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LITERATURE FOR HUMAN VALUES

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BLOCK-1

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Unit-1 : Acharya Tulsi on Contemporary Problems

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NOTES

1.0 Introduction

As you are well aware, Acharya Tulsi was one of the most remarkable saints of the modern times. He exercised a tremendous impact on the Jain community in particular and on other communities in general. Acharya Tulsi was not only a writer of philosophical subjects but also a social reformer. He was not amongst those saints and pontiffs who remained aloof from society, concentrating on their penance and austere practices of yoga in the solitude sylvan surroundings of the Himalayas. Rather, he lived in the midst of saints, stayed at a place for a definite period during '*chaturmas*' (four months), interacted with people from all walks of life, sermonised to the masses and pondered over the problems that confronted us and still stare at us. He is perhaps the only saint of the twentieth century who has deeply thought of the problems that plague our country. He was well conversant with the fact that mere thinking over a problem does not serve any purpose. So, he also gave us solutions to these problems. And, his solutions are not difficult to follow. These are not air-airy solutions; the remedies he prescribes are practical and can be translated into action. The only condition is that we should be willing to sublimate our ego. We should shun our petty self-centred approach to life and should see life not in fragments, not in bits and pieces but as a whole.

The book prescribed for your course entitled 'Acharya Tulsi on Contemporary Problems' is virtually a questionnaire, indeed a big one, wherein questions related to contemporary problems are asked and the seer-saint answers all the questions boldly, without caring about whether his answers please all or not, whether they will be appreciated or debated about. This is to say, he was an embodiment of fearlessness. He had recommended his solutions, objectively and as a spiritual doctor, and he has through these answers given us a unique therapy, which can be called "therapy of the soul." Dear students, the book inculcates us, sublimates us, and makes us better human being. As such, it embodies the very spirit of 'Sahitya' (साहित्य) which aims at the welfare of society. I am sure while reading the book you will appreciate this point.

1.1 The Shape of a Society without Exploitation

Introduction : 'The Shape of a Society without Exploitation' is the first article in the series. The prime objective of all saints, philosophers and leaders is to establish an exploitation-free society. Acharya Tulsi was a versatile genius. He combined so many qualities that it is difficult to determine whether he was a greater reformer or a greater writer. To me, he seems to be a great reformer first.

The greatest problem of today is that we are self-centred. We believe in pomp and show, glitter and etiquette, and as a result. We completely ignore the qualities of heart. We want to amass money by hook or crook. The result is a blind mad race; everybody is running after money, money and money. It seems as if all our principles, all our faith has disappeared and the 'taka dharma' (टका धर्म) has overwhelmed us. The result is that the rich exploit the poor. The rich have become richer and the poor poorer. Everybody in his capacity is busy in exploiting others; be he a rickshaw puller or an industrialist. The over-all effect of this tendency is a feeling of despondency and pessimism. Now, how to come out of this morass? The answer to this question is given by Acharya Tulsi. Let us see the solution he suggests.

Summary: The importance of politics and economics towards the formation of society cannot be questioned. They play a major role but are not the most important. No doubt, the political system gives us stability. Stability is important for having proper law and order, and without law and order, we cannot have a harmonious economic culture. If we don't have a good economic system, then there will be no prosperity. As a result, poverty will envelop our society. Poverty brings about violence, restlessness, and crimes. Poverty is an outcome of exploitation, exploitation of the weak, by the strong and powerful. They may be powerful either economically or politically, but one thing is certain: they are resourceful. All political ideologies, Marxism, Gandhism etc. want to put an end to exploitation.

Marxism introduced a number of changes in the political system. It put an end to exploitation; it gave importance not to the individuals but to the society. But in its zeal to reform the political system, it throttled the voice of the individuals. It spread mistrust even among family members, so much so that a mother was afraid of her son; a husband was afraid of his wife. Each of them thought that a spy was set on him or her. Such was the suffocating atmosphere in a communist country like the U.S.S.R. or China. There is no scope for individual freedom in communism. So, despite its noble ideals, it failed to attract the greater part of the world; and now it is only prevalent in China, Vietnam, North Korea etc.

A better option in tune with democracy was Gandhism. Gandhism gives enough freedom and it aims at the change of heart; It employs the two weapons of non-violence and truth towards achieving its target, which is always noble. It helped achieve freedom for India. The Gandhian path of ushering in a new era of equality and 'Ram Rajya' (a society free from the curse of exploitation and discrimination) through 'Bhoodan' (voluntary surrender of excess land) and 'Sampatti Daan' movements, as launched by the first volunteer of Gandhi, namely, Vinoba Bhave, had failed to deliver the desired results. Yet, Vinoba's bonafide intentions deserve all praise and admiration.

Acharya Tulsi is of the considered opinion that Anuvrat is the most effective way to achieve the goal of building an exploitation-free society. It

works on the emotional plane without ignoring different political and economic planes. Anuvrat combines the better qualities of both – Marxism and Gandhism : it doesn't ignore society but at the same time it gives glory to individual freedom as well; it facilitates the process of providing the four essential necessities of life – food, health, education and a free environment – to the people. The ancient Jain Acharyas advocated four kinds of parting – parting with food, parting with medicines, parting with knowledge and parting with terrorising tactics. By these means, they motivated and inspired the rich to help the poor; and they ensured food, health and education for the deprived people. The Acharyas saw to it that it was implemented in letter and spirit. It was an emotional underpinning. What is known today as Human Resource Management was done successfully thousands of years ago due to the Jain Acharya's efforts which appealed to the heart. As a result, no one remained hungry, unclothed and unsheltered.

Anuvrat aims at building an exploitation free society with the support of the people. It touches the emotional chord of the rich; these who are rich are exhorted to pass with their opulence. They willingly come forward to help. Without developing new habits of sharing and co-operation, we cannot have an exploitation free society. In the old days, the system worked miracles and there is no reason why it cannot work again in the present. Anuvrat will revive this spirit. At the same time, it will work for the upliftment of the poor, exhorting them to be self-reliant. Work hard and success will come. Your means should be transparent certain and above board. This is the message of the great Acharyas.

Anuvrat focuses upon morals. An exploitation-free society is possible only when a certain values are adhered to. These values can be nursed only when we impart moral values. Pursuing moral conduct needs our society's support. "Anuvrat gives primary importance to mental discipline." For, no system can succeed without it. As such, it intends to popularise the practice of vows among the common people.

Acharya Tulsi ends the first chapter of the questionnaire in these soothing words, "I think proper emotional orientation of the individual towards the system as a whole mental discipline. Self reliance and the strength of vows will together give rise to a social order from which exploitation will automatically disappear."

1.2 Building a Society Free from Exploitation

Introduction : Acharya Tulsi belonged to the galaxy of those saints who always desired the improvement of society. He was well read in politics and economics as well. A dynamic thinker, he designed the Anuvrat movement so as to make it all pervasive and extremely useful for all, the rich and the poor, the high and the low. He introduced spirituality to the common people. Before him, spiritualism remained a forte of a selected few; he brought it out to

everyone. He knew that a constructive change can be brought about by making people understand the significance of oneness, that the proper study of mankind is man and that the ultimate objective of our society is to have an exploitation free society. This objective can be achieved by igniting the spiritual fire, by bringing out the sublime emotions to the fore. Anuvrat is a spiritual instrument of change: it can introduce a classical order in the world.

Summary : Initially, Anuvrat aimed at reforming the present society by waging a non-violent war against the evils that have enveloped it such as corrupt practices, superstitions and senseless rigid traditions. For making the movement a grand success, its scope was widened. Acharya Tulsi realised that so long as differences based upon caste, creed, language, colour, etc. continued, the real progress couldnot be achieved and the greatest task of making this world a beautiful place to live in can never be accomplished. So, the great seer envisaged a society free from the scars of exploitation.

For making an exploitation-free society, what is needed most is restraint. This is the base, the bed rock of Anuvrat. All our problems come to an end if our emotions are guarded, and don't run riot. All our impulses should be controlled. It is through restraint that we will have lasting peace. If we have people practicing peace, exploitation of any type cannot be dreamt of! Anuvrat lays down the following conditions for a society devoid of exploitation.

1. Control over wants : Our wants should be limited. If our wants are boundless, there will be no peace, and a tendency for acquisition will continue to develop. Therefore, Anuvrat attaches paramount importance to 'reduced wants'.
2. De-centralisation of economic and political power.
3. Emphasis upon the dignity of labour and self-reliance.
4. People given to acquisition will have no prestige.
5. Non-violence.

The above five points if translated into action will pave the way for a restraint based society. Acharya Tulsi's views are being accepted by the society. Today, in the age of globalisation we have seen a fierce competition amongst the business houses and even between various economies. The world is a field to a mad race to outsmart the other! Acharyaji was against all this. Even the U.S.A. is now sounding a note of caution. A think-tank in the United States talk about controlled emotions and a sense of belonging towards a community. In India too, we had some fashionable economic-enthusiasts who had designed our economy after the so-called western model. The result was steep price-hike, inflation and unrest. Fortunately, all of us did not follow this line. And, its reason is that we have saints like Tulsi, who are our guide.

1.3 Social Structure and Non-violence

Introduction: In the third chapter of his famous book, "Acharya Tulsi on Contemporary Problems", Acharya Tulsi has ruminated over the social structure; how a society is built, what are the factors responsible for its creation, how an exploitation free society can be established and what can be the role of non-violence in setting up an ideal society.

Acharya Tulsi maintains that acquisition and violence play a major role in structuring a society. In the very act of accepting to be a part of a whole, man builds a relationship of personal attachment. The sense of belonging to a group, the feeling of "my family", "my caste", "my community, "my nation" separates him from others. When one belongs to a particular class, country, etc. there is a special feeling. If that feeling, that sentiment is hurt, he becomes violent. Complete non-violence is not possible if one is attached to anything whether it is in person or in kind.

Acharya Tulsi regards it essential to differentiate between violence and non-violence. Violence means the use of force. It can be used for solving any problem for better or worse. If there is a law and order problem, the police are called in. Their efforts restore normalcy. They use force to curb violence. That means violence overpowers violence. The police, the Army, Para-military forces etc. are the means to keep society, or country in order. This is one form of non-violence. The other form is complete non-violence. "Complete non-violence means solving all problems through mutual agreement and goodwill. Resort to satyagrah, sit-ins, fasting etc. where no solution is possible through mutual agreement is practical non-violence. It cannot be termed complete non-violence, because it involves compulsion. Compulsion without resort to arms can be called practical non-violence." Compulsion involved in practical non-violence is a milder form of violence.

Fasting also has two forms. One form is to fast in order to exert pressure upon the people, whether favourable or unfavourable. The second form of fasting aims at self-purification. We fast to purifying ourselves. This is the best form of non-violence.

Sometimes, pressure is mounted upon a group of people who violate the norms of society. They are declared out-castes. This may not be a direct act of violence, but it is certainly non-violent pressure.

Non-violence can succeed only in the presence of love or fear. Mahatma Gandhi could succeed because the British were under great pressure from all sides. They had to leave India. History bears it out. But the same path of non-violence cannot succeed with Pakistan or China.

Non-violence can also change the hearts of people occasionally, though it cannot be easily generalised. Non-violence can succeed only when the entire society rises to the occasion, and desires to cultivate these sublime qualities.

1.4 Non-violent Resistance

Introduction: Acharya Tulsi propagates the principles of non-violent resistance and lays down certain conditions for this type of opposition. He points out that non-violence is the only ultimate weapon which can defeat violence.

Summary: In the context of the present national turmoil, the value of non-violence increases. Peace becomes much more important at a time of war. So, we can put non-violence into practice and give it the glory it deserves.

Though in our own country, we have seen the example of Mahatma Gandhi who spearheaded the independence movement and drove the English out without much bloodshed, it cannot be denied that "later non-violence was given a back seat." It is sad to see that in a country where non-violence was a force to reckon with, violence is increasing. But the truth is that whatever be the quantum of violence, it can never be counted as a value. For, it is against our cultured nature and values. For practising non-violence one must have full faith in it. If you lack conviction, you cannot be a non-violent. The examples of Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Junior and very recently, Anna Hazare come to one's mind.

Non-violent resistance is opposed to violence. It can be practised only when our society is well-trained in non-violence. Without training, people cannot develop faith in non-violence nor can it bring prestige associated with it.

Acharya Tulsi accepts that both violent and non-violent methods have always been in vogue for solving problems, yet solutions found by violent means have proved to be ephemeral, short-lived and not permanent. He cites the example of America and Russia. Both are powerful, both have nuclear weapons. Still, they do not launch war. The reason is that no one wins the war; both are losers, the victor and the vanquished.

Acharya Tulsi stresses the importance of non-violence and recommends the following principles and procedures:

1. Training in non-violence,
2. Detachment and modesty,
3. A clean image,
4. Public support.

Needless to say, the above mentioned points are important. Training in non-violence will make the trainee understand the circumstances he is to work in. Similarly, a non-violent leader must remain detached and modest. He must have a clean image, as only a virtuous person can carry conviction and win the faith of the people. Public support in favour of a leader fortifies any movement. Once public opinion is roused against a practice, it cannot last." The non-violent movements, such as Satyagraha, Bhoodan and Chipko have gained

success because of mass participation. Recently, Anna Hazare showed the power of non-violence in Delhi, thanks to the public and media support.

To sum up, Acharya Tulsi's insistence on non-violence can solve the problems of society in a manner which will please all. But before exercising this tool, the requirements he recommends must be complied with.

1.5 Revolution and Non-violence

Introduction: It is rightly said that man is a social animal. He cannot live without society, and while living in society, he ponders various topics from head to heart. One of the topics that draws his attention, is revolution. He is in a dilemma; he cannot easily decide how a revolution can take place. The three accepted ways are through constitutional means, through violence or through non-violence.

Acharya Tulsi ponders over this question. He has gone deeply explored into this subject as he was a social revolutionary and a practitioner of non-violence par excellence. His ideas are not only thought provoking but also inspiring. He appeals to both heart and mind.

Summary: Revolution means change, not an ordinary change but a change of significance. He defines revolution thus, "Revolution means a sudden and far, reaching change. What looks impossible today, if it comes about as a result of the circumstances being ripe for it later, comes to be regarded as revolution".

Acharya Tulsi discusses the means of bringing about revolution. Usually, it is said that a great change comes either through constitution or violence. Some people think it may be through non-violence too. He rules out the role of constitution in ushering in revolution because it is a set of principles; that puts a system in place. It is instrumental in bringing about social development. In fact, after revolution, we have constitution. It happened in the U.S.A., in France and also in India. So, Acharya Tulsi feels that to expect a constitution to deliver a revolution is not reasonable.

Acharya Tulsi firmly believes that between violence and non-violence, the latter has always been held superior, since there is nobody openly championing violence, bloodshed and war. In fact, nobody wants to resort to violence. It is out of compulsion, out of frustration, out of anger, that people take the law in their own hands. Everybody loves non-violence. Even the use of violence is to bring about law and order. So, the ultimate aim is to have a peaceful, tranquil atmosphere, which is not at all possible by violence. Though we do not have a single example of revolution achieved through non-violence (even the bloodless revolution of 1688 in England was not totally bloodless), we cannot doubt the effectiveness of non-violence.

Acharya Tulsi quotes from the 'Mahabharat' to support his point he mentions, in no unclear terms, that there was no government, no ruler, no punishment and no magistrate there. Everyone protected everyone else by

following dharma. The great thinker stresses the point time and again that no permanent solution of any problem-economic or social-can be found by violence. Even if a problem is solved through arms, bloodshed and terror, its effect will be short-lived.

Acharya Tulsi is opposed to violence of any type. He widens the scope of non-violence when he puts forth a unique interpretation in these words, "In its refined form, non-violence is free from all kinds of pressure and admits only a change of heart as the operational principle. But it doesn't seem feasible to bring about a revolutionary transformation on the basis of a mere change of heart."

There is no denying the fact that the voice of non-violence has become much louder during the last twenty five years, yet its impact is not felt on our society. Acharya Tulsi endorses this point. He finds its cause in the non-committal approach of the votaries of non-violence. They forgot Mahatma Gandhi. Instead, they nursed casteism, created communalism and preached hatred. They were swayed away by the intoxication of power! When the feeling of sacrifice was missing, how can the concept of non-violence succeed? When violence demands sacrifice, "How can non-violence, the very basis of which is sacrifice and renunciation, succeed without sacrificing oneself?", he questions.

1.6 Non-violence and Bravery

Introduction: A charge has often been levelled against the practitioners of non-violence that they lack courage and bravery, and that India remained a slave for over seven hundred years only because she believed in non-violence. You may be surprised to note that Narmad, a great Gujarati poet, also propagated this idea. Mahatma Gandhi didn't approve of his views. Acharya Tulsi too dismisses this theory outright, citing so many reasons which are logical and convincing.

Summary: Acharya Tulsi at the outset rejects the view that India remained a slave for such a long period because Indians were non-violent. Even today the people of India are non-violent. They are not aggressive. He admits the fact that non-violence rears a feeling of pity and compassion for others. At the same time, the use of violence cannot be ruled out completely as long as there is disparity and discrimination in our society.

It is misunderstood that a Jain is non-violent and as such they cannot fight against the enemy forces during times of war. Even the famous Hindi poet Dinkar harboured this misconception. Acharya Tulsi succinctly points out. "I think violence is based on acquisitiveness. Acquisition is allied with uncontrolled desires. The latter gives birth to fear and fear is a sure invitation to strife and war. Anyone who lives in this society and therefore bears the responsibility of preserving and protecting it knows the compulsive nature of war and therefore for him to pretend otherwise will be a mistaken belief."

Our history records the victories of many Jain rulers and ministers. Wars have been fought since the days of Rishabhdev. The battle fought between Bharat and Bahubali and later on a terrible battle fought between King Kunik and Chetak in the days of Lord Mahavira are just two examples to prove that being non-violent doesn't make one less brave. Chandragupta Maurya too adopted Jainism. He was one of the greatest rulers of the world.

So, war is a necessary evil. It cannot be avoided. It will take place; as long as society doesn't come close to a classical order. We should be strong in heart and body. Acharya Shri asserts that India lost so many battles and wars not because of non-violence but because of divisions in society, internal contradictions and because of its out-dated arms and ammunitions.

Truly, the seer here turns into a dispassionate, disinterested, detached subtle historian who gives a new dimension to the interpretation of history of India.

1.7 Non-violence : A Solution to War

Introduction : Generally, we feel non-violent resistance is legitimate as it doesn't allow any room for violence, and that the movements launched by Mahatma Gandhi such as the Civil Disobedience Movement, Satyagraha, and sit-ins, strikes and gherao are relevant, as they bring change.

Acharya Tulsi was a strict disciplinarian. He was straight forward in his views. So, while commenting on the Gandhian movements, he categorically mentions that they have lost the effectiveness they had in Gandhiji's time because they have lost their purity. Those who employ these methods even today swear by the name of Gandhi but the common man doubts their integrity. As a matter of fact, non-violent resistance can yield results only when the ground realities are taken into account and the leaders of the movement are willing to sacrifice themselves.

A non-violent resistance demands co-operation from both sides: the oppressor and the oppressed. Acharya Tulsi gives the example of gherao. If a man, say an employer, is gheraoed by the employees and the employer feels tortured, it will lose the sanctity of non-violent resistance. He is emphatic about it, "use of force—in whatever form—is nothing but violence." The harbinger of Anuvrat movement remembers Mahatma Gandhi on this issue. He didn't permit the participation of women in the Dandi Satyagraha, for the reason that the British would not use force against them in the presence of women. And, Gandhi was prepared for his supreme sacrifice. He was completely willing to sacrifice his life in the movement. Therefore, it was due to this background that he had prevented women's active participation, despite opposition from Kasturba Gandhi and Munnee.

Acharya Tulsi mentions clearly that the only solution to war is non-violence. Wars have been waged because of ulterior motives—Earlier, it was due to ego, a sense of pride, lust for money and flesh but now the flesh part has

disappeared, though the ego part remains. What else can be the explanation of Iraq invading Kuwait and the U.S.A. invading Iraq? The ulterior motive of capturing the oil belt or bringing it under their influence was the sole aim of the U.S.A. It didn't improve the position of Iraq. It threw America into a state of recession. War cannot bring any positive results. It has never solved any problem nor will it ever do, so in the future.

Acharya Tulsi is absolutely right in saying that the task of non-violence begins when the war is over. The formation of the U.N.O. is a step toward solving the problem of war. It has been slightly successful in its mission. Yet, the present day scenario is not encouraging and assuring for peace. Still, the world will have to devise a path for peace, for humanity can only survive and thrive in a peaceful atmosphere. "Non-violence provides the only hope for avoiding a catastrophe", he cautions us.

War is a disease. It can be cured by bringing down the inner temperature. If our sublime qualities, latent in us are brought to the fore, we can avoid war. For, no one is a victor in a war! Some poets have expressed this feeling in their poems. The feeling of non-violence persists even at the time of war. This explains as to why the code of conventions is followed at that time. The code states in no unclear terms that hospitals, places of worship, educational institutions and thickly populated areas should not be targeted.

To sum up, Acharya Tulsi believes that non-violence is the only effective weapon against violence. He affirms, "Even so it is my firm belief that the above example can be made use of to find a practical solution. Theory needs to be transformed into a practical reality. Seeing the dire consequences of going to war, our faith can be reposed in non-violence. All that is needed is a global leadership and the fulfilment of this need is imperative."

1.8 Challenge to Non-violence

Introduction: The world we live in is full of happiness and sadness. If we think the source of these two conflicting emotions, we find that it is ultimately the men and women who cause pleasure and pain. Pleasure is man-made; pain is manmade. Similarly, violence is also caused by us. No doubt, man cherishes peace. But, it is disturbed by him and gradually, it is disturbed to the extent that it becomes uncontrollable. The greatest challenge to non-violence comes from the vested interests of selfish people. The murder of Martin Luther King moved Acharya Tulsi. He commented upon the death of King extensively, highlighting the cause of violence and propounding that King's death is not a defeat, but a glorious triumph.

Acharya Tulsi penetrates deep into the subject and finds out the cause of violence. He admires the progress that modern man has made in all the fields—physical, economical and intellectual. Yet, this progress, though miraculous is lopsided, it is flawed. It tends to ignore the emotional side and the sentimental aspects of society. The result is

competitiveness, a mad race for outdoing the other. Come, what may, I am to win at any cost—seems to be the slogan of the so called modern man.

Acharya Tulsi points out that, "lack of cordiality, arrogance of the high towards the low, hatred and terror act as the seeds of violence. They will continue to grow and flourish spreading poison in the minds of the people so long as the values of unity, equality and liberty don't get established."

Martin Luther King Jr's murder was a result of the above mentioned feelings. The whites had a superiority complex. They hated the blacks. The state was also a bit indifferent to this evil in the name of personal freedom. At that time the U.S.A. had many hotels where the non-whites were not allowed. One Indian leader was also arrested by the Police while entering such a super-hotel, reserved for the whites. The murder of Martin Luther King Jr. was condemned across the globe. As a result, there was a change of heart. People realized that violence will not serve any purpose.

Acharya Tulsi never allows the use of violence. He doesn't approve of the reaction of the followers of Martin Luther King who indulged in arson, looting, plundering and killings of the whites. The murderer murdered Martin Luther King physically, but his followers indulging in disorderliness and plunder, murdered his soul. He praised the courage and conviction of King's wife who took the command of the rally even in the worst circumstances.

Acharya Tulsi pleads for unity in the predations of non-violence. If they are united in their efforts and think collectively, then they can succeed in their mission. The spiritual leaders and seekers of spiritualism can play a vital role in training the ordinary people in non-violence.

1.9 Causes of Violence : Deprivation and Surfeit

Introduction: It has been aptly said that distance lends enchantment. We, the people of India are often carried away by the glittering scientific progress and dazzling wealth of the United States of America. We should remain what we are; we are an ancient country with a great tradition. We need not copy the American system blindly. We can imitate their good qualities. In fact, wherever we see goodness of things, we must introduce them in our country. But to run after the religion of materialism without rhyme or reason is suicidal. Acharya Tulsi warns us not to fall prey to this reasonless approach to life.

Sometimes it is believed that capitalism is the root cause of America's problems. Today, the U.S.A. is a violent country. The crime-graph is very high there, perhaps higher than any other country. There was a time when two leaders (Martin Luther King and Senator Robert Kennedy) were assassinated within two months. Both these leaders were very popular and liberal in their outlook. They were the followers of equality and non-violence. On these deaths, the entire world was in a state of shock.

Acharya Tulsi does not find any fault with the political system. He disregards capitalism as the cause of Kennedy's death, as very aptly he briefs these. There are many other countries practicing the capitalistic system which are free from the murder-polities or the trigger happy culture. He finds frenzied passion and spiritual apathy to be the twin causes of violence.

A material programme brings about disparity; the materially advanced class becomes conscious of their status. They ignore the poor. As a reaction, the poor develops a sense of hatred for them. They believe that it is at their cost that they have become rich.

Acharya Tulsi mentions that the real cause of all this misunderstanding between the two classes—the rich and the poor—is that neither of the two follows the path of Dharma. He quotes from Lord Mahavira to advance his argument. He propounds the utility of 'Dharma' in these inspired words, "Dharma is primarily meant to save the deprived from a feeling of inferiority and those indulging in acquisition and enjoyment from frenzied passion and spiritual apathy, so that they imbibe sublime, humanitarian feelings."

In fact, Dharma, if taken in the right spirit, can be a sublime power to heal the wounds of humanity. The communist countries have given bread and butter and shelter to all. Yet, there is violence there. The reason is that they have ignored the emotional side of man's character. Man needs 'Dharma'. Without faith, we can't live.

Murders are an outcome of revenge. And, we all know, revenge is wild. It is opposed to civilized conduct. It has also been seen that "they are motivated by an obsession with fame, self-glorification, sheer wonder and self indulgence." Newspapers also publicise them.

Acharya Tulsi insists on developing a spiritual culture, a real 'Dharmic' environment, which will create a sublime world where there will be no hatred, no ill will, and no grudge against anyone. This is fairly difficult, but with sustained efforts, we can achieve this goal.

1.10 Khadi and Non-violence

Khadi has been a symbol of Gandhians for long, as all Gandhism used to wear the Khadi-clothes. The Khadi clad politicians and common men earned immediate respect. But after the independence, it lost its lustre. No doubt, it continued to embellish the airy leaders of all hues, but the soul was lost. It was the symbol of sacrifice. That spirit, the feeling of oneness with the soil, with the country, the feeling of self-dependence sadly disappeared. Its loss was a great blow to our home-made spinning industry. It rendered thousands of workers unemployed. They were driven to penury.

Acharya Tulsi, being a visionary, realized the importance of khadi. A saint cannot remain aloof from society. He is a torch bearer of spirituality. But

he knows the path of spirituality goes through the path of peace. And, peace is possible only when people are well fed.

In order to popularize Khadi, a decision was taken that a Anuvrati would wear Khadi. Since Khadi was not popular with the great public, this decision was somewhat not logical. Yet, Acharya Tulsi pointed out its utility. He propagated it, because no industry can be entirely free from violence, but one has to take note of the degrees of violence. "I see a short start, less violence, and low acquisition in the Khadi industry. The Jain scriptures, as a result of close analysis, posit longer starts and high acquisition in the case of big factories and mills. Therefore, in the Anuvrat samiti's decision I see the advantage of favouring clothes involving less cloth."

Acharya Tulsi favours Khadi for other reasons too. It is a bread winner for our villagers. A big factory provides employment to hundreds of workers but it also renders unemployed to thousands of workers. It was for this reason that Mahatma Gandhi launched the spinning wheel movement. This movement was an effort to make India a self-dependent country. Gandhiji advocated the use of indigenous produce because it saves the people from exploitation, it keeps them busy as they have enough work and thereby introduces a friendly and conducive atmosphere for growth. Acharya Tulsi also feels the same. He bemoans that after Mahatma Gandhi's death, despite the efforts of Vinoba Bhave, the charm of Khadi was lost, as the persons who mattered most turned selfish.

Acharya Tulsi supports the use of Khadi as there is less violence and low acquisition in the Khadi industry. He also speaks against centralization. He never supported centralization since it kept power confined to a coterie. All powers vested in one or a selected group of people who made money by all foul means. A centralised system gives birth to corruption, and it is a fact that our country had attained notoriety because of it. There was a time when the bureaucracy of India was a butt of ridicule on account of its delaying tactics, its tendency of keeping matters pending for years and years. Things have changed a little now, and one hopes that the process will go on.

I am tempted to give one incident to prove my point. Once Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri visited Amul Dairy. It is even today one of the best dairies in India and at that time it was the best in the east. Shastriji saw the dairy. He was much impressed by its system and the way it was managed. The dairy was in the Anand town of Kheda district. Now it is a city, and the district head-quarters of Anand district. Shastriji requested the General Manager, Amul to replicate the Anand pattern in all the districts of India. He promised all types of assistance and co-operation to its General Manager of Dr. V.Kurien the Father of the Milk-Revolution. Dr. Kurien agreed to his proposal when Shastriji accepted all his conditions—the most important condition was that the Head Office of the National Dairy Development Board will remain at Anand in Gujarat. Dr. Kurien went to the Agriculture Ministry,

Delhi. No one helped him. All bureaucrats were against him. They wanted its head office in Delhi. And, here was a man, a little known man, Kurien, who opposed them tooth and nail. They were so powerful that despite the support of the Prime Minister, and the Agriculture minister, he didn't get any assistance, and he borrowed money from 'Amul' (Anand Milk Produces Union Limited), Anand. With this money, he set up the office of the National Dairy Development Board. Such was the power of bureaucrats. If, today India is the largest milk producing country of the world, its credit goes to Dr. V. Kurien and his team who exhorted the farmers to unite themselves in the co-operatives and produce maximum milk.

So, we feel that Acharya Tulsi's comments on the utility of decentralization are well founded. We have progressed due to the abolition of Inspector Raj but even today the restrictions imposed on the Indian businessmen (farmers included) are much more than the restrictions imposed on the businessmen of the developed countries. He is absolutely right when he says, "A decentralized system gives equal opportunities of growth to everyone. It in itself is a great spiritual achievement which allows no scope for violence, excessive control, tension etc. and at the same time creates conditions that are conducive to the growth of equality and equity."

1.11 Socialism and Non-violence

The ultimate objective of any political system is to create a society based on the noble principles of life. The noble principles of life, such as love, compassion, non-violence and truth, cannot be realised without good governance. Every society requires a system to govern it. A country with a good political ideology can usher in an era of peace and prosperity.

Acharya Tulsi was a dynamic thinker, a progressive pontiff and a unique seer far ahead of his times. He was a spiritualist but a spiritualist with a difference, an ascetic who always felt the pulse of society. He never believed in "the only system". He followed the principle of "this too".

Acharya Tulsi doesn't hide his feeling while talking about socialism. He regards socialism as a slogan very often referred to by its fashionable votaries, especially at the time of crisis. Otherwise, it remains just a fad to talk about.

Socialism, as a political thought, stands for equality, freedom and justice. It ensures an exploitation free society. In fact, most of our problems are an outcome of economic exploitation. Socialism, aims to stop it.

Acharya Tulsi is of the opinion that the Anuvrat philosophy fully supports socialism. It fully backs up a socialist system. It believes in removing all forms of discrimination and exploitation from society, for disparity is an open invitation to violence and violence breeds hatred which in turn again brings about violence."Socialism also aims for the same. Gandhiji virtually worked for it. The ideas of Gandhi are similar to those of Anuvrat and socialism. Anuvrat has prepared the ground for the success of socialism. It has

awakened the people from the slumber of mental lethargy and made them think that no problem can be solved without nursing a moral approach. Without morals, nothing can be achieved. As such, the Anuvrat movement wants to improve the morals of society. Like socialism, it also wants the Removal of the Right to Property. So long as the accumulation of wealth continues to live in the hands of only some people, there cannot be equity. We can never have an ideal society. People often turn violent due to poverty and hunger. (At present, we have law and order problems in a number of districts across the country. We call it the Naxal movement, this or that movement, but it is born out of hunger which is exploited by our enemies who wish to unsettle our country.)

Acharya Tulsi declares that the Bhoodan movement cannot solve the problem of resentment, for it fails to strike at the root cause, though he lauds its non-violent approach.

Acharya Tulsi considers the democratic system as the best one for it gives an opportunity to the masses, to the people of the country, to participate in the system. There is no alternative to democracy (His views have been endorsed by people across the globe and today we see people's agitation in so many countries of the world). Yet, it requires some principles, he believes. Democracy cannot flourish without selfless leaders. Acharya Tulsi mentions the five requisites for those who run the government:

- (i) Love of justice,
- (ii) Efficiency in policy making,
- (iii) Righteousness,
- (iv) Spirit of service,
- (v) Liberal Outlook.

If the leaders have the above qualities, the country prospers. When our leaders lose these qualities, people lose trust in them. They feel cheated and plundered even. (In India, we feel it. People don't have respect for their leaders, for they are involved in many scams of undreamt magnitude). Acharya Tulsi found the political scenario murky and one can add to it that now it has become far muddier and murkier than before. He asks the people to make the right choice.

Acharya Tulsi was sad to see the emerging tendency of the people to resort to violence if their demands were not met with. They don't hesitate to destroy public property. The incidents of setting buses on fire and plundering of banks are not rare. He referred to the violent agitations in Bombay (now Mumbai). He expressed concern over the behaviour of the people who take the law into their own hands, settle the score by themselves and think that to use violence as a means to achieve their target is justified. He bemoaned the fact that all parties practised violence. But he cautions us to shun violence or else we may lose culture and civilization, "So far as the effectiveness of democracy is concerned. I think it has become spineless now. A healthy democracy can have no room for violence, irresponsibility and intolerance. These things are so

much in evidence today that I hesitate to call the system a democracy. Freedom of thought doesn't imply a wilful breach of the limits of democracy."

Great prophetic words! He expresses the feelings of a common man. A great seer who feels the pulse of humanity!

1.12 Prohibition, Revenue and Morality

It has been said by the liquor-lobby that the states of the union will face a revenue-crisis if there is prohibition. These propagators of wine forget the basic truth of life—Life is not for a momentary thrill, it is much more than that. Superficially, the government does not get revenue, but the money it saves from banning the sale of liquor is too much. If a survey is conducted, it will be found that the main cause of road accidents is liquor. Drivers drive their vehicles in a drunken state. So many persons die, so many are left handicapped and permanently wounded. This apart, every year we see hooch tragedies. Personally, I have seen people going blind because of too much consumption of liquor. Innumerable diseases occur due to hooch, how much money the government spends on the treatment of such patients. It is a tragedy that its consumption is steadily increasing. What a great fall!

Acharya Tulsi is highly critical of those who prefer revenue to life. He is out and out for a strict ban on the sale of liquor. He never supports any move which goes against ethics. He quotes Mahatma Gandhi who gave a damn to revenue by saying that he would "prefer lack of education to that made possible through revenue derived from liquor sales."

Liquor is harmful and it kills the moral values in man. It is a drain on the purse of the poor. A drunkard quarrels with his wife, ignores his children and contracts diseases. His liver turns weak. His heart is affected. It is a poison which no government should recommend for its citizens. It is against humanity. It is a sin.

Acharya Tulsi favours a blanket ban on the sale of liquor. But at the same time, he does not find it a permanent solution. He exhorts the public to stand up and protest against the government policy which encourages liquor-culture.

In fact, Acharya Tulsi's views on prohibition are useful. Liquor is harmful not only for the person who consumes it, but also for the society as a whole. It creates law and order problems in so many places. Come what may, the present trends cannot be allowed to go on.

Thanks to the movement of Acharya Tulsi and other religious preachers, a community feeling is fast coming up. It is good to see that a large number of ladies are mustering courage to stand against the drunkards and the liquor lobby in the hills and on the plains. Recently, the ladies in Bihar's Hajipur district punished their husbands publicly for they were drunk!

Though it is said that prohibition does not work, it is useful to control it. America tried it in 1920's but failed. Whatever be the opinions of people for or against prohibition, it is good not to use liquor as it creates problems.

1.13 The Film Industry

The film industry exercises a tremendous effect on the impressionable minds. This is to say that the children, young boys and girls are highly impressed by the activities of the cine artists, the heroes, heroines, villains and vampires. Even their trivial activities, their idiosyncrasies, their hair styles, their way of speaking etc. captivate them. The impact of the film industry has been unwholesome, to say the least, for our films, especially the Bollywood films, are a curious blend of crime and sex.

Acharya Tulsi was a great social scientist. He couldn't ignore the significance of the film industry. It reaches everywhere and the scope of its reach is going on increasing day-by-day, thanks to the ever increasing, tantalizing Television. Acharya Tulsi was upset to see that the ideals of our young boys and girls had changed so fast. There was a time when the children derived inspiration from Ram, Krishna, Mahavira, Buddha, Vivekanand, Dayanand, Gandhi etc. but now "they are after the star's life style. All new fashions emanate from them. Even educated young men and women are out to ape these actors and actresses." Acharya Tulsi regards the film industry as the "main cause of the decline in national character", because the films encourage crime, sex, nudity, and abusive language.

Still, Acharya Tulsi never advocated a ban on the film industry. He wanted to impose an age-bar for viewing the films, along the lines of Switzerland. Side-by-side, he drew the need to explore the alternate sources of entertainment for the children, young boys and girls. He also underlined the need for a national discussion on the topic as it concerns the future of our country.

Anuvrat as a movement stands for purity in conduct and the removal of the germs of immorality. Acharya Tulsi had a burning desire to purge the society of the evils that have penetrated deep into it. For this purpose, whatever is the occasion, he made good use of time. He interacted with the film producers in Kolkata, Mumbai and Madras, underscoring the need to make good entertaining films which could uplift the morals of our society, which could inspire our boys and girls. He realised that they too shared his views and were quite willing to contribute their might but they were somewhat perplexed as to what would happen if their ventures proved unprofitable. They were not wrong. The tastes have gone down so much that it is indeed difficult for a good, clean film to make profit. Acharya Tulsi, while partly agreeing to their viewpoint, puts the onus on them, for it is they who have introduced vulgarity in the films for making a fast buck. To quote his words, ".....Even if the public taste has sunk so low, the responsibility of retrieving it also is on the film

makers. If the entire film industry of the country comes out with a common code of conduct, I am sure they will be able to raise the mental stature of the public. The most critical question is whether the film industry will rise to the occasion and choose to prefer the preserving of the nation's character to making profits."

Thus, Acharya Tulsi gave a clarion call to the film producers to change the tastes of the youth for the sake of good future. He suggested to them the way to move forward towards this goal.

1.14 Result of Friendly Relations or Strength

Acharya Tulsi was a moving encyclopaedia. He was also curiosity personified. He always had an eye on the surroundings. He realised that a country can progress only when there is peace, both internal and external. Acharya Tulsi felt that friendly relations between the two countries always help and benefit each other. Both derive strength from each other.

India and China are the two most populous countries of the world. Nature has bestowed both the countries with all the resources that make a country great. There was a time and a slogan such as "Hindi-Chinee Bhai-Bhai" rent the air and the "Panchasheel" doctrine came into being. The entire world was impressed. But all of a sudden, China invaded India in 1962. We suffered a humiliating defeat. Pt. Nehru, the apostle of peace, was broken. It was a jolt for him, a nightmarish horror. He had never expected that a friendly country like China would stab India in the back. The entire country started criticising his philosophy. Even an ardent Gandhian Acharya J. B. Kripaliani summarily dismissed 'Panchsheel' as "five nonsenses". And, a broken, crest fallen, despondent Nehru admitted, almost with a sense of resignation, "We were living in a fool's paradise". After that incident, nobody ever talks of non-alignment. To speak with Acharya Tulsi, "Things have now come to a pass when non-alignment is no longer held to be a symbol of strength but of weakness."

Acharya Tulsi does not subscribe to the views of Maotse-tung who believed that the presence of enemies on the frontiers enables a country to remain eternally vigilant. The entire population casts off its narrow, vested interests and thinks of the country above self. Never do we find so great a unity than at the time of war. The whole country speaks one voice; the only motive is to win the war. Yet, this sentiment is short lived. The development is flawed, lopsided and inadequate. At the time of war, we concentrate fully on the supply of arms and ammunition, and the other equally important fields, namely education, health and welfare, are left behind. So, war can be instrumental in development only in parts, for having a wholesome development, peace is required.

It is often said that in politics we don't have permanent friends or permanent foes; we have our own interests. Acharya Tulsi doesn't rule out

friendly relations between India and China, for politics is the act of the impossible. But before this India will have to develop herself as a powerful country. His words are eye opener for all of us (politicians included), "Therefore unless India develops into a self-reliant and self-confident nation, not to speak of China, no other country will seek her friendship and live up to it for any length of time. The real issue is not one of friendship, but that of strength and capability."

Truly, the above mentioned words cannot be argued about. For, they have a practical truth. Acharya Tulsi's spiritualism is grounded in realism. That is why he appeals to all, even to an atheist. His political comments are based on practical politics, he is India-centric, but his India based approach never turns into chauvinism. He remains a world-citizen keeping the interests of India always in mind.

1.15 Communism and Spirituality

Acharya Tulsi has pondered over all the problems of society. It is a great testimony to a saint who has seen beyond the religious books. All knowledge seems to be his province, and to me, he appears to be a spiritual Bacon. Acharya Tulsi had fully grasped the kernel of communism which aims at the welfare of the deprived, placing the tools of development in the hands of the poor and setting up their own administration. But he disowns the cult of violence that communism lovingly and religiously follows, even now, when it is more or less a spent force.

Apparently it seems that communism and spirituality are poles apart, for communism does not recognize any thing spiritual. It is anti-spiritual. Likewise, it propagates violence. In communism, means don't matter. What matters is the end result. The votaries of communism often resort to violence to achieve their ends. Spirituality does not allow violence. It is based on the purity of means. That is why, at the outset it appears that the twain-communism and spirituality can never meet.

Acharya Tulsi underlines the harmony between these two looking so distant ideologies—communism and spirituality. He says, "If communism renounces violence, no two principles will be more similar than communism and spirituality, so much so that the two can be treated as synonymous. The culmination of spirituality is communism—a state in which everyone is equal and where there is no equation like big-small or rich-poor or employer-worker. Each individual is his own servant as well as master." Acharya Tulsi lauds the community-oriented, societal approach of communism. He also refers to the comment of a staunch Gandhian Dada Dharmadhikari who remembered Marx as a sage. As a sage regards everyone equal, so does Marx. A sage is full of compassion and pity and so is Marx.

Acharya Tulsi has, for the first time, pointed out that communism opposed institutionalized and power-oriented religion, because that was the

kind of religion that existed then. It was a revolt against the arbitrariness of the religious heads. Communism is not at loggerheads with spiritualism. In fact, Stalin was much impressed by Radhakrishnan, when he explained the theory of monism to him. Acharya Tulsi goes to the extent of saying, "If only communism could reform itself slightly, it could provide the best base of spirituality." Such a bold assertion by a spiritual head proves the beauty and utility of this system, this ideology, which has changed the fortunes of this millions in the world. Who can deny that communism has affected all, the east and the west and everywhere the system has taken something out of it.

Acharya Tulsi advocated a policy of neutrality. This is to say that India kept herself away from the Soviet Block and also from the Western Block (comprising of the U.S.A. and other NATO countries). India, under the statesmanship of Nehru, propagated the policy of non-alignment, which was supported by Nasar and Tito. India, Egypt and Yugoslavia were the three leading countries claiming to practise non-alignment.

Acharya Tulsi is a realist as well. He categorically mentions that it is almost impossible to follow the policy of non-alignment. His words may be biting but can one deny the reality when he says, "A country surviving on foreign assistance can merely pay lip service to non-alignment, it cannot honour it. In moments of crisis, it is bound to lean towards one side or the other."

The above words of Acharya Tulsi are applicable to India and as a matter to all those countries which bank upon foreign assistance for their expenditure. True non-alignment is possible only when a nation has the requisite stamina to successfully face its consequences. "True stamina comes only when you are strong from all sides. If a country is strong, it can follow a policy of non-alignment, otherwise the very talk of it is useless..

1.16 Science and Spirituality

Science is the study and knowledge of the structure and behaviour of natural things in an organised way. Spirituality is the study of the inner self. Both are based on experiments. The young enthusiasts of science blissfully forget the underlying relationship these two have. They out of sheer fashion undermine spirituality, dismissing it as a waste of time. Acharya Tulsi is a synthesist, he deliciously depicts the significance of both, bringing out their objective which remains the same—welfare of society.

Acharya Tulsi lauds the contribution of science emphatically, "It is true that man has made immense gains through scientific progress. Science has brought within man's reach things that would have otherwise taken a long time of strenuous efforts to achieve. Penance yields benefits only to him who does it, the fruits of science are available to one and all. Therefore, people have given even greater importance to science. An ordinary man attaches greater

significance to a boat than to walking on the surface of water by an individual after long penance."

Science aims at the physical world. It has not gone beyond to explore the world of the spirit. The practitioners of spirituality "acquire mystery over some material skills like flying in the air, hearing distant sounds etc. To that extent it has come nearer to spiritual pursuits." Otherwise, the basic difference between the two is that one is practical, external, society oriented, while the other (spiritual) is idealistic, internal, self-aimed.

Acharya Tulsi does not regard science as a curse. He is not amongst those who are dead against science so much so that they want to banish it from the world. He admits that science can cause destruction if used by the nasty, self-centred politicians, who either for destroying the other state or for usurping the territories of other states can go to the extent of using nuclear weapons. Such crazy power-drunk politicians can do anything. Science is basically meant not for building armaments, but for bringing about happiness and prosperity to man. It introduces comforts to all. So, what is needed is the proper application of science, a reasonable humane approach to it. The absolute goal of science and spirituality is the same—make life meaningful. When applied cogently, science will be a boon, a blessing, a nectar of life, and not a curse or poison.

1.17 Science and the Scriptures

Science is based on facts, while scriptures are based on Bhakti, devotion, reverence etc. The task of science is to examine all objects in the laboratories. It is only after trials and tests that scientists affirm the truth. Our scriptures were made when truly speaking science was not so developed, and to conquer the moon was just a dream. Moreover, the description of the moon is not the same as shown in our religious books. Naturally, people tend to be sceptical. When in 1969 man for the first time landed on the moon, some religious preachers and devotees were puzzled. Some of them did not believe that man had indeed landed the moon. A few rubbished the idea. Yet, some others said it must be something different. How is it possible for a man to reach to the moon? Some wondered.

Acharya Tulsi was a mass religious leader. People from all walks of life flocked to hear his sermons. He also loved to interact with them. As such, it was natural for him to comment upon this epoch-making event of history, as it had disturbed and stirred the feelings of so many orthodox persons cutting across all faiths. Acharya Tulsi had to tell the truth, and truth is sometimes biting and harsh. Still, one should face it.

Acharya Tulsi was very happy to see that man had landed on the moon. He always believed in the power of man, that there is nothing greater than man, and that man can do anything. He welcomed the discoveries and inventions whole heartedly. To him, it didn't matter that the traditional picture of the moon

was lost and the one, quite different from what we had thought of had emerged. To quote his words, "The moon, the nearest satellite of the earth, is dark and smaller than the earth, whereas the scriptures attribute to it qualities exactly opposite to it."

Acharya Tulsi finds this moment as a great opportunity to verify the authenticity of the scriptures. He admits the interpolations in the scriptures, and it is quite natural, as there was no press in the ancient times, when these scriptures came into existence. Since these were never written, they were told and retold to generation after generation, and as such their volumes went on increasing. The Valmiki Ramayana, Mahabharata and other books too have interpolations.

Acharya Tulsi differentiates spirituality from geography and astrology. Scriptures also deal with physical subjects, which have hardly any significance for spirituality. Spiritual practice means the existence of spirit. Scientists do not approve of the existence of any spirit, but they have no solid proof to reject it either. So far as the concept of spirituality in Jainism is concerned, it is focussed on deliverance.

The epoch-making incident of conquering the moon by man cannot rob away the people of their faith because it is above worship and rituals. Some parts of the scriptures can be redundant, but their utility is eternal, as they act as a pointer. We are to follow it and experience the goal pointed to. Scriptures pave the way to our self-realisation.

This incident has strengthened "our faith and we will be able to rightly honour the scriptures only when we start applying to them the touchstone of experience instead of mere words or tradition", feels Acharya Tulsi.

In fact, faith is so deep a feeling that it cannot be shaken by any incident or physical development. Faith is a psychological necessity. We cannot live without it, come what may, and it is for this reason that Albert Einstein, the doyen of modern scientists, propounded the utility of spirituality in his book "Out of My Later Years".

1.18 Modern Problems & Gandhian Philosophy

Mahatma Gandhi was the most influential and by far the greatest leader of the twentieth century. He politically united India and employed the tools of non-violence, love and truth against the forces of British imperialism. He made India free, and the grateful Indians called him the Father of Nation. He is our Rashtrapita. Gandhiji was born in 1869 and assassinated in 1948. His magic dominated our country for many decades, but it gradually vanished, thanks to the efforts of selfish politicians.

While commenting on the effectiveness of Gandhian philosophy, Acharya Tulsi insists on its usefulness but at the same time pines over the loss of true Gandhians. He is sad that every party, including the congress, encashes the name of Gandhi while throwing away all his ideals to the winds, Acharya

Tulsi admits that the ideals of Gandhiji will continue to lead the society for these are universal values—the values of love, non-violence, truth, self-abstinence, welfare of all etc. and much before Gandhi, Lord Mahavira had propounded these values-through his sermons.

On the celebration of Gandhi centenary, Acharya Tulsi cautions that merely by organizing seminars, symposia and exhibitions, we cannot realize his dreams. To Gandhi, politics was a means of service, while today politics is a means of prosperity. So, he says, "Gandhi sacrificed himself for the independence of the country. Today, we need bigger sacrifices by the people so that the country may experience real freedom. This will be possible only if the followers of Gandhi choose not politics but public life as their field of action."

What a great tragedy. Now, service is not the motto of our leaders. They are hankering after money, power and pelf. They are doing everything that goes against the principles of Gandhism. Gandhi was the high priest of non-violence. He said, "My God dwells in the poor." He was all for simplicity. Now, every leader promotes violence for his petty gains; all leaders agree to one point and that point is increase in their pay packets. They thankfully agree on this point at least. Other bills may remain pending for years and years, but the one related to the increase in their pay and allowances is presented and passed in a week. Nothing can explain the somersault of such Gandhians better than this hefty increase. Mahatma Gandhi dedicated his life to the uplift of the deprived-daridranarayan. Today, our leaders talk of the poor only when general elections are round the corner.

Acharya Tulsi does not doubt the relevance of Gandhian philosophy. He regards it very effective, but regrets that despite the presence of some great practitioners of Gandhism, namely Morarji Desai, Shrimanarayanji and others, it failed to attract the attention of our leaders in general. What was and is being done in the name of Gandhiji is camouflage, and nothing else. And, this is the reason why people have started questioning the efficacy of Gandhian philosophy in solving present day problems."

The problem of India is that she does not have trusted leadership. Before independence, our leaders enjoyed confidence of the people. They revered and respected them. Now-a-days, that respect, that reverence, and that trust has disappeared. Acharya Tulsi states categorically that only that leadership can succeed now which sympathises with the poor. He whole heartedly praises Bank nationalization, done in 1969, which brought prosperity to lakhs of people. But he believes that the need is to go much beyond it, as this step alone will not suffice the purpose of ending economic inequalities. A leader who has courage and non-partisanship can deliver the goods.

Acharya Tulsi puts forth with considerable stress the necessity of having a clean, healthy and responsive administration, for what really matters is not the initiation of a move but ensuring its full and successful culmination.

Acharya Tulsi, though highly appreciative of the suggestion given by Jayaprakash Narayan for an all-party government comprising competent people to assume national leadership, calls it impossible to implement as the representatives of the various parties will not be able to rise above their party ideologies, their selfish ends.

1.19 Gandhi Centenary : The Dos and Don'ts

Mahatma Gandhi left us in 1948. He was assassinated by Nathuram Godse. His murder shocked the entire country, nay, the whole world. What an irony! The harbinger of peace, the apostle of truth and the high priest of non-violence was murdered and that too, in free India. The nation felt that the light had gone out, as Nehruji so aptly said. But his death has left many unanswered questions, and one of the questions still awaiting an answer is when will we be able to bear opposition?

Needless to say, Mahatma Gandhi was the towering personality of the twentieth century. He had given a new instrument of 'Ahimsa' to the world. Even his opponents appreciated his resolution. In India, everybody has respect for him. As such, in 1969 his century was celebrated with much fanfare, with gusto. So many programmes and so many seminars were organized, and so many talks were broadcast. While nobody questions such celebration, yet the basic question remains, "Are these programmes in tune with the Gandhian philosophy?" Does it serve the purpose? Do the so-called fashionable talks of our pseudo-intellectuals bring about simplicity and responsibility in the persons who matter most? The answer of all these questions is in the negative.

Acharya Tulsi was one of the greatest critics of life. He had drunk deep at the fountain of life and letters, religion and philosophy. He had a great love for Gandhian philosophy and believed in its efficacy. But he was crestfallen to see the downfall of the pseudo Gandhians, pseudo politicians and fashionable arm chaired votaries of Gandhiji. Naturally, a man of his stature sees all this; his grief over such celebration finds an outlet.

Acharya Tulsi holds Gandhiji in high esteem and wants his principles to be followed in toto, for his principles—simplicity, transparency, love, non-violence, fiscal discipline, self-restraint, prohibition etc.—are necessary for realizing the dream of a good society. But his heart plunges in the ocean of darkest despair when he sees that leaders only provide lip service to Gandhiji and do everything that goes contrary to Gandhism. After lambasting the leaders for leading a life luxurious enough to put the emperors and queens to shame, he asks, "Is it not a mockery of Gandhism that the inheritors of a man who put on just a loin cloth in view of India's utter poverty should lead a life of luxury?"

Acharya Tulsi is dead against such persons. In fact, the people of India now cry out, "No more sermons please, Netaji. The meaning of leader (Neta) has changed now. The fashionable Gandhians usually justify their luxurious, palatial houses and cars by saying that the foreigners are impressed by the

show. They will invest money in our country only when they see glamour and glitter. They innocently forget that the foreigners know the reality. They always refer to our poverty, and so long we do not become strong both in terms of economy and security, the world will not give us the importance we deserve.

Acharya Tulsi advocates socialism for weeding out violence. He mentions that violence breeds only when there is not proper distribution of wealth in society. If nobody is hungry, there will be no violence. In fact, Acharya Tulsi underlines the unity of purpose in the traditional Jain system, Gandhian path, socialism and communism. All aim at the eradication of poverty and for the wellbeing of people. All political parties, whether they believe in Gandhism or not, hold Gandhiji in esteem, for his teachings and preaching are good for the entire world.

1.20 Spirituality : A Tourist Attraction

Acharya Tulsi is perhaps the only spiritual guru who has underscored the significance of spirituality from a different point of view. He is a propagator of spiritual tourism. It is a fact that our government spends millions of Rupees to attract foreign tourists, but it does pretty little to popularize the spiritual centres. In fact, the foreign tourists do not know much about our spiritual centres, such as Aurobindo Ashram in Puducherry (Pondicheri), Yoga Ashram in Munger (Bihar), Swami Sivanand Yogashram in Haridwar, Vishvayatan in Kashmir and Shrimad Rajchandra Ashram in Idar. If the Government makes a special cell under the Ministry of Tourism, it can keep the foreign tourists posted with the spiritual centres. Such spiritual centres can help bring peace to the world.

Sometimes it is felt that spiritual tourism cannot be 'marketed' as the westerners are generally scientific in their outlook and as such they don't have any flair for such places. Acharya Tulsi disowns this view. He cites the case of a Korean tourist who said, "My visit to India wouldn't have been successful if I had not come here. Why does the Indian government not publicize such spiritual centres? Such types of tourists' attractions can be found in India alone." He further adds that these views have been echoed by many tourists during their meetings with him. Despite our commendable progress towards industrialization and urban development, it goes without saying that we are trailing behind developed countries and even today our roads, our trains, our buses and our food items cannot be compared to them in terms of quality. If the tourists visit our country, they are interested to see the remains of our ancient culture and civilization, the beautiful monuments built by the Moghuls, the magnificent temples of the south, etc. and not the wealth of India. The government machinery should focus upon the spiritual tourism rather aggressively as it is hitherto an unexplored field.

Many carping critics doubt the feasibility of spiritual tourism on the plea that it is a mere abstract idea. Acharya Tulsi solves their problem. He says

spirituality is a feeling, an experience to be experienced. Therefore, the mobile centres, stationed centres and the mobile spiritual practitioners like the moving Jain saints and nuns, and other religious preachers can influence them. The westerners may be far ahead of us in the realm of wealth but they cannot match us in the domain of spiritualism.

Thus, spiritual tourism should be aggressively marketed. It will be very good for the tourists, for they will have a first-hand experience of spiritualism and also for us as our culture will spread across the globe.

1.21 The Utility of a Body of Mendicants

Ours is an age of doubt. We are in a state of transition. Having journeyed from the bullock cart to high speed-cars, and enjoying the fruits of science and space, we on the one hand regard the world as a global village, while on the other dismiss faith or religion as something farce, unbelievable, tantamount to scientific knowledge. It has become a fashion to pose an atheist, a non-believer and to poke fun at the body of mendicants. We outright reject them as a burden on society, an unproductive segment, and impostors. It may be the negative impact of Marx and Marxism, as we have understood him and his philosophy, forgetting the fact that Marx is said to have uttered the words, "Thank God, Marx is not a Marxist! Radhakrishnan, our renowned philosopher president once remarked that with the arrival of wisdom, one learns to believe. For, to believe is to be strong. The young boys and girls, our graduating students often question the utility of mendicants.

Acharya Tulsi comments upon the utility of mendicants. He is firmly of the opinion that a body of mendicants is quite useful for society, for it upholds moral values. Saints adhere to certain moral and sublime values and these values inspire people in general to develop themselves into virtuous persons. As such, Acharyashri emphatically says, that saints are necessary for any society. They are not dependent upon anyone because they do not want anything from them. Those who equate mendicants with beggars forget one basic fact. A beggar asks for something, a mendicant doesn't ask for anything. It is out of emotions, out of respect we offer anything to him. It is not obligation but veneration. However materialistic we may be, we cannot rob ourselves of emotions; man lives by emotions more. That is why the great seer writes aptly, "From a grossly materialist point of view the two cases may strike as identical, but in terms of the emotions involved there is a fundamental difference between them and no community should forget the emotional aspect."

Acharya Tulsi also sounds a note of caution. He lays considerable stress on the emotional aspect of the people. When countries forget the emotional bond in a frenzy of nationalism catastrophe breaks out. He refers to the example of a German tourist who spoke to him, thus, "Acharyaji, we, the German youth are increasingly coming to hate nationalism, because we feel

that the only cause of the destruction and catastrophe we were forced to experience was the frenzy of nationalism, which were made possible by the emotional vacuum we were victims of. Once again we are cultivating the emotional aspect of our being and the frenzy of nationalism has all but disappeared."

A mendicant is a symbol of veneration in society because he gives stability to the social norms of morality and a concrete shape to non-violence, non-possession, international brotherhood, love and other similar ideals of society. Society gets inspiration from them. Acharya Vinoba Bhave once said that even a mendicant performing penance on some Himalayam peak is rendering a yeoman's service by preserving the norms of good living. A mendicant's wants are limited. Following his example, we can reduce our needs, which can improve the lots of the poor. And, in a country like India where we find so much diversity, it is the saints who unite us. Thanks to them, we have been able to preserve our culture, arts and literature. Saints are as productive and useful as are scientists, teachers, doctors, industrialists. Their contribution is different from the workers and farmers. It is emotion. They are spiritual physicians and they provide us with what is called therapy of the soul. There may be some hypocrites amongst them, but to disown the entire class because of them is unfair.

1.22 Infinitude in Finitude

There are some modern enlightened intellectuals who believe in spirituality but they do not follow the various rituals associated with faith or religion. Nor do they have any respect for any sect. Rather, they throw turnips at the sects or rituals. Acharya Tulsi feels that there is nothing strange in it. He sees the entire scenario with a philosopher's eye and answers the question in a manner that one marvels at his genius. Verily, before the saints all doubts disappear. Everything becomes transparent.

Acharya Tulsi likens the enlightened intellectuals of today to the Pratyek Buddha and Swayam Buddha. They have reached a stage where they don't need a Guru, scriptures or God. But for reaching this stage, one needs faith or a Guru or a tradition. If it is disowned before realising that stage, it is harmful.

Sects are vital, as they provide a favourable platform for the collective expression of religion. While associated with a sect, the individual becomes a part of the mass; it denotes the collective strength. Yes, it should keep itself confined to religion, not overlay it with itself.

A sect's primary objective is to make the individual followers soul oriented. There are people who have become spiritually oriented, and for them, the importance of sect diminishes. Still, it must be remembered that the number of such persons is limited. So, the importance of sect or Guru will remain for the ordinary mortals, who want to understand meditation. The common people

do need guidance from a Guru. Without a Guru, self-discovery is impossible for a lay man.

Religious thinkers never impose the bondage of a particular sect. According to the Jain philosophy, a seeker can abandon an order of saints. To quote the words of Acharya Tulsi, "It maintains that the physical being is to be abandoned for the sake of meditation; cravings and longings have to be abandoned for the sake of spontaneous joy, food is to be abandoned for the sake of detachment and dualistic knowledge. Likewise, the order of saints has to be abandoned for the sake of heightened spiritual practice." But there is a rider. It is not for everyone. It is applicable only when a person reaches a particular stage. This is to say, when he is spiritually advanced, he can charter out his own course.

Organisations also change. If they don't change, they will perish, for change is the law of nature and no human effort can alter this law. Sometimes, such organisations which oppose change fall into the net of orthodoxy, and lose their impact. Therefore, Acharya Tulsi recommends that for any institution, it is important to keep pace with the moving times. It must be receptive to the new ideas. A Guru is important and so is a sect. We derive solace and inspiration from Guru—the inspirer, while the sect provides us a proper platform, a group of as-we-are people. Therefore, both are vital for an individual's growth and development.

Acharya Tulsi sums up this all-time useful essay with these words, "The need of the hour is that all sects should abandon sectarianism and join the common voice of humanity. The enlightened intellectuals of today should also talk not of abolishing but reforming faith, for I regard faith as an absolute necessity for building and developing human life."

Indeed, the above sentences are a key to making our lives happy. Acharya Tulsi was a reformer. He reformed his sect first; side-by-side, he also tried to reform the whole country. He was successful in his mission. Our country, nay the entire world, can progress if it follows his views.

1.23 Jain Philosophy and Casteism

India is an ancient country, with a known history of over 5000 years. It has a great past, a decent present (decent in many respects) and hopefully a bright future. Yet, it cannot be denied that she has so many problems to solve. The problems of communalism, casteism, regionalism, corruption, nepotism, over population, malnutrition, violence (naxalism) etc. have hindered our progress. Had we not faced these problems or had we overcome them, we would have become a developed country, in the line of U.S.A., U.K., France, Russia and China. Unfortunately, we are still grappling with these curses. But every Indian is an optimist at heart. One day we will defeat these scars, and get the place we really and richly deserve.

Acharya Tulsi has deeply thought upon contemporary problems. Casteism could not escape his vigilant eye. A saint and a reformer par excellence, he abhors casteism and condemns the inhuman treatment meted out to a certain section of people by the so-called 'Savarna' classes. He admits that the caste- system came into being for the smooth conduct of the social system, and the system continues even today. He also makes it clear that there were castes in the past, they exist in the present and will continue in the future. This is a down to earth analysis of casteism, devoid of any jargon.

Acharya Tulsi differentiates between the approaches of the Vedic tradition and Jain tradition towards casteism. He believes that the former regards it as fundamental while the latter doesn't regard it fundamental. The Vedic tradition believes that God created Brahmins from His mouth, Kshetrias from His arms, Vaishyas from his belly and Shudras from his feet. The Jain philosophy doesn't accept it.

It is also not mandatory that the Tirthankars must be born only of Kshetriya parents. Acharya Tulsi puts forth two reasons for this. First, the Tirthankars should be bold enough to overcome and master all the physical and spiritual problems. They must be strong not only physically but also spiritually. Kshatriyas are usually strong and noted for their bravery. Secondly, every caste has two divisions: the nobility and the commonalty. This division is evident not only in human beings but also in other biological species—both animal and vegetable. But the scriptures categorically mention that there are other clans also of the same kind.

A charge has often been levelled against the Jain scriptures that they prohibit the taking of alms by the mendicants from clans that are contemptible. Acharya Tulsi rejects this outright. He quotes from the scriptures to prove the point that there is no room for discrimination against any class and that mendicants can seek alms from any caste.

As regards to the entry of the Harijans (scavengers) into the temples, Acharya Tulsi feels it as an insult to humanity if they are not allowed to enter the temples. What is the worth of temples if their doors are not open for all? He demolishes the myth that Harijans are unclean and dirty. He says that if "that indeed is the reason for the restriction, then it should not be confined to any particular caste, but to all those who are unclean and dirty. By exclusively labelling Harijans unclean and dirty, their sentiments are hurt and it can never be justified."

Untouchability is a curse. It is the greatest sin. It is a crime against God. Acharya Tulsi, like other social reformers, namely Raja Ram Mohan Ray, Dayanand Saraswati, Mahatma Gandhi etc., minces no words in criticizing those who deprive Harijans (now, the word 'Dalit' is in use) of their right to enter the places of worship. Fortunately, this practice does not exist now and they are now equally esteemed citizens of India.

1.24 The Use of the Summer Holidays

A general complaint about our present education system is that our schools and colleges observe so many holidays. If the entire vacation-period (summer vacation, winter break, Dussehra-Deepawali break etc.), all the Sundays and other holidays, elections, cultural festivals and customary strikes are added up, the total swells to nearly six months. "Even on working days, the actual working hours may not exceed four hours a day." So, real teaching is far less. Our students have a lot of time. They roam about. The result is that they are increasingly becoming unruly and often indulge in destructive activities.

Acharya Tulsi has pondered over this problem. How to utilize the creative faculties of students in spare times so as to bring out the best in them is a question that cannot be left out by a great social thinker who wants to improve the manners and morals of society. The best and the most powerful tools towards materializing this dream into reality is the proper utilization of youth, for the youth should look up. If they do not look up, they will go down, and no nation can afford it.

Acharya Tulsi suggests a number of activities for the boys and girls during the vacation-time. He is quite right in saying that our students do not get practical knowledge; they are not imparted training as how to face oncoming struggles in life. They are not at all bothered about virtues. The only aim of our students is to score good marks, to pass the examination with a thundering and sparkling success. Acharya Tulsi doesn't approve of this approach and this system, as it is all examination centric, marks-oriented.

Acharya Tulsi says that our students must be taught the significance of the spirit of sharing, service, co-existence, humility, liberality and similar humanitarian virtues. These basic values, he feels, are important for building a sublime national image.

Our country lives in villages. The soul of India resides in villages, said Mahatma Gandhi. We go on repeating this statement of Gandhiji without paying any attention to the fact that our villages still lack in education, illiteracy reigns supreme there. Our students can be motivated to teach the village boys and girls, so that the curse of illiteracy is completely wiped out.

Apart from the curse of illiteracy, the Indian villages are full of filth and dirt. Our villages have not understood the importance of hygiene. They can be given lessons in health and hygiene. Our students during their spare time should accept this challenge to make our villages neat and clean. To quote the words of Acharya Tulsi, "Those living in villages don't know how to live properly, maintaining a clean and hygiene i.e. environment both physically and morally, how to behave with one another and how to keep the village free from quarrels and strife. If only students decided to address themselves to these problems, besides doing a lot of good to the country, they would benefit themselves immensely."

Acharya Tulsi does not belong to the class of kill-joy monks who simply harp on the so-called puritan aspects of society. They don't wish to give anyone liberty to see the historical buildings, or visit places where nature is present in its natural form—hills, mountains, forests etc. Acharya Tulsi advises students to go to sight seeing, but he also wishes them to follow the code of conduct while visiting historical monuments. They should realize that all this constitutes their national heritage. They must be proud of and work hard to preserve it. Journeying from one place to another place will give them a first hand knowledge of the country. They can teach how we are one, despite our differences, which the books they read cannot teach so effectively. Students going together in a group learn co-operation, co-existence and develop some virtues of love and sharing almost instantly. Gradually, it becomes a part of their life.

Students should utilize their vacations for studying spiritual literature. It is regrettable that our students are by and large ignorant of the true worth of our great spiritual literature. Once they go deep into it, they will realize that India, despite her different languages and religions, is one and that there is unity in diversity.

Acharya Tulsi recommends training camps for realising this purpose. It is a supreme task of national importance. He feels, "If the Anuvrat Samiti and other organizations arrange for such training camps on a large scale during school/college vacations, they can greatly contribute to the improvement of student life."

This will help students to utilise their energies in a positive mode and they will be able to contribute to nation-building in a big way. It will keep them busy and save them from wrong influences and above all will give them a rare degree of sublime satisfaction that they have done something for the down trodden.

1.25 Self-Restraint: A Healthy Basis of Family Planning

It is a fact that India is an over populated country. Our population has gone beyond one arab. It is expected that by 2050 we will out do China in term of numbers. It has become a great problem for us. Once, our Prime Minister Late Indira Gandhi remarked, "Man is the greatest obstacle in the progress of India". By her comment, she was emphasising the need to control it. Our government has done a lot for controlling population, the government employees are given incentives to follow a two-child norm, and this continues till the day of retirement. All other incentives are for a certain period of time, but not the one related to family planning.

Acharya Tulsi was a moving sociologist and philosopher. He must have thought over this problem not in isolation, but in totality. He very rightly sees this problem in relativity. If a country has a very large area, it needs a large population to people itself. For example, Russia is a big country, far bigger

than India in terms of area. She naturally needs a greater number of people. There the concept of family planning will not work. Instead, they need more and more people. That is why parents were rewarded there for giving birth to children. But in India, the situation is different. We have so many problems to solve; the problem of unemployment, shortage of water, overcrowded cities, disposal of garbage, etc. Acharya Tulsi drives his point home, "When individual survival is at stake, a small family becomes imperative, though even today if all the available land is brought under cultivation, food deficiency can be got over." He rightly believes that it is a personal affair, and it is not for the saints to interfere with people's "right to family planning", if they resort to it under compelling circumstances.

Acharya Tulsi recommends self-restraint as the best means of family planning, but at the same time he is conscious of the fact that it is quite difficult, as "it requires long spiritual practice to develop self-restraint". He exhorts scientists to think of something better than artificial means of contraception. When they can bring down the mortality rate by controlling so many diseases, why can't they find out the ways to control and refine man's passions?", he questions.

Acharya Tulsi is highly critical of exerting pressure on girls. He advises not to force them into marriage. They should be allowed to lead a life of self-restraint and spiritual practice, if they want to. It will benefit our society and country in population-control, in a much more positive way.

Acharya Tulsi is a social reformer, not a populist leader. He never indulges in circumlocution. His expressions are direct and clear. He makes it clear that there cannot be two parameters for carrying out the family planning movement. He elaborates his views candidly, "It is often heard that the Muslims and Christians are opposed to it. Any control not capable of being universally applied is illogical.... If family planning is a genuine problem it cannot be handled in segments."

Acharya Tulsi vehemently opposes the move to legalise abortion, as it is a sin. He refers to the old times when abortions took place, but they were treated as heinous crimes. He mentions that even today the Indian psyche regards it as a sin. He condemns this practice because it leads to devastation of knowledge; a voluptuous man becomes unbridled. He quotes the views of an American doctor who claimed to have carried out about twenty-five thousand abortions and who regarded all this activity as "a heinous crime". Acharya Tulsi is a saint; he studies and comments upon the whole problem from that angle. This is the reason why he asks the advocates of abortion "to make a psychological study of the mental condition of those who get abortion done or who carry it out." It is indeed a very painful experience for a lady; much more painful than giving birth to a child. He likens foeticide to manslaughter. It is as serious a crime as manslaughter, he points out, and the killing of any type, whether it is that of a child or foetus cannot be justified.

Though in India, abortion has been legalised, subject to certain conditions, yet the views expressed by Acharya Tulsi hold water. They make us think regarding the trauma of those who get abortion done. His views will never go stale, for there is no remedy for controlling wanton lustfulness, except developing self-control, which he so strongly propounds. It is difficult but not impossible. Mahatma Gandhi also favoured self-restraint. So, we must develop the virtue of self-restraint, and it will solve the problem of over population.

1.26 Human Unity: Its Process and Future Direction

Since the dawn of human civilization, human beings have been witnessing a number of battles and wars born out of ambitions and selfish interests, despite knowing that there is an undercurrent of unity that binds all—the rich and the poor, the high and the low. Acharya Tulsi is of the opinion that "it is an inner truth to regard every other being like one's own self. This truth cannot be gainsaid, but it can be suppressed. The natural result of truth is unity and that of selfishness is the feeling that unity is an external imposition. So long as the feeling of imposition continues, unity will be a burden, as soon as it is internalized; it will become inseparable from man's being."

What Acharya Tulsi highlights is that unity cannot be achieved by propaganda, by saying that we are a global village or from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, all Indians are one and that no one can divide us. It sounds nice, but real unity can be attained only when we look inwards, when we realise that the same spirit of oneness runs in all.

Acharya Tulsi expresses his displeasure over the tendency of nursing limitless desires. The curse of the modern man is that he is eternally dissatisfied. He always desires to get more and more. He does not long for peace and instead, he goes in for money. Money is the religion of the day. The result is that he is always tense, suffering from so many diseases. He can get rid of tension and mental diseases only when he develops faith in the time-tested principle that contentment is sweet, and that the essence of the art of living lies not in competition with colleagues or neighbours but being at peace with one's own self.

Acharya Tulsi does not believe that caste, wealth and power are nature's creations. He describes colour, gender etc. as secondary qualities. He admits of caste as a social system. It is acceptable only when it is used as a means of regulating the social system. Money is earned by labour, power is procured by labour. He insists on acquiring self-knowledge. In fact, everyone should strive hard to acquire self-knowledge. Self-knowledge paves the way for synthesis. Once we learn how to assimilate or synthesise various cultures, we will be able to discern unity in all objects. Acharya Tulsi is absolutely right when he says, "seeing unity in diversity and acting accordingly can alone save human disintegration."

Acharya Tulsi is of the considered view that real progress towards achieving human unity can be made by experiencing unity in diversity, by trying to find common points between opposing doctrines and by dedicating oneself to the truth. Needless to say, Acharya Tulsi's views are in assonance with the traditional Indian thinking. He shares the views of Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Aurobindo Ghosh, Radha Krishnan and the like as regards to the significance of synthesis in life.

Acharya Tulsi sees no difference in the teachings of Christ and Mahavira. Mahavira preached non-violence. Jesus preached love. To him love is God and for Mahavira truth is God. If you are not true to yourself, you cannot be non-violent. If you are violent, you cannot be compassionate. So, love and non-violence are interlinked. The basic truth is one, its wordings are different."

'Dharma' (religion) has been a subject of debate amongst social thinkers for centuries and centuries and the radicals often reject it as the opium of the people, endorsing the line of Marx. Acharya Tulsi believes that 'Dharma' bridges the gap, it never divides. It joins us. In reality, religion teaches love and goodwill, it never preaches to bear ill will or grudges against anyone. It is sublime in its form, and the vested interests misuse dharma to fulfil their selfish, petty ambitions.

Acharya Tulsi propounds that in order to achieve human unity, we must cultivate righteousness. Our society should learn the real meaning of 'Dharma'. It is possible when we are just. We should develop a feeling of love and affection to our Harijan brothers and sisters. Even today, untouchability remains a blot on our society. Our constitution has abolished it. It is a crime. Yes, we still ill-treat our Harijan brothers and sisters. It is because of our myopic interpretation of Dharma. Acharya Tulsi pleads for abolishing sinister traditions and generating moral values in order to create a just society, which will foster a real human unity.

1.27 Building a Bridge of Trust between the North and the South

India is one of the most ancient countries of the world. We have a known history of over five thousand years. Naturally, such an ancient country is expected to go through many ups and downs and we have faced numberless trials and tribulations. But the greatness of India lies in the fact that despite suffering so many debacles, she retained much of her glory. It is a wonder of history that a country which remained under foreign rule for about seven centuries could retain so much of her faith, literature, festivals etc. Yet, India could not remain untouched by a number of evils that slavery brings about. While remaining under the political influence of the alien forces, we became selfish, self-centred and petty minded. We love to dance to the terms of those who know the artful devices of "divide and rule". Earlier the white-skinned

English did divide us to fool proof their rule, and now our own leaders divide us, so as to materialise their mean dreams.

Acharya Tulsi is perhaps among those very few saints of our modern times who have travelled to almost all parts of India. He has touched all the directions—the East and the West, the North and the South—and that too, on foot. It is nothing short of a miracle. During the course of his itinerary, he must have come into contact with millions of people. He interacted with them, understood their problems and gave solutions. He visited Tamilnadu, after 1967. The language movement had by then become non-existent, and yet the feeling of mistrust on account of language persisted. It was obvious because one of the leaders of a regional political party had spoken of a separate Tamil country in the Rajya Sabha and his impact was quite great. It is in this background that Acharya Tulsi explains this problem. His comments are even today acceptable.

Acharya Tulsi acknowledges that there has been a kind of tension in North-South relations but he believes that it is confined to Tamilnadu. He is also of the considered view that politicians highly exaggerate this divide. Instead of bridging the gap they widen it, for they are guided by their ulterior motives.

Acharya Tulsi blames our educational system for it. We have ignored religious education. The North-South divide story was narrated and propagated by our white rulers so laboriously and so artfully that we were all taken in by believe it, forgetting that they had planned a deep rooted conspiracy to drive a wedge between the north and the south with a sinister design to weaken our country, and they succeeded in their motive. The words of Acharya Tulsi move us, compelling us to look within, "Since ancient times we in the North have had the tradition of considering our religious shrines in the South. The same applies to the people in the south. The motivation behind this traditional thinking was the feeling that both regions should respect each other as equals and consider themselves as inheritors of a common religion and culture, besides providing people from the two regions with opportunities for an exchange of views."

Unfortunately, our policy makers, our so called think-tanks, our politicians etc. have almost completely overlooked this fact, thanks to their petty mindedness and narrow outlook. Acharya Tulsi's above quoted words are true to our tradition. He as a saint has courage and conviction to write the fact as it is. The tradition still goes on in the realm of pilgrimage. Religion can play a vital role in preserving national integration.

One of the reasons of the so-called and intentionally much hyped the north-south divide theory is our myopic vision, our lopsided, sectarian approach. Our selfish attitude comes to the fore, preventing us from arriving at a just and righteous conclusion. The words of Acharya Tulsi hold a key to solve our problem of national integration provided we follow them in right

earnest: "People belonging to different regions, language communities and sects should give up their narrow outlook and be liberal with one another." This is possible; the target is not difficult to achieve, but much depends upon our political leaders. Whether they are able to rise to the occasion, shedding their petty motives remains to be seen?

Acharya Tulsi takes up the problem of language. He bemoans that our policy makers showed little common sense and foresight. We had adopted Hindi as our link language. Our neighbouring country China has made Mandarin her national language, despite having a number of languages. With a little understanding we would have solved the problem, and Hindi should have got her rightful place. He rejects the idea of having two or three link languages in the context of India, for "it is difficult and impractical", causing a heavy burden on our exchequer as well.

Acharya Tulsi gives a clarion call to shun the feeling of mistrust that has developed between the North and the South. He emphasizes the need of taking each other into confidence, because without mutual trust, national unity remains a mirage.

Acharya Tulsi says that once mutual trust is established, we should create an atmosphere of unity, and for achieving unity, we should conduct workshops, organise cultural festivals and literary seminars. We can produce literature aimed at fostering national unity. The message should go across the country, loud and clear, that we are a single nation and no one can divide us. He sounds prophetic when he trumpets, "Unity can be preserved only by rising above the narrow considerations of caste, religion and sect or else it is doubtful if this controversy can be confined to the North and the South only."

Well, Acharya Tulsi was a seer. He had prophesied the pitfalls of petty politics. History has proved him right. Today, almost the entire North East is unfriendly to us; a large area is in the grip of Naxalities, who kill our soldiers and common people. Acharya Tulsi had predicted it. Verily, the bell tolls for us either improve or perish. There is no other option.

1.28 South India and the Question of the National Language

We, the people living in the North often believe that the Southern have a special love for English and that they are hostile to Hindi. Some of us also believe that they have a native command over English and all activities there are performed in English. While the fact is that the South Indians sincerely love their languages (whatever it is Tamil, Telugu, Kannad or Malayalam), buy books, and respect their men of letters, unlike the Hindi-speaking people. It is a fact that there was a time when there was resentment in the then Madras state (now known as Tamilnadu) in 1965 and it continued till 1970 or so, but thereafter it became almost non-existent. You may be surprised to know that the number of Tamil employees who have acquired proficiency in Hindi has increased manifold and there are universities in the state offering post graduate

courses in Hindi, Translation etc. What a greater proof is required than this fact that a Tamil scholar has served as the professor and Head of the Department of Hindi in the University of Delhi for a couple of years.

Acharya Tulsi spent many years in the South. He has set at rest certain misgivings that we nurse against the southerners. He says that he found a greater fascination for English in the North than it was in the South. They have a fear that they would suffer if Hindi became the national language and, this feeling is exploited by the political leaders. Acharya Tulsi admits that our politicians have failed us. They never went beyond their vested interests.

Acharya Tulsi also refers to the tokenism of our Government. The founding fathers of our constitution unanimously declared Hindi written in the Devanagari script as the official language of the Union (India). They allowed a period of fifteen years to the non-Hindi knowing people to learn Hindi. This is to say, Hindi was supposed to become the official language with effect from 1965. But for some reasons it could not happen in the real sense of the term. In fact, the policy of our Government was not effective. It did indulge in lip service, but it paid no attention to the ground realities. Even if Hindi was introduced at the secondary level, it was not necessary to pass the Hindi examination. The result was that it turned out to be a farce, a drama, a hoax.

Acharya Tulsi goes deep into the subject as to why Hindi could not get her due in independent India. He thinks that the entire exercise to spread and propagate the use of Hindi in day to day office work and social life was undertaken half heartedly. The intention of the people who mattered most was doubtful. Even those who professed to love Hindi could not resist the temptation of sending their children to English medium public schools. (He desists from giving names because of his saintly nature, but we all know the reality). Acharya Tulsi also takes a dig at the fashionable 'Hindiwallahs' who always love to speak English. Moreover, most of them do not learn any other Indian language and regard it as a sacred duty for the non Hindi speaking people to learn Hindi religiously.

Acharya Tulsi finds that the need of the hour is to develop mutual trust between the North and the South. So, to have a congenial atmosphere in order to have a heart to heart task is imperative. The Hindi votaries should learn other languages enthusiastically and non-Hindi speaking people should learn Hindi, so that we may have a link language in Hindi in the real sense of the term. It will enhance our glory as a nation. Acharya Tulsi has made the following very useful and practical suggestions.

1. Instead of indulging in the red-tapism of achieving the targets fixed by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs with a view to eliciting praise from the High ups, efforts should be made to popularise Hindi across the country.
2. The regional language must be given the status of the official language of their state.

3. Scientific, technological, administrative, financial etc. Literature should be prepared by scholarly persons and printed by the central Government in the regional languages.
4. A fixed time limit should be set within which the regional language will become self sufficient so as to replace English.
5. Persons who matter most must give up their obsession with English.
6. Hindi should not be imposed. People should be encouraged and motivated to willingly accept it. Love not compulsion, persuasion not imposition, should be our policy.

Acharya Tulsi recognises that the language question has been politicised to such an extent that now even politicians cannot solve it. He considers the formation of states on the basis of languages as a blunder, a Himalayan blunder which has sowed the seeds of separation. One cannot say that he is farther from the truth. We still remember the language riots of Assam, where the Bengalis and the Assamese indulged in bloody fights. He expresses happiness that the centre has accorded priority to regional languages in the field of education.

The thinker in Acharya Tulsi raises a series of questions which deserve the attention of our policy makers. These are the questions that can be asked by a saint, not by a politician or a pure varsity academic. Acharya Tulsi insists on having Hindi as our link language and asks the southern to accept Hindi in the larger interests of the nation.

All our controversies, including the language controversy, would be solved if we transfer the ideas of Acharya Tulsi in action, "I firmly believe that if the minority gives due respect to the majority, the latter cannot be indifferent to the problems of the former. But all this presupposes a solution based on mutual good will, a feeling of cordiality and a change of heart. It will be truly unfortunate if our intellectuals and thinkers cannot solve even an ordinary problem like the one posed by the language controversy."

1.29 The Causes of Disintegration

India is a unique country with so many religions, languages and customs. Some Westerners have highly appreciated the uniqueness of India on this score. There is a unity in diversity discernible everywhere. In fact, the words like (Rashtra) Nation and Sanskriti (Culture) were first used in our ancient scriptures. Acharya Tulsi assimilates all our culture and history and tradition when he says candidly that India was an integrated country before independence but the partition in 1947 sowed the seeds of poison. For the first time a country that had earned the love and respect of all the foreign tourists for its tolerance and synthesis was dismembered on the basis of religion. He is straight forward in his views and what is important is that his views hold water. In fact, no other writer, no political commentator has commented on this line. Acharya Tulsi opines, "It resulted not only in the creation of India and Pakistan

as two different countries but also in creating for an indefinite time possibilities of sectarian, and linguistic controversies in what was a multi-religious, multi-caste, multi-lingual country."

What can be a more realistic and objective study of partition than the present one made by a saint!

Acharya Tulsi regards the formation of states on the basis of their respective languages as a blow to national unity. It was a folly that we will not be able to undo in the near future. Linguistic reorganisation of the states opened up a Pandora's Box. The problem did not end with the formation of the states. It gave a fillip to certain other problems. It is not for nothing that Acharya Tulsi underlines the fact, "Punjab for the Sikhs, Nagaland for the Christian and Telangana for the Telugus - these slogans were also raised after the linguistic reorganisation. Things have come to a pass that states within state are being demanded by different communities. Everywhere one hears only of safe guarding the interests of one's own caste, community, sect, language or region and the national interests are jettisoned."

A country disintegrates when the national interests are ignored at the altar of petty, short-term gains. Acharya Tulsi thinks that our politics and our political parties have fuelled the disintegration of our country with a sole motive of increasing their vote-bank, and the tragedy is that the Central Government remains a mute witness, a silent spectator. One wonders what type of country we are. We fight against one another over the language issue, common boundaries, religious monuments etc. This is by no means expected of a nation. All this goes on because our leaders have an eye on their vote bank. The vote oriented politics has become the curse of the nation. So, Acharya Tulsi demands electoral reforms. Elections must be contested in a fair manner, free from corruption. That Acharya Tulsi was a seer is evident from the fact that today every political party talks of electoral reform.

Acharya Tulsi favours a holistic policy, not a policy based on the considerations of language, sect and caste. He cautions not to divide the country on the line of North and South. He asserts powerfully, "The North-South divide has to go." "So long as we do not see and think of our country as a whole, we can never achieve national integration, despite all the noise we make.

Having cited the reasons of our national disintegration, Acharya Tulsi highlights the need of emotional unity for aborting the disintegrating trends. He desires mass media to contribute a lot towards this effort. He advises us to desist from the use of such words as Northerners, Southerners, Bengalis and Tamils.

In the end Acharya Tulsi appeals to our politicians to rise above their narrow party interests. They should work for the country first, party afterwards. Whether they heed his words or not remains to be seen?

1.30 Lotteries and the National Interest

It is said and rightly that avarice is the root of all evils. Not to talk of an ordinary man, even cash rich state governments too believe in this principle. The state governments have developed a lust for revenue, how to generate money remains their only concern, and for getting easy revenue they have launched lotteries. Nearly for two decades it remained a passion with the people. They bought lottery tickets not in one or two numbers, but in hundreds. It had a very bad impact on the poor. They wasted their hard earned money only to lose. Acharya Tulsi criticises the entire system as immoral and unethical. How can a Government that cares for all round development and welfare activities generate revenue in this manner? He terms it gambling. How can you rob the people of their money? This is legalised corruption. Acharya Tulsi thinks that the lottery culture will make our people lethargic and dull. They will desire to earn easy money and when they fail to get it, they will commit crimes. A nation's economy does not thrive on easy money. A nation becomes secure and strong when it works hard.

Acharya Tulsi can not understand why our leaders are so selfish that they turn a blind eye to the need for moral values. In fact, the government is encouraging corruption in the form of lottery. The great preacher is also sad as to why the political parties or some leaders or even the general public did not oppose this type of gambling going on under the state's patronage. Perhaps we need a Gandhi now to stand up and oppose such moves. The concept of lottery saps the very foundation of our character. It enhances evil, giving birth to indolence and weakens the whole country.

It is heartening to note that some state governments have banned the state lotteries. The role of Ms. Mayawati, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, is praise worthy in this respect. She not only banned the state lottery but also disallowed the sale of the other states' lotteries.

1.31 Summary

Though to me the book appears to be a questionnaire, it may also be considered as a collection of interviews. For, it seems that these are the questions raised by the interviewers from time to time. Whatever one may call them, questionnaire, interviews, catechism, etc. the book is interesting, stimulating and inculcating.

I would also like to mention the urgency of reading the book 'Acharya Tulsi on Contemporary Problems' in its original text. There is no short cut to success. Here are some tips, useful tips one may say, but so long as you don't read the book as a whole, you cannot assimilate the subject which is so useful, not only from your examination point of view, but also for your all round development.

1.32 Questions :

1. How is the concept of Anuvrat better than the other prevailing ideologies?
2. What are the salient features of Anuvrat? Do you find them useful? If so, give reasons.
3. What do you mean by revolution? What are the means through which it can be achieved?
4. Why is war unavoidable? Why is non-violence not linked with cowardice?
5. Write about the contribution of science for human-being.
6. What is the efficacy of Gandhian philosophy in solving present day problems?
7. Write about the role of Acharya Tulsi to building a bridge of trust between the North and the South.

NOTES

Unit-2 : Jeevan Vigyan (Science of Living)

NOTES

STRUCTURE

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2.0 Introduction

Acharya Mahapragya was a great spiritual scientist and educationist. He had seriously pondered over the problems of the modern system of education. He was of the opinion that there should be a combination of science and spirituality and with this combination alone the students would be able to live a peaceful, happy and beneficial life. This is the reason that he recommended the study of science of living or Jeevan Vigyan at every level. Without the knowledge of inner-self, our knowledge will remain incomplete, irrespective of the degrees we display. He has suggested the ways and means to attain calmness of mind and with our efforts we can translate whatever he has suggested in to practice.

After going through these essays, one feels enlightened. So experience the enlightenment by going through the book Jeevan Vigyan (The Science of Living) in original.

2.1 Jeevan Vigyan (The Science of Living) What and Why?

Man is a thinking animal. He has been progressively developing ever since the earliest times. He has an intense desire to know, inquire, investigate and perform. He wants to become anything. He desires to remake himself. In our literature, we have three terms – Jigyasa, Bubhuksha and Chikirsha. He has

a tendency to question: why, who, where, what, how and which are the words he often employs to progress.

Education has paved the way for quick development in all fields. The basic meaning of education is practice. We have neglected the core meaning of education. Today, we produce book worms; we encourage a class of muggers, crammers and parrots but not that of practitioners of education. We do not apply it in our day-to-day use. The result is we excel in the bookish knowledge but awfully regress in experimentation. Our religious education also suffers from the same lacuna. We exhibit that we are religious. We also perform some rituals with gusto. Yet, we fail to assimilate it, we forget to internalise it.

Education means knowledge. It is to be acquired and applied. Broadly defined, “the skill of doing something, the courage to change and become something and the ability to know or acquire something are all gifts of education.”

Education has four dimensions: Bodily development, mental development, intellectual development, and emotional development. All these four are important and essential for an individual’s growth. But unfortunately, our educational system concentrates on the physical and the intellectual aspects and neglects the other two. Consequently, there has been a remarkable development of the body and the intellect but the mental and the emotional development has not been made properly. Modern education hardly offers any scope for mental and emotional development.

We wish to have a balanced system of education for our children but we cannot find it. So, we blame the entire system without thoroughly probing it. It is here that Science of Living helps us. To quote the words of Acharya Mahapragya, “In fact, Science of Living and balanced system of education are being used synonymously. And, by the word balanced is meant equal importance given to bodily and intellectual development on the one hand and mental and emotional development on the other. It alone can make education balanced.”

There are four facts involved in a balanced education :

1. The balance of the vital force.
2. Establishment of biographical balance.
3. Rousing faith in the individual’s potentialities.
4. Refinement.

All this will give results of four kinds:

1. Bodily development.
2. Intellectual development.
3. Mental development.
4. Emotional development.

The study of Science of Living will help the students and their teachers achieve the desired results. They will have enlightenment and education as well.

2.2 The Science of Living : Its Basis and Process

Our body, breath, speech and mind are the four pillars of our being. Without them, our activities cannot be properly managed. The most important part of the human body is the nervous system, the brain and the spinal cord. The left part of the brain controls the right side of the body and vice versa. There is a system, an order in it. The messages from all the parts of the body are forwarded by the nerves to the brain through the spinal cord. It is the brain which decides the course of action to be taken.

The second important element which controls the body apparatus is breath. It infuses life into speech, mind and the nervous system. It is a bridge between our inside and outside. We breathe in and breathe out. We get oxygen out of inhaling and release carbon dioxide through exhalation.

The third element is speech which makes us different from animals. We can form society because we can speak. It is the base of society, for it alone brings coherence in thinking. Animals do not speak; it is only the human beings who speak.

The last and the fourth element is the mind which makes possible memory, imagination and thinking. It is impossible to think of life without memory, imagination and thinking. The entire process of development would come to a halt without the above attributes of mind. Life would be entirely meaningless.

It is to be noted that all the four elements of the controlling mechanism -body, breath, speech and mind- can play a positive role. So, we are to see it that they are well trained.

The way to make our body, breath, speech and mind healthy goes through training. The process of training has four parts :

1. Preksha (perceiving profoundly).
2. Anupreksha (contemplation).
3. Kayotsarga (Relaxation)
4. Spiritual vigilance (consciousness, awakening and its constant alertness)

The above four together constitute complete education.

Perceiving is very important. It is observation. Philosophy means direct apprehension or seeing. We must see our breathing system. It is through breathing we control our thoughts or fickle mindedness.

Anupreksha is seeing the body or body perception in totality. It involves thoughts, sounds and feelings.

Kayotsarga helps us in perceiving vibrations and their locations. It helps us in releasing stress.

Spiritual vigilance keeps us alert. We ward off several problems that may otherwise affect us.

It is evident that preksha, anupreksha, kayotsarg and jagarukata are the key elements in the process of practicing preksha meditation. One who practices them learns to enjoy the full significance of life.

2.3 The Problem of Education (I)

Man is blessed with the gift of speech. Language and Literature are the two means of development which enable him to have a developed memory, rich imagination and fine thinking. These are the qualities that distinguish him from all other living creatures.

Indian Philosophy propounds two main streams of thought. Pravrittivad or activism or acting, and the Nivrittivad (inactivitism or for not working). Action and inaction are the two natural aspects of all real objects; it is true that all matter has two aspects, positive and negative. In the case of human being the positive aspect is pravritti and the negative aspect is nivritti. There must be a perfect balance between nivritti and pravritti in one's life. Mere action makes a man crazy, mere non-action makes his life worthless. Therefore, a balance is called for. "What is needed is a real balance between activity and non-activity, contemplation and non contemplation, thinking and non thinking, silence and speech.

By common consent man's superiority lies in his ability to become educated and to develop a command of language. An uneducated man with a poor language command is often looked down upon. The problem of today's education is that it is extrovert. It does not wish to go in, there is no room in it for self study and the irony is that knowing something about oneself has yet not been recognized as an indispensable part of study.

In order to have a profound transformation, our students should not be burdened with an excessive dose of external learning. They should have tranquility and steadiness of mind. It is possible only through meditation. It helps us control lust and violence. Lust weakens and dissipates human energy, its wasteful expenditure leads to so many personal and societal problems. There must be a balance.

Although the primary objective of education should be to develop a balanced, peaceful, unruffled mind, modern education simply attends to the need of making students literate and worldly- wise, intelligent but not enlightened. It emphasises on cramming but not on thinking. Enlightenment will come from the science of living, whatever is the level of the school, whatever is the course, tolerance and mental peace can never result from the present system of education. The Science of Living activates the inner potential of the learner and brings about an overall and balanced development of his

personality. Modern man suffers from a state of uncertainty. Man's inner defenses need to be fortified more than ever before. It can be executed by combining formal education with training in the science of living.

The science of living educates the mind, the speech and the body alike. Educating the body means discipline of the body—the ability to sit in the same posture for a specific period of time. Educating the speech means discipline of words, control over the feeling of expression; it teaches the significance of cogent speech and reasoned non-verbosity. While educating the mind means being free from the unbridled memory, uncontrolled imagination and thinking.

Meditation is a part of science of living. The best candidate for practicing meditation is the one who meets with all the odds of life with a balanced outlook, one who remains unruffled in all circumstances. Meditation makes us see inward. A balance between external knowledge and internal being is required. Both are equally important; both are real; both are necessary. True meditation or the science of living integrates the external knowledge and internal being and brings about their creative union.

2.4 The Problem of Education (II)

Modern education is object oriented, it concentrates on the object and the subject remains in the background. Being object-centric, it pays attention to the physical aspect of the education, woefully ignoring the emotional side of a man's personality. No doubt, man's basic needs are physical. He can achieve whatever he longs for only when he remains physically fit. So, he earns, nourishes and feeds his body. Besides the body, he has senses, the mind, the language faculty, intelligence and the breath of life.

The tragedy is that the entire process of education aims at the physical. It overlooks all the other aspects. Many educationists claim to have specific provisions for mental and intellectual development, along with physical development. But they ignore the importance of the imperceptible. Man is absent in today's education; the subject gets neglected and the object takes paramount importance.

A general complaint about our students is that they are undisciplined. Educationists have racked their brains to find ways to inculcate discipline in our students. But they have not achieved success in their aim. Our students cannot be disciplined if they are not trained in spirituality. That is why the teaching of the science of living is recommended to all students and teachers. They cannot learn self-control without the knowledge of science of living.

Without self-control education is incomplete. Spiritualism teaches self-control. Today, we are living in a world of uncertainties. We are suffering from a number of problems, from high blood pressure to mental tension. The number of patients is alarmingly going up. The physicians have no cure for these problems. The only cure for these problems is self-restraint. Therefore, it is important for all irrespective of their beliefs to practice self-restraint. A

message should go to the educationists to include the science of living in the curriculum and give it supreme importance in order to make a wholesome society.

Every student should learn the science of living for developing self-discipline. After finishing his formal education he should devote some months to this course. If it is done, our society will find a real cure for the maladies in the present day education. "It would be the greatest endeavour of the people to attain self-discipline, not on an individual basis but on an institutional basis. And in achieving it, the world of religion would also have made its enormous contribution.

2.5 Why Teach the Science of Living-I

The very talk of spiritual education invites controversy. Spiritualism is very often treated as sectarianism. The two words are not identical in meaning. Spiritualism is a state of mind where the feelings of attraction and repulsion disappear. Most people talk of objectivity, a dispassionate view and impartiality. They fail to do so because they are easily swayed away by their preferences propensities and prejudices.

The entire conduct of our life is managed and driven by our likes and dislikes. Spirituality demands bold experimentation, even if it is for a single day. One will have to develop discipline of thought and, a balanced outlook. He will have to develop a sense of equanimity towards the happenings of the day and then spiritual awareness will automatically follow.

The entire world is busy in the mad race for worldly considerations. Education is linked with degrees and diplomas. As soon as one gets a degree, one starts earning. The purpose of education is restricted to earning and earning alone. The spiritualists find such an education incomplete, for it ignores the study of the heart.

The burning issue of today is the mad rush for manufacturing as many devastating weapons as possible by developed countries. They go on outsmarting others in this direction. This is an outcome of insecurity. So, the need for disarmament should start from home. Arms are needed for security, nobody can deny it. But what is the guarantee that these weapons of destruction will not be used by their manufacturers for furthering their vested interests? Will they not market their deadly weapons to the rulers of various countries for making money? Will they not encourage one country against the other, overtly or covertly, to wage a war? Not only this, the manufacturers of arms will also supply arms to the disgruntled, misguided youth of society who may unleash reign of terror in some areas. One of the reasons of terrorism is that it is state sponsored. But the perpetrators of violence do not realise that an evil design does not stop at your will; it will grip your country too. Violence begins at the family level first; thereafter it grips the entire region. So, the need of the hour is to curb bad thoughts or feelings. We should make concrete

efforts to develop nobler thoughts and suppress the negative emotions of jealousy, prejudice, envy, enmity and passion.

In order to save the world from a nuclear holocaust it is vital to curb the use of primary arms. First, we will have to set our house in order- 'house' means me, my family members, my country. This feeling of oneness and a sense of belonging will further broaden into a feeling of 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam'—the world is a family. If this feeling is generated in us, there will be peace both at the individual level and the international level. The study of Science of Living will be instrumental in achieving this much sought after goal.

2.6 Why Teach the Science of Living-II

Today, if you go anywhere you will find people complaining of indiscipline. They will also criticize our educational system for the lack of discipline. It seems everybody is obsessed with this problem, we talk and then talk and forget it. We fail to search its real cause. The reason of increasing indiscipline is that we have totally neglected the importance of self-discipline which comes from within. We attach all importance to the so-called imposed discipline, which is born out of compulsion and is naturally short lived. We summarily dismiss self-discipline as redundant, obsolete or useless.

Self-discipline makes us self-reliant. Our mission should be to develop ourselves as self-reliant and also help others to grow self-dependent.

There are some monks who do not take medicines from physicians for external treatment of physical ailments. They make themselves strong enough to cure the disease through various yogasanas. They develop their own mechanism to combat diseases. This is possible only when one is self-disciplined. Self-discipline is a gateway to self-reliance.

The Science of Living teaches us to look inward, not to focus on the external world. Our seers have suggested many yogic postures to make the body healthy, fit and fine. For example Vajrasan, Sarvangasan, etc.

1. Vajrasan after meals or use of mahamudra for weak digestion.
2. Breathing through the right nostril for fifteen minutes after the meals for indigestion.
3. Pressing the nerve above the elbow for acute headache.
4. Exerting pressure from above to below on the spinal cord, five – ten times for stomach ache.

There are hundreds of nerves in our toes, heels, ribs, knees and the spinal cord using which a complete cure can be affected. What a great surprise that such a useful science has been all but neglected and forgotten.

Self discipline can be achieved only when we have a disciplined body. A disciplined body means a sound body, an alert mind and balanced speech. An alert mind is not at all possible without a sound body. The very foundation

of self discipline rests on the smooth functioning of phlegm, wind, bile and on the proper flow of blood. Their orderliness ensures the mind's discipline. In fact, the body and the mind are the two sides of the same coin. They can not be separated from each other.

Spiritual practitioners have discovered ways to discipline the mind. Man's mind is always active. As a result, he does not have peace. It results in the weakness of mind. The doctors prescribe pills as tranquilisers. But the spiritualists prescribe something different. He asks you to do 'Yoga'. Practice 'Khechari Mudra' for quietening the mind. He also suggests pressing the tongue, the roots of the teeth and not letting it move at all. The seasoned Yogacharya will prescribe 'Kayotsarg' or total relaxation of the vocal cords. This is a permanent solution to the problem of restlessness.

Even the physicians and medical practitioners emphasise the use of certain Yogic postures. They have realised the utility of Yoga in preventing diseases and keeping the body agile. These small efforts also inculcate self-discipline. Preksha Meditation is an important landmark of our times. "An individual is able to perceive his breath, his vibrations and his electricity together with all his hormones and hormonal changes. It is a great spiritual endeavour which strengthens the foundations of self-discipline. Self discipline demands acquiring a balanced life force, overcoming excessive attachment and aversion and achieving a balance between the body and the mind and intellect.

2.7 The Development of an Independent Personality

A child learns everything from this world. As he grows and becomes socialised, he comes to have memory and imagination. He gets education. He learns from the environment, from his parents, relatives, teachers and friends. It develops his personality, but it cannot be said that he has an independent personality. An independent personality is able to differentiate between a right demand and a wrong demand. He accepts the right demands and turns down the wrong demand immediately. The education we impart fails to generate this power in man. It is the spiritual education that empowers a man and he can reject the demands made by the senses and by attitudes and desires. But this is not easy. One is to undergo training for developing this trait. One will have to go beyond theoretical knowledge. The development of an independent personality demands the fulfillment of three essentials: development of life-force, intuition and self-discipline.

Development of life force is the first thing. It paves the way for the growth of intuition and self-discipline. Concentration in the tip of the nose for prolonged periods of time constitutes 'Pran Kendra'. Life force is like the power of an explosion. The energy derived from vital force enables a man to put up a brave fight against the odds of life. He stands as firm as a rock, for he learns to believe that life is a series of struggles.

Development of Darshan Kendra is vital for the growth of intuition. This Kendra (centre) is the exact middle point between the eye brows. Intuition surpasses the limits of the mind and of the intellect. Intuition is the dividing line between the physical and the metaphysical. It stands between the two worlds, the sensory and the supersensory. Intellect when tempered by intuition works miracles.

Jyoti Kendra (the centre of controlling and disciplining one's temperament and nature) is situated in the middle of the forehead. It develops all our behavioral traits and the front brain controls our body temperament. An independent personality flourishes after the development of the vital energy, intuition and discipline. An independent personality can be developed through spirituality and meditation. It is high time to adopt the study of living science at all levels religiously.

2.8 Education and the Problem of the Mind

Meditation unravels the riddles of the mind. It cleans, purges and refines the mind. It is the process of refinement and nourishment. Meditation should form a part of our education. It will help in making our education comprehensive and inclusive. The sad part of our system is that we give undue importance to meeting the physical needs, but neglect the mind. How can the mind be separated from the body?

A number of problems spring from our impetus on the gross intellect and by discarding the use of our subtle intellect. All our thinking should be directed to the determining of the effect an activity or action will have on the consciousness. An action is momentary; its reaction is quite enduring. Therefore, it is always important to reflect upon the cumulative effect of a particular action. Man often carries a burden of memory which results in many mental problems. Similarly, imagination is also a source of mental problems, apart from being an index of mental development. Our imagination should not run amuck. Control of imagination is the key to the solution of the problems connected with the mind. Imagination also takes us to a world far away from reality.

Our education cannot help us. It does not tell us how to control our imagination and mind. It is here that training in meditation comes to our help. The remedy to all our problems lies in our internal secretions. In modern terminology, it is called endocrinal secretion. Every action has its fruit. The juice that is emitted affects our consciousness. It is the glands that emit it. Any modern biologist will testify to the views that the hormones secreted by the hypothalamus, the pituitary and the pineal govern the function of the adrenals and the gonads. The sexual urge, feeling of anger, envy, fear or anxiety are related to the gonads and the adrenals, but they are controlled by and dependent upon the secretions of upper glands. Therefore, by mastering the flow of the latter one can control one's base instincts.

Good and bad thoughts do influence us. It is important to replace them by the former. It is not an easy job. What is most important is to know all about breath. One who fails to properly evaluate breath, lives either in the past or in the future. A man who has realized the full value of the breath has given and added meaning to his present. He will live in the present. As such, he will master the art of controlling endocrinal secretions. He will free himself from infatuation and repulsion, love and hate alike.

Where thoughts fail, the consciousness of the present succeeds. A right turn of the consciousness will change the secretions and that in turn will transform the dispositions. For such a complete transformation we will have to acquire complete understanding of our mental problems—their nature, process, source the secretion causing them and the way to change it. All this forms an interlocking chain, a grid. Once it is mastered, the man given to meditation becomes the maker and master of his personality and the arbiter of his own destiny.

2.9 The Science of Living an Experiment in Intuition

Water is important for our life. We cannot live without it. It quenches our thirst and cleanses a lot of toxins and other impurities generated and accumulated in the system. Not only our body but also our mind needs cleansing. Meditation purges the filth of the mind. The purification of the mind is as important as that of the body.

Our traditional system of medicine recognized the importance of purging the body of its dross. It aimed at the purification of body. Present day medical practices believe in the suppression of the ailment. They do not go to the root cause of the disease.

All our problems of body crop up when our three humors- wind, bile and phlegm- are in disorder. Any imbalance can cause a disease. Anger and excitement are a kind of mental bile. Greed, desire and avarice are mental phlegm and the mind's unsteadiness and fickleness are like mental wind. Bile adds fear, energy and piquancy. That is exactly what anger does. Phlegm causes tenderness. Wind makes the various systems function; even a little imbalance in the three affections can affect the mind.

The Science of Living helps us extremely and intensively in understanding mental affection and their relation and effects. There are so many centers in the body which affect physical health, but there there a very few centres regarding to mental health. We have ignored this fact as our education is based on external objects. It does not recognize the world of consciousness. Whenever we fall ill we rush to a doctor who gives us a pill. We do not think of the cause of the disease nor do we care for the cure. We never realize that the disease may also occur due to an internal cause.

The reason is that we do not read about the science of living. Our students are not given an opportunity to read this subject. It is the pressing need

of our times to include the science of living as an internal part of education so that we look into the problems and find out their solutions both externally and internally.

Man's liking for external objects has deprived him of his internal power. He is so much attracted to the outside world that he has no time for himself; he has forgotten himself. As a result, he becomes pessimistic after a certain period of time. Both the worlds -external and internal- are necessary for a wholesome development. Meditation is a means to acquire this education.

We are required to develop faith in our power. We must believe in ourselves, for to believe is to be strong. Our power lies in our breath. It is our vital energy which governs our life. When ill, one should try to balance his breath power and there after take the advice of the doctor.

From Man's perspective, power is of two kinds as per the Jain preceptors:- one Nivritti Indriya and Upakaran Indriya. Nivritti Indriya is related to the growth and development of senses and the Upakaran Indriya is related to the power of experiencing senses. If the Upakaran Indriya is impaired, the Nivritti Indriya will be ineffective; for the real strength lies within us. Jeevan Vigyan or the science of living enables us to see not only the external power but also the internal power and to recognize the source of our real power.

We need practice, for mere theory will not work. Small experiments give big results. We can reap the benefits of ayambil (restricting daily intake to one small meal), Unodari (eating less than the appetite) and Upavas (fast) only when we practice them. They are the effective aids to meditation. The practice of science of living makes us aware of our powers, provides us access to the paths of development which the above awareness makes known and motivates for a careful study, practice and experimentation.

If someone finds it difficult to practice what the scriptures prescribe, he should concentrate on practicing controlled breathing. He will be able to awaken his intuition. He will realise that the real source of power lies within and most of his problems can be solved by the inner strength (breathing power) that is vital force.

2.10 The Science of Living and the Building of a New Generation

We all know change is the law of nature. No human effort can alter it. Yet, there are certain changes which are automatic and involuntary. However, there are other changes which are the outcome of our efforts. One can change only when one has a strong will to do so. Otherwise, it is impossible. Meditation and will power are the two most important means to achieve change.

The concept of change as suggested by the science of living is different from that of genetic engineering. In fact, geneticists envision a time when man

could be custom- made. Whatever you ask, you get. The science of living does not believe in it. It charts out a course of three techniques: causing inner illumination, developing equanimity and practicing tolerance. The inner illumination is but intuition. Once it is awakened, the process of change is set into motion. Intuition brings about complete confidence in a man and he gets ready to change himself. We must learn to conserve breath- power. Its wastage is disastrous. Conservation of breath- power controls our base instincts and wild emotions. It is thus a spiritual necessity to maintain a reservoir of breath- power.

The second technique required for total change concerns equanimity; it means facing cold and heat equally well, equal use of both the Sun and Moon. In this our breathing is involved. For breath through the left and the right nostrils represents the Moon and the Sun, respectively. For a balanced life one will have to concentrate on both. The former stands for purity, the latter for light.

The third technique of activating the process of change is the practice of tolerance. A man who wants to change himself should remain unaffected by the criticism of others. Sometimes, we fear so much about others that we do not start anything new. We should not get carried away by the favorable criticism of others nor should we get disturbed by hostile criticism. Tolerance teaches us to remain unaffected.

Meditation ensures the attainment of the above kind of balance. On who meditates uses the left nostril for breathing. Long and rhythmic breathing enables a man to face extreme situations boldly. His own defence mechanism gets strong and stronger.

Practice of tolerance is linked to breath. Man can remain unaffected by all grief if his breath gets unified with his consciousness. It will also make the beginning of his transformation from the human to the divine. With the necessary will- power and the right practice, man can achieve everything. Nothing is beyond his reach.

2.11 The Science of Living and Social Life

Man lives at the individual level and at the social level. He is both a type and an individual; none can be exclusively social or individual. People prioritise their preferences as per their needs. Most people live socially and not individually, because it is human nature to do so. Those who want to go deep, those who want to get into the truth and know it, lead an individual life. Spiritualists and scientists are engaged in the search for truth. They live their own life. They are so absorbed in their mission that they remain indifferent to their physical needs. They forget even to eat and sleep, for they are obsessed with their work. They remember nothing except that they are to accomplish their task.

An ordinary man feels that such persons torture themselves. But it is not so. Scientists and spiritualists follow a path not full of roses, but full of

thorns. An average man cannot opt for such a dedicated life style for the fulfillment of a purpose.

Preksha Meditation aims to transform life. It is a scientific process, operating on the basis of a cause-effect relationship. As a matter of fact, aetiology and teleology are inseparable if the objective is to effect change. The need of the hour is to combine the physiological and the spiritual aspects into one. Once they are combined, a new consciousness can emerge. Our main aim is the transformation of consciousness, which can be made possible by meditation and meditation alone.

Change in consciousness results in behavioral changes. Jainism propagates non-violence and non-acquisition vigorously. All other religions also propound the importance of non-violence and mutual cooperation. Despite the propagation and emphasis of the religious saints, there has not been a transformation of consciousness. Consciousness is at the root of all things. All our feelings, all our emotions, attachments, passions, pugnacity- are housed in our consciousness.

Transformation of consciousness can be made by sustained efforts. One will have to meditate. "It you want to do or achieve something, for the first ten minutes concentrate on the thought that you have unlimited potentialities. Then for the next ten minutes say to yourself that these potentialities have really been awakened and activated. And in the final minutes concentrate on the thought that you have the ability to use your power and solve your problem. These are the three stages of experiment. These thirty minutes so spent would optimize the results."

A practitioner of spirituality never clashes. He solves all his problems by good will and mutual consent. In fact, when we think socially, we cannot fight. Meditation helps the practitioner to remain just. He is judicious and fair in his dealings. He regards the high and the low as the manifestation of the same consciousness. Consequently, all arrogance disappears.

Peace and happiness cannot be purchased from any shop or mall. Peace comes from within, when our means of life are fair, when we do not resort to evil designs, we experience peace. When we are at peace, happiness will automatically flow. This is the kernel of philosophy, which we should understand and implement.

2.12 The Science of Living : A New Dimension of Education

Efforts have been made to solve the problem of modern education, which banks upon intellect. As a result, discontentment increases. Intellectuality is a part of education. It is not complete in itself. So long education is not supplemented by a sense of social responsibility, humanistic values and sound character; it will not give the desired results.

The Science of Living combines worldly success, spiritual progress and yoga. Modern education centers on physiology, anatomy and psychology. If all six are combined, a total and integrated course for complete human development can be planned successfully. The example of Japan proves that a wholesome education can work miracles. If Japan is a great country, highly developed in every respect, its credit goes to its education which motivates the students to work hard, to learn meditation and to take care of their emotions. They have successfully combined religion and science in their work and culture.

2.13 Summary

Modern education removes ignorance but remains insensitive to our sensibilities. That is why it cannot discipline our students. In order to make our students enlightened, we should introduce Science of Living at every level. 'In fact, it is our firm conviction that even religion cannot truly guide us unless it can be scientifically validated. The enormous and precious findings of science should be the decisive criteria and should provide the overall context for the practical use of religious instruction and text book knowledge. Only then will we be able to build a new generation of people enjoying perfect and all round health—physical, intellectual and emotional.'

2.14 Questions :

1. What are the four facts of a balanced education and their results?
2. Write the process of training to make our body, breath, speech and mind healthy.
3. What is the role of Science of Living for developing self-discipline in students?
4. How can we control our mind through meditation?
5. Write about the role of the Science of Living in Building of a New Generation.
6. How does the Preksha Meditation transform the lives of human being?

BLOCK-2

NOTES

Unit-3 : Non-Violence and World Peace

STRUCTURE

- 3.0 Introduction**
- 3.1 World Peace and Non-violence**
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3.0 Introduction

'Non-violence and World Peace' is a slender volume which has nine articles and the two declarations, made at Ladnun and Rajsamand. The five articles are contributed by Ganadhipati Tulsi and four by Acharya Mahapragya. Muni Dharmesh rightly writes in the 'Preface' of the booklet, "Non-violence is the eternal religion and an inevitable part of our life. One should be taught about it from his childhood in any society. This booklet contains the scientific explanation of the necessity of non-violence in educational system. Training in non-violence is not only a necessity, but a reality."

We are grateful to Gurudev Tulsi and Acharya Mahapragya who have jointly propagated the importance of non-violence in our day-to-day behaviour. Without non-violence, humanity will not survive. The views contained in the book are useful for the development of society. Acharya Tulsi, though a saint of extraordinary stature, always thought of the common people. He wished to have a virtuous society, and he continuously worked hard to materialise his dream. Acharya Mahapragya followed in the footsteps of his illustrious Guru. We seldom see such a guru-shishya (teacher-taught) tradition.

The book will develop virtues in you. There is nothing greater than a virtuous soul. All saints, monks and nuns, philosophers and spiritual poets teach us to develop good qualities—qualities that make life worth living. Acharya Tulsi the universal thinker and Acharya Mahapragya, the evergreen

soul-stirring spiritual sermoniser transports us to a sublime world. So, go through the book carefully, digest it, use it. The blessings of the two very great spiritualists are with you.

3.1 World Peace and Non-violence

Acharya Tulsi delivered a special lecture at the three-day First International conference on "Peace and Non-violent Action", at Ladnun from 5th December to 7th December, 1988. His lecture is reproduced as 'World Peace and Non-violence' in the book 'Non-violence and World Peace'. This lecture is a key note address wherein Acharya Tulsi analysed the need of non-violence for an ideal society. He referred to the political systems and pointed out their lopsidedness. He propagated the need to have a system that is based on the doctrine of manifold aspects—Anekantvada. Acharya Tulsi also pleaded for co-existence, the necessity to nurse the virtue of co-existence and demolish the artificial walls between man and man making it impossible for one man to see, know and understand another.

Summary : Man is a social animal. He cannot live alone. He needs company. The company he forms is known as society. In this society, he lives and develops himself, spends his entire life and dies. The bond of mutuality binds him with the people. This bond is an outcome of our need too. We can never be self-dependent. All of us are interdependent. Nobody in this world can claim to be self-sufficient. The famous Jain aphorism "Parasparopagraho Jeevanam" means that all sentient (*jivas*) are mutually related through favour and obligation; that is, beneficence.

We live as part of society and the unit of society is the individual. Like individuals like society and vice-versa. The above relationship is relatively true. In modern times society is conceived in terms of economic conditions and management. A relative and balanced transformation of all these three constituents can alone establish a healthy and non-violent society.

Countries like the Soviet Union* and China have adopted what they call socialistic pattern, while Great Britain, America and India claim to have a democratic system. In the Soviet Union and China, individuals are not given importance. They don't enjoy the right to freedom of speech, writing and expression, while in the democratic countries right to freedom, writing and expression is given to its citizens. Both the systems have the seeds of violence. Communist countries suppress the voice of dissent and don't allow individuals to grow whereas the democratic countries permit individuals to grow beyond all limits; one can be a billionaire at the cost of teeming millions. This gives birth to violence. In fact, we must search for the solution to the problem of violence in the doctrine of manifold aspects—Anekantvad— this encompasses eternalism and non-eternalism, which considers neither this nor that but this as

* Now, there is no Soviet Union. Instead, we have Russia. They have changed their political system, replacing communism by democracy.

well as that. It is not dogmatic and it is only through this principle we can move forward to the path of non-violence. It is possible to find a permanent solution to the vexed problem of world peace by integrating the socialist economic system requiring a definite limit to individual proprietorship with the democratic individual freedom.

Co-existence: Nature doesn't discriminate against any person. We live in this world. We have the same planet system and share a common solar system. We need a proper atmosphere and ecological cover. The feeling of co-existence springs from the natural state; Nature dictates that we cannot but live together. We have divided this world into so many nations. We have raised huge artificial walls between man and man making it impossible for one to interact with another. Furthermore, differences of race, colour and religion have divided humanity causing much heartburn. It is this hostility which has disturbed the natural concept of co-existence. For example, an Indian feels more attached to his country's soil than he does to Pakistan. In reality one man should be closer to another man, but in practice men feel more attached to things than to other men. Nationalism divides them. Again, the philosophy of Anekantvad has found a solution to the problem of violence. It propagates that there is nothing in the world like total opposition or total non-opposition. The cure of violence lies in viewing opposition/non-opposition and difference/non-difference dyads relatively and in trying to integrate and reconcile them. The principle of co-existence can be implemented on this basis alone.

The Materialistic Point of View

Man is by nature an exhibitionist, an egoist who wants to show himself off. Being an egoist, he is ambitious often to a fault. He wants to satisfy his desires, both physical and societal. So, he becomes a materialist through and through. He displays his assets proudly and looks down upon those who are underprivileged. We must say good bye to hedonism and materialism. Otherwise, the very talk of world peace is futile if we don't translate it into our behaviour and conduct. If a major chunk of society is driven in its activities by ambition and the pleasure principle, the only outcome is violence, unrest and wars. In order to offset the impact of those who run the governments of various countries and resort to violence, common people must be involved, for it is the common people who decide the destiny of the rulers. Without the support of the masses, nothing can be achieved.

World Peace and Non-violence

The world we live in has become a global village, thanks to the blessings of science. Still, we must remember that the centre of all consciousness lies within the individual, whether it is individual consciousness or collective consciousness. What is needed most is to awaken social consciousness in individuals to ensure world peace. Military rulers and

dictators used to run the show earlier, but now the roads are reverse. We have come a long way from the days of monarchy to present day democracy. The next stage of the journey should be a government wedded and committed to peace, a kind of paxocracy. In this system, the rulers will have to be men and women having complete faith in non-violence.

Non-violence : A Practical Course of Development

We live in a world full of contradictions. On the one hand, we organise programmes to underscore the need to preserve peace and introduce a culture of non-violence and on the other we go on piling arms and ammunition without rhyme or reason. We talk of disarmament while arming ourselves to the teeth. This is the greatest irony we witness while talking of non-violence.

In fact, the culture of non-violence cannot be fostered by organizing peace-conferences. For materialising non-violence in letter and spirit, we should have a global platform where the various problems of violence may be collectively considered and decisions taken on the ways of ending incidents of violence. People should be properly trained so as to spread the message of non-violence across the globe. Peace brigades should be strengthened and motivated to rededicate themselves to the cause of peace. All our efforts should be worldwide and aimed at strengthening the faith in non-violence.

3.2 Peace and Non-violent Action

Acharya Tulsi addressed the second International conference on Peace and Non-violent Action at Rajsamand, District Udaipur on February 17, 1991. It was a five-day conference and his was the inaugural speech. The speech was reproduced here in the book entitled 'Non-violence and World Peace', in the form of an essay. In fact, it is a great essay which displays the great thinker's quality of going very deep into the subject, analysing the presence of many opposite traits such as light and darkness, violence and non-violence, and finding the solution of violence in metaphysics and philosophy. He has applied his tremendous knowledge of life and letters, theory and practice in order to give us a gospel of peace.

Summary: Darkness is eternal, it existed in the past, it still exists and shall continue to exist. Mankind has discovered the use of 'lamp' to offset the effects of darkness. The relevance and need for light will always be more with an increase in the intensity of darkness. Similarly, violence and non-violence existed in the past; they still exist and shall always exist in the future. The more powerful the violence becomes the more intensive, strenuous and effective efforts would be required for propagating non-violence. That violence exists should not de-motivate the practitioners of non-violence to cease their activities. Non-violence is as powerful as violence, if not more. The only reason why violence has assumed a gargantuan -shape is that a huge, massive, virtually, incalculable amount of money is pumped into experiments, research,

training and manufacture of equipments for perpetuating violence, while truly speaking, hardly any amount is earmarked for propagating non-violence.

Taking the entire picture into consideration, there is an urgent need for comprehension of non-violence, research in non-violence, training in non-violence, and experiments in application of non-violence. Many persons may doubt research and training aspects in non-violence, but training is indispensable. Without training in non-violence, all our efforts will come to a naught.

The violence–instinct in a man is very strong. It is born out of three motives – retaliation, defence and fear. If we delve deep into the problem, we find that the cause of violence is grounded on the above three, whether it is at the individual level or at the national level. Billions of dollars are used on the production of mass destructive weapons, and every country displays them with gusto. Still, peace eludes them.

Peace is possible only when we are non-violent, and without training in non-violence it is not possible to propagate the culture of non-violence. For imparting its training we will have to emphasise both the theoretical and practical aspects of non-violence. As regards its theoretical side, we can say that there are five points that confirm its value, namely: (1) Reality of Soul–there is a real existence of God, (2) Independence of soul, that every soul is independent, it is responsible for its actions, good or bad, (3) Souls of all living beings are intrinsically identical, (4) Relativity in all facets of living–Nobody is self-dependent; one needs another. Nobody is indifferent to or from other beings; and (5) Co-existence. There is no room for sectarian thinking. "Either I or he" has no place in the canons of non-violence. "You and I" will live; we will live; this as well as that will prevail.

Practical Training of Mind

The theoretical side of training in non-violence is important, but it must be supported by the practical training of mind. A practitioner of non-violence knows how to balance his emotions. Psychologically, emotions are mental disturbances. Fear, anger, hatred, sensuality, lust, agony and pleasure etc. are born out of response to particular stimulus. It is indeed an uphill task to overcome the emotional disturbances, yet certain techniques do help in balancing them. For example, anger can be controlled by practising meditation on the emotional area of the brain. The technique of "Preksha Meditation" helps addicts to develop confidence in themselves. They get rid of drug-addiction, tension and terrorism.

Behavioral Training

How we behave is always very important for others. Everybody watches our behaviour. In the world of behaviour, the practical training in non-violence has a very wide scope. It includes relations with human beings and with nature and also their expansion.

Man is by nature a social animal. He leads a collective life. He does so because it is useful, but he is to go beyond it. He is to think in terms of selflessness as well. Training in non-violence empowers him to think about others.

As a human being, we have to maintain family relations, social relations and professional relations. The dealings between blood relations, wife and with extremely near and dear ones (mother in law, father in law), both from the maternal side and wife's side, constitute family relations. If they demonstrate tender feelings, if there is a feeling of oneness, there will be no violence, no heart-burn, no ill-will.

As regards to social relations, we must bear in mind that its scope is much wider. It begins with our neighbour and spreads to every person belonging to the remotest corner of the society. We can maintain our social relations in a cordial manner when we show catholicity in our behaviour, when we are accommodative; and above all when we are not self-centred or selfish.

Everybody has to work for his sustenance. We serve in an organisation, it may be a government institution or a private one, but we cannot live without service. We may run our own business. But we will have to interact with our customers. Everybody in this world is a customer. So, professionalism means—your behaviour with your superiors and juniors. Each of us should show genuine concern for his colleagues. We must show mutual respect, appreciation, sympathy, empathy, fair attitude etc. towards our subordinates. Intensive training is required for professionals so that they can work in a better way and give exemplary results. It is possible only when they are well trained in non-violence. For, non-violence brings out the hidden positive nature of a man. If we are positive we will be sympathetic to all. And, sympathy succeeds when all 'pathies' fail.

Peace is possible only when we are non-violent. Man regards himself as the greatest creature on the earth. His attitude towards animals remains callous. He is unkind to them. Of course, there is inevitable violence. We cannot avoid it. For example, we milk a cow. The cow thinks that the milk drawn from her udders is for her calf. We don't give it to her calf but consume it ourselves. This is 'Hinsa', but we can condone it. Nevertheless, the avoidable violence cannot be condoned. We use cosmetics made of animal skins. We organise animal fights for our crude and cruel entertainment. This is very bad, highly deplorable. Training in non-violence enables a man to realise his oneness with the animal world.

We must live in tune with Nature. Let Nature be your teacher. This is what Lord Mahavira preached over 2500 years ago. Modern ecology doesn't allow any type of tampering with nature.

For fostering the culture of non-violence, one must give up one's tendency of accumulation. A man's existence is meaningful only when he

leaves his possessions. He must rise above materialism. Training in non-violence will help him in limiting his attachment to the material world. He will become spiritual, freeing himself of unnecessary worldly possessions.

Non-violence: The Only Remedy for All Maladies : More than two thousand five hundred years have passed since Lord Mahavira declared, "Non-violence is wholesome for all living beings." War is not a permanent solution to any problem. Even today, people take refuge in non-violence. They fight war but resort to ceasefire. Non-violence is a weapon of heroes. By no stretch of imagination can it be called a symbol of cowardice or helplessness.

The three main reasons that ignite violence are fundamentalism, materialistic attitude and cruelty in human relations. It is the first and foremost duty of our educationists to include non-violence as a compulsory subject at all levels. Students must be introduced to the importance of non-violence as prescribed in all the scriptures and trained to practice it in their behaviour and conduct. The co-operation of all the sectors, public sector, private sector and non-government organisations must be taken to widen the reach of the specific type of training that is required in the field of non-violence.

3.3 Moral Values and Training in Non-violence

Acharya Mahapragya has expressed his concern over the falling moral values of society, bemoaning the fact that it is a global phenomenon. As a spiritual researcher and psychological explorer he has found out two causes for this sorry state of affairs: (1) Economic advancement and (2) Hedonistic approach. Our desire to amass money and enjoy the worldly pleasures in a libertine manner has driven us to this position. We only wish to achieve success, success not in the sublime sense but in an extremely vulgar manner where only power and pelf, money and opulence matters throwing off purity of means. Acharya Mahapragya suggests the path of non-violence. He prescribes training in non-violence for coming out of the morass the present world is in.

Summary: Moral and spiritual values have decreased throughout the world. Today, we have fallen on bad days. At a time, when the money-culture determines the greatness of a man and when the nobler qualities are being neglected by the general public, the very talk of moral values appears to be out of place. Yet, we talk of spiritual values and moral virtues. This proves that a man cannot get real happiness by his obsession with money and succumbing to sensual pleasures.

"Non-possessiveness and non-violence are spiritual values, integrity and honesty are moral ones. Only with the development of a 'purity of means' outlook can these values be established." We can execute our vision in the spirit of Anekanta or the relative point of view. We will have to arrange intensive and extensive training session in non-violence. These training sessions will be instrumental in changing the outlook of society towards material objects (money, power and pelf).

The objective of world peace can be fulfilled only when the world becomes non-violent. Murder, terrorism, fundamentalism, development of destructive weapons, fierce conflict and wars emanate from the desire of excessive obsession—this may be the obsession of wealth or that of power.

Non-violence can save us from this pathetic and cruel situation. It is indeed a tormenting situation when one lives in the constant fear of war. To emerge from this mess, training in non-violence should focus on bringing about the change of heart. We must overcome our greed and our possessiveness.

The purpose of imparting training in non-violence is the development of equanimity. "For this, non-possessiveness, non-violence and Anekanta together furnish a threefold value. Through it, it is possible to establish the virtue of equanimity."

3.4 Living Path of Non-violence

As a thinker of modern times, Acharya Mahapragya has propounded the utility of non-violence for everyone. He feels that violence can never be the lasting solution to any problem. Rather, it prolongs it, aggravates it, Acharya Mahapragya had heard about the devastation of the Second World War. He had also seen the pathetic and miserable plight of the refugees during the troubled times of India's independence in 1947. His essay 'Living Path of Non-violence' speaks of the necessity of making peace all pervasive in the life of the individual and of society.

Summary: The perpetrators of wars always think themselves right. In fact, they invest a lot of money in manufacturing far deadlier weapons, while the protagonists of non-violence hold conferences, meetings and seminars where they deliver mighty speeches, make impressive presentations and express confidence that the world will listen to their clarion call for peace.

The glaring irony is that for committing violence there is a provision of elaborate training, whereas no well-conceived training is there to strengthen the forces of non-violence. This approach exposes our rulers. Our leaders, who determine our future to a very great extent, spend any amount of money on the ordnance factories but do precious little to promote the use of non-violence.

War will go on so long as hostilities remain. It is born out of fear for safety or desire to accumulate money. We should devise training programmes for the volunteers of non-violence, so that they can contribute towards building up in the society, the right approach and the right culture in society which would make non-violence universally acceptable and pervasive.

The seeds of violence and non-violence are present in every man. Our training for non-violent action should aim at germinating the seed of non-violence. We need a healthy society, and a healthy society can be formed by

healthy individuals. Violence sickens man, and a sick man has a distorted, vision and misguided, often sickening, distortions.

We all believe in non-violence. But we should think rationally on this issue. We are to impart training in non-violence so that it can be employed as an effective tool to promote peace and understanding. Mere bookish knowledge will not serve the purpose. Acharya Mahapragya gives the example of Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln once wrote a letter to the teacher of his son requesting him to impart an all pervasive knowledge to his son, so that his son could become an enlightened citizen, a cultured man.

We can achieve results only when we follow the directives of Acharya Tulsi. He asked us to change the feelings of those who believe in violence. Those who believe in violence should be requested to desist from it and adopt non-violence as a creed. He also advised us to go to the human brain. He highlighted the necessity to activate its right hemisphere as much as the left one and reinforce the parasympathetic nervous system.

We must focus the practical and concrete aspects of the principles of non-violence with clarity and conviction. Only then can we attain success in making it a vibrant factor in our day-to-day life.

3.5 Training in Non-violence

Acharya Tulsi was a harbinger of peace. In fact, much before Pt. Nehru, he had advocated the need for peace. He was always people-oriented; spiritualism to him was not an isolated activity or an intellectual pass time, rather it was a powerful instrument to change society. He wanted to improve the face of society and the remedy he recommended was non-violence. He underlined the great need for training in non-violence. He not only spoke of non-violence but also practiced it. In this essay he has emphasised upon the practical aspect of non-violence.

Summary : Born and brought up in a Jain family, Acharya Tulsi had imbibed non-violence as an inborn trait. It was a part of his being; a *sanskar*. He was initiated at the age of eleven. As a practicing monk, non-violence became his alter ego. He observed it in his day-to-day activity. He realised its power and its efficacy in solving present day problems.

Acharya Tulsi had experienced the plight of the Second World War. He had also heard of the participation of Indian soldiers and their supreme sacrifice. As such, his longing for peace was intense. His "Message of Peace to a World Full of Unrest" was read out in an International Congress of Faiths, held in London on June 22, 1945. Later on, his message entitled "The Path of World Peace" was also read at the Peace Conference held at Shanti Niketan, West Bengal. He had given a five point formula to spread the message of peace:

- (i) Truth and Non-violence must form the sound foundation of society.
- (ii) Non-violence should be practiced instead of being talked about.
- (iii) Materialism should be kept in check through spirituality.
- (iv) Never force your principles on others.
- (v) Narrow mindedness of any type should be discouraged.

Acharya Tulsi continued his thinking and discussion on non-violence. He regarded the Anuvrat movement launched in 1949 as an epoch making event in the realm of non-violence. While delivering a key note address at the First International Conference on Peace and Non-violent Action at Ladnun in December, 1989, he asked the votaries of non-violence to unite together and find solutions to violence collectively. Conferences will be useful in this respect. Acharya Tulsi was a practicing monk. In his case, practice kept pace with precept. So, he recommended an intensive training for people devoted to non-violence.

The Anuvrat Movement is based on non-violence. Violence springs either from fear or from anger. Such emotions are born when one fails to adjust oneself. The training in non-violence focuses on adjustment too.

Man is selfish to a fault. His vested interests make him blind to violence at a personal level. So, the transformation of the individual is absolutely needed in order to check violence.

The Anuvrat Movement aims at checking violence from becoming a habit. Before committing violence one must think twice. If a tendency of re-thinking is developed (this is to say, a person should be trained to act on the basis of logic, reason and sentiments), then the cues of violence can be checked.

Building a Non-violent Society

In the absence of mass contact programmes, efforts for building a non-violent society have gone haywire. Acharya Tulsi stressed the need to include everyone in this movement. We cannot succeed by bylanes alone; we will have to follow the highways as well. The Anuvrat exponents introduced the concept of Anuvrat villages in Rajasthan with the following minimum programme:

1. Ninety percent of the people in the village should be anuvratists.
2. Differences amongst individuals should be sorted out at the village level itself through mutual goodwill.
3. Progressive thinking—villagers will be literate, rational, superstition - free and they will not practice untouchability.
4. None should be idle, unemployed or landless.
5. It should be a clean village.
6. People should be oriented towards scientific advancement.
7. There should be complete prohibition of alcohol and all other intoxicating drugs.

In fact, we can say that the concept of clean village has caught the attention of thousands of people. Directly or indirectly, it has inspired the "Sulabh International". They have introduced innumerable neat and clean toilets throughout third world countries.

Acharya Tulsi prescribed a three-fold path for transforming the human personality. To quote his words, "Anuvrat, Preksha-dhyan and Jivan-Vigyana is the human personality. The person trained through this trinity will surely develop a balanced personality and succeed in all walks of life..... If research, training and experimentation are done simultaneously, non-violence may be embedded in people's thoughts and actions."

Violence is encouraged everywhere. To defeat it, it is our duty to carry on research and training in non-violence and protect it from being uprooted. Acharya Tulsi exhorted us to rise and collectively force the government to train the people in non-violence and war. It will indeed serve a very real purpose.

Acharya Tulsi stood for non-violence throughout his life. He wished to see reach to every nook and corner of the world. He worked incessantly for this purpose so dear to him, giving us the ways and means to proceed towards it.

3.6 The Primary Lesson of Non-violence

Acharya Tulsi was a great spiritual teacher of the twentieth century. He was initiated by Acharya Kalu Gani. Acharya Tulsi learnt the primary lesson of non-violence from his preceptor the revered Kalu Gani. The present write up is a tribute of Acharya Tulsi's to his Guru which shows his deep respect and dedication towards his Guru on the one hand, and on the other explains the permanent imprints that the venerable Kalu Gani left on him.

Summary: Acharya Tulsi's revered preceptor venerable Kalu Gani initiated him into the order of Jaina monkhood when he was barely eleven. He asked him to observe non-violence and non-acquisition. He also exhorted him to remain alert, never to speak any word without thinking.

Close on the heels of his initiation, he began the study of the Dasavaikalika Sutra. He learnt, "Be conscientious while you move, while you stand, while you sit at a place, while you sleep and while you eat or speak." He practiced conscientiousness in each action. He realised the significance of orderliness in nature; he grasped the import of non-violence. He learnt to respect the individuality of each and every individual.

Acharya Tulsi's Guru, Kalu Gani practiced what he preached. The little Muni followed him with all dedication. Kalu Muni was liberal not stubborn. He denounced dogma that deserved denunciation, but not an individual. He never condemned any sect or individual. Catholicity was discernible everywhere. Acharya Tulsi learnt a lot from his conduct. Kalu Gani always spoke on any topic rationally; he never debated any issue angrily. Acharya Tulsi gratefully acknowledged his indebtedness to his Guru in these words, "The master's composure and stoicism left a lasting impact on my psyche. What he preached, he implicitly practiced... To a practitioner of non-violence utterance of unpleasant facts is an anathema, what to say of deprecating another being. This lesson induced in me the practice of equanimity and restraint."

Non-violence and truth are synonymous. Kalu Muni preached Acharya Tulsi not to fear age, grief, disease etc. As a result, he realized that non-violence and fearlessness are inseparable from each other. Violence and acquisition are wedded together. Conversely, non-violence and non-acquisition are wedded together.

Non-violence originates from fearlessness which shelters itself in stoicism. Revered Kalu Muni demonstrated both fearlessness and stoicism. He was not at all disturbed when Prince Ganga Singh called on the Saint but failed to catch the eye of the Master. Devotees feared something bad. Yet, the great Master remained unfazed.

Acharya Tulsi remembers his Master's unique power, his firm resolution, and his stoicism in this essay. He has narrated an incident in Bikaner where an aggressive Jain sect decided to oppose Kalu Muni with all its might. The Muni advised his followers not to lose temper, nor to resort to any type of provocation.

Acharya Tulsi had to face a similar situation in the initial days of his Acharyahood. He gave way to the other group, despite the opposition of some of his followers. He learnt this lesson from his Guru. Prince Ganga Singh appreciated the young Acharya for his intelligence and sublime qualities.

Acharya Kalu Gani always faced opposition with smiles. He never reacted aggressively against anyone. He was of the opinion that a stoic alone can withstand provocations. He was calmness personified. He suffered a carbuncle in his left index finger. He abstained himself from surgery. He bore the pains bravely.

A non-violent soul has to master his feelings. He remains above board, untouched by the temptation of material wealth. When one comes above temptation, one becomes non-violent.

Acharya Tulsi referred to his book 'Agnipariksha', which became controversial because of certain remarks. Some narrow-minded bigots fired with communal strains chose to disseminate their polluted mentality. He made all attempts to pacify their feelings. The High Court regarded the work as innocuous – "We Chose to Withdraw the Book".

This lesson of practicing non-violence Acharya Tulsi learnt from his Guru and his faith in non-violence remained unshakable and unexceptionable. He wanted to spread this message throughout the world.

3.7 The Foundation of Training in Non-violence

Acharya Mahapragya has suggested the various ways and means of training in non-violence. He had an unflinching faith in non-violence. He not only practiced it but also enabled other to follow it in letter and spirit. In this essay, he has traced the origin of violence and its causes. He has also recommended training in non-violence in order to offset violence.

Summary : Man is by nature an egoist, an exhibitionist—one who wants to show himself off. He wants to serve his own interests at the cost of others. So, he accumulates wealth and power. And, this tendency of accumulation, the intense longing and craving for money and power makes him violent. He desires to make his own empire by virtue of wealth. So, proprietorship, accumulation and fear are connected with one another. It is an uphill task to get

rid of them. "However, they can be cleansed, refined and disciplined. Therein lies the seed of non-violence."

There are various steps to check violence. First thing comes first. The mind has to be trained to ensure that only positive affections are generated.

It is only a healthy person who can practice non-violence. Without intensive physical training one cannot have rhythmic control of breath. Certain yogic postures are required to be performed by the practitioners of non-violence. Pranayama, Padmasana, Sarvangasana, Anuloma-Viloma etc. purge the body of the causative factors of violence.

Physical health is important. It makes the body agile and flexible. But, without mental training its purpose will be served only partially. Meditation contributes to the development of concentration. Violence increases directly in proportion to the degree of distraction. So the less the distraction, the less the violence.

"More important than physical and mental training is the training of affects. The formula for practicing it consists of meditation on the Chaitanya Kendra and on the Abhamandal. Contemplative practices are useful for all types of training—physical, mental and effective."

It is said that charity begins at home. Family is the cradle of social virtues. The first lessons of non-violence can be learnt from the family. If we are successful in nurturing non-violence in our families, we can try it in our neighbourhood. We should curb intolerance, overreaching ambition, greed etc. and nurse tolerance, a balanced approach to life and love. This will ensure a peaceful atmosphere in the family. Non-violence will automatically thrive.

Non-violence within the family is possible only when we accept the existence of others, not on our own terms but also on their terms. This is to say, we must make people aware of the co-existent duality-diversity and unity. It will be an important step towards building a non-violent society.

There are some social factors like casteism, racism, apartheid, regionalism, mass poverty, sectarianism etc. that cause violence in society. All these problems can be tackled by a well-reasoned human approach. If we follow a humanitarian approach, we can solve all the problems, even the problem of poverty. We are to focus on the basic unity of mankind. The tender thread of humanity surpasses the geographical territories.

Training in Non-violence

The basic element of training in non-violence is a change of heart or mental training. The factors that cause violence are greed, fear, hostility, anger, egoism, cruelty, intolerance, absolute thinking and absolute behaviour. The above factors have their effects. We develop a tendency to acquire, we manufacture arms and use them. We want to take revenge and often quarrel with others. We nurture hatred and a sectarian approach and undermine others.

The above factors and their effects can be controlled and mastered by training. We must train our people spiritually, so that they develop a sort of aversion to material objects. Once they overcome the tendency to amass money, they will be free from hostility and exhibitionism.

People should be trained to give up non-essential things. Wastage of water, over-mining, killing innocent people and animals must be stopped. These are the activities that make men cruel.

For fostering a culture of non-violence, we need healthy people. An ill man loses his temper frequently. An ailing person gets agitated. We must pay attention to food. A healthy diet is required to make a man fit and fine in thinking.

An individual cannot live without money. He should be trained to earn money by justified means and to shun pomp and show.

Non-violence requires a wholesome personality. An individual has to be trained in such a manner that he realises that he is a member of the family, that he is a social being, who is a citizen of a nation and also a citizen of the world. Then alone can the culture of non-violence thrive.

3.8 Anekanta and Non-violence

Acharya Mahapragya, along with his Guru Acharya Tulsi, has played a vital role in making non-violence a creed of the people. His mission was to spread and propagate the message of non-violence and he did it with a missionary zeal. In this essay, 'Anekanta and Non-violence' he has brought out the dualistic nature of the world, compounded of separateness and oneness.

Summary: We live in a dualistic world. It is different in many ways but there is an underlying unity in it too. All men are the same, but no two persons can be exactly the same. Nature doesn't repeat itself. That is why we say there is unity in diversity and diversity in unity.

Man is a thinking being, not a mechanical tool. He is emotional too. So, he has differences of ideas and tastes. Then, there are differences of temperament. Differences amongst individuals are the embellishment of a cultured society. This is a clear manifestation of free thinking. Yet, when our emotions are changed to an uncontrollable degree, we resort to quarrelling. So, the need is to develop a person into a mildly emotive man. He doesn't take part in activities involving destruction and malice. The idea of killing either himself or others doesn't strike him at all.

Violence is wide spread. It is not confined to war alone. Family quarrels, bitterness in human relations, racial, sectarian and regional conflicts are forms of violence. Anekant provides an alternative. It is a principle that can put an end to violence, if applied.

Anekanta is a principle that admits of flexibility. It believes in a "You too and me too" principle. It is an experiment by which one can free oneself from false tenacity and obduracy. Anekanta believes that no existence is without opposite. If there is light, there will be darkness too. Everything has countless pairs of opposites. They exist together. We should learn to live together. Every object is independent and autonomous. We must respect and recognise the individual freedom. Mutual support is vital for the survival of society. Everybody is important in his own way. All ideas are partly true. We should never insist on the rigid approach that our own ideas are right; that others are wrong. We should go back to our ancestors. We should follow the teachings of Bhagawan Mahaveer. He has directed people to accept the truth.

Acharya Mahapragya favours reconciliation and not obduracy or stubbornness. He has explained the principle of 'Anekant' and the world will be free from the troubles and turmoil if it adopts this flexible and all-sublime principle in letter and spirit.

3.9 Non-violence and Conflict-free Society

Acharya Tulsi belonged to a class of those saints who had a direct contact with society. He was also a social reformer. He felt that all problems spring from society and it is again society that finds a solution to these problems. Acharya Tulsi points out in his benedictory address that we have ignored training in non-violence. We must focus on this aspect in order to make the world violence-free.

Summary: More than 7000 wars have been fought in the history of the world. Crores of people are killed in wars. Still, wars do take place, though everybody denounces them.

Wars are an outcome of the insatiable desires of the persons who are at the helm of affairs in the world. Persons who matter most or whose writ runs large cause wars. Acharya Tulsi prescribes that training in non-violence for the legislators and members of parliament, teachers, lawyers, journalists and the judges is made compulsory.

The fundamental basis of such training is a change of heart. Without bringing about a change of heart or the transformation of the mind, there can be no progress in non-violence. The very creation of individuals devoted to non-violence makes the development of non-violence on the social level.

3.10 Summary

Acharya Tulsi believes that a holistic approach is needed to change the outlook of society. Individual transformation or social change constitutes a partial approach. We must keep both the individual and society together. The aim of training in non-violence is the creation of a healthy society through the development of unique individualities. Nobody can challenge the movement of non-violence. It will succeed.

3.11 Questions :

1. Write about the role of Non-violence for World Peace.
2. How should the world be developed through Non-violence?
3. What is the scope of social relations? How we can maintain it?
4. What is the five point formula of Acharya Tulsi for peace?
5. What was the aim behind launching the Anuvrat movement?
6. What should we do for fostering a culture of Non-violence?
7. Write a short note on Anekanta (Non-absolutism).

Unit-4 : Non-violence and Its Many Facets

STRUCTURE

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Our Life Style and Non-violence
- 4.2 The Root of Non-violence
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4.0 Introduction

Acharya Mahapragya was one of the greatest scholars and sermonisers of the twentieth century. He was a disciple of Acharya Tulsi, the ninth Pontiff of Terapanth sect, who expanded the dimensions of philosophy. He was a moving encyclopaedia of his times. He was a philosopher, a poet, a yogi, a preacher, a writer, a spiritual scientist, an essayist, a short-story writer, an educationist, an ecologist—all rolled into one. Such a versatile genius is hardly visible today! He reminds us of Aurobindo Ghosh in his profound scholarship. But there is one vital difference. Aurobindo wrote in English, his English was, is and will always remain very difficult to understand for an average English graduate. Acharya Mahapragya writes in a very simple language. He can be understood by all. Even a lay man can enjoy his writings. His language is simple, but not common place. He has written over three hundred books. Many of his books have been translated into English

The book "Non-violence and Its Many Facets" is a collection of seven lectures delivered by Acharya Mahapragya. Later on, these lectures were compiled and printed in book form. When taken together, these lectures appear to be a dissertation on non-violence and its many facets. In fact, most of us don't understand the true meaning of non-violence. Acharya Mahapragya has exhaustively explained how non-violence affects us, how we can control violence and above all how our traditional knowledge of yoga can help us in getting rid of the gravest problem of modern times-violence.

These essays are written in an easy to understand style. While reading the seven essays one finds the presence of the personality of the author, which is an essential requirement of an essay. Usually, the philosophic subjects are deep and difficult to comprehend. Yet, Acharya Mahapragya makes these

subjects lively. He infuses examples of warriors, saints, leaders, etc. to prove his point. Such examples lend an additional charm to the book and the reader is immersed in the subject. Acharya Mahapragya has the capability of assuming friendship with his readers. A reader forgets that he is reading the writings of a polyglot. He regards him as his mentor, his teacher, not a Victorian teacher who believed in the 'spare the rod and spoil the child' principle, but a modern teacher who claims to read with the child. This is the beauty of his style.

Friends, it is not at all possible to understand the book properly with the help of the tips given here. It is just an introduction to these essays. You will have to dive in it. If you do not go deep into it, your knowledge will remain incomplete. So, read the book carefully. You will enjoy it. You will never forget it, for it helps you in your character-building. And, there is nothing more important than character; for it is the crown and glory of life.

4.1 Our Life Style and Non-violence

'Our Life Style and Non-violence' is the first essay of the book 'Non-violence and Its Many Facets', written by Acharya Mahapragya. He was a saint of many alluring parts. Besides being a poet and philosopher of repute, he was also a mystic, and a mystic alone can fathom the depth of emotions. In this essay, he ponders over such intricate questions as to how violence was born, what practical non-violence is, what spiritual non-violence is and how Preksha Meditation helps its practitioners to perceive the soul by the soul.

Summary: How was violence born in man? It is an unanswered question. Man is a social animal. He cannot live alone. Social life means a life of interrelatedness. To satisfy his sexual desire, he built the institution of family and new relations came into being. He developed friendship with others. So, his wife, children and friends all became a part of his life. This way our society flourished. But all this was based on utility. They lived in a friendly manner. This was an illustration of practical non-violence. But it is not true non-violence, for even the slightest case involving selfish interests explodes the relationship. This is true of husband-wife, brother-brother and all such relationships. But there is a difference between practical violence and spiritual non-violence. Practical violence is based on selfishness and utility, while the spiritual non-violence is based on sublime qualities—the unity and equality of souls. It is not an outcome of selfishness, but that of divine qualities or angelic virtues.

Spiritual non-violence is based on the unity and equality of all souls—souls of all sentiments. All human beings are like us. They experience the twin emotions of pain and pleasure as we do. Once we realise it, all violence ends and we fully grasp the meaning of spiritual non-violence. This can be achieved only when we see inward.

Preksha Meditation enjoins its practitioners to perceive the soul by the soul. They shun the tendency of judging everything from the utilitarian point of

view, and cultivate a spiritual style to judge things. Violence springs when other interests, self-centred interests are attacked or jeopardised. We lose control. We are swayed away by our imaginary fears or envy or jealousy when we presume that somebody has robbed us of our right. We don't think seriously for a while on the issue seriously.

Practising meditation is a step towards spiritual excellence. Meditation teaches us to look within. To meditate is to see oneself, which in turn means seeing and searching for the real base of non-violence. The irony of today's man is that he values education because it brings about wealth, power, position and helps in getting a good partner in marriage, but discards the very idea of spiritual goodness. The need of the hour is to give equal importance to both.

Science, history or genetics cannot help the search for spiritual non-violence. One is to identify his true self. Then alone can one know all those dispositions that encourage violence. Efforts can be made to neutralize such feelings. The question of violence and non-violence is in essence an internal matter. As such, no external branch of knowledge, whether it is science, history, genetics, sociology, economics or psychology, can find out the real cause of violence. The rise of violence is often attributed to the general atmosphere or external circumstances. It is also held that man is slave to circumstances. He acts not on his own but as circumstances dictate to him. This is an illusion that we accept. This illusion can be destroyed if we meditate. The deeper one probes inside, the newer the truths one discovers—truths that are beyond the reach of scientific explanation.

Points to Remember

1. Violence is the use of physical force to hurt or harm someone. Sometimes, it is used in the form of words so as to cause sadness or ignite to others. For example, writing an article that foments trouble. Then it becomes mental violence and emotional violence.
2. **Non-violence** : Non-violence is opposed to violence. It aims at synthesis—do not hurt the feelings of anyone, live in peace, respect the sentiments of each and every person, etc.
3. Non-violence is of two types :
 - (i) Based on utility—husband-wife relationship, father-son-relationship, brother-brother relationship etc.
 - (ii) Spiritual non-violence—it is the real form of non-violence. It is sublime. It is permanent, because it permits no room for vested interests.
4. Meditation is the key to spiritual non-violence.

4.2 The Root of Non-violence

Acharya Mahapragya was a spiritual sociologist. The greatest problem and also disease of today's world is violence. We face violence on every step. Not only do we see the cases of violence against children, women and others,

but also come across cases of mental violence. We are gradually becoming insensitive day-by-day. I remember an incident in Delhi. A govt. employee, approximately of middle age, suddenly died. He had a wife and a child. His wife had to run from pillar to post to get the Provident Fund amount. When after a lot of effort, she could not get it, she was broken, totally unable to think of what to do. Unable to bear the hardship, she committed suicide. We can very well imagine her plight; some of us might say she should have continued her fight against the system, so on and so forth. But the point is why did the lady commit suicide? And, the only real answer is that she was subjected to emotional violence, mental violence. She must have thought, "It is my late husband's money. How can they deprive me of my money? Why should I grease their palms?" Was she wrong? No, she was absolutely right. But then, mysterious are the ways of the corrupt world, and she did not know the ins and outs of the world, being a housewife. Insensitivity is born out of violence.

Acharya Mahapragya had drunk deep at the fountain of philosophy and psychology. In order to bring about a society free of violence, he has extensively concentrated on the subject of violence and how it affects our society. But what is more important is that he also finds a solution to put an end to violence and that method is meditation. Meditate, meditate and there will be a complete change in you. You will be non-violent, full of peace, a content soul, and good at body, pious at soul.

Summary: A question that remains an enigma to us awaiting a concrete answer is, "Where and in what does the root of violence lie?" Scholars have tried to answer it but they are not unanimous in their views. Geneticists propound that it is because of genes and nothing could be done to control the heredity. We can choose anything but we cannot choose our parents! Psychologists trace violence to one of basic instincts. Environmental scientists talk of the general atmosphere or circumstances surrounding a human being since childhood. Philosophers claim that all this is due to karmas.

The above interpretations may not be coloured. Each one of them holds substance, but none of them can be called fully true. The theories based on genes, prime instincts, environment and karmas may make one believe in fatalism. Yet, the doctrine of karma provides the scope of changing karmas. When karmas can be changed, why not other factors? This feature, the possibility of change relumes new hope in the heart. We can change ourselves; and when we can change ourselves, violence can also disappear.

It depends upon us to develop the better side of ourselves. Needless to say that good and evil, violence and non-violence, anger and patience, the instigating and restraining tendencies are present in us, and the most important question is which one shall we awaken and which one shall we put to sleep?

It is here that meditation has its vital role. Meditation teaches us to look inward; it makes us conscious of our selves. It develops self-awareness. Once self-awareness has dawned, non-violence develops. Meditation brings before

us the supreme reality—we are one, there is no difference between you and I, for we all derive our origin from Him.

As regards genes, instincts, environment and karmas, environment has an immediate effect on us. Man cannot remain aloof from the impact of the general atmosphere. "It is noteworthy that right from childhood man is exposed to violence, crime and immorality through the mass media-radio, television, cinema and news-papers." No wonder, violence dominates our society. Worse the crime, bolder the banner.

We should make sustained efforts to reverse the situation. The undesirable activities—murder, looting, arson etc.—should not get publicity. Sex, greed, fear, suspicious and anger breed violence. Media men must realize that they have a great responsibility towards the common people they claim to care for. They should desist from spicy stories.

Though the external factors are important in curbing the feeling of violence, yet the root cause of violence can be weeded out through spirituality or knowledge of the self. A complete change is possible only through meditation, as it is the only remedy for the malady of violence.

Points to Remember

1. Violence and non-violence, good and bad, positive and negative emotions are present in us. A man has a Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde personality. He should work hard to develop the nobler side of his personality.
2. Genes, instincts, environment, and karmas all are important. As regards the first three, we have virtually no control over them. But karmas we can change with our sustained efforts.
3. Violence can be partly checked if our media acts responsibly. They should not print spicy, sizzling, erotic and violent stories.
4. Meditation makes us conscious of our real worth. We tend to look inward; we become conscious of ourselves. When self-awareness dawns, when sublimity comes out, violence disappears and non-violence develops.

4.3 Non-violence and Meditation

Acharya Mahapragya was perhaps the most vocal propagator of non-violence in the twentieth century. He had deeply thought over the causes of violence. He took up the question of violence in its totality and recommended the remedy of meditation. He proved that meditation is a scientific method to cure the society of so many evils, including violence, for it purges man off his evils, helps in the attainment of what is called "calm of mind". Meditation makes one understand the significance of looking inward, and when a man looks inward, when he becomes spiritual, all violence goes down, and non-violence comes up. Acharya Mahapragya has described the factors of violence

in this essay and has recommended the therapy of meditation to curb violence and develop non-violence.

Summary: We live in a society. Man is a social animal. He cannot live alone. All human beings like non-violence, because it stands for peace, and peace begets happiness. But our happiness is marred by violence. As such, it is necessary to find out the root cause of violence as well as the factors which nurse it.

One of the most important factors is stress. It is pressure caused by the difficulties of life which makes one tense. Stress is opposed to relaxation. When the muscles get tense, the mind becomes tense and the feelings turn tense too. In such a situation, violence erupts. Stress is born either by a sense of arrogance or a sense of defect. It is an outcome of anger, greed, despair, defeat, indolence etc. Whatever the reason; all types of tensions spark violence.

Acharya Mahapragya advises us to meditate to ease tension or stress. Kayotsarga (Relaxation of Body) relieves muscles tension and *dirgha svase preksha* (perception of breath involving slow and complete exhalation and deep inhalation) removes all mental tension. There are various techniques of meditation which cure specific types of tension. Scientifically it is proven that meditation is a complete cure for all varieties of stress and tension.

Chemical imbalance also breeds violence. When there is an imbalance of glandular secretions in the body people become violent. Every endocrine gland has its specific functions, whether it is the pituitary gland or the pineal gland, the thyroid gland or the adrenal gland. A harmonious functioning of these glands keeps a man balanced. Violence is an outcome of hormonal imbalances in the body. Meditation is their best and the only therapy. *Chaitanya kendra preksha* is very effective in curing the chemical imbalance.

An imbalance in the nervous system also causes violence. Sometimes, we witness the cases of motiveless violence. We fail to understand the reason and even the doer doesn't know as to why he did an act of violence. He simply says that he did it for the sake of fun. *Samvriti shvas preksha* cures it. By practising *samiritis shvas preksha* (exhaling breath through one nostril and inhaling through the other) a balance between the two systems is achieved. Besides, an internal trip (travel of the conscious mind from the bottom to the top) also helps in restoring the balance. This is similar to the *Hath Yoga*. It recognises two parts of the nervous system, while Acharya Mahapragya propounds three parts of the nervous system—central, sympathetic and parasympathetic. When all these systems act in a balanced manner, violence disappears—all at once.

Man has two types of attitude—one positive and the other negative. Usually, man is carried away by negative attitude. Hatred, jealousy, fear and lust are symptoms of negative attitude, contributing to violence. Racism, casteism, bigotry, fanaticism, etc. generate violence. We should think

positively so that it becomes impossible for us to harbour ill-will or grudge against any one. Meditation helps us develop positive thinking, chasing away bad feelings for others. Anitya Anupreksha is a powerful method for developing positive thinking.

Exertion also results in violence. The tragedy of a modern man is that he is awfully busy, so much so that he has hardly any time for his wife and children. To remain busy is good; as an idle man's mind is a devil's workshop. But to cross the limit is to invite problems. Nature demands a balance between work and rest, mental and physical, speech and silence. Meditation helps in maintaining the above balance. Silence works as a miracle. Observing silence for one hour in a day will provide stimulus to balanced living.

Violence affects our biology. The muscles get an extra dose of blood and become tense. The adrenals and the liver are also affected. It brings about physical, psychological and chemical reactions. Aggressiveness fastens breathing. The normal rate of 10 to 15 breaths a minute goes up to 30 or 40. The stage is fully set for letting loose violence.

Meditation brings respite to a busy person. It soothes the mind. Thus, meditation helps prevent violence.

Points to Remember

1. Everybody wants non-violence. For, it gives peace and peace brings happiness.
2. Violence often comes to the fore because its roots are deep.
3. Meditation is the only remedy to keep the malady of violence away.
4. Stress, chemical imbalance, imbalance in nervous system, attitudinal approach and over-exertion are the factors responsible for violence.
5. All these factors can be controlled by the various techniques of yoga.

4.4 Non-violence and Food

Acharya Mahapragya has deeply pondered over the problem of violence and has found out, very rightly that its antidote is non-violence. He has also considered the significance of food in the context of non-violence. It is also in the traditional line of our thinking, "As you eat, so you think." (जैसा अन्न, वैसा मन).

Summary: Air and food are necessary for the survival of human beings and plants. There will be no life without them. The food that man eats produces so many chemicals in his body. It helps form a number of neurotransmitters in the brain which act as communicators. Through them the brain runs the body. Scientists have identified about forty types of neurotransmitters. Food also forms amino acids in the body, including uric acid and many other toxic elements. It is important to understand which type of food produces what. The

type that produces poison also creates mental and emotional problems. It encourages violence. That is why the ancient seers and physicians paid a lot of attention to the various effects of different kinds of foods. Modern dieticians too attach a good deal of importance to food. They have widened the scope of their study. They also study the effects of not eating different kinds of foods.

A highly irritable man may have vitamin A deficiency. If there is a deficiency of sugar in a man, he becomes ill-tempered and in extreme cases even a murderer. Similarly, a vitamin B deficiency causes fear. Scientists are busy in studying the significance of vitamins and how these influence our behaviour.

Advocates of non-vegetarianism forcefully argue that meat and egg are rich in protein and these should be consumed by all. Media often supports them. But excessive intake of protein, particularly animal proteins, is harmful for health. Non-vegetarian food is often taken with intoxicants. Wine is used with it. It disturbs emotional balance. Cases of accidents and acts of voluptuousness etc. are due to over-drunkenness. Vegetarianism is good for health. It maintains emotional balance.

Traditionally, we have three types of food (सात्विक, राजसिक एवं तामसिक) and one should take *sattvik* food, that is, food endowed with the quality of highest purity and not the *rajasik* (exciting passion) or *tamasik* (stirring up darkness) food. A man who consumes '*sattvik*' food remains calm and quiet. He is non-violent.

Food is life. It should be taken in moderation. Generally, people overeat. The habit of overeating should be avoided. We should also observe fast. Food is a necessity, not a luxury, and it must be taken for fostering physical, mental and emotional health. It is the emotionally healthy people who practice non-violence. Like emotions, like the mind and the body.

The three words, *adhi*, *vyadhi* and *upadhi* denote mental disease, physical disease and emotional disease respectively. We concentrate more on physical disease and ignore emotional diseases, such as jealousy, anger, egoism, greed etc. We should make efforts to eliminate the emotional ailment first. This will help us in rearing and nurturing a climate of non-violence. And, the importance of food in bringing about this atmosphere is vital. One who meditates must take a balanced diet. Without proper food, non-violence will always remain a forlorn dream, a mirage and a chimera.

Points to Remember

1. Food is of utmost importance in realizing the dream of non-violence.
2. Meditation helps control emotions.
3. Balanced Diet (संतुलित भोजन) must be taken, but in moderation.
4. Emotional health is of paramount importance. Without emotional health, we cannot have a culture of non-violence.

4.5 Non-violence and the Yogic Postures

Acharya Mahapragya is one of the greatest yogis of our times. He has not only read the ancient scriptures and yogic literature but has also practiced different yogic postures. As such, his knowledge is not theoretical but also practical, and this unique blend of theory and practice makes him a spiritual-scientific yogi of modern India. In this essay, Acharya Mahapragya has highlighted the significance of yogic postures in bringing about a perfect balance between the body and the mind.

Summary: Violence and non-violence are also related to the various bodily postures. The yogic postures tone up the muscles, regulate the flow of blood, improve the general function of the body and even affect the nervous and endocrine systems. Thus, they control emotions.

Modern civilization has given us much comfort but it has robbed us of physical exercises. Man depends upon machines more and does far less physical work than required for keeping him fit and fine. The result is our muscles remain unexercised. We love to live under stress, though we know it is harmful. Man is reduced to a machine. This is the tragedy of today's man. This is the sickness of modern civilization.

The modern man is in search of joy, happiness and peace. He wants to get rid of stress. It is possible only when there is a perfect balance between the body and the mind. Yogic postures may accomplish this task. They improve the external part of the body. People look healthy. But the yogic postures also take care of mind. They regulate emotions. They provide emotional strength.

We know that the adrenal gland creates excessive excitement, mental agitation, impatience and other negative trends which burst out in the form of anger. '*Shashankasan*' helps us in controlling over the adrenals. Similarly, the *Sarvangasan* controls and balances the working of the thyroid gland.

Violence is in the mind. There is a part of the brain called hypothalamus which constitutes the emotional system. It is a part of the limbic brain. Between the limbic brain and the adrenal, pituitary and pineal glands, lies the secret of all types of violence. If we break the circuit at any point violence can recede into the background. Acharya Mahapragya refers to the Kalinga war which changed the heart of Ashok and made him the messenger of peace.

Yogic postures bring about a balance in the working of the nervous and endocrinal systems and amino acids. Along with fasting they are also a means of expelling all toxic and foreign matter from the body. Yogasans are for this reason an intrinsic part of Preksha Meditation.

Points to Remember:

1. Violence and non-violence are related to bodily postures. It is in our mind.
2. We ignore physical labour. We love to live under stress.
3. Yogic postures help in controlling our emotions.

4.6 Developing a Non-violent Personality

Acharya Mahapragya has raised a question in this essay, "Is it not a paradox that we talk of peace and non-violence and prepare for war and violence?" Really, we train our cadets of the Police Force and also in the Army to use arms to quell violence and to protect the frontiers. This is true of the entire world. He recalls the terrible destruction that the world saw when the two cities of Japan (Hiroshima and Nagasaki) were bombarded during the Second World War. The world was moved to see the devastation. Since then, the necessity of introducing non-violence in every field has attracted the attention of the policy makers.

Acharya Mahapragya thinks that merely talking about non-violence will not be fruitful. The need of the hour is to strengthen and deepen one's faith in it. It should be realized that violence can serve no purpose. Peace can be achieved by non-violence and not through violence. We need training to develop our faith in non-violence.

The general atmosphere is indeed disgusting. Wherever we go, we see violence. The reason is fear. We are scared about our security. The way to control crime and violence is giving proper training in non-violence. "Even if there is one duly trained non-violent person for every one hundred trained soldiers, a new miracle can be performed and a new order created."

Meditation is a panacea. It controls violence. Kayotsarg, if done properly, yields wonderful results. It frees the mind from all thoughts. Kayotsarg teaches us to think positively. Positive thoughts curb violence.

We should aim at total quality. Non-violence requires intensive training. We can learn the significance of training from Japan. The Japanese of all ranks undergo training. That is why they have given us the maxim of Total Quality Management. We must follow their example. Only by undergoing a thorough and rigorous training can one have firm faith in non-violence. Society needs to develop non-violent personalities in its members. Preksha Meditation is an effective tool to develop a non-violent personality.

Points to Remember

1. We talk of non-violence but go on training our cadets, preparing them for wars.
2. Our talk is flimsy, meaningless. We must impart training in non-violence.
3. Meditation helps us. It soothes our emotions. Preksha Meditation is an excellent method for developing a non-violent personality.

4.7 Non-violence and Fearlessness

Man wants to live. The very idea of death frightens him. Acharya Mahapragya mentions the need to overcome the fear of death. He is of the opinion that a non-violent person is not at all afraid of death, for he is above

attachment. We can create a society where non-violence reigns supreme only when we are free of the delusion of attachment.

Summary: We fear death because we use our near and dear ones. We love ourselves. We love our existence. We are afraid of losing our body. We fear losing our possessions, both earthly and physical. The fear of death always haunts us.

Through *Kayotsarg* one can conquer the fear of death and thus rid oneself of the tension and oppressive feeling accompanying the fear. It resides within. If we succeed in cultivating fearlessness then no incident, no external circumstances can strike fear in us.

Fear envelops the entire world today. No two countries see eye to eye with each other. It is so because we suffer from the delusion of attachment. Fearlessness is possible only when we free ourselves from this delusion.

A non-violent society can be formed if the power is decentralized and a judicious distribution of wealth is made. We suffer from the passion of accumulation of power, accumulation of wealth. The tendency to cling to power and to refuse to share wealth has to be changed.

It can be done systematically. We should go step-by-step. First thing should come first. The first step will be *Kayotsarg*, for it is the basis of Preksha Meditation. It will relieve us of tension. The second step is we should practise non-violence within the family. We all know that the family is the cradle of social virtues. After achieving success at the family level, we should further extend it to the neighbourhood. Next it should encompass the nation and finally the whole world.

An ideal society based on equity and free from fear can be built only if we learn to limit and control selfishness and attachment. This is possible through the practice of Preksha Meditation.

Points to Remember

1. Nobody wants to die.
2. It is because of attachment that we love ourselves and our possessions.
3. A non-violent man overcomes the fear of losing anything. He sees everything with a feeling of resignation.
4. We can mount the delusion of attachment through *Kayotsarg*.
5. After *Kayotsarg*, we should practice non-violence within our family, thereafter in our neighbourhood and then further extend its scope.

4.8 Summary

Acharya Mahapragya sums up his essay by saying that a balance between the practical and spiritual aspects of life is required and it is possible by looking inside, "By looking inside we can get to know the truth and succeed

in striking a balance between the practical and spiritual aspects of life. We shall be able to answer the question how violence was born in man only after we have succeeded in integrating and balancing practical and spiritual non-violence."

4.9 Questions :

1. What is the role of meditation to make us conscious of our real worth?
2. How can we remove stress through meditation?
3. Write about the importance of food in realizing the dream of non-violence.
4. How do yogic postures help in making a balance between the body and the mind?
5. How can we make a society based on equity and free from fear?

NOTES

BLOCK-3

NOTES

Unit-5 : The Prophet : Khahlil Gibran (1883 -1931)

STRUCTURE

- 5.0 Introduction**
- 5.1 Comments on some selected Essay of the Prophet**
- 5.2 Summary**
- 5.3 Questions**

5.0 Introduction

Khahlil Gibran (also written as Khalil Gibran) was born in Lebanon in 1883. His father Khalil was a Muslim, while his mother was a Catholic. Thus, he imbibed both the traditions of Islam and Christianity from his parents. Though he could not get his formal education because of penury, yet he managed to study Islam and Arabic under the tutelage of visiting priests. He was above religion. He believed in all religions, and yet did not convert to any, for he believed that God resides in every faith, in every object, and his work reflected his universal spiritualism. That is why his book was widely read across the globe.

Initially, Khalil Gibran started writing in Arabic and he holds a place of pride in the modern Arabic literature. But, he switched over to English by the time he was thirty-five and from 1918, onwards, he wrote mostly in English. To him goes the credit of introducing a unique style of English prose which borders on poetry. His first book in English 'The Mad Man' (1918) was a bunch of aphorisms and parables written in biblical cadence somewhere between poetry and prose. One can not tell whether it is the direct impact of Rabindranath Tagore or that of the bible on him. Tagore's Gitanjali had become very famous by the time Gibran took to writing and if one finds similarities between the two, one may presume the influence of the Nobel Laureate Indian poet over him, though it can not be said conclusively and the topic is open to research.

Gibran's magnum opus The Prophet published in 1923 is a partly autobiographical book which consists of 26 poetic essays. We find an excellent example of lyrical prose here and one is reminded of the traditional romantic definition of essay that an essay is a lyric in prose and that a perfect egoist is a perfect essayist. Almustfa, the prophet has spent 12 years of life in a foreign country and is about to board a ship in order to return to the isle of his birth. He is stopped by a group of people, whom he teaches the mysteries of life. In fact,

he unearths the mysteries of life. The resulting 26 sermons are delivered to enlighten and emancipate the listeners.”

The Prophet became a very popular book as soon as it hit the stand. It is lived, read and revered by Christians, Muslims and Hindus. It is said that in the 1960's 'The Prophet' became a counter culture, guide and in the 1980's the message of spiritualism overcoming material success was adopted by Yuppies;

Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.

Sing and dance together and be joyous,

but let each one of you be alone,

Even as the strings of a lute are

Though they quiver with the same music.

'The Prophet' is neither a novel nor a story book, but a series of philosophical, spontaneous expressions of a prophet. He does not forget the country he has lived in but he is also conscious of his home. Therefore, he gives these sermons as a gift. Each part of it is his farewell gift to the people. His thoughts about Love, Marriage, Children and several of other issues are in the first part and about 'Death' in the last.

'The Prophet' is basically an exercise on human philosophy, Gibran's effort is to have a balance between the spiritual and physical, and he is extremely successful in his mission. The language he uses is spontaneous, the way he employs metaphors, similes, personifications makes one fall in love with the book. Even if the content of the book is not pleasing to someone, he can not leave the book because of its language. The entire tone and tenor of the sermons is soaked with sensual humility. He treats all the question confronting us with an almost human- like respect. The prophet turns into a teacher, a teacher who seems to be of this world! Look, how positive, prophetic and pragmatic is his advice about love, "when love beckons to you, follow him though his ways are hand and steep,"

'The Prophet' does not appear to be a book of philosophical discourses; Dull, dreamy and scholastic. Rather, it seems to be and it is a bunch of prose- lyrics, marked by its on peculiar melody, imagination, spontaneity and conversational tone. See how nicely he describes freedom; his diction is superb and one is forced to say that there can not be a more beautiful, touching way of making words flow together;

"Any in the grove of the temple and in the shadow of the citadel I have seen the freest among you wear their freedom as a yoke and a handcuff. And my heat bled within me, for you can only be free when even the desire of seeking freedom becomes a harness to you, and when you cease to speak of freedom as a goal and a fulfillment."

Kahlil Gibran's views in 'The Prophet' are for all the times. He is a thought-provoking sermonizer. One may agree or disagree with his views, but one can not doubt the writer's honesty. To read the book is to experience peace. You are at peace with yourself. There is no plot, no characterization but all this is soon forgotten when one goes into the spirit of the book. In fact, the overall effort of 'The Prophet' is amazing. One feels fresh.

It will be quite interesting to compare Gibran with Bacon. Both are philosophers, well-read and have chosen the same subjects for their essays. Bacon has also written on friendship, envy, family and single life on revenge, children, death etc. His treatment is often practical to a fault. He does not allow his fancy roam. So he appeals to our mind while Gibran touches our heart. There is hardly any emotional display in Bacon's essays. He weighs pros and cons of any subject and argues his case as an astute lawyer in order to score over his opponent. It is not so with Gibran. He speaks from his heart. He wants to emancipate his readers while Bacon wants to make them successful in life. Bacon's language is weighty, full of terse expressions. Whereas, Gibran's language is flowery, giving the pleasure of poetry in the garb of prose. Truly speaking both can be complementary to each other. What Bacon misses, Gibran gives and what the former has, the latter misses. As such, both, 'Essays' and 'The Prophet' supplement each other and should be read together.

5.1 Comments on some selected Essays of *The Prophet*

1. **On Love :** Love is the greatest emotion of life. It is impossible to define love though we all love. 'Khalil Gibran' speaks of love as a panacea. He says it is not a fun. It is something to be experienced, not to be seen. He asks us to listen to love. It is full of tears and cheers. It gives life but it also demands life. Love in its supreme form is all dedication, and with no desires.
2. **On Marriage :** Marriage is a great institution. It helps to put a system in place. 'Gibran' tells us that we are born of a union. Marriage is a union between the two bodies, nay; two souls. It is a bond, a sacrament that goes on. Marriage is not surrender; both the parties must maintain their individuality.
3. **On Children :** 'Gibran' sounds a note of caution to parents by saying that "your children are not your children." They are, according to him, life's longing for himself. Parents see themselves as their creator but they have not really created them. They can be the source. We love our children but we must give them enough space to develop their own thoughts. This is a solid piece of advice given by the writer which is very useful particularly for the Indian parents.

- 4. On Giving :** ‘Gibran’ in this beautiful essay points out the significance of giving. He says if one gives his possession, it is not at all significant. It is when you give yourself, you become a real giver. If anything is given with a view to gaining publicity it can be called an investment but not a real charity. Usually, the rich donate so much but their motive is different. They want recognition in return. The poor who have little money and donate it for any worth cause are the real donors. They believe in life and the bounty of life and their coffer will never be empty. He also asks never to boast of charity and follow the example of the trees. The trees give fruits to all and the cows give milk to everyone irrespective of their stature.
- 5. On Work :** Gibran artistically points out the beauty of labour. He says that to be idle is to miss the beauty of nature. An idle man never listens to the music of life. God has made us to work. Work gives us knowledge. When we work we realize the supreme aim of life and feel the pleasure in our assignment. So whenever you work, do it with full of love. This is the appeal of the poet. Sow seeds with tenderness and reap the harvest with joy.
- 6. On Joy and Sorrow :** Gibran sees life in totality, and life has both joys and sorrows. Our joy is full of sorrow. Sadness and happiness are inseparable from each other. You feel the worth of joy only when your cup of sorrow is full to the brim.
- 7. On Clothes :** Gibran says that our clothes cover our beauty, but not our ugliness. They preserve our privacy but also enchain us. Clothes protect us from the vagaries of nature but, “forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair.”
- 8. On Beauty:** Beauty is a relative term. What is beautiful to one may be jarring to the other. Beauty is an ecstasy, a heart enflamed and a soul enchanted. It lies in the eyes of the beholder. To quote Gibran,
- “Beauty is life when life unveils her holy face.
But you are life and you are the veil.
Beauty is eternity gazing at itself in a mirror.
But you are eternity and you are the mirror.”

5.2 Summary

In fine, ‘The Prophet’ is a valuable book which enriches our life and enhances our spirituality, irrespective of our beliefs and religion. The western world may have some reservations about its style and its fundamental belief. Kahlil Gibran’s writing is highly oriental, rich with metaphors which may appear artificial and jarring to a westerner. Therefore, the book appeals to the

eastern readers more. He finds an affinity with author. Still one agrees with the views of a critic, “If you don’t like it because of its style or its fundamental belief, you will still find it a worthy to deepen your knowledge about eastern philosophy and spirituality.”

5.3 Questions

1. In which year the book 'The Prophet' was published? Is it a novel or a story book?
2. How can we say that ‘The Prophet’ does not appear to be a book of philosophical discourses?
3. Compare Gibran with Bacon.
4. Write about the ‘Beauty’ based on the book 'The Prophet'.
5. How is 'The Prophet' is a valuable book?

BLOCK-4

NOTES

Unit-6 : The Gitanjali : Rabindra Nath Tagore (1861 -1941)

STRUCTURE

- 6.0 Introduction**
- 6.1 Gitanjali**
- 6.2 Tagore's Mysticism**
- 6.3 Tagore's Lyricism**
- 6.4 Tagore's Patriotism**
- 6.5 Tagore's Language**
- 6.6 Some Important Songs of Gitanjali**
- 6.7 Summary**
- 6.8 Questions**

6.0 Introduction

Rabindranath Tagore (1861- 1941) was the greatest personality of the modern era. He was a poet, a philosopher, an educationist, a novelist, a short – story writer, an essayist, a painter, a musician, a dramatist, a journalist, etc all rolled into one. In fact, the world has not seen such a versatile literary genius till date. There are poets in modern times who can equal Tagore. Poets like Maithlisharan Gupt, Jayashankar Prasad and Bharati equal him in the realm of poetry. Premchand, Sharad and Munshi are not an inch inferior to Tagore, the novelist. Similarly, Prasad the playwright is comparable to Tagore, the dramatist. As a short story writer, Premchand is equally great, may even surpass him in some respects. But nobody can come close to him when we see his versatility and the tremendous impact he has exercised over Indian literature. His influence over our literature continues. Tagore's popularity is great. Every city has Tagore Park, Tagore garden, Tagore schools, Tagore Nagar, so on and so forth. What can be a better example of his popularity than the fact that two of his lyrics are the national anthems of India and Bangladesh and the national anthem of Sri Lanka also has the Tagore style? It is said that it is written by a Sri Lankan student of Shanti Niketan under his guidance.

Tagore is a voluminous poet. His poetic career spreads over sixty years and what makes him unique is that his work gradually shows maturity, greater richness, intensity and also complexity with the passage of time. In this respect, he offers a striking contrast to Wordsworth whose poetic powers deserted him after the glorious decade of 1798- 1808. Wordsworth bemoans

the loss of poetic vision in his wonderful poem “Ode on intimations of Immortality.”

Although Tagore wrote about 4000 lyrics compiled in the various collections such as *Sandhya – sangeet*, *Prabhat Sangeet*, *Manasi*, *Sonar Tari*, *Jivan Devata*, *Kahini*, *Kalpna*, *Sisu*, *Purabi*, *Mahua*, *Banabani*, his fame as a poet chiefly rests on *Gitanjali*. It was with the publication of *Gitanjali* that he became a world renowned poet. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. The entire world appreciated and admired the songs that Tagore had offered in his masterpiece. W. B. Yeats, himself a great poet virtually became his devotee, for he had not seen such a bunch of lyrics before.

6.1 Gitanjali

The publication of *Gitanjali* was an epoch making event in the history of letters. The entire western world lauded its publication in 1913 and the book was consumed like hot cakes. The global literary world was a witness to the numerous editions appearing frequently in short intervals. Many scholars came forward to translate *Gitanjali* into different languages. It was indeed rare for a country which was under the clutches of the British Raj that one of its sons got the Nobel Prize for literature. India became famous overnight across the globe and Tagore became the symbol of Indian and Asian glory. The western world had not seen a book like *Gitanjali* earlier. Its mysticism, its lyricism, its devotion to god, its humanism and its universal appeal took entire Europe by storm. Now, we will analyze some of the traits of *Gitanjali* that endear it to its readers.

6.2 Tagore’s Mysticism

Rabindranath Tagore was a mystic. A mystic looks inwards. Tagore believed in the immortality of the soul. He was of the opinion that all the objects of nature derive their existence from god. His concept of mysticism was different from the concept of traditionalists. Tagore’s mysticism is firmly rooted to the ground never losing the base of terra firma. He is not air airy. His mysticism is a part of our world.

For Tagore, mysticism is not at all an intellectual theory, but it is fundamentally an active, formative, creative, elevating and ennobling principle of life. Mysticism means a spiritual grasp of the aims and problems of life in a much more real and ultimate manner than is possible to mere reason. Like Kabir, Tagore ponders over the problems of life and surrenders himself to god. He asks his readers to have unshaken faith in divine wisdom, love and charity.

“O Fool, to try to carry thyself upon thy own shoulders! O beggar, to come to beg at thy own door!

Leave all the burdens on his hands who can bear all, and never look behind in regret

Thy desire at once puts out the light from the lamp it touches with its breath. It is unholy – take not thy gifts through its unclean hands. Accept only what is offered by love.”

6.3 Tagore’s Lyricism

Tagore is considered to be one of the greatest lyricists of the world. As a lyric poet, he is in the company of Vidyapati, SoorDas, Meera and Shelley. His genius was primarily lyrical and all his poems have the tinge of a lyric. Like Shelley, he exhales a lyric as a flower exhales fragrance. Tagore’s reputation as a mystic and philosopher has overshadowed his greatness as a lyric poet. But taking into consideration the large number of lyrics he has written and his confidence over their universality, one is tempted to say that he is primarily a lyricist and his philosophy and mysticism come afterwards.

Before commenting upon the quality of Tagore’s lyrics, it will be worthwhile to know about lyric as a form of poetry. A lyric is a brief subjective poem marked by emotions and melody. It comes from within. It is spontaneous in expression. The language of a lyric should be simple. When we analyse Tagore’s lyrics, we find his language to be extremely simple. His expression is natural with lyrics having a musical touch to them as they can be sung by the ordinary people. Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson and Swinburne are the leading lyricists of English literature. Vidyapati, Soordas, Tulsidas, Meerabai, Kabir and Mahadevi are the leading lyric poets of Hindi literature. Rabindranath Tagore is a doyen of modern lyricists in India, and arguably the greatest lyric poet of Bengali Literature. Tagore’s Gitanjali is a collection of devotional songs. He was a devotee but with a difference. He never ignored the world. He mingled his personality with Him; he had a communion with the Supreme. His poetry is nothing but prayer, pleading and exaltation. A devotee prays, pleads and sublimates himself, loses his identity by merging it with god. The lines below are a testament to the fact that Tagore did it brilliantly:

“Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure. This frail vessel thou emptiest again and again, and fillest it even with fresh life.”

The above lines imbibe the Upanishadic spirit. Human soul is immortal. But the human body is perishable and weak. God fills it again and again. Man dies and is born again and the cycle continues. Tagore believed in the Hindu doctrine of transmigration.

Tagore realised that god is omnipresent. Yet, for him god was not an abstract, formless element, but a living being. God was not only a friend, philosopher and guide to him, but surprisingly enough, at times god was also his lover. He was influenced by Vaishnav saints, Upanishads, Kabir and Sufis.

Tagore was a modern yogi who knew that man is the supreme creation of god and that the proper study of mankind is man. He was a humanist, a spiritual humanist, one must say. He finds god in the fields, in the tillers and not in the temple. The lyric, "Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads" is a testimony of Tagore's faith in humanism. It shows that he had imbibed the spirit of both 'Gita' and 'Bhagwat' as he was full of yoga and bhakti:

"Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads! Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut? Open thy eyes and see thy God is not before thee!"

The poet gives importance to work. For him, work is worship. He is not at all interested in rituals. The very idea of 'deliverance' is an anathema to him:

"Deliverance? Where is this deliverance to be found? Our master himself has joyfully taken upon him the bonds of creation; he is bound with us all forever."

Here the poet reminds us of the Bhakti poets who want to come again and again to this world in order to perform Bhakti. The above lyric is both traditional and modern. Its appeal is universal.

6.4 Tagore's Patriotism

Tagore was a politically conscious writer. He has written a number of patriotic songs. Our National Anthem is also written by him. As regards the patriotic songs of 'Gitanjali', the 35th song holds a great significance. This political lyric is said to be included in the 'Gitanjali' from one of his Bengali works written much earlier. This lyric is perhaps the most famous one of Tagore's illustrious book. No school curriculum is complete without this song and very often it is entitled as "Motherland". When Tagore wrote it, somewhere in between 1903 – 10, Iqbal was also chanting "Saare Jahaan se Accha Hindustan Humara." These two poems were very popular during the pre independence era. Of course, Iqbal's Quami Tarana (National song) was published in 1904 in an Urdu magazine called "Zamana" in Kanpur and it got tremendous popularity leaving all songs far behind. But Tagore's patriotic songs forced the people to come in some measure out of their narrow cell and made them think of broader issues affecting humanity. His patriotism is not confined to a particular country, it is widespread. It transcends the territorial boundaries and aims at the introduction of sublime values of fearlessness, truthfulness and unity. Look what he prays to god –

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow
domestic walls
Where words come out from the depth of truth

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection
 Into that heaven of freedom, my Father,
 Let my country awake.”

The above lyric sums up Tagore’s philosophy. If the avid Gitanjali lovers were asked to name the only one lyric which represents him in totality, they will name the 35th song of the Gitanjali. In this short lyric, the poet prays to god for the true freedom of his country. He wants spiritual emancipation for India. He asks for a heaven free from the bondage of caste, creed, selfishness and violence. This is the vision he has for India and for the entire world. This is completely in consonance with the Indian culture.

6.5 Tagore’s Language

The language of Tagore is very simple. Whatever he wrote in English was not at all difficult. It seems he was a follower and practitioner of biblical English. The English of Tagore and Gandhi was simple while the English used by Aurobindo and Radhakrishnan was very difficult. The language we see in the Gitanjali touches our heart. Tagore believed in simplicity which is evident by the usage of simple words in his songs rather than high sounding philosophical words. He never used figures of speech deliberately, they automatically came in. The use of alliteration, simile, onomatopoeia, etc added beauty to his poetry, yet never looked out of place.

The poet is a master of words and a maker of magical music. Sometimes, he uses a single word and makes it extremely significant and suggestive. For example, in the 14th song of Gitanjali, he contrasts the smallness of his desires with the greatness of God’s gifts. His feelings are original and great. He has a holy feeling, a great satisfaction, “day by day thou art making me worthy of the simple, great gifts that thou gavest me unasked- this sky and the light, this body and the life and the mind- saving me from perils of overmuch desire.”

The contrast between simple and great and the word unasked describes the inscrutable ways of God. He is so kind that he gives without asking! This is the greatest devotion and it certainly brings man closer to God.

Rich in sublimity, remarkable for its Bhakti (devotion), full of music and melody, the Gitanjali has become a perennial source of pleasure and bliss to the lovers of poetry.

6.6 Some Important Songs of Gitanjali

- 1) The very first lyric of the Gitanjali is suffused with devotion. It is a song offered to god in a spirit of all humility. The poet has surrendered himself to God. He believes that God continues to pour His blessings on His creatures through the ages. He is kind and generous. He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent.

We must change ourselves into ideal beings as God aspires for. Tagore believes in the immortality of soul and also in the hindu doctrine of transmigration.

He has been influenced by the Upanishads and the Gita. The second canto of the Gita had tremendously influenced him.

- 2) The second lyric shows the identification of the self with God. This is the experience of the mystic. He loses his identity and merges his personality with God to achieve a perfect communion with him. The lyric is remarkable for its feeling of devotion to God. Mysticism and devotion become one here.
- 3) The third lyric highlights the presence of God in every object of nature. God is present in all the objects he has created. God sings his song which captivates the poet and he cries out “my master” in full dedication.
- 4) The fourth lyric is full of the feeling of touching atheism. The mystic poet is not prosaic at all. He addresses God as his maker. He derives his origin from Him. The presence of Lord keeps him away from the evils.
- 5) The thirty- fifth lyric of ‘Gitanjali’ has become the most famous poem by Tagore. The poet prays to God for the enlightenment and emancipation of his Motherland. He wants freedom from the darkness of life. He wants his country to remain free from narrow mindedness and bondage. He is in conformity with the Vedic seers who said,” Let noble thoughts come to us from every side.”
- 6) The third last song is essentially mystic in nature. The poet has longed for the company of his maker through his songs. This has been his mission throughout his life. He has dedicated himself to God. These songs sung in His praise have made him wise, with joys and sorrows. His songs would lead him to his destination- the palace of the divine and he would have a reunion with God.
- 7) The penultimate lyric of Gitanjali shows Tagore as a word-painter par excellence. A painter paints by brush. The poet employs words, the painter colours. Tagore was both a painter and a poet. The poet drew the picture of God. Beautiful it was, but he could not explain the meaning when asked for. Similarly, he sang songs in His praise. People asked the meaning, and he could not tell, “God sits smiling.”
- 8) The poet realises that for knowing God, absolute faith is necessary. There should be complete dedication, total surrender to God. Forget yourself, merge your personality with this His

personality. This is the supreme form of Bhakti and mysticism. Tagore was a devotee and also a mystic.

- 9) The concluding lyric of the Gitanjali is the symbol of poet's absolute surrender through a number of images. Tagore is also a great poet of nature. Just as a cloud bends and brings showers, the poet will bend and offer everything that he has at His feet. He will merge himself with God. As a river flows into the sea, he will be one with God. As the cranes fly to their nests after a day's hard labour he will also take rest in his eternal home, in the company of God.

The poet has surrendered himself and this is the befitting offering to God.

6.7 Summary

The Gitanjali is a collection of 103 lyrics which are unique in their lyricism, mysticism and devotion. It is a blend of tradition and modernity, mysticism and neo mysticism, nationalism and internationalism. Though Tagore continued to experiment with the other forms of literature with effortless ease, yet his name has become synonymous with the Gitanjali, largely because of the Nobel Prize it fetched for him. This is not to say that his other poems or writings are not great. Some of his poems may even surpass the lyrics of Gitanjali. Urvashi is one of the best lyrics of our literature. His novels, short stories and plays are significant. He is considered to be the "father of modern short story writing" in India, "father of lyrical prose" and above all the torch bearer of modernity in our modern literature. No other literary personality, except perhaps Eliot has exercised such a great impact on our literature in the twentieth century as Rabindranath Tagore.

6.8 Questions

1. How we can say that Rabindranath Tagore was a mystic?
2. How many lyrics are available in Gitanjali?
3. Write a short note on Tagore's Lyricism.
4. Write the one lyric which represents Tagore in totality?
5. What does represent the concluding lyric of the Gitanjali?

BLOCK-5

NOTES

Unit-7 : Ramayana

STRUCTURE

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7.0 Introduction

The ‘Ramayana’ is one of the greatest epics of the global literature. Valmiki, who is referred to as “father of poetry” has authored it. The details of his life are not available but it is said that he was a robber who made a living out of robbing people. But after realising his folly, he turned to God to lead a saintly life. Inspired by sage Narad and Blessed by Lord Brahma, he decided to sing the achievements of Rama – an ideal human being.

7.1 Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (1878-1972)

Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, popularly known as “Rajaji” or “CR” belonged to a class of distinguished politicians and patriots. He was an original thinker and a close follower of Mahatma Gandhi, often referred to as the “conscience – keeper of the Mahatma”. He participated in the freedom movement of India and spent many years in Jail while being an active member of the freedom struggle. Post the independence of India; he rendered significant services to the Nation in different positions such as the Chief Minister of Madras, Governor of West Bengal, Home Minister of India and the Governor – General of India. He has a place in the General Knowledge books as the first Indian Governor General of India.

Initially, Rajaji supported Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India. With the passage of time he fell out with him due to disagreement over the policies of the Government. He went on to become the founder of the Swatantra Party, which had an impressive army of great intellectual leaders, scholars as well as a few mass leaders. The party gained reasonable ground in Gujarat and Rajasthan, but its influence dwindled after the demise of Rajaji making it a thing of the past.

Rajaji lives today because of his writings. He was a unique story – teller and was very influential in popularising Valmiki’s “Ramayana” and Vyasa’s “Mahabharata”. He has presented both the epics in an all – inclusive style making them appealing to all age groups and genders. His writings were well accepted by children, youths and grown up and admired by both men and women of the society. The immaculate presentation abilities of Rajaji lend a charismatic charm to his ‘Ramayana’ which binds the reader to the book and leaving it mid – way becomes nearly impossible for the readers.

Rajaji was extremely well read being an avid reader of the classics of both English and Indian Literature. He had seriously read the Vedas, the Upanishads, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Iliad, Odyssey, Divine Comedy and Paradise Lost. He was in a position to comment upon the utility of mythology authoritatively. The fashionable youth of today often dismiss the old books simply by saying that it is a myth and holds no relevance in our modern times. Rajaji asks them to shun this belief and propounds the relevance of mythology in the following words,

“Greece – the Greece which we all admire is gone, but Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey remain and will remain forever not only in Greek, but in all the languages of the civilized world. In a similar sense, Valmiki’s Ramayana lives in all the tongues of civilized people whatever may happen to India and its politics.”

The Ramayana is partly history and biography, but it is largely a part of Hindu mythology. It is impossible to understand Greek life and Greek civilization without having knowledge of Zeus, Apollo, Hercules, Venus, Nestor, Paris, Priam, Helen, Odysseus and others. Similarly, we cannot learn about ‘Hindu Dharma’ if we do not know about Rama, Seeta, Bharata, Lakshmana, Ravana, Vibhishana, Kumbharkarna, Meghanad and Hanuman. We cannot dispense with mythology as it along with philosophy and rituals form the three pillars of ancient religions. Rajaji remarks cogently, “The attitude towards things spiritual in nature which belong to a particular set of people cannot be grasped, preserved or conveyed unless we have all of these three. Even an iconoclast like Bernard Shaw has acknowledged the essentiality of myths.”

Chakravarti Rajagopalachari appeals to the young students in schools and colleges to read our old classics like Ramayana and the Mahabharata reasoning that the youth will emerge with greater courage, stronger will power and purer mind after going through these books. These books will make the youngsters a better person as despite having a captivating narration like a storybook; the Ramayana is much more than the story book. It is a “record of the mind and spirit of our own forefathers who cared for the good much more than the pleasant and who saw more of the mystery of life than we can do in our interminable pursuit for petty illusory achievements in the material plane.”

Rajaji stresses upon the significance of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata as they bind us together as a nation despite our diversity of castes, creeds and languages. As such, Valmiki and Vyasa are our first National poets followed by Kalidasa, one of the supreme poet - artists of the world. The poetic genius of the trio of Valmiki, Vyasa and Kalidasa make them indispensable to the Indian culture by familiarizing us with our ancient heritage which according to Rajaji, "is necessary if we desire to preserve our individuality as a nation and serve the world through 'dharma' which alone can save mankind from error and extinction."

7.2 The Origin of the Ramayana

The traditionalists and some devotees of Rama maintain that Valmiki wrote the 'Ramayana' during the life time of Bhagawan Ram. But an objective analysis compels us to believe that the story of Rama (Rama Katha) had been in vogue, long before Valmiki shaped his epic. The time span of Valmiki cannot be determined. The description of the war as given in the Ramayana proves that it is quite ancient. It is believed that he recited his Ramayana much before Lord Mahavira and Lord Buddha. He has depicted Rama not as an incarnation of God, but as a great and unique man. Though some of the verses of the Ramayana describe Rama as a divine being, yet by and large, he remains an ideal man who performs all his duties assigned to him by his parents. The concept of incarnation was developed much later. Perhaps, it came into existence in the Puranic period. It did cast a spell on the people of India and they started worshipping Rama. Till today, the Hindus worship Rama and there are numerous temples of Lord Rama not only in India, but outside India as well.

The origin of Ramayana is related to Narada, the immortal ever moving saint who was asked to name the greatest virtuous and wise soul by Valmiki. The saint answered by naming Rama as the greatest virtuous and wise soul and an ideal man. Valmiki was impressed by his story and continued to think of Rama. While walking on the riverbank of Tamasa, he saw two loving birds sporting and making love on a nearby tree. Suddenly, the male bird fell down hit by a hunter's arrow. Seeing her lover lying in a pool of blood, the female bird started lamenting. Her lamenting moved Valmiki and he cursed the hunter, "O hunter, as you have killed one of these love – intoxicated birds, you will wander homeless all your long years."

The sage wondered why he lost himself in anger and why he cursed the hunter. But soon, he realised that it was the will of God and that his pity had taken the form of a beautiful verse. He went in for meditation and while meditating, he saw Lord Brahma who blessed him. He asked Valmiki not to fear the incident and added that all these things happened so that he could start the story of Rama for the welfare of the world. Lord Brahma gave him the vision and power to see all that happened and how the characters thought and

acted. Thus, Ramayana, the immortal epic written by Valmiki came into existence.

7.3 The Ramayana

The Ramayana of Valmiki is the first and one of the greatest epics of global literature. Though, the Rig Veda is hailed as the first book in the library of mankind, yet its authorship is attributed to God making Valmiki the first poet of humanity, thereby giving him the title of “Father of Poetry”. It seems that Valmiki had shaped his Ramayana much before the Greek poet Homer often referred as the “Father of Western Poetry” wrote Iliad.

The Ramayana is an epic. An epic is a long narrative poem written on a great man or a sacred subject in a sublime style. It is usually divided in cantos or books or kands. The Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Iliad, the Odyssey, the Shahnamah, the Aenied, the Paradise Lost and the RamCharitmanas are the most famous epics of the world. In terms of impact and inspiration, Valmiki’s Ramayana and Vyasa’s Mahabharata surpass all the literary works of the world. Since India and Greece had epics, the literary pundits of both the countries propounded some principles for this form and most of the epic writers tried to pen their epics based on these guidelines. But, they also took liberty as the poets are above rules and no critic or acharya can restrict them to bind their creativity in a set of rules.

An epic must have following elements in it :

1. Plot
2. Characters
3. Eternal and Universal Message
4. Sublime Language

If we consider Ramayana in the light of the above parameters, we can emphatically say that it has an excellent and gripping plot which binds you to the book. The Ramayana narrates in detail the story of Rama and his great efforts to make the land free of the devils of the society. As the story goes, king Dashrath ruled the great kingdom of Kosala. The capital of Kosala was Ayodhya, a city situated on the banks of river Sarayu. He was a very powerful and popular king. Everything was fine with him but a feeling of sadness and despondency overtook him as he had no progeny. So, he decided to perform a “Yagna”. The Yagna was executed under the guidance of sage Shringa.

In the meantime, the Gods in heaven were shocked to see the crooked designs of Ravana. He used to torture the people knowing well that because of the blessings of Lord Brahma, the Gods, angels, Gandharvas and Devils could not kill him. “In his arrogance, Ravana didn't care to ask for security against mankind as Brahma revealed this fateful omission, all the Gods rejoiced and turned to Lord Vishnu”. On their persistent request Hari agreed that he would be born as four sons of King Dashratha, who was then performing a sacrifice

for progeny. The Gods were happy with him sending Payasam for his wife. They asked him to serve this divine beverage to his wife in order to have sons. Dashratha followed all these instructions and in due course of time, his sons were born. Kausalya gave birth to Rama, Kaikeyi to Bharata and Sumitra to Laxmana and Shatrughana.

All the children got education and turned out extraordinarily good in scriptures and warfare. Rama's fame as a chivalrous and brave youth spread everywhere. So, Vishwamitra came to Ayodhya and requested Dashratha to send Rama to kill the devils Maareecha and Subaahu. After initial dithering, he sent Rama and Laxmana with Vishwamitra following the advice of Vashistha. Dashrath directed Rama for obeying Vishwamitra without questioning him. Rama killed Subaahu and Tataka. Vishwamitra taught Rama the use, control and recall of the various divine weapons and Rama in his turn imparted the knowledge to Laxmana. Both the brothers were exceedingly happy in the company of their Guru.

As the king Janak intended to perform a great sacrifice, Vishwamitra took Rama and Laxmana to Janak's city. The king welcomed the sage and enquired about boys. Vishwamitra wanted Rama to marry Seeta. Janak understood it and allowed Rama to see a special bow which was kept with him and required immense might and courage to lift it. Rama, with the blessings and permission of his Guru, lifted the bow effortlessly and drew the string back with irresistible force that the mighty bow snapped with a crash. Janak decided that his daughter would be wedded to Rama. Accordingly, the marriage was held. There was happiness and joy all around. Rama was loved and admired by everyone in Mithila.

Dashratha wished to crown Rama as "Yuvraj" (the crown prince) and make him the de facto ruler. He on the advice of his holy men selected the auspicious month of Chaitra (March – April) for the anointing of Rama.

In the meantime, Manthara (the maid of Kaikeyi) poisoned the ears of Kaikeye and asked her to demand that Dashratha should crown Bharata as the Yuvraj and send Rama to the forest for fourteen years. Kaikeye did the same. Dashratha was stunned and unable to speak a word. He tried to make Kaikeye understand the implications of her unreasonable demands, but Kaikeye remained adamant. After coming to know about this, Rama cheerfully decided to go to forest. Laxmana and Seeta also accompanied him. Everyone cursed Kaikeye. As a shock, Dashratha died.

Bharatha and Shatrughna were summoned to return to Ayodhya by Guru Vashishtha. On knowing the role of Kaikeye in the exile of Rama, Bharata wept and criticized his mother and decided to bring Rama back to Ayodhya. He along with his troop went to Chitrakoot requesting Rama to return and run the state. But, he refused and counselled him to look after the kingdom of Kosal. Bharata was broken, yet he agreed to discharge the king's duties on the insistence of Rama. He stayed at Nandigram and installed the

sandals of Rama on the throne of Ayodhya signifying the rule of Rama on Ayodhya and making it clear that he was the caretaker of the state.

After Bharata's departure Rama also left Chitrakoot. They enjoyed the beauty of nature, met various saints during the course of their journey and also fought against the evil forces. After spending ten years in the forest, Rama came to Panchavati. This marked the foray of Rama to the South zone of India. Things were going on smoothly until Soorpanakha came to Panchavati and fell in love with Rama. She tried to lure Rama and Lakshmana, but when the brothers did not respond to her overtures, she attempted to hit Seeta. Rama saved Seeta from Soorpanakha and Lakshmana punished her by maiming her with his sword. She then went to Khara and Dooshan who decided to avenge her insult. A battle took place between Rama and the army of Khara - Dooshan. Rama killed both Khara and Dooshan and Soorpanakha was surprised to see their valour.

She reported the matter to her brother, Ravana. He made a plan to abduct Seeta. He asked Mareecha to execute his plan. Mareecha was reluctant to carry on the execution and tried his best to prevent it, but he had to follow the orders of his master. He transformed himself into a golden stag and started wandering here and there. Seeta looked at the stag and was spellbound by its beauty. Out of her enthusiasm, she called Rama and Lakshmana to see the beautiful Deer. Although Lakshmana smelled the rat, Seeta pleaded Rama again and again to catch it. Rama couldn't say no to Seeta. He advised Lakshmana to stay vigilant and left the cottage to catch the Deer. Mareecha took Rama far out so that Ravana could execute his plan. He was tired of chasing the Deer, so he bent his bow and sent forth an arrow. It pierced the stag and he transformed in his natural self. He simulated Rama's voice "Ah Sita! Ah Lakshmana!" and died.

Seeta heard the voice and was disturbed. She asked Lakshmana to go immediately to help his brother. Lakshmana requested her not to lose heart and cautioned her not to be misled by such sounds as it could be a sinister design of the demons, but she didn't believe Lakshmana. Rather, she doubted his integrity, virtually abused him and threatened to commit suicide. Despondent, Disgusted Lakshmana left the cottage and went to search Rama who while seeing him understood the whole drama. He told Lakshmana that Seeta would not be in the cottage and turned out to be correct. In the meantime, Ravana abducted Seeta and brought her to Lanka. Jatayu, the bird challenged him showing great heart and conviction, but his efforts went in vain as Ravana was successful in his attempt and in turn left Jatayu wounded. Seeta wept repenting her behaviour towards Lakshmana. Ravana put her in the Ashoka Vatika where she was closely guarded by the womenfolk of the kingdom.

Rama and Lakshmana hurried back to the cottage and did not find Seeta. Rama burst into tears and Lakshmana consoled him. The two brothers searched every nook and corner of the surroundings without any results. They saw a wounded Jatayu who narrated the entire incident in his last few

moments. Rama was moved to tears by seeing the state of Jatayu. They performed Jatayu's obsequies as Jatayu was a second father to them.

Rama and Lakshmana wandered about in search of Seeta. Passing through forest, they were caught by Kabandha, who was a very powerful demon. They severed his arms. He explained to Rama that he was cursed by Indra and requested them to commit his body to flames. He also advised them to the Pampa; help Sugreeva who lived on the Rishyamooka hill because of the terror of his elder brother Vali. "Sugreeva will help you in searching Seeta and you will succeed in your attempt."

Rama and Lakshmana did follow his words. They developed a friendship with Sugreeva. Rama killed Vali and made Sugreeva the king and Vali's son Angad, the prince. Sugreeva's army went in all four directions to search Seeta. It was to the credit of Hanuman that he was successful in locating Seeta. He saw her surrounded by a group of she - devils. Seeta was pleased to see Hanuman and was convinced that Ravana would pay for his deeds.

Rama tried to avoid war but Ravana was adamant for a war not heeding to the advice of his brother Vibhishana and others. The result was that a war took place. It went on for several days and on the tenth day, Ravana was killed. This day is celebrated as Vijayadashami which signifies the victory of good over the evil. The mighty warriors of Ravana comprising of brave soldiers like Kumbhakarna, Meghanad and Ravana himself, fought bravely but lost to Rama as he stood for the good.

Vibhishana was crowned as the king of Lanka. Hanuman brought Seeta to Rama who spoke very harsh words to her. She requested him to desist from the use of such uncultured words. Her eyes flashed fire and she ordered Lakshmana to kindle a big fire and jumped into the flames invoking "Agni" to prove her purity. Agni – the god of fire presented her to Rama, testifying her purity. Gods, Dashratha from the heaven and all the saints of the time praised Seeta.

Rama, Lakshmana, and Seeta returned to Ayodhya. It took twenty days for them to reach Ayodhya from Lanka. The city of Ajodhya lit up and was full of joy. This marked the celebration of Diwali and on auspicious and joyous note of celebration, Valmiki concluded his Ramayana.

The plot of the Ramayana is well knit. Neatly divided in six Sections (Kands), the plot of the epic envelops us. Though, there are interpolations in the story, yet an intelligent reader can make out what the poet wants to convey. The story of the Ganga, the life of Vishwamitra and the description of Kumbhakarna make it far livelier than any work of fiction. Verily, the truth is in Valmiki's case, stranger than the fiction.

7.4 Characters

Any story will look half baked if the author has not done full justice to its characters. Very often, we find stories with compelling plots being let down

by the lack of characterization of the protagonists of the story. However, Valmiki has not only succeeded in painting a splendid picture of the pivotal characters like Rama, Seeta, Lakshmana, Ravana, Dashratha and Bharata but also tailored the small characters like Jatayu, Manthara, Mandodari and Vali to perfection.

Rama is the supreme hero of literature. Dr Lohia used to say that the like of Rama is impossible to get and that there cannot be another Rama. As an obedient son, he renounced his kingdom, lived in the forest for a period of fourteen years. He was a caring and loving elder brother. He admonished Lakshmana when he spoke critical words for their father and step mother. He calmed Bharata down and impressed upon him the need to fulfil the vows given to their father. He was an ideal friend who crowned Sugreeva and Vibhishana as the kings of their respective states. He killed Ravana but maintained dignity and showed respect to him. He loved Seeta heart and soul and waged a war virtually for retaining her. This shows his valour and love. He always remained calm. He never used harsh words for Kaikeyi and remained grateful to his friends like Sugreeva, Hanumana and Vibhishana. He was an ideal human being in every respect and remains the best example of dheerodatta hero since the days of Valmiki.

Seeta is the symbol of womanhood. She stood by Rama through thick and thin and was with him in all the phases of his life. It is evident by the fact that she accompanied him to the forests. She worked hard in the forests. Even Ravana was astonished to see her will power and resolve. He kept her in the Ashoka garden. She always treated him as trifling telling him that he would be mortally punished by her brave husband.

Seeta is normally taken to be a symbol of a typical Indian lady, but Valmiki's Sita is assertive. She can challenge Rama's remarks about her, can be harsh to Lakshmana and can dismiss Ravana as a coward who clandestinely abducted her.

Lakshmana was dedication personified. He was devoted to Rama to such an extent that he went to the extreme step of challenging his father's decision. His bravery, his love for his brother and his respect for his sister in law make him one of the greatest epic characters of the world.

Bharata knew no evils. He was purity personified. He is a dheersant hero. He did not know that his mother would come in the way of Rama's coronation. Bharata never had an eye for the kingdom. His is a supreme example of renunciation. He was so much in love with his elder brother Rama that he virtually left his mother staying at Nandigram.

Dashratha's character was tragic. On one hand he loved Rama most and on the other, he was bound by his word to Kaikeyi to send him to forests for a period of fourteen years. He was a caring father and love for his sons was so great that he died in their absence. He was a man of his words. This is evident as he gave Kaikeyi what she had asked for despite having a different opinion

on it. Dashratha remains an example of the fact that how an old man can dance to the tune of his relatively young wife and yet remain true to his words.

The other characters of Ramayana are also great and have place of their own in the epic. Kaikeyi's adamancy, Sumitra's patience and Kosalya's tolerance impress us. The different shades of woman's characters are present in the Ramayana.

Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Meghanada are also impressive characters. Meghanada, also referred as Indrajit as he winning over Lord Indra was a fearless fighter who obeyed his father and sacrificed his life for him. Kumbhakarna criticized his brother but decided to fight for the sake of his honour. Ravana fought fantastically well and lost his life like a battling warrior. He respected Seeta and ignored the suggestions of his minister of using violence against her. Vibhishana's character shows that there are few people who will always stand for the just cause. He testifies to the truth that the minority is always right and the strongest man in the world stands alone.

7.5 The Style and Technique of Ramayana

The style and technique of Valmiki shows that he belongs to the top league of poets in the world. He has used all the emotions (Rasas) in his epic. The pangs of separation, the joy of meeting, the element of pathos, the terror of Ravana, the humorous description of Kumbhakarna and the bravery of Rama and other warriors make the book full of life. The language used by the poet is simple and the meter used is anushtup. The poet employs various figures of speech such as simile, pun, alliteration, metaphor not in a laboured way, but in a natural manner.

7.6 Summary

To sum up, the Ramayana of Valmiki is a base book for an Indian. It is a great epic full of a sublime message. It is the truth that prevails is the message of this pious book. Valmiki treats all characters as human beings lending a note of realism to the Ramayana which is not found in works of other poets. Valmiki's narrative is splendid displaying sympathy and neutrality to every character. He never speaks through his characters but allows the characters to speak for them.

7.7 Questions :

1. Chakravarti Rajagopalachari was famous with which of the names?
2. What did Chakravarti Rajagopalachari appeal to the young students?
3. Write about the origin of the Ramayana.
4. What Manthara poisoned the ears of Kaikeye?
5. How we can say that Seeta is the symbol of womanhood?
6. Prove that Ramayana of Vamiki is a base book for an Indian.

M.A. English Literature

Paper-V : Literature of Human Values

SESSIONAL PAPER-I

NOTES

Q.1. Answer the following (any ten) :

20

1. What was the full name of C.R.?
2. What is the literary form of the Ramayana?
3. Who killed Indrajit?
4. When was the Gitanjali's English translation published?
5. Who wrote the introduction of Gitanjali in 1912?
6. Write the most important trait of Tagore's poetry as experienced by you while going through the Gitanjali.
7. Why is the farmer more important for Tagore than the temple?
8. Where was Kahlil Gibran born?
9. When was the book *The Prophet* published?
10. What was the name of the lady seer (Seeress)?
11. What is the name of metre used by Valmiki in his Ramayana?
12. When did Rabindranath Tagore get the Nobel Prize for literature?

Q.-2. Write short answers of the following: (Any five)

20

1. What is the story of the genesis of the Ramayana?
2. Why did Vishwamitra visit Dasaratha?
3. Explain the grief of Bharata.
4. Why Gibran is called a master of poetic prose?
5. Why our children are not our children?
6. Why does Tagore's poetry appeal to us?
7. What does Tagore want for his mother land?

Q.-3. Answer the following questions (any three) :

60

1. What is the relevance of the Ramayana for the readers of the 21st century?
2. Who is the character in the Ramayana you like most and why?
3. What are the major characteristics of Tagore's poetry?
4. Comment upon the lyricism of Tagore with reference to the Gitanjali.
5. Do you think the relevance of Khalil Gibran's essays in day- to-day life?
6. Write an essay on the style and technique of Khalil Gibran with reference to *The Prophet*.

M.A. English Literature

Paper-V : Literature of Human Values

SESSIONAL PAPER-II

NOTES

Q-1. Answer the following (any ten) :

20

1. When did the first International Conference on Peace and Non-violent Action take place?
2. Who delivered the inaugural address for the Second International Conference on Peace and Nonviolent Action?
3. What are the three degrees of mildness? Write on the basis of Non-violence and world Peace?
4. Why should the sale of lotteries be banned?
5. How can you make full use of the summer holidays?
6. What can be the positive role of the film industry towards the development of our youth?
7. What is the dividing line between science and spirituality?
8. How can we develop a non-violent personality?
9. What are the three affections or morbid elements of the body?
10. Write the two main streams of thought in Indian Philosophy.
11. What are the four pillars of our being?
12. Indicate the point of Darshan Kendra (the centre of intuition).

Q.-2. Answer the following (any five) :

20

1. Give Acharya Tulsi's views on nonviolence as a solution to war.
2. Is it possible to build a society free from exploitation? Do you think that the Anuvrat Movement can be an effective instrument towards achieving the goal?
3. Why is Acharya Tulsi in favour of wearing Khadi?
4. What is the root of nonviolence according to Acharya Mahapragya?
5. What is the greatest weakness of the present system of education?
6. Why is training in non-violence essential?

Q.-3. Answer the followings (any three) :

60

1. What are the views of Acharya Tulsi on the language problem of India? Do you agree with his views? Give a reasoned answer.

2. Elucidate the statement that Acharya Tulsi is an idealist, one may say a practical idealist.
3. Summarise the views of Acharya Mahapragya on the development of an independent personality.
4. What is the utility of the science of living in the opinion of Acharya Mahapragya?
5. Violence is not a permanent solution of any problem. Do you agree with the views of Acharya Mahapragya? Give a cogent reply.
6. India has not seen greater practitioners and propagators of non-violence than Acharya Tulsi and Acharya Mahapragya. Testify the comment with reference to the books you have read.

NOTES