CHAPTER IV

SELF REALIZATION

‘What I want to achieve,- what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years- is self-realization, to see God face to face, to attain Moksha’ (Notes Moksha-lit., freedom from birth and death. The nearest English equivalent is salvation). 1

The above quotation from Gandhi’s Autobiography crops up a number of queries in us, namely- What is ‘self’ in self-realization? What is ‘self-realization’? What is the object of self-realization? And a number of other subsequent queries crop up while answering the above primary queries, e.g. What is the method of self-realization? What are the salient features of self-realization? What is the importance of prayer and its efficacies from the point of self-realization? What are the characteristics of the Gandhian way of self-realization? What are the limitations inherent in the Gandhian way of self-realization? And lastly, what is the evaluation of Gandhi’s idea of self-realization?

1. The ‘Self in self-realization’

Gandhi has not only the idea of the ‘self’ in self-realization but he experiences it as a fact within himself. His idea of ‘self’ is in the line of the description of self given in the Upanisads.
The Sanskrit word for self is *Atman*. The self is the purest self, infinite, imperishable, absolute. The Self Gandhi seeks is free from evil, sorrowless and is the Ultimate Reality. "The self (*Atman*) which is free from evil, ageless, deathless, sorrowless, thirstless, whose desire is the Real, whose conception is the Real—He should be searched out. Him one should desire to understand. He obtains all worlds and all desires who has found out and who understands that self." Thus spoke Prajapati. That the self is different from the body, the psychological ego, intellect can be known by analysis. The self that is the purest self is known as spirit also. We should know the self by the *Self* (*ātmānam ātmanā*). We can see it in the cavity of the heart (*hrdayākāśe*). It can be experienced in the bare room of the innerman (*anatarbhūtasya khe*). When the self is trying to know about the self and goes on analysing the self, the self in its efforts ultimately knows. 'I am that I am' (*so'hamasmi* Isa Up. 16)

Gandhi does not doubt self as Descartes doubted it and ultimately Descartes had to say: 'Cogito ergo sum' (*I think therefore I am*). The self is the primary postulate of Ethics. It cannot be established by reasoning but it can only be experienced by everybody. No ethics can start without this postulate. Rashdall observes: 'It is the postulate without which we cannot even set out on our ethical journey.' According to Gandhi, the nature of self is that it is partly individual and partly not. So long the creature lives, the self is individual but at death, the self of the creature mingles with the universal self and becomes one with it, as the drop of water mingles itself in the ocean of water,
and loses its individuality. Suffice it to say at present, the subject is discussed in details earlier in the Chapter I. 4.

The metaphysical theory about the self as stated by Gandhi proves briefly—(a) that the self is a permanent reality, (b) that reality is spiritual as it is independent of the changes done in body and mind (c) the acts of the man really proceed from the self and express the nature of the self.

2. What Self-Realization Is—

On knowing Gandhi's idea about the self in self-realization, one can very easily understand Gandhi's idea about self-realization. It seems that Gandhi understands, by the term self-realization, that the self (Jiva) having karmans tries to be free from the bonds of the past karmans by living within and worshipping the purest Self (Atman). The self-realization is achieved in degrees and the self gets strength from within corresponding to the realization of the inner self. Gandhi is of the strong opinion that everybody can realize his or her higher or inner Self which is the purest one.

J. Seth's view supports Gandhi's view of self-realization that the self realizes self (here, the Higher self) when Seth observes: "the typical and characteristic activity of man is self-realization,' realization of self by self." 

But, Rashadall is of the opinion that self realization is 'self-contradictory nonsense,' He observes: 'Firstly, then, we may suppose that the upholcer of self realization means exactly what
he says. If he does, it seems easy to show that what he is committing himself to is mere self-contradictory nonsense. To realize means to make real. You cannot make real what is real already, and the self must certainly be regarded as real before we are invited to set about realizing it.

But, Rashdall's criticism is beyond the mark as to realize means to make real is not so really in self-realization, for to realize is to change the existing self degree by degree from the point of the higher self. The Vedānta does recognize that self-realization is Prāptayya Prāptih. That which is already real has to be realized or acquired. The distinction is made between the transcendent and the empirical self, it is the prior to be realized by effort on the part of the latter. So Rashdall has played upon the words when he says 'to realize means to make real.'

Bradley denounces out-right Rashdall's line of thought when he (Bradley) observes: "Now nothing is easier than for a one-sided reflection to rush in with a cry for clearness and consistency and to apply its favourite 'either or': 'if real, how realize? If realize, then not real.' We, however, must not allow ourselves to give way to the desire for drawing conclusions, but have to observe the facts; and we see that the religious consciousness refuses the dilemma. It holds to both one and the other, and to one because of the other; and pronounces such reflections irreligious.""

Again, Rashdall pointedly says: "But of course it will be said that what is actually meant by self-realization is the realization of some potentiality or capacity of the self which is at present
unrealized. In this sense no doubt it is true enough that Morality must consist in some kind of self-realization. But to say so is to say something 'generally admitted indeed but obscure,' as Aristotle would have put it.7 Rashdall seems to say that in that sense self-realization is obscure. But it is not so, as one can change one's habits, though slowly, with reference to one's higher self by meditating on it. Bradley positively says that self-realization is possible. He observes: "Realize yourself as an infinite whole means, 'Realize yourself as the self-conscious member of an infinite whole, by realizing that whole in yourself.' When that whole is truly infinite, and when your personal will is wholly made one with it, then you also have reached the extreme of homogeneity and specification in one, and have attained a perfect self-realization."8

So self-realization is not a play on words as Rashdall believed and Bradley opposed him emphatically. There is a distinction between the idea of self-realization or perfectionism of the western Moralists and the Vedantins (or for that matter of the Indian Philosophers in general). Usually the Westerners identify the self with Reason, while for the Indian, it is spirit beyond Reason.

Dr. Sinha advocates that the lower self or the lower life is not to be annulled but it should be made harmonious with the higher self or the rational self. Dr. Sinha observes: "Self-realization consists in full development of personality. It consists in realization of the IDEAL, RATIONAL OR SOCIAL SELF in intimate relationship with others in society. The ideal self is the rational self. The rational self can be realized by regulating all feelings,
impulses and desires by reason.' He further observes: 'Self-realization means achievement of Health, knowledge, Beauty and Virtue, the Ideals of human life, and especially achievement of that ideal which fits in with a person's inborn aptitudes, which raises him to the height of his personality, and through which he can make his contribution to the progress of humanity.'

Dr. Sinha, being broad in the idea of self-realization misses the main mark of spiritual realization which is the basis for the realization of other values of life.

The above Sinha's view is in keeping with the Westerners. The goal of self-realization is not merely ethical. Actually, the goal is spiritual which though attainable through moral efforts takes as beyond morality. Though living an integral life of perfection of varied values is not inconsistent with the spiritual theory of self-realization, the spiritual goal is at once beyond ethics and logic.

Briefly, Gandhi like Vivekanand hits the main mark in the self-realization that one should know one's inner Self first.

3. The Object of Self-Realization

After knowing what self-realization is, we should know what the object of self-realization is. The object of self-realization depends on the different schools, mainly the hedonistic and the rationalistic schools. The extreme hedonistic school, the early Cyrenaics, advocated the sacrifice of the rational self to the sentient self, implying the life of one meant the death of the other. On the other hand, there was the extreme rationalistic school of Kant,
who advocated the complete sacrifice of the sentient to the rational self. Wherever there are extreme opinions, they are faulty. So we should see the more moderate forms. A more moderate form of egoistic Hedonism, the Epicurean, held that the pleasures in a small degree should be sacrificed to a greater one, thus, considering the virtuous life as the calculating one and making the most of one's opportunities. A more moderate form of Rationalism refused to see the absolute or the permanent sacrifice of the sentient to the rational self. So the real issue is that both the extremes are faulty and the more permanent is the rational self, as the sentient self is subordinated to the rational self. Some considered Gandhi as of the extreme rationalistic school, but thinkers like Iripalani and others refuted this remark. The reading of the Gandhian Works as a whole leads the reader that Gandhi is not an ascetic or an extreme type of the rationalistic school. It is crystal clear that Gandhi stands for the development of the rational self and wants to and not to kill the sentient self in him.

4. The Method of Self-Realization

The method of self-realization is the introspective one as one should see what comes in the one's way of keeping the balance of mind or in keeping the surface of the mind unbroken. So one has to watch carefully inside and has to learn about one's Vṛtti that crop up Tarka-Vitarka, in one's mind. By studying those Vṛtti which are obstacles in maintaining the balance of the mind, one can have self-realization. To stop Vṛtti that may be due to attachment, anger, greed and deceit, one has to train detachment (Vairagya) and not to merely suffocate those Vṛtti. This Vṛtti
must be analysed and should not be forced down otherwise they will enter the sub-conscious mind and gather strength there and when they get a suitable outlet, they spring out with an added strength. The mind is compared with the surface of the lake and the self is compared with the moon or the sun. So long the surface of the lake (i.e. here, mind) is unbroken, one can get the ray from the moon or the sun which represents the Self here.

So self-realization has the close relation with detachment (vairagya). Detachment is due to the analysis of Vyrtti. These Vyrtti must not be forced down but should be studied and thus one can lessen their strength which is displayed as an obstacle on the path of self-realization. By solely going to the shelter of God within and meditating upon Him, one can have self-realization and it can be increased by repeated practice. Gandhi observed this practice and the countless followers of this path followed it in the past and a number of such ones, at present, in the world, in the East and in the West, follow it and have self-realization, even up to this day.

Thus the method of self-realization is introspection coupled with meditation.

5. Gandhi's Participation in the Salient features of Self-realization -

There are Yogas of four kinds, viz. Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga and Raja Yoga. Out of these four ones, Gandhi could practise the first three. He attempted the fourth one. He attempted the fourth one. He admits that he was not successful in following the fourth one.
We can see the seeds of his later Sadhana in Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. His intensity to act always in truth came later and that led him to Karma yoga. In this way, there is a synthesis of the three most important Yogas, Jnana, Bhakti and Karma that accounts his march on the path of Truth or Godward. Gandhi’s endeavour was every moment of his life to live in the supreme consciousness or in his higher self. He always tried to live a unitive life of the spirit and tried to translate it into practice. He tried to experience the immanence of the Spirit through loveful service and sacrifice for all forms of life, however low they may be.

As to Gandhi’s Sadhana, he himself remarks in Young India (dated 3-11-27) that the Gita contains the gospel of Karma or work, the gospel of Bhakti or devotion, and the gospel of Jnāna, or knowledge. And he adds that the life should be a harmonious whole of those three. His knowledge of Yoga is not bookish, he is original and creative in it. Philosophers lay stress on metaphysics or ratiocination and give a chain of reasoning for the realization of the Ultimate Reality, whereas Gandhi does not lay stress on it. He lays stress, for self-realization, on direct apprehension by the purification of heart and on knowledge by identity. He follows truth not only through intellect but also through heart and the heart plays much more importance than the intellect as it is rooted in the heart. R.R. Diwaker observes: 'Knowledge by identity, by communion, by meditation, by silence and silent prayer was the way he (Gandhi) followed more than argument, discussion, and logic. Another important aspect of Gandhi's Jnāna
yoga is that his conception of God is not an abstract Reality but Truth as hard cash working in daily life. He knows God as the Law in operation in the universe. Another peculiarity of his Jnana Sādhanā is that whenever he was in thick and thin, and away from God, he used abstinence, silence, fasting and prayer as the means of bringing himself near to God. He lays stress on the purification of his heart and searches his heart to see if there is any loophole lurking within his mind. Abstinence and continence prove more effective ways than the process of intellection in him.

With reference to Gandhi's conception of Bhakti Yoga, God is love. He has intense love for God. With reference to the intensity of love to God, he says that the identification of the worshipper with God should be still closer than that between the lover and the beloved. Gandhi's poise as a devotee or Bhakta is that he believes in submitting to the will of God believing Him that He alone is the final arbiter of things. The whole universe moves according to His wish. Gandhi's love of God is neither abstract nor impersonal. He sees God in humanity, so he loves humanity and translates his love into incessant service of both the poor and the needy. He loves the depressed and the oppressed also.

With reference to Gandhi's conception of Karma Yoga, he conceives life itself as incessant action. We may better say it in the words of Carlyle, 'the infinite conjugation of the verb to do.' He endeavours constantly to transmute all actions, small or big, from writing a letter to the launching of the non-violent non-
cooperation movement into a part of his spiritual discipline. His Karma Yoga is of a unique type. So he could evolve a way of life, called Satyagraha. Gandhi, being a devotee of God, is always in action in the service of others and in doing service, he never gives up truth. For Gandhi, service of man is greater than learning Vedas. He once declared: 'My creed is service of God and therefore of humanity.' He is a Karunyaogi par excellence. He is a Bhakti Yogi more than a Jnana Yogi, but he is a Karma Yogi more than either.

After knowing self-realization through selfless work i.e. Karma Yoga, we are in a position to compare Karma yoga with Jnana yoga. In the case of Jnana yoga, the one realizes one's self by reasoning, while in the case of Karma yoga, the one learns through work and experience, and there is no cessation of work. In the case of Jnana yoga, the man requires a strong will power and it is very hard to follow. Only a few are able to have self-realization through Jnana, yoga. It is given in the Bhagavat Gita that of the two yogas, Jnana yoga and Karma yoga, Karma yoga is better than Jnana yoga. (Ch. V:2)

Briefly Gandhi has used for self-realization all the three yogas described as above in his life, laying stress more on the Karma yoga. For self-realization, besides observing the three yogas, Gandhi has great faith in austerities, in vows and in Ashram life. He holds mortification of flesh as a condition of spiritual progress. With reference to the importance of austerities, he thinks that his austerities have an inestimable value if they represent the yearnings of a soul striving to lay its heavy head in the lap of his Maker.
To know prayer and its efficacies, we should go through the discussion of the following points: What is prayer? The necessity of incessant prayer; repentance; right prayer; To whom should we pray? God as immanent and transcendental; How to pray: Rama-name; The form of prayer; Are temples a necessity? and the last one, The prayer and service. Let us see all these points one by one.

(i) What is Prayer?

Prayer is the yearning of the heart to see one's purest or deepest self, or to see God within. With reference to prayer, Gandhi observes: 'a heartfelt prayer is not a recitation with the lips. It is a yearning from within which expresses itself in every word, every act, nay, every thought of man.' 14 K.M. Sharif gives Plotinus' view of prayer thus: 'Prayer is the silent yearning of the soul for affinity with the Supreme One.' 15 One can see here that the word 'yearning' is the most important word in prayer. Yearning denotes the poignant desire or the burning desire in a man. There cannot be yearning without the anguish in the heart.

(ii) The Necessity of Incessant Prayer-

We have to pray to God within and it should be done incessantly, for the God and the Evil powers in our hearts are not war eternally. These powers are termed as God and Satan and in Zoroastrianism they are termed as Ahurmazd and Ahriman, respectively. Gandhi observes: "Except for perfect beings evil thoughts will arise in every breast.
Hence it is necessary for us to offer incessant prayer to God to keep us free from evil thoughts. That is the process which does us good. Though we, imperfect beings, tend to be perfect, we have to keep a constant watch over us and pray often, as the path of perfection is an uphill task and is in a zigzag way. The instincts and the lower appetites in us, from time immemorial in the history of the mankind, have been nurtured, voluntarily or involuntarily, knowingly or unknowingly and have thus become so much strong and sinewy that it is impossible to defeat them, even after a long run, without a prayer to God and His help. But the necessity of incessant prayer, arises from repentance.

(iii) Repentance -

We cannot repent unless and until we own our drawbacks, limitations, commissions and omissions, failings in our duty. True repentance requires penetration into our psychology and should finger into the subconscious of our mind. Dreams should be analysed. We should truly know where we are. Unless we know psychologically where we are, we cannot ethically progress. We are groping into dark unless we know ourselves truly. But there cannot be true analysis, unless we are HONEST in our efforts. If we repent truly, many sins will be burnt away and a great many of them will turn pale. We should be humble and reduce us to a cipher, if we want to see the real dawn of progress. Without repentance, there cannot be a true prayer. Only after repentance, will we come to the right prayer.

(iv) Right Prayer -

Without repentance, there cannot be the right prayer. By
repentance

we purge our dross from our mind. Generally, medicine does not become effective if the bowels are not made clear; similarly is the case with prayer. Repentance must precede prayer. Then the prayer will be more effective. There cannot be the right prayer, with the full belly. How can a man, in an agony, take food? Gandhi once observed: 'My fast was the prayer of a soul in agony.' Prayer and fast go hand in hand. Just as the prayer without fasting is not effective, similarly the fast without prayer has no meaning. Gandhi observes: 'I believe that there is no prayer without fasting and there is no real fast without prayer. My fast was the prayer of a soul in agony.' 17 One should also note that in prayer one cannot pray for anything that is against the God's will. One should first of all know what can be the God's will. Otherwise a thief can pray to God to help him in a theft. One cannot ask for riches in a prayer. God will only help him to be away from riches! It is stated in the Bible that there is, perhaps, the possibility for the camel to pass through the eye of a needle, but for a rich man, there is no possibility for his entrance into the heaven. He must then have the control over the desire for riches. So it is peremptory to know first what can be God's will. Then one should pray. In this connection, Gandhi observes: 'It (prayer) does not provoke God to change His will; but it enables us to know His will which is everything.' 16

After knowing what the right prayer is, one should know to whom one should pray. Can it be Force or Spirit?

(v) To Whom Should One Pray? - To Force or To The Spirit?

We pray to the Supreme Being i.e. God. Now a query may
may arise in our mind whether God should be prayed as Force or Spirit. It is not easy to pray to Force as one cannot locate one's mind on force. But it is easy to locate one's mind on spirit. But this does not mean that to pray to Force is objectionable. God as Force or Spirit is everywhere. There is no place in the Universe without Him. God is omnipresent. However, Spirit is not an airy something while Force is. So to pray to Spirit is relatively easier than to pray to Force. Now, God is both immanent and transcendent. It is a question: which of these two forms of God is helpful, relatively, to us?

(vi) God as Immanent and Transcendental -

God believed as transcendental has a myriad forms. One may choose any one form out of the myriad ones. Gandhi sometimes sees God in a 'Rantia Chakra', sometimes he sees Him in a Harijan or Untouchability, and at other times in something else. How Gandhi establishes communion with God as transcendental is quoted below. "My God is myriad formed, and while sometimes I see Him in the spinning wheel, at other times I see Him in communal unity, then again in removal of untouchability, and that is how I establish communion with Him according as the spirit moves me."

But when Gandhi was questioned - "Where is the seat of authority?" - he pointed to his breast. At many places, he has referred to the Immanent Form of God. 'Prayer is to the God within'. He further observes: 'In Madame Blavatsky's language man, in praying, worships his own gloried self. He can truly pray, who has the conviction that God is within Him.' Radhakrishnan, in considering God as one's Deepest Self observes: 'When the worshipper realizes that the
God he worships is none other than his deepest self, when externality is broken down, he reaches the object of worship. Gandhi considers God as Truth. N.G. Damle, M.A. in exposing Royce's philosophy observes: 'Mysticism says 'Know the truth is not outside. It is nigh thee, even in thy heart. Purify thyself, In there is all truth.' These quotations show that God as immanent is laid stress on.

(vii) How to Pray

I have laid stress on God as immanent for praying, in the above paragraphs and the various authorities cited corroborate it. The modern word for 'prayer' will be helpful to us. Gandhi observes: 'Where people of old used to use the word 'prayer', listening in 'is the modern word.' Now the query may arise,—To whom should we listen? We have to listen to God Immanent in us. In our heart, there is a nexus. There are six centres in our body for nexuses, the heart being one of them. Concentration on God Immanent, or one's Deepest self or one's purest self in one's heart (a nexus), makes one purer and purer in degrees and stages by the virtue of the characteristic nexus in the heart. So one should form the habit of 'listening in,' concentrating on one's heart, degree by degree and for this, early before the sunrise, between 4 A.M. to 6 A.M. one should sit apart, in the corner of the room where one may not be disturbed. The time limit is not so much of importance as the degree of concentration is. By this method, 'Dehadhyas' (identifying one's self with one's body) will be lessened, degree by degree. 'Dehadhyas' is the root of all evils. Yogis following Rajayoga for their self - realization follow the above method. For a beginner, the nexus in the heart is much more helpful than any other one of the five nexuses.
One should be pure in one's motive for praying. One should prepare one's self in such a way that one may hear the 'Still small voice' within. H.M. Sharif, in exposing Plotinus' philosophy, states, "He (Plotinus) holds that one should prepare oneself for receiving Divine grace by developing aspiring love; yet 'it is for the gods to come to us, not for us to go to them.'" 25

(viii) Ramanāma-

Taking Ramanāma is another way of remembering God within and being attuned with God. To prattle Ramanāma has no value. Taking Ramanāma must make changes in one's concentration to God within. Gandhi on the importance of Ramanāma observes: 'Ramanāma or some equivalent is necessary not for the sake of repetition but for the sake of purification, as an aid to effort, for direct guidance from above. It is therefore never a substitute for effort. It is meant for intensifying and guiding it in a proper channel.' 26 Ramanāma gives peace of mind, a certain poise in one's mind in times of difficulties, detachment to worldly affairs and is a sure guide when the mind is tormented with doubts and difficulties and when it is divided in conflicts. On the effect of Ramanāma Gandhi further observes: 'Ramanāma gives one detachment and ballast and never throws one off one's balance at critical moments.' 27

This form of prayer, discussed in the last two points, is one of Inward Communion.

(ix) The Form of Prayer -

There are two forms of prayer: (1) petitional, and (2) inward
communion. We have touched the last one in the above paragraphs. Now let us know about the first form of prayer—petitional. In the petitional form of prayer, we address to God for removing our drawbacks. We reduce ourselves to zero. We become humble. We consider ourselves as the most thorough sinners. Devotees tend to this form of prayer, while Yogis follow the prayer of the inward communion type. Persons of both these kind follow the ways characteristic to them but the result is the same. They go nearer and nearer to Godhood in them. We should not worry for not following the inward communion type of prayer. In this connection Gandhi observes: 'Prayer is either petitional or in its wider sense is inward communion. In either case the ultimate result is the same.'

But whether one should pray all alone or in the mass is a question to many.

(x) Individual Prayer and Mass Prayer—

To concentrate on one's self the individual prayer is indeed necessary. While praying all alone, the individual can mark the evil thoughts surging in his heart. He feels himself unequal to the task of controlling the evil passions in him. So there is agony in him. So naturally, in a helpless condition he will invoke the Supreme Being to help him. The deeper the individual knows himself the intenser will be his prayer. So in the case of the individual prayer, the individual has the chance to analyse himself psychologically. Then he knows his foibles. He reduces himself to a cipher before the mighty power which is Omniscient. The individual becomes contrite. However fallen he may be, he has the faith in his redeemer and strives his best to fight against the forces of evil powers. He
becomes determined to face the untoward wind on his path of evolution. Gandhi observes: 'There is a saying in English that there is none so fallen but can redeem himself, if only he has the will. We have the promise that no matter how far gone in sin the sinner may be, God will forgive him, if he confesses his sin and repents of it even with his last breath.... But if one repents, even on one's deathbed the repentance will burn away sin and sterilize if of consequences.'

We can understand truly the importance of the individual prayer when Gandhi observes: 'These are moments when one reviews one's weakness, asks for forgiveness and strength to be and do better.'

Having known the importance of the individual prayer, we now come to the importance of the Mass prayer, or the General Devotion. The mass prayer has its own value. Where there is a congregation of devotional persons, there is a cloud of devotion above the congregation. Those who have studied Theosophy know that Rev. C.W. Leadbeater has mentioned the colours of the thought forms. He says that there is a blue cloud of devotion over the congregation, having devotion in the hearts of the men of the congregation. Individuals having devotion are the different drops of devotion. But in a congregation, all these drops of devotion combine and there is a flow of the devotional river, amidst which the devotees bathe themselves and become purer than what they were. In the congregation, the magnetic current sets up and even the shallow hearts are overcome with that magnetism. They, consequently, sometimes have the new determinations under that magnetic force. It is said in Theosophy that where the devotional persons meet together, there is not the Arithmetical progression but there is the Geome-
trical progression in the devotion of the members of the group, honestly met for the single purpose of devotion to God. But, now-a-days, there may be a congregation without the congregational mind. There may be indifferent persons and there may also be, in the congregation, hypocrites! Such a congregation loses its value. C.W. Headley once saw hats, umbrellas and such other fashionable things, in his clairvoyance, hanging above the church, as a great majority of the congregation sitting in the church was after the fashionable things. Gandhi lays stress on the correct attitude of the Mass prayer or the General Devotion, thus: 'Hence have all religions set apart times for general devotion. Unfortunately these have now-a-days become merely mechanical and formal, where they are not hypocritical. What is necessary, therefore, is the correct attitude to accompany these devotions.'

Thus though for the individual, the individual prayer has a singular importance, the Mass prayer is indeed a supplementary one for the evolution in his self-realization. But in any form of prayer, the individual whether alone or in the congregation must be honest in his efforts. Gandhi rightly observes in this connection 'He (God) being the Indweller, All Powerful and Omniscient knows our innermost feelings and responds to us according to our deserts.'

As we know now the importance of the Mass Prayer or General Devotion, we may have a query as to whether public shrines e.g. temples are a necessity or not.

(xi) Are Shrines a Necessity?

There is no temple in the world so nice as the broad earth...
as the base and the sky as the canopy. So for some persons, the temples are not a necessity. But, for a great majority of the people, temples are indeed a necessity. Temples, mosques, churches and the other sacred Houses of God are indeed a necessity for the ordinary run of mankind to concentrate the attention on something. Moreover, those sacred shrines are the great reservoirs of spiritual strength as people for hundreds of years poured thoughts sublime there and thus made a living atmosphere there. These places, whatever religion they may embrace, at any cost, should be preserved. Suppose, these places of worship are misused by some, should they, then, not be demolished? In this connection, there require[ed] the social reforms for temple-entry and temple-management. Some educated persons are of opinion that shrines (in general) are of no value; instead of being helpful, they become means for deterioration. Thus writes an American correspondent to Gandhi, "Truth is too universal to be confined and made sectarian. Therefore, I consider temples, mosques and churches to be prostitution of religion. In every nation we have witnessed the degradation of truth and righteousness in the temples, and, in my opinion, in the very conception of organised religion this is certain to follow as a natural consequence."33 This opinion is too much sweeping.
It is the opinion of an extremist. That temples have a share in our religious and moral life cannot be denied. Deny the good influence of the photographs of father, mother or friend, if we can do so, we can deny the good influence of the temple. Gandhi's reply to the above correspondent is noteworthy. He observes: "That temples and temple worship are in need of radical reform must be admitted. But all reforms without temple entry will be to tamper with the disease .... To reject the necessity of temples is to reject the necessity of God, religion and earthly existence." 34

So temples and such other sacred Houses for worshipping God are indeed a necessity to a large section of the mankind. They should never be demolished.

(xii) Prayer and Service -

The institution of temple is a good help for the ideal of service to the mankind. The idol of worship strengthens in us detachment and thus we can render service to the mankind in a wholesome way. Without detachment in service, service pollutes its name. Service to mankind is supplementary to one's self realization...
The man who does service to the mankind must have a repose in his mind and manner, otherwise he will be disturbed often by the varied temperaments of men whom he serves. In the heart of man, there surges a great duel between the powers of darkness and light, and without a prayer he cannot have a ballast and a sheet-anchor in life. In this connection, Gandhi observes: 'The man of prayer will be at peace with himself and with the whole world, the man who goes about the affairs of the world without a prayerful heart will be miserable and will make the world also miserable... You, whose mission in life is service of your fellowmen, will go to pieces if you do not impose on yourselves some sort of discipline and prayer is a necessary spiritual discipline.'

Briefly, having known the modern word "listening in" for prayer, we should form the habit of "listening in" in degrees for Gandhi observes: "The listening in must make people's lives daily richer and richer." In our lives, there is the place both for Individual prayer and the Mass prayer. In the case of the individual prayer, a man can analyse himself psychologically. Then and then only, he can have moral excellence. Without moral excellence, there can never be self-realization, nor the spiritual progress in any one. The mass prayer is indeed supplementary to our spiritual progress. If a man does not pray, he will not lose; but if he prays, he will certainly gain. The immanent form of God is indeed the most effective one. We must realize the importance of that form, if we want to check and control the surge of emotions in our hearts. Prayer requires
patience in us because we have to control the eternal duel, raging in our hearts from the time immemorial. For a beginner, the nexus in the heart for concentration to God within is indeed helpful in a marvellous way. Prayer and fast go together. A prayer without a fast and a fast without a prayer have no meaning. In an agony, one cannot take food. Without an agony, there cannot be the keeness in prayer. An agony leads us to repentence. Service without prayer may pollute the service itself. The importance of prayer cannot be gone home, unless I use the very words, coming from the prayerful heart of Gandhi. He observes: "Prayer is the only means of bringing about orderliness and peace and repose in our daily acts. Take care of the vital thing and other things will take care of themselves. Rectify one angle of a square, and the other angles will be automatically right."37

7. The Characteristics of the Gandhian Way of Self-Realization-

As we have compared Gandhi's idea of self-realization with that of others earlier in this chapter, we can easily draw the characteristics of the Gandhian way of self-realization. The first and foremost characteristic of the Gandhian way of self-realization is that Gandhi has an unflinching faith in God, though his faith in God may be challenged on the ground of reasoning. He says that he cannot prove the ground for his faith logically. He says that he may be vanquished on the floor of reason. He is a staunch believer in God. He is so staunch believer in God that he is often called or nick named as 'God-intoxicated.' Even in his boyhood, he used to take the 'Ramanama' as a remedy to overcome fear in darkness. Whenever he has to face the odds of life, he takes Ramanama. Thus God, or Ramanama is a PANACEA for all the evils of his life.
He says that he is never deserted by God in any trial of his life.
Not only that but also, he established a rule that as in the past
God helped Narsinh Mehta, Harishchandra, Columbus in the nick of
time, God never deserts his devotee. Of all his duties he considers
to remember or to pray to God as his first duty; then he will do
his other duties. His aim is to realize absolution, freedom from
births and deaths. For this he has an unflinching faith in the
verse of the Bhagavadgita- ' Abandon all duties and come to Me the
only refuge. I will release thee from all sins; grieve not'.

Another characteristic of the Gandhian way of self-realization,
is that he believes in God both immanent and transcendent.
As to the transcendental form of God, he believes Him in the
'Rentia Chakra', in the uplift of the Harijans, in the Co-operation
and love of both the communities, sometimes dagger drawn, namely
the Hindus and the Muslims in India. As to the immanent form
of God, he believes that He resides in the heart of every one and
says that every one can hear the ' still small voice of God'
within.

Whenever Gandhi knows that there was either omission or commission
in his life, he used to repent and pray to God to forgive him. Nay, he
determines at that time not to repeat it in his life. Thus by
his strongwill trained and strengthened often, he has the evolution
of his life. Naturally, he follows Jnana Yoga in his life. He
follows not only Jnana Yoga but also Karma yoga in his life. He
is full of activity. He pays attention at a time to a number of
fields of work. The old age does not come in his way and day by
day he works more and more. Cessation of work he does not know
for the universe is full of activity and the Gâunas in our Pra-
kriti compel us to engage ourselves in activity. Though he
works, he has no attachment to any worldly desire. He has put the
sermon of Lord Krishna given in the Bhagavadgita in his life,-
'Action alone is thy province, never the fruits thereof; let not
thy motive be the fruit of action, nor shouldest thou desire to
avoid action.'* Cast all thy acts on Me, with thy mind fixed
on the indwelling Atman, and without any thought of fruit, or
sense of 'mine' shake off they fever and fight!" 41 Within
his activity, he has Mivaritti; within his Pravritti, there is
Mivaritti, for he keeps his mind fixed on the God immanent in
him, while he engages himself in work. Once a week, he observes
silence. By this, he conserves much of his energy. At this time
he pays attention much more within than he pays it without. Though
his mind dwells on the doctrines of the Bhagavadgita and works
almost incessantly, he is not without love to the mankind. His
heart is full of the milk of human kindness not only to the Indians
but also to the peoples of other countries of the world. He has
love to all men irrespective of colour and creed. As he loves the
Lord intensely, he loves the universe. The pivot of love in
Gandhi is the Lord. He hates sin but not the sinner. He loves
his enemy and bears enmity to none, for his heart is full of love
to God and His creation, the world.

One cannot forget one of Gandhi's characteristics of his self-
realization with reference to prayer. He believes in prayer whole
heartedly. He is punctual in his prayer. During the storms of
life, his ship of life, gets ballast by means of prayer. In the
trials and tribulations of his life, by means of prayer he stands
firm as a rock. He believes in the mass prayer also. For him, to pray is 'to listen in.' With him, prayer and fast go together. He believes that there cannot be true and intense prayer without fast. The fast without prayer is no true fast.

In Gandhi, there is the sum of the three Yogas—(1) Jnāna yoga (2) Karma yoga and (3) Bhakti yoga. He has the broad circle of social life. The moral life rests on the social life, and vice-versa. In Gandhi there is the high moral life and it becomes as the basis for his spiritual life or his self-realization. Without purity of heart, there can never be the glimpse of truth. So he lays stress more on the heart than on the mind. Our whole education should have the base of the moral life. Then there will be true education in us.

8. Limitations of the Gandhian Way of Self-Realization—

In the beginning of the last point we have seen that Gandhi is criticized by calling him as 'God intoxicated.' Though this does not hold water, it is not without some bearings. Though these bearings may be of small importance for Gandhi, they are of vital importance to us.

Placing his attention on God, Gandhi looks to the remotest ideal and forgets the proximate one. To be God and thus place the attention to the remotest ideal one cannot have scientific progress in one's spirituality. There is a ladder in the spiritual progress believed not only by the Easterners but also by the Westerners. Every step in one's spiritual progress should be scanned and scrutinized,
otherwise in the ordinary run of mankind, there will appear hypocrisy in a great majority of persons. Whenever Gandhi addressed the mammoth meetings of either students or laymen, he hopes that they will follow his teachings, they may be either in the moral field or in the spiritual field. There is the effect upon them due to his magnetism! But it has a short lease of life. His sermon is rather a sweeping one. It is rather horizontal and lacks in being vertical. Spinoza suffered from being otherwise. Spinoza went vertical in knowledge but lacked in being horizontal. Gandhi does not show a series of steps in the realization of higher self but he says only broadly that if one angle of the square is looked to, the others will take care of themselves. Apparently, it seems alright, but it seems to me that this is only DOCTRINAIRE in the spiritual field of life,—especially from our point of view. Though the example we cannot go to the Reality. It may be a false analogy! The example may not have all the characteristics inherent in Reality. The analogy in the example may shoot TOO high! There should be a series of steps to follow in self-realization. So far I know that Gandhi shows none, either in speech or in press. He lacks in scientific precision in showing the steps to one's self-realization. If the layman follows psychologically in the spiritual field of life, he can have faith in whatever little realization he may have. Gandhi owns that he has no study in psychology. He also owns that he tried Raja yoga but in vain. The lack of these two things comes in the way of his being precise and scientific in the sermons on self-realization.
In our criticism of Gandhi's ideas of self-realization, we have seen that Gandhi has not shown the steps to self-realization either in speech or in press. But it does not mean that he has no self-realization. He has used Jnana yoga, Karma yoga, and Bhakti yoga for his self-realization. He has laid stress on these yogas, for he marched to his goal of liberation by these yogas. His philosophy of self-realization is CRYPTIC as was Socrates' one. He is Socrates in the field of religion and ethics. Plato expounded the philosophy of Socrates, so someone one of us should be a Plato to expound the philosophy of Gandhi. He has given the broad outlines of the idea of self-realization and the students of Gandhian idea of self-realization have to insert the details between the poles erected on the way of self-realization.

To Conclude, self-realization is not a play on words as Rashdall believed but it is a fact of life. In India, the sages and yogis have been experiencing self-realization for the last four thousand years, in less or more degrees. In the past, they recorded their experiences in the Vedic period, and on the lines shown by the seers and yogis, there has been a continuous flow of experiences down to day, with reference to self-realization. Gandhi has an unflinching faith in self-realization on the basis of his experience in it, and has keenness to achieve Moksha (freedom from a cycle of births and deaths) by self-realization. So it is within the scope of all persons to have self-realization. It is not the monopoly of yogis but anyone who is desirous to follow yoga can train
himself on the path of yoga, particularly on the path of Raja-yoga as it is wrought through and through with psychology. It is scientific. It is not a chimera. It is not a quack. The method of self-realization is introspection and meditation on the particular centre, preferably, the nexus in the heart. On the degrees of purification of the heart depends self-realization. Though intellect, we develop reason, while through heart, we get inspiration which leads us into the field of super-conscious one for the glimpse of the Ultimate Truth.

The whole edifice of self-realization is erected on ethics. Gandhi has BROADLY treated the subject as if he has erected the pillars of the idifice of self-realization and we have to insert details in the form of the brick-work between those pillars. Gandhi's philosophy of self-realization is CRYPTIC so it should be expounded in full details. His way of self-realization is unique, as it cannot be copied. As everybody must have his own coat, so everybody must have his own ways for self-realization, as we have the different Ganas, Satva, etc. predominant in our Prakriti (nature). So taking inspiration from the experience and example of Gandhi we have to train ourselves for self-realization according to our DOGMATIC particular nature in us. No one should be ----- for any kind of yoga, for self-realization. We may follow anyone of the four yoga discussed in the chapter, for all yogas lead us to liberation from the slavery to nature (Prakriti) and should march ahead to Moksha, a fact of life, as everybody, sooner or later, has to come to that path of salvation.

To know self-realization in depth it should be supplemented with the philosophy of religion.