

*Lectures on Vedanta  
and  
Integration*

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गणित

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दुर्जनः सज्जनो भूयात् ,  
सज्जनश्शान्तिमाप्नुयात् ।  
शान्तो मुच्येत बन्धेभ्यो,  
मुक्तश्चान्यान् विमोचयेत् ।।

*May the wicked become gentle,  
May the gentle attain peace.  
May the peaceful get rid of the bondages,  
May the liberated liberate others.*

## PREFACE

The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;  
It rains, and the wind is never weary;  
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,  
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,  
And the day is dark and dreary.

Be still sad heart! and cease repining;  
Behind the clouds is the Sun still shining;  
Thy fate is the common fate of all,  
Into each life some rain must fall,  
Some days must be dark and dreary.

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow  
Modern Library edition, p. 671*

India is facing the same problem of disintegration as Europe faced at the time of the dissolution of the Roman Empire. It has already lost two rounds by losing Burma and Ceylon in 1935; and Pakistan, Bangladesh and Tibet in 1947. As in Europe two cultural strands are in conflict, and unless they are harmonised, disintegration is inevitable. No army can hold a determined population at bay for ever. Christian culture was superimposed on germanic, romanic, saxon and such other cultures. Eventually the spirit of these cultures asserted itself and nation-states were born. India also was a polycultural society. Hinduism harmonised them in a way that was satisfactory to all the units. Thus India remained culturally united throughout the ages. It was not political unity in the sense of a nation-state. The Hindu spirit unfolded the concept of Samrāt, which meant the most liberal federation on the political plane, with the spiritual-cultural as the unifying thread. The present age of India

begins from the Muslim conquest, which introduced the idea of political centralism along with cultural destruction, specially the spiritual element in it. Both these ideas are foreign to the indigenous population. A federal political and economic structure with near independence at the lowest level, as visualised by Mahatma Gandhi, will minimise the tensions of different geographical units. Centralism will lead to the break up of the nation. Similarly respect for the value system, and the religious and social systems of even small groups will decrease communal tensions. All religions must learn to respect the feelings of other religious groups. Merely emphasising that Hindus observe respect for others will only increase the tension. A secular nation can only insist on the secular law of the land. The fascist tendency of governmental take-over of only the temples will bring communal tension to a head to bring down the structure of cultural unity. It is equally true of social reform. Economic and social backwardness is not a monopoly of a few scheduled groups. It extends to the whole of society. Hence secular criteria must be established in place of the accident of birth. It is only then that the unity of nation can be saved.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has pointed this out in his *The Discovery of India*. 'Hinduism became the symbol of nationalism. It was indeed a national religion with its appeal to all those deep instincts, racial and cultural, which form the basis everywhere of nationalism to-day.' We have to remember that integration implies a foundation structure on which the building can be built. The present day leaders are ready to accept minority communalism, objecting only to majority communalism. This will only lead to disintegration as already seen in the case of Pakistan or Bangladesh. Throughout the foreign occupation of one thousand years we never forgot the unity of India. We continuously worked to maintain it. But today we have ceased even to dream of uniting the severed limbs, merely because we want to cater to minority communalism. Religious minority, if nationalist, will support the unity, and if the nation is secondary as far as it is concerned, the nation also will consider them as second-class citizens. West and East Germany, or South and North Korea are working towards unity. But though our bonds are stronger, we do

not feel like working towards unity. It shows that integration is not what we are aiming at. The other geographical units feel that it is only accidental that they are not a separate state. Integration, if existed, would be evident in our attitude to the geographical units that were part and parcel of India.

Pandit Nehru maintained that 'the essential characteristic of national consciousness is a sense of belonging together and of together facing the rest of mankind.' *Rest of mankind* is to be noted. If the religious sentiment differentially prefers other nation to one's own, one cannot agree that the group is integrated in the national stream.

It is our firm conviction that as far as India is concerned, integration can be founded only on the firm ground of spiritual unity. Thus integration implies a positive content. Even an agnostic like Pandit Nehru confesses: 'The environment in which I have grown up takes ātmā, future life, the Karma theory of cause and effect, and re-incarnation for granted. I have been affected by this and so in a sense, I am favourably disposed towards these assumptions.... I have been attracted towards the Advaita philosophy of the Vedānta. I realise that merely an intellectual appreciation of such matters do not carry one far.' If these concepts which are the basis of the whole freedom movement are made the foundations, integration will manifest itself in not too distant a future. But as the present stands the outlook is bleak, for the national leadership has lost a national perspective, and seems to have been imprisoned in its philosophy of surviving for the sake of surviving. It is the same spirit that prevails, whether the leadership calls itself opposition or otherwise. In these lectures we have tried to put forth a positive programme and ideal for integrity. Being a Vedānti one is always an optimist, and it is not too late to try. Yatrā naḥ pūrvē pitarāḥ pareyuh enā jajñānāḥ pathyā anu svāḥ.

Bharatiya Sanskriti Samaj took upon itself to arrange this lecture series at FICCI auditorium in the winter of 1987. The situation in Punjab, North Bengal, Assam, Kashmir, Srilanka, etc., at the present moment forces us to analyse the content of our nationalism. We feel that Vedānta, which has been the national outlook in the past, will be able to see

us through the present crisis if it is properly applied. The present analysis may help in the process.

*Shankar Math  
Mount Abu*

Maheshanand Giri

## LECTURE ONE

We are going to discuss the problem of integration. First, we had discussed Vedānta and the twenty-first century, that is, the future. Then we had discussed Vedānta and the art of living: How are we going to move into the twenty-first century, how are we going to prepare ourselves for that future? We had also discussed the problems of modern society, that is, the field in which we have to function. Now we will address ourselves to the task of integration. Modern society is basically a society which is continuously differentiating itself. The whole scientific outlook of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has affected our social as well as intellectual thinking in such a way so as to compartmentalise our knowledge, our emotions, our feelings, our actions, our attitude towards society, that the problem arises: are we basically different or are we basically integrated? We must first find out what we mean by the term integration. The word integration is an interesting one. It is derived from the Latin word 'tangere', which means to touch. From the same root we have tact, tactual, tactual sensation, contact. Basically 'intangere' means untouched, that which is whole, which is complete in itself, which has not been created by different units coming together and touching each other. It is whole in itself. In the same sense, we use the word integer number as compared to fractional number; integer number is a whole number, fractional number is not a whole number. Thus, what Vedānta emphasises is that the universe is a whole, it is not made up of different parts which have come together but it is a whole by nature.

The word can be derived in yet another way. Though the root is the same, it is past participle of it. Then it implies the meaning—making a thing whole so as 'to renew', that which has been made whole. Vedānta emphasises that it is not *made* whole, but it *is* whole. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad on which we are going to base our concepts, adheres to this



original meaning of integration. It says, 'In the beginning this (world) was only the self in the form of a person looking around he saw nothing else than the self so he uttered "I am" first of all'.<sup>1</sup> This is from the First Chapter, Fourth Brahmana. The Upaniṣad begins with the assertion 'self alone existed in the beginning'. Before the manifestation of all this variety of name and form we perceive today and even the differentiation that we conceive, did not exist as differentiation, but existed as Brahman which means the whole, the complete. This means 'the world'. According to Vedānta, the manifested world, all that we observe, is merely name and form. Basically, human beings think either of forms, things as they themselves are, or in terms of words. Thus the whole universe which we perceive is constituted of name-form complex. This is what we mean by 'aggregate'. The world which is perceived consists of name and object if you would like to call it, though we prefer to use the term 'form' instead of object. There is a reason for this. A thing can be a subject and an object at different times, but its 'form' remains unchanged. For instance, when we are reading a book, the letters are the objects, and the eye through which the letters are being read is part of the subject. But when we go to an optician to get our eye examined, then the eye becomes the object, and the mind becomes the subject, because it is the 'eye' that we are going to observe. We objectify it. The mind in this case is part and parcel of the subjective element. When we sit for meditation, or to contemplate, we find that our mind is peaceful. At that time the mind becomes objectified, and the perceiver, the witness, becomes the subject. In short, a thing can become a subject or an object at different times, but it remains and retains its original form as it is. That is why we use the terms name and form instead of name and object, or word and object.

The Upaniṣad does not say that the name-form complex did not exist. That is the important point—'This was'. All this did exist but existed as Brahman, existed as a whole. Let us consider an example to illustrate this point. There is darkness in the room and one cannot see anything, that does not mean that nothing exists in the room—tables, chairs, everything is in its place. One cannot see things

because they are covered with darkness. As soon as the room is lit up, one can see everything. This does not mean that anything is being produced. It just becomes manifest to us. It was not manifest earlier. Thus, the Upaniṣad does not say that nothing existed. It says, 'this was only self'. All this existed but it was not differentiated, it existed as a whole. What was that Brahman, how did it exist? Did it exist as a lump of clay? The Upaniṣad goes on to elaborate: 'in the form of a person'. The entity Brahman was conscious and conscious of its own self. Hence, it was not a mass or lump of clay but it was a living entity, a conscious entity.

The question arises: How did it know itself? 'I am', I am the whole. Thus everything was integral to start with. This does not refer to an isolated passage in the Upaniṣads. Whether one reads the Aitareya Upaniṣad or the Taittirīya Upaniṣad, all start with the assertion that in the beginning the whole existed. It was neither differentiated nor compartmentalised nor fractionalised; it existed as the whole. Thus the Hindu view is that the universe is basically an integral (whole) and therefore needs no integration, we have only to realise that it is an 'integral whole', that knowledge has to dawn. This realisation makes a fundamental difference in our attitude towards others, whether they are individuals or societies. As an individual, we can say that we have a body, we have senses, we have a mind, we have an intellect, we have feelings, and so many other different aspects which constitute the 'I'. Is 'I' a conglomeration of all this? Has 'I' come into being by adding all these things? Or, does it exist as the person, as something integral, which is manifesting itself, expressing itself, through the body, mind, intellect, feelings, etc. It may be expressing itself through all these things, but it is one whole. The Hindu view holds that the body, mind, etc., are different facets. Integration has not to be achieved, it already exists. By not realising the integral aspect of individuality, we have created barriers and are, therefore, not able to express and manifest that integrity. Hence, the śruti repeatedly emphasises this wholeness. The Taittirīya Upaniṣad starts with the assertion that it is that Ātman which takes the form of Ānandamaya Kośa, Vijnānamaya Kośa, Manomaya Kośa, Prāṇamaya Kośa, and Annamaya Kośa. All these Kośas are facets through which Ātman expresses itself, but it

basically remains an integral whole.

The same is true of India, of a nation, of humanity. The Vedānta view is that India as a nation is an integral whole. Integration is not something to be achieved. We are erroneously fragmenting it into different units; we must realise the totality of it. Unfortunately, on the national level we were under the yoke of foreign rulers for many centuries. They tried to emphasise that India was not a political unit and, therefore, it was in a state of dis-integration. They could perceive only political unity as integrity. Therefore they believed that by bringing about political unity they had integrated the nation.

After the departure of the foreign rulers, those at the helm of affairs were not ones who were born as Indians but those who had discovered India, basically through the English language. As our slavery was through that language, this idea became embedded in our consciousness. We started believing that India was always disintegrated, and it was only now that integration had taken place. Thus, even after the British left, we did not realise that political differentiation or different political rulers do not comprise the basic integrity of a nation. This has been the main cause of the present ideological fragmentation of India. The real cause is that we have not been able to emphasise the basic integrity of the nation.

Long before any so-called political integration took place, a person born in Rameshwaram always dreamt of visiting Badrinath, Kedarnath to bring the waters of the Ganges to Rameshwaram. A person born in Kashmir always thought of going on a pilgrimage to Kanyakumari, Cape Comorin, and offer his worship there. This unity, this integrity, this wholeness existed, in spite of the fact that there were any number of political units. Emphasising merely the political uniformity, we are not, and will not be, able to maintain the real integration. It is only when we realise the reality of integration that is non-political that integration will be achieved. As long as we believe that integration has to be attained, we will always have two options: either to preserve our identity or to be integrated. We have also fractionalised our personal lives, our religious lives. I am as much a man of feeling, as of thought, as of action. So to say that mere emotion or

mere action is enough for a person is out of the question. He has to exist on all the three levels. Once fragmentation sets in, we have different paths to attain God, different ways to perfect ourselves. Devotion is one way, Rajyoga is another, dispassionate action yet another, thinking, analysing 'Vichāra' is still another. But we accept that a person is an integral whole, he has all three aspects and unless they are completely manifested in their wholeness, there is no question of attaining the final beatitude. Similarly, we see fragmentation in religion. And once fragmentation sets in, we start thinking which form is better and which form is worse. We want to know which is a better way, or an easier way, because we feel that we have a choice. What Vedānta says is that we are endowed with three powers—intellection, emotion and action. They exist in us and they cannot be taken away from our personality. So we have to perfect all of them. There is no choice. Similarly if the nation has to be integrated, it is natural that we talk of Sikh identity, Muslim identity, Tamil identity, Gujarati identity, etc., because Bhārat-identity has still to be achieved. Vedānta, on the other hand, asserts that Indian unity, Indian integrity exists; Sikh, Muslim, Tamil, Gujarati, Oria, etc., are all facets of that one identity—the Bhārat-identity.

In every big Vedic sacrifice, a massive wooden octagonal pillar is constructed, the Vedas call it the yūpam. It shines when polished and reflects the sun. Hence the Veda asserts, ādityo vai yūpaḥ. Further it says, yūpam aṣṭāśī karoti. Thus it has eight different facets, it has been polished in a particular fashion, erected in a particular way, etc. It is really only one yūpa, though it has eight different facets. Similarly, the śruti says that the whole of humanity is like a yūpa: it is one, but it has different facets. The sun shines differently in the morning, noon, afternoon and evening on that particular yūpa, giving it different shapes, different colours, but the yūpa remains the same. Similarly, the Vedas assert that the nation, humanity, etc., is basically an integrated whole, only reflecting the different facets, the different expressions of the same Godhead. When we analyse, we find that each nation has a special contribution to make, and necessarily, the various nations depend on each other. Similarly, every different part of the nation contributes towards the harmony of a national ethos.



What is true in the case of the individual, is also true in the case of the society. The important point when we define integration is that it is an organisation—just as the body consists of many organs, but all organs are in a harmonious relationship with each other. We cannot say that the liver was brought from one place, the heart from somewhere else, the kidney from another and then they were put together, and the body came into being. All the organs are equally essential at every stage. Though they appear to be absolutely different from each other yet together they form an organisation, and there may be various traits. We often hear people say that we should 'see unity in diversity'. It is very easy to say this, but how are we going to 'see unity in diversity', unless the unity is already existing. As in the human body, so in the national body all the different aspects, all the various traits, feelings, attitudes, should form a unified field. All the different facets necessarily need each other, as in the case of the yūpa. It will not be octagonal, unless every facet is present. If we remove one facet, seven facets will remain and it will no longer be octagonal, it will not be a yūpa any more. All facets are equally important and need each other equally, and are in harmony with each other.

Just as in the case of the individual body harmony is important, the need of each organ for the existence of the other organs is necessary, so also in the national body all the different regions are equally important, they need each other. Otherwise they will not be a whole.

It is natural for any society to be divided functionally. The way the Veda explains society is very interesting. We have divided society in a very peculiar way. We have the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas, the Vaiśyas, and the Shudras. The Brāhmaṇa is supposed to do intellectual work, but can he do his intellectual work without money? No. So he needs the Vaiśya. Can he do his intellectual work, unless there is law and order in the society? No. So he needs the Kṣatriya. Can he do his intellectual work, unless there are people to perform certain functions? No. So he needs the Shudra. Similarly, the Kṣatriya needs the Brāhmaṇa to guide him, the Vaiśya to provide him, the Shudra to perform certain functions. So each unit needs the other equally and cannot exist without the other. That is why we cannot think of a

movement of Brahmanistan because that movement would imply that only intellectuals will live there.

On the other hand, when we think in geographical terms, we feel that things can be done independent of each other in that geographical complex. Why do we hear of different geographical regions trying to assert themselves as if they can exist independently? Because they do not feel that other parts are equally important for them, for their own existence. While the important fact is that integration is something to be *realised*. Unity in diversity has to be *realised*. Unity is not something to be super-imposed.

There is an interesting story of Tripurāsuras in the scriptures. There were three Asuras named Tārakāksha, Vidyumālī and Kamalāksha. Their father was killed by Kārtikeya, so they decided that they should attain powers through austerities to be able to avenge his death. This is one of the most important elements of the unity of what I call Bhārat-consciousness. We have always believed that powers come from within through austerity; while others are of the view that powers come from outside. Hence they try to acquire powers through accessories, by acquiring arms and ammunitions, by accumulating wealth, by acquiring things external to themselves. On the other hand, we have always emphasised that power comes from within through austerities. Austerity implies sacrificing sense enjoyment. Power does not emanate from sense enjoyment, but it comes from renouncing these enjoyments.

Most of the other nations of the world have never emphasised this aspect of austerity. This, however, does not mean that austerity cannot be seen there, but it is not accepted as an ideal to be practised by those who have. They believe that austerity is something to be practised by those who do not have. Whereas our Indian way of thinking is just the opposite. Here even the Asuras, that is, those who are not really wedded to the divine ideal, practised austerity when they wanted power. They followed the path of truth, which is a great austerity.

Today most people believe that it is not easy to be truthful. What they really mean is that they are not prepared to practise austerity for the sake of truth. Or, that they are not ready to become austere enough, to suffer, for the sake of



truth. Though they were Asuras, yet they were part and parcel of the 'integrated Bhārat', and were aware of the values which would give them powers. They practised deep meditation and eventually Lord Brahmā appeared before them and told them to ask for any boon they wanted. They asked for immortality. Lord Brahmā said that it was not possible to make them immortal. They could, however, wish for any condition which would be hard enough to fulfil to bring about their mortality. They could make their death as difficult as possible. But nothing in the universe can be immortal. The Asuras then asked for three cities—or we can call them forts—one made of gold, another of silver and the third of iron. As long as these were in harmony, nobody would be able to kill them. Brahmā agreed and granted them their wish. The Asuras were quite sure that since they loved each other, nothing would be able to create disharmony amongst them, and hence they would be immortalised.

However, the main difference between the Asuras and the Devas is that the Devas practised austerity—sacrificing sense enjoyments, adhering to the truth, practising deep meditation naturally, whereas the Asuras practised austerity as an imposition—not as their natural self, but to attain something. That attainment always was a luxury. As soon as they were granted their wish, they began to lead a luxurious life. First, they went all round the three worlds and conquered them. It is a lesson to be learnt that the moment luxuries are acquired, harmony no longer exists. We think that if there is economic prosperity harmony will prevail. Economic prosperity leads to luxury. Luxuries do not bring harmony, they bring disharmony. Āchārya Śaṅkara says that there is not even a morsel of food for which someone else is not desirous. Whenever there is an object, there will always be many people desiring it. And because that thing will be denied to many people, there is bound to be conflict. To put it in a gross way, if a father has left no property and wealth, there will be no litigation amongst the brothers. However, if there is property and wealth, there is bound to be some litigation.

Thus, it is not through luxuries and economic prosperity that integration will be achieved. This point should not be misunderstood. It is not to say that there should be no

economic growth, the word being used here is 'prosperity'. A person is prosperous only when there are many others who do not have those prosperities. For instance, if every one in a village has 500 rupees, then no one can be called prosperous. However, if one person has 500 rupees, another 100 rupees, yet another person has nothing, only then can we say that a person with 500 rupees is prosperous. We are not against economic development of all people at the same time. Prosperity implies that some have and others do not have. There is a natural development when people work. But the moment we start working for ourselves at the cost of others, prosperity comes into being. Thus economic prosperity will lead to conflicts. The same was seen in the case of the Asuras. Along with luxury there was increasing disharmony.

In the meanwhile, the Devas felt that it was time to act. So they approached Lord Siva and prayed that since the Asuras were not following the path of virtue, they should be punished. Lord Siva told them that though there was no harmony among the Asuras, yet they still had a goal, an ideal. As long as any group of people, any nation, for that matter any individual, has a shining goal, an ideal in front of them/him, they/he cannot be easily destroyed. Lord Siva then asked Viṣṇu to go and preach to them what was in their heart, their innermost convictions, which they were not manifesting: 'Swarga and Naraka are here on this earth, everything is here, there is nothing to be attained later on. Virtue and vice are nothing but joys and sorrows on this earth.' The same is true of our nation, we are not ready to attach any value to virtue simply because it is a virtue. Even in the field of religion this decadence has set in. For example, if we go to a Hanūmān temple, we will find a long queue. There may be 100, 200 or even 400 people standing in the queue for hours together. If we were to ask each of them whether they had come to offer prays to attain God realisation, to attain powers to be truthful, to avoid disharmony, we will be surprised that not one person would be praying for virtue. They would probably be praying so that they could win a litigation, in which they are the defaulting party. Or, they want to undercut someone else. Or, they want to be cured of some disease which they may have acquired

by indulging in extreme sense enjoyments. The desire for 'virtue for virtue's sake' was not present in the mind of the Asuras. But Viṣṇu made this weakness manifest. So he further said, 'This universe has been existing like this. There is no God who created the universe. It is existing by itself.'<sup>2</sup>

In this way the ideal that had kept them together was abandoned. The moment virtue is abandoned, ideals also cease to exist. And when ideals are not present, there is no unity to be perceived.

The Asuras had been continuously working for the good of each other, they had not been working for the good of the whole universe, for the good of all beings. When they stopped working for the good of their own society, they began to strive for the good of their individual selves.

Women generally preserve values, even after the men have given them up, because women basically have a sense of preservation. But how long can a thing be preserved, until and unless it is continuously created? There is a saying that if fresh water does not come into the well, even the deepest well will dry up. It is through continuous creation of the values of virtue that this preservation can take place, when that ceases bad conduct becomes the norm. Here we are talking of Tripurāsura, not of present India, 'Raksha' becomes 'Rākshasa'. Once an officer at Jodhpur Railway Station told me an interesting thing. He said that if a person came to him for a seat on a train, he would give him a seat and not take any bribe. But after having given him the seat, the officer would tell the passenger that he had done his duty, and the passenger should know what his duty is. If the passenger did not comply and do his duty, then he would know that the passenger was not a gentleman and the next time, the officer would not perform his duty towards him. This is called 'good conduct'. Bad conduct becomes 'good conduct', the norm. Every vicious act is formalised. Every vice is known before; what is to be done and what is not to be done. Now Lord Śiva was ready to attack the Asuras. Though the Supreme-Self could do anything He liked, yet He wanted to teach us. Lord Śiva told the Devas that He needed a chariot, because only by riding a chariot could He go and conquer the Asuras. He also told them that for that chariot He needed the help of all the Devas.

The chariot was made:<sup>3</sup> Soma was the left wheel of the chariot and Sūrya the right wheel. All the deities assumed different positions. Brahmā was the charioteer, the arrow was Viṣṇu, the earth itself the base, the Meru mountain the bow, etc. When Siva went to attack the Asuras, they tried to become harmonious. They tried to integrate themselves. But it was too late. Once the ideal of virtue is abandoned integration becomes impossible. The Lord was able to burn them away with the help of all the deities. He tried to emphasise and make it clear that it is through co-ordinated effort that any great thing can be attained.

It is very easy to break a system. But unless we are able to introduce another system which is better than the previous one, that destruction is of no use. A disintegrated society can be easily destroyed but unless we know how to bring about integration in that society, we can do no good to it. Mere destruction is no solution. With the help of this story, the Lord made it clear that the integrated Devas were ready to take over from the disintegrated Asuras.

This Tripurāsura is both personal as well as social. Intellection, emotion and action must be integrated. We will deal with this problem in detail. These three constitute the personal Tripura. They are integrated to some extent otherwise we would not be living; but if that integration is real, not imposed, then it will be like that of the Devas. On the other hand, if integration is only for a purpose, then it is similar to that of the Asuras, a momentary integration but eventual disintegration. These three elements are present in the national conscience as well. Unless intellectually, philosophically, we find harmony in the nation; unless our hearts bleed for our values because it is these which give us the motion, the emotion; and unless we are able to move with one-pointed goal before us, national dis-integration cannot be prevented. Through the illustration of Tripurāsura, the scriptures laid before humanity—the individual as well as the society—to realise this integration. Integration is not merely a word. It is a real experience of one wholeness. Just as when one says 'I', one's body, one's mind, everything is included in it, as an experience. To explain to others, one may say, 'This is my belief, this is what I think, this is what I have done, etc.' One may try to explain

to others, but one's feeling of 'I' is that of unity. It is a real, palpable experience. Similarly, when we talk of national unity, of national integration, it is not a mere word—it is a feeling, an innermost feeling. We may not even express it in words. For example, a Hindu would say that he is an Agarwal, or a Khatri, or a Brāhmana, a Saraswat. But if he is asked whether he is a Hindu, his reply will be 'Of course'. He may not at first say that he is a Hindu, but deep within that consciousness exists. Similarly, if the consciousness of Bhārat integration exists in us—no matter what we say, no matter what we utter through words, that palpable sensation will be there that we are all one—then we have attained that integrity. It has been revealed to us. How to attain this integration through these three means of intellection, emotion, and action, will be discussed later.

## LECTURE TWO

We had discussed the problem of integration, and the message Vedānta has to give regarding it. We analysed what we mean by the term integration and pointed out that it is the wholeness, that which is untouched. The different facets lead us to believe that there is variety. Unity is real and it has to be realised, it is not to be achieved or super-imposed. It had been pointed out earlier that human personality consists basically of intellection, emotion and action.

Man is a rational animal, and this is a generally used expression. We cannot give our hearts, our emotions completely and thoroughly to anything, unless we are rationally convinced that what we have chosen is real and true. Reason has its own limitations, it cannot lead to new knowledge. We have to realise this. But reason is the touchstone by which we are able to make a distinction between real knowledge and false knowledge. Reason does not help us to realise something new, to have a new experience, but once we have had the experience, it helps in testing it. It is true that modern man is often not conscious of the limitations of reason. He thinks that reason can give him the Final Truth. But the Final Truth dawns only after experience. How are we going to test it? How are we going to find out if a particular knowledge is true or false?

In a slightly darkened room, we see a snake. Once the light is switched on we see a rope. As far as the experience is concerned both are equally true. We have no way of finding out by experience alone that one is true and the other false. Only by reasoning out can we determine the truth: if the



snake was real it would have been there in spite of the light. The light could not have destroyed the snake. Again, the snake could not have evaporated even if it was destroyed, there would be some remnants. The very spot where we saw the snake earlier, we see a rope, two things cannot occupy the same location. We go through these reasonings consciously or unconsciously, and then come to the conclusion that the experience of the rope is a true experience, and that of the snake, a false one. Analysis alone can convince us of the truth of the experience. We may go wrong in our reasoning, that is a different matter which we will discuss later, but it is reason alone that will convince us, nothing else, that one experience has a true object while the other a false one.

Are we having the experience according to the object, or are we having the experience which does not co-relate to the particular object in front of us? The conviction about this comes through reasoning; the reality of the experience can never be questioned. No matter how many experiences we have of an object, we can never be sure unless we have reasoned it out. Therefore in the most important prayer of Hinduism—the Gayatri—we pray to the Lord 'to guide our reasoning, our intellectual faculty, our rationality, so that we do not make a mistake, we do not accept falsity as reality.'

In our universities in ancient India it was emphasised that everyone be taught proper ways of reasoning. Often enough we reason incorrectly, wrongly, and thus come to wrong conclusions. This is because we have not been trained in the science of reasoning. In our curriculum *ānvīkṣikī*, *trayī vārtā* and *daṇḍanīti* were compulsory for everyone. *Ānvīkṣikī* is the right way of reasoning. Whatever we have heard or whatever we have experienced has to be analysed. How are we going to analyse it? The science of reasoning is known as *Ānvīkṣikī*. *Trayī*, i.e., spiritual, moral and religious subjects were also compulsorily taught.

*Dandaṇīti* means the civil and criminal laws of the country. *Vārtā* is the means of livelihood. These four subjects were compulsorily taught. Unless a person has adequate knowledge of these sciences, he cannot live in a society. Socially, we are not able to communicate with each

other properly because we have not been taught these sciences. Every individual is supposed to live according to these laws.

In modern times we have abandoned these subjects. We leave it to the lawyers to study law. We have to live according to the laws which have not been taught to us, neither the civil laws nor the criminal laws and, if I may add, nor the laws of taxation. Everyone must be taught how he is to pay his taxes. But they do not want to teach these laws because the law-makers are not sure of the laws themselves.

Laws cannot be changed at will. They have something permanent about them. We cannot say that one day we will follow one law and the next day we will follow another law. Yet we are continuously in the process of changing the laws. If we ask the parliamentarians, who are the makers of laws, to tell us all the laws that we are supposed to follow, all the legalities. They themselves would say that they do not know the laws. So even the law-makers do not know the laws. Even the people who give decisions, the judges, have to be made aware of the laws by the lawyers. Once things become as complicated as that we force the people to break laws consciously or unconsciously, knowingly or unknowingly.

In the same way, virtues have to be taught. Unless we give proper virtue orientation, how do we expect people to follow them. Everyone must live, and so he must have a means of livelihood. Of course, that is one aspect that we are not overlooking.

The only compulsory subject which teaches us, to some extent, how to reason, is mathematics. Fortunately, mathematics is still a compulsory subject. When we have a rational approach we find that for any knowledge we must have the proper apparatus for knowing, which is called 'Pramāṇa'. Gautama says that liberation can be attained only by knowing the truth. But how are we going to get the certitude about the truth of knowledge? He lays down sixteen fundamentals which make us realise whether a particular knowledge is really valid, whether it is according to the reality or not, and whether it is false or true knowledge.

He begins with *Pramāṇa* the apparatus through which we will know the truth. We must be sure that the means of



knowledge—light, its colour, eyes, the mind, all the means for knowing a particular object are present. Otherwise in a diffused red light we may see violet, which in sunlight will not be so. So we must test the apparatus with the help of which we are going to examine anything. It is a mistake we often make: we do not examine the particular apparatus through which we will know a thing. Just as in the example of mistaking a rope for a snake. The main reason was that we took dim light for granted and expected real knowledge of the object in that light. The apparatus basically are our senses. The senses report to us, but they are coloured by our impressions most of the time. We see a thing as we would like to see it.

An experiment was conducted in the United States. People were made to fast for ten days and then leather was burnt in another room. All of them thought that something was being cooked. When overcome by hunger, we will immediately perceive a thing as edible. Others who were not fasting, knew immediately that leather was being burnt. This is true of most of our experiences. Whenever our mind is coloured, we will not see things properly.

There is an interesting story. Hanūmān also, it seems, wrote a Rāmāyana. Some passages of it are found even now. When he learnt that Vālmīki, the great sage, had written the Rāmāyana, he went to him and said, 'Let us compare our works. If I have missed a point, I will include it in mine. If you have missed something you can take it from my version and include it in yours.' Vālmīki agreed. When they were comparing notes, most of the events and descriptions reported were similar. But when they came to Hanūmān's visit to Lankā, their versions differed. Hanūmān had reported that all the flowers there were red in colour. So he told Vālmīki that Vālmīki had described flowers of different hues; whereas they were all red in colour. Vālmīki said that he was not wrong. Hanūmān was aghast, Hanūmān said, 'I went there and saw the flowers, how can you say that I am wrong?' Vālmīki, however, remained calm and said, 'You might have seen the flowers as red, but what I saw was through deep concentration and meditation, through samādhi. My knowledge cannot be wrong.' Hanūmān thought that how could they decide who was right.

Eventually he said, 'Let us ask Lord Rām and he will decide for us'. Hanūmān was absolutely sure of his position, because he himself had seen the flowers. They went to Lord Rām. Rām said that Vālmīki was correct and Hanūmān was wrong. Hanūmān thought that Lord Rām was taking sides, as Vālmīki was a great Brāhmaṇa and he was only a poor monkey. However, Lord Rām explained to him, 'It is not so. You were so angry that your eyes had become red and so you saw the flowers as red. They were not red really.' Hanūmān was extremely disturbed and said, 'Let my Rāmāyana be destroyed. If it is not authoritative, it is not worth keeping'. Thus, we can see that if our minds are coloured, everything appears coloured.

This is what happens most of the time. This leads to lack of communication between different social groups, and lack of communication even within our own selves. When we are dealing with different social groups, if we are not conscious of the fact that our minds may be tricking us in thinking what we think as correct, we will always make decisions and be sure of them while in reality they will be false. It is true also when we are dealing with knowledge that is handed down to us through tradition, or by other people. There are two ways of knowing anything: one is through our senses and the other through verbal knowledge which other people give to us of their experiences. Man is unique in the sense that he is able to receive knowledge from his contemporaries as well as from the past. The past experience is handed down traditionally. It is this which gives him the freedom to experiment. Animals also experiment, but their experiments are repeated generation after generation, because they have no way to hand down the knowledge which they have acquired. Words are a source through which we can know precisely what Vālmīki, Kṛṣṇa, or Vasiṣṭha talked about a subject. It is only through words that we are able to receive the knowledge. So our means of knowledge, to a great extent, is verbal transmission; either of the traditional lore, or that of our contemporaries. Words cannot be so exact as to give the proper meaning, unless we have made our minds so pure, that we are able to observe things as they are. The mind requires a lot of training for that.

What we call proper verbal knowledge is that which comes from an āpta puruṣa. The word āpta puruṣa means a person who is authoritative on a subject, has said it intentionally to impart correct knowledge, and has absolutely no benefit to derive from our gaining that knowledge. Technically we call such a person as bereft of bhrama, pramāda and vipralipsā.

First, the person who is imparting the knowledge must be an authoritative person. For instance, Einstein may be a great physicist, but if he said something about politics or about mystic experience, we have to take it with a pinch of salt. Because he was not an authority on that subject. He may be otherwise a great person. We have to find out whether the verbal knowledge that we are receiving is being handed down to us by an authoritative person, whether he is intentionally giving the correct knowledge. A person may know a lot of things but it is not necessary that every time he may want to convey the exact knowledge to the other person.

In the West it is a tradition to make a small speech after dinner. Someone made an after dinner speech, in which he quoted Shakespeare wrong. He quoted from 'Othello' and said that it was from 'As You Like it'. Another person got up and pointed out that he was wrong. The man who was making the speech said that a great authority on Shakespeare was present among them and the matter may be referred to him. The person who was an authority on Shakespeare said that the speaker was correct. The person who had objected was very disturbed.

The next day he went with a book in his hand to the person who was an authority on Shakespeare. Before he could say anything or show him the book, the person said, 'Well, you want to show me the page, I can tell you from ten different editions, the page numbers and the line numbers. But that person was making an after dinner speech. It was not a dissertation on Shakespeare. There was no point in discussing it there.' So many times a person may know a thing, but it is not necessary that every time he wants to impart its exactitude to the other person. Unless something is told intentionally, it is not authoritative. This has been discussed in great detail in our Śāstras.

How do we interpret the different passages in the Vedas? We have to first determine in a given context the purport. What is the real purpose? For example, creation is described in the Vedas. Sometimes the creation starts from fire, sometimes from water and at other times from ether. The question arises: what was it that was first created? From where did creation start? Āchārya Gauḍapāda says, 'The passages that you are referring to are not the science of creation'. They are there to teach you the reality of Brahman, and the other things are there only to make certain points clear.<sup>5</sup>

The science of creation was not being taught. Hence the process and chain of creation was unimportant in those particular passages. This is true of many other different passages in the Vedas. It is a vast literature and it is not possible to interpret it properly, unless we know the definite rules of interpretation. A person may not be attentive while imparting that knowledge at that particular moment. This is what we mean by pramāda.

The third thing is Vipralipsā. If a person has any ulterior motive, any benefit to derive from our gaining the knowledge that he has imparted, he can never be faithful to knowledge as such. As, for instance, in the case of lawyers. A lawyer knows the laws relating to both sides of the case; but in the court he will present only those particular arguments, which he thinks will benefit his client. He is aware of the counter-arguments but he will not present them. So we cannot say that he knows only this set of laws. We will not go to an advocate and say that such and such a law exists, did he not know about it, for his reply will be that that law is for his opponent to know and not for him.

There is an interesting anecdote. Ras Behari was a great lawyer, but he used to drink a lot. When presenting a case in the court, he would make sure that there were a few lawyers nearby who would check him if he made a mistake. The other lawyers were usually quite junior, and it took them a lot of courage to point out his mistakes. In a particular pleading, every time they tried to draw his attention, he just told them to be quiet. Eventually things went too far and someone had to make him realise what he was doing. They told him that they were to plead for what

he was pleading against. He told them that they should have pointed it out earlier. He continued with the argument a little longer and then said that he had presented these counter-arguments which his opponent would have presented to save the time of the court and that he would now answer these counter-arguments. He was able to win the case. Whenever a person has any ulterior motive, anything to gain, he may not reveal the truth. When we take verbal testimony, we have to take these three things into consideration. And having taken them into consideration we have to depend upon it.

There is another point which we must take into consideration, this is something which is not easily accessible to the modern man, this is what we call *saniśya*, that is, doubt. As long as we have certitude of a particular knowledge we will not think about it. To start a thought pattern, we need *saniśya*, the ability to see antithetical points of view.

Āchārya Vāchaspati Mīśra begins the discussion on the Brahmasutra with the question: why should anyone want to inquire into Brahman? People know what they are and they are quite satisfied with that knowledge. He goes on to say that if a person is convinced he will not make an attempt to analyse. This is so even if it is false knowledge. A person may be sure of a false knowledge as much as of the right knowledge. All enquiry *mīmamsā* starts with *saniśya*, a doubt.

We see variety all around us. But at the same time we have an inner feeling that there is a thread of unity passing through all the variety, tying it together. When we study the Vedic passages which say that God is the thread which passes through all of us, binding us together, we know that it is in the unity of God that all this diversity exists. When we study these passages indicating the unity of all existence, our mind starts thinking: Is what the Vedas say real, or is our perception real? It is then that the doubt arises in our minds. We take for granted that this world is real, the variety is real, but when we come across the Vedic passages: 'all the variety that you see is not really real'<sup>6</sup> we start analysing. There is a doubt in our minds—Is the variety real? Or, is the unity real? The Vedas, the great mystics, and

is have all along been talking of unity; not only in India but all over the world. There is always the mystic call to unity. When these two ideas present themselves before us, we must be ready to accept them, and analyse them both. Often we live in our own cobwebs of thoughts, hence we do not see the resonability in any other point of view.

The moment we hear words like 'the variety you see is not real',<sup>7</sup> our immediate reaction is that this must be referring to something else. It must not be referring to this world as we see it. Immediately we alter the thought: a stage will come when nothing will remain; perhaps after dissolution; perhaps after we go to the seventh heaven; perhaps when we enter *samādhi*. But a person who does not live in his own cobweb of thoughts, knows that the Vedas are not saying that all this variety *will not* exist or all this variety *did not* exist. They are asserting an eternal truth—all this variety *does not* exist. So they are referring to something here and now, not to any other state or experience.

We are not saying that we should just accept every verbal testimonial. We are seeing variety, just as we saw the snake in the darkened room. If, however, someone says that it is not a snake but a rope, then we must switch on the light and find out the truth for ourselves. This means that we must not judge before analysing. This is the reason why a tradition of *Sāstrārtha*, that is, to solve a dispute through discussion, developed in India. Discussion is a very peculiar term in the Indian context. We start with the assumption that when a person talks seriously he is trying to convey some truth, it may be only an iota of truth, or it may be the whole truth; but when a person talks to convey seriously, he is trying to convey something to us. We open up to receive what he is trying to convey. In India we have never followed the tradition of having a closed mind. We never accepted that God is a closed book, or that Nature is a closed book. We accepted eternal revelation. God is revealing Himself eternally through Nature, through our mind, through all our experiences; and therefore we must experience, analyse the experience, and reach a conclusion. So the moment we talked to anyone we tried to open up, tried to understand what he was trying to convey, and in



the process informed him of our own experience, and thereby reached a conclusion which was acceptable to both of us. The word used was Vāda. People who do not adhere to any particular theory, discuss amongst themselves to arrive at a mutually acceptable view. This is called Vāda. It was through śāstrārtha, trying to explain his experiences, that Buddha preached throughout India what he had realised. Similarly Śaṅkara preached what he had realised. They went everywhere not to proselytise, not to change a person's point of view, but to understand him, to explain to him.

When Śaṅkara went to Mandana Miśra, another great scholar, to discuss the purport of the Veda, there had to be someone to decide when they were discussing. Śaṅkara told Mandana Miśra that since his wife was a great scholar, she should be the mediator. This is something which the modern man cannot think of; to rely upon the opponent's wife to decide. This goes to show the level of education women had in those days. They discussed for seventeen days and eventually Mandana Miśra accepted that he could not refute Śaṅkara's position. Then he posed a question: 'What you have pointed out logically has convinced me. But I have been following the great sage Jaimini. How could he have gone wrong?' Śaṅkara did not say that Jaimini was wrong. He pointed out that Jaimini wanted to convey a particular knowledge and therefore he did not stress the other point of view. Śaṅkara explained that which Jaimini had defined in his own words, what Jaimini had actually meant. This is what we mean by vāda. It is not that we are convincing another person. We are both working together to find out the truth. This applies even to the teacher and the disciple. We did not accept the view that the teacher would impart knowledge to the pupil, it was not a submissive acceptance. We believed that to attain knowledge both will work together.<sup>8</sup> Every time a teacher teaches a student, he learns something from the student. If he has not learnt something from the student, he has failed as a teacher. Every student contributes some particular facet, some question which the teacher never thought was needed to throw fresh light on the subject. This is a continuous process of education. The disciple is not merely

a submissive participant, he is an active partner. Thus sanīśya is a very important thing. An ancient tradition has emphasised it. Even the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, in the Yajurveda, emphasises this point repeatedly: 'Those who are knowers of the tradition, sit down and discuss.'<sup>9</sup>

The Upanisadic sages often got together and discussed questions like what is the ultimate cause of the universe. The Śwetāśweta Upaniṣad begins with a discussion about the ultimate cause of the universe amongst six sages.<sup>10</sup> One of the sages believed that time is the ultimate cause. Another asserted that the nature of things in themselves is the cause, and there is no other cause. Another sage believed that destiny is the cause of the universe, God destines things to happen. One of the sages asserted that chance is the only cause. The universe emerges from chance. Perhaps, most modern people believe in chance as the ultimate cause, and the government reinforces this belief by having different lotteries in every state. They teach us that it is chance alone that will make us rich and we need not work for it. Someone says that it is matter, another believes that it is energy or consciousness. Though each one may have a different viewpoint, but the important thing is that they sat down and discussed it. Today, we have ceased to have discussions.

One of the main reasons for the growth of communalism is that there is no communication between different communal groups. We do not discuss with each other. Of course, at times meetings of all the religious groups are organised, but they are not organised with the intention of sharing ideas. We do not attend these meetings with an open mind to learn something, to convey something to the other party. Most of the time the attitude is: 'I scratch your back, you scratch my back'. Thus a Hindu will say Mohammedanism is alright and a Muslim will say that Hinduism is alright. If we ask either of them what he knows about Mohammedanism or Hinduism the answer will be that they know nothing. Such meetings do not enlighten them about the different aspects of each other's religion. There is no give and take. There is no śāstrārtha, there is no discussion. Unfortunately, India is not utilising what God has bequeathed to India. All the different religions exist here. It is a great opportunity for us to learn, to understand, to share and thereby to develop what is called the science of



religion. We do not have a German science, a French science or a Russian science. The scientific truths are there for everyone to take advantage of. Similarly mystic experiences must be available to each one to take advantage of them. We must share with others to the extent that we are able to present the other man's viewpoint even more vigorously than even he could do it himself.

There was a brilliant writer and scholar, Prabhākara, who has written a great commentary—'Br̥hafi'. Āchārya Sureśwara has demolished in his 'Vārtika' the conceptions which were enumerated in 'Br̥hafi'. 'Vārtika' is a commentary on Br̥hadāranyaka bhāṣya. While publishing that particular work, we wanted to give detailed notes from the 'Br̥hafi' to show what Prabhākara had written. But we found that Sureśwara had condensed the thought pattern of Prabhākara and had expressed it better than what Prabhākara himself had done. So that the 'Br̥hafi' could be understood better in the light of what Sureśwara had written in the 'Vārtika, rather than the other way around. In other words, he tried to put forth the viewpoint of the other person in a better way than what the other person had himself done. This is the real attitude of śāstrārtha or vāda. It is neither to impose our views on others, nor to impose others' views on us. It is but sharing our thoughts, so that we realise something higher. We transcend 'your thought' and 'my thought' into 'our thought'. But this can be attained only if we are earnest and honest seekers of the truth. We must not be tied the apron strings of anyone. It is because each of us is convinced that the truth is ever revealing, by communicating with each other we transcend our knowledge and attain its higher level that we start a discussion. Treating the laws of Nature, or the laws of virtue, or the laws of mysticism as a closed book is, I think, the greatest drawback in any prophetic religion. Because then we immediately think that whatever was said by a particular person, at a particular time, at a particular point in history is the final truth. At one time, for example, science was divided into compartments. We believed that if Aristotle had proved anything, we could not do anything better than that; but slowly the attitude towards science changed. Similarly, we have to take and develop religion, not as a

compartmentalised knowledge, but as something like the science of religion, which will be applicable to all people at the same time. It may be profitable for a particular person to practise a particular thing, but the knowledge must be shared by all.

It is a fact that Vedānta has not tried not to emphasise religion as an appendage to life. We are talking about the wholistic view here. The wholesome view is that the individual is a whole. We can study different facets of that individual, but he remains the whole. Religion is not merely a part of our life, it will guide our whole life. It permeates all the different activities of our life. It is not something which is to be practised once a week or two hours in the day, and then to be forgotten. Vedānta preaches that religion has to be lived every moment of our lives. We may meditate for two hours but religion does not end there.

Many people think that losing weight is a part-time activity. They believe that once in a while, may be after six months, they can go on a diet, do certain exercises and they will lose weight and will be in shape. After six months, they realise that they have gained a little more weight. So they go through the entire exercise again. It has to be realised that weight is connected with all our activities all the time. For instance, if we have to drink a glass of water. We get up and fetch a glass of water and drink it. Wash the tumbler and put it back. Perhaps we have consumed twenty-five calories by doing all this. But if we press the bell and ask the servant to bring a glass of water and drink it, we have not been able to loose those twenty-five calories. So in every activity we have to be conscious. Similarly every time we eat, we have to be conscious of what we are going to eat. In the same way, Vedānta gives us a particular view of life. Religion is not a part-time activity. We may meditate to gain certain insights. But that insight has to be lived every moment throughout the day.

The purpose of philosophy is not mere analysis but to utilise it to make our life a whole. This is what we call 'mokṣa' that is, liberation, liberating ourselves from ignorance, delivering ourselves into the hands of God. It is this that we have to practise. In short, the intellection that we are talking about means opening up, that is, receiving.

Our purpose of life is to practise all that we have received in the process of intellection. Then only we become certain of what we have rationally achieved; and only then can we make it into an emotion, which will make us move throughout the day.

### LECTURE THREE

We have been discussing the topic of integration and we have seen that every human being must be integrated on three levels—intellection, emotion and action. We have already discussed how our thought processes must be refined. They must be guided. They must be able to deal with everyday problems. What we arrive at after properly analysing our everyday thinking must then become our emotion. Emotion is absolutely necessary for linking our intellectual conviction with action yielding pleasure or happiness. We may act because of a sense of duty, but it will not lead to happiness. It will not give us joy unless we are emotionally moved to do it. Hence the secret of living, the secret of enjoying what we do, is to be intellectually convinced of what we do; and to be emotionally moved by it. The mind basically is a dynamic field. The Gita points out that it is basically fickle.<sup>11</sup> Any dynamic field is always restless. There are different pushes and pulls. There is also a constant adjustment which takes place on the level of the conscious mind. Various factors play in our mind. There is a hierarchy of needs which draws our attention at any given moment, and unless those needs find proper harmonious fulfilment, we can never attain joy. It is true that at any given moment, a particular need may hold the field, but as soon as that need is fulfilled in a human being who is integrated, the master urge takes over. Most of us who are not trained in our emotional life, do not have a master urge. We do not have a steering guiding us all the time. Instead of our needs being pyramidically construed so that there is a definite

hierarchy, our needs are scattered. They are never wholesome. It is precisely for this reason that we are never at peace with ourselves. The pinnacle of the pyramid is always hazy. We are taken in by the sides of the pyramid most of the time.

There are different needs. Physical needs are primary and in this respect we are more or less similar to the animal world. For example, when we are hungry, there is a need for food and this need takes over all our mental thinking. We cannot even consciously decide about the time to rest or sleep. We may postpone sleeping for a while but not for long. Even the most important act of meditation will have to be given up when the need for sleep arises. Similarly, there are everyday emotions like fear. Most of us are guided by the instinct to preserve our species and ourselves. Fear is one of the important factors which helps us to preserve both. When danger looms large in front of us we cannot make a conscientious decision. If, for instance, there is a person in a darkened room and intense light is focused on his eyes, his pupils will contract. He does not have to think about it. Even if he wants he cannot stop his pupils from contracting. This is called reflexive action. Similarly, when there is danger to one's own self or to the species, fear is a natural reaction. This is common both among animals and human beings. In the same way the desire to propagate is one of the basic desires both in animals and human beings. Physical needs, when not fulfilled, take over our mental activities. We cannot truly call them emotions. We are merely led by these needs. These needs lead us to certain acts, but they are more out of necessity than out of joy.

There are certain social needs. We want to be recognised. No human being wants to be neglected. In any given society, a person wants to be considered a gentleman, a virtuous person. Even a thief does not want to be called a thief. He may be indulging in theft, but there may be a number of reasons why he may do so. He may not be proud of it. When these social needs are not fulfilled it is but natural that we are goaded by them. Even their fulfilment is more out of necessity than out of joy. Apart from these needs, there are other needs which arise from our own minds. We may call them psychogenic needs, needs which are generated in our

psyche, in our minds. However, psychogenic needs are not necessary for our survival, either on the social plane or on the physical plane. But the fulfilment of these needs gives us true joy or happiness. One such need is the need to love. Human beings by nature want to love. Loving is in their very mental make up. Unless they have an object of love, they can never be happy. This need may become perverse—instead of loving we may try to dominate others. Many parents do not realise that instead of loving they dominate their children. That which is true of the individual is also true at the social and national level. It is very natural for us to love all the members of our society. However, once we begin to decide and dictate what is good for the society, it is loving no more. We may try to do good for the society, but it has become a desire to dominate rather than the desire to do good out of pure love for the society. In love it is vice versa. We want to do good to others as we all see it, not as I alone see it.

Another basic psychogenic need is autonomy. No individual wants to be dictated. Take the instance of a two month old infant. Just hold its hand or leg, without pressing it, without causing any pain. The baby will try to move the hand or leg, and when it is unable to do so, it will start resisting and may eventually start crying. In this case, there is no real pain. It is merely resistance to any sort of restraint. This is a psychogenic need. The Yoga Vāsistha says that just as we need empty space to move about, we need empty space in our minds.<sup>12</sup> We do not like any resistance in our minds. Another basic psychogenic need is that of acquisition. Everyone wants to acquire something or the other. Children may collect toys, and elders may collect imported things. But the desire to acquire is present. Along with the desire to acquire is the desire to retain. Whatever we have acquired must remain with us. There is also the desire to excel ourselves. Whatever we have done today, we should be able to do even better tomorrow. All these are psychogenic needs, and unless these needs are directed towards a proper goal, we cannot have peace, joy or happiness. There is nothing in the world which can be an object for fulfilling all these desires for all time to come. Śiva is the only one who can become the object of all our love.



Śiva is the fit object for acquiring, retaining and autonomy. This is possible as He is our innermost self. Since Śiva is our own self, surrendering to Him is identical with being independent. The psychogenic need is the need for God, the need for that wholesomeness. Since He happens to be our very nature, autonomy is possible in being Him alone. When we use the term autonomy we mean that we do not want any restraint to be put on us by someone else. A restraint which we have imposed on ourselves does not hurt our autonomy. Similarly when we acquire something else, it cannot be an acquisition for all times. But God being our very nature, our very self, never leaves us. Once we acquire Him our desire of retention is fulfilled. Nothing can excel Him, being the most excellent; and once we have identified with Him, excellence becomes our very nature. All these psychogenic needs, when directed towards God, become one-pointed and are intimately related to the expressions and gratifications of all our psychogenic needs.

Need is the basic feeling of any emotion. We have to distinguish between the different needs. We are talking of psychogenic needs. Any need is felt as a tension within, and when that need is fulfilled the tension is released, and happiness is experienced. When we have analysed the true nature of the universe, when we have determined the true nature of ourselves and God, there must be a tension within to attain that particular structure—our self, God—completely and wholly. In Hindi the word used is तड़पन. In English we could use the word torture. We must feel the torture for not having attained what we have intellectually perceived to be true. Unless that need becomes a tension, a torture within, there is no movement. To become an emotion, the intellectual realisation must become a strong movement in the mind. Our focus of attention must be completely centred on it. When we sit for meditation, what happens? We want to focus our attention; that is basically what meditation is. Focusing attention is like a searchlight over the environment. Anyone who has done introspective meditation will know this. All the different parts of the mind are illumined and it is, as if, looking for an opportunity to highlight the dominant need of the moment. If that torture resulting from the lack of God realisation is experienced, the

focus of attention will be completely on that particular point, that is, on the Godhead. But if some other needs are present which attract our attention, it will not be possible for us to focus our complete attention on anything. In the process of self-introspection we often find that there are needs present in our conscious or subconscious mind of which we were never conscious of at any given moment. For example, while working on a project we may be completely engrossed in it and may even forget our lunch-time. If someone comes and offers us lunch, we accept it. As we eat, we realise and may even say that we did not know that we were so hungry. There are many needs which are psychogenic in nature in our minds, and in the process of self-introspection, the searchlight of our attention is directed towards them and suddenly we become conscious of them.

Among the reasons underlying this is that culture imposes restraints on certain aspects of our life pattern continuously, from the moment of our birth. Different cultures have grown. There are cultures which give freedom in some aspects but put restraints on other aspects. This restraint is necessary to avoid conflicts in different groups which constitute the society. This restraint basically accounts for the difference between different cultures. For instance, the Hindu culture will impose several restraints but it will not tolerate any restraint on its spiritual moorings. On the other hand, in the European culture any restraint on their spiritual growth is tolerated, whereas any restraint on their social growth is not tolerated. Thus the moment a spiritual problem arises, a Hindu is awakened. Whereas when confronted with other problems a Hindu will remain content and accept many restraints which may be imposed on him. This suppression leads to certain maladjustments, unless intellectually we are enlightened about it. Hence we attach so much importance to intellection. Once we are aware that a restraint has been imposed on us for a particular purpose, and since we have grown in that culture, we will be able to accept that restraint without becoming neurotic or psychotic. But if we are not enlightened, then psychological and psychosomatic diseases are bound to follow. This is what is slowly happening in all the cultures today. Restraints are continuously increasing. In spite of the fact



that we increasingly talk of liberties, in reality we are being steadily enslaved everyday. Before the First World War, there were no passports; and before the Second World War, there were no visas. We cannot even imagine today how freely people moved from one country to another.

As centralisation is increasing in our country, more and more restrictions are being enforced, and it is this which creates tensions within and leads to social tensions, psychosis and other mental aberrations. But if we are enlightened about it and know that the restraint is not externally imposed but is internalised and we are conscious that it is a cultural necessity, then it will not create problems. Once we are convinced that a thought is real, we must change it into emotion through the process of continuous reflection. The desire to live in the light of truth as we perceive it is very important. It has already been pointed out that we must be ready to receive new light as it comes, but we must not stop living by the light we have already received. Often people say that we will start living after we have realised the final truth.

We must not wait for the final truth to dawn, for it is by living the present truth—that we have seen—that new light will dawn. By living the truth of today we shall broaden our horizon and will be able to get new light tomorrow. Unless we have transformed our conviction into our life pattern, we will not be able to perceive new light. That is a mistake we often make. It is something like learning mathematics. We have to learn arithmetic with the conviction that ten is the base, eventually to realise that this is a particular expression of the general rule. In the final analysis any base is as good as ten. But we cannot question to start with. To understand higher mathematics, we must go through lower mathematics, as if it is the truth. Similarly, we must live the truth from moment to moment as it is revealed to us; and in its light only will we get new light.

For this emotive development, dispassion for untruth is very necessary. Just as we must be passionate about truth, so must we feel a torture when we cannot live the truth, and we must feel a torture when we live the untruth. There must be complete dispassion for it. This develops by continuously thinking about what is true and what is not true. All our

scriptures emphasise that we must continuously discriminate between what is real and what is unreal. Yama says that both the pleasant and the good approach a man. Pondering over them the wise discriminates and chooses the good in preference to the pleasant.<sup>13</sup> This discrimination has to be continuously exercised.

This continuous dwelling on certain values is lacking socially as well as in our educational system. Whatever we want to make of the nation must be continuously emphasised. Most of the time we lead a life of contradictions; we may lecture on Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence in a 5 star hotel where meat is cooked and served all the time. It is for precisely this reason that our children are unconvinced of what we preach. We do not live the truth as we claim to see it. It is alright to reject Gandhi's philosophy; we may say that he made a mistake. But to preach his philosophy, to accept him as a model, and then not to live that life will not lead to any integration. Once this particular stage of integration has been attained, it can be claimed that integration on the emotional level has been attained.

Āchārya Śankara says in the Śivananda Lahiri that when the worshipful Lord of Perfection bearing the moon as the crest jewel is crowned in the esteemed city of the mind-lotus, the four-footed virtue becomes whole, sin is destroyed, lust, anger, pride, etc., are dissolved, happy days dawn, the crops of wisdom and bliss become plentiful.<sup>14</sup>

Virtuous life is fulfilled, once all our emotions are concentrated on the Lord of Perfection. Dharma or virtuous life has four legs as Vālmīki points out: tranquillity, discrimination, satisfaction and the company of saints.<sup>15</sup> These are the four cardinal virtues seen by Hindus. Tranquillity is calmness under all circumstances. It has to be slowly practised and developed. Discrimination is continuously thinking before acting. We must not do anything mechanically. We must do everything conscientiously and, at the same time, consciously. There must be a sense of contentment in all that we do. We must also make sure that our environment includes saintly people. It is the environment that affects us more than anything else. Our thoughts are continuously interacting,

even when we are not talking.

Some of us may recall that earlier in the cities there were different areas for different groups of people to live in. There were the Agrahāras where only the Brāhmanas lived. The underlying belief was that children in the locality would get the suitable environment for their moral growth. Certain definite virtues will always be emphasised if the group is homogeneous. So in an Agrahāra people were always talking of learning, education, contentment, dispassion, etc.

If every one around is talking of nothing but money, then a person who is wedded to intellectual life is bound to feel a deficiency in himself. He is bound to develop an inferiority complex. So it is very important to select a suitable environment. If the environment in which we live is contrary to our intellectual convictions, then we can never find joy or happiness there. These four qualities become natural when our mind is emotionally attuned to the Lord of Perfection. It is then that all wrong acts cease to flow from us. What we consider wrong and still indulge in is hypocrisy. Most of the time we are conscious of what ought not to be done while still doing it. Our scriptures say that the sins about which we are not conscious can be atoned by expiation but no expiation can remove indulgence. The Sanskrit term is an interesting one, chitta means certitude. We are not going to indulge in that act any more and are ready to bear any misery that may flow from what we have done previously, this attitude is chitta. If unknowingly, we have committed a sin, on realising that it is a sin, we make a firm vow not to indulge in it any more, and we may even get rid of it. But the scriptures say that if knowingly we commit a wrong act, then there is no expiation for it, because we are indulging in it consciously. We are harming ourselves consciously. A person who is emotively guided will never do such a thing. He cannot indulge in such passions as lust, anger, and pride. Such passions take us to a lower strata of living. When we are guided by these we can never lead a higher life. What is anger? Basically, it is a desire to dominate others. Under all circumstances things ought to happen as we like them to happen; people ought to obey us as we want them to obey us. When the other person does not respond favourably we get angry. The moment we

realise that the other person is as independent a unit as we are, the desire to dominate leaves. We do not feel angry with anyone under any circumstances. It is then that time becomes full of joy and happiness.

The crop of wisdom and bliss has completely come into being. The word used is crop. Any cultivation is called crop. Herbal medicine is also known as crop. Wisdom expels our ignorance, and bliss removes our misery, hence we can call them medicines. Because they are a natural growth, they can even be called cultivation. The word keval means a unit, and the word Kaivalya means unity. Śiva is the Lord of unity. When Kaivalyanath, the Lord of Perfection, becomes our object in life, when He becomes established in our hearts we are continuously conscious of unity. It is only then that the above mentioned things are realised. By using the phrase 'city of mind lotus', the mental lotus is likened to a city. Śiva is to be established in our mental lotus. By using the word 'city' he points out that this is a Utopia both for an individual and a nation. When a nation takes Śiva as the culmination of all its endeavour, all people and things of that nation begin to flourish automatically. The ideal Kaivalyanath can be taken in three senses: either we can say that God is protecting us; or He needs our co-operation, and He is co-operating with us; or we can go a step further and say that we are protecting the ideal.

There are three ways of looking at God. In Hindi these ways are known as 'Bhāvās'. Different devotees adopt varying attitudes. For instance, God is protecting us, is the attitude which Arjuna had adopted. He says, 'Now you are my charioteer, so you are going to protect me under all circumstances.' Hanūmān, on the other hand, adopted the attitude of co-operation. While going to Lankā he asked Jāmbavān whether he should go to Lankā, kill Rāvaṇa and bring back Sitā, so that Lord Rāma would not have to do anything. Jāmbavān advised him that he was not to do all this, as it had already been decided that Rāvaṇa was to be killed only by Lord Rāma. Hanūmān co-operated to the extent of merely finding out the whereabouts of Sitā.

Then there are devotees who feel that they protect God himself. Udayana was one such devotee. Once he went to the temple of Lord Jagannātha. The priests were closing the

temple doors. On reaching there, he told the priests that he had vowed to first have audience with the Lord and then take food. He requested them to open the temple doors. The priests, however, did not heed the request, as they did not know who Udayana was. They told him that the time for audience was over, and the Lord was resting. Hence he could not seek an audience. Udayana, however, insisted, and subsequently the priests threw him out. At that point he challenges the Lord. He says, 'You are letting me down sitting in the temple. You have become very proud of yourself. I am being insulted and you are not coming to my protection. But remember when the Buddhists emerge and negate your existence then it is I, Udayana, who will protect you. If I do not protect you people will not accept you as God.'<sup>16</sup> The story continues that the doors of the temple immediately opened, so that he could have audience with the Lord.

In short, we may have the feeling that we will co-operate with Śiva, in all His actions as He desires. Alternatively, we may have the attitude that we will do everything for Him. He need not do anything. Or, we may have the attitude that one is like a child guided by Him. All these different emotional attitudes stem from love. These are different attitudes of love.

Emotively, Vedānta holds that in its very essence Śiva is love. He is our innermost self, our Ātmā, which is the very nature of bliss. Under no circumstance can we ever lack love for ourselves. There is not a single moment when we do not love our own selves. We may not love even our body at times. For example, if a person is suffering from cancer, he may ask the doctor to end his life by practising euthanasia. He wants to get rid of this painful existence. Many people think that in this situation he is not loving himself. But here too he is loving himself. 'I want to get rid of the misery which the body is inflicting upon me. Similarly, a person may want to be free from worries of the mind. Supposing a person is extremely worried about something he will take a tranquilliser so that the mind goes off to sleep and he can rest. Here the person may not be loving his body, his mind, but there is not a single moment when he does not love himself. So the soul's love for Śiva and Śiva's love for the

soul are identical. That is why the Gita says, 'In which ever way a person loves Him, He loves him in the same way'. Continuous melting in love is the emotive approach. Here the emphasis is on the mind becoming merged again and again into the ideal.

Āchārya Madhusūdana points out that lacquer or shellac cannot be coloured until it has been melted. If some colour is added to the shellac, it will not become coloured as shellac is very glossy. But the moment it is melted and colour is added to it, shellac takes that colour and retains it for ever.

The same is true of the mind. Until it is melted in some Bhāvā, until it is melted completely in love, God does not become imprinted on it permanently. Intellectually we may realise but emotively God has to become the very nature of our own self. It is only then that beatitude is attained. We must praise Him melting in love.

Every spiritual aspirant repeats some hymn, some stotra day in and day out. And yet why is it that it is not effective? The last part of many of the stotras assert that if we repeat it, we will have a vision of the Lord. But nothing happens. Why? Because we do not repeat the stotra melting in love. We must seek the source of our being, the primal being, melting in love. Our meditation must be completely full of love, it is then that the Lord bestows the union—the ultimate gift of loving Him alone. This is a gift which He alone can bestow on us, but this happens only when we have melted ourselves in love. But as mentioned earlier, unless we realise our true nature as the Lord of Perfection, this ultimate love will never be possible. If God is different from us, our love cannot be complete and whole because a part of our love will always be for our own self. But when we have intellectually understood that our self is non-different from God, then it is possible to love Him completely and wholly. It is only then that we can melt entirely into Him. It is the absolute love that makes us forget our relative self, that is, Jīva. Otherwise we are not able to forget our relative self. Even in deep meditation we retain our Jīva Bhava. We feel that we will die if we relinquish this bhāvā because our love for God is not absolute. Only when we forget our relative self, real integrity will be achieved. God's love for us is infinite. We cannot even imagine how much He loves us.



Achārya Śārikara points out that considering that the soul is hard-hearted by nature, and Śiva will have to dance on it to protect him, Śiva practised trodding on the mountain ridges. Else how can one explain His movements on mountains while divine houses, flowery bedsteads, laid pathways are easily available to Him to walk on.<sup>18</sup> With His tender feet He takes very tender steps as He moves on the mountains. Why is it that Lord Śiva is continuously moving on the mountains? What for? It is not that He does not have other places to promenade. Heavenly mansions, bedsteads of tender flowers, carpeted floors, etc., are easily available to Him. Then why is it that He is continuously moving on the mountains? Śārikara says that he knows the reason for this. The Lord knows that this person is going to take birth. His mind will be as hard as stone and it will never melt. But he will come to the Lord and then the Lord will have to walk on his heart which will be hard as stone. That is to say, the Lord has been practising because He knows that the person will come and his heart would be like stone. God's love is infinite. A great saint once said, 'We are born in love, we are brought up in love, we move and rest in love, and are fed with the supreme ambrosia of love.' This realisation dawns when we realise this supreme sacrifice of Śiva in helping us.

He enters us as love. This emotive integration leads to complete transcendence of personality. Just as in individual integration we transcend the personality; so also in social and national integration. We can attain this integration only when we realise it. This eternal nation has bestowed upon us so much love that we can never know. From the time of Mohenjodaro and Harappa to the present day, think of all the great people who came here, all the cultural developments that have taken place here, the amount of kindness and purity nature has showered upon us—an environment where contentment is possible. If we were born in an extremely hot country we would need a very well built house. If we were born in an extremely cold country we would require a lot of clothes or heating systems. Just reflect on what nature has endowed us with. All the year-round we can do with a minimum of clothes. When we reflect on all these things, we become conscious of the love which the

nature of this country has bestowed on us. A loving field of social interaction is naturally available to us. All this is accessible to us without our having done anything. When we visit other countries we are surprised to see that the amount of love which even a maternal aunt has here is not to be seen in mothers there. In other words we have been endowed with a field of social interaction of love. Once we realise that the nation has bestowed all these things on us, we become conscious of them. Our hearts begin to melt in love for our nation. It is then that integration takes place.

As long as we do not think of loving our nation, but think in terms of receiving something from the nation, integration is not possible. Today, we are continuously taught—what can we get out of nation. This is true not only of the poor, but even the richest, even those who are at the pinnacle—whether in the field of industry, bureaucracy, or political leadership—want to find out what the nation is going to do for them. They are not prepared to realise what the nation has already bestowed upon them. Thus by melting in love it is possible to attain emotive integration, whether it be on the personal level or on the social and national level. What we have attained intellectually must become emotive, must become a need, and it must become a master urge. The moment our physical and social needs are satisfied, we must become immediately conscious of our objectives. Once guided by that consciousness, we will be able to attain emotive integration.



## LECTURE FOUR

We have discussed the two stages of integration—intellection and emotion. Now we will discuss the action aspect of it. What we mean by action here is the expression of emotion when it becomes so intense that it is impossible to control its manifestation. We have already discussed that there is such a thing as acting for the sake of creating emotions. But what we are going to discuss now is action which is performed when our emotion becomes strong enough, and we find it impossible to hold it within ourselves and we have to express it. Just as a man is a rational being, so is he a social being. He wants to share his innermost feelings with others. Action implies the resultant of the intensity of emotion. It is true that through intellection and emotion we have experienced that it is God alone who has become everything. All this world is nothing, but Siva. Whatever we are perceiving is nothing but Siva. But when it comes to action, that is, expression, it is not possible to express this love towards all beings at the same time. Man is independent to a large extent in what he thinks. He is practically free in what he feels, that is, willing. But when it comes to action, he is limited to a large extent by his body and the environment in which he is. God alone can act on a cosmic level. A human being, no matter how much he feels, by necessity has to express himself in a limited field. A question arises in our mind: if God is all, then how are we going to express our love towards Him who is all beings? We realise that it is not possible. We can express our love towards all beings who are in our conscious objectivity.

Though the field is limited, yet it is the whole field that we are conscious of. While acting, when this emotion is strong, we share this love with all who are present in our conscious life. Here we are not referring to only those who are immediately present. Patañjali describes the activity as austerity, study, devotion, etc. He says that the activity emanating from this intense emotion, this intense love, can be expressed in three ways. These three ways do not exclude each other but they include each other.

First, is austerity. This particular age and generation along with the overwhelming impact of the western civilisation on our thoughts, is continuously experimenting with luxuries. The moment we use the word austerity we feel that it is not relevant to us. This is because austerity implies denying luxuries. An industrial civilisation is a civilisation of wastes. It appears that everyone is in a hurry to utilise and waste away all the available resources. We find that wastage has become our very nature today. Even resources like water are wasted; we consume more than what is required: while one glass of water will suffice, we will waste two, for no reason whatsoever. Knowing that we will drink only half a tumbler of water, we make it a point to fill up the tumbler to the brim and then waste half the tumbler. In our ancient way of thinking we were conscious of the fact that food is a valuable thing and it is not to be wasted. If any food remained in the plate, it was considered to be very inauspicious. The belief was that we had insulted the God as food. Today, on the other hand, we are not at all conscious of the amount of food which is wasted. Both at the individual and societal level we waste food.

There is load shedding in electricity every day; but whenever there is no shedding, we make it a point to switch on all the lights and fans. It seems that we are celebrating Diwāli every day. The consciousness of waste, if present at all, is due to the meter attached for which we have to pay. Wherever the meter is not attached and we only have to pay a fixed amount every month and use as much electricity as we want, we do not want to switch off the lights. By denying ourselves luxuries, we benefit others whose need is sometimes more, if not equal to ours. By denying ourselves luxuries we are expressing our love towards all beings.

Though one may say that it is a negative expression, it is really a positive one. The earth's resources are limited. The moment we do not utilise a thing, it will be utilised by others. This also helps in keeping down the prices. Why do prices rise constantly? One of the main reasons for inflation is wastage. If we do not waste then things will be easily available and at a lower rate. We have to continuously practise the concept of austerity: utilise things as much as is necessary and not waste anything. Āchārya Śaṅkara points out in his Bhāṣya that even a morsel of food that is consumed is desired by others, be it an ant or a fly, but surely that being is desiring that particular morsel. While practising austerity we must be conscious of the fact that it should not be practised in extremes. There is a commentary on Patañjali by Vyāsa in which he points out that it must be practised in such a way that it does not have an adverse effect on the clarity of the mind. If we practise excessive austerity, if we deny ourselves things beyond a certain limit, our mind will be affected. We will continuously think of that particular object. It must be remembered that here we are not talking of excessive practise of austerity which will influence our mental thinking. As long as clarity of mind is not affected, we should practise austerity.

The next thing is swādhyāya. To express love, one must develop the adequate means through which one is going to express love. Often we try to express our love in a way we know nothing about. Without an adequate knowledge of this, the manifestation of love may harm the recipient. For instance, a grandmother, without knowing that chocolates are harmful for the child, may give the child chocolates. Or, if there is a marriage in the family, she may insist that the child attends the ceremony, even if it affects his studies. It is true that the grandmother is expressing her love, yet it is without an adequate understanding of what is good for the child. A proper study of the field in which we are going to express our love is extremely essential. Otherwise one may harm the person concerned.

When the emotion of the highest order is present it is natural that we want to share the highest that we have. The highest good of an individual is to induce in him a desire to know the Divine. If we want to share the highest thing,

our study must include those particular branches of knowledge through which we are able to share our love. Āchārya Śaṅkara addresses Śiva to let his mind dwell on His Divine feet, speech be engaged in His glory, hands in His worship, ears in hearing His praises, intellect in thoughtful meditation and eyes at His visage. This leaves no sense which can be given to any other thought.<sup>19</sup> He says that our study must be conducted properly, the mind must emotively feel Him. The mind must contemplate on the divine plays which the Lord has played with His devotees. The plays He has enacted in His incarnations. We have read about the continuous plays described in the Rāmāyaṇa, the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas. However, he emphasises that mere repetition is not enough.

'May we be able to understand the meaning behind your divine play, search the deep meaning of your actions. If I describe merely your actions to others, it will not be of much use to them. It will neither help them intellectually nor emotionally. One should be able to dwell, realise and convey the deep meaning hidden in all your activities, in your "leela", in your play.' It is only through this that people will realise how much love God has for us. Most of the time we are not conscious of God's love for us. I often say that God's love for man is infinitely greater than man's love for God. We are limited in every thing we do, therefore we cannot possibly love Him as much He loves us. Most of the time we are conscious of other things, but we are not conscious of His love. By continuously reflecting on the way in which He plays with His devotees, either in incarnations or otherwise, we are able to come in close contact with that loving aspect of the Lord. He goes on to say that the tongue, the most active organ of action, should speak of nothing but His infinite qualities. Since the Lord has infinite qualities, the question can never arise of having said all about the Divine being. There will never be a time when nothing remains to be described. No matter how much one tries, His infinite qualities will be far more than the uttered praises. There is a saying that even Sheshnāg who has one thousand mouths with a thousand tongues in each mouth, that is, a million tongues, has been singing the Lord's praises from the beginning of time and has not yet finished. We should dive deep

and study and find out about Śiva's infinite qualities and be able to convey them. Hands are the other important part of the body. Let our hands be engaged in the worship of the Lord. Śiva's form is the devotee, therefore we can serve the form of His devotees. It is true that all souls are manifestations of the Divine, but in His devotees He is felt. May our hands be always engaged in serving these souls, no matter who they are.

There was once a staunch devotee, a Nāyanāra, whose name was Kalikamba. He was a businessman. Nāyanāra had a servant who committed a theft and was subsequently dismissed from service. Nāyanāra was always engaged in the service of the Lord's devotees—offering them food, and showing them respect. After a few years the servant who had been dismissed from services came to his house. He was dressed like a devotee—wearing the rudrākṣa, bhasma, etc. As Nāyanāra was about to wash the man's feet, as was his habit, his wife recognised the man and told Nāyanāra that he was the same person who had committed the theft. Nāyanāra took the vessel containing water from his wife's hand and washed the thief's feet. He whispered to his wife that the thief had left and the devotee had come to their house. This influenced the man instantly. He had not realised that he had been recognised. Nāyanāra told his wife that he did not allow her to pour the water as her mind was affected and she was not able to see the man as a devotee. On hearing this, the man began to cry and said that he had not changed. Nāyanāra told him that the very fact that he had realised that he had not changed, meant that he had already changed. Nāyanāra's attitude towards him helped to change his life.

Whenever we interact with another person, our attitude towards him influences him. Recently, I read an article published at Harvard University. An experiment was conducted. Teachers were told that a group of students were the best students with the highest IQ that year. At the end of the year the teachers were asked to give their report about those students. The teachers gave excellent ratings. Their results were also very good. They were extremely cooperative and receptive, and their IQ growth was higher as compared to the other students. However, these students

had been selected at random. They had not been selected according to any criteria. The object of the study was to determine whether teachers' attitude towards students had any effect on their growth. The findings were positive. The moment we deal with another person as a devotee, we make his mind react in a particular way. Āchārya Śaṅkara says, 'Continuously think of all the devotees, all beings, as your manifestation; and thereby make them conscious of their own Śivahood.'

We have the habit of asking questions and listening to what others have to say. We inquire about the weather, about politics, about the family life of others. People go on repeating themselves and we go on repeatedly listening. Āchārya Śaṅkara says that a man who wants to express the infinite love which is in him should ask questions not relating to others' family affairs, nor economic matters, nor about politics; he should inquire about what other devotees have learnt about Śiva, about their experiences, about the particular aspects they have studied. This will make our ears ever vigilant and conscious of Śiva.

It may come as a surprise that not many people are interested in politics. In Mount Abu very few people read the newspapers. If they were interested they would have read them. When these same people are in Delhi, they are very particular about reading the newspaper because they are conscious of what they are going to talk to others. Or, if they are asked a question which they are unable to answer correctly, other people may think that they are backward and ignorant. In the same way, if other people know that we are only going to discuss divine matters, and not worldly matters, they will make an effort to learn about divinity to converse with us. They will try to find out about God. Not only will we be saved from listening to all sorts of useless talk but we will also make people conscious of issues relating to God.

Another instrument is the intellectual or discriminative faculty. All desires should be goaded towards Śiva. All the time we must think of Him as the goal. Whether we think of ourselves or others, we must find out what is it that will help us or others move towards the goal. How to make God the centre of our being should continuously permeate our



thoughts. Whether we are acting for ourselves or others the guiding thought should be the same. Whatever we perceive, whatever we see around, should be seen as an expression of His Divine play. The whole universe should be seen as nothing but the manifested form of the Lord. Only when we are able to perceive it consciously that we will be able to convey to others that it is His Divine play which is being manifested everywhere. If we want to share the highest emotion our study will be directed along these lines. Āchārya Śaṅkara says towards the end that all other learning is useless. What is the purpose of worldly knowledge, what are we going to gain from it? Having utilised all our faculties for Siva, we are not left with any apparatus to gain any other knowledge. We are not left with any other apparatus to be conscious of the worldly things on the worldly level. This is due to the fact that emotively we have changed the whole world as a manifestation of the Divine.

Another thing in Divine activity is devotion. To offer all our actions and their fruits to God, who is the Supreme Guru is real devotion in this context. According to Patañjali, offering of our actions means that whenever we act we must be conscious of the fact that it is God who is acting in us. As far as worldly people are concerned, they are driven by their own desires. One desire or the other is continuously arising in their minds and they are driven by it to act. It never occurs to them to ask the question: Why do these desires arise? The Upanisads say that desires are also guided by the Lord. He guides the particular desire arising in our minds. The question arises: When we commit a sin, is it God who has guided that desire? Āchārya Śaṅkara says, 'What we internally want, only that particular desire is manifested'. As far as the manifestation of the desire is concerned it is the Lord who guides. But it is our willing which has given birth to that desire. Whenever we want to do something He makes it possible for that particular desire to be fulfilled. That is to say, we are responsible for that desire having arisen. But the expression—manifestation, fulfilment—of that desire is controlled by the Lord. All our social actions flowing from integrated emotion and action will always be unattached actions. Therefore actions will

not be guided by what we desire but by what we have realised as an integrated individual. The soul at that stage is ever conscious of the Cosmic Divine presence within. There is a continuous prayer within: 'Lord guide me in what I should desire, I do not know what is good for me, much less what is good for others. It is you who will give rise to the proper desire in my mind.'

This is the difference between an aspirant and an ordinary person. As long as integration has not taken place, we want a particular desire to come up in our mind. Once integration takes place, we pray to the Lord to guide our desires in a way which is helpful to all. At this point a continuous Cosmic Divine presence within guides us. This is the reason why integrated vision implies wholistic action. In Sanskrit it is called *loksanigraha*. We are not concerned about how it will benefit us, benefit our body-mind complex, because there is nothing we desire for ourselves. We merely want to express the Divine presence within, which has been emotively felt, in all our social actions. Through the process of intellection we have already realised that the body-mind complex is not our real self. The body-mind complex is a mere instrument to express ourselves and this instrument cannot be made the goal of our actions. For example, if we want to cut an apple, we do not want any benefit to accrue from the knife itself, which is a mere instrument, the goal is to cut the apple. In the same way this body-mind complex is a mere instrument through which we express ourselves. There is no doubt that we have to take care of the instruments so that they function properly, but the result that ensues is not for the sake of the instrument, but for the object. Thus an integrated person does not work for his body-mind complex, he follows the wholistic approach to become an instrument in the Divine play. He has renounced all expectations within. He is like a child. He welcomes every moment as it comes and for him every moment is like a new day. With the dawn of a new day, we are ready to do new things, expect new things. There are, of course, people in cities like Delhi where they do not get to see the sun rise and each day in their lives is a monotonous repetition of the previous day. But there are changes no matter how minute. An integrated person on the other hand views every moment

as a new day. All his impressions, past saniskāras are so unified that there is no divergence of motives. Whatever he does he does it wholeheartedly. That is why all his actions are one-pointed. His attention is never diversified. Since his attention is always concentrated, he derives maximum pleasure from his actions. The pleasure we derive is always proportionately related to the attention we give to a particular act. An integrated person derives pleasure from the action itself and not from the fruit of that particular action. He derives pleasure in *doing* it. Externally, he may appear to be acting like an ordinary person; but internally, all his attention is directed towards the action itself and not towards its result. He is liberal by nature and there is a tenderness in all his actions which stems from his love for others. He knows that all other living beings are giving him an opportunity to express the emotion which is within him. He does not feel that he is doing anything for others. He gracefully accepts that other people are able to receive the emotive content from him which he is not able to contain within himself. Being aware of the nature of the universe he has nothing to look forward to. He does not feel that he has anything to gain. In spite of this he behaves like other people as if he is working towards a goal. Sorrow, loss or death do not affect him and he remains peaceful within though externally he may manifest all the emotions which the occasion demands.

When Abhimanyu was killed in the battlefield, Subhadrā was inconsolable and even Yudhiṣṭhira was unable to console her. Everyone appealed to Kṛṣṇa as she was his sister. Kṛṣṇa went to see her and tried to pacify her. He said, 'You are my sister, Yogeśwara's sister, it is not proper for you to cry like this.' On hearing this, Subhadrā replied, 'Let me cry! There is one Subhadrā who is your sister, she is always calm, she is Su-bhadrā. Bhadrā means good and Su means extremely. That extremely calm sākshi bhāvā is within me. She is your sister, Yogeśwara's sister, who does not express any emotion. Even at this moment she is calm within. But there is another Subhadrā, the mother of Abhimanyu who went to the battlefield. After I had put tilakam I told him, 'If you come back victorious, my embrace will be ready for you. But if you come back defeated, allowing the enemy to

conquer you, the earth will be the only thing that will embrace you.' Either Abhimanyu could have been victorious or he could have died in the battlefield. That was the wife of Arjuna, she was also Subhadrā. Now, Abhimanyu's mother is crying. Let her cry her heart out because it is necessary for her to do so. You are telling me not to cry, you have no right to say so. First, become a mother and then see your young son die at the age of sixteen. Only after you have suffered this loss without shedding a tear will you have the right to tell me not to cry. Let the mother Subhadrā cry.'

This reflects the position of an integrated person. He remains peaceful within, but all his external expressions are not heartless. He shares emotions with others. Though he is convinced that he is actionless, the soul cannot act, yet he takes upon himself actions which appear excessive to others. Similarly, he expresses emotions which appear excessive to others, while he is conscious all the time that he cannot be emotive.

Consider the example of Āchārya Śaṅkara. He repeatedly emphasises that Ātmā is actionless. But if we examine his life we realise that within a short span of thirty-two years, he was able to instil a new consciousness in the entire country, organise various orders, conduct discussions with the different schools of thought. According to tradition, he was able to unify seventy-two different religious and philosophical schools of that time. He was able to do all these excessive actions because he had attained peace within, peace that surpasseth all understanding. A person like Śaṅkara, a realised soul, does not have to continuously refer to what he ought to do. An integrated person depends more on his own realisations than on externalities like the religious code.

Śaṅkara had decided to renounce the world, take sannyāsa. This was not only necessary for him but it was also essential for the good of Hinduism. Initially, his mother opposed him but he was able to convince her and she consented to his becoming a monk. However, his mother stipulated a condition which he had to fulfil. She told him that he was her only son and if he wanted to serve the nation and humanity he was free to do so, but at the time of her death he should light the funeral pyre. According to the

ordinary rules of conduct, a monk is not supposed to touch fire, much less cremate his own mother, or any one else for that matter. Śaṅkara agreed to the condition laid down by his mother. This is what happens when a person is integrated. Śaṅkara did not try to find out whether a particular act could be justified by the letters of the scriptures because he knew the essence of the scriptures. An integrated person is aware of the utter falsity of the universe, and the world and its relations do not frighten him any more. He perceives the universe as his own extension, as an extension of his innermost self. But in all his actions he is conscious of others. He is aware that they do not know it.

People who are miserable need protection. Those who are depressed need protection. He does not need anything, others need it. People are always afraid. They are afraid of life itself. The greatest fear is that of the cycle of birth and death. It is important to relieve people from this fear. An effort should be made to make them realise that they are divine beings, beyond birth and death. They have the power within to transcend this fear complex and to express themselves in an integrated way.

We need not have reached the highest state of integration, but we must practise as if Śiva is present in all. Even though we are not integrated persons, we can at least act as integrated persons.

Āchārya Śaṅkara says that in a particular passage in the Second Chapter of the Gita a man of realisation is described as steady wise. He asks the question that why is this person being described here. A man of realisation acts spontaneously. And, as was pointed out in the case of Śaṅkara, he does not consult the texts for his actions. For a person who has not realised himself the texts describing a man of realisation are of no use. The Āchārya says that they are useful to an aspirant seeking realisation. But they are of no use to a realised soul. He then goes on to enunciate a principle: 'Whatever is the nature of a realised soul, should be practised by an aspirant consciously.' Through practise it slowly becomes the aspirant's nature as well. When it becomes the aspirant's nature then he also becomes a realised person. This realisation has to be manifested. A

devotee like Mīrā concentrates on the image of stone and through continuous practise is able to bring Lord Kṛṣṇa out of that image. The Lord appears and plays with her. If Mīrā or Nammalvar can bring the Lord out of a stone image why is it that we are not able to bring out the Lord from living beings? Initially, neither Mīrā nor Nammalvar saw the Lord but through practise they were able to realise that state.

During the process of disintegration we do not see Śiva everywhere; but through practise we will gradually see the whole universe as His manifestation. Thus it is by continuously expressing our emotions, even when emotions are not intense, that we gain perfection. As was pointed out earlier, we should not wait for the final realisation to dawn before we act. It will become natural only after the integration has taken place. Before this realisation dawns we must practise it 'as if' it is that state. This action aspect is extremely important when we think in terms of social and national integration. We will now discuss how this is important at the social and national level because the action has to take place in an environment. This is a burning issue today



## LECTURE FIVE

We had started our discussion on the passage in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad pointing out that the whole universe, the whole cosmos, is an integral. It is asserted that the whole cosmos is already an integrated unit and we have only to realise this unity. We had also discussed the next passage which describes the path to this realisation. We learnt that human beings are endowed with intellection, emotion and action; and unless all these three aspects of life are integrated, integration cannot be complete. Integration already exists and has to be realised in all these three ways. Mere intellectual perception of integrity is not enough, this intellectual perception has to become an emotional reality to guide us into action. We also discussed logical ways of thinking; we must organise our thoughts or else the thinking may lead to disintegration, as seen all round today. The emotion must be one-pointed towards the ideal which has been realised intellectually. Action must be oriented towards this ideal. We must act as if that ideal is real. Only when these three aspects are integrated that we can say that the integration is complete. The Upaniṣad also asserts that whoever becomes awakened to the knowledge: 'I am Brahman' becomes the integrated whole. This knowledge may be realised by gods in heaven or by mortals who have godly qualities. Seers have also realised this wholeness. Ordinary mortals also attain it when enlightened.<sup>20</sup>

When we say that the devas or divine beings realised this wholeness it means that the wholeness is revealed to them. The important thing is to attune to integration in our personal lives because whoever realises this within himself will

be able to manifest it externally. The divine beings, the ṛṣis, the prophets, the messengers of God realised this and, upon realisation Śiva became manifest in them. The question arises: Is it only for the divine beings, the prophets, the selected few to realise this? Is integration only for them? The Upaniṣad makes it clear that it is not so. Human beings can also realise the integrity, the wholeness, which these divine beings realised. The important point is that gods, divine beings, prophets, human beings can realise this wholeness, this integrity, which is their birth right. This point has been emphasised in an important passage in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad. Other passages also emphasise the fact that realisation is not for any select group. It is for all. The realisation of integrity in oneself makes the whole atmosphere integrated. Vedānta repeatedly emphasises: 'You must realise this wholeness. You must realise this integrity in your personal life, for here you are absolutely independent to realise it.' It is not possible for everyone to be able to integrate a large social group. But everyone has the right to attain integration in his own life. So the importance of integrity in a person is very important.

The Upaniṣad asserts that groups of disintegrated persons can never be integrated. Often we make this mistake: we try the impossible. We try hard to make every member of our society socially integrated. We expect that in spite of being dis-integrated in their personal lives, somehow or the other, they will attain integration on a social level, on a national level. In the name of personal freedom, freedom of belief, we let people remain disintegrated. This is a bitter truth. When we talk about freedom, personal freedom, we have to first find out whether man can actualise this in his personal life or not. Merely believing in whatever he likes is not freedom of belief. We must make the person develop the apparatus to have freedom of belief, to attain freedom of belief, and then only we have given him freedom. We are making the same mistake which the so-called democracies and chartists made in the nineteenth century. They believed that once everyone had a right to elect their representatives, democracy would come into existence. Everyone would be happy. This belief was based on a superstition that everyone would know what was good for him. We are at the fag end

of the twentieth century, and we know that this is not true. In the best of democracies, in the richest of democracies, a large number of people who have the power of working still live in miserable conditions. Why? The reason is that they have not been given the apparatus, or the opportunity to realise the freedom. If they cannot realise it, how can they express it? This is something like a large limited company. Theoretically, every shareholder is the rightful owner of the company. The shareholders own the company. But practically what happens? They do not have the apparatus. They do not even have the intellectual and commercial knowledge to go through the audited balance sheets. So a very small group controlling their votes—the proxy votes, manifest or unmanifest—controls the whole institution. And it may sound bitter, but the fact is that the cream is enjoyed by these few, who control the whole structure. Only the butter-milk is handed down to the shareholders. Since the shareholders are not capable of doing anything else, they are quite happy receiving the meagre dividends doled out to them. The same thing happens in a democracy. Theoretically, it is the people who are ruling, but actually they do not have the apparatus to understand and utilise this power. They do not even know the value of their vote. In reality, only a few people control the whole state apparatus. The situation remains the same.

Similar is the case of freedom of belief. There will always be people who will control the media and thereby control the belief of other individuals. When beliefs in the field of emotion are not the resultant of our intellection, they are not free. Unless a belief is born out of the experience of a person living in India in 1987, it will not be free. If a belief is not intellectually experienced, realised, thought out in terms of 1987 India—emotive integration will not take place. The reason is that emotionally our beliefs will refer not to 1987 India, but to something which existed 2,000 years ago in a distant land. Usually whatever was thought out in different countries, in different times and climes, moves us emotionally. Unless the emotion is born out of our experience at this moment here and now, it has no relevance to our lives. This actually is the seed of communalism. It is a basic problem of emotional disintegration. We have to

make everyone conscious that we are living *today*. This particular time-space context is the only real one for us. The nation has also to decide what it wants to attain. We must be clear in our ideals. Through the medium of radio, newspapers, magazines, television or other media that ideal must be drilled into us constantly. We have to bring the knowledge born out of intellection into the minds of the people. Our educational system has to be geared to it. We have to give the apparatus to the people to attain integration. I am not saying that we will give them solutions. The solutions have to be worked out by the people themselves and this is what we mean by freedom. People must have the proper apparatus to be free. This point was repeatedly emphasised in our ancient system of education. *Ānvīksikī* was given so much importance so that the people would be able to analyse things properly. Integration cannot take place so long as the emotional side of life is completely out of context. Our emotion arises not out of the freedom of intellectual realisation, but out of freedom of a tribal nature. In the twentieth century we cannot have a society integrated on the basis of tribal thinking. This is my tribe and that is your tribe, and we are free to be tribals. Basically a person identifies himself with a particular group and then stops thinking. Tribal leaders take up his responsibility as far as thinking is concerned. No integration is possible unless one is a whole person, that is, unless 'I am I'. In the middle ages, a person was *born* a peasant or a nobleman, and he was convinced that he belonged to the peasantry or to the nobility. A nobleman or a peasant, in the Indian context—a *Kṣatriya* or *Vaiśya*, was born, and he was processed into that role. But on analysing we find that it is not true. I am a human being to start with. I happen to be a peasant, a nobleman, a *Brāhman*, or a *Kṣatriya*. This is what makes all the difference between a cultured way of thinking and the tribal way of thinking. *Vedānta* has made a contribution on these lines. *Āchārya Gauḍapada* says:

अद्वैतं परमार्थो हि द्वैतं तद्भेद उच्यते ।  
तेषामुभयथा द्वैतं तेनायं न विरुद्ध्यते ॥

In many passages, Āchārya Gauḍapada tries to point out that from the stand point of Reality, there is absolute non-duality present everywhere. There is no duality. Really, that is, from the stand-point of Reality, all the duality that we perceive is nonexistent. It is only the imagined aspect of non-duality. Duality does not have an existence of its own. Duality is only an imagined version of non-duality. This is the view of transcendence. We perceive a person as a male or as a female. Now we have to change and transcend our thinking. We have to look upon him/her as a human being who happens to be manifest in a male or a female body. This fundamental way of thinking has to develop instead of the natural tribal thinking. 'I am so and so' should be our concept rather than 'I happen to be so and so'. We may ask what difference will it make? It will make a tremendous difference in our life. I am an Indian, when I want to integrate on the national level. On a broader level, I am a human being; and eventually, according to Vedānta, I am the whole cosmos. Let us consider this on the national level: I am an Indian, while I may happen to be a Gujarati, a Bengali, a Hindu, a Sikh or a Muslim. It is not that I *am* a Muslim or a Sikh, and I happen to be born in India. If we think along these lines, integration will never take place. But when the realisation dawns that I *am* an Indian while I happen to be in a particular position, then we move away from the tribal way of thinking and attain the cultured way of thinking. But we need courage for that. For some reason or the other, religious, ethical or even social traditions are slowly becoming what they call 'the Holy Cow'. They say do to touch it, do not talk about it.

As long as we remain disintegrated on the emotional level, we will never attain national integration. Unless we analyse these aspects properly we will be always trapped by tribal leaders. We have to provide different forums where free discussions about these aspects can take place. It may be religious, cultural, ethical or even historical matter. Nowadays, we are even afraid of discussing certain historical problems for it may hurt the sentiments of certain group of individuals. This means that we are continuously conscious of disintegration. As we mentioned earlier, if one sees Śiva in another person, then Śiva in the other person will be

manifested. If one sees the absence of Śiva and the presence of the devil in another person, then the devil in the other person will be manifested. Similarly if we look upon everyone as an integrated Indian, we will find that everyone will also manifest as an integrated Indian. As long as we continue to think that we are not integrated Indians—that is basically the mistake we often make, and have been doing so for a long time—disintegration will be manifest in us.

It is not that only Hinduism needed reformation. Other religions also needed reformation. Why is it that our reformists—whether Gandhiji or others—continuously thought of reformation amongst Hindus and not amongst other groups? The took it for granted that other groups were not integrated Indians, and it was not for them to touch these groups, as if these groups were different from them. Since we continuously see disintegration in them, disintegration has become manifest. Once we try to perceive them, perceive the entire population as integrated, integration will be expressed.

Āchārya Śaṅkara points out in his commentary on the Taittirīya Upaniṣad that the conscious mind is basically bereft of any pre-conceived notions. It is not that the conscious mind is imprinted with certain concepts in its very nature, and there is nothing we can do about it. He points out that the moment the truth about something becomes revealed to us, no matter how strong and for how long a notion or a belief has been held, we get out of its grip. This is a very important idea. It means that we do not start with the notion of a pre-programmed mind present in every being, or at least in every human being, or at least in every Indian. We know that though our conscious mind is already restricted by pre-conceived notions, yet the moment the truth is revealed to us, it will be accepted. However, in some cases the resistance may be more than in others. Many times I tell people that in a discussion the other person should get the right concept. We must leave it at that. We should never make the mistake of pinning a person down. He should not be humiliated to say, 'I have been defeated, I have been wrong.' Once that happens, one's ego is involved. A person does not want to easily accept an idea under humiliating circumstances. By cornering him we will make it more



difficult for him to accept the idea. Āchārya Śankara says that even if hundreds of scriptures in the Vedas repeatedly emphasise that fire is cold, we are not convinced as we know that fire is not cold. First, the scriptures will never say such a thing. Even if they do, we will have to find out if there is some other meaning hidden behind this. But we cannot accept an untruth, we cannot accept a concept which is against our rational reasoning, even if it is stated in our most sacred scriptures. Āchārya Śankara has made this point in terms of the Vedas. We have to develop the same attitude towards all scriptures and prophetic statements. We have to emphasise that whatever has been told must have a basis. We will search the basis together, but we cannot accept anything which is contrary to our experience and reasoning. We have to realise that we cannot have certain sections of our nation or even humanity which are really sick. Merely multitude does not transform sickness into health. Suppose there is an epidemic of a particular disease or an endemic disease, most people have been affected and only a few have been spared. Do we say that those who are not suffering from the disease are really sick? And those who have the disease are normal, simply because they number in millions. A disease remains a disease, no matter how many people suffer from it. It is deceptive to assume that consensual validation makes a thing true. Mere consensus does not make it the truth. A falsehood remains a falsehood. If millions of people share a vice do we say that it is a virtue because most people indulge in it?

Similarly there may be huge sections of society in the world, and in our nation, who are merely sick. Take, for example, greed. Most people are greedy, they may get together and decide that greed is a great virtue. At times vices are raised to the level of virtue through group culture. In India tax evasion is considered a virtue. There are individuals who call themselves tax experts, and their work is not to advise us how to pay our taxes, but how to avoid them! Are we going to call this is a virtue? A normal psyche remains a normal psyche. A psyche which is suffering from some malady has to be treated as such. When a greedy person thinks of obtaining some monetary advantage at the cost of social living, we cannot say that he is sane. It is really

a kind of insanity and he has to be treated for it. Similarly an ambitious man, one who is continuously after power, position, name, or fame, is usually perceived by society as an annoying person. Actually he is sick.

The same is true of certain groups who may think that they are discriminated against. We have to analyse whether this belief is true, and if it is true, it has to be dealt with. We cannot say that just because certain people regard themselves like this, we have to take it into consideration. Whether it is a disease or a fact, it has to be dealt with. Integration cannot take place unless these concepts become clear in our minds. Certain basic concepts must be made a part of our integration in a positive context. As we said earlier, by transcending the lower state into the higher state, integration can be achieved. Instead of looking at a person as a male or a female, see a human being. Here 'human being' is a contentful idea and not merely the absence of being male or female. We will not go into the philosophical aspect of it as it has already been discussed. We called it metaphysical cancellation. The male or female does not cease to exist as such, but metaphysically we cancel it out and we see the whole human being instead. This is what I mean by transcendence. In the totality of our life we have to bring in something contentful. We may call it Bhārat-identity, which is not contentless.

We must define the bare minimum which makes a person an Indian. Let that be our stepping-stone, we have to be clear about that basic minimum. To that identity, we may add a Bengali identity, a Punjabi identity, etc. But we must be clear about Bhārat-identity. Unfortunately, this is never done, because we do not want real integration to take place.

If we were to ask even those who are continuously thinking of, and are responsible for bringing about national integration, to define that basic minimum which characterises Bhārat-identity, and without which one does not have this identity, I am not sure whether they will be able to give a comprehensible answer. We are not talking of passports here. Many people would say that whosoever has an Indian passport is an Indian. But we are talking about the real contentful Bhārat identity. What emotions do we expect from such an individual? What actions do we expect

from him? What type of a person do we expect him to be? To that minimum other aspects can be added. Bhārat-ness must transcend all the atomic variety of Bengali, Hindu, Harijan, etc.

The Katho-upaniṣad says that speech should dissolve in the mind.<sup>21</sup> Transcending speech implies taking back the words into their origin—the thoughts. How to do this? Though we have different languages in India, yet all of them contain similar thought pattern. India as a nation produced a vast mass of literature. All the vernaculars contain that literature: in Bengal it may be Krittivasa's Rāmāyaṇa, in Uttar Pradesh it may be Tulsi's Manasa, in Gujarat it may be Girdhar's Rāmāyaṇa, in Tamil Nadu it may be Kamban's Rāmāyaṇa. The basic thought presented is the same everywhere.

The same is true of the Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas and all our other scriptures. When we compare them, we will find that there are certain provincial variations, but the basic thoughts remain the same. This is what we mean by a contentful orientation or contentful integration. This is not just talking about an integration which is without any content.

Similarly our ways of worship are integrated. Wherever we go we will see that there are slight variations, but the fundamental remains the same. How do we worship? Āpstabha says in very clear terms that worship must be performed in a way that we honour an initiated respected great. Consider the Lord as a great personage who has come to our house. The way we deal with a great personage we will deal with the deity whom we are going to worship. This aspect of devotion remains the same wherever we go east, west, north or south. We may be devoted to Śiva, we may be devoted to Viṣṇu, we may be devoted to Śakti, we may be devoted to anyone, the fundamental remains: devotion is important. Devotion is part of our life. Nyāya, Yoga, and Sāṅkhya may differ in many aspects but their object of analysis is Ātmā. They tell us something about Ātmā, the Supreme spirit. This is contentful orientation. This is what we mean by emotional integration. Our ways of worship, spirit of devotion, enquiry into the nature of self are aspects which are basic to Bhārat identification.

This line of thinking was not merely confined to Sanātana Dharma, but it was seen even in other religions. The Jains analyse the Ātmā. Their worship of Mahāvīrā is quite similar to that of the Sanātānīs. The same is true of Buddhism. Later such integration was experimented with Islam, though the attempt was not very successful, I must admit. But the trial itself should that the spirit to integrate was present.

When we examine our actions we see that most of our good conduct is identical. Whether we go to Kashmir or to Cape Comorin, to Bengal or to Gujarat, wherever we go we find that a certain conduct of life is accepted by all the populace. When this integration is complete it is not possible to say to which particular region this person belongs. Take a person like Patañjali, people from the south say that he belonged to Chidambaram; in the north-west the belief is that he belonged to Pushyapur, that is, modern Peshawar. People from other places also claim that he belonged to their area.

In Assam the Assamese claim and the Kālikā Purāṇa asserts that Vaśiṣṭha belonged to Assam. In Manali, there is a big temple dedicated to Vaśiṣṭha. The local people claim that Vaśiṣṭha belonged to that place. In Mount Abu also there is a temple dedicated to Vaśiṣṭha and people believe that he stayed there. In the Rāmāyaṇa, Vaśiṣṭha's abode seems to be in the vicinity of Ayodhya. After all he was the chief priest at the Court. There is a vast literature associated with him, but we cannot determine even from this the place to which he actually belonged. The whole of India seemed to belong to him.

We may analyse the writings of Śaṅkara or Kālidās. People have been analysing and trying to find out from their own works to which region they belonged. To date one cannot give any definite answer. This is because they were absolutely integrated Indians. The particular province or region to which they belonged had almost no effect on them. Unless we are able to create this kind of integration, which is the real integration, it will not be possible to bring about national integration. After achieving personal integration we must attempt social integration. The basic social unit is the family. So it must be integrated first. Unless the family is democratically constituted, democratically conceived,

national democracy can never come into being. As was said earlier, democracy does not merely mean right of voting. It is actually a value judgement. It is a state of mind in which we respect the views of others. Unless we have respect for the views of others democracy can never function. As long as we harbour the feeling that we alone know the truth, what we say must be done, no democratic society can come into existence. Autocracy in religion and democracy in politics, if simultaneously practiced can only cause schizophrenia and bring disaster to society.

In ancient India, this particular type of voting may not have been exercised but the conviction of democratic ideal was present. In Kashmir there was a king named Chandrapeeth. He was a great devotee. He wanted to build a temple. Architects were called and they chose a site. A site right on the bank of the Indus from where breath taking beauty of the snow-capped peaks could be seen.

All the details were finalised. However, there was a snag in it. There was a small hut belonging to a cobbler at the selected location. It was taken for granted that he would be paid some money and his land would be bought. In the process of planning such a big temple that small hut was not taken into consideration. The foundation stone was laid. In due course the people approached the cobbler and asked him to sell his land. He adamantly asserted that he was not going to sell his land. They offered him more and more money but he continued to refuse. At last they had no other alternative but to approach the King. They informed the King that there was a small hut at the chosen site which belonged to a cobbler who was refusing to sell it. They wanted to know what could be done about it. The King told them that they could not force a person out of his home if he was not willing. The King then decided to talk to him. The cobbler was summoned. The King asked him for his reasons for not selling the land. The cobbler replied, 'You have a palatial mansion built by your parents, grandparents, great grandparents, which you have inherited. If someone comes along and offers you money, will you sell it? Will you sell your ancestral home for the sake of money? Similarly this is my ancestral home. My parents, my grandparents, my great grandparents have lived here; so I am not ready

to sell it.' Upon hearing this, the King told his courtiers to select another site for the temple. The courtiers, however, informed him that it was very difficult to change the site as the temple had to be built on the best available site. Moreover, having already laid the foundation stone, it was against the scriptures to change the site. The King then told the cobbler that they wanted to build a temple at that site, and he was not doing a virtuous act by obstructing a work dedicated to God. Hearing this, the cobbler told the King that what he said was true and he did not want to commit a sin. But as he could not sell his land, he could gift it and thereby perform dāna.

The courtiers were aghast: Would the King accept a gift from a cobbler? But King Chandrapeeth told them to be quiet. What the cobbler had said was true. Since it was his parental home, no one had the right to take it by force or by any other means. The next day King Chandrapeeth went to the cobbler's house and accepted the dāna. Dāna has to be accepted as a gift in the traditional way. The temple was finally built.

It is this respect for the views of others which basically constitutes democracy. If the same situation had arisen today, what would have happened? We all know very well. Our attitude would be acquire the land, we have police behind us. We even have the military to support us. There is no respect for the other person's point of view. And all this is said by leaders who claim to be democratic.

Democracy means a definite commitment to a value structure. Unless we have that commitment, democracy will never come into being. The family being the minimal unit of a social group must be governed by a democratically conceived system. Today we expect people born and brought up in patriarchial families to become suddenly convinced of democratic values as soon as they are 18 years of age. It is not so easy to be convinced about a democratic attitude of life. National integration or social integration must be an integration on all the three levels. Different social groups must function in fruitful harmony. They must be interdependent on each other. The concept of Varṇa is often criticised. But there is an important reason, a great philosophy behind the whole concept. Varṇa is a concept



which conveys the interdependence of different groups. We may not pursue the same form of Varna which is manifest today. I am not trying to say that the present situation of the varna system is commendable. But the concept of interdependence must be developed within different social groups, if they have to be integrated. Co-operation, not competition, will bring harmony. That co-operation should be on all the levels. Proselytising brings in the spirit of competition and not co-operation in different social groups. The competitive spirit within one religion is bound to lead to tension. Eventually the other groups will also become competitive.

History enlightens us on this topic. The Holy Wars went on in Europe, as well as near Palestine. The Holy Wars continued between Islam and Christianity for a long time. Compare that to the two complete changes which took place in India. Buddha came 2500 years ago and was able to change practically the whole of India into the Buddhist faith. How was he able to achieve this without any war? He was not competing, he was not proselytising. He was only making his ideas available. It was not a conversion as we see it today. It was change of inner conviction. All the rational and reasonable Upanisadic lore was accepted by the Buddhist scholars including Buddha himself. Later, when there was a degeneration in certain conceptions of Buddhism, there was a total change; but not out of any conflict. All that Buddhism had to contribute was accepted as part of Hinduism.

It is not by proselytising, by converting, by competing, that we are able to bring about integration. For integration, it is necessary that we accept wherever truth is found. Conversion is not needed to accept truth. We have to go on accepting the truth wherever it is to be found.

We have to co-operate even in the field of religion. We have to realise that the universe is in a continuous flux. It will go on changing. It can never remain static. Thus it is called Jagat meaning that which is continuously moving. We can never say that once integration takes place, we can go off to sleep. This is what often happens in India. Whenever there are riots, national integration council meetings are held. When peace reigns again everybody goes off to sleep:

they think that now the nation is integrated. Integration is a continuous process because there is a continuous flow. This national integration has to be eventually transcended, as a Vedantin sees it, in international integration. Just as provinces are only boundaries which have been imagined in an integrated nation, so to a student of Vedānta the boundaries of nations are equally imaginary. They are not real. Once national integration has been achieved, we should work towards international integration. But all this has to be based on the personal realisation of integrity of all the three aspects which we possess.

The Upanisads assert that not merely human beings, even divine beings, even prophets, are part and parcel of that Advaita from which everything appears to have originated, and go back to Advaita. Our manifestation is external. The movement is to be towards complete integration. Whoever realises it, will be able to bring it about in society.

Integration is a burning issue today and that is the reason we have discussed it in detail. Unless we are able to bring about this contentful integration, we will not be able to bring about a total change in our national outlook on these delicate issues. It has been pointed out that national integration should be based on inner harmony leading to a positive forward movement than being merely a positive thought. I pray to Śiva that we may live to see the integrated Bharat manifest in our lives. We may cancel out the disintegration caused by illusion that diversity is disintegration. Then we will not perceive every difference of opinion, every difference in life pattern as something which is disintegrating us.