

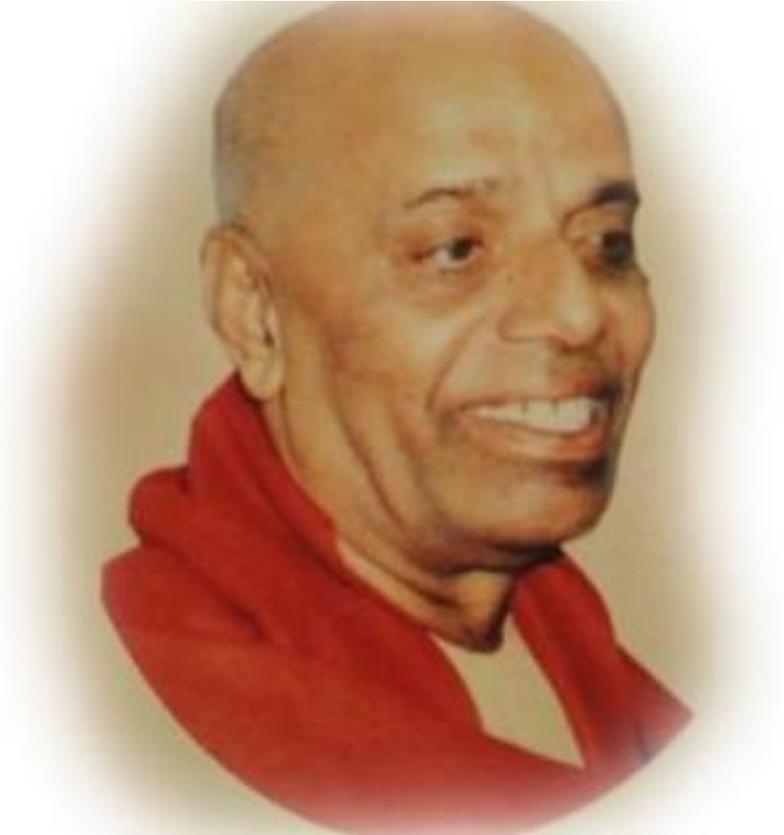
# ***DHARMA***

**A SHORT HISTORY FOR  
YOUNGER READERS**

***BY***

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**HUMAN SERVICE TRUST U.K.**



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**HUMAN SERVICE TRUST U.K.**

**Dedicated to the memory of**



**the late Mansukhbhai J. Upadhyaya,**  
[www.upavadi.net/genealogy/documents/Eulogy-Mansukh-Upadhyaya.pdf](http://www.upavadi.net/genealogy/documents/Eulogy-Mansukh-Upadhyaya.pdf)  
**a founder Secretary and Treasurer**  
**of The Human Service Trust U.K.**  
**From the inception of the Trust in 1977**  
**to his demise on May 15th 1986,**  
**he worked devotedly and untiringly**  
**to benefit suffering humanity.**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The subject we are about to discuss, Dharma, is unique in the history of man. Our approach will be historical, Dharma being the oldest word used to describe such concepts as religion, discipline, duty, way of life, service, charity, as well as divine and moral values.

Man, from his origin has taken refuge in some kind of faith, and tried many beliefs, but they all disappeared after some time, and their place was taken by new ones. Only Dharma, being an eternal truth, and not a belief or a faith, has survived all onslaughts during the past thousands of years, and, every crisis has added something more for its flowering and fruition.

From the very beginning of human history, man has lived on the banks of rivers where social and moral values evolved. In ancient Egypt, people who had lived on the banks of the river Nile have always remained sources of moral discipline and social order and organisation. In the same way, the Tigris and the Euphrates valleys gave birth to different concepts which, however, have all disappeared with time. Greece and Rome, at one time, were also major centres and valleys of rivers in China and in South East Asia have remained beehives of human values.

The Rishis (*Seers*) of India meditated on the banks of the great holy rivers of India and

discovered the eternal values of Dharma. Even today, most places of pilgrimage in India, be the cycles of congregation 12-yearly, 3-yearly or even daily, where people flock for purification and enlightenment, are the banks of rivers flowing from North to East, East to West, North to South. These rivers then merge with the Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea, or indeed the Indian Ocean itself. Today, all these key and eternal places of Dharma are centres of spiritual knowledge, yoga, and learning.

## **2. NAMES**

People in India have called Dharma by different names according to their own liking. They have added prefixes to Dharma of which the most popular are these five:—

**1. Sanatan Dharma** - Eternal Dharma. It means "That which was, is, and will remain".

**2. Vedic Dharma** - The Dharma which has its developed form in the scriptures called the Vedas. There are four Vedas: Rik, Yajur, Sam and Atharva.

**3. Arya Dharma** - The Dharma which was practised and followed by the Aryans from the beginning of their history.

**4. Bharat Dharma** - Dharma which has spread all over India, and is practised by Indians everywhere.

**5. Manav Dharma** - Dharma of man: This means the duties and disciplines which are followed as essentials for every responsible human being, not only in India but all over the world. Here the main things are responsibility and good behaviour in life.

### **3. ORIGIN AND AGE**

How old is Dharma?

It is impossible to answer this question with precision. According to the traditional Indian view, Dharma is a creation of God, just as He created air, water, sunlight and food. The birth of a being's body and that of its shadow occur at one and the same time; what comes later is growth. The same is true for Dharma: it was born with the birth of man, and developed later as time and circumstances demanded.

Therefore, no one can tell when Dharma originated, or how old it is. We do not need to go into such arguments which create nothing but bitterness between man and man, between nation and nation.

## **4. HISTORICAL VIEW**

In the Vedas, we find the theories and ways of practice of Dharma. When we go through the four sections of each Veda, it becomes clear that Dharma, the origin of which is unknown, got a sprouting, growth, flowering, and fruition in pre-Vedic times. The Vedas are like beehives in which the honey of Dharma has been stored by the great Seers and Masters.

### ***1. Pre-Vedic Age***

These Seers did not give birth to Dharma: they researched and found the truth of Dharma. Whatever they had experienced, through their meditation and profound practices for thousands of years, they had recorded in the Vedas. Since, in the beginning, there was neither script nor paper, these Seers asked, as teachers of their students, and as fathers of their sons and daughters, that the Vedas be memorised. In this manner, this Ganga of Dharma went on flowing.

When it was realised that this unfathomable and increasing knowledge of Dharma could not possibly be memorised by one and all, the Masters decided to give a form so that its understanding and memorizing became easier. That is the form in which we find Dharma in the Vedas today.

## ***2.The Vedic Age***

Many Great Masters of the distant past, who, diving deep, discovered these pearls of wisdom, brought them out and gave them, in the form of the Vedas, to their successors. There are four Vedas (*as we have stated earlier*) — Rig-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sam-Veda and Atharva-Veda. Each is divided into four sections: Samhitas, Aranyakas, Brahmanas, and Upanishads. In the pre-Vedic and Vedic ages, people worshipped nature and performed Yagnas (*fire sacrifices*) which were of various kinds.

## ***3.Parallel Scriptures***

The form of Dharma which we find in the Vedas today is certainly the main body of Dharma, but there are also other scriptures of Dharma. They are called Agamas, Nigamas and Tantras.

## **5. THE AGE OF EPICS**

### **1. *Introduction***

The Seers found that it was impossible for the whole community to memorise and understand everything contained in this ever increasing fund of knowledge of Dharma. By and by, the community and its tradition faced a crisis. At one time, it seemed that all the knowledge which had been accumulated since the pre-Vedic age up to the Upanishads, where deep and complete subjects such as the nature of God, soul, and life were discussed, was in danger of complete annihilation.

By God's grace, at this critical time, the Rishis (*Seers*), whose responsibility was to give, preserve and expand knowledge of Dharma made some extraordinary discoveries which were not only novel, but also offered a perfect solution for the problem which faced Dharma.

The Rishis invented poetry, narratives, and dialogues. These three literary devices were to simplify spiritual truths, making them as easy as possible. Poetry and stories are easy to remember, and dialogue in which questions are asked and answers given, is attractive for one and all. When one asks a question, then, in a natural way, curiosity is so aroused that one reads on in order to understand the whole answer.

Some may ask: "Are these stories true?" That, however, is an unprofitable and unimportant question, because, through the medium of their created stones, the Rishis have explained profound and otherwise difficult spiritual truths in simple and easy ways. Is not this a lasting service to the community and humanity? Valmiki, a great Rishi, is called the first ever poet (*Adi Kavi*).

And now to the Epics themselves.

## ***2.Ramayan***

Ramayan is the first epic. It was composed by Valmiki. In a short time, it became so popular that everybody in the community memorised it and began chanting its stanzas whenever and wherever they were needed. It became not only popular but also dear to the people. So, everybody liked to memorise it, and it helped them to understand the deep spiritual meanings of the story of Rama.

## ***3.Mahabharata***

Mahabharata is the second epic. Its author was Veda Vyasa. There are 100,000 stanzas or couplets in it. Everything good and evil, profane and sacred, is presented in it. This is because the world contains good and evil. It is said that what is missing from the Mahabharata does not exist. This epic narrates everything through the story of the war of the Kauravas and the Pandavas.

The Bhagavad Gita, a part of Mahabharata, has, today, become popular throughout the world; it has been translated into all civilized languages. The Holy Bible is the only other book which has been translated into so many or perhaps a few more languages. The purpose of the translations of the Holy Bible is to spread Christianity, but that of the Gita is something else. The best translations of the Gita into world languages are by non-Indians.

#### ***4. Puranas***

Just as the Vedas were followed by Vedantas, and Up Vedas, so also when the epics became popular, then it became fashionable to explain or declare truths using the form of epics. This trend gave birth to the Puranas. They are written in simple language, and remain popular today. Every spiritual truth is explained in the Puranas by a simple and interesting story. Of the 18 well-known Puranas, the Bhagavatam is the most popular, and people read it and attend its reading on special occasions.

## **6. THE AGE OF LORD BUDDHA AND LORD MAHAVIR**

### ***1. Introduction***

In the Gita, Lord Krishna states: "When goodness grows weak and evil increases, then I

make myself a body". In the same context, He says: "In every age I come back to deliver the holy, to destroy the sin of sinners, and to establish righteousness". In the Indian tradition, it has been tested time and again, and found that the Lord fulfilled His words.

When violence replaced non-violence, cruelty love, and enmity friendliness, when the killing of the weak, disabled, and unprotected replaced bravery, chivalry and nobility, and when Dharma was on the verge of total destruction, then it was that the Lord took human birth to re-establish Dharma which was most needed and to bring peace to humanity.

## ***2. Lord Mahavira***

Lord Mahavira, born in 599BC in Bihar, Northern India, left this mortal world in 527BC. His influence was felt more in India. The scriptures of the Jains, which were the preachings of Lord Mahavira as Dharma, have spread in India, where, still, we find Jainism alive in many parts. This form of Dharma contributed very much to the development of sculpture and art which today, we see in India in the beautiful Temples of Jains. This was the first time that Dharma took on organisational form through preaching. Today, we see Jain preachers moving from place to place and state to state in India and Jain libraries, which can be called stores of knowledge, are also a remarkable contribution by Jainism.

### **3. Lord Buddha**

Lord Buddha was born a prince in 599BC. He was, from the very beginning a man of compassion, non-violence, truth and kindness. His father found he was more inclined towards renunciation and a new kind of life, so he arranged for him to be married.

Lord Buddha, whose name was originally Gautam, even had a son, but the life of a householder and of princely luxuries made him all the more attracted towards renunciation. In the end, renouncing everything, he disappeared from his home and people, in search of that something which could make mankind happy.

He visited many yogis and places of pilgrimage, and performed powerful austerities, but nothing could take him to his desired goal. It was at Bodhgaya, now a renowned place of pilgrimage for Buddhists who are spread all over the world, that he realised that something which he had been seeking was, to him, enlightenment face to face.

Buddha means the "Enlightened One". He began, like a whirlwind, the campaign of preaching the truths which he had discovered.

He was the first in world history to have had so many followers of his way.

He moved from place to place preaching the truth, which he had acquired, to serve suffering humanity. Kings and princes, men and women,

old and young were all magnetised by his personality and enlightenment, and so, some joined him as monks. He asked all his followers to "do the greatest good to the greatest number".

Although there are relatively few Buddhists in India today, many thousands of Buddhists come for yearly pilgrimage to India. They come from Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Laos, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, and from some western countries as well. The largest number of Buddhists was in China, before China was taken over by communism. In the same way, Kampuchea, Vietnam and Tibet used to be Buddhist.

Lord Buddha gave to the world, for the first time, Dharma in the form of non-violence, compassion, truth, meditation, renunciation, and kindness. He proclaimed that man can get rid of the suffering due to old age, disease, and death by practising, in daily life, the above mentioned aspects of Dharma.

## **7. THE AGE OF THE GREAT MASTERS (OR TEACHERS)**

### ***1. Introduction***

In the days of decay of Buddhism and jainism , when they were divided into many different sects, and when their preaching moved

away from practice, then new life was given to the eternal tradition of Dharma by the Great Masters. They were renowned thinkers and scholars who originated six orthodox schools of philosophy: Viz: Nyaya, Vaisesika, Sankhya, Yoga, Purva Mimansa and Uttar Mimansa. Of the heterodox schools of philosophy, there are three: Viz: Buddhism, Carwacism and Jainism.

The names of the masters are Gautama, Kanada, Kapila, Patanjali, Jaimini and Sankara. The first five only gave philosophy and that, too, in the form of aphorisms, but from Sankara onwards, a new era began.

## **2. Sankara**

Sankara is also called Jagadguru

Sankaracharya , meaning, Sankara, the Great Teacher of the world. He was not only the man who originated the Vedanta philosophy of monoism (*as against dualism*), but also he established an order of monks called Dashnami (*Ten-named*), to preach his philosophy. He established four monasteries in the four corners of India: North, South, East and West. In this way, he was the first master who gave India the true form of a nation. He became a monk at the tender age of 12 and died when he was 31 years old. Today, his sect in India is the largest as far as preachers and followers are concerned.

### ***3. Ramanuja***

Ramanuja was the second master of this new era. He gave a philosophy, a sect, and an order of monks which is quite large in number. His followers have also spread all over India. The third philosopher, master and organiser of a sect was Nimbarka. In the same line, we have Madhava, Vallabha, Chaitanya, and some others.

They were all not only philosophers who gave birth to sects, but also they were learned men who wrote commentaries on the scriptures (Upanishads, Brahmasutras, and the Gita), and these have since been called oceans of knowledge.

## **8. THE AGE OF SAINTS**

All the masters were philosophers and scholars, and so their works and thoughts appealed mainly to rationalists. The appeal of Buddha and Mahavira, which had gone to the grassroots in the common man's language, embraced one and all because the language was simple and easy to understand. But not so the language of the great Masters. It was limited to an elite. For this reason, the masses of India remained devoid of their traditional values of Dharma.

Thus, there appeared a gap. This gave rise to a crying need for a something in someone who

could be owned and accepted by the masses as their own, and who could think and give in the language of the masses. This need gave birth to the age of Saints.

Belonging to this age were saints such as Kabir, Nanak, Ravidasa, Dadu, Nabhadas, Garibdas, Pipa, Jambha in the north, and many others in the south. All these saints had themselves hailed from the masses. They gave the masses — mostly labourers and farmers — a form of Dharma through the medium of Bhajans (*devotional songs or hymns*), and in the language of the masses, a philosophy which may be called "the philosophy of the masses".

Although all these saints were nearly illiterate, yet they were enlightened. Today, they are respected equally by the high and low and their Bhajans are sung by all, and their words give light to those confused and groping in darkness. In particular, their followers respect their words as much as they do the words of the Vedas or of God.

## **9. THE AGE OF DEVOTION**

No doubt the saints were great. And they taught philosophy in simple, homely language. But, later on, their teachings were found dry, lacking joy and happiness which the masses needed to forget their day's labours, woes, and

worries. A deep need was felt by one and all for this sort of joy. This need was fulfilled through devotion, by masters such as Vallabha, Chaitanya, Jiva Goswami and Baldev. Everywhere the name of God caught the people's love, since in chanting the name of God, neither literacy nor scholarship was necessary. People began singing in ecstasy the divine name most beloved to them. Everywhere, many joined in their dances, forgetting their social and material status, sorrows and problems. Tears of joy rolled from their eyes.

This age gave birth to poets and devotees of the calibre of Surdas, Tulsidas, Mira, Narsi Mehta, Tukaram, Tyagaraj and so on; such devotees were without number. Epics such as Tulsidas' "Ramayan", Surdas' "Sur Sagara", and compositions like Tukaram's "Abhangas", and Narsi Mehta's "Prabhatias" (*Songs of the Morning*), have since become immortal. Mira's Bhajans have, even today, the strongest appeal among the masses. It is said that as long as the sun and moon remain, these devotional songs sung in streets and huts will be heard in the heavens. This has kept Dharma fresh till this day.

## **10. THE MODERN AGE**

### ***1. Introduction***

Sakas, Sythyans, and Huns came to India and became submerged in her ocean of Dharma. In the first century A.D. , after Jesus Christ had been

crucified by his own people in his own land, his followers scattered in many groups in many directions. Some of them reached India, where they lived and worshipped in peace. Later still, invasions from Muslims came like tidal waves upon India. They destroyed beautiful temples and unique specimens of architecture, burned tons of scriptures, and murdered innumerable saints, scholars, and devotees of the Lord. Eventually, many of them settled in India, became impressed by Vedantic philosophy (*which they called Sufism*), and some of them became devout devotees of Lords Rama and Krishna. In this way, the waves of the sword and the fire acquired peace, and Muslims accepted India as their chosen land.

It is said that wherever Christianity went, it was followed by the armies of imperialism. When British, French and Portuguese traders reached India by sea they settled there. Then, more and more Christian missionaries arrived, and, with the help of their followers, (*traders turned rulers*), they began to preach Christianity and to convert others. This became possible only through debasing the name of Dharma. Indian society and Indian ways of worship were propagated as low and worthless. They insulted the tradition of Dharma in order to attract more converts and the faithful. Protected by the East India Company, these "Sahibs of the church" made Saturdays and Sundays the days for their preaching in the streets of the towns and cities. In the same

way, during famines and floods, when hundreds of thousands of people were without bread, home, clothes and medicines, they exploited such disasters also.

In these disturbed times, all Indians, and especially the intellectuals, identified this new danger to Dharma, became alert immediately, and took on the challenge.

## **2. Reformists**

All these circumstances led to the age of Reforms. Many intellectuals and learned people came forward with two objectives: (i) To reform their own society, uprooting all that was bad and unwanted in it and which was holding back its progress; (ii) To defend Dharma against the onslaught of Christianity and of the West. Because Christianity entered India from the then capital, Calcutta, so Bengalis were the first to come forward to take on the challenge.

**Raja Ram Mohan Roy** was the first social revolutionary. He was a scholar of Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Bengali and English. He reformed his own society, and stopped the practice of "Satti" (*burning widows alive*). He founded English schools and colleges, and encouraged all to become educated in English, against stiff opposition from the traditionalists. He was the founder of the society called "Brahma Samaj" (*Society of God*). Through it, he preached reforms to Indians and defended values of Dharma.

With this, he faced Christianity bravely and exposed its lacking and hypocrisy. For this cause, he had to live in England, and, in the end, he died there in Bristol. Later on, all educated gentry of Bengal and of many other provinces joined the "Brahmo Samaj", and, it became evident that nothing can stop the progress of the people of this country.

**Swami Dayanand Saraswati**, a scholar of Sanskrit, logician and debator, founded "Arya Samaj" (*Society of Noble People*). His call was: "Back to the Vedas". He revolutionised ways of worship by removing idol worship, and society itself by giving equal status to all wherein everybody had the freedom to perform "Yagna" and to chant the Vedas and Vedic mantras, be that one an untouchable or a woman. He gave ten commandments or disciplines to the society to be followed strictly.

**Mahadeva Govinda Ranade**, the first Indian Judge, founded "Prarathna Samaj", (*Prayer Society*) in Bombay. Everyone, irrespective of caste or material or educational status, was allowed to join the prayer meetings. Agni Hotri founded a society to propagate the divinity of man. It was called "Deva Samaj".

At the same time, the Theosophical Society, founded by Madam Blavatsky and Colonel Alcot in the USA, moved its headquarters to India when they found that it was difficult for them to carry on working in the USA against the

mounting opposition of Christianity there. That society became named "Brahma Vidya Samaj" in Sanskrit, and they did wonderful work in presenting Dharma in a new scientific garb.

### **3. *Nationalism***

This contact with the West brought to Indians a new awareness of the ideas which encouraged Europeans to spread their empires in so many countries overseas. Nationalism was the backbone first and foremost among these ideas.

Swami Vivekananda, Sri Arbindoghosh, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Swami Ramtirtha, and so many others — whether they were social workers, preachers, or educationists — everywhere invoked nationalism which became the soul of the nation. The prince of all the patriots, Mahatma Gandhi, awakened the whole nation to the core. For the first time in world history, he gave a novel way, namely non-violence and truth, as a means to fight against the imperialists' swords, guns, and bombs. In this war through the principles of Dharma in which moral arms (of non-violence and truth) are used, he made India independent in 1947.

### **4. *Universalism***

If we swim in the ocean of Dharma, we will not find in it a single word to the effect that its knowledge is exclusively for Indians. In the

Rig-Veda, called the oldest book of the world today, the following are written: "Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti" = "Truth is one, it is the enlightened who call it by many names". "Vasudev Sarvamiti" = "All is God". "Sabe bhumi Gopalki" = "The whole earth belongs to God".

Gandhiji has said: "The truth and non-violence with which I am experimenting here in India, India being my laboratory for these two spiritual values, are for the whole world: My work of liberation is not ending with the liberation of India; it is for the liberation of all countries colonised by foreign powers". Later on; when his spiritual disciple, Vinoba, started on his march for "Land to the Landless", his slogan was: "Long live the world".

The words which every Indian chants at the beginning and ending of a holy work "Shanti Shanti Shanti" mean "Peace Peace Peace". Today, in this age of missiles, nuclear bombs, star wars and such latest weapons of destruction, there is need for peace and peace alone. This will become possible when we accept that "all men are the children of God", (*Gandhi*), and, when, instead of selfishness, we accept that "Service to man is service to God" (*Gandhi*).

## 11. SPREAD

There is a volume of literature on the spread of Dharma in overseas countries. One such book is "Indian Cultural Empire". Other works are entitled in nearly identical words. But, in this age of nationalism, the affected countries and their people resent being influenced. This is natural: political empires have ended; religious, industrial and other new forms of colonialism are now rampant. Whenever the author has the opportunity to attend conferences and seminars on Dharma in South-East Asia and India, he has always given vent to his views on this touchy subject in his own way. In his eyes, all those who have values of Dharma in Asia are members of the same family, and, every Asian country is but an apartment in a big and palatial building.

Before groups of Buddhist monks crossed the Himalayan passes and the Indian Ocean, Indians of the pre-Buddhistic age had reached Sri Lanka, Burma (*Brahmadesh*), Singapore (*Singhpur*), Indonesia — Hindasia — consisting of Sumatra (*Saumitra*), Java (*Yava Dveep*), Bali, Kali Manthan, Borneo, and Madura, Malaysia (*Malaya*), Thailand (*Siam or Shyam*), Laos, Kampuchea (*Kamboj*), Vietnam (*Champa*). These countries were collectively called Swaran Dveep, "The Golden Island". These immigrants were from Karnatak in South India. Traders, priests, and preachers were followed by kings who founded kingdoms there. Agastya was their

leader. Further on, they reached the Phillipines and other Pacific islands.

Historians have now found evidence of Indian business colonies and scholastic settlements in the Nile Valley, Nubian Valley, Babylon, Asyria, Greece and Rome — in the 'prehistoric era. Recent researches — excavatory and anthropological — have collected proof of Indians in North and South America. Monks inspired by the lasting values of Dharma as preached by Lord Buddha, reached Tibet and China, crossed the Gobi Desert reaching Korea, from where they turned to Japan and neighbouring islands. They learned the languages of these different countries and translated the works of Lord Buddha into them.

Afghanistan calls herself Aryastan, and takes pride in proclaiming that the Vedas were first chanted on her holy land. Some of the Sanskrit authors had hailed from the Afghanistan of today. The mighty statues of Lord Buddha in Bamiyan, Afghanistan, are well-known. Caravans laden with gold, diamonds, silk, muslin, and spices negotiated the passes of Khybar and Bolan to reach Europe via Russia and other countries.

## 12. THE PRESENT

In the present, which is the age of science and technology, man lives with radio and television, fulfills needs by telephoning, reads daily newspapers, travels by aircraft, and has knowledge of the latest researches in science. These things are not merely a comfort or a luxury, but a need for all people of all nations and colours. The old discriminations based on unscientific notions and observations have disappeared. All people are running in the same direction, running towards achieving the same goal, namely, happiness with peace. Man is trying hard (*and has become rebellious also*) to remove everything which stops his progress, or becomes a hurdle on his path.

What are these hurdles? And, who has placed them there? How are they to be removed at the earliest? These are some of the questions which are troubling everyone today.

All these hurdles have their roots in the past. They want to remain in the past and of the past. Such things had come to man in the form of the problems which existed in the past in the name of sects, as well as differences in social and moral values all of which, when combined, took the name of religions. Who has created all these religions? The answer is ignorant man. Who has accepted all these differences due to ignorance? And who is trying today to maintain these differences? The answer is, again, ignorant man.

Then, what about those who understand, who possess knowledge, and are trying to gain more knowledge, understanding, and enlightenment? Their numbers are increasing.

When everyone can talk, whether he or she is white, black or brown, a follower of one religion or of another, on the telephone without any kind of discrimination or hesitation by the telephone machine. . . When men of different religions, countries, and colours can watch the same programme on television, the "box" has no refusal or discrimination. . . When aircraft fly all passengers of all countries, creeds, colours and religions without any kind of discrimination, flying them at the same time and altitude. . . . When the latest drugs produce the same effect on all patients without discrimination. . . When the radio box never refuses anyone on the basis of religion. . .

When all these are happening, it means that, today, man can live without sects, beliefs, and religions. But, he cannot live without science and technology. Where, then, lies the solution of this problem of today? It lies only in Dharma, which is equally true to the enlightened, to scholars and illiterates alike. There is a saying of an Indian illiterate farmer: "Ghar sansar", meaning "The whole world is one family", which is another way of stating "Unity in diversity".

In the same family, so long as the members are following Dharma, albeit with differences in thinking,

taste, and modes of worship, yet they will live together as one family. This has been true not only of the last decade but of millennia. Such freedom is the need of man in the present. And, nothing can stop him from attaining this freedom.

Dharma, has proved since eternity, this truth — physical diversity with unity of life — to be the only solution, the only way.

### **13. THE FUTURE**

Many a cyclone and tide has tried to stop this eternal flow of Dharma but none has succeeded. Today, we see that technology, medical sciences, and means of transportation and of communication have given the world a oneness which was absent in the past. The times, circumstances and needs are forcing man to eliminate the errors of the past.

Dharma says: "Do not speak ill of any one, or of different thoughts in the world. Simply state the truth in a sweet language for the good of one and all".

The past was shrouded in darkness, (i.e. ignorance). The present gave more needed light, (i.e. knowledge) in order to discriminate between good and evil. And, it is the dawn of enlightenment with which the future is to be blessed.

In the present circumstances, man has started thinking in a universal frame of mind, which has

raised him above the past "mine" and "thine". Today, everyone understands the language of the times, and realises very well that man's need is happiness which is possible through individual freedom. This is the way to make an individual happy, a nation happy, and the world happy. This kind of happiness is the mother of permanent peace.

Thousands of years ago, Lord Krishna said: "An individual can reach perfection only by practising his individual Dharma". A great saint and devotee of the Lord said, some hundreds of years back: "Today, the need of every individual is to take care of his own individual Dharma". This human life is very precious, and God has blessed man with this life in order to practice and develop so as to reach perfection.

Humanity has tried different theologies and religions, but found that all these created groupism and enmity, bringing man nearer to complete destruction. Today, there is neither a need to grope in darkness anymore nor wait for a miracle to happen. The need is to accept truth, to make a break through for the sake of truth, happiness, and peace. All religions and theories are for the good of man. If this aim is fulfilled then there is no need to hang onto outdated things with closed eyes. The need is to open the eyes and proceed towards the human goal of happiness and peace.

A Seer, thinking nothing but the good of humanity, once said: "He who goes away from

Dharma, destroys himself. But he who follows the path of Dharma cannot be destroyed by anything".

## **14. THE ROLE OF INDIANS**

Today, we find that Indians — intellectuals, bankers, industrialists, businessmen, teachers, clerks, and labourers — are spread all over the world. They are in the minority. What then can they do in the countries of their adoption where they live and work? They can render the greatest service to humanity today, and especially to those countries which are unable to find a path, and so are shivering out of fear because they have reached a crossroad where they are facing complete and certain destruction of everything which they have founded or created. The ignorant and the backward who have contributed nothing towards these instruments of destruction, will also be undoubtedly destroyed. Nor is that all. The whole planet called earth with everything thereon will be destroyed.

In these circumstances, the Indians abroad, in whose background stands Dharma, can play a very important role to serve the world and humanity at large. They give, by their behaviour and preaching, peace to one and all on earth. This is possible only when they turn honest and true messengers of peace, which, in turn, remains impossible until they themselves imbibe peace, practise peace, experience peace, and have true peace.

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