea of Guru as the Supreme Divine force is very helpful in spiritual pursuit. (BWS 255)
- The conception of the Guru as a spiritual mother promotes within us the feelings of love, reverence and surrender which are the main factors of a spiritual life. (BWS 260)
- God is the real Guru or Master and we get Light from Him alone. (BWS 227)
- At higher levels the conditions are such that even if one ascends a little by selfeffort, he quickly slips down because of the strong push from above. So, for our entry into higher regions, the Master's help is indispensable. (SDG 14)
- It is only when a worthy master of calibre comes up to our help, that we are able to tear them (bondages) off in order to make our passage to the Absolute Reality smooth and easy. (SDG 98)

- A man who is himself free can free you from eternal bondage. (BWS 221)
- To find the way back by unravelling the strands binding us may not be possible except with the help of a guide who has connected himself to the Source. (SDG 24)
- One who can foment us by his own inner powers would be the best for a guide in the spiritual pursuit. (SDG 10)
- One who can foment you with his own internal divine power to make your task easy, is the only capable hand for spiritual guidance. (SDG 120)
- The only thing for the abhyasi to do is to connect himself with the power of the master, whose mind and senses are all thoroughly disciplined and regulated. (SDG 88)
- Indeed our Great Master has boldly asserted that one can, for sure, attain liberation in this very life, nay, even in a part of it, provided one is really earnest about it and has the fortune of having a proper guide. (SDG 71)
- The beauty of the training of my master is that spiritual life runs parallel to the life in the world, with ever increasing efficiency. (SDG 163)
- What we stand in need of, from a Guru is the true impulse to effect the awakening of the soul. (BWS 221)
- The help of the Master, who has himself travelled the entire distance and has developed in himself the Divine force, is therefore of immense value. (SDG 99)

- It is now the regime of Lord Krishna which is to continue till the next avatar comes into the world. (SS 116)
- Lord Krishna had originally introduced bhakti in Raja Yoga in a way the yogis know, because he knew the time was at hand when life would be uncertain. (BWS 102)
- The word mahatma has been defined in several or various ways, not perhaps without some reasonable basis. But my definition of it as a 'non-being person', though somewhat peculiar, is meaningful. (SS 513)
- I would define a Mahatma as the most insignificant being or rather a neglected figure, beyond all feelings of greatness, pride or egoism, dwelling permanently in a state of complete self-negation. (BWS 219)
- A saint or a Mahatma is not in any way different from an ordinary worldly man, except that his mind and senses are in a well-disciplined state and wholly under his control. (SS 427)
- Now since times are changing, as I have hinted at in 'Efficacy of Raj Yoga', only such means as introduced by our Revered Master Mahatma Ram Chandraji shall be in vogue throughout the world. (SDG 84)
- If we are in the hands of a real master, all the things necessary for 'man to be called man' gradually come out of themselves. (SDG 54)
- The proper sort of training, if the Guru is perfect, is that the teacher should generate among his

disciples that sort of smell which leads them to the garden. (SDG 145)

- When He has come to know that someone happens to be His real Seeker and Lover, then it would become a sure condition for His coming close to you. (SDG 42)
- He introduces in the abhyasi the Pure State of Divinity, which he is having because this is his work. (SDG 49)
- My (Pujya Babuji Maharaj) restlessness lies in this, that you should continue to be restless to achieve the goal of attainment of the Divine which alone can give me Real Peace. (SDG 130)
- Swimming is the part of swimmer and to teach swimming is the part of master. (SDG 33)
- God is known to be both samavarti and samadarshi. (IPAM 43)
- Gurumata disciples are those who obey the commands of the master in all matters and try to submit to his will in all possible ways. (BWS 261)
- Divinity is a play, and Divine the way! (SDG 70)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- The guru is the formless Self within each one of us. He may appear as a body to guide us, but that is only his disguise. -Ramana Maharshi
- Imagine Brahman as a sea without shores. Through the cooling love of the bhakta some of the water becomes frozen into blocks of ice. Now and then, God assumes a form and reveals Himself to his lovers as a Person. But when the sun of Knowledge rises, the blocks of ice melt

away and God is without form, no more a Person. He is beyond description. Who could describe Him? Anyone who tries disappears, unable to find his "I" any more. -Ramakrishna

- Living God (Master)

We want to worship a living God. I have not seen anything but God all my life, nor have you. To see this chair you first see God, and then the chair in and through Him. He is everywhere, saying, "I am." The moment you feel "I am," you are conscious of Existence. Where shall we go to find God if we cannot see Him in our own hearts and in every living being? -Vivekananda

- Cling to the feet of a master who can introduce you to yourself. -Swami Veda Bharati

- God is really all-pervading, above the mind, without features, imperishable, and infinite. How can such a one be worshipped? That is why, out of compassion for his creatures, He takes the form of the guru. The guru is the supreme God enclosed in human skin. He walks the earth, concealed, bestowing grace on his disciples. -Kularnava Tantra

- He is the only adorable one to me: I have none other.

My tongue has left off impure words, it sings His glory day and night: Whether I rise or sit down, I can never forget Him; for the rhythm of His music beats in my ears.

- Kabir says: "My heart is frenzied, and I disclose in my soul what is hidden. I am immersed in that one great bliss which transcends all pleasure and pain." -Kabir

- When the student is ready, the teacher appears.
- Tao saying
- “Homage to the one who knows and tests. The master gave sugar and the fool saw salt.” By Kabir

Pranahuti

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- Transmission gives a new life to the sleeping condition of man, and prepares for the highest approach reserved for human beings. (SDG 104)
- As long as the abhyasi is not getting the Grace direct, the teacher diverts the Grace which is coming directly upon himself to the abhyasi. (SDG 59)
- As the transmission takes us to deeper and deeper levels of remembrance, our journey to the source becomes firmly established. (SDG 24)
- I may assure you that spiritual training for the attainment of higher stages is only possible by the process of Yogic transmission and by no other means. (BWS 223)
- The condition of Ajapa rightly believed to be a high spiritual achievement acquired after years of hard labour, is only a matter of weeks or rather days, through right training by the process of transmission. (BWS 239)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- Nature of Pranahuti: Pranahuti when experienced for the first time put me in a state of wonder and I felt like "I would rather have a mind opened by wonder than one closed by doubt or belief."
- If instead of a gem, or even a flower, we should cast the gift of a loving thought into the heart of a

friend, that would be giving as the angels give. -
George MacDonald

- "You're only given a little spark of madness. You mustn't lose it." --Robin Williams (1951 -)
- No trumpets sound when the important decisions of our life are made. Destiny is made known silently. -Agnes DeMille

Mind

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- The mind, which in its primordial state was absolutely pure and regulated has now been spoiled and polluted by our wrong ways and doings. (SDG 19)
- Diversion from the path of duty is in fact not due to circumstances or outside engagements, but only to the misdirected activities of the indisciplined mind. (BWS 252)
- Heaviness of mind or internal denseness caused by gross forms of worship is a great impediment to our spiritual advancement and should be avoided. (BWS 247)
- If somehow we turn its (human mind's) downward trend towards the Base, it will become quite calm and peaceful. (SDG 13)
- If any of you breed the divine thoughts, mind will grasp it and will not eject them because, it is the real nature of mind since it has come from the real Artery. (SDG 32)
- Mere consciousness of God cures many of the evils of the mind and removes difficulties from our path. (BWS 252)
- If a man wants to work out the problems of his life easily, he should give right suggestions to the mind. (SDG 32)
- World peace is closely related with the peace of the individual for which one has to take into account the inner state of one's mind. (SDG 18)

- If man's mind is brought to the state of peace and order, everything in the outside world will get into order in the same colour. (SDG 18)
- The disturbed state of mind is more often due to the tyranny of one's own heart and to a brooding nature.(SS 177)
- Thought when purely Divine, can reach the Source without fail. (SDG 62)
- Mind can be known by mind and Divinity can be known by Divinity. (SDG 151)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- Nature of Mind.

Whatever an enemy might do to an enemy, or a foe to a foe, the ill-directed mind can do to you even worse. Whatever a mother, father or other kinsman might do for you, the well-directed mind can do for you even better.

- Nature of Mind of the Perfect

Profound and tranquil, free from complexity,
Uncompounded luminous clarity,
Beyond the mind of conceptual ideas;
This is the depth of the mind of the buddhas.
In this, there is not a thing to be removed,
Nor anything that needs to be added.
It is merely the immaculate,
Looking naturally at itself.

- A ruffled mind makes a restless pillow. -
Charlotte Bronte

- Mind is like a raft of snakes you cling to on the ocean for fear of drowning and the snakes are biting you. By Kabir
- The mind becomes clear and serene when the qualities of the heart are cultivated: friendliness toward the joyful, compassion toward the suffering, happiness toward the pure, and impartiality toward the impure.

-The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, 1:33

- The mind is an object of perception like the eternal world. The Atman, the real seer, remains unknown.

-Pantanjali

- Don't think about ideas such as bondage and liberation, simply abandon all craving and through wisdom and dispassion bring about the cessation of the mind. Even if the wish "may I be liberated" arises, the mind will come back to life. - Maharamayana
- You'll never plow a field by turning it over in your mind. - Irish Proverb

Meditation

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- We proceed with meditation on the heart thinking of the Divine Light within, and by so doing we gradually begin to rise or to express it better, to dive deep into the inner consciousness. (SDG 59)
- It is at this point(Heart) that the connecting link between the animate and the inanimate is most clearly felt. (BWS 306)
- If we make our heart the target of masterly force we begin to expand inside, with the result that in the long run we find ourselves stretching throughout the Godly empire. (BWS 101)
- Meditation really means that the mind may be accustomed to the centre itself instead of wandering elsewhere. Meditation on heart is prescribed for that purpose. (SDG 49)
- There must be yielding attitude towards the master. (SDG 49)
- Please think only that Godly light within is attracting you. (IPAM 57)
- You should only meditate. You should not struggle with the ideas and thoughts which generally come in during meditation.(SS 136)
- When we meditate, the central power we have remains in force. (BWS 44)
- If we are deep-rooted in meditation, we connect our link with the innermost thing desired. (BWS 100)

- By meditation we make a will in our heart covering thereby the surroundings around the heart region. (BWS 43)
- By meditation we create a temporary lull in our mind and calmness prevails for the time during which we are in touch with the divine force. (BWS 254)
- While meditating, if you secure even a temporary lull, that means you have gone a step further on the path. (SDG 161)
- When you acquire a state of permanency in your meditation, touching the innermost plane, the idea of the Ultimate or God becomes quite near you. (SDG 161)
- Meditation only at a certain fixed hour is not enough, for we are thus in touch with the sacred thought only for a while after which we have no idea of God whatsoever and are for most part of the day away from the path of service and devotion. (BWS 254)
- If we try to retain the effect gained by meditation for the most part of the day, and abide in the same state for as long as we can, we are in a way in constant remembrance of God and our progress is easy and rapid. (SS 307)
- The density of the thought can only be removed if we take to the subtle method. (SDG 62)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- Generally, quietude, calmness, peace, silence and stillness are taken to be identical states of mind. But in reality, this is not so. All these are states of a deepening order of consciousness,

silence being the deepest. In a state of deep silence, there are no thoughts, feelings or mental movements that can disturb or alter the peace of the inner being.

The human mind gets absorbed in the core of silence where it touches the original source of energy, love, purity and bliss of The Being, and discovers the soul. The mind is transmuted into the Mind of Light. This transmutation is the bridge that leads us to our true Self within. There, God becomes a living presence, and silence a conversation of the soul with God, wordless and wonderful.

HE takes men out of time and makes them feel eternity.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

- God is the tangential point between zero and infinity.

- Alfred Jarry

- The person who is willing to say yes to experience is the person who discovers new frontiers.

- John Marks Templeton

- “Reality is merely an illusion, although a very persistent one” --- Albert Einstein (Times Magazine's Man of the 20th Century. American Nobel Prize Laureate for Physics in 1921. 1879-1955)
- Silence is the secret that is not hidden from anyone.

– Sri K. C. Narayana

- Silence is an eloquence where words die.
- Sri K. C. Narayana
- "Silence is God's first language; everything else is a poor translation. In order to hear that language, we must learn to be still and rest in God." — Invitation to Love
- "Meditation - You have the right to remain silent."
- An act of meditation is actually an act of faith--of faith in your spirit, in your own potential. Faith is the basis of meditation. Not of faith in something outside you--a metaphysical buddha, an unattainable ideal, or someone else's words. The faith is in yourself, in your own "buddha-nature." You too can be a buddha, an awakened being that lives and responds in a wise, creative, and compassionate way. -Martine Batchelor, "Meditation for Life"
- Half an hour's meditation each day is essential, except when you are busy. Then a full hour is needed.
- Words are the shell, meditation the kernel. Words are the body of the prayer, and meditation its spirit. - Bahya, Hobot HaLebabot, 1040
- We should always remember that meditation is the cultivation and practice of nonattachment. The Buddha taught only the middle way, and mindfulness is nothing but the middle way. It is neither an intense practice, nor can it be done without effort. It must be done with balance. Properly done, it is neither detached pushing away nor egoistic clinging. Be very careful about sitting down with ideas like, "I am sitting, I am

watching, I am breathing, I am meditating, I am this, that is mine."

-Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, "Mindfulness With Breathing"

- Thought is an event like the weather but the sky is unaffected. The weather can obscure the sky but the sky is no less as a result. – Todd Vickers
- When all the myriad streams that flow in different places, each with its own colour and taste, enter the great ocean, they blend and become just one taste, with one name. In the same way, stupidity and wisdom both become one in the awakened mind. When one first starts along the path, there seems to be a distinction that this is stupidity and that is wisdom. But later, when one penetrates more deeply, one finds there is no difference between stupidity and wisdom. -Visuddhi Magga
- Self-discipline is when your conscience tells you to do something and you do not talk back.
- [BUDDHISM] Actually, emptiness of mind is not even a state of mind, but the original essence of mind which Buddha and the Sixth Patriarch experienced. "Essence of mind," "original mind," "original face," "Buddha nature," "emptiness"--all these words mean the absolute calmness of our mind.

-Shunryu Suzuki, "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind"

- [BUDDHISM] There is an extremely easy way to become Buddha. Refraining from all evil, not clinging to birth and death, working in deep compassion for all sentient beings, respecting those over you and pitying those below you,

without any detesting or desiring, worrying or lamentation—this is what is called Buddha. Do not search beyond it.

- The no-mind state is not the vacancy of idiocy but the most supremely alert intelligence, undistracted by extraneous thought.

-Ramesh Balsekar

- All my days I have been raised among the Sages, and I found nothing better for oneself than silence; not study, but practice is the main thing; and one who talks excessively brings on sin.
- Before you speak, ask yourself, is it kind, is it necessary, is it true, does it improve on the silence?
- There is only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that's your own self.

- Aldous Huxley

- Meditate. Live purely. Be quiet. Do your work with mastery. Like the moon, come out from behind the clouds! Shine.

- Buddha

- The Creator...is revealed to the heart, not to the eye...Thou wilt find thy God within thy bosom, Walking gently in thine heart.

- Judah Halevi, "Selected Poems"

- The continuous and unbroken awareness of the indwelling presence, the inner light of consciousness, is the supreme meditation and devotion. -Maharamayana

- The Buddha meditated for six years, Bodhidharma for nine. The practice of meditation is not a method for attainment of realization—it is enlightenment itself.

-Dogen, "The Practice of Meditation"

- Learning is like a design in water, contemplation is like a design on the side of a wall, meditation is like a design in stone.

-Adept Godrakpa, "Hermit of Go Cliffs"

- SILENCE

When I say silence I do not mean the inflicted silence of an angry lover, nor is it the silence of a punitive parent. Many people fear silence because to them it seems nothing more than a mind full of angst or painful boredom. When I say silence I mean the peace that is unaffected; birthplace of creativity; freedom in the midst of all changing events; the all inclusive and abiding nature that remains constant and is revealed in one moment of no thought when all that you "think" has dissolved including who you "think" you are.

- How to cope with wavering thoughts? Versatile are flying clouds, Yet from the sky they are not apart. Mighty are the ocean's waves, Yet they are not separate from the sea. Heavy and thick are banks of fog, Yet from the air they are not apart. Frantic runs the mind in voidness, Yet from the Void it never separates.

-Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa

- "The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said."

--Peter Drucker

- "Meditate Deeper than a Zen Monk!"
- William James put it, "the intellectual life of man consists almost wholly in his substitution of a conceptual order for the perceptual order in which his experience originally comes."

Purification

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- Complications also arise by the effect of our wrong thinking and practice, which we have to clear off through the process of cleaning. (SDG 98)
- Purity starts from being and impurities are the result of the wrong suggestions and improper utilization of the inner environment.(SDG 31)
- The process of cleaning uses the Original Power of Thought in the form of human will. (IPAM 59)
- Under the system of 'Natural Path' it (inner cleaning) is accomplished by easy mental practices, aided by the power transmitted by the teacher. (BWS 237)
- The external ways adopted for the purpose (attainment of purity) began to cast their effect upon the mind and thus the internal purity too began to develop. (BWS 129)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- If the chimney is full of smoke, how can the light be seen? If the mind is full of dirt, how can the soul shine? -Yogaswami of Jaffna
- Funnily many aspirants seek to fly within their own egg shells. –Sri K. C. Narayana
- Spirituality in dustbin is not even good to hear.
–Sri K. C. Narayana
- Develop a meditation that is like water. Doing this, you will find that the thoughts and

impressions that possess you will flow away. Just as people wash away their body liquids, their sweat and spittle, pus and blood, and yet the water is not troubled or disgusted--so this water meditation will bring you peace. -Majjhima Nikaya

- Where there is great hatred, are the fetters of hell.
Where there is great avarice, are the fetters of the tortured spirits.
Where there is great ignorance, are the fetters of the beasts.
Where there is great lust, are the fetters of man.
Where there is great envy, are the fetters of the demigods.
Where there is great pride, are the fetters of the gods.
These are the six fetters of non-liberation.

- Brandon Peele

- Have you ever won an argument, or gotten your way, yet had the subtle feeling that something was wrong? We are constantly driven by a part of us which wants to always get its way: to win an argument, to look good, or to gain approval and acceptance. This we call success. The irony is, we can only truly succeed when we are able to consciously forego the relentless demands of that part of us.
- Worrying about something that may never happen is like paying interest on money you may never borrow.
- If you do not cut the noose of your karma while living, what hope is there of liberation when you are dead?

- It is a hopeless dream to think that union will come after the soul leaves the body. -Kabir
- The place to improve the world is first in one's own heart and head and hands.
-Robert M. Pirsig
 - To be blind is bad, but worse is to have eyes and not see.
- Helen Keller (submitted)
 - There is no pillow so soft as a clear conscience
 - Never fear shadows. They simply mean there's a light shining somewhere nearby.
- Ruth E. Renkel
 - Once a man has committed a sin once and then a second time...it [appears to him that it] is permitted.
- Babylonian Talmud
 - Worldly desires are like sunbeams in a dark room. They seem solid until you try to grasp one.
- Rebbe Nachman of Breslov
 - Gossip kills three: the speaker, the spoken of, and the listener.
 - On no account brood over your wrongdoing. Rolling in the muck is not the best way of getting clean.
- Aldous Huxley
 - The spiritual weapon of self-purification, intangible as it seems, is the most potent means of revolutionizing one's environment and

loosening the external shackles. It works subtly and invisibly; it is an intense process though it might often seem a weary and long-drawn process. It is the straightest way to liberation, the surest and the quickest, and no effort can be too great for it. What it requires is faith—an unshakable mountain like faith that flinches from nothing.

-Mohandas Gandhi

- Better keep yourself clean and bright; you are the window through which you must see the world.

- George Bernard Shaw

- Bad habits are like a comfortable bed, easy to get into, but hard to get out of.
- When you are completely clear, there is no subjective distortion; when you are completely pure, there is true perception. But even if you are thus through and through, this is still now the transcendental key. When the wind and waves have died out, the ocean of mind is as is; when you get to the bottom of the ocean of mind, for the first time you see the black pearl.

-Tzu-te

- A Brahman named Sangarava bathed every morning and evening in the river so that he could be cleansed from whatever sin he might have committed during the day. To him, the Buddha said, "If bathing could purify one from sins, then all the frogs, turtles, and crocodiles would be free from sin! The real lake is the lake of goodness, with grace as its shore for bathing. Clear and undefiled, it soothes all who immerse

themselves. Plunge into the waters of goodness and learn to swim."

- If you hear a voice within you say 'you cannot paint,' then by all means paint, and that voice will be silenced. - Vincent Van Gogh

Satsangh

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- We should utilize this occasion in getting into the Master and Master alone, which will act as food and tonic for spiritual elevation. (SDG 29)
- The grace of my Master Supreme has enabled us again to assemble here and feel the cozy warmth of the sunshine of His everlasting benigance. (SDG 35)
- When all of my associates gather at one spot, it becomes a temple for me and it is their duty to make their hearts as the temple themselves. (SDG 117)
- We are here again to take stock of our work on the path of the Master Almighty for the benefit of His children of all ages and climes. (SDG 103)
- My (PUJYA SRI RAMCHANDRAJI MAHARAJ) heart remains connected with you all, here and elsewhere, giving impulse in unbroken silence to affect the hearts naturally in due course. (SDG 136)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- Even if for a lifetime
the fool stays with the wise,
he knows nothing of the Dhamma--
as the ladle,
the taste of the soup.
Even if for a moment,
the perceptive person stays with the wise,
he immediately knows the Dhamma--
as the tongue, the taste of the soup.

-Dhammapada, 5,

- As long as the followers of the way hold regular and frequent assemblies, they may be expected to prosper and not decline. As long as they meet in harmony, break up in harmony, and carry on their business in harmony, they may be expected to prosper and not decline.

- Lord Buddha.

- As water changes according to the soil through which it flows, so a man assimilates the character of his associates.

By knowing his thoughts, a man's mind is discovered.

By knowing his associates, his character is revealed.

-Tirukkural 46:452-453

- It is harmful to make a multitude of foes, but it is ten times worse,
To give up the friendship of the worthy.

-Tirukkural 45:450

- Tat sannidhau vairatyagah. (Yog-Sutra, 2.35)
In the vicinity of Yogic influence-unifying influence, integrating influence, coherent and harmonious influence-conflicting tendencies do not arise.
- The collective identity of the 'I' in the we and the we in the I – the anima una in its global dimension -- emerges and needs to be recovered by the congregation.

Commandment 1

“Rise before dawn. Offer your prayer and puja (Worship) at a fixed hour preferably before sunrise, sitting in one and the same pose. Have a separate place and ‘asan’ (seat) for worship. Purity of mind and body be specially adhered to.”

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- Our first and the foremost commandment relates to the proper observance of Sandhya and Upasana. (BWS 130)
- It is a scientific principle upon which the division of the timings for puja and Sandhya is based in accordance with the natural effect of the time. (BWS 122)
- Performing of Sandhya before sunrise is stressed upon for the reason that the external heat and other influences, which have been driven out of the body, may not creep in again by the effect of the sun which would prevent our deriving the best advantage of the time. (BWS 125)
- ‘Awake, O sleepers, it’s the hour of the dawn’. (SDG164)
- It is better to sit in the grey of the morning for meditation. (IPAM 54)
- One must be regular in the abhyas.If interest in meditation is created, half the work is done. (SS 21)

- 'I' consciousness remains far and near, and it disappears also, if we do our abhyas devotedly (SDG 161)
- In fact it(Reality) is all the sphere of Tam and Tam alone. This is the only thing worth achieving for a true yogi. (BWS 122)
- The state of negation which one craves for and which is the real life, abides in it (Tam) and all activities cease before one reaches the point. (BWS 123)
- People have lost sight of the true Reality which is beyond both light and darkness. (BWS 124)
- Satyapad is itself a science for which one may not be well fitted unless he develops the capacity to perceive Nature with his inner eyes. (BWS 124)
- When one resolves to do a thing, the connecting link between the thought and the work becomes intensified, and one begins to draw power from the real source in accordance with the strength of his thought. (BWS 125)
- For picking up the pearls one must oneself dive deep into the ocean. (BWS 125)
- In principle the devotee or abhyasi should present himself before the Master in the same manner as a soldier does at the time of parade. (BWS 128)
- Under our system of spiritual training, the teacher at the very outset weakens the downward tendency of the Abhyasi by the effect of his own

power, so that it may get automatically diverted towards the Divine (BWS 132)

- When his (Man's) downward tendency is checked, the thought of reaching the Origin automatically revives in his heart. (BWS 131)

Inspirational Quote from Sri K. C. Narayana:

- The Dawn is always fresh and young; those who see it everyday however grow old and tired!

Commandment 2

“Begin your puja with a prayer for spiritual elevation with a heart full of love and devotion.”

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- The reason why prayer should be offered with a heart full of love and devotion is that one should create within himself a state of vacuity so that the flow of Divine Grace may be diverted towards them. (BWS 135)
- By prayer, we come nearer to our goal because we come in contact with the Being. (SDG 67)
- In prayer we stand before Him as an humble supplicant presenting to Him our true state and completely resigning ourselves to His will. (BWS 210)
- Constant practice brings a man to a state in which he begins to feel himself in prayer all through. (BWS 135)
- The state of prayer is that of a devotee and it is strengthened by love and devotion. (BWS 136)
- At the time of prayer we adopt supplicant mood and becomes very near to surrender. (SDG 52)
- No particular time is fixed for the prayer. One can do it when he feels inclined to it or else he should try to create a disposition for it when required (BWS 136)
- It is also sheer folly to pray to the Great Master for worldly gains except in most special cases. (BWS 137)

- Prayer remains the most important and unfailing means of success. (IPAM 59)
- When a man creates in himself a strong craving for the Absolute, he is indeed in a state of prayer and it is for everyone to strive for it. (BWS 144)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- While praying, listen to the words very carefully. When your heart is attentive, your entire being enters your prayer without your having to force it.

- Rebbe Nachman of Breslov

- Prayer is not asking for what you think you want, but asking to be changed in ways you can't imagine.
- Learning must be sought; it will not come of itself.
- To ask is not to pray and to pray is not to ask.

–Sri K. C. Narayana

Commandment 3

“Fix up your goal which should be 'Complete Oneness' with God. Rest not till the ideal is achieved.”

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- If you meditate having your real goal before you, you are sure to arrive at the destination. (BWS 97)
- What is the Destination, where we have to reach? It may, preferably, be called insignificance. If you chose to designate it as such, it is an insignificance, of which we know nothing! (SDG 39)
- Realisation is not at all difficult for those who have the real craving for it. (SDG 61)
- One thing which I especially lay stress upon is that the abhyasi must cultivate an intense craving amounting to restless, eagerness or pinching impatience for the realisation of the goal. (SDG 93)
- The burning desire for Realisation brings the goal nearer. (SDG 64)
- It is very essential for everyone to fix his thought, at the very outset, upon the goal which he has to attain so that his thought and will may pave his way upto it. (BWS 145)
- The kingly thing in us is thought which ultimately develops, steering us to our goal. (BWS 26)

- The spiritual path can be discovered only when one keeps the destination ever in view. (SDG 82)
- If we go on pursuing our practice of Sadhana without having the final aim in view, our position will be that of a traveller who travels on without any idea of a destination. (SDG 82)
- Whoever moves one step towards it(Goal), the goal advances ten steps towards that one. (SDG 174)
- A man can be a real man only when his eye is diverted towards his inner self. (SS 39)
- Faith in reality, faith in the right course you have adopted for realization, faith in the worthy master whom you have submitted to, this is the rock upon which you must build your edifice of spirituality if you really aim at success. (BWS 248)
- When restlessness increases and reaches the limit, crosses the limit of strength, then the beginning of real peace starts. (SDG 129)
- It is generally admitted that the goal must be the highest, otherwise progress up to the final limit is doubtful. (BWS 191)
- A real seeker is he who all along with his state of tranquility, feels a restless craving for the realisation of the Ultimate. (BWS 330)
- Proceed towards Unknown. Love Him who loves all. Destination is not far off. Remembrance is the instrument. (SDG 131)
- Our intention to reach the goal promoted our efforts, and since the Ideal was the noblest, the

interest for it went on increasing till it developed into a strong craving. (BWS 147)

- Longing for Reality brings a person to the right path. It gives a new life to the sleeping condition of a man and prepares him for the highest approach reserved for human beings. (SDG 153)
- If you really aspire, in good faith, for the attainment of the Absolute, all that you are to do is to turn your attention that way with full sincerity of heart, linking your-self closely with One-ultimate Reality. (SDG 139)
- The final point of approach is where every kind of force, power, activity or even stimulus disappears and a man enters a state of complete negation; Nothingness or Zero. (BWS 192)
- If somehow one is relieved of the idea of body or the soul even, he gets closest to that, one craves for. (SDG 12)
- Anything short of liberation cannot be taken as the goal of life although there remains still a lot beyond it. (BWS 189)
- When we thus get awakened to the sense of duty and the idea of God becomes prominent in our hearts, we begin to treat realization as the primary object of life. (BWS 252)
- We should attempt the finite for the Infinite. (SDG 58)
- To reach the Infinite Absolute is one of the primary duties of man. (BWS 146)
- When one has got a mind and a strong sincere desire to reach the state of Realisation, he will

surely get the means to take him to the state of Realisation. (SDG 64)

- One of the essential things necessary for the achievement of negation is the growth of intense craving amounting to restless impatience, combined with sincere love and devotion. (SS 168)
- For making one-self deserving one must have his goal and his present position clearly in his view. (SDG 146)
- Divine help does come, no doubt, but only when the Supreme is convinced of devotee's earnestness of purpose. (BWS 146)
- The only way to free ourselves from the entanglements is to divert our attention from them and fix our eyes on the very Real thing. (BWS 198)
- There cannot be any breakdown in spirituality, if faith and desire for the Ultimate is there. (SDG 163)
- All of us are proceeding towards Divinity or the goal of life - some consciously and some unconsciously. (SDG 103)
- Silence is a part of a few grains of Spirituality and not the Reality itself. (SDG 67)
- We know that God is completely devoid of grossness, so the realisation of God must mean the attainment of a state of similar subtleness to the last possible degree. (SDG 91)

- If somehow or other they make a firm determination to reach the Reality, the power of Master shall affect them. (BWS 40)
- The natural yearning of soul is to be free from bondage. If there is one who does not like to free himself from the entanglements there is no solution for him. (BWS 190)
- A powerful will made at the very first step and maintained all through, shall never fail to achieve complete success. (BWS 206)
- Having God is the real subject of spirituality. (SDG 146)
- For realising Him we have ourselves to become god-like. (SDG 72)
- Thus the thing goes on and the time comes when grossness bids farewell and subtleness also loses its charm. (SDG 144)
- The goal of life is easily reached if we are devoted to it, having idea of our Master all the way through. (SDG 160)
- We must march on the path of realization like a brave soldier with full faith and confidence, not minding the difficulties or reverses. (BWS 209)
- It is only realization in the right sense that makes a true yogi or saint. (BWS 219)
- A warrior is never nervous on the field, because he has some aim before him. (SDG 38)
- There is every sense in living — not only in living but achieving the highest. The craving of the soul

can be satisfied best, while one is living and existing. (SDG 163)

- It(Life) is a state of being which should remain permanently, as long as we live, thoroughly in contact with the Being, smelling at each step the fragrance of the Being. (SDG 36)
- Perfect peace is one of its high stages, although the real thing is still onwards, when even the consciousness of peace fails. (BWS 222)
- As we develop in spirituality, the nature of peace also changes and, in the end, non-peace peace, is the result. (SDG 116)
- We can only know the unknown when we become unknown ourselves. (SDG 69)
- One of the essentials in the making of a man engaged in spiritual pursuit is moderation. (BWS 209)
- The finest Divine gift, which is patrimony of the entire progeny of mankind, stands reserved just for the human being, residing in the state of moderation in all respects. (SDG 174)
- Moderation really means that we have entered the sphere where our restless tendencies have subsided to a great extent. (SDG 73)
- Realization is not possible unless moderation and balance are restored. (BWS 209)
- To cultivate moderation we have to pay special attention to external ways of life too. (BWS 210)
- With the overemphasis on “Self” morality decays. (SDG 53)

- The way of life should be pregnant with high morals. (SDG 65)
- The background of spirituality is the “Moral Courage” which rises when one is moral. (SDG 53)
- What is morality in the True Sense? It is that all the faculties may come in harmony for proper use. (SDG 53)
- When you have played your part fully well, the Ultimate cannot fall short in playing His part. (SDG 29)
- There must be one and only one goal so that one may not form different channels for the different goals. (SDG 143)
- While referring to this path to the Ultimate, saints have said ‘beyond and beyond’. (SDG 161)
- Let us get so deeply involved in the thought of “This”, that no thought arises at all of “That”. (SDG 130)
- The real state of enlightenment comes when we get into full consciousness of the condition of enlivenment and after imbibing its effect, secure merging in it. (BWS 307)
- The most important factor in realization is self-confidence in our own capacity and power to achieve success. (BWS 208)
- A little inclination towards the attainment of the Reality, will start weaving the future. (SDG 32)

- The remembrance of everything should merge into the remembrance of One - the Ultimate. (BWS 137)
- Remembrance should be in a way that we feel the thought of remembrance oozing out from the objects everywhere. (SDG 29)
- If a grain of Reality be gained; it so invaluable that the entire riches of the world can not be its ransom. (SDG 179)
- No doubt the world will be paradise but for that we have to work very hard. (SDG 159)
- Once Divinity dawns, the negative attitude to life goes far away. (SDG 162)
- Physical or mental troubles do not tell upon spirituality. (SDG 163)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- Goal is a dream with a dead line.
- Sri K.C.Narayana
- A poor devotee points to the sky and says, "God is up there." An average devotee says, "God dwells in the heart as the Inner Master." The best devotee says, "God alone is and everything I perceive is a form of God."
- Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa
- Let Hari teach you,
Or Brahman, born of the lotus,
Or Shiva Himself!
Unless you forget everything,
You will never live in your heart.
-Ashtavakra Gita 16:

- There's no fire like passion,
no seizure like anger,
no snare like delusion,
no river like craving.
-Dhammapada, 18,
- Some people succeed because they are
destined to, but most people succeed because
they are determined to.
- Anonymous
- Marriage with the Divine has its own share of
sorrow. The fun of it is that we seek God in
darkness and He seeks us in clear light. Who is
wise?
- K. C. Narayana
- ADVAITA - Non-duality is a general term that
covers several -mostly eastern- schools of
thought, which point to the single source before
and beyond all temporal experiences and
apparent diversity. While reading texts from non-
dual systems such as Zen, Advaita, Taoism, or
Dzogchen, you will find the affirmation that Self-
realization has no promise other than to release
you from your belief in a separate self or ego.
That's it. The dropping away of the illusion simply
reveals this as it is, often summed up in the
phrase "Before enlightenment chop wood and
carry water. After enlightenment, chop wood and
carry water.
- Willpower is "contained, sustained and
reasoning" enthusiasm.
- Always aim for achievement, and forget about
success.
- Helen Hayes.

- Make every effort to increase your longing for God. Of course, this alone is not enough; it must be realized in action. But even if you are not worthy of achieving your spiritual goals, the yearning is still very precious and deserves reward.

- Rebbe Nachman of Breslov

- It is funny thing about life if you refuse to accept anything but the best, you very often get it.

- Somerset maugham.

- Be like a postage stamp. Stick to one thing until you get there.

- Josh Billings

- The ideal of man is to be a revelation himself, clearly to recognize himself as a manifestation of God.

- Baal Shem Tov

- Life can be pulled by goals just as surely as it can be pushed by drives.

- [Real Man] Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things do not matter at all, because once you are Real you can not be ugly, except to people who do not understand.

- Margery Williams, "The Velveteen Rabbit"

- [Real Man] Adversity introduces a man to himself.

- "Success is not a harbor but a voyage with its own perils to the spirit. The game of life is to

come up a winner, to be a success, or to achieve what we set out to do." - Richard Nixon (1913-1994)

- "At best a gold, at worst a gold." -- Ryoko Tamura (Yawara-chan) when asked about her goal for the 2000 Sydney Olympics

Commandment 4

“Be plain and simple to be identical with Nature.”

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- One should lead a simple and pious life absorbed in constant Divine Consciousness, discharging properly at the same time all his worldly responsibilities and duties. (SS 36)
- Nature too helps us in the process by creating a field for bhog in order to remove the impressions of our thoughts and actions from the causal body. (BWS 201)
- When we were born into this world for the first time we were pure, because the source from which we have descended or come down is purity. (SDG 23)
- To acquire naturalness should be the main care of the abhyasi. (SDG 51)
- As a matter of fact Reality, which one aspires for, is so simple that its very simplicity has become a veil to it. (SDG 86)
- One must go on reducing the activities, shaking off all superfluities that have entered into his being, for the purpose of shattering his individual network. (BWS 153)
- He (abhyasi) must also cultivate habits which will be conducive to his efforts of shattering the network. (BWS152)
- As you think, so you become. (SDG 62)

- We are searching for the potentiality which creates consciousness, and if that too is gone then we find ourselves on the verge of true Reality, pure and simple. (BWS 72)
- Reality dawns upon him alone who goes back along with Nature making himself subtler and subtler. (SDG 28)
- It (Knot 2) is known as the seat of atman. Cleanliness and simplicity are the characteristic features of this state. A feeling of moderation is also experienced to a certain extent. (BWS 311)
- We are a part of the cycle of this existence or in plain words, we are a part of Nature. We should abide by Nature and not try to beat the Nature. (SDG 153)
- If all the things are changed to co-operate with the Nature, balance develops and that is what we want. (SDG 153)
- It is very easy to talk about the creation but as to what part we have to play in it remains always silent. (SDG 150)
- We should always take the broader view of things and widen it so that it may be able to cross its own boundary. (SDG 149)
- When you clear off the matter and exhaust the power produced by you, I mean your self-created power, you enter the state just as it was in the beginning. (BWS 57)
- The retracing from it (intricacies) can now be effected only by the process of casting away all that he had taken in previously, and by removing

perversion of thought by fixing it firmly in the right direction. (BWS 152)

- The grace or effect of higher centres remains far apart due to the grossness and complexities we have made. (SDG 58)
- If we drag ourselves towards the world, things of fear begin to display their character and when we are towards the Divinity, Divinity plays in Divinity itself. (SDG 68)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- There is no pillow so soft as a clear conscience
- Live simply so that others may simply live. - M.K.Gandhi
- Too many people miss the silver lining because they're expecting gold. - Maurice Setter
- Fame is a vapor, popularity an accident, riches take wing, and only character endures. - Horace Greeley
- Character is doing the right thing when nobody's looking
- [Simplicity] Everything should be made as simple as possible--but not simpler. - Albert Einstein
- Use what talent you possess: the woods would be very silent if no birds sang except those that sang best. -Henry Van Dyke

Commandment 5

“Be truthful. Take miseries as Divine Blessings for your own good and be thankful.”

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- The mystery of the problem will be clear if we look into the origin of miseries. (BWS 197)
- Constant brooding over our own afflictions increases our worries. (SS 422)
- Total absence of sufferings and miseries in life is, however, impossible and unnatural. (BWS 198)
- One who is born in this world is sure to taste miseries. (SS 435)
- To put up coolly with miseries and troubles contributes much to our betterment; hence they are valuable assets to our progress. (BWS 199)
- We are benefited by the disease also which takes along with it the vicious ‘Samskaras’. All is the play of His love. (SDG 121)
- Really, that(Worry) is a great Justice and favour for humanity from divinity. (SDG 37)
- Impressions remain on our causal body so long as they are not wiped off through the process of ‘Bhog’. (BWS 196)
- We cultivate a habit of truthfulness so that our actions and dealings may be in consonance with the state 'It is as it is'. (BWS 155)
- When impure ‘Samskaras’ come into 'Bhog', the eyes of the creator are towards us. (SDG 121)

- Really speaking, the difficulties are the operations of Nature for our good. (SDG 65)
- The abhyasi should always look to the bright side of the picture and should not, at any rate, submit himself to the feeling of despondency which is a great obstacle in the path. (SS 274)
- Suffering is the root and results are flowers which every associate should strive hard to have. (SDG 65)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants, and murderers, and for a time they can seem invincible, but in the end they always fall, always. -Mahatma Gandhi
- What we call failure is not the falling down, but the staying down
- To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant, to enact gratitude is generous and noble, but to live gratitude is to touch Heaven. -Johannes A. Gaertner
- Adversities are good friends; they come together.
–Sri K. C. Narayana
- Five stages of grief; denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.
– Sri K. C. Narayana
- If you would swim on the bosom of the ocean of Truth, you must reduce yourself to a zero.
-Mahatma Gandhi

- Beyond the safety of the intellect, beyond the judgment of the labels we apply and the roles we play, beyond the limiting beliefs that create our reality, is truth, in the whisper of the wind, in the song of the birds, in the dawn of a new day, forever in our own hearts. When the thought in our minds is the song in our heart, we will see what we believe."

-Anonymous.

- "Belief in truth begins with doubting all that has hitherto been believed to be true."

--- Friedrich Nietzsche

- "Three things cannot be long hidden: the sun, the moon, and the truth."

--- Buddha.

- Form is suffering. The cause and condition for the arising of form is also suffering. As form has originated from what is suffering, how could it be happiness?

- It is said that there are only two tragedies in life: not getting what one wants, and getting it.

-Bhanta Henepola Gunaratana,

- A king asked a sage to explain the Truth. In response the sage asked the king how he would convey the taste of a mango to someone who had never eaten anything sweet. No matter how hard the king tried, he could not adequately describe the flavor of the fruit, and, in frustration, he demanded of the sage "Tell me then, how would you describe it?" The sage picked up a

mango and handed it to the king saying "This is very sweet. Try eating it!"

-Hindu Teaching Story.

- Man cannot remake himself without suffering, for he is both the marble and the sculptor.

-Alexis Carrel

- Love truth, but pardon error.
(Pardon/Forgiveness)

-Voltaire

- Truth does not become more true by virtue of the fact that the entire world agrees with it, nor less so even if the whole world disagrees with it.

- Maimonides

- One should not promise a child something, and then not give it to him, because as a result, the child will learn to lie.

- Babylonian Talmud

- Teach your tongue to say, "I do not know," lest you be led to lie.

- Babylonian Talmud, "Berakhot 4a"

- Problems are only opportunities in work clothes.

- Henry J. Kaiser

- Human fallibility being what it is, victory and truth do not always go together. Therefore, if you have to always win, you can't always be true.

- Rebbe Nachman

- "The opposite of a correct statement is a false statement. But the opposite of a profound truth may well be another profound truth."

- Niels Bohr

- Anne Besant: I asked no other epitaph on my tomb but that 'she tried to follow truth'."
- Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear.

- Ambrose Redmoon

- It is better to be a lion for a day than a sheep all your life
- He who loses wealth loses much; he who loses a friend loses more; but he who loses his courage loses all.

-Miguel de Cervantes

- Courage is fear that has said its prayers.

- Karl Barth

- A head of gray hairs
Doesn't mean one's an elder.
Advanced in years,
One's called an old fool.
But one in whom there is
Truth, restraint,
Rectitude, gentleness,
Self-control--
He's called an elder,
His impurities disgorged,
Enlightened.

-Dhammapada, 19

Commandment 6

“Know all people as thy brethren and treat them as such.”

Sayings of Puiya Babuji Maharaj:

- We are all brethren connected intellectually, morally and spiritually - the main goal of human life. (SDG 132)
- We are united in the common cause keeping towards proper order the good of man and humanity. (SDG 165)
- One has to remove only the brokenness and he will feel the love flowing equally to one and all, and it becomes universal. (SDG 125)
- Only remove the hatred, I say, and universal love is there. (SDG 122)
- It was all really the effect of our own thoughts and actions that converted brothers and friends into strangers. (BWS 157)
- The development of the feeling of universal brotherhood means the breaking up of the individual network that separated one from the other, and the closer adherence to the tie of fraternity. (BWS 158)
- Life in family is a life worth having, because in it we learn how to love others. (SDG 37)
- God has created the world so that every flower may grow in its right standard. (SDG 124)

- We should have good heart for all human beings. Then the power will run to them automatically. (SDG 107)
- This world is in fact a reflection of the other world(Astral world). (BWS 158)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- We ask ourselves, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?" Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God.
- Nelson Mandela
- We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools.
- Martin Luther King
- See, feel, envision, and imagine every man, women and child recovering and being completely healed. Together we can bring light to the darkness. This is one of the profound prayers we can offer.
- The greatest good you can do for another is not just share your riches, but to reveal to him his own.
- Benjamin Disraeli
- When one teaches, two learn. - Robert Half (the teacher and the taught)

Commandment 7

“Be not revengeful for the wrongs done by the others. Take them with gratitude as heavenly gifts.”

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- The real cause of anger is usually one's own refractory temperament. (SS 518)
- Take everything as coming from the Lord, so that the feelings of resentment may not arise. (BWS 161)
- He (Rev.Lalaji Maharaj) used to say, “Our home is the training ground of patience and endurance. “ (BWS 199)
- The greatest obstruction on the path of spirituality is offered by our feelings of partiality and prejudice, which may be roughly assumed as a type of ahamkara. (SS 154)
- Prejudice is the greatest evil, rather the deadliest poison to spiritual life. (BWS 177)
- The external help comes in the form of suffering caused by the wrongs done by others, against which the people generally poison their thought on account of their own ignorance. (BWS 161)
- When we do something by applying our head and heart we form impressions (BWS 160)
- We should never act in such a way that anyone can lift a finger against us. (SDG 128)
- Another external thing necessary for the beginner is that he should practice restraint in

- thought, word and deed so as not to injure the feelings and prick the hearts of others. (BWS 99)
- Thoughts have life and they also work on the lives of others. (SDG 25)
 - We blow our own trumpet in our own thoughts, and lose a lot in the process. (SDG 40)
 - By the effect of our vicious thoughts and actions we spoil our sense of discrimination and right cognition. (BWS 40)
 - When we remain in contact with ideas and thoughts of different kinds, they leave impressions upon our emotional feelings and senses.(BWS 39)
 - The best way to get rid of them(thoughts) is to be unmindful towards them and treat them as you treat uninvited guests. (SDG 68)
 - Our present degenerated state is the reaction of thoughts, and by the help of thoughts alone will we be able to evolve our-selves. (SDG 143)
 - Our actions and thoughts count much in our wrong making. (BWS 39)
 - When a man goes on with his usual work, of whatever nature it might be, in the sense of duty having no weight or impression of it upon his heart, he spoils neither himself nor the cosmos. (SS 127)
 - I would therefore prefer to induce people to forget themselves instead of knowing themselves. (SDG 101)
 - When we are really quite unconscious of the very presence of peace, we are in true sense free

from the impression or the weight of the feeling.
(BWS 222)

- To him who might be eager to have experience of that Infinite plane, I may say that he must step into it after brushing aside all the effects of feelings. (SDG 80)
- Bhog does not only mean undergoing the effect of our past actions but it really means passing through the process of unfolding the intricacies of the point which we have already arrived at. (BWS 214)
- Our belongings are a pile of Samskaras (impressions) with their resultant effects in the form of complexities and the diverse coverings, which we have gathered round the soul and which are the results of our thoughts and actions. (BWS 196)
- Anything that comes to us for our ultimate good, may it be from any medium, fills our heart with delight and promotes in us a sense of gratitude. (BWS 161)
- The effect of the activities of the lower consciousness settles down upon the subconscious mind forming fate. (SDG 100)
- Truly speaking, we ourselves are the makers of fate. (BWS 160)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- Removing the incurable cancer called hatred Reveals one's undying, undiminishing radiance. The destruction of hatred, that sorrow of sorrows, Yields to man the joy of joys.

-Tirukkural 86: 853-

- From evil springs forth more evil. Therefore, evil is to be feared even more than fire.
To commit no wrong, even against one's enemies,
Is said to be supreme wisdom.
-Tirukkural 21:202-203
- To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant, to enact gratitude is generous and noble, but to live gratitude is to touch Heaven.
- Johannes A. Gaertner
- Am I not destroying my enemies when I make friends of them?
- Abraham Lincoln.
- It is no longer good enough to cry peace; we must act peace, live peace, and live in peace.
- Shenandoah proverb
- Silent gratitude isn't much good to anyone.
- Gladys Browyn Stern
- An attitude of gratitude creates blessings.
- Sir John Templeton
- When a person doesn't have gratitude, something is missing in his or her humanity. A person can almost be defined by his or her attitude toward gratitude.
- Elie Wiesel
- To be wronged is nothing unless you continue to remember it.
- Confucius

- The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.

- Mohandas Gandhi

- If any man was wronged by another and he neither rebukes, nor hates, nor bears a grudge against him, but forgives him with his whole heart, this is a saintly virtue...
- This too shall pass away.
- Remember the virtues you lack and the faults you have; forget the good you did and the wrong you received.

- Orhot Tzaddikim

- It is the lot of man to suffer, it is also his fortune to forget.

- Disraeli, "Vivian Grey"

- Just as we love ourselves despite the faults we know we have, so should we love our neighbors despite the faults we see in them.

- Israel Baal Shem Tov

- Aid an enemy before you aid a friend, to subdue hatred.
- Always forgive your enemies; nothing annoys them so much.

- Oscar Wilde

- [BUDDHISM] There is no evil like hatred. And no fortitude like patience.

-Santideva, "Bodhicaryavatara"

Commandment 8

“Be happy to eat in constant divine thought whatever you get, with due regard to honest and pious earnings.”

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- Happiest man is he, who is happy under all circumstances, and that is the part of a saint. (SDG 38)
- It is a hidden dictum of Nature that every soul must live a happy and restful life. (SDG 37)
- A happy disposition is a state which percolates its effect upon the lower layers and purifies them. (BWS 162)
- While taking food we fix our thought upon the Ultimate which we have finally to attain, in order to take in its effect too, and increase our purity all the more (BWS 163)
- Our rules provide for taking food in the remembrance of God. (BWS 163)
- The thing got from Nature is very pure because its basis is purity. The thing earned by man can also remain in a pure state when that is got through pure and pious means. (BWS 164)
- If it(Food)is taken meditating all the while on God it will cure all kinds of spiritual diseases and remove things which hinder our progress. (BWS 97)

- The power of Prana being all pervasive, nothing is free from its influence. It is inside the food as well as outside it. (BWS 163)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has.
- Tirukkural.
- Happiness grows at our own firesides, and is not to be picked in strangers' gardens.
- Douglas Jerrould
- Happiness is not a state to arrive at, but a manner of traveling.
- Margaret Lee Runbeck
- The only way on earth to multiply happiness is to divide it.
-Paul Scherer
- Who is rich? One who is happy with what he has.
- Happiness is a thing to be practiced, like the violin.
- John Lubbock
- Happiness makes up in height for what it lacks in length. - Robert Frost
- Always remember: Joy is not merely incidental to your spiritual quest. It is vital.
- Rebbe Nachman of Breslov
- Happy is he who controls his inclination.
- Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful.
- Albert Schweitzer

- Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.

- Anonymous

- [Realized person] If you observe a really happy man you will find him building a boat, writing a symphony, educating his son, growing double dahlias in his garden. He will not be searching for happiness as if it were a collar button that has rolled under the radiator.
- When the perfect wisdom is first seen, a new perception comes into being that does not depend on any structure. The great quest of the seeker now blossoms as various vast and mysterious doors swing open at the mere touch of the new perception.

There is the door that opens to a vista of the essenceless essence, that which is the real nature of the manifested world. There is the door of liberation from a merely partial perception or muddled perspective of this real nature. And there is the door that opens directly into the authentic realization of this true nature.

There is the wonderful door that opens into an intensity of sights and sounds, colour and beauty. And there is the door of balance and ease through which one looks in awe at all the limitless structures of the world as one looks at the star-studded night sky. And there is the door to the exquisite happiness that would never want to own any worldly treasures or to possess even that same happiness. Finally, there is the door of total awakening itself.

-Prajnaparamita

Commandment 9

“Mould your living so as to rouse a feeling of love and piety in others.”

Sayings of Puiya Babuji Maharaj:

- We get power from our thought. It happens only when we create perfect harmony between things of our making and those of the Divine. (BWS 165)
- Somehow if we become subtle as He(God) is, it means union. (SDG 144)
- Nature manifests herself in different colours, each object receiving its due share according to its capacity and worth. (BWS 166)
- We should effect such a making of ourselves as may help us to become the cynosure of His eyes. (BWS 165)
- Our dealings must be moulded , with due regard to proper needs and fair right of everyone, and bring them in close conformity with those of Nature. (BWS 166)
- When we want to humour a baby we pose innocence like him; (SDG 72)
- When we inwardly develop, in and out become the same. In this way, purity begins to reign all over. Thus, we help Nature also. (SDG 106)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- Never miss a chance to keep your mouth shut.

- Learn as if you were going to live forever. Live as if you were going to die tomorrow.

- Mahatma Gandhi

- The love of one's country is a splendid thing. But why should love stop at the border?

- Annon

- WHAT is called sympathy, kindness, mercy, goodness, pity, compassion, gentleness, humanity, appreciation, gratefulness, service, -- in reality it is love.'

- Pir Inayat Khan

- For a spiritual practitioner, one's enemies play a crucial role. As I see it, compassion is the essence of a spiritual life. And in order for you to become successful in practicing love and compassion, the practice of patience and tolerance is indispensable. There is no fortitude similar to patience, just as there is no affliction worse than hatred.

-His Holiness the Dalai Lama

- If a man is unkind and speaks cruelly, his vast wealth will not last long before perishing. Harsh language and overly severe punishment, like a keen file, grind down a king's conquering powers.

- A king's wealth wanes when, without thoughtful involvement, he lets ministers work, then furiously faults their efforts.

-Tirukkural 57: 566-568

- Among the wealthy, compassionate men claim the richest wealth,
For material wealth is possessed by even contemptible men.
Find and follow the good path and be ruled by compassion.
For if the various ways are examined, compassion will prove the means to liberation.

-Tirukkural 25: 241-242

- Love, modesty, propriety, kindly look, and truthfulness--
These are the five pillars on which perfect goodness rests.

-Tirukkural 99: 981-83

- Think like a man of action, act like a man of thought.

- Henri Bergson

- Learn perfectly all that you learn, and
Thereafter keep your conduct worthy of that learning.

- Epictetus

- Conditions are never just right. People who delay action until all factors are favorable are the kind who do nothing.

- William Feather

- Expecting the world to treat you fairly because you are a good person is like expecting the bull not to charge you because you are a vegetarian.
- The best security for old age: respect your children.

- Sholem Asch

- A man is what he is, not what he used to be.
- Yiddish proverb
- He who possesses both learning and piety is like an artist with his tools ready to hand.
- Johanan b. Zakkai
- Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves.
- Carl Jung
- Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.
- George Bernard Shaw
- To be loved, be lovable.
- Ovid
- The Bible tells us to love our neighbors, and also to love our enemies; probably because they are generally the same people.
- G.K. Chesterton
- Love blinds us to faults, hatred to virtues.
- Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got a hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.
- George Bernard Shaw
- The divine test of a man's worth is not his theology but his life.
- To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly

- Henri Bergson

- The man who regards life...as meaningless is not merely unfortunate but almost disqualified for life.

- Einstein, "The World As I See It"

- Take time to work - it is the price of success
Take time to think - it is the source of power
Take time to play - it is the secret of perpetual youth
Take time to read - it is the fountain of wisdom
Take time to be friendly - it is the road to happiness
Take time to love and be loved - it is the nourishment of the soul
Take time to share - it is too short a life to be selfish
Take time to laugh - it is the music of the heart
Take time to dream - it is hitching your wagon to a star

- [anonymous]

- Nothing is lost, nothing is created, everything is transformed. - Antoine-Laurent de Lavoisier
- When family life possesses love and virtue, That is both its essence and fruition. Among those who strive for liberation, the foremost are they Who live the blessed state of family life as it should be lived.

-Tirukkural 5: 45, 47

- In dreams and in love there are no impossibilities.

- Janos Arany

- "Reprove thy friend privately; commend him publicly."
--Solon (638 BC - 559 BC)

Commandment 10

“At bed time, feeling the presence of God, repent for the wrongs committed. Beg forgiveness in a supplicant mood, resolving not to allow repetition of the same.”

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- The prayer must be offered in such a way as if some most miserable man is laying down his miseries with a deeply afflicted heart before the Supreme Master, imploring His mercy and grace, with tearful eyes. (SS 141)
- We must snatch a few minutes from our hours of rest (preferably at bed-time) and pray to God with a sincere heart for His guidance and support on the path of duty. (BWS 252)
- When one has accepted Him as the Master he can lay before Him every wrong committed unknowingly by him, or anything that might be against the principle, in the capacity of one feeling guilty. (BWS 167)
- The best method for that (shortening the distance between oneself and the Master) would be to maintain in our thought a constant feeling of His presence. (BWS 169)
- We acquire the state of highest purity by establishing the relationship of devotion.(BWS 168)

- The feeling of humility, which may as well be expressed as a state of supplicancy, covers within it the condition of innocence. (BWS 169)
- Meekness refers to that feeling of mind in which, on being rebuked by others, one feels his own self to be at fault, and for which he has to yield to what is meted out to him. (SS 420)
- Repentance is nothing but a jerk to the thought-waves which creates to a certain extent a state of vacuum within him. (BWS 168)
- Human perfection lies in realising the Master as Master in true sense, and oneself as His slave devoted entirely to His service. (BWS 167)
- When you begin to embrace the Reality, it echoes towards you also. (SDG 149)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- Penance is that goodness which refrains from killing.
Perfection is that goodness which refuses to tell others' faults.
Humility is the strength of the strong and the weapon
With which the wise conquer their foes.
-Tirukkural 99:984-985
- Humility, like darkness, reveals the heavenly lights.
- Henry David Thoreau

- While praying, listen to the words very carefully. When your heart is attentive, your entire being enters your prayer without your having to force it.
- Rebbe Nachman of Breslov
- How is one proved to be a true penitent? Said Rabbi Judah: If the opportunity to commit the same sin presents itself on two occasions, and he does not yield to it.
- Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 86b
- Keep in mind that the essence of your prayers is the faith you have in them that they will be answered.
- Rabbe Nachman of Breslov
- Humility does not mean you think less of yourself. It means you think of yourself less.
- Ken Blanchard
- Repentance: a fierce battle with the heart.
- Orhot Tzaddikim,
- The most difficult thing I have ever had to do is to follow the guidance I prayed for.
- Albert Schweitzer
- Repentance means that the sinner forsake his sins, cast them out of his mind, and resolve in his heart to sin no more.

U - Level Consciousness

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- The laws of life are five - Nonviolence, Truthfulness, Integrity, Chastity, Nonattachment. These laws are universal. Unaffected by time, place, birth, or circumstance, together they constitute the "Great Law of Life."

-The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, 2:30-31

- The Rules for Being Human

When you were born, you didn't come with an owner's manual; these guidelines make life work better.

1. You will receive a body. You may like it or hate it, but it's the only thing you are sure to keep for the rest of your life.

2. You will learn lessons. You are enrolled in a full-time informal school called "Life on Planet Earth". Every person or incident is the Universal Teacher.

3. There are no mistakes, only lessons. Growth is a process of experimentation. "Failures" are as much a part of the process as "success."

4. A lesson is repeated until learned. It is presented to you in various forms until you learn it: then you can go on to the next lesson.

5. If you don't learn easy lessons, they get harder. External problems are a precise reflection

of your internal state. When you clear inner obstructions, your outside world changes. Pain is how the universe gets your attention.

6. You will know you've learned a lesson when your actions change. Wisdom is practice. A little of something is better than a lot of nothing.

7. "There" is no better than "here". When your "there" becomes a "here" you will simply obtain another "there" that again looks better than "here."

8. Others are only mirrors of you. You cannot love or hate something about another unless it reflects something you love or hate in yourself.

9. Your life is up to you. Life provides the canvas; you do the painting. Take charge of your life, or someone else will.

10. You always get what you want. Your subconscious rightfully determines what energies, experiences, and people you attract; therefore, the only foolproof way to know what you want is to see what you have. There are no victims, only students.

11. There is no right or wrong, but there are consequences. Moralizing doesn't help. Judgments only hold the patterns in place. Just do your best.

12. Your answers lie inside you. Children need guidance from others; as we mature, we trust our hearts, where the Laws of Spirit are written. You know more than you have heard or read or been told. All you need to do is to look, listen, and trust.

13. You will forget all this.

14. You can remember any time you wish.

- The virtue of angels is that they cannot deteriorate; their flaw is that they cannot improve. Humanity's flaw is that we can deteriorate; but our virtue is that we can improve.

- Hasidic saying

- To be content with little is hard; to be content with much is impossible.

- Marie Ebner-Eschenbach

Viveka and Vairagya

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- The feeling of Vairagya in the real sense and with the lasting results can only be developed after thorough cleaning and due moderation. (BWS 270)
- The knowledge of the Divine is a science. (SDG 84)
- For every grain of wisdom the knowledge required must be at least ten times greater. (SDG 96)
- Attachment with God results in detachment from the world, and that is true vairagya. (SS 36)
- We are failing in our sacred duty if we do not exert ourselves for the discharge of our responsibilities pertaining either to this or to the next world. (BWS 264)
- The real form of Viveka is that when a man begins to realize his own defects and shortcomings and the bottom of his heart feels repentant for them. (BWS 273)
- It (Vairagya) is simply an inner feeling which turns our heart away from all that is superfluous for our normal living. (BWS 33)
- I do not agree with those who hold the view that the only means of cultivating non-attachment is to get away from home and family and retire to a solitary corner discarding all worldly ties. (BWS 200)

- Renunciation truly means non-attachment with worldly objects and not the non-possession of things. (BWS 200)
- 'We are and we are not' as also 'we are not and we are' (SDG - 156)
- It is all absorbing attachment (bondage) to Reality alone, which liberates one from every other bondage. (SDG 105)
- We should love our parents and everybody in the family without being soiled by attachment. (SDG 125)
- A few are so born who confuse dhal for boiled rice and take great pleasure in this confusion. (SDG 180)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- When a lute is played, there is no previous store of playing that it comes from. When the music stops, it does not go anywhere else. It came into existence by way of the structure of the lute and the playing of the performer. When the playing ceases, the music goes out of existence.

In the same way all the components of being, both material and nonmaterial, come into existence, play their part, and pass away.

That which we call a person is the bringing together of components and their actions with each other. It is impossible to find a permanent self there. And yet there is a paradox. For there is a path to follow and there is walking to be done, and yet there is no walker. There are actions but there is no actor. The air moves but

there is no wind. The idea of a specific self is a mistake. Existence is clarity and emptiness.

-Visuddhi Magga

- We should surrender our intention to selfishly seek merit and recognition for our merit, and instead simply plant merit and cultivate wisdom.
- Inwardly be free of all hopes and desires, but outwardly do what needs to be done. Without hopes in your heart, live as if you were full of hopes. Live with your heart now cool and now warm, just like everyone else. Inwardly give up the idea "I am the doer," yet outwardly engage in all activities. This is how to live in the world, completely free from the least trace of ego.

-Maha Ramayana

- Empty and calm and devoid of self
Is the nature of all things.
No individual being
In reality exists.
There is no end or beginning,
Nor any middle course.
All is an illusion,
As in a vision or a dream.
All beings in the world
Are beyond the realm of words.
Their ultimate nature, pure and true,
Is like the infinity of space.

-Prajnaparamita

- Domestic life is rightly called virtue. The monastic path, rightly lived beyond blame, is likewise good.

He who rightly pursues the householder's life here on Earth will be rightfully placed among the Gods there in Heaven.

-Tirukkural 5:49-50

- Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you would have preferred to talk.

-Doug Larson

- The king said: 'Venerable Sir, where does wisdom dwell?'
'Nowhere, O king.'
'Then, Sir, there is no such thing as wisdom.'
'Where does the wind dwell, O king?'
'Not anywhere, Sir.'
'So there is no such thing as wind.'
'Well answered, Sir'

- He who has amassed great wealth but does not enjoy it is reckoned as dead, like his unused heap.
Believing wealth is everything, yet giving away nothing, the miser himself will be possessed by a miserable birth.

-Tirukkural 101:1001-1002

- From evil springs forth more evil.
Therefore, evil is to be feared even more than fire.
To commit no wrong, even against one's enemies,
Is said to be supreme wisdom.

-Tirukkural 21:202-203

- Wisdom is the ability to do good and to abandon sin.
- The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook.

- William James

- In seeking wisdom the first step is silence, the second: listening, the third: remembering, the fourth: practicing, the fifth: teaching others.

- Solomon Ibn

- The purely righteous do not complain about evil, rather they add justice. They do not complain about heresy, rather they add faith. They do not complain about ignorance, rather they add wisdom.

- Rav Kook

- The day the child realizes that all adults are imperfect he becomes an adolescent; the day he forgives them, he becomes an adult; the day he forgives himself, he becomes wise.
- People may fail many times, but they become failures only when they BEGIN TO BLAME SOMEONE ELSE.

Faith

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- If anybody wants that he should get benefited, he should encourage himself to cultivate right faith, right cognition, and right morals. (SDG 65)
- True faith is really an unspeakable virtue which is beyond the scope of religion. (BWS 250)
- Faith, in true sense, is a lively link connecting the mortal with the Immortal. (BWS 250)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- Faith is knowing that one of two things shall happen: Either you will be given something solid to stand on or you will be taught to fly.

-Edward Teller

- Friendship is a promise of future loyalty, loyalty no matter what comes. Promises are the bricks of life and trust is the mortar.

- Stephen Carter, "The Emperor of Ocean Park"

- So-called aging is not the deterioration of life, but the deterioration of our faith, our enthusiasm, our will to progress.

- Connie Fillmore

- Doubt limits you from what is already yours, but faith unlocks the door allowing you to walk in and receive it.

- With faith, there are no questions; without faith there are no answers.

- The Chofetz Chaim

- "He who has no faith in himself can never have faith in God."

– Swami Vivekananda

- Your three best doctors are faith, time, and patience.

- From a fortune cookie

Love and Devotion

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- Love is the inner awakening to Reality. (SDG 159)
- Devotion makes our passage smooth and creates a channel for the Godly current to flow into our heart. (BWS 254)
- Through thinking of the Divine, devotion and love develop. (SDG 128)
- By devotion to the Highest, we make a channel from us to Him that serves as a path to Him. (SDG 161)
- Love makes every task easy and paves the way for the shower of Master's grace to smoothen the way to the Ultimate Goal. (SDG 159)
- Real love develops in purer mind, having its Nature Divine. (SDG 69)
- A true devotee is one who loves Him not for any favour or worldly interest but merely for love's sake. (BWS 263)
- Under the system, though the spiritual training is imparted through transmission, still the most important and indispensable thing remains for the abhyasi to develop in himself. It is love and devotion to supplement the abhyas. (SS 37)
- Love Him who loves all, and thus everybody is automatically loved through Him. (SDG 159)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- 'TO understand the heart and mind of a person, look not at what he has already achieved, but at what he aspires to do'.

- Kahlil Gibran

Surrender

Sayings of Pujya Babuji Maharaj:

- While doing a thing, think that you are not doing it for yourself, but for your Master, or rather think that your Master himself is doing it for himself. (BWS 255)
- If one can sell his heart, i.e. make a gift of it to the Divine Master, hardly anything more remains to be done. (SDG 137)
- Self surrender is nothing but a state of complete resignation to the will of the master, with total disregard of self. (BWS 258)
- Whatever act you do, do it in the thought “It is the Divine’s command and therefore it is my duty to do so”, so that the state of remembrance should continue steadfast. (SDG 128)
- When surrender is perfect the idea of surrender itself is gone, and it becomes completely natural. (SDG 50)
- When we surrender ourselves to the Great Master we begin to attract a constant flow of the highest Divine force from Him. (BWS 258)
- The best way of surrender which I have stated is to “Feel Dependence Upon God”. (SDG 50)
- How do we know that our Surrender is complete? It is when we begin to know that the abhyasi is surrendering naturally to all humanity. (SDG 50)
- It is really the state of self-surrender in which one, as a true devotee, surrenders himself

completely to the will of God, the Master, basking in the sunshine of His Grace. (SDG 101)

- To effect the surrender of heart in the easiest way, only an act of will is required. (SDG 138)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- We should surrender our intention to selfishly seek merit and recognition for our merit, and instead simply plant merit and cultivate wisdom.
- Relying on God has to begin all over again every day as if nothing had yet been done.

- C.S. Lewis

Service

Sayings of Puiya Babuji Maharaj:

- Service and sacrifice are the two main instruments with which we build the temple of spirituality, love of course being the fundamental basis. (BWS 253)
- Service to fellow beings is service to God in the real sense, if it is not done out of any selfish motive. (BWS 253)
- The work of the Mission will save the humanity from its doom by carrying the teachings of Master to every heart. (SDG 123)
- We should give our due consideration and try to improve the lot of the unvirtuous also, who may feel the thirst for the Real and develop yielding attitude to the Master. (SDG 158)
- We should do our duty to uplift the mankind not minding whether they are doing their duty towards us properly. (SDG 152)
- When you have a mind to do the work for the good of humanity, you will naturally get it. (SDG 107)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- In reality there are only verbs and no nouns. This in short is realisation.
– K. C. Narayana
- One must care about a world one will never see.
-Bertrand Russell

- Advice to the Elderly:
The body trembles,
The tongue falters,
The mind is weary.
Forsaking them all,
I pursue my purpose happily.
Knowing I do nothing,
I do whatever comes my way,
And I am happy.
-Ashtavakra Gita 13:2-3
- Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap,
but by the seeds you plant.
-Robert Louis Stevenson
- A jubilant heart rejoices upon seeing
those who give without scoffing or scorning.
Deprived of beggars, this vast and verdant Earth
would become uncharitable, a ball for the play of
wooden puppets.
-Tirukkural 106: 1057-1058
- And the day came when the risk it took to remain
tight inside the bud was more painful than the
risk it took to blossom.
- Anais Nin
- The only place success comes before work is in
the dictionary.
- [BUDDHISM} Sakka asked: "What is the cause
of self-interest?" The Buddha answered: "It is
perception of the world as one's object." "How
does one overcome this perception of the world
as apart from oneself?" "By acting for the

increase of goodness and happiness. It is in this way that the world ceases to be one's object."

-Digha Nikaya

- [BUDDHISM]Take no pleasure in worldly talk; Take delight in what passes beyond the world. Cause good qualities to grow in others In the same way (you wish them) for yourself.

-Nagarjuna, "Precious Garland"

- What is virtuous conduct? It is never destroying life, for killing leads to every other sin. Of all virtues summed by ancient sages, the foremost are to share one's food and to protect all living creatures.

-Tirukkural 33: 321-322

- The benevolent expect no return for their dutiful giving. How can the world ever repay the rain cloud? It is to meet the needs of the deserving That the worthy labor arduously to acquire wealth.

-Tirukkural 22: 211-213

- Amassing great wealth is gradual, like the gathering of a theater crowd. Its dispersal is sudden, like that same crowd departing. Wealth's nature is to be unenduring. Upon acquiring it, do that which is enduring right away.

-Tirukkural 34: 332-333

- Bodhicitta - sometimes translated as 'the awakening mind' is a key concept in Mahayana

Buddhism. It refers to the initial aspiration to win enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. It is an aspiration based on deep compassion for others trapped, as they are, in a world of suffering and dissatisfaction

- It's not what you gather, but what you scatter that tells what kind of life you have lived.

- Helen Walton

- Enthusiasm finds the opportunities, and energy makes the most of them.

- Henry S. Haskins

- Do not say, "When I have leisure, I will study." Perhaps you will have no leisure.

- Pirkei Avot

- We can't take any credit for our talents. It's how we use them that counts.

- Madeleine L'Engle

- A baby enters the world with hands clenched, as if to say, "The world is mine; I shall grab it." A man leaves with hands open, as if to say, "I can take nothing with me."

- Ecclesiastes Rabbah 5:14

- What you do may seem insignificant, but it's important that you do it.

- Mahatma Gandhi

- He alone is worshipping God who serves all beings.

– Swami Vivekananda

- We can judge a man faithful or unfaithful only by his works.
- Spinoza, "Theologico-Political Treatise"
- Yesterday is not ours to recover, but tomorrow is ours to win or to lose.
- 'O Lord! Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in Thy service and give me the strength to surrender my strength to Thy will with love!'
- Ravindranath Tagore in Gitanjali
- [Nature of work] What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal.
- Albert Pike
- Wealth is something you acquire so you can share it, not keep it.
-LaDonna Harris
- We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.
- Winston Churchill

Nothingness

Sayings of Puiya Babuji Maharaj:

- Total vacuum is God alone. When we merge in Divinity, the state of vacuum begins to dissolve itself; it comes to the Nearest. (SDG 67)
- 'One is unaware to the extent that he is aware'. (SDG 43)
- In fact there can possibly be no hallmark to the advancement of the human soul, because we have finally to enter into Infinity. (SDG 97)
- We have to reach a point where consciousness assumes its true form (i.e. what it really ought to be). (BWS 72)
- Man ought never be away from his own level; and this level is called ABUDIYAT (The subdued). (SDG 41)
- Having attained the state of realisation one develops an unflinching will in the spiritual sphere. (SS 358)
- The infallibility of will (special will) is in fact the real interpretation of the characteristic feature of Brahma-gati the state of Brahman. (BWS 341)

Inspirational Quotes from Various Sources:

- Whatever is dependently co-arisen
That is explained to be emptiness.
That, being a dependent designation,
Is itself the middle way.

Something that is not dependently arisen
Such a thing does not exist.
Therefore a nonempty thing
Does not exist.”

- Nagarjuna

- Once we realize universal emptiness, all objects are spontaneously penetrated integrating the world and beyond, and contains all states of being within. If we lose the essence, there is nothing after all; if we however understand and play the function (our?), there is spiritual enlivenment. The genuine path of not minding the thoughts during meditation is not a method for the immature.

- K.C.Narayana

Ashtavakra Gita

1. The world calls me mad.
I am mad. You are mad. The world is mad.
Who is not mad? Still these madmen call me
mad. Some are mad after name and fame.
Some are mad after money.
Some are mad after flesh.
But blessed is he who is mad after God.
Such a madman am I.
2. Even if you have nothing,
It is hard to find that contentment
Which comes from renunciation.
I accept nothing.
I reject nothing.
And I am happy.
3. Two from one!
This is the root of suffering.
Only perceive
That I am one without two,
Pure awareness, pure joy,
And all the world is false.
There is no other remedy!
4. First I gave up action,
Then idle words,
And lastly thought itself.
Now I am here.
Ridding my mind of distraction,
Single-pointed,
I shut out sounds and all the senses,
And I am here.

5. Liberation,
Bondage,
What are they to me?
What do I care for freedom?
For I have known God,
The infinite Self,
The witness of all things.
Without, a fool.
Within, free of thought.
I do as I please,
And only those like me
Understand my ways.
6. All sorrow comes from fear.
From nothing else.
When you know this,
You become free of it,
And desire melts away.
You become happy
And still.
7. I am the infinite deep
In whom all the worlds
Appear to rise.
Beyond all form,
Forever still.
Even so am I.
I am not in the world.
The world is not in me.
I am pure.
I am unbounded.
Free from attachment,
Free from desire,
Still.
Even so am I.

8. I am the mother-of-pearl.
The world is a vein of silver,
An illusion!
This is the truth.
Nothing to grasp,
Nothing to spurn,
Nothing to dissolve.
I am in all beings.
All beings are in me.
This is the whole truth.
Nothing to embrace,
Nothing to relinquish,
Nothing to dissolve.
9. Of the four kinds of being,
From Brahma to a blade of grass,
Only the wise man is strong enough
To give up desire and aversion.
How rare he is!
Knowing he is the Self,
He acts accordingly
And is never fearful.
For he knows he is the Self,
One without two,
The Lord of all creation.
10. Like bubbles in the sea,
All the worlds arise in you.
Know you are the Self.
Know you are one.
Let yourself dissolve.
You see the world.
But like the snake in the rope,
It is not really there.
You are pure.
Let yourself dissolve.

11. All things arise,
Suffer change,
And pass away.
This is their nature.
When you know this,
Nothing perturbs you,
Nothing hurts you.
You become still.
It is easy.
12. But he who is truly wise
Always sees the absolute Self.
Celebrated, he is not delighted.
Spurned, he is not angry.
Pure of heart,
He watches his own actions
As if they were another's.
How can praise or blame disturb him?
13. I am the boundless ocean.
This way and that,
The wind, blowing where it will,
Drives the ship of the world.
- But I am not shaken.
I am the unbounded deep
In whom the waves of all the worlds
Naturally rise and fall.
But I do not rise or fall.
14. The true seeker feels no elation,
Even in that exalted state
Which Indra and all the gods
Unhappily long for.
- He understands the nature of things.

His heart is not smudged
By right or wrong,
As the sky is not smudged by smoke.

15. Whatever takes form is false.
Only the formless endures.

When you understand
The truth of this teaching,
You will not be born again.

For God is infinite,
Within the body and without,
Like a mirror,
And the image in a mirror.

As the air is everywhere,
Flowing around a pot
And filling it,
So God is everywhere,
Filling all things
And flowing through them forever.

16. My Child,

Because you think you are the body,
For a long time you have been bound.
Know you are pure awareness.
With this knowledge as your sword
Cut through your chains
And be happy!
For you are already free,
Without action or flaw,
Luminous and bright.
You are bound
Only by the habit of meditation.

17. The man who is pure of heart

Is bound to fulfill himself
In whatever way he is taught.
A worldly man seeks all his life,
But is still bewildered.
Detached from the senses,
You are free.
Attached, you are bound.
When this is understood,
You may live as you please.

18. You are the endless sea

In whom all the worlds like waves
Naturally rise and fall.
You have nothing to win,
Nothing to lose.
Child,
You are pure awareness,
Nothing less.
You and the world are one.
So who are you to think
You can hold on to it,
Or let it go?
How could you!

-Ashtavakra Gita 15: 11-12

19. Striving and craving,

For pleasure or prosperity,
These are your enemies,
Springing up to destroy you
From the presumptions of virtue.
Let them all go.
Hold on to nothing.

-Ashtavakra Gita 10:1

20. You are wise.

You play and work and meditate.

But still you mind desires
That which is beyond everything,
Where all desires vanish.

Striving is the root of sorrow.

But who understands this?

Only when you are blessed
With the understanding of this teaching
Will you find freedom.

-Ashtavakra Gita 16:2-3

21. It is hard to find

A man who has desire
For what he has not tasted,
Or who tastes the world
And is untouched.
Here in the world
Some crave pleasure,
Some seek freedom
But it is hard to find
A man who wants neither.
He is a great soul.
It is hard to find
A man who has an open mind,
Who neither seeks nor shuns
Wealth or pleasure,
Duty or liberation,
Life or death. . .
He does not want the world to end.

He does not mind if it lasts.
Whatever befalls him,
He lives in happiness.
For he is truly blessed.

-Ashtavakra

22. When you live without discrimination,

Desire arises.
When desire persists,
Feelings of preference arise,
Of liking and disliking.
They are the root and branches of the world.

-Ashtavakra Gita 16:7

23. Seeing to this,

Neglecting that...

But when the mind stops setting
One thing against another,
It no longer craves pleasure.
It no longer cares for wealth
Or religious duties or salvation.

Craving the pleasures of the senses,
You suffer attachment.
Disdaining them,
You learn detachment.

But if you desire nothing,
And disdain nothing,
Neither attachment nor detachment bind you.

-Astavakra Gita 16:5-6

24. Desire and aversion are of the mind.

The mind is never yours.
You are free of its turmoil.
You are awareness itself,
Never changing.
Wherever you go,
Be happy.

-Ashtavakra Gita 15:5

25. As a wave,

Seething and foaming,
Is only water
So all creation,
Streaming out of the Self,
Is only the Self.
Consider a piece of cloth.
It is only threads!
So all creation,
When you look closely,
Is only the Self.

-Ashtavakra Gita 2:4-5

26. Have faith, my Child, have faith.

Do not be bewildered.
For you are beyond all things,
The heart of all knowing.
You are the Self.
You are God.

-Ashtavakra Gita 15:8

27. The master's way is unfettered

And free of guile.

He shines.
But for the fool
There is no peace.
His thoughts are full of desire.

-Ashtavakra Gita 18:52

28. The master goes about his business

With perfect equanimity.
He is happy when he sits,
Happy when he talks and eats,
Happy asleep,
Happy coming and going.
Because he knows his own nature,
He does what he has to without feeling ruffled
Like ordinary people.
Smooth and shining
Like the surface of a vast lake.
His sorrows are at an end.

-Ashtavakra Gita 18:59-60

29. The body trembles,

The tongue falters,
The mind is weary.
Forsaking them all,
I pursue my purpose happily.
Knowing I do nothing,
I do whatever comes my way,
And I am happy.

-Ashtavakra Gita 13:2-3

30. Even when he is still,

The selfish man is busy.
Even when he is busy,
The selfless man is still.

-Ashtavakra Gita 18:29

31. When the mind is attracted

To anything it senses,
You are bound.
Where there is no I,
You are free.
Where there is I,
You are bound.
Consider this.
It is easy.
Embrace nothing,
Turn nothing away.

-Ashtavakra Gita 8:3-4

32. Thinking

Of what is beyond thinking
Is still thinking.
Whoever fulfils this
fulfils his own nature
And is indeed fulfilled.

33. The body is confined

By its natural properties.
It comes,
It lingers awhile,
It goes.
But the Self neither comes nor goes.
So why grieve for the body?

-Ashtavakra Gita 15:9

34. If you detach yourself from identification with the body and remain relaxed in and as Consciousness, you will, this very moment, be happy, at peace, free from bondage.

-Ashtavakra Gita

35. Right or wrong,

Joy and sorrow,
These are of the mind only.
They are not yours.
It is not really you
Who acts or enjoys.
You are everywhere,
Forever free.

-Ashtavakra Gita 1:6

From "The Heart of Awareness: A Translation

36. You are pure awareness.

The world is an illusion,
Nothing more.
When you understand this fully,
Desire falls away.
You find peace.
For indeed!
There is nothing.

-Ashtavakra Gita 15:17

37. Feeble with age,

Still he is filled with desire,
When without doubt he knows
That lust is the enemy of awareness.
Indeed how strange!

-Ashtavakra Gita 3:7

38. The fool practices concentration

And control of the mind.
But the master is like a man asleep.
He rests in himself
And finds nothing more to do.

-Ashtavakra Gita 18:33

39. The moment a fool gives up concentration

And his other spiritual practices,
He falls prey to fancies and desires.
Even after hearing the truth,
The fool clings to his folly.
He tries hard to look calm and composed,
But inside he is full of cravings.

-Ashtavakra Gita 18:75-76

40. I am always

Without I.
So where is the one
Who acts or enjoys?
And what is the rising
Or the vanishing of thought?
What is the invisible world,
Or the visible?
In my heart I am one.
What is this world?
Who seeks freedom,
Or wisdom or oneness?
Who bound or free?

-Ashtavakra Gita 20:5-6

41. Blame does not disturb him,

Nor does praise delight him.
He neither rejoices in life,
Nor fears death.
His mind is calm.
Never seeking the solitude of the forest,
Nor running from the crowd.
Always and everywhere,
He is one and the same.

-Ashtavakra Gita 18:99-100

42. In the ocean of being

There is only one.
There was and there will be
Only one.
You are already fulfilled.
How can you be bound or free?
Wherever you go,
Be happy.

-Ashtavakra Gita 15:18

43. Free from desire,

He neither praises the peaceful
Nor blames the wicked.
The same in joy and sorrow,
He is always happy.
He sees there is nothing to do.

-Ashtavakra Gita 18:82

44. The wise man knows the Self,

And he plays the game of life.
But the fool lives in the world
Like a beast of burden.

-Ashtavakra Gita 4:1

45. You are not your body.

Your body is not you.
You are not the doer.
You are not the enjoyer.
You are pure awareness,
The witness of all things.
You are without expectation,
Free.
Wherever you go,
Be happy!

-Ashtavakra Gita 15:4

46. The man who is wise

Knows himself in all things
And all things in himself.
Yet how strange!
He still says? This is mine?
Determined to be free,
He abides in the oneness
Beyond all things.
Yet how strange!
Indulging in passion, he weakens,
And lust overwhelms him.

-Ashtavakra Gita 3:5-6

47. The awareness of the fool is always limited

By thinking, or by trying not to think.
The awareness of the man who lives within,
Though he may be busy thinking,
Is beyond even awareness itself.

-Ashtavakra Gita 18:6350

Swami Vivekananda

- It is Raja Yoga alone that can successfully lead a man up to the highest level of approach - Swami Vivekananda (SS 134)
- "Religion is not in books, nor in theories, nor in dogmas, nor in talking, not even in reasoning. It is being and becoming."
- "I do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth."
- "Infinite power and existence and blessedness are ours, and we have not to acquire them; they are our own, and we have only to manifest them."
- "He who has no faith in himself can never have faith in God."
- "Be an atheist if you want, but do not believe in anything unquestioningly."
- "The living God is within you."
- "He alone is worshiping God who serves all beings."
- To study the origin of the Vedanta movement in America is to study Swami Vivekananda and his travels across the US. We like to put the spotlight on him since his message about self-effort, strength, and freedom of the soul is especially favored by the Western mind. But who was he? What was the magic in his message that made him so popular in America and his homeland of India? We shall only attempt a brief sketch here.

- Swami Vivekananda or Narendra as he was called then, was born on January 12, 1863. Bright and full of energy, his mother found him extremely restless and hard to control. "I prayed to God for a son, but he sent me one of his demons," she would sometimes say in frustration. But he was not a bad boy. He had an early fascination for the wandering monks that are so common in India and would practice meditation for fun.

As he grew older, Narendra excelled at his studies and amazed his teachers. At college he mastered Western philosophy and logic and seriously questioned the orthodox beliefs of Hinduism. Reason, he felt, was the surest guide in life. Yet reason didn't satisfy the yearnings of his soul. About this time, he met a holy man by the name of Sri Ramakrishna. The holy man was in many ways from quite a different background than Narendra, yet Narendra was drawn to him. On the one hand, Ramakrishna seemed to be a madman and a monomaniac, yet, the holy man radiated a holy atmosphere unlike anything he had experienced elsewhere. The more Narendra saw him, the more he saw an extraordinary holiness and a most uncommon sanity.

As their relationship grew, Narendra was fired by the ideals of renunciation, the concept that the only important thing in life was to realize God. After Ramakrishna died, Narendra took the vows of a monk and became Swami Vivekananda. For two years he wandered throughout India growing spiritually and experiencing many hardships. He saw the great poverty of India and pondered deeply the role of religion and the suffering of the

masses. He impressed great kings with his wisdom, yet learned wisdom during his moments of pride from the lowly of society.

His wanderings helped to develop an understanding of the real meaning of religion. As he said to two of his brother disciples that he happened to see at a train station,

"I have traveled all over India. But alas, it was agony to me, my brothers, to see with my own eyes the terrible poverty and misery of the masses, and I could not restrain my tears. It is now my firm conviction that it is futile to preach religion amongst them without first trying to remove their poverty and their suffering. It is for this reason - to find more means for the salvation of the poor in India - that I am now going to America.

We should understand that at this time in India, such talk was almost heresy. Society said a monk should busy himself with meditation and other spiritual practices, not doing social service.

True to his word, Vivekananda traveled to America to speak at a conference in Chicago that he had heard about called The World's Parliament of Religions. When he arrived, he discovered that not only had he come too early, but that he lacked proper papers to be a delegate. The authorities wouldn't recognize him.

But Providence has its ways. He came to meet Professor J.H. Wright, of the Greek Department at Harvard University. They talked for hours. The professor was so impressed that he insisted that his new friend should be the representative of

Hinduism at the Parliament. On hearing that the Swami lacked proper credentials, he replied, "To ask you, Swami, for your credentials, is like asking the sun to state its right to shine." The professor wrote a letter to a friend in charge of selecting the delegates saying, "Here is a man who is more learned than all our learned professors put together."

On September 11, 1893, Swami Vivekananda attended the Parliament as a delegate to speak. Nervous at first, he passed on his chance to speak. Finally, he spoke, in words that became famous throughout the world:

"Sisters and brothers of America.

It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world. I thank you in the name of the mother of religions, and I thank you in the name of the millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance I am proud to belong to a religion which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations on earth....."

Vedas and Upanishads

- The Primordial Vastness is the sky. The Primordial Vastness is the sphere of space. The Primordial Vastness is the mother, the father, the son. The Primordial Vastness is all the Gods, the five sorts of men, all that was born and shall be born.

-Rig Veda

- He is the inner Self of all, Hidden like a little flame in the heart. Only by the stilled mind can he be known. Those who realize him become immortal. He has thousands of heads, thousands of eyes, Thousands of feet; he surrounds the cosmos On every side. This infinite being is ever present in the hearts of all. He has become the cosmos. He is what was and what will be. Yet he is unchanging, The lord of immortality.

-Shvetashvatara Upanishad

- Get up! Wake up! Seek the guidance of an Illuminated teacher and realize the Self. Sharp like a razor's edge, the sages say, Is the path, difficult to traverse.

-Katha Upanishad

- Only the one-pointed mind attains this state of unity. There is no one but the Self. Who sees multiplicity but not the one indivisible Self Must wander on and on from death to death.

-Katha Upanishad

- The supreme Self is neither born nor dies. He cannot be burned, moved, pierced, cut, nor

dried.

Beyond all attributes, the supreme Self is the eternal witness, ever pure, Indivisible, and un-compounded, Far beyond the senses and the ego. In him conflicts and expectations cease. He is omnipresent, beyond all thought, without action in the external world. without action in the internal world. Detached from the outer and the inner, this supreme Self purifies the impure.

-Atma Upanishad

- The supreme Self, adored in the scriptures, Can be realized through the path of yoga. Subtler than the banyan seed, subtler Than the tiniest grain, even subtler Than the hundred-thousandth part of a hair, This Self cannot be grasped, cannot be seen.

-Atma Upanishad

- He fills the cosmos, yet he transcends it. Those who know him leave all separateness, Sorrow, and death behind. Those who know him not Live but to suffer.

The Lord of Love, omnipresent, dwelling
In the heart of every living creature,
All mercy, turns every face to himself.

He is the supreme Lord, who through his grace
Moves us to seek him in our own hearts.
He is the light that shines forever.

-Shvetashvatara Upanishad

- Know him to be the supreme magician
Who has become boy and girl, bird and beast.
He is the bestower of all blessings,
And his grace fills the heart with profound peace.

Know him to be the supreme source of all
The gods, sole support of the universe,
The sower of the golden seed of life.
May he grant us the grace of wisdom.

-Shvetashvatara Upanishad

- As there can be no water without the sea,
No touch without the skin, no smell without
The nose, no taste without the tongue, no form
Without the eye, no sound without the
Ear, no thought without the mind, no wisdom
Without the heart, no work without hands, no
Walking without feet, no scriptures without the
Word, so there can be nothing without the Self.

-Bhadaranyaka Upanishad

- I will give you the Word all the scriptures Glorify,
all spiritual disciplines Express, to attain which
aspirants lead A life of sense-restraint and self-
naughting. It is OM. This symbol of the Godhead
Is the highest. Realizing it one finds Complete
fulfillment of all one's longings. It is of the
greatest support to all seekers. Those in whose
hearts OM reverberates Unceasingly are indeed
blessed And deeply loved as one who is the Self.

-Katha Upanishad

- The Self, who can be realized by the pure
in heart, who is life, light, truth, space, who

gives rise to all works, all desires, all odors,
all tastes, who is beyond words, who is joy
abiding—this is the Self dwelling in my
heart.

-Chandogya Upanishad

- In the secret cave of the heart, two are seated
By life's fountain. The separate ego
Drinks of the sweet and bitter stuff,
Liking the sweet, disliking the bitter,
While the supreme Self drinks sweet and bitter
Neither liking this nor disliking that.
The ego gropes in darkness, while the Self
Lives in light. So declare the illumined sages
And the householders who worship
The sacred fire in the name of the Lord.

-Katha Upanishad

- In the dark night live those for whom
The world without alone is real; in night
Darker still, for whom the world within
Alone is real. The first leads to a life
Of action, the second to a life of meditation.
But those who combine action with meditation
Cross the sea of death through action
And enter into immortality
Through the practice of meditation.
So have we heard from the wise.

-Isa Upanishad

- "The sun is the prana of the universe,
And it rises to bring light to our eyes.
The earth draws the lower fire of apana;
The space between sun and earth is samana,
And the moving air is vyana.

"Fire is udana. When that fire goes out,
The senses are drawn back into the mind
And the person is ready for rebirth.

"Whatever the content of consciousness
At the time of death, that is what unites us
To prana, udana, and the Self,
To be reborn in the plane we have earned."

-Prashna Upanishad

- Hear, O children of immortal bliss,
You are born to be united with the Lord.
Follow the path of the illumined ones
And be united with the Lord of Life.

Kindle the fire of kundalini deep
In meditation. Bring your mind and breath
Under control. Drink deep of divine love,
And you will attain the unitive state.

Dedicate yourself to the Lord of Life,
Who is the cause of the cosmos. He will
Remove the cause of all your suffering
And free you from the bondage of karma.

-Shvetashvatara Upanishad

- Earth, sky, worlds above, quarters and their halves;
Fire, air, sun, moon, and stars; water, herbs, trees,
Space, and entity are the elements.
Eye, ear, mind, tongue, and touch; skin, flesh, muscle.

Marrow, and skeleton; and the five
Vital forces constitute the body.
The sage, contemplating these sets of five,
Discovered that everything is holy.
Man can complete the inner with the outer.

-Taittiriya Upanishad

- Those who act without thought of personal
Profit and lead a well-disciplined life
Discover in course of time the divine principle
That all forms of life are one.
Those who work in the service of the Lord
Are freed from the law of karma.

-Shvetashvatara Upanishad

- Conscious spirit and unconscious matter
Both have existed since the dawn of time,
With maya [illusion] appearing to connect them,
Misrepresenting joy as outside us.
When all these three are seen as one, the Self
Reveals his universal form and serves
As an instrument of the divine will.

-Shvetashvatara Upanishad

- When the mind is detached from the senses
One reaches the summit of consciousness.
Mastery of the mind leads to wisdom.
Practice meditation. Stop all vain talk.
The highest state is beyond reach of thought,
For it lies beyond all duality.
Keep repeating the ancient mantram OM
Until it reverberates in your heart.

-Amritabindu Upanishad

- As a man in the arms of his beloved is not aware
of what is without and what is within, so a person

in union with the Self is not aware of what is without and what is within, for in that unitive state all desires find their perfect fulfillment. There is no other desire that needs to be fulfilled, and one goes beyond sorrow.

-Bhhadaranyaka Upanishad.

- But not those who are free from desire; they Are free because all their desires have found Fulfillment in the Self. They do not die like the Others; but realizing Brahman, they merge in Brahman.

- Bhhadaranyaka Upanishad.

- As rivers lose their private name and form When they reach the sea, so that people speak Of the sea alone, so all these sixteen Forms disappear when the Self is realized. Then there is no more name and form for us, And we attain immortality."

-Prashna Upanishad

- The ego and the Self dwell as intimate friends in the same body, like two golden birds perched in the same tree. The ego eats the sweet and sour fruits of the tree, while the Self looks on detached. For as long as you identify with the ego, you will feel joy and sorrow. But if you know you are the Self, the Lord of Life, you will be free from suffering; the supreme source of light; the supreme source of love. You will transcend duality and live in a state of Oneness.

-Mundaka Upanishad

- Not by the weak, not by the unearnest,
Not by those who practice wrong disciplines
Can the Self be realized. The Self reveals
Himself as the Lord of Love to the one
Who practices right disciplines.

-Mundaka Upanishad

- As the rain on a mountain peak runs off
The slopes on all sides, so those who see
Only the seeming multiplicity of life
Run after things on every side.

As pure water poured into pure water
Becomes the very same, so does the Self
Of the illumined man or woman, Nachiketa,
Verily become one with the Godhead.

- Katha Upanishad.

- The Self cannot be known by anyone
Who desists not from unrighteous ways,
Controls not his senses, stills not his mind,
And practices not meditation.
None else can know the omnipresent Self,
Whose glory sweeps away the rituals
Of the priest and the prowess of the warrior
And puts death itself to death.

-Katha Upanishad

- In deep meditation aspirants may
See forms like snow or smoke. They may feel
A strong wind blowing or a wave of heat.
They may see within them more and more light:
Fireflies, lightning, sun, or moon. These are signs
That one is far on the path to Brahman.

-Shvetashvatara Upanishad

- Asan and attitudes for Meditation:

Be seated with spinal column erect
And turn your senses and mind deep within.
With the mantram echoing in your heart,
Cross over the dread sea of birth and death.

Train your senses to be obedient.
Regulate your activities to lead you
To the goal. Hold the reins of your mind
As you hold the reins of restive horses.
Choose a place for meditation that is
Clean, quiet, and cool, a cave with a smooth floor
Without stones and dust, protected against
Wind and rain and pleasing to the eye.

-Shvetashvatara Upanishad
From The Upanishads, translated

- The wise see the Lord of Love in the year,
Which has two paths, the northern and the
southern.
Those who observe outward forms of worship
And are content with personal pleasures
Travel after death by the southern path,
The path of the ancestors and of rayi,
To the lunar world, and are born again.

But those who seek the Self through meditation,
Self-discipline, wisdom, and faith in God
Travel after death by the northern path,
The path of prana, to the solar world,
Supreme refuge, beyond the reach of fear
And free from the cycle of birth and death.

-Prashna Upanishad

- He is formless, and can never be seen
 With these two eyes. But he reveals himself
 In the heart made pure through meditation
 And sense-restraint. Realizing him one is
 released
 From the cycle of birth and death.
 -Katha Upanishad
- "AUM has three sounds. Those who meditate on
 A Come back to earth, led by the Rig Veda,
 To lead a pure life, full of faith and love.
 Those who meditate on the first two sounds,
 A and U, led by the Yajur Veda,
 Go to the lunar world, full of pleasure,
 From which they come back cloyed to earth
 again.
 But those who meditate on A, U, and M
 Are led by the Sama chants to the sun,
 Where freed from sin, as a snake sheds its skin,
 They see the supreme Lord, who lives in all.
 -Prashna Upanishad
- In the depths of meditation, sages
 Saw within themselves the Lord of Love,
 Who dwells in the heart of every creature.
 Deep in the hearts of all he dwells, hidden
 Behind the gunas of law, energy,
 And inertia. He is One. He it is
 Who rules over time, space, and causality.
 -Shvetashvatara Upanishad
- The rituals and the sacrifices described
 In the Vedas deal with lower knowledge.
 The sages ignored these rituals
 And went in search of higher knowledge. ...

Such rituals are unsafe rafts for crossing
The sea of samsara, of birth and death.
Doomed to shipwreck are those who try to cross
The sea of samsara on these poor rafts.
Ignorant of their own ignorance, yet wise
In their own esteem, these deluded men
Proud of their vain learning go round and round
Like the blind led by the blind.

-Mundaka Upanishad

- As a heavily laden cart creaks as it moves along, the body groans under its burden when a person is about to die. When the body grows weak through old age or illness, the Self separates himself as a mango or fig or banyan fruit frees itself from the stalk, and returns the way he came to begin another life.

-Bhhadarany Upanishad.

- The dreaming mind recalls past impressions. It sees again what has been seen; it hears Again what has been heard, enjoys again What has been enjoyed in many places. Seen and unseen, heard and unheard, enjoyed And unenjoyed, the real and the unreal, The mind sees all; the mind sees all.

-Prashna Upanishad

- Never fear that old age will invade that city; never fear that this inner treasure of all reality will wither and decay. This knows no age when the body ages; this knows no dying when the body dies. This is the real city of Brahman; this is the Self, free from old age,

from death and grief, hunger and thirst. In the Self all desires are fulfilled.

-Chandogya Upanishad

- After a year Kabandhi asked the sage: "Master, who created the universe?"

The sage replied: "The Lord meditated and brought forth prana With rayi, the giver of name and form: Male and female, so that they would bring forth Innumerable creatures for him.

"Prana is the sun; rayi is the moon. Matter is solid, matter is subtle; Rayi therefore is present everywhere.

"The sun gives light and life to all who live, East and west, north and south, above, below; It is the prana of the universe."

-Prashna Upanishad

- The sage Vamadeva declared of old: "While dwelling in the womb I understood The birth of all the gods. A hundred forms, Strong as steel, held me prisoner. But I Broke loose from them, like a hawk from the cage,

And came out swiftly." While still in the womb, Vamaveda made this declaration. He emerged from his mother's womb, fully Illuminated, to live in abiding joy, And went beyond death. Indeed He went beyond death.

-Aitareya Upanishad

- Filled with wonder, we sing, "I see the Lord."
So his name is Idamdra, "He who sees."
The name Indra stands for Idamdra.
The gods do like to sit behind a veil;
Indeed they like to sit behind a veil.

-Aitareya Upanishad

- The mantra AUM stands for the supreme state
Of Turiya, without parts, beyond birth
And death, symbol of everlasting joy.
Those who know AUM as the Self become the
Self; Truly they become the Self. Om shanti
shanti shanti

-Mandukya Upanishad

- Know the Self as lord of the chariot,
The body as the chariot itself,
The discriminating intellect as charioteer,
And the mind as reins.
The senses, say the wise, are the horses;
Selfish desires are the roads they travel.
When the Self is confused with the body,
Mind, and senses, they point out, he seems
To enjoy pleasure and suffer sorrow.

-Katha Upanishad

- That which makes the eye see but cannot be
Seen by the eye, that is the Self indeed.
This Self is not someone other than you."

-Kena Upanishad

The Gita

- There are ignorant people who speak flowery words and take delight in the letter of the law, saying there is nothing else. Their hearts are full of selfish desires, Arjuna. Their idea of heaven is their own enjoyment, and the aim of all their activities is pleasure and power. The fruit of their actions is continual rebirth. Those whose minds are swept away by the pursuit of pleasure and power are incapable of following the supreme goal and will not attain samadhi.

-Bhagavad Gita 2:42-44

- Those who abstain while allowing the mind to dwell on sensual pleasure cannot be called sincere spiritual aspirants. But they excel who control their senses through the mind, using them for selfless service.

-Bhagavad Gita 3:6-7

- Knowledge is hidden by selfish desire--hidden by this unquenchable fire for self-satisfaction.

-Bhagavad Gita 3:38-39

- True sustenance is in service and through it a man or woman reaches the eternal Brahman. But those who do not seek to serve are without a home in this world.

-Bhagavad Gita 4:31

- Those who know this truth, whose consciousness is unified, think always, "I am not the doer." While seeing or hearing, touching or smelling; eating, moving about, or sleeping; breathing or speaking, letting go or holding on, even opening

or closing the eyes, they understand that these are only the movements of the senses among sense objects.

-Bhagavad Gita 5:8-9

- Closing their eyes, steadying their breathing, and focusing their attention on the center of spiritual consciousness, the wise master their senses, mind, and intellect through meditation. Self-realization is their only goal. Freed from selfish desire, fear, and anger, they live in freedom always. Knowing me as the friend of all creatures, the Lord of the universe, the end of all offerings and all spiritual disciplines, they attain eternal peace.

-Bhagavad Gita 5:27-29

- It is not those who lack energy or refrain from action, but those who work without expectation of reward who attain the goal of meditation. Theirs is true renunciation. Therefore, Arjuna, you should understand that renunciation and the performance of selfless service are the same. Those who cannot renounce attachment to the results of their work are far from the path.

-Bhagavad Gita 6:1-2

- When a person responds to the joys and sorrows of others as if they were his own, he has attained the highest state of spiritual union.

-Bhagavad Gita 6:32

- After many births the wise seek refuge in me, seeing me everywhere and in everything. Such great souls are very rare. There are others whose discrimination is misled by many desires.

Following their own nature, they worship lower gods, practicing various rites.

-Bhagavad Gita 7:19-20

- Remembering me at the time of death, close down the doors of the senses and place the mind in the heart. Then, while absorbed in meditation, focus all energy upwards to the head. Repeating in this state the divine Name, the syllable Om that represents the changeless Brahman, you will go forth from the body and attain the supreme goal.

-Bhagavad Gita 8:12-13

- These two paths, the light and the dark, are said to be eternal, lending some to liberation and others to rebirth. Once you have known these two paths, Arjuna, you can never be deluded again. Attain this knowledge through perseverance in yoga. There is merit in studying the scriptures, in selfless service, austerity, and giving, but the practice of meditation carries you beyond all these to the supreme abode of the highest Lord.

- Bhagavad Gita 8:26-28

- Even a sinner becomes holy when he worships me alone with firm resolve. Quickly his soul conforms to dharma and he attains to boundless peace. Never forget this, Arjuna: no one who is devoted to me will ever come to harm.

-Bhagavad Gita 9:30-31

- Still your mind in me, still your intellect in me, and without doubt you will be united with me forever. If you cannot still your mind in me, learn to do so

through the regular practice of meditation. If you lack the will for such self-discipline, engage yourself in my work, for selfless service can lead you at least to complete fulfillment. If you are unable to do even this, surrender yourself to me, disciplining yourself and renouncing the results of all your actions.

-Bhagavad Gita 12:8-11

- Integrated Self - Fitting our intellectual, emotional, and creative selves together as a consistent, synchronized whole. Finding our purpose and greater balance and harmony so that we achieve greater meaning, passion and purpose in our lives and careers, and also ignite our potential rather being thwarted by self sabotaging behaviors

Why is the integrated self so important? Because it is your integrated self that works to support your values, realize your purpose. And, it is your values or the alignment of your values and your ability to feel that you are on purpose that drives how you see yourself, your ability to tap into intrinsic motivation and to achieve happiness.

Be fearless and pure; never waver in your determination or your dedication to the spiritual life. Give freely. Be self-controlled, sincere, truthful, loving, and full of the desire to serve. Realize the truth of the scriptures; learn to be detached and to take joy in renunciation. Do not get angry or harm any living creature, but be compassionate and gentle; show good will to all. Cultivate vigor, patience, will, purity; avoid malice

and pride. Then, Arjuna, you will achieve your divine destiny.

-Bhagavad Gita 16:1-3

- By loving me he comes to know me truly; then he knows my glory and enters into my boundless being. All his acts are performed in my service, and through my grace he wins eternal life.

-Bhagavad Gita 18:55-56

- Make every act an offering to me (God); regard me as your only protector. Relying on interior discipline, meditate on me always. Remembering me, you shall overcome all difficulties through my grace. But if you will not heed me in your self-will, nothing will avail you.

-Bhagavad Gita 18:57-58

Miscellaneous

- That very seeing does not see itself at all. How can something that cannot see itself see another?

-Nagarjuna

- A monk asked Shigui, "What is the first principle?"
Shigui said, "What you just asked is the second principle."

-Zen's Chinese Heritage

- Silent about virtue and swift to act wrongly, one who does not slander others may still be called good.

More vile than violating virtue and committing crime

is slandering a man, then smiling to his face.

-Tirukkural 19: 181-182

- If a man considers that he is born, he cannot avoid the fear of death. Let him find out if he has been born or if the Self has any birth. He will discover that the Self always exists, that the body that is born resolves itself into thought and that the emergence of thought is the root of all mischief. Find from where thoughts emerge. Then you will be able to abide in the ever-present inmost Self and be free from the idea of birth or the fear of death.

-Ramana Maharshi

- When the heart grieves over what it has lost, the spirit rejoices over what it has left.

- Sufi epigram

- Out of your vulnerabilities will come your strength.
- Sigmund Freud
- Why can't life's problems hit us when we're seventeen and know everything?
- A.C. Jolly.
- Of all nature's gifts to the human race, what is sweeter to a man than his children?
- Marcus Tullius Cicero
- Avert the danger before it arises. Today is yesterday's pupil.
-Thomas Fuller.
- Confusion is a word we have invented for an order which is not understood.
- Henry Miller
- Your son is at five your master, at ten your servant, at fifteen your double, and after that, your friend or foe, depending on his bringing up.
- Hasdai ibn Crescas
- A man should love his wife as himself and honor her more than himself.
- Babylonian Talmud, Yevamot 62b
- As cited in "Jewish Advice is what we ask for when we already know the answer but wish we didn't.
- Erica Jong
- Anger is never without a reason, but seldom a good one.
- Benjamin Franklin

- One should not stand at the foot of a sick person's bed, because that place is reserved for the guardian angel.

- Jewish folk saying

- The purely righteous do not complain about evil, rather they add justice. They do not complain about heresy, rather they add faith. They do not complain about ignorance, rather they add wisdom.

- Rav Kook

- A man does not have to be an angel in order to be a saint.

- Albert Schweitzer

- A poor devotee points to the sky and says, "God is up there." An average devotee says, "God dwells in the heart as the Inner Master." The best devotee says, "God alone is and everything I perceive is a form of God."

-Ramakrishna Paramahansa

- Selfishness may be sweet only for oneself, but no harmony of the whole can come from it.

- Tenrikyo Osashizu

- We seek to find peace of mind in the word, the formula, the ritual. The hope is illusion. Prophecy, however honest, is generally a poor substitute for experience. Justice is not to be taken by storm. She is to be wooed by slow advances.

- Benjamin Cardozo

- Every man has three characters: that which he shows, that which he has, and that which he thinks he has.

- Alphonse Karr

- The glory of friendship is not the outstretched hand, nor the kindly smile, nor the joy of companionship; it's the spiritual inspiration that comes to one when he discovers that someone else believes in him and is willing to trust him with his friendship.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

- That which we call the Hindu religion is really the eternal religion because it embraces all others.

-Sri Aurobindo

- Perfection has one grave defect; it is apt to be dull.

- Somerset Maugham

- We should remember that it doesn't matter how stuck things may seem, for everything changes. It is the fear that difficult times won't end that makes us nervous. Let go of fears and be ready to move into the future

- Anonymous

- Your son is at five your master, at ten your servant, at fifteen your double, and after that, your friend or foe, depending on his bringing up.
- What is a friend? A single soul shared by two people.

- Aristotle

- "The layer that is above the sky and below the earth, which is described as being situated between the earth and the sky and which is indicated as the symbol of the past, present and future, where is that situated?" - bamboozled even the great Vedic men of letters

- Gargi

- If a person closes his eyes to avoid giving [any] charity, it is as if he committed idolatry.

- Babylonian Talmud, Ketubot 68a

- The best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time.

- Abraham Lincoln

- Worrying is like a rocking chair: it gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere.

- One of the secrets of life is to make stepping-stones out of stumbling blocks.

- Jack Penn

- Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson afterward.

- Vernon Law

- O god, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains. That we should with joy pleasure revel and applause transform ourselves into beasts.

- Shakespeare.

- To have seen much and to have nothing, is to have rich eyes and poor hands.

– Shakespeare, *As you like it*

- (Venus) No, that same wicked bastard of Venus that was begot of thought, conceived of spleen and born of madness, that blind rascally boy that abuses every one's eyes because his own are out, let him be judge how deep I am in love.
- Shakespeare
- Stopping at third base adds no more runs than striking out.
- unknown
- People of mediocre ability sometimes achieve outstanding success because they don't know when to quit. Most men succeed because they are determined to.
- George Allen
- It is quite possible to work without results, but never will there be results without work.
- unknown
- The beauties of the world are best seen by those who strive to reach them.
- unknown
- It is never too late to give up your prejudices.
- Henry David Thoreau
- To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul.
- Spoon feeding in the long run teaches us nothing but the shape of the spoon.
- E.M. Forster

- "Come to the edge."
"We can't. We're afraid."
"Come to the edge."
"We can't. We will fall!"
"Come to the edge."
And they came.
And he pushed them.
And they flew.

- Guillaume Apollinaire
- Don't spend time beating on a wall, hoping to transform it into a door.

- Dr. Laura Schlessinger
- To please all is an impossible aim, and to escape some criticism is an unattainable goal.

- M. Ibn Ezra, "Shirat Yisrael"
- We should be too big to take offence and too noble to give it.

- Abraham Lincoln
- Believe those who seek the truth; doubt those who find it.

- Andre Gide
- We forfeit three-fourths of ourselves in order to be like other people.

- Arthur Schopenhauer
- If I knew God, I would be God.
- When man completes a product, his relation to it ends; but God's power continues to permeate His creatures.

- Shneor Zalman, Tanya

- Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire, called conscience.
- George Washington
- You are not stuck where you are unless you decide to be.
- Angels can fly because they take themselves lightly.
- G.K. Chesterton
- A man cannot say to the Angel of Death, "Wait till I make up my accounts."
- Ecclesiastes Rabbah 8
- The door of opportunity won't open unless you do some pushing.
- Anonymous
- Never try to teach a pig to sing. It wastes your time and annoys the pig.
- Mark Twain
- Right is right, even if everyone is against it; and wrong is wrong, even if everyone is for it.
- William Penn
- Never miss a chance to keep your mouth shut.
- Robert Newton Peck
- Revelation is the silent, imperceptible manifestation of God in history. It is the still, small voice: it is the inevitableness, the regularity of nature.
- Herbert Loewe, "Rabbinic Anthology," 1938

- Don't go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first.
- Mark Twain
- Who finds a faithful friend finds a treasure.
- Ben Sira 6:14
- For peace of mind, resign as general manager of the universe.
- Anonymous
- Anger deprives a sage of his wisdom, a prophet of his vision.
- Simeon b. Lakish, Talmud: Pesahim
- We can never rely on inspiration. When we most want it, it does not come.
- George Gershwin
- Forget mistakes. Forget failures. Forget everything except what you're going to do now and do it. Today is your lucky day.
- Will Durant
- Winners have simply formed the habit of doing things losers don't like to do.
- Albert Gray
- The bird of paradise alights only on the hand that does not grasp.
- John Berry
- A miracle cannot prove what is impossible; it is useful only to confirm what is possible.

- Let a good man do good deeds with the same zeal that the evil man does bad ones.
- When you rise in the morning, form a resolution to make the day a happy one for a fellow creature.

- Sydney Smith

- If you have one eye on yesterday and one eye on tomorrow, you're going to be cockeyed today.
- Mind over matter is good news only if your mind is sound.
- The mind's highest good is the knowledge of God, and the mind's highest virtue is to know God.

- Spinoza, "Ethics"

- Peace is not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice.

- Baruch Spinoza

- Your search among books, word upon word, may lead you to the depths of knowledge, but it is not the way to receive the reflection of your true self.

When you have thrown off your ideas as to mind and body, the original truth will fully appear. Zen is simply the expression of truth; therefore longing and striving are not the true attitudes of Zen.

-Dogen,

- There is a difference between watching the mind and controlling the mind. Watching the mind with a gentle, open attitude allows the mind to settle down and come to rest. Trying to control the mind, or trying to control the way one's spiritual practice will unfold, just stirs up more agitation and suffering.
- God had a purpose in the life of Saddam Hussain. Determination and commitment are very noble qualities and when the same are used for achieving misconceived goals, God again fails in the great experiment of human transformation. A splendid flower alas! has gone the way of the dust. I pity him for having lost his goal and for the treatment by others of the human race:when did real Compassion the greatest Archetype of Being ever succeed? May he Saddam Hussain flower again and prove the real intention of the Divine in his being. Dust however needs no effort to multiply! and why are the big brothers over there think too eager to do the same and so fast?

- K.C. Narayana

- Experience is not what happens to a man. It is what a man does with what happens to him.

- Aldous Huxley

- When the only tool you own is a hammer, every problem begins to resemble a nail.

- Abraham Maslow

- Doubtless we think with only a small part of our past, but it is with our entire past, including the original bent of our soul, that we desire, will, and act.

- Our personality, which is being built up each instant with its accumulated experience, changes without ceasing. By changing, it prevents any state, although superficially identical with another, from ever repeating it in its very depth. That is why our duration is irreversible

The finished portrait is explained by the features of the model, by the nature of the artist, by the colors spread out on the palette; but, even with the knowledge of what explains it, no one, not even the artist, could have foreseen exactly what the portrait would be, for to predict it would have been to produce it before it was produced--an absurd hypothesis which is its own refutation. Even so with regard to the moments of our life, of which we are the artisans. Each of them is a kind of creation

- Bergson.

- Three sins none can escape on any day: sinful thoughts, the presumption that God must answer our prayers, and dust of slander.
- The mind is like a parachute. It doesn't work unless it's open.
- I was strongest when I laughed at my weakness.

- Elmer Diktonius

- For every minute you are angry, you lose sixty seconds of happiness.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

- You have to do your own growing no matter how tall your grandfather was.

- Abraham Lincoln

- It is integrity that invests man with immortality, and bestows upon him the privilege of direct communion with God.
- There's an old saying: "Give a man a fish and you can feed him for a day. TEACH him to fish and you feed him for life!"
- "Purpose and principle, clearly understood and articulated, and commonly shared, are the genetic code of any healthy organization. To the degree that you hold purpose and principles in common among you, you can dispense with command and control. People will know how to behave in accordance with them, and they'll do it in thousands of unimaginable, creative ways. The organization will become a vital, living set of beliefs."

- Dee Hock

- Every portion of matter can be thought of as a garden full of plants, or as a pond full of fish. But every branch of the plant, every part of the animal, and every drop of its vital fluids, is another such garden, or another such pool. [...] Thus there is no uncultivated ground in the universe; nothing barren, nothing dead.

(Monadology, §67,69)

- "What difference does it make if one sings like a donkey, as long as people say it is a nightingale?"

- Nassr Eddin.

- To explain the normal by means of the abnormal is a modern hobby
- Dr K.C.Varadachari (dreams)
- Dream is a deep disease and not a common ailment. The reason is not far to seek; the symbolic reintegration in the life of the primitive is un-developed or under-developed, just as in the case of infants.
- Dr.K.C.Varadachari.
- The young man who has not wept is a savage, and the old man who will not laugh is a fool.
- George Santayana
- Stop the habit of wishful thinking and start the habit of thoughtful wishes.
- Mary Martin
- Reason is a spark kindled by the beating of our heart.
-- Apocrypha: Wisdom of Solomon
- [Beauty] Some people, no matter how old they get, never lose their beauty. It merely moves from their faces to their hearts.
- Martin Buxbaum
- [Ability and Motivation] Ability is what you're capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it.
- [Dreams] Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die Life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly.
- Langston Hughes

- [Ethics-Postponement] He who postpones the hour of living rightly is like the rustic who waits for the river to run out before he crosses.

- Horace

- Someone who practices only bhakti yoga is like a blind man who cannot see where to go, and in his enthusiasm wanders off in the wrong direction. Someone who practices only gnana yoga, on the other hand, is like a lame man who can see the distant destination but, because his knowledge remains only theoretical, makes no progress towards it. However, if the love and energy of the bhakta is combined with the wisdom and discrimination of the gnani, seekers are sure to reach their destination.

- Hindu teaching story

- I want to sing like the birds sing, not worrying about who hears or what they think.

- Rumi

- In prosperity, our friends know us; in adversity, we know our friends.

- John Churton Collins

- [TRUE FRIENDSHIP] The bonds that good men share,
like good bound books,
Reveal new enjoyments at each new encounter.
The object of friendship is not merrymaking
But a stern rebuking when friends go astray.
It is not constant meeting and companionship
But mutual sensibilities that confer the alliance of friendship.

Friendship is not seen on a friendly face,
But felt deep within a friendly heart.

-Tirukkural, 79:783-86

- No fool is more foolish than one who eagerly expounds
His learning to others while failing to follow it himself.

-Tirukkural 84:833-834

- The great religions are the ships, Poets are the life boats. Every sane person I know has jumped overboard. That is good for business, isn't it Hafiz.

- Hafiz

- I speak for all but know one knows me. It was ok then and it is ok now. Ages pass, I stay the same. If I speak out I am beaten. When the veil's up, no one sees. The dog is under the haystack. Why talk and make enemies?

- Kabir

- "Into a lion's coat rushes a goat. You will recognize him by his voice: the word reveals.

- Kabir

- If one morning I walked on top of the water across the Potomac River, the headline that afternoon would read: "PRESIDENT CAN'T SWIM."

- Lyndon B. Johnson

- One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man.

- Elbert Hubbard (1856 - 1915)

- Put your hand on a hot stove for a minute, it seems like an hour. Sit with a pretty girl for an hour, and it seems like a minute. That's relativity.
- Einstein
- I have yet not been able to answer the great question that has never been answered: What does a woman want?
- Sigmund Freud
- Always laugh when you can; it is cheap medicine.
- Lord Byron
- "Keep away from small people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great."
- Mark Twain
- "When health is absent, wisdom cannot reveal itself, art cannot manifest, strength cannot fight, wealth becomes useless, and intelligence cannot be applied."
- Herophilus (100 BC)
- "To be appreciated is one of the strongest basic human needs."
- C Jung
- "A newspaper should be the maximum of information, and the minimum of comment."
- Richard Cobden (1804-1865) English politician
- After a good dinner, one can forgive anybody, even one's own relations.
- Oscar Wilde
- You miss 100% of the shots you never take.
- Wayne Gretzky

- The more you seek security, the less of it you have. But the more you seek opportunity, the more likely it is that you will achieve the security that you desire.
- Brian Tracy
- "When you hire people that are smarter than you are, you prove you are smarter than they are."
- R. H. Grant
- If you want to improve your life radically, check this out, "I have been listening to "The Dive" now for 30 days and I feel great!"
- Jim Blair
- "You can complain because roses have thorns, or you can rejoice because thorns have roses."
- Ziggy
- "Develop interest in life as you see it; in people, things, literature, music - the world is so rich, simply throbbing with rich treasures, beautiful souls and interesting people. Forget yourself."
- Henry Miller (1891 - 1980)
- "Do not hire a man who does your work for money, but him who does it for love of it."
- Henry David Thoreau (1817 - 1862)
- Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.
- T.S. Eliot
- Never miss a chance to keep your mouth shut.

- Fools paradise is a still paradise of sorts.
- K.C.Narayana.
- It is better to be a lion for a day than a sheep all your life.
- Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is a daring adventure or nothing at all.
- Helen Keller
- To avoid habits without replacement is difficult as the 'doer' dies then.
- K. C. Narayana
- Success is going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm.
- Winston Churchill
- Byron, while dedicating the fourth canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage to his friend, John Hobhouse, wrote: "To one whom I have known long, and accompanied far, whom I have found wakeful over my sickness and kind in my sorrow, glad in my prosperity and firm in my adversity, true in counsel and trusted in peril - to a friend often tried and never found wanting.
- "I refuse to accept the idea that the 'isness' of man's present nature makes him morally incapable of reaching up for the eternal 'oughtness' that forever confronts him."

- It is human to think wisely and act in an absurd fashion.

- Anatole France

- Three men went into the jungle on different occasions and saw a chameleon. "A chameleon is red," said the first man. "No a chameleon is green," said the second man. "Nonsense, a chameleon is brown," said the third man. Those who disagree about the nature of God are like these three men.

- Hindu Teaching Story

- Walking the spiritual path is a very subtle process; it is not something to jump into naively. There are numerous sidetracks which lead to a distorted, ego-centered version of spirituality; we can deceive ourselves into thinking we are developing spiritually when instead we are strengthening our egocentricity through spiritual techniques
- Life can only be understood backwards, but must be lived forwards.

- Soren Kierkegaard

- If a commandment comes your way, don't delay.

- Mekhilta, Bo

- [BUDDHISM] When you see with discernment, 'All fabrications are inconstant'--you grow disenchanted with stress. This is the path to purity.

When you see with discernment, 'All fabrications are stressful' -- you grow disenchanted with stress. This is the path to purity.

When you see with discernment, 'All phenomena are not-self' -- you grow disenchanted with stress. This is the path to purity.

-Dhammapada, 20

- Man is by nature a mystic.

- Kook, HaMahshaba HaYisraelit
