5.1 RELIGION AND SELF-REALISATION

The fundamental feature of religion from the beginning of history is that religion is an inward transformation, a spiritual change that helps in overcoming the discords within our own nature. Religion helps to satisfy the fundamental needs by giving him a faith and a way of life and thus restore the broken relationship between him and the spiritual world above and the human world around. Swami Vivekananda also identified religion primarily with spirituality. He did not regard religion to be a mere attitude of faith. To him religion is realisation. He said - "It is only at the level of transcendental experience which is what religion is really all about". Religion is also a great cosmic force which enables humanity to transcend itself and to take the next step in its evolution. The very aim of religion in the long run is to bring into existence a higher species than man. This is one of the reasons why man in all ages and countries have clung to religion in spite of its mistakes, defects and drawbacks of its manifestation in the world of man. Mere vague spirituality can never take the place of religion. To fulfill the true purpose of religion it
has to incarnate himself into some historical religion in accordance with the conditions prevailing in the various places and time on the earth.

Hinduism is one such historical religion. It is highly philosophical and at the same time practical of all religions. It is a fact that every religion has its own philosophy. The dichotomy of religion and philosophy has not been recognised in India as in the west. If philosophy is understood to be the search of the spirit religion brings about the immediate awareness of that spirit and thereby forms the very basis of religion. Swami Vivekananda said - "Religion without philosophy runs into superstition and philosophy without religion becomes a dry atheism". Philosophy is the underlying basis of all religions while symbols, forms and mythology etc. are only stepping stones in the attempt to reach the ultimate.

This sanskrite word 'Dharma' which is roughly substituted for religion is difficult to translate. It is translated into English as Law, Duty, Morality etc. To be precise Dharma is Mokṣa in the making. If Mokṣa is taken to be the complete divinity then Dharma is divinity under human conditions. Dharma is half divine as well as half-human. It is divine in the sense that it is the call of the spirit, and it is taken to be human
because Dharma changes in accordance with the conditions of time and place. The code of law progress along with the progress of man but in each and every step there remains an element in it and hence it is to be obeyed as divine commandment until it is abrogated.

At all stages and in different forms religion is also a concern of the personality as a whole and beliefs and practices are intermingled with strong emotional attitude. In most of the religions these beliefs refer to supernatural beings or beings. The religions which do not believe in such supernatural beings, they believe in the validity of some supreme moral ideal. Thus every religion has faith either in some kind of transcendence, may it be some kind of ideal. Each religion is also related to certain religious practices in the form of prayer and worship. The followers of each religion pray to the supernatural Being taking to be transcendent and yet not indifferent to His creatures. The followers of religions who do not believe in God they pray to the founder or the founders of the religion concerned and these founders are believed to be the embodiment of all that is highest, purest and noblest. For example - Buddhists pray to Buddha and the Jainas to Arhats. All kinds of prayers made always involve a spirit of self-surrender as well as intense
desire to get oneself purified from all kinds of ignorance and to be led to that which is pure and bright. These religions practices are nothing but the outward expressions of the inward desire for realising the supreme. As religion arises in the inner life of man so most of the religions believe in some stable character of the inner personality of man, i.e. soul. This soul is believed to be in relation to a power beyond and yet permeating it. It is believed that the soul has kinship with the spirit and has its destiny of its own and has continued existence beyond earthly life even after death. This soul may be absorbed in the Supreme soul or it may have some kind of separate existence. The advanced religions also point out the suffering to which the soul is subject and at the same time indicate the possibility of liberation. Buddhism which does not believe in permanent self also speaks of its liberation. The fact of suffering and the problem of escape from suffering has gained such an importance that many advanced religions even concerned with the means of removing them. To be precise, the various religious practices are connected with the problem of curing the evils and sufferings to which human beings are subjected. Hence, the concept of self realisation or Mokṣa has become an important subject of discussion for most of the living religions of the world in different forms and languages.
All religions have come into being owing to the personal experiences of the seers who became directly aware of an Infinite spiritual present beyond and within the range of the mundane world. Hence, the personal experience of union with the Absolute Reality or God has been a common and continuous feature of all the faiths of mankind. In Hinduism, particularly in the Upanishads we find the idea of religion as direct experience of the Divine - 'Brahmaanubhava'. It is a direct and active participation in the truth, the affirmation of the supreme identity of man in the depth of his being with the Absolute, the Transcendental Reality. They assert the oneness of the inward self and the Absolute. If a man fails to recognise the immortal in him, he is subject to the law of Karma, of necessity. He becomes a puppet pulled to and fro by invisible forces. But one who succeeds in realising the universal self in him, he begins to act from a new basis of freedom. Similarly the Bhagavad Gita also teaches that the soul being a portion of the Lord or a fragment of the Divine returns to it's home in God. Hence, the ultimate aim of man should be the spiritual realisation or contacting ultimate Reality, i.e., 'Brahmasamparsa'. In order to have this communion the Bhagavad Gita emphasises on prayer and devotion. In Vaishnavism also we find that man can realise the supreme through devotion and love. The aim is regeneration of mankind,
a spiritual transformation of human nature. Religion is essentially rebirth, 'dvitiya-janam'. Similarly all historical religions like Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity Islam etc. stress more on the renewal of life, the attainment of transcendental consciousness than the worship of personal God.

According to Buddha our subject to time, to Samsara is due to Avidya. From avidya man must rise to vidya, bodhi, enlightenment. It is an immediate, non-discursive intuitive relation with the Absolute truth. When a man has Vipassana, knowledge by seeing, clear perception he will acquire unshakable calmness. The Buddha aims at a new spiritual existence attained through Jnana or bodhi, absolute illumination. He aims at spiritual experience in which all selfish worldly desires are extinguished. It is a pure state of perfect inward peace together with the conviction of having attained spiritual freedom i.e. Nirvana.

Mahabira, the founder of Jainism, renounced the world and was able to realise the dignity of his own self. In order to attain self realisation he advocated three great principles like Darsana, jnana and charitra. According to him man must have faith, 'Sraddha' that there is something superior to the things of the world. But mere faith in it will not do. He
must have knowledge - manana. By mere textual learning man can not get life eternal. He must embody these principles in his own life, caritra or conduct is equally essential. As the principles of caritra Jainism asks us to undertake certain vows like not to kill anything, not to lie, not to take what is not given, to preserve chastity and to renounce worldly pleasures. The most important vow is Ahimsa, the vow of non-violence. Absolute truth or Kevala-jnana should be the ideal of life. As truth has many sides man can have only partial view of it. The complete truth can not be attained in these vows. It is only realisation by the soul who can overcome their own passions.

In the Adi-Grantha of Sikhism we find a wide range of mystical emotion, intimate expression of the personal realisation of God. It believes in the freedom of human spirit. According to Nanak the means to the knowledge of God is - self-surrender to God. God is something inward in the soul. By perfect self-surrender with humility ignoring the petty egos man can attain super human reality. Man is a child of God, comes from God, is always in Him as a partial expression of God's will. When he becomes perfect manifests God's will perfectly. Man can freed from the rotating wheel of Samsara by union with God attained through devotion. Man must accept God as the guiding principle.
Belief in a separate self and its sufficiency is the original sin. Self-noughting is the teaching of Jainism.

In Christianity Jesus advocates that the ideal of man is to transcend the intellectual point and feel inward supra-social spiritual realities. Jesus demands inward renewal and inner change. According to him the Kingdom of Heaven is not to be found in space, but a state of mind. The Kingdom of Heaven is present, here, immediate. "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand". He said. It is the attainment of truth which makes for Freedom or Liberation. By 'repent' he meant the change of the inner man. Man can attain higher level of being through violence to his own lower nature, through abstinence and self-control. He advised man - "ye must be born again from above". means spiritual birth, not physical or natural. A proper understanding of man's whole nature is the meaning of salvation. Truth realisation is the meaning of the soul by contemplative prayer and ascetic practice.

The prophet of the Islamic religion, Muhammad teaches that God is an Infinite and Eternal being without form and place. He is present in our most secret thoughts by His own nature and derives from himself all moral and intellectual perfections. The Quran teaches that everything in the world is perishable except the Allah. It abides for ever. The unique
personality of Allah far above and beyond human reach became transformed into the one Real Being revealed in all created beings. He is the true self of man which man can find by ignoring his individual consciousness in ecstatic self abandonment. The definition of fana as a transcendentel state and the way to it by extinguishing all passions and desires is similar to Buddhist concept of Nirvana and the way to it.

Before Lao-tse, the Chinese regarded Tao as the ultimate reality. Tao is eternal, unchanging, all pervading principle of which all other developments are manifestations. It is the prime cause of all existence manifesting itself in the creator and the created universe. Tao is the source as well as the goal to which all things tend. From Tao comes the One, the great Monad which is the material cause of the world. Tao in man is not generally manifested. Man to regain tranquality must set out on the Quest of Tao. Vacuity and extinction of the worldly desires alone can induce man to have possession of Tao. Lao-tse demands that a man who is eternally free from worldly passions can apprehend the spiritual essence of Tao. This stage is called Purgation. The goal of Taoist is to attain unity with Tao. When Tao is attained we regain tranquility. Real virtue consists in spontaneous experience of Tao within. Tao cannot be attained by artificial conformity to moral law.
According to Zoroastrianism Ahura Mazda is the supreme Being, the law of life and matter, the cosmic Lord Isvara from whom have come out purusa and prakriti. Out of the three rays emanating from the supreme, Asha is the first ray which represents the will of God which planned out the universe. Asha stands for truth and righteousness. The highest ideal of man is to have union with the supreme and it can be attained through Asha by which man gains purity of mind, heart and soul. Unselfish work is the way by which human individual attain their spiritual welfare and thereby help in the progress of the world. To know the Supreme, Ahura Mazda, man stand act in accordance with the law 'asha', man has to perfect his nature through prayer and meditation. When the goal is reached, we get peace and unity.

From the above discussion it follows that in most of the religions of the world the ultimate aim of human life is Liberation or Moksha. This liberation not only implies freedom from the bondage of the flesh, it also implies free from the limitation of finite being. Moksha means becoming a perfect spirit like the supreme spirit - but on his way to this final goal man has to satisfy the animal wants of the body, and the economic and other demands of his family and community.
All religions have emotional attitude towards moral value and this moral value is not simply individualistic in outlook, but also social. Bhagaban Das opines that - "Every ideal religion aims at binding together a new again the hearts of all to each other and back again to God". The unity sought in and through various religions practices and partly felt in individual is also social. The vedic Hindu desired social unity when he prayed - "united the thought of all that all may happily agree". Hinduism which cherishes universal salvation (Sarvamukta Vada) it's outlook is social. The Jaina concept of Ahimsa shows consideration for all creatures. The zoroastrianism in and through their religious worship develops a strong sense of communal welfare. They believe that universal salvation will be brought about by the last saviour. Muhammad asked his followers to form themselves into a community of faithful. Similarly Christianity attaches much insistence on the doctrine of love and it advocates Brotherhood of man under the common Fatherhood of God. Though different religions insist upon different religious practices associating with an ideal, they aim at the same kind of spiritual upliftment of the individual concerned together with the establishment of some kind of bridge between the natural and the spiritual.

As regards to the ways or paths for self-realisation enunciated by Indian religions thinkers agreed on the point
that each path contains within it all the ethical codes and spiritual discipline. These paths have the generic name 'Yoga' in the Hindu philosophy. Swami Vivekananda recognised four different paths like - Karmayoga, Bhakti yoga, Jnana yoga and Raja yoga in this regard. According to him these divisions are not artificially made but all the yogas are deeply related to the complexities of human nature. Each has a special nature peculiar to oneself which one must follow and through which one will find his way to freedom.
5.2 **FOUR WAYS OF SELF-REALISATION**

Going through the Indian philosophy it has been found that right from the Vedic age in regard to God there are three stages in Indian religious thought. The concept of God began with the personal or the extra cosmic God. From the external passed on to the internal cosmic body, God immanent in the universe and after this ended indentifying the soul with God and making One Soul, a unit of all the various manifestation in the universe. But a mere understanding of the three aspects of God - Personal, Impersonal and Absolute does not constitute religion. Hence, Swami Vivekananda in keeping with the spirit of Indian religious thought upheld the view that religion is realisation. Religion is to be known neither by ordinary sense of the word, nor by intellectual understanding. Religion is not mere rationalistic understanding of the real things but intense realisation which is much more real than the world of sense. He regarded religion as a real life force, not simply a make-belief. This is the only reason why even after decaying centuries various religions of the world have still a tremendous life force in them. Vivekananda holds that "Not one of the great religions of the world has died, not only so, each one of them is progressive." All religions are nothing but abstractions of the same supreme Reality pointing to an Ideal
unit Abstraction putting down before us either in the form of a person or as Impersonal Being. Hence, the goal of all religions is same in essence. The ultimate end of mankind, the objective of all religions is the same — reunion with God, with the divinity which is every man's true nature.

With a view to helping man to attain the summum bonum of life the different religions essentially concern themselves with the practical life of man by transforming codes of conduct and spiritual disciplines. In different paths or ways formulated by the seers contains all these ethical codes and spiritual disciplines. These paths have the generic name of 'Yoga' in Hindu philosophy. The principal yogas are - Rāja yoga, Karma-yoga, Bhakti yoga and jnana-yoga. Vivekananda also elaborately discussed these yogas as the means for attaining self-liberation or Mokṣa. These different yogas may be regarded as the pillars upon which the whole edifice of Vivekananda's philosophy stands. Hence, it pertinent to discuss each one of them to highlight the religious teachings of Vivekananda.

**Karma-yoga**:

The word 'Karma' has been derived from the sanskrit term 'Kri' which means 'to do'. All action is karma. Technically it also means the effect of all actions. Meta-physically it
sometimes means the effects of which our past actions were the causes. But Vivekananda in his 'Karma-yoga' by Karma he meant 'work'.

In conformity with the ideal of Eastern philosophy Vivekananda holds the view that the goal of mankind is knowledge. This knowledge is inherent in man and does not come from outside. What a man learn in the real sense is what he discovers by taking the cover off his own soul, which is a mine of infinite knowledge. Every mental and physical blow by which it's own power and knowledge is discovered is Karma. In this sense we are all doing Karma all the time in the form of walking, listening, breathing etc. whatever we do whether physical or mental is Karma and it always have it's mark on us. The mystery of Karma lies in the fact that whatever work we do, the mind is thrown into a wave and after the wave is finished that wave does not disappear. Had it been disappeared there would not have been memory at all. Hence, every action, thought just goes down and becoming fine they are stored up. All happy and unhappy thoughts that come from the senses bring pain for us. The more we enjoy the more thirst for it grows and leads to unlimited desires in man and consequently it creates pain for us. All these thirsts for unlimited desires stand in the way to the freedom of the soul.
According to Vivekananda doing good to others is necessary for one's own good. When we dedicate our body to the service of others more sincerely our heart get purification by work and we come to feel that my own self is pervading in all beings and in all things. Thus doing good to others constitutes the means for revealing one's own self. This is a spiritual practice for God realisation. So the ultimate aim of work is self realisation. Vivekananda once said - "all the secret of success is there to pay as much attention to means as to the end". The great defect in life is that we are too much concerned with the ideal with too much mental vigour in our mental horizon that we lose sight of details altogether. In the case of 99% of our failures we meet because we do not pay attention to the means. If our means are all right the end must come by itself.

According to Swami Vivekananda Karma-yoga teaches that we should not work for our enjoyments sake. He said - "Do not give up the world, imbibe influences as much you can, but if it be for your own enjoyments sake, work not at all". Work should be performed perfectly giving up the idea of attachment. If we at all believe in God we should believe that all those which we consider ours are really His.
Commsurating with the Bhagavad Gita Vivekananda opines that we should work through yoga, concentration. We should work with such concentration that there is no consciousness of our lower ego present. He said thus - "The consciousness that I am doing this or that is never present when one works through yoga. One who feels one with God through yoga performs all his work becoming immersed in concentration and seeks no personal benefit whatsoever, only such performance of work brings good to the world - no evil can come out of it. The result of every work is mixed with good and evil. The work done without selfish motive or attachment brings the highest bliss and freedom.

To Vivekananda work for work's sake should be the ideal of work. Work is not done as duty due to obligation; the Karma-yogi works as a free being unattached and considers as God's duty. He said - "Unselfishness is more paying, only people have no patience to practise it. It is more paying from the point of view of health also. Love, truth and unselfishness are not merely moral figures of speech". Vivekananda held that a man who can work even for five minutes without selfish end, he earns the capacity for making a moral giant. It is difficult to do so no doubt but in the heart of our hearts we know it's value. Self-restraint is the expression of greatest power than
all outgoing powers. Self-restriction results in development of such a tremendous power that it produces a mighty will, a character which makes a Christ or a Buddha.

Vivekananda opines that a work, however, it may be lowest forms should not be looked down upon. Everyone should be allowed to work even for selfish end for name and fame, but every one should try to obtain higher and higher motives. Vivekananda said - "To work we have the right, but not to the fruits thereof".

Vivekananda exhorts us to regard each and everyone as great in his own place. Every man is constituted of the three gunas - Sattva, Rajas and Tamas and because of the predominance of one or the other at different times man is prone to either activity, inactivity and by balancing both activity and inactivity or sweetness, calmness etc. Karma has specially to deal with these three factors. People should learn what they are and how to employ them to work better. Human society being a gradual organisation, all of us are aware of what is morality or what is duty. He was also aware of the fact that the significance of morality and ideal of duty vary from country to country and at different times to the same individual. Hence, he gave stress on the constitution of one universal ideal of duty. He remarked -
"Two ways are left open to us. The way of the ignorant who think that there is only one way and that all the rest are wrong, and the way of the wise, who admit that according to our mental constitution or different planes of existence in which we are - duty and morality may vary. The important thing is to know that there are gradations of duty and of morality - that duty of one state of life in one set of circumstances will not and cannot be that of another".  

According to Vivekananda our primary duty is to have faith in ourselves - then in God. The most important thing is to know whether he has the power of resistance or not. Having obtained that power if he renounces it and does not resist he is doing an act of love. But if he fails and try to deceive others into the belief he is doing something with the motive of highest love, he is doing opposite to it.

According to Vivekananda to be a perfect Karma-yogin a man must understand the highest ideal of non-resistance and in practising this ideal resistance of evil will be his first step on the way towards the manifestation of highest power i.e. non-resistance. Hence, before reaching this ideal to resist evil man must work and fight and then "only when has gained the power to resist will non-resistance be a virtue".  

To be a Karma-yogin he must avoid inactivity, resist evil both physical
and mental, and if he succeeds in this the calmness will come to him.

Vivekananda holds the view that it is the duty of every man to take up his own ideal and try to accomplish it and this is the sure way to progress. He should not take up the ideal of others which he can never hope to accomplish. He also opines that no man or woman in any kind of society is of the same mind and capacity. They have different ideals and we have no right to hate any ideal followed by others. Every man must be given scope to do his best in order to realise his own ideal. We should not judge all men by the same standard. He says - "Unity in variety is the plan of creation. However man and woman may vary in individuality there is the unity in the background and classes of men and women are natural variation in creation. Hence, we ought not to them by the same standard or put the same ideal before them". 14

Throwing light on the Varnasrama Dharma Vivekananda holds the view that householders also should be devoted to God. Knowledge of God should be his ideal of life. He must perform his duties and give up the fruits of actions to God. A man who performs his duty constantly doing good to others
without caring the criticism of other fellow beings he does his highest sacrifice. He must earn his livelihood by honest means with the idea that his life is meant for service of God and the poor. He must treat his parents as the visible representative of God and should try to please them. As regards woman Vivekananda opines that - "That man who has succeeded in getting the love of chaste wife has succeeded in his religion and has all the virtues". A householder must avoid excessive attachment for food, clothes etc. and he must be a man of pure heart, clean in body, always active and always ready for work. He must be the hero to the enemies and must have reverence to the wicked. A householder by doing his duties purely and sincerely he also can obtain the same result like that of the yogis. He says - "If the householder dies in battle fighting for his country or his religion he comes to the same goal as the yogi by meditation". Further he says - "Each is great in his own place but the duty of one is not the duty of the others".

The whole gist of Karma-yoga is that we should work as a master and not a slave. Vivekananda says - "Work through freedom! work through love. The word love is difficult to understand. Love never comes untill there is freedom. There is no true love possible in the slave". True love can never react. Attainment of unattachment is almost a life's work, and
as soon as we reach that ideal of complete unattachment we reach the goal of love and we become free, bondage of all sorts falls from us. At this state we stand entirely free and do not take the result of the action, into consideration. Attachment comes to a man when he expects something in return. Might and mercy are the guide of our conduct of man. The exercise of might is necessarily the exercise of the selfishness. Mercy is heaven in itself, to be God we have all to be merciful. All thoughts of obtaining return for our work stand in the spiritual progress of man and ultimately cause misery for us. This ideal of mercy can be put into practice by looking upon our work as worship provided we believe in personal God. We should give up all the fruits of work into the Lord and worship Him in such a manner that we have no right to expect for anything from mankind for the work we do for the Lord Himself is working incessantly without any attachment. Vivekananda says - "just as water can not touch the lotus leaf, so work can not bind the unselfishness by giving rise to attachment to results". According to him he is Karma-yogin who "even act at the point of death to help any one without asking question".

In Vivekananda's philosophy he made use of the traditional notions and images concentrating on the moral aspect of Hinduism for he thought that might form the foundation of socially
oriented moral consciousness. In doing this he appealed not the outer-ritualistic aspect but to the inner religious conviction of Hinduism, ethics conditioned by the inner internal plan especially Vedanta which, he believed, could give satisfactory explanation of the moral norms and evince real essence of morality. Vivekananda also followed the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, yet he did not just perpetuate ancient tradition of the turning inwards of moral consciousness, He made prominent belonged in fact to a different quality joined mostly with assertion of the personality, man's self as having the initiative, free and able to make choice and to act with reconsidering the individual's role in society. He assessed the nature and essence of morality as contained in the thesis of the unity of the transcendental and the immanent spiritual principle - 'That is Thou'. According to Vivekananda a man can perceive general precepts of morality when he understands the 'oneness', one spiritual basis of all existence. The very notion of morality should include the realisation of one spiritual principle. When a man learns to regard the divine nature of his self, he learns to regard other people in the same way as himself.

In explaining the essence of ethics Vivekananda had recourse to the category of unselfishness. In Karmayoga he made a simple statement that "which is selfish is immoral
and that which is unselfish is moral. Practically 'Selflessness' and 'egoism' appear as universal categories and are qualified in this respect corresponding to the general dichotomy of good and evil. Though Vivekananda was influenced by Vedanta and the Bhagavad Gita yet he introduced new, non-traditional components in treating the category egoism. He discussed the problem not so much in the plan of speculative metaphysics as in that of the practical life conditioned by social and political changes. He was deeply concerned with man treating as abstract individual who wishes to attain personal liberation but as an active member of the society. He never made contradiction between individual and society. Again, when the idea of selflessness in the Bhagavad Gita is renunciation of personal pleasures and plain as well as the liberation from the world to Vivekananda selflessness is above all the liberation from the worldly things that enrich an individual of wealth and money, power, name and fame, the ideal itself is pregnant with a new interpretation. Out of the four yogas Vivekananda gave much importance to Karmayoga because it corresponds to the greatest degree to the goal and tasks of the time. He gave too much importance in selfless activity for he thought that idea comprised not only call to religious activity in order to reach spiritual
and moral level in which man's self is completely unified with Atman but mainly a call to activity directed at social and political garbs.

Vivekananda in explaining the perfection of morality suggested certain concrete stages on the way to attaining it. To him perfection is to be achieved by gradual abnegation first of egoistic cares and desires starting from family to the good of the country step by step. But in each step one should not ignore the universal unity. A man who is not capable of sacrificing him for the sake of his motherland will not be able to achieve self-abnegation for the sake of humanity. This interpretation of self-denial suggested overstepping the limits of traditional Vedantism on the way to practical tasks of modern life, the ideal fitted with socio-political content. Vivekananda's insistence on positive side of self denial for the sake of human service was surely a new thing to Indian ethics. Vivekanda's interpretation of the word 'Karma' is much wider than that of Sankara. This was due to the fact that while Sankara in considering Karma he was inclined to subjective viewpoint but Vivekananda to the objective view point. Apart from this Vivekananda had wider scope of Karma by allowing it a position independent of theistic faith and metaphysical doctrine particularly accepting the
Buddhistic ideal of selfless work as a means to Nirvana. Vivekananda said - "The Karma yogi need not believe in any doctrine whatsoever. He may not believe even in God, may not ask what his soul is, not think of any metaphysical speculation. He has got his own special aim of realising selflessness, and he has to work out himself .....". To be precise Vivekananda in introducing work as worship into the every sphere of life welded together his ethical and spiritual ideal. This may be regarded as his special contribution to the present age.

**Bhakti-yoga:**

Swami Vivekananda was encouraged by Buddhism and Vaishnava theism in regard to their effort in giving due place to the affective side of man. His very aim was to soften the stern logic and monastic metaphysics of the Upanishads and the Advaita Vedanta. Because he understood that mankind could not be combined together through abstract concepts of reality that could only be done through love. He said - "The whole cosmos is the manifestation of love from the lowest atom to the highest idea; love is the motive power of the universe ..... without it universe would fall to pieces in a moment. This love is God". He, of course, maintained that
religious feeling is possible without having faith in God but also believed that the concept of God has greatest evocative power. He opined - "... All the hopes, aspirations and happiness of humanity have been centred round that word. It is impossible now to change it. All that is great and holy is associated with it". According to him the idea of God rouses the emotion of love and warm personal attachment and love is the secret of undying power. This was possibly the reason why he recognised Bhakti to be one of the paths for attaining liberation. For him Bhakti is the way of the heart leading to truth, to freedom.

According to Vivekananda Bhakti is a real, genuine search after God, a search beginning, containing and ending in love. He even holds the opinion that madness of extreme love of God for a single moment brings us eternal freedom. In defining Bhakti he refers to the great speeches of Bhakta Prahlada - "That deathless love which the ignorant have for the fleeting objects of the senses - as I keep meditating on Thee may that love not slip away from my heart". In Bhakti love for God grows and assumes a form called parabhakti or supreme devotion in which all other forms vanish, rituals disappear, books are superceded and all kinds of limitations and bondage like images, temples, mosques, religious sects
countries and nationalities fail of completely. He defines Parabhakti thus—"As oil poured from the vessel to another falls in a unbroken line, so when the mind in an unbroken stream thinks of the Lord, when we have what is called parabhakti or supreme love. Bhakti is an undisturbed and every steady direction of the mind and heart to the Lord. This self surrender (Aparaprakulya) of the devotee is a state of mind in which it has no interest and naturally knows nothing that is opposite to it."  

According to Vivekananda Bhakti is religion. But this religion is not for all but only for a few. This few want nothing but God. All of our wants are supplied by external world. But when our necessities go beyond the external world than want a supply for the internal, from God. A man may go through all the books in the universe but love is not to be had by the power of speech, not by the highest intellect or by studying various sciences, one who desires God gets love. This love is always mutual and reflective. It is the psychological phenomenon. We must desire God with the same spirit as a loving wife earnestly thinks of her departed husband. And only then we will find God. Mere reading books does not make a man learned. If a man reads really one word of love he becomes learned. So
we must want first to get that desire.

According to Vivekananda people who pray to God with the hope of getting material comfort in return can not be called religious. He says that it is better to be an atheist then to have such an idea of religion. Bhakti is the highest ideal and hence everyone of us should strive to attain that ideal.

Vivekananda compared love to a triangle. As a triangle has three angles so love is consisting of three angles - (a) Love is that knows no beginning, (b) Love knows no fear and (c) Love knows no rival because in it is always embodied the lover's highest ideal. Love is always the giver and not the taker. A true devotee is imbued with the spirit that - "If God wants I give Him my everything but I do not want anything from Him."

To ask for something from God is nothing but a shop-keeping religion which Vivekananda disliked like anything. Secondly, God is not to be looked upon as a Being sitting above with reward in one hand and punishment in the other. One who thinks Him so can not have love. A spiritual man who approaches religion, in whom spiritual insight is awakened regards those ideas as foolish and such a man rejects all ideas of fear. A man who succeeds in passing over the first two stages he begins to realise that love is always the highest
Vivekananda believed that every soul is destined to be perfect and every being in the end will attain that state. But the possibility of that state is always quickened by some influence from outside. These influences work upon our own possibilities and thereby growth begins, a spiritual life comes, becomes holy and perfect in the end. But this influence does not come from books for the self can receive impulse from another soul. Study of books may make us intellectual but cannot develop spirituality sometimes we find that a man develops his intellect at the expense of the spirit. The self out of which influence comes is called a Guru and the soul to which the impulse is transmitted is called a disciple. The Guru must be a spiritual giant and he must have the power of transmitting the impulse and the disciple must be fit both physically and mentally to receive that impulse. Hence Vivekananda says - "The speaker of the religion must be wonderful; and so must be the hearer be and when both of them are really wonderful, extra-ordinary then alone with splendid spiritual growth comes and not otherwise." A true lover of God instinctively can recognise his Guru. The conditions which are necessary for real teachers are - purity of heart real thirst for knowledge and perseverance.
According to Vivekananda God is both personal and impersonal, prayer and praise are the first means of spiritual growth. Repition made in the name of God has wonderful power. Mantras are not special words sacred texts or the name of God chosen by the Guru for repition and reflection by the disciple. Such mantras are however not sounds of words but God Himself. God is within us. We should think of Him, speak of Him and we should not have desire for the world. The disciple must concentrate on a personality for prayer and should think of God as the only 'Istha'.

According to Vivekananda religion exists in pure and sincere love in the heart. He says - "External worship is only a symbol of love of internal worship and purely are the real things. Worship must be pure both physically and mentally. The supreme teaching of all worships is to be pure and to do good to others. To express in his words - "He who sees Shiva in the poor, in the weak and in the diseased, really worships Shiva" one who has served the poor seeing Shiva in him of any caste, creed and religion etc. God is pleased with him than the man who sees in temples. Vivekananda says - "..... those who serve the servants of God are His greatest servants". A perfect man sees nothing but God. Man should always worship the highest ideal and when he reaches that stage, when he loves
the ideal as the ideal, all sorts of doubts and arguments in him vanish for ever. The ideal of love is sufficient for him for he thinks the universe as the manifestation of love. God manifests itself starting from the lowest atom to the highest being, omnipotent and all pervading is the love. And imbued with this love the sacred souls dedicate their lives for the sake of humanity. Love is the motive power of the universe and without which universe cannot exist even for a moment. He said - "None, O beloved loves the husband for husband's sake but for the self that is in the husband...... None ever loves anything else except for the self". Even the selfish love is the manifestation of the same love which deserves no condemnation for it differs from love only in degree. At first it was a love for the self and the claim of the little self made love selfish. But at last that appears the blaze of light when the self became infinite. God, who at the beginning was a Being existing elsewhere became resolved as it were into Infinite love. Man himself is also transformed. His desire for material attachment as well as selfishness vanishes and at the apex he finds love, lover and beloved are one.
Raja-yoga:

Exponents of the Raja-yoga declare that religion is not based upon the experience of ancient times and no man can be religious if he does not have the same experiences himself. Yoga is a means for having that experience. To them simply talking about religion does not make a man religious if he does not feel for it. If God really is man must see Him and the same is true in the case of self also. If not, better not to believe either God or self and still better to be an outspoken atheist.

In conformity with the Vedas Vivekananda opines that in order to remove all kinds of doubts or to dispel darkness of mind man must earn the distinction to experience truth for himself. He must grasp it, realise it and feel it within the heart of hearts. Raja-yoga is such a practical and scientifically worked out the method of realising the truth. A man may be pregnant with thousands of sermons but those sermons will not make a man religious until he practises the method. Sages of all countries in all times declare that they found out some truth higher than the senses can bring us and they invited verification. They advised us to take up the method and practise honestly. If after doing this we do not find higher truth we
have every claim to say that there is no truth at all. But before we do so we are not rational to decry the truth of their assertions and so it is essential for us to work faithfully using the method prescribed by them for the attainment of truth.

Referring to science Vivekananda holds the opinion that in acquiring knowledge science makes generalisation based on observation of facts. Hence, he insists on the fact that to have knowledge of the mind, the internal nature of man, of thought, man must have the power of observing the facts going on within the mind. The science of Rāja-yoga is destined to supply such means of obtaining the internal states. The instrument is the mind itself. The power of attention should be properly guided and directed towards the internal world and this will help us to analyse the mind and illumine facts for us. With the help of concentration of the powers of mind it is possible to gain all the knowledge of the world. To Vivekananda the world is all the time ready give up it's secrets if we really know how to give the necessary blow to it. Concentration of mind gives us the necessary strength and force of the blow. The more concentration we give the more power we acquire to gain the knowledge in the world. But to concentrate upon the internal states is not so easy than the concentration made upon the external states. The object is
internal - mind studying mind, mind itself the object. Mind has the power of reflection. Man works and thinks at the same time, while a portion of the mind stands by the sees what he is thinking. The power of the mind penetrates it's own innermost secrets. And then will come to the basis of belief, the real genuine religion. The Rāja yoga proposes to teach how to concentrate mind or how to discover the innermost recesses of our own minds. This yoga also proposes to teach how to generalise the contents from, and conclusion from them. It never questions what our religion is - we are human beings that is all. Every human being has the right to seek and the power to seek religion. So Raja-yoga teaches us not to believe anything unless one finds it out for one itself. The study of Rāja-yoga takes a long time and requires constant practice - physical at the beginning but in the main it is mental.

Accepting the views of the ancient sages Vivekananda says that there is a continuity of mind. The mind is universal and our personal minds are the fragments of that universal mind - 'little waves in the ocean'. And owing to this continuity we convey our thoughts directly to another. The science of Rāja-yoga claims that it has re-discovered laws which develop personality; the personality that can influence the inner man.
It gives stress on proper attention to those laws and methods that can grow and strengthen one's personality. With the help of this personality it is possible to control over our thoughts thought at the root before it has become thought. At this stage it becomes possible for us to control the whole. A method must be there by which we can analyse, investigate, understand and finally grapple with those fine powers and final causes and only then we can control over ourselves. A man who has the power to control over his own mind surely he will be able to control over every other mind. And this is the reason why purity and morality have always been object of religion. A perfectly moral person has control of himself. Minds are same different parts of one mind. Vivekananda says - "who knows and control his own mind knows the secrets of every mind and has the power over every mind". 30

Vivekananda also opines that to be a yogi one must undergo all kinds of excesses whether in talking, sleeping, working etc. for all these distract attention. The power of yoga is such that even the least of it brings tremendous effect or benefit. Neither it will hurt anybody but will benefit everyone. Such a yogi first decreases the nerve excitement and brings calmness and makes us fit to perceive things clearly.
It will improve not only health but also temperaments. In order to be a yogi one must take care of his diet. When a man begins to concentrate his mind the dropping of a pin seem like a thunder going through the brain. As the organs get finer, the perceptions get finer. To attain this stage several stages has to be cross over and a good deal of perseverance is essential. He must give up all sorts of argumentation and distractions. The things of the subtler planes have to be realised. He must study only those books written by persons that have that realisation. Leaving aside all nibbling things he should take up one idea and should make that idea his life. He should think of it, dream of it and live on that idea alone. This is the key to success and following this way the great spiritual giants are produced. Vivekananda says - "If we really want to be blessed and make others blessed, we must go deeper." To be a yogi one must have tremendous perseverance, tremendous will. Having this energy and will, he should work hard and then he will reach goal.

In practising yoga Vivekananda advised to adopt the following means - "Take the easiest posture of sitting. Hold the three parts straight the ribs, the shoulders and the head
leaving the spine free and straight, no leaning backward or forward. Then mentally picture the body as perfect, part by part. Then send a current of love to all the world. And then pray for enlightenment.32 Regarding time for practising yoga the junction time of dawn and twilight should be selected. Through yoga the 'Citta-vrittis' - the mind waves which are gross can be easily controlled. All feelings should be controlled in the germ, the root in their finer forms before we have come conscious that they are acting on us. One of the important means of controlling these feelings is meditation. He says - "When a man practises meditation for days and months and years, it turns into a habit and then all sorts of emotions are controlled."33

According to Vivekananda concentration is the key to all knowledge. When the mind is concentrated the mind turns back upon itself, all that we have within us will be servants and not masters. Yoga is the means of controlling senses, will and mind. The good result that we obtain from yoga is that we learn to control instead of being controlled. The mind seems to be layer on layer. Our real aim is to get over all the intervening states of our being and find God. The aim of yoga is to realise God and in order to accomplish this we must go beyond relative knowledge, go beyond the sense world. Concentration is restraining
the mind.

Vivekananda mentions eight processes for restraining mind. They are - (i) **Yama** - It means control of mind avoiding externals. One should not beget evils and injure no living creatures. One should be chaste in thought, word and action. Chastity is the basis of all religions. (ii) **Niyama** - One should not allow one's mind to wander in any direction. (iii) **Asana** - It means posture. There are 84 postures, but one is to follow that one which one deems to be natural to him. (iv) **Pranayama** - It means restraints of breadth. (v) **Prāyahāra** - One is to draw in of the organs from the object. (vi) **Dhārana** - it means concentration of mind (vii) **Dhyāna** - it signifies contemplation or meditation. (viii) **Samādhi** - it means super consciousness. The more pure the body and mind, the more easily one can have the desired result. If one is perfectly pure and practise sincerely one can make one's mind a search-light of infinite power. When a man reaches this state all feelings of the body disappear and then only he can become free and immortal. To him all external appearances, unconsciousness and superconsciousness are the same. A man whose whole soul is given up to God, he reaches the super-conscious plane.
According to Vivekananda the path that leads man to perfection is always slippery than a stair case. Hence, ethical preparation is the primary pre-requisite for spiritual insight. The mind must be free from all kinds of impurities and make a clean mirror in which divine can be reflected. The successive stages of yogas of the Raja-yoga are intended to stabilise human nature and aid the systematic purification of the whole being essential for an integral reflection and taking in of divine reality. When a man succeeds in making him spiritual his conflicts are resolved and he finds himself in the great current of life. No human remains alien to him. He does not feel to be a member of this or that group but belongs to humanity as a whole. He obtains primary patriotism which is the love of humanity. He learns to respect for the diversity which is natural to the constitution of things and understands the unity underlying all. He feels in his deeper self his oneness with his fellowmen and unity with life. The welbeing of humanity becomes his deepest concern. He loves humanity with tenderness and depth unknown to others. The realised person becomes an elemental force of nature, a dynamo of spirit, works with stupendous high velocity. The renunciation he has practised does not require him to escape from the world but only to destroy the ego sense. He finds eternal life here and now. It is the life of the eternal part of us, of the light within us.
Every man is troubled with the question if the world is real. Religion begins with the question and comes to an end with its answer. Metaphysics, Philosophy and religion, all these really filled with the various answers to the question. So long as death is inevitable to the life of man can not but think to this eternal problem. Human body is perishable so the question naturally arises - if anything remains after death? A great discussion follows as to whether the aggregate of materials we call body is the expression of the force that we term as soul, thought etc. It can not be denied that all religions of the world are of opinion that force called thought manifests the body and not the reverse. What is that force which manifests itself through the body. It is the soul or the Atman. The soul of man is neither the body, nor the mind. The soul has neither form or shape, it is Omnipresent. It is beyond time, space and causation and hence Infinite. This Infinite can not be two; it must be one and hence the individual souls that we have are not real. Vivekananda says - "The Real man is one and Infinite, the Omnipresent spirit and the apparent man is only a limitation of that Real man." An apparent man however great he may be is nothing but the dim
reflection of the Real man who is beyond. The apparent man is bound by time, space and causation while the Real man being not bound by all these, it is free. The apparent soul appears to be bound but really is not. This is the Reality in our souls, the spiritual nature. Hence, every soul is infinite and hence the question of birth and death does not arise at all.

Vivekananda holds that we are all slaves of Māyā. We born in Māyā, live in Māyā. This world is a prison cell where we are confined. And as such a question arises - Is there any way out of this Māyā? He says that even though we are troubled with the question of birth, death, sufferings of life etc. there is a small voice that is ringing through all ages, through every country and in every heart. This is the voice that leads man forward, man has heared it and is hearing still all through the ages. So it is impossible for man to get rid of the riddle of Māyā. Of course, it is difficult to get over it. Vivekananda said - "Be not despair, the way is very difficult like walking on the edge of razor, yet despair not. Arise, Awake and find the ideal, the goal. All human beings should try to attain freedom. He says that all the religious systems of the world believe that the human soul whatever it
be, whatever it's relation to God - is essentially pure and perfect. Every religion holds that man is divine, he has divinity in his nature. The soul is one with freedom.

In order to realise the true nature of the soul or to attain jñāna or wisdom Vivekananda has referred to certain steps following which man can attain freedom or realisation. The first requirements of this are - (1) Shama and Dama. Sama consists in not allowing the mind to externalise and Dama means checking the external instruments (2) Uparati - it means total abstaining from thinking of the objects, of senses (iii) After this stage comes - 'Titikṣā' which means following the ideal of forbearance - 'Resist not evil'; One should be without any feeling of hatred, anger etc. Mind must be kept calm and quiet (iv) To be jnani the next requirement is 'Sraddha' or Faith. He must have absolute faith in religion and God and consequently ardent anxiousness to reach God. (v) After Sraddha comes 'Inumukshatva'. It means ardent desire to be free. The human nature is such that everybody runs after momentary pleasures and before he reaches that they are no more. And still man is made after sensual pleasures and thereby he makes himself fool for ever. Man should be disinterested in both pleasure and pain for both of them are derogatory. A man can
seek freedom when he really understands that he is slave of nature and it is his primary duty to throw out his slavery. The next discipline is 'Nilyanitya viveka'. In this stage man is able to distinguish what is true and what is false, between the eternal and the transitory. The world of things are in a constant flux and there is one who never changes - that is God. When man is able to reach Him he conquers nature and nature can have no effect on him.

Vivekananda opines that religion is such which can never be attained either through the senses or brain or studying religious scriptures. There were and are many intellectuals but only a few of them succeeded or succeed in coming to God. God is beyond the sense and consciousness even. He says - "consciousness is only one of the many planes in which we work". Man can attain God only when he transcends consciousness, go beyond senses. The proof of God is direct perception, 'Pratyaksha'. This perception is, however, not ordinary perception of the senses but super-sensuous super-conscious state and to attain this state requires arduous training to rise beyond the senses.

According to Vivekananda true religion is entirely transcendental. He believes that every being has the potentiality of transcending the limitation of senses. He is quite optimistic
in holding that a time will come when all beings will be able to reach God. He says — "The highest as well the lowest life God ever projected will come back to the Father of all lives from where all beings projected in whom all lives and unto whom they will return — that is God".$^{37}$

Vivekananda also holds that man mistakes self either for body, the force or the mind. But self is beyond all these. He can realise his own self provided he really seeks for it. He himself is the Being. He must find it for himself. He says 'Thou that art'. He himself is the self beyond all thought, one without birth or death, neither beginning nor end, the immortal, intangible, Omniscient and Omnipotent Being. But very few have the power to grasp the higher fewer still have no patience to attain it. Vivekananda opines that — upon the same tree there are two birds, one on the top, the other below. The upper bird is calm, silent and majestic, immersed in his own glory i.e. God and the lower is the human soul eating both the sweet and bitter fruits of the world. When the lower bird eats the bitter fruits and gets disgusted and then he stops eating and goes towards the unknown God and understands the world as a vain show. But soon his senses drag him towards the sweet and bitter fruits of the world. But he is again confronted
with the hard blow and the self approaching God and try and try goes near and near to Him. It's old soul starts melting. But when he comes still near enough, it then comes to know and realise that he is none but God himself. Jnana yoga teaches that 'Thou art that' and makes man aware enough that he is essentially divine. Referring to Upanishads Vivekananda says - that the self is only attained by him whom the self chooses, which means that we are the self and we choose ourselves. Though Vivekananda elaborately discussed yogas classifying under four divisions but these divisions were not artificially made by him. These divisions are deeply related to the complexities of human nature. To express it in his own words - "Each has a special nature peculiar to himself which he must follow and through which he will find his freedom." He tried to teach that each path has efficacy of it's own if pursued sincerity, good intention, reason and non attachment and renunciation. Each man can follow one of these paths in accordance with his temperament. He repeatedly warned us that none of these paths is exclusive in character. He said - "There is not really so much difference between knowledge (jnana) and Love (Bhakti) as peoples sometimes imagine. We shall see, as we go on, that in the end they coverage and meet at the same point. So also with Raja yoga, which when
persued as a means to liberation ..... lead to the same
goal. .... work, endless work, without looking at the
results and always keeping the whole mind and soul steadfast
at the lotus feet of the Lord ... this is Karma-yoga. You
must harmonise the four different yogas - otherwise, how can
you always keep your mind and heart on the Lord.³⁹

Vivekananda also opines that these spiritual practices
are essential for building one's character. In complex human
nature the elements of all four natures are intermingled. Hence,
a harmonious blending of all the modes of practice helps
immensely in framing an ideal character. Vivekananda was
optimistic in holding the view that the spiritual disciplines
to be followed in his organisation should be passed on the
synthesis of four different yogas.

In modelling the seal of the Ramkrishna Math and Mission
Vivekananda depicted the symbolic representation of the synthesis
of all the yogas. In the seal we get a lake in which there is
a lotus, swans and the sun and all these are encircled by a
serpent. Vivekananda interpreted this in this way - "The wavy
waters in the picture are symbolic of Karma, the lotus of Bhakti
and the rising sun of jñāna. The encircling serpent is indicative
of yoga and the awakened Kundalini Shakti, while the swan in the
picture stands for Paramatman. Therefore the ideal of the picture is that by the union of Karma, jnana, Bhakti and yoga, the vision of the paramatan is obtained. 40

One of the greatest contribution of Vivekananda was that he tried to find out a new gospel of synthesis by accepting the safe paths of accepted ideals in regard to thought and practice of religion. According to him the philosophical problems like concept of Absolute and the correct paths to approach it are responsible for the creation of immutable religions and religious sects of the world. He regarded these two problems to be universal and all other problems related to religions can be grouped within their range. Hence, he made active effort to resolve the conflicts existing in different religions by an appeal to reason, broad mindedness and tolerance in order to help mankind to have a new realisation. The chief mission of his life was to spread the spirit of harmony, not dissention. He opined that all religions of the world together with their various spiritual paths laid down by the seers lead to the same goal - i.e. Self-realisation or God realisation and hence he accepted all religions to be true. He advised the people of the world belonging to various religions to practise toleration for .......
avatara is always one and the same plunging into the ocean of life, He rises up in one place and is known as Krishna, diving again and rising elsewhere, He is known as Christ....
I have practiced all disciplines. I accept all paths.41
The knowledge and love of God are intimately one. There is no difference between pure knowledge and pure love. Each soul is potentially divine and the goal of mankind is to manifest that divinity within by controlling nature external and internal. Hence, he appealed to mankind to manifest that divinity either by work or worship or psychic control or philosophy, by one or more or all of these. Hence if the followers of all religions realise the true spirit of religion as preached and practised by Vivekananda then they can not but cultivate the spirit of tolerance and pay respect for any religion in order to ensure peaceful co-existence of all living beings on the planet.
5.3 TRUTHFULNESS, SATYAGRAHA AND NON-VIOLENCE:

According to Gandhi man is free to choose any path as he thinks to be conducive to attain perfection in life. He said - "there are as many paths as there human beings as man differ in temperaments paths also differ." But attaining perfection Gandhiji laid great importance on guru who is spiritually advanced and morally proficient. If such a guru is not found then "It is better to grope in the dark and through millions of errors to truth than to entrust oneself to one who knows not that he knows not." 42

Gandhiji also remarked that it is not possible for man to attain perfection in life without the grace of God. He said - "Perfection or freedom from error comes only through grace, without an unreserved surrender to His grace, complete mastery over thought is impossible. This is the teaching of the every book of religion and I am realising the truth of it every moment striving after the Bramhacharyya." 44

To him one must be able to shelter the claims of egoism to attain perfection in life. It is only through detached and unselfish action man can free himself. He must dedicate everything to God the fruits of actions and surrender himself
to Him. His whole interest must be absorbed in God to have attained to yoga. When a man becomes free from all desires and even the desire to see God, only he can hope to attain perfection. Perfection or truth can be attained only through the selfless service to humanity. He said, - "They can be done by service to all I am part and parcel of the whole and I can not find Him apart from the rest of humanity". 45

Gandhiji also opined that prayer must be regarded as the core of life and this prayer must accompany purification of heart. He suggested that man must devote to follow the middle path to have fixed time for worship. He said - "True pilgrimage or supreme effort is to make shelter in the core of the heart to perceive God there". 46

Being an ardent devotee of the Bhagavad Gita Gandhiji put equal importance to Karma (action), Bhakti (devotion) and jnana (knowledge) as the means to attain perfection and he regarded all these paths to be interrelated. To express in his own words - "without Bhakti human effort by itself will not succeed and without jnana Bhakti will not be effective. Bhakti and jnana are the means which help us in performing right Karma". 47 He would seek God's help to guide him along
the right path for he believed - "Him who worships Me, I
guide alone the right and see to his needs. My God is
myriad formed, and while at the other time see Him in the
communal unity, then again in removal of untouchability and
that is how I establish communion with Him according as the
spirit moves me." Gandhi wanted to see God in his action.
Service to His creation he regarded as service to God. He
said thus - "We may not know God but know his creation.
Service to His creation is the service to God" and this is
the way to attain perfection.

Gandhi also mentioned five rules of life like truthfulness,
Non-violence, non-stealing, non hoarding and Bramhacharyya.
These he named as cardinal virtues which are obligatory to all
aspirants of perfection.

Truthfulness:

Truthfulness is one of the most important cardinal
virtues recognised by the Indian philosophical systems. Even
Manu, the greatest of the Indian law-giver also mentioned
truthfulness as great virtue. Gandhi accepted these virtues
and interpreted them in the light of his own experiences to
suit the needs of the days he lived. And in doing this he
accepted the great Indian formula of truth in thought, in speech and in action (Manana, Vachana and Kayema).

Truth for Gandhi did not simply mean partial knowledge nor regarded it as a metaphysical fact. He regarded it as a normative concept and thereby he deduced from it the ideal for right action. The sanskrit word 'Satya' (Truth) means not only truth but also truthfulness. Gandhiji included in the concept of 'truth' ontological truth (Reality), a value metaphysical ideal (Moksa), natural justice and truthfulness. The concept of truth is very wide. In principle the different meanings of truth can be deduced from Ontological or metaphysical truth. Truth at the same time is the goal of life. Every man must reach this goal, it's unimpeded and efficient realisation of the natural right. Our knowledge of all these is completely increasing, never comes to an end. That is why moral norm of truthfulness cannot be avoided.

According to Gandhiji it is dangerous to identify 'Satya' erroneously with positive justice that we find in formal law. By avoiding such an interpretation Gandhi had to appeal to truth instead of justice.

Gandhiji holds the opinion that there is an intimate relation between truth and truthfulness. Truth is the and and
truthfulness is the means. Gandhiji asserted that means and ends are convertible terms in his philosophy of life. He believes that a man who tries to realise truth must be truthful, in speech and in action. By truthful in thought he meant sincere devotion to facts which consists in earnest search to discover truth. According to Gandhi reason is the voice of God within us. In order to solve any problem it is our duty to follow the dictates of reason. He said - "Truth is by nature self-evident. As soon as you remove cobwebs of ignorance that surround it, it shines clear". If a man fails in his attempt to follow the dictates of reason then the search for truth will automatically set it right. But discovery of truth is a difficult task because it requires self-analysis and self-purification etc. to get rid of six deadly enemies like lust, anger, hatred, greed, infatuation etc. To express in his own words - "For the quest of truth involves tapas - self-suffering even unto death. In such self-less search for truth nobody can lose his bearings for long directly he takes the wrong path he stumbles and is thus restricted to the right path. Therefore, the pursuits of truth is the Bhakti (devotion). It is the path that leads to God".

According to Gandhi truthfulness in speech and action is the natural outcome of the truthfulness of thought. The
nucleous to the votary of truth must bear in mind all the time that - Truth alone prevails' (Satyam eva jayate). Asat or untruthfulness can never help a man to attain success. He said - 'Even when falsehood momentarily succeeds it so long passing under the gerb of truth. So the strength of falsehood ultimately is derived from the stimulating truth. Truth is thus can make it prevail. Falsehood has no legs to stand upon. It is doomed by its own nature to ultimate destruction. Gandhi always emphasised on the perfect harmony of thought speech and action. He believed that our sincere love for our fellow beings gives rise to truthfulness in speech and action. True love and not of deceiving others are always incompatible in character. According to him the ideal of vow of truthfulness generates true love which is a matter of heart. This vow is to speak what is true, good and pleasant which Gandhi reflected in life.

According to Gandhi truth as means is always within our reach. If we take care of the means we are bound to reach the end sooner or later. Whatever difficulties we may face we should not give up the quest for truth. We are sure of attaining perfection in life. With this hope in mind Gandhi made ceaseless striving for truth. He said - 'I am but a poor
struggling soul yearning to be wholly good, wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed, but everfailing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. It is a painful climb but pain of it is a positive pleasure to me, each step forward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next."

The uniqueness of Gandhiji's philosophy and his technique lie in the fact that his sensitive moral nature constructed world view, gave truth a social basis and expanded Ahimsā into a community ethics. He resolved moral dilemma of modern time by giving a shake up, a stirring to old postulates. It was Gandhi who proved that a new mode of seeing is the function of philosophy. The opinion that philosophy is a mere perception of Brahman leaves behind it a residue of vestalgia. Gandhiji proved his genius in the foundation of eternity by proving that philosophy is the criticism and synthesis of life and philosophy can assume tasks on the social and political planes. Gandhiji was a revolutionary thinker in history who gave a collective vision and community ethics. He walked over the philosophical chasm of knowing and doing. He placed ethical significance in terms of man's social responsibilities. He related philosophy to human affairs and gave philosophy a sovereign accent. He teared the straight altire of the Absolute and enabled philosophy to
enter into action by his concept of truthfulness.

Commenting on Gandhi's concept of truth Y. G. Krishnamurthi observed - "Gandhi demonstrates truth in the dynamic movement of the self toward vaster centres of awareness. It throws of psychic protecting circle round man. Gandhi's spiritual revolution starts in the blaze of August noon. It's ending truth is still in the zenith. It is beyond the reach of the pilgrim. This truth is nourished not by hand of grenade but by reverence for life".

\[64\]

Satyagraha:

In India there were pluralistic and empirical trends in classical thoughts no doubt, but they did not become a part of practices. Scales of value and the mode of social action were relatively unaffected either bringing about change in social conditions or by varied philosophical discourses. Philosophy remained far removed from solving the problems of man. A particular school of philosophy rooted so much into Hindu way of life that no scope was there for other philosophers either to criticise or improve upon the traditional practices. Philosophical opposition was merely confined to intellectual gymnastic. Thought and action were completely divorced. But
due to the impact of Western influence intellectuals, however, started reflecting on the problems of life. The conflict between the traditional beliefs and matter of fact knowledge became manifest. For the first time an opportunity emerged for philosophy to participate in the problem of man to criticise the existing ways of life and to foreshadow those to which future may conform. Gandhi was of opinion that the social inconsistencies can be remedied when man begins to relate thought and action to a common ideal. To him when beliefs fail to meet the demand of the circumstances they tend to loose their instrumental character. Ideas that can not be translated into action, beliefs which are impracticable and the values that can not be shared must be discarded. And here arises the need for classifying ideas and beliefs in action and experience. When circumstances precipitate action and man fails to understand it's intellectual significance either there is a divorce between thoughts and action, intent and consequences, means and ends, the individual and society. Such a relation is fundamental to and beginning point of the philosophy of Gandhiji.

The idea of Satyagraha as developed by Gandhi is directly connected with the identification of reality and value with truth. Satyagraha is a truth force. To Gandhi -
In ancient times wise men like Jesus, Buddha etc. regarded this force most powerful and they drew their inspiration and confidence from this knowledge. In modern world the great potentiality of this force had been forgotten. Gandhi meditating upon the ideas of Thoreau and Tolstoy tested this discarded weapon and found that it could work wonders. Gandhi wrote - "It is a force which would revolutionise social ideals and to do away with despoticisms and the emerging militarism under which the nations of the west are groaning".

Initially Gandhi used Satyagraha as a technique to gain political independence no doubt, but that was not the end. To him Satyagraha has deep rooted meaning. For him political freedom is necessary to gain spiritual freedom. He said - "My patriotism is for me in my going to the land of eternal freedom and peace". Satyagraha ultimately developed in Gandhi's hand as a whole way of life with a philosophy, ideology and discipline of its own.

In Satyagraha there is always unflinching adherence to truth. It's root meaning in holding to truth hence truth force. He termed it as love force or soul force. It signifies the vindication of truth not by inflicting sufferings on the
opponent but to one's self. The word Satyagraha used by him out of two sanskrit words - 'Satya' (Truth, Right) and 'Agraah' (firmness or determination). His Satyagraha did not remain only a technique of non-violent resistance. The name positive resistance which Gandhiji used as a technique was subsequently named by him as 'Satyagraha'. This change was made subsequently by him because the word 'passive resistance' suggested a negative sense, whereas the word 'Satyagraha' suggests the active principle of love. Gandhiji always believed that love is the only means for realising truth. Satyagraha is a truth-force as opposed to armed strength or violence. It excludes the use of violence because as man is capable of knowing Absolute truth he is not to punish anybody. Self-purification is another name for Satyagraha. Satyagraha is the way of non-violence. According to Gandhiji beauty and efficacy of Satyagraha is very great but it is also too simple that it can be preached even by a child also. He regarded Satyagraha as a kind of education in the real sense of the term. He said - "In brief the sign of satyagraha consists in the quest for the principle of life."

According to Gandhi Satyagraha is like an all-sided sword and can be used everywhere and at any time. He deduced the laws which operate in the acceptance of Satyagraha both
as a way of life and as a method of fighting injustice in various fields, economic, social and human self-respect, human dignity, human freedom and human progress in terms of higher moral and spiritual life which were the basic values to which he attached greatest importance. Satyagrahi can attain a far reaching result without shedding a single drop of blood. It never rusts and not to be stolen. It is not a weapon of the weak. It requires physical and mental training. It depends only on truth and one's capacity to suffer for truth. For where there is no strength of mind then there can not be strength of soul. So a Satyagrahi who wants to serve the country has to cultivate certain moral qualities like perfect chastity, poverty, truthfulness and fearlessness. Thus it signifies that it needs for proper education to create an altitude of mind towards truth. Truth, therefore, has necessarily to be followed and at any cost.

According to Gandhiji there can not be Satyagraha for an unjust cause. Even for a just cause it may fail to achieve the end if the satyagrahis are not having strong determination and capable of fighting and suffering to the end. A satyagrahi must exclude the use of violence in any form whether in thought, speech and action. If the cause is just one and the Satyagrahi
retains the capacity for endless suffering avoiding violence
the victory is a must. A Satyagrahi must always remain calm
and unperturbed even under any kind of-provocation.

According to Gandhi the method of Satyagraha is possible
only when people by nature is fearless and lovers of poverty
and cultivate the spirit of tolerance. He can be a Satyagrahi
who has the heart to sacrifice his poverty and even his own
family whenever necessary. To quote Gandhiji's words - "I
see that satyagrahi is assured of divine help, and that is
testing a satyagrahi the creator imposes on him at every step
only as much burden as he can bear". For Gandhi suffering
undergone in the purest form of satyagraha is tapasya on
penance.

Gandhiji mentioned three principles regarding the goal,
means and results of satyagraha. The first implies that the
original demand for satyagraha should not be increased, the
second implies that whatever is gained by satyagraha should
be retained by satyagraha alone. Lastly whatever is not attainable
by satyagraha can not be gained by any other means. It knows
no defeat either side. From the lowest point of view the aim
of satyagraha is the service to humanity and from the standpoint
of higher, it is Moksha or liberation. The result of satyagraha
is always good if the principles are strictly followed. It should be practised without thinking of the result and it should make no difference whether the expected goal is reached or not. He said - "The extraneous factors can not affect satyagraha ...... the victory of a single member may be taken to mean victory of all, but the defeat of the side as a whole does not spell defeat for the person who has not yielded". Satyagraha presupposes the ultimate victory of truth, it incites the freedom of the soul. Gandhiji compares satyagraha "to a banyan tree in which 'satya' (Truth) and ahimsa (Non-Violence) represent the parent trunk with innumerable branches of which civil disobedience is one."

Satyagraha is not a new word. Gandhiji discovered it only to give new meaning to it and used it in every field of human activity. He used it ultimately as a technique for the realisation of the soul-force in man because this principle is based on the faith in the inherent goodness of man. Hence, the sole aim of Gandhiji was to make aware of this point and to make best use of it for bringing about peace with an earnest zeal and for the realisation of the truth. He often refers Satyagraha as a science, and an art. He always approached the subject as a scientist with an open mind and made a number of
experiences in his life. For Gandhi Satyagraha was not simply a technique for non-violent resistance. He developed it also as a whole way of life with a philosophy, ideology and discipline of its own. He found out the laws which operate in the adoption of Satyagraha both as a way of life and as a method of fighting injustice in all disciplines like economics, politics etc. and other human self-respect, human dignity, human freedom and human progress in terms of higher spiritual life on which he attached much importance.
Non-violence:

Non-violence as an ethical norm is basic to Gandhi's philosophy, a kind of foundation stone. He repeated several times that truth as a goal precedes non-violence. He considered truth as a hierarchical order of values. Truth as a goal to be reached has greater values than the means i.e. non-violence used to reach it. But whatever may be the case, non-violence is necessary part of Gandhiji's philosophy. We can inevitably reach the goal sooner or later provided we take care of the means.

Gandhi admitted himself that he had nothing new to teach the world in the case of non-violence. He said - "I have nothing to teach the world .... Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to try experiments in both as vast a scale as I could". This ideal is nothing but the continuation of ancient philosophical tradition particularly Buddhism and Jainism.

Ordinarily the meaning of non-violence is the ideal of non-killing or non-injuring in any form of life under any circumstances, not even thinking or speaking of non-injuring others. This meaning of non-violence was made elastic by Manu
who allowed killing of animals or sacrifice and food or for self-defence. But Gandhi's conception of non-violence lies in between the two extremes. Because his chief aim of life was to make the ideal more practical, positive and dynamic in character. Basically he was a votary of truth but in search of it he discovered non-violence. He said - "..... In fact it was in the course of my pursuit of truth that I discovered non-violence". 53

Gandhiji in explaining the relation between truth as 'End' and non-violence as 'Means' expressed the opinion that they are inseparable. He explained thus - "Means may be compared with the seed, ends with the tree, the same unbreakable connection exists between means and ends as between the seed and the tree". 54 Like the Indian general ethics Gandhi's more doctrine is teleological in principle.

As Gandhi was a practical minded man he could not ignore the reality of the human progress. To him Non-violence is the law of the species. The primary duty of man is to keep this divine element alive and make possible effort to use it by practising love. He did not interpret non-violence in the negative sense i.e. in the sense of physical and mental injury. He liked to interpret non-violence in the positive sense as
the greatest love and greatest charity. To him non-violence borns out of love and the true criteria of non-violence is the inner feeling of the heart that lie implicit in non-violence. It reveals itself as love in the working state. One who clings to the inner feeling cannot but non-violent. The more we practise morally elevated to understand truth more.

According to Gandhi morality is thus the means. Right behaviour by itself has no value. Morality is the key, it is necessary means for achieving the goal - i.e. truth. Hence, Gandhi gave much more importance to moral questions. He did not accept violent means for achieving the goal, individual or collective. A goal achieved by wrong means is not a real goal, but proves itself to be an illusion.

From the standpoint of ends, morality always implies purposeful human behaviour which gives rise to best possible result. According to Gandhi it is morality upon which depends the real development of individual or the community. Morality advances freely for others, creates harmony, peace and happiness.

According to Gandhi means always must be within our reach. We can control means but not the goal. The basic importance in aiming the right goal falls on morality or means, i.e. on deeds.
which can be performed in practice. We may not be aware of
the final goal except as a formal idea, still in accordance
with the border value theory of truth we may have a number
of intermediary goals, relative truths. Consequently according
to the best of our ability we esteem certain achieved goals
correct and experiences others as wrong and thereby we can
solve our moral problems in relation to these achievements.
And it is impossible for us to separate 'ends' and 'means'
or morality and hence according to Gandhi they are interchangeable
terms.

According to Gandhi whether an action is right or wrong,
vviolent or non-violent can be studied both from the point of
view of motives and consequences. To get sure good results we
must take care of the plurality of means and ends. Hence,
Gandhi opines that self-analysis and purification of one's
motives is more certain way to right action than the analysis
of external aim.

According to Gandhi a non-violent man must restrain all
impulses. Non-violence is meant for the strong and not for the
weak. He said - "My creed of non-violence is extremely active
force, it has no room for cowardice even weaknesses". To him
violence is the expression of inner sense of weakness. But a
truly non-violent man goes on observing it even at the cost of his life. The capacity for self-sacrifice develops fearlessness in the non-violent individual. He said - "The path of truth is narrow as it is straight even so that of Ahimsa. It is like balancing oneself on the edge of the sword....". 56

One must learn the art of dying in the training of non-violence. It is the art of discovering the cause of fear. The non-violent man has to cultivate the capacity for self-sacrifice of the highest order to make free from fear.

Non-violence is the positive spirit of treating all beings as one's self. A votary of non-violence grants maximum convenience to others even at the maximum inconvenience to one-self. Gandhiji said - "Non-violence is not the mechanical performance. It is the finest quality of heart and comes by training". 57 It requires difficult course of training to attain this mental state. His principle of non-violence is in principle teleological even though in practice the main stress is upon plurality of man. According to Gandhi perfect state can be reached when body, mind and speech are in complete harmony. To him while violence is required for production of external things, non-violence is the protection of the Atman. It is the highest type of renunciation which implies complete freedom from the attachment of
earthly possessions as the meanest". A non-violent man as Gandhi said "takes refuge in God, ought to have a glimpse of Atman that transcends the body, and the moment one has a glimpse of the imperishable Atman one sheds the love of perishable body". 58

But inspite of Gandhi's yearning for non-violence he holds that killing may be necessary in certain exceptional cases. For example the using of violent means to restrict the activities of the drunkard. But these exceptional cases should not set the rule to encourage violence.

To Gandhi non-violence is the supreme ideal of life. It is supreme because truth can not be attained without non-violence. He said - "When you want to find truth as God, the only inevitable means is love, i.e. non-violence". 89 Being a practical idealist he believed that non-violence prepares the way of life to be followed equally at all times in the domain of economics, politics and day to day life even. It is not meant according to Gandhi for a few but for everyone equally, for the rishis alone, but for the common people also.

Commenting on Gandhi's concept of non-violence R.R. Diwaker says - "Gandhi realised that the abstract form of Ahimsa was of no use in the world of thought and metaphysical
speculations. It is as good as the abstract idea of Reality. We have to deal with life as we lived to-day and as it ought to be lived for making an instrument all sided evolution ...

... To Gandhi all life was one as well as sound but at the same time he could not lose sight of values and the process of evolution of life in his eyes, it was through Ahimsa that humanity had realised the present level of culture and civilisation and it was through Ahimsa alone man could negotiate the next stages of his progress. Ahimsa emerges as the fundamental condition of human relationship.

Civilisation is an ethical endeavour and it's progress and the existence of human race can be saved only by continued affirmation and practice of ethical virtues such as reverence for life in all its forms. Self-correctedness is the key of all that is highest and finest in our life and thought. Mahatma Gandhi envisaged the progressive decay of humanity, losses of all human virtues of spontaneous understanding and sympathy and the sapping of man's spiritual and moral freedom. Hence, he put much importance on Ahimsa or non-violence as the valid rule of conduct for civilised man and his concept of non-violence was revitalised by his personal view of history. He wrote - Man has been steadily progressing towards Ahimsa since the beginning of history, our remote ancestors were cannibals, next came a
stage when man took to agriculture, settled down to stable
civilised life ....... all these are signs of progressive
Ahimsa and diminishing himsa*. Gandhiji was opinion that
all prophets of religion taught us Ahimsa with it's attributes
of truth, harmony, brotherhood and justice. To Gandhi Ahimsa
has been the motive force of history and the goal of history
is oneness of humanity. He said - "I believe in the essential
unity of man and for that matter of all that lives...." His
concept of history is not the gospel of passivism but progressive
realisation of Non-violence in the affairs of man in it's
fullest connotation of truth, Justice and oneness of mankind
destained to achieve the fullest realisation on earth. In the
historical process he put much importance on the place and
value of the individual. To him individual was of supreme
importance. He believed man is superior to system under which
he, his working or living. He found no single virtue which
aims at and satisfied with the welfare of an individual alone
but concerns the whole world. The individual's moral and
spiritual progress is not only the meaning of history but also
the motive force behind historical process both for the good
and the bad. He had much faith in human nature and never
suspected it. He opined - "If we know only how to strike the
right chord in the human heart, we can bring out the music
According to Gandhi, non-violence is an universal principle and it is not a matter of practice for individual, but for the humanity as a whole. He asserted that equal freedom of all could be given only through non-violence. He also believed that non-violence is the panacea for world peace. The credit lies with Gandhi in the fact that he succeeded in making the principle of non-violence as the principle of socio-political dynamics in which tolerance works as the inner force in bringing about a harmonious relation between man and man.
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