

**DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL**

**MASTER OF ARTS-PHILOSOPHY
SEMESTER-I**

**INDIAN ETHICS
ELECTIVE-104
BLOCK-2**

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

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FOREWORD

The Self Learning Material (SLM) is written with the aim of providing simple and organized study content to all the learners. The SLMs are prepared on the framework of being mutually cohesive, internally consistent and structured as per the university's syllabi. It is a humble attempt to give glimpses of the various approaches and dimensions to the topic of study and to kindle the learner's interest to the subject

We have tried to put together information from various sources into this book that has been written in an engaging style with interesting and relevant examples. It introduces you to the insights of subject concepts and theories and presents them in a way that is easy to understand and comprehend.

We always believe in continuous improvement and would periodically update the content in the very interest of the learners. It may be added that despite enormous efforts and coordination, there is every possibility for some omission or inadequacy in few areas or topics, which would definitely be rectified in future.

We hope you enjoy learning from this book and the experience truly enrich your learning and help you to advance in your career and future endeavors.



INDIAN ETHICS

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Unit 2 Mimamsa Ethics (Part One)

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BLOCK-2 INDIAN ETHICS

Introduction to Block

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Unit-9 Deals with Upanishads ethics which focuses on Souls and Brahman

Unit-10 Deals with the dilemmas in Mahabharata

Unit-11 Deals with ethics as expanded in Bhagvad Gita

Unit-12 Talks about rules in Arthasastra and its implications

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UNIT 8 VEDIC ETHICS

STRUCTURE

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.3 Rta
- 8.4 Morality
- 8.5 Tapa
- 8.6 Sacrifices , Rites and Ritual
- 8.7 Karma
- 8.8 Let's Sum Up
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- 8.10 Questions for review
- 8.11 Suggested Readings
- 8.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

8.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the basic features of Vedic Philosophy
- know the philosophical understanding of Vedic Philosophy

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In the Rig Veda may seem a somewhat barren field for the study of Ethics. There is in it no ethical speculation in the strict sense, and even moral conduct receives but small attention.

It may be said without exaggeration that none of the questions treated in modern European ethical works have yet been raised.

There is no discussion of the moral end; there are no problems arising out of seemingly conflicting duties, nor regarding the relation of the

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individual to society. And yet in any study of Indian ethical thought we shall find it desirable to begin with the Rig Veda, for we shall find there the springs of the ethical thinking as well as of the religious thinking of the Hindus, The river of Hinduism has followed a strangely tortuous course, in which it has been fed by many streams, but at every point it retains something of the character of those springs in which it took its rise.

There are no doubt many ethical conceptions in modern Hindu thought that we shall not be able to trace back to the Vedas, but on the other hand there are many that we can so trace back, and there are others that are less direct developments of tendencies that may be discovered there.

There is a further consideration that makes it imperative that we should begin our study of the history of Hindu ethics with the Rig Veda. Ethics for most European students means the ethical systems wrought out by Ancient Greek and Modern European philosophers.

And these again presuppose the civilization, social organization, and, to put it broadly, the whole culture of these comparatively limited sections of human society.

The thought of Ancient Greece and Modern Europe represent, indeed, but a single stream of thought. It is a stream that has been joined by many tributaries.

Yet the thought and life of Modern Europe are so related to those of Ancient Greece that the modern student readily feels himself at home in the study of the latter.

8.2 RIG VEDA

When we turn to Indian literature, on the other hand, we find a civilization, social organization, and intellectual outlook, that in their character were almost as remote from those of the West, and that until modern times were as free from the influence of the West as we can well imagine. In thinking of the ethical problems that confront us in Western thought, we are apt to forget how much is presupposed in the very setting of these problems.

The setting is familiar to us, and consequently its significance tends not to be fully recognized. But in studying the problems of Indian ethical thought we shall at every point be conscious of the need of understanding the conditions under which they arose, especially the religious and social conditions. A study of Indian ethics will, accordingly, involve some study of problems not themselves strictly ethical, and also some study of conditions that held prior to the rise of ethical speculation proper. In undertaking this study, it will be necessary for us to seek in the Vedas and in other Indian literature the germs from which ethical ideas developed, and also to exhibit features of Indian life and thought, the connection of which with our subject may seem even more remote.

The Rig Veda consists of hymns addressed to the gods, hymns of praise and prayer.

Most of the gods were originally personifications of natural phenomena. In some cases the connection has become obscure, and in almost all cases features have been introduced into the characters of the gods that cannot be shown to have any connection with the original physical phenomena. Yet the characters and in many cases the names of the gods point to such an original identification.

Such a natural polytheism could not obviously form a foundation for any satisfactory ethic, nor indeed for a very satisfactory morality. The absence of unity in the universe as it is conceived by the strict polytheist, the existence of Powers antagonistic to each other, or at any rate not united in purpose; these are features characteristic of all systems of natural polytheism that we know. Such a religious outlook cannot have as its counterpart a conception of the ideal life as a unity in which the unifying principle is a single absolute good. In Greece, for example, it was only when the religious myths came to be regarded as myths that ethical speculation in the strict sense began. The myths of the Rig Veda represented to the ancient Aryan almost literal truth, and consequently we cannot expect to find in the Hymns ethical speculation of a very advanced order.

In the character of the Vedic gods the moral features are far less prominent than the physical. The gods are not generally conceived as immoral. There are no doubt stories related of some of the gods that

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reveal moral imperfection. In the character of Rudra there are features of a sinister order. He sends plagues upon man and beast; he is a robber, a deceiver, and a cheat. He is, generally, the god of destruction, a god to be feared and held in awe, as able to inflict or avert evil. To his sons, the Maruts, similar qualities belong in a less degree. 'Before the Maruts every creature is afraid.' Yet even in these gods we find qualities of a higher ethical value.

Rudra is celebrated as a healer as well as a destroyer; he both heals, and possesses and grants to men healing remedies.

These are the only gods in whom evil qualities are markedly obtrusive. It is characteristic of the Vedic gods that ethical qualities find but comparatively little place in their characters.

We may read hymn after hymn without coming to a single moral idea or epithet. Praise of the power and skill of the gods, prayer for temporal benefits, and celebration of the power of the sacrifices, these are the chief themes of the Rig Veda. Yet all this has to be qualified.

In certain notable ways its polytheism is modified. First of all, the gods are not in all cases sharply distinguished from one another. There are gods with identical qualities so that one or another god may be invoked indifferently. Again there are pairs and larger groups of gods with identical qualities, who are invoked jointly, as for example Indra-Agni, Indra- Soma, and Mitra-Varuna. Even more important than this is the fact that the worshipper tends to attribute to the god whom he addresses the qualities not of a god but of God.

This is the tendency that Max Muller has characterized as Henotheism. It is most marked in the case of certain gods, notably Indra, Varuna, Mitra, and Agni.

The names of the various gods are but names under which a single Reality is invoked. The following passages illustrate the tendency:

They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, and he is heavenly, nobly winged Garutman. To what is ONE sages give many a title: they call it Agni, Yama, Matarishvan.

Again two gods are regarded throughout the Rig Veda as occupying a position higher than the others.

Varuna is the greatest of the gods. The pre-eminence that belongs to him is not represented by the number of hymns addressed to him, for in this respect he ranks behind several other gods, but it lies in the supreme moral authority that resides in him.

Indra, on the other hand, is celebrated as, in a special degree, the possessor of power.

With Varuna is very frequently conjoined Mitra, who is hardly recognized as having any separate character.

The home of Mitra-Varuna is in heaven (RV.1:136.2.).

There they sit in their golden dwelling-place, supporters of mankind (RV.5:67.2.). Their eye is the sun, and with it they watch mankind. To Mitra-Varuna the Sun reports the deeds of men, watching the deeds of living creatures like a herdsman (RV.7:60.1-3.) In the fields and houses their spies keep unceasing watch (RV.7:61.3) and their spies are true and never bewildered. (RV.6:67.5) Nothing can happen without Varuna's knowledge, or without his sanction. Even the gods themselves follow his decree. (RV. 8:41.7.) These are but some of the functions that mark him out as supreme. Indra, as has been said, is celebrated as the possessor of power rather than as a moral ruler. It was he who conquered Vritra, a deed which is celebrated in many hymns, and it is deeds like this that are typical of his character.

He is also praised as liberal in the gifts that he bestows on men. In the later parts of the Rig-Veda there are passages where features of a more distinctively moral nature are ascribed to him, but over against these there are others where deeds of a less worthy kind are described.

It is very significant that by the time when the Atharva Veda was composed, Indra's position had been raised and Varuna's lowered: the supreme place in the pantheon, occupied in the Rig Veda by one who was pre-eminently the moral ruler of the universe, had been usurped by one whose special qualification was the possession of power, exercised non-morally. In this fact there are implications that will claim our attention later.

8.3 RTA

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We have so far said nothing of a conception that has far more importance than any other for our ethical study of the Rig Veda, the conception of Rita. This is a term which it is difficult to translate by any single English equivalent, but which we shall try to explain.

It is usually rendered 'Law' or 'Order' by English translators of the Vedas. It represents in a way both natural and moral order, and also that order which characterizes correct worship of the gods through sacrifice and prayer and all else that belongs to service of the gods.

The idea does not emerge for the first time in the Rig-Veda, but has been traced back to Indo-Iranian times.

But in the Rig Veda it has a new richness of content. It is through rita that the rivers flow; the dawn is born of rita; by rita the moon and stars keep their courses.

Again under the yoking of rita 'the moon and the stars keep their courses. Again 'under the yoking of rita 'the sacrificial fire is kindled; by rita the poet completes his hymn; the sacrificial chamber is designated the 'chamber of rita'.

These, chosen almost at random, are illustrations of the functions of rita as cosmic order and as the order that is involved in the proper expression of man's relation to the gods.

But these two senses in which the term is used are not clearly distinguished from one another, nor from the third sense of moral order. It is the same law or order that governs the course of nature, that is involved in the right ordering of the sacrifice, and that is manifested in the moral law. It is to this last aspect of rita that we must here specially direct our attention.

But it will not always be possible to keep the different aspects apart from each other.

The 'lords of order' are pre-eminently Varuna and Mitra.

Those who by Law uphold the Law, Lords of the shining light of Law, Mitra I call and Varuna.' (RV.1:23.5) But the same function is attributed to many other gods, notably to the other members of the group known as the Ādityas. It is, however, pre-eminently Varuna who is the guardian of rita in the sense of moral order, and it is specially as the possessor of this supreme moral authority that he is celebrated as the chief of the gods.

Indra is represented as saying:— But thou, O Varuna, if thou dost love me, King, discerning truth and right from falsehood, come and be Lord and Ruler of my kingdom. (RV.10:124.5) We do not look for strict consistency of thought in the Vedas, and no doubt numerous passages may be quoted in which other gods are given the supremacy. But the tendency is to attribute the pre-eminence to Varuna, and this in virtue of his ethical qualities, because he is guardian of rita.

While recognizing this, we must be careful not to understand rita as moral order, or possessing the full connotation that the term ‘moral order’ has in modern speech.

Bloomfield surely goes too far when he says that: ‘we have in connection with the rita, a pretty complete system of Ethics, a kind of Counsel of Perfection’.⁴ Any system of ethics that might be discovered in the Rig-Veda is of a very rudimentary sort. Yet it is very significant that at this early stage we should find such a unifying conception as that of Law or Order, pervading all things, expressing itself in the order of nature and in the manifestations of man’s religious life, and tending to be associated with one Supreme God.

But unfortunately long before the Vedic period ended other conceptions had arisen and displaced it, and in the history of Indian ethical thought it has not been upon the idea of an overruling God, righteous in Himself, seeking righteousness of His people, and helping them in the attainment of it, that the moral life has been grounded.

When we inquire further as to the content of rita thus viewed ethically, we find that rita is specially identified with truth.

All falsehood, Mitra-Varuna, ye conquer, and closely cleave unto the Law eternal.” Far from deceits, thy name dwelleth in holy Law. (RV.5:44.2) The Laws of Varuna are ‘ever true’. (RV.5:63.1.) We may indeed say that truth is the law of the Universe; it is the foundation not only of moral but also of cosmic order.

Truth is the base that bears the Earth. (RV.10:85.1) From Fervor kindled to its height, Eternal Law and Truth were born. (RV.10:190.1) And more striking than any of the other passages quoted is the description of Mitra-Varuna as:— ‘true to Law, born in Law, the strengtheners of Law, haters of the false’. (RV.7:66.13)

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Beyond this identification of rita with truth there is little definite mention of ethical qualities that go to form its content. The ‘pretty complete ethical system’ of which Bloomfield speaks certainly is not more than an embryonic one. We have references to Brihaspati, the ‘upholder of the mighty Law’ as ‘punisher of the guilty’ and ‘guilt-avenger’ (RV.2:23.17); the Adityas, ‘true to eternal Law’, are the ‘debt-exactors’ (RV.2:27.4.); the prayer is offered to Varuna that he would loose the worshipper ‘from sin as from a bond that binds me: may we swell, Varuna, thy spring of Order’ (RV.2:28.5) We find these and other gods besought to loose their worshippers from sin and to forgive sin.

It is clear enough that rita stands for moral order and is opposed to sin or unrighteousness, but we search in vain for clear indications as to forms that conduct, in accordance with rita takes as against conduct that is sinful. Not only so, but in following the scattered hints that we find as to the content of morality, it is difficult to discover any guiding thread. The conception of rita is so wide in its application that it loses correspondingly in depth.

8.4 MORALITY

On the other hand, when we approach the problem of the content of morality from the point of view of the ‘good’, we get as little satisfaction. For the writers of the Vedic hymns there were many goods, equally the objects of prayer to the gods — health, length of life, offspring, victory over enemies, skill in warfare, honor, freedom from sin.

The goods that they sought were mainly those obvious goods that appeal to a comparatively undeveloped people.

The virtues and vices that are definitely mentioned are such as have a bearing on life lived in pursuit of these simple ends. Following what scattered hints are to be found as to the content of the moral life, we may note in the first place that it is probable that moral duties were regarded as being owed only to one’s own people. In one place we are given a classification of sins as those committed ‘against the gods, our friend,

and our house's chieftain (RV.1:185.8) and again we have a reference to sins committed against 'the man who loves us... a brother, friend or comrade, the neighbor ever with us or a stranger' (RV.5:85.7). The stranger here referred to is no doubt the stranger within one's gates of one's own race. On the other hand, the Dasyus, the aboriginal inhabitants of the land, are contrasted with the Aryas as a wicked and godless people, and to them no special duty is recognized (RV.1:51.8).

Again in the small list of moral duties that we can put together, those that have to do with religious observance occupy, naturally, a prominent place. Liberality towards the priests is an important duty.

Agni, the man who giveth guerdon to the priests, like well-sewn armour thou guardest on every side. (RV.1:31.15)

There are many eulogies of the liberal man, among the most notable being that of the hymn to Dakshina (RV.10:107) and the hymn in praise of Liberality (RV.10:117). In the latter, especially, we have the idea of liberality freed very largely from sacerdotal implications.

'The riches of the liberal', it is said, 'never waste away.'

The man with food in store, who, when the needy comes in miserable case begging for bread to eat. Hardens his heart against him — even when of old he did him service, finds not one to comfort him. (RV.117.2.)

The grounds on which the duty is inculcated in this hymn are utilitarian, but it is likely that these utilitarian considerations are a later support to a duty, the significance of which was at first religious. This idea of liberality is one that found a place permanently in the thought and practice of the Hindu people, and all through it retains something of its original character.

Rita has been shown to be identified with truth: truth is a principle that belongs to the constitution of the universe. As a natural application of this, truthfulness is demanded of man, and lying is condemned as a sin. In one prayer (RV.10:9.8) the Waters are entreated to remove far from the worshipper the sin of lying or false swearing. The sin of 'injuring with double tongue a fellow mortal' (RV.1:147.5) is held up for condemnation. We meet in one hymn the protest, 'I use no sorcery with might or falsehood', and the indignant exclamation, 'Agni, who guard

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the dwelling-place of falsehood? Who are protectors of the speech of liars?' (RV.5:12) In a notable hymn Indra-Soma are praised as in a special way the supporters of truth and enemies of falsehood. Soma slays him who speaks untruly, and protects that which is true and honest. The prayer is offered that the speaker of untruth may be 'like water which the hollowed hand compresses'. And special punishment is invoked on false accusers.' (RV.7:104) Crimes of fraud and violence are condemned. To injure with double tongue a fellow mortal, 'to cheat as gamesters cheat at play', to lay a snare for another, to threaten another without offence of his, to be evil-minded, arrogant, rapacious, are sins against one's fellow-en that are held up to reprobation. The hatred even of enemies is more than once referred to as sinful.

The adversary, thief, and robber, those who destroy the simple and harm the righteous, the malicious — upon these judgment is invoked.

Notable also is the place that is given to friendship. In a hymn to the praise of Vach (speech) (RV.10:71) it is said that he who has abandoned his friend who knows the truth of friendship has no part in Vach; 'naught knows he of the path of righteous action'.

In all this there is nothing specially significant. The virtues and vices are such as we expect to see marked in such an early type of society; they are such as are connected with the very coherence of a society maintaining itself amid hostile peoples.

This brief discussion may help us in considering the idea of sin that is so prominent in some parts of the Rig Veda. We must be careful not to read into it all that belongs to the same conception in Modern Europe. It includes not only moral failure, but laxity and error in the performance of religious duties. It may be not only the outcome of conscious choice but may be committed sleeping as well as waking (RV.10:164.3), in ignorance as well as with full knowledge (RV.7:89.5).

One may be involved in the sin of others, so as to suffer for it, notably 'sins committed by our fathers' (RV.7:86.5).

Sin which one has committed clings to one like a disease.

Provide, O Soma-Rudra, for our bodies all needful medicines to heal and cure us. Set free and draw away the sin committed which we still have inherent in our persons.

(RV.6:74.3)

The sinner is bound as with fetters that he cannot shake off” (RV.2:28.5); ‘he is caught as in a noose’ (RV.6:74.4).

Further, sin is regarded as disobedience of the commands of the gods, especially of Varuna, though also of Indra, Agni, and other gods, RV.2:38.5 &c) and this disobedience leads to anger on the part of the god and to punishment (RV.2:29.5).

What was the nature of the punishment meted out to the sinner? It would seem that in places the doctrine of future punishment in Hell is taught, for example in the following passage:— Like youthful women, without brothers, straying, like dames who hate their lords, of evil conduct. They who are full of sin, untrue, unfaithful, they have engendered this abysmal station.’ (RV. 4:5 5)

This abysmal station is probably rightly interpreted as naraka-sthanam or hell. Similarly, in another passage, Indra-Soma are prayed to ‘dash the evil-doers into the abyss, into bottomless darkness, so that not even one of them may get out’ (RV.7:104.3).

But more frequently in the Rig Veda we have the idea of punishment without these eschatological implications. In many passages it is indicated the punishment is executed by the hands of men, to whom the gods hand over the wicked, Indra is besought to ‘discern well the Aryas and the Dasyus; punishing the lawless, to give them up to him whose grass is strewn’ (RV.1:51.8). i.e. to him who sacrifices to the god. Again, Brahmanaspati is referred to as ‘punisher of the guilty, guilt-avenger, who slays the spoiler, and upholds the mighty law’(RV.1:190.5). Again, it is said that he ‘punishes the spiteful’. The ‘prison of the gods’ (RV.4:12.5) is mentioned along with that of ‘mortals’ as the punishment of sin. In these and in many other passages, the nature of the punishment is vague and indefinite. The injured god may work out his purposes in punishing sin, through men, or in other ways by sending misfortune, sickness, or death to the sinner.

While the idea of punishment is prominent in parts of the Rig Veda, the ideas of release from sin and forgiveness of sin are hardly less prominent. We do not find a sense of the guilt of sin comparable to what we find in Christian literature, or in the Psalms. We find nothing like the

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cry of the Psalmist, burdened with a sense of guilt, 'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight'. In the Rig Veda the sting of sin seems to lie chiefly in the punishment which it brings with it, and the typical form of prayer regarding sin is that the worshipper may be freed from punishment. There are no doubt passages that would suggest a deeper sense of the significance of guilt, notably in prayers to Aditi and Varuna, who are implored to release from sin. Professor Macdonell has pointed out that while many gods are petitioned to pardon sin, 'the notion of releasing from it is much more closely connected with Aditi and her son Varuna, whose fetters that bind sinners are characteristic, and who unties sin like a rope and removes it. We find passages such as this: Loosen the bonds, O Varuna, that hold me, loosen the bonds, above, between, and under. So in thy holy law may we, made sinless, belong to Aditi, O thou Aditya.' (RV.1:24.15)

Aditi and Varuna are doubtless pre-eminently the releasers from sin, but the same function is less frequently attributed to Agni, Aryaman, and other gods. The power of forgiving sin belongs to many gods, to Varuna, Aditi, Agni, Mitra, Savitri, Aryaman, Sun, Dawn, Heaven, and Earth. The following passages are typical: Pardon, we pray', this sin of ours', O Agni, —the path which we have trodden, widely straying. Dear Friend and Father, caring for the pious, who speedest nigh and who inspirest mortals. (RV.1:31.16) If we, men as we are, have sinned against the gods, through want of thought, in weakness, or through insolence. Absolve us from the guilt and make us free from sin, O Savitri, alike among both gods and men. (RV.4:54.3) The distinction between the two functions of forgiving and releasing is after all not very fundamental. Sin is conceived as something that, once committed, continues, and adheres to one; and this is characteristic of sin committed in ignorance as well as of sin committed insolently, of sin committed by another which has been transmitted to one as well as of sin committed by one's self. It is a thing, the presence of which works evil, and the worshipper prays that it may be removed, that he may be freed both from it and its consequences.

1. Check your Progress

1. Explain the Concept of Rta

8.5 TAPA

We meet in the Rig Veda the germ of two ideas that are in some ways more significant than anything that we have yet discussed. Perhaps most noteworthy of all is the idea of tapas, which is not by any means prominent in the Rig Veda, but which appears in the late tenth book. It is an idea of such great importance in the development of Indian thought and practice, that it is necessary that attention should be drawn to it here. We are told in the Creation Myth that it was through tapas that the Primal Being began to create. (RV.10:129) By tapas rita was produced. (RV.10:190) Indra conquered heaven by means of tapas. (RV.10:167.1) Again, the practice of tapas leads to the reward of heaven. (RV.10:154) The first meaning of the word tapas is 'heat', and in the passages referred to this original meaning is still prominent.

Then it came to be applied specially to the heat or fervour of devotion; and lastly we have the familiar meaning of austerity or self-mortification. We can hardly read this last meaning into any of the uses of the term in the Rig Veda. But it is noteworthy that in one hymn at any rate in the tenth book there are described to us some of the ascetic practices that came later to be connected with tapas. RV. 10:136 is a hymn in praise of the long-haired Munis, wearing soiled garments of yellow hue, wandering about upon the earth, who have thus attained fellowship with the deities of the air. Here we have an idea foreign to the other books of the Rig Veda, but an idea which once introduced was destined to remain and to develop.

Another idea which is even less obtrusive in the Rig Veda contains the germ of a still more significant ethical conception. Sacrifice is known as iṣṭha and the presents given to the priests as pūrta. To him who offers sacrifices and gifts the gods grant their favour.

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Indra aids him who offers sacrifices and gifts: he takes not what is his and gives him more thereto. Increasing ever more and more his wealth, he makes the pious dwell within unbroken bounds. (RV.5:28.2)

Iṣṭha and pūrta became compounded into a single word, Iṣṭha-pūrta, and one's Iṣṭha-pūrta, what one has given in sacrifice and in presents to the priests, comes to be regarded as having separate, substantial being. With this the pious are united after death.

Do thou join the Fathers, do thou join Yama, join thy Ishta-pūrta in the highest heaven. (RV.10:14.8)

This was the germ from which the idea of Karma was later developed. Its content became deepened so as to include not merely one's sacrifices and gifts, but one's whole activity.

And its significance changed with the emergence of belief in transmigration. But the essential idea remained in it —of something stored up in life, a Sort of bank on which one should draw after death. The idea of Karma has been perhaps the most significant and determining in the development of ethical thought in India.

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8.6 SACRIFICES , RITES AND RITUAL

In the literature that stands nearest to the Rig Veda we are brought face to face with a world of thought in which there is little place for ethical conceptions. Magical and sacrificial ideas obscure almost everything else. The literature in which these ideas find expression is very extensive. All that we propose to do here is to look at these ideas as they find expression in early Vedic literature, and to try to bring out the bearing which they have on ethical thought. In the Atharva Veda we have the great text-book for the study of ancient Indian magic, and in the Yajur Veda and the Brahmanas for the study of sacrifice. We may take their teaching as representative of these points of view, reserving the other literature for merely passing reference.

Turning first to the Atharva Veda, we cannot but be struck by the extraordinary difference in its tone from that of the Rig Veda. The gods of the Rig Veda are still recognized, and the worshipper invokes them: but, apart from changes that their characters have undergone, to which

reference will be made later, the place of the gods has become a subordinate one. Whereas in the Rig Veda religion was largely objective, in the Atharva Veda it is very largely subjective. The worshipper in the Rig Veda no doubt usually had in view his own temporal advantage; yet he entered into the worship of the gods with an abandon that served to redeem his religion from selfishness. In the Atharva Veda, on the other hand, personal profit comes first and last, and the gods are reduced to the level of mere instruments to be used for the attainment of this profit. The conception of the gods as free personal beings has almost disappeared, and in their place we have magical forces which the individual seeks to utilize in order to gain his own selfish ends. The hymns consist mainly of prayers, charms, and imprecations with a view to the attainment of such objects as the healing of disease, long life, prosperity, the discomfiture of enemies and rivals, freedom from the power of demons and evil charms, the expiation of sin, and the like.

It is obvious even to a superficial reader that we are here in contact with a world of thought that has much in common with the thought of primitive peoples generally. Yet it is certain that the Atharva Veda in the form in which it has come down to us belongs to a later period than the Rig Veda. The fact is that we have here a great mass of magic and superstition that found its origin in the minds of the people long before the period of the Rig Veda, wrought up at a later time by the hands of the priests. The Rig Vedic hymns acknowledge no wicked divinities and no mean and harmful practices, except for one or two fragments which serve to prove the existence alongside of its loftier religion of a lower order of religious thought. The priests of a later period, ever eager to attain complete ascendancy over the minds of the people, took the direction of these magical forces, which played so large a part in the religion of the common people, into their own hand and established their own position in relation to the magical rites as agents without whose mediation the rites could have no efficacy. So, even more important than the charms and spells themselves are the Brahmins who control them. As Oldenberg has put it, the centre of gravity, so far as meritorious conduct is concerned, has been shifted from worship of the gods to the giving of presents, of food, and of honor to the Brahmins, We found in studying

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the ethical standpoint of the Rig Veda that one of the most important features to be considered was connected with the conception of the gods, and that especially in their representation of Varuna and Mitra the hymn-writers showed the rudiments of an ethical conception of the Divine. In the Atharva Veda there are some traces of this same spirit. We meet such passages as the following:— I reverence you, O Mitra-and-Varuna, increasers of right; who, accordant, thrust away the malicious; who favor the truthful one in conflicts; do ye free us from distress. (AV.4:29.1) or, Much untruth, O King Varuna, doth man say here; from that sin do thou free us, O thou of thousand fold heroism. (AV.19:44.8) We have also the remarkable passage which speaks of Varuna's omniscience and of the fetters which he binds on him who speaks untruth (AV.6;121.1) The smallest details of human conduct, the standing, the walking, even the winking of men he sees, helped by his thousand-eyed spies who look over the earth. 'What two, sitting down together, talk, king Varuna as third knows that.' (AV.4:16.2) But these are isolated passages. It can hardly be maintained that even in the Rig Veda the characters of any of the gods are thoroughly ethicized, while even in the case of those gods whose characters are most ethically conceived the significance of the fact is considerably modified by the consideration that alongside them there are other gods whose characters are deficient in ethical traits. But when we turn to the Atharva Veda we find, in spite of some passages such as those quoted above, that the gods have almost completely lost their ethical character, and that their physical qualities are most prominent. The de-ethicizing process is manifested in another way. In the Rig Veda the most impressive figure is Varuna, the upholder of rita. In the Atharva Veda he sinks into comparative insignificance, and no god is endowed with the moral supremacy among the gods which belonged to him. Prajapati, Lord of creatures, and Indra, who is regarded as the 'heavenly prototype of the earthly king', are the most important gods, and these are gods in whom ethical qualities are almost entirely lacking. So it may fairly be maintained that the tendency towards an ethical, almost Hebrew conception of the divine, that is evident in parts at least of the Rig Veda, hardly-appears in the Atharva Veda.

Again it is important to observe that in the Atharva Veda the importance and power of the gods have very greatly decreased. They have become not merely less moral, they have become less real. There has risen up a great crop of all kinds of spiritual beings, possessed of powers that may be used for the benefit or injury of man. The cultus itself is now being given a new importance. The tendency now is to regard prayer, ritual, and sacrifice, not as means whereby the worshipper is brought into touch with gods who are free personal beings, but as themselves powers alongside the gods and spirits. So the gods tend to fall more and more into the background. It is obvious that in all this we have conditions that were bound to have a profound effect on the moral ideas and practices of those who accepted these religious ideas. We are dealing with a Universe in the constitution of which ethical ideas have no sure place. The Universe is not even reasonable. There are in it all kinds of capricious powers, which if offended will inflict injury on one. And the kinds of actions through which they are placated or offended do not depend for their efficacy on any moral value that belongs to them but on considerations largely accidental. The outcome of this is an ethical point of view in which judgments of good and evil are determined in a way very different from that of modern European ethics. A quotation from Dewey and Tufts' Ethics will help to make clearer to us the distinctive character of this outlook.

They say: There are two alternatives in the judgment of good and evil, (1) They may be regarded as having moral significance, that is, as having a voluntary basis or origin. (2) Or they may be considered as substantial properties of things, as a sort of essence diffused through them, or as a kind of force resident in them, in virtue of which persons and things are noxious or helpful, malevolent or kindly.... "the result is that evil is thought of as a contagious matter, transmitted from generation to generation, from class or person to class or person; and as something to be got rid of, if at all, by devices which are equally physical.

This quotation describes fairly accurately the conception of good and evil that is characteristic of the Atharva Veda. Oldenberg brings out an idea essentially the same in his conception of a Zaubersfluidum. In the Rig Veda, he says, sin is pre-eminently disobedience to the divine will, and

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reconciliation is attained through the placating of God by means of gifts and other marks of submissiveness. But when sin is thought of as a sort of magical substance that becomes attached to one, freedom from it is to be attained through the manipulation of those magical forces that are able to remove it; So it is chiefly in the charms prescribed for the expiation of sin and defilement that the Atharva Vedic conception of good and evil is made plain, and to some of the points of significance in these we must turn our attention now.

That there are traces of the higher way of conceiving good and evil has already been remarked. But this lower conception, by which sin is regarded as something quasi-physical, is more characteristic of the Atharva Veda. Sin is something that a man may fall a victim to without willing it. In many of the hymns it is associated with or even identified with disease and worldly misfortune. There are many prayers to the gods in which protection is sought in the same breath from sin, disease, and misfortune. For example:— Let whatever sacrifices I make, make sacrifice for me; let my mind's design be realized; let me not fall into any sin so ever; let all the gods defend me here.

On me let the gods bestow property; with me be blessing, with me divine invocation; may the divine invokers win that for us; may we be unharmed with our self, rich in heroes. (AV.5:3:4.5)

Again: From Kshatriya (probably a scrofulous disease), from perdition, from imprecation of sisters, from hatred do I release thee, from Varuna's fetter; free from guilt I make thee by my incantation; be heaven and earth — both propitious to thee. (AV.2:10.1)

And again: Free from defilement are the waters; let them carry away from us defilement: Let them carry forth from us sin; let them carry forth evil dreaming. (AV.16:1.101) Sin is regarded too as something almost contagious, passed on from one being to another.

In a hymn to be used in connection with the binding on of an amulet, protection is sought from a great variety of evils, including diseases, sorcery, and enemies. In the middle of the hymn is found this verse:—

What sin my mother, what my father, and what my own brothers, what we ourselves have done, from that shall this divine forest-tree shield us. (AV.10:3.8) The evil infection may be conveyed to men even by the

gods, e. g., On Trita the gods wiped off that sin; Trita wiped it off on human beings. Twelfefold is deposited what was wiped off by Trita — sins of human, beings. (AV.6:113.1.3)

Such sin communicated by the gods to men may cause mania. See, for example, the expression:— Crazy from sin of the gods, crazy from a demon. Sin then is viewed quasi-physically, being identified with many actions or even passive experiences that have no strictly ethical significance at all, and being communicable through physical means. It may be of interest to look somewhat more closely at the kinds of actions or occurrences that are so identified with sin. Evil dreaming has been already referred to as frequently mentioned together with sin. So are personal misfortunes of many kinds — the hatred of others, their curses, being the victim of sorcery, the influence of demons, ill omens, notably birds of ill omen, against which there are several hymns.

It is not so remarkable that many hymns should deal with the subject of the right performance of the sacrifice and of religious ceremonies generally, and that release should be sought from the effects of errors in their performance, as from sins. That such occurrences are not distinguished from what we should recognize as moral faults is clear from certain passages.

We find, for example, being the victim of curses, and association with the dark-toothed, ill nailed; and mutilated, put alongside evil doing, in a prayer to the plant apamarga for cleansing:— Since thou, O off-wiper, hast grown with reverted fruit, mayest thou repel from me all curses very far from here.

What is ill done, what pollution, or what we have practiced evilly —by thee, O always- facing off-wiper, we wipe that off?

If we have been together with one dark-toothed, ill-nailed, mutilated, by thee, O off wiper, we wipe off all that. (AV.7:65)

When we turn to the more distinctively moral ideas of the Atharva Veda, we find that they are but few. Only slight mention is made of what we should call virtues and vices. The virtue most frequently mentioned is perhaps that of truth-speaking, while falsehood is as frequently condemned. The speaker of untruth is kept in the noose of Varuna, who, again, is besought to release from untruth. In that thou hast spoken with

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the tongue untruth, much wrong —from the king of true ordinances, from Varuna, I release thee. (AV.1:10.3) Mitra and Varuna are especially celebrated as the ‘increasers of right’, in particular thrusting away the malicious, and favoring the truthful in conflicts. Similarly Soma is mentioned as being on the side of the truth-speaker: It is easy of understanding for a knowing man that true and untrue words are at variance; of them what is true, whichever is more right, that Soma Verily favors; he smites the untrue.

Soma by no means furthers the wicked man, nor the Kshatriya who maintains anything falsely; he smites the demon; he smites the speaker of untruth; both lie within reach of Indra. (AV.8:4:12.13) Again truth is spoken of as one of the elements that sustain the earth (AV.12:1.1). It is not surprising to find truth spoken of in this way. It is a fundamental virtue, the recognition of which in some way is essential for the existence of any kind of social life. It is one of the few recognized virtues that such a writer as Nietzsche, who in modern times has departed so far from traditional morality, admits into his ethical system, and its recognition in the elementary ethical thought of the writers of the Atharva Veda is as little to be wondered at as its inclusion in the ethical code of the superman. Of the few other virtues and vices to which reference is made, those connected with liberality and niggardliness are among the most prominent. Niggardliness on the part of the sacrificer towards the priest interferes with the success of the sacrifice, and the influence of the niggard is even more subtle and widespread still, marring the success of the plans of men generally.

Likewise, greatly making thyself naked, thou fastenest on a person in dreams, O niggard, baffling the plan and design of a man. (AV.5:7.8) Departure from the niggardly is praised:

Thou hast left niggardly, hast found what is peasant; thou hast come to the excellent world of what is well done. (AV.2:10.7)

In seeking protection from the wrath of the gods the writer of one hymn prays:— Be yon Rāti (liberality) a companion for us. (AV.1;26.2) We have an idea, which may be allied to this idea of the importance of liberality, expressed in a number of passages in which entertainment of

guests is praised. In one passage, for example, it is said that he whose food is partaken of by guests has his sins devoured. (AV.9:6.25)

A number of hymns consist of charms for the securing of concord or harmony, especially within the family. One of the most touching hymns in the whole Atharva Veda is that beginning— Like-heartedness, like-mindedness, non-hostility do I make for you; do ye show affection the one toward the other, as the inviolable cow toward her calf when born.

Be the son submissive to the father, like-minded with the mother; let the wife to the husband speak words full of honey, beneficial. Let not brother hate brother, nor sister sister; becoming accordant, of like courses, speak ye words auspiciously. (AV.3:30.1–3) Harmony in wider relationships is also sought. For example:— Harmony for us with our own men, harmony with strangers, harmony, Asvins, do ye here confirm in us. (AV.8:52.1) Other strictly ethical qualities mentioned in the Atharva Veda are neither numerous nor significant. Unfulfilled promises (vi.119), offences at dice, adultery (vi.118), failure to return what is borrowed (vi.117), these are marked as sins that require expiation.

It is important to observe that throughout the Atharva Veda it is always as something that has to be expiated that sin is mentioned. It may be remarked that as sin is conceived quasiphysically, so the means of expiation (prayaścitti, prayaścitta) are also physical or quasi physical. Water especially is used for the removal of sins; as also are plants. From sin against the gods, against the Fathers, from name-taking that is designed, that is devised against any one, let the plants free thee by their energy, with spell, with milk of the seers. (AV.10:1.12) Uttered spells, amulets, and fire have the same efficacy. The gods too have their place in connection with the releasing from sin, though it is a subordinate place. The god Agni, in particular, is frequently appealed to for deliverance. But the power lies rather in the prayer itself than in the god who is invoked. Attention has already been drawn to the use of the term tapas in the last book of the Rig Veda. It is prominent also in the Atharva Veda. The practice of penance is supposed to give one standing with the gods and power to attain one's desires. The following passage is typical:— In that, O Agni, penance with penance, we perform additional penance, may we be dear to what is heard, long-lived, very wise.

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O Agni, we perform penance, we perform additional penance —we, hearing things heard, long-lived, very wise. (AV.7:61) Filled with tapas, the Vedic student ‘goes at once from the eastern to the northern ocean’ (AV.11:5.6) The same austerity is supposed to be practiced by the gods and to be to them a source of power.

By Vedic studentship, by fervour, the gods smote away death; Indra by Vedic studentship brought heaven for the gods. (AV.11:5.19) The practice of tapas in the Atharva Veda has very little ethical significance. The term may usually be translated by penance or mortification, but it is self-mortification with a view to the acquisition of magical powers. Dr. Geden mentions as characteristic of the magical power that came to be ascribed to tapas the fact that the passage in the Rig Veda (vii.59.8), rendered ‘kill him with your hottest bolt’, is altered in the Atharva Veda, vii.77.2, ‘kill him with your hottest penance’.

There is still no trace in the Atharva Veda of the doctrine of transmigration. Reward and punishment is reserved for heaven and hell. In heaven freed from bodily infirmities, sickness, and deformity, they meet father, mother, wives and children (vi.120.3; xii. 3. 17; iii. 28. 5). It is a place of delights; all the pleasures of the senses are at their disposal (iv. 34. 2. 4, 5, 6). Distinctions of wealth and power are done away (iii. 29. 3). Hell (Naraka-loka, the place below), on the other hand, is a place of torture — of lowest darkness (viii. 2. 24). It is the abode of weakness, hags, and sorceresses (ii. 14.3). With great detail the tortures suffered by those who injure a Brahmin are described; they sit in the midst of a stream of blood, devouring hair, subjected to gruesome tortures (v.19.3). Our brief study of the ethical ideas of the Atharva Veda will have shown that there is represented in it a view of life that is morally very low. The ethical way of regarding good and evil has largely given place to a point of view from which good and evil are conceived almost physically. This unethical attitude to human experience has certain obvious consequences. There are certain elementary virtues that are necessary to the very existence of society. Truthfulness in certain relationships, at any rate, and harmony are among the most fundamental of these, and we are not surprised accordingly to find them valued. But the magic and witchcraft in which the minds of the writers were steeped led to many strange

judgments regarding goods and evils. Spells, incantations, curses, and the like are good when used for one's own benefit, evil when used against one. With utter shamelessness charms are laid down for the infliction of injury on others — imprecations to spinster-hood, spells to prevent the success of an enemy's sacrifice, to cause diseases in an enemy, and so forth. The good tends to be conceived purely selfishly, for the constitution of the Universe leaves very little place for a good in which men share in common. Long life, health, success over enemies, superiority in the assembly, success in love, skill in gambling, worldly prosperity, and such like personal benefits are the objects chiefly sought, and these are objects the attainment of which is conceived as possible not chiefly through the orderly regulation of social life, but through the exercise of mysterious powers over which the individual may acquire mastery.

In close connection with magical ideas and practices are those connected with sacrifice. They are closely related with each other, but they must not be confused. Oldenberg has drawn attention to an important distinction between them; He maintains that there is an essential distinction between the proceeding of one who seeks to win a god to his side through gifts, and that of one who burns an image of his enemy or a lock of his hair in the belief that he is so consigning the enemy himself to destruction. The one attains his end indirectly, through inclining to himself the will of a powerful ally; the other attains it directly, through an impersonal concatenation of causes and effects. He admits that as an actual fact it is often difficult to draw a sharp line between the two provinces; in practice they have frequently interpenetrated, and this interpenetration has been due to various causes. It is important to observe that in the Vedic sacrificial literature the sacrificial idea has been, to say the least of it, largely influenced by magical ideas. The Rig Veda deals very largely with the Soma sacrifice, and in it the influence of magical ideas is not very marked. The gods are conceived as free personal beings against whose wills men may offend or whose wills they may fulfill, and in whose power it is to send misfortunes or to grant favors to men; and sacrifices are offered to them with a view to conciliating them or with a view to receiving benefits from them. When we turn to the sacrificial

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literature proper, for example to the Yajur Veda and the Brahmanas, we find a very different attitude to sacrifice. Even in the Yajur Veda the sacrifice is no longer an offering to the gods as free personal beings, but something that has power in itself. As Professor Macdonell says: 'Its formulas, being made for the ritual, are not directly addressed to the gods, who are but shadowy beings having only a very loose connection with the sacrifice.' The same is true of the Brahmanas. What has been said in connection with the Aitareya Brahmana in particular is true of the attitude to sacrifice in the sacrificial literature generally:— The sacrifice is regarded as the means for attaining power over this and the other world, over visible as well as invisible beings, animate as well as inanimate creatures. Who knows its proper application, and has it duly performed, is in fact looked upon as the real master of the world; for any desire he may entertain, if it be even the most ambitious, can be gratified, any object he has in view can be obtained by means of it. The Yajña (sacrifice), taken as a whole, is conceived to be a kind of machinery, in which every piece must tally with the other, or a sort of long chain in which no link may be wanting, or a staircase, by which one may ascend to heaven, or as a personage, endowed with all the characteristics of a human body.

When sacrifice has assumed such significance as this it approximates very closely to magic. The divorce between religion and morality in the Brahmanas is almost as complete as in the Atharva Veda. Through the correct performance of sacrifices one can attain one's ends; but what ends? Certainly not the attainment of righteousness. The destruction of guilt is frequently sought, but sin and guilt have been so unethically conceived that not much can be built on that any more than in the Atharva Veda. The ends sought are mainly the selfish ends that have been marked in the literature already discussed. 'Adoration of the power and beneficence of the gods, as well as the consciousness of guilt, is entirely lacking (in the Yajur Veda), every prayer being coupled with some particular rite and aiming solely at securing material advantage.' Nay further 'Religious rites are also, prostituted to the achievement of criminal schemes'. Take for example one passage, taken from among

many of the same character: , The silent prayer is the root of the sacrifice. Should a Hotar wish to deprive any sacrificer of his standing place, then he must not at his sacrifice repeat the 'silent praise'; the sacrificer then perishes along with his sacrifice which thus has become rootless.¹⁸ Such a proceeding is elsewhere forbidden, but the significant fact is that such directions are laid down in the Brahmanas at all; and while the use of such practices may be forbidden, they were nevertheless believed to be efficacious; and some, at any rate, approved of their use.

Taking such a phenomenon as this as illustrative of the unethical character of the religious observances dealt with in the sacrificial literature, we may proceed to consider certain other facts which are closely connected with this. It has been shown above that, the gods have been pushed into the background, and that the place of the gods has been very largely taken by the sacrifice itself. Nevertheless the pantheon of the Rig Veda is recognized with few changes throughout all the Vedas and Brahmanas. The gods have been to a very large extent de-ethicized, and the de-ethicizing process is seen in the prominence that is now given to the less respectable members of the pantheon. It was remarked in connection with the Atharva Veda that the practical primacy among the gods had been yielded by Varuna to Prajapati. In the Yajur Veda also he is recognized as the chief god, and in the Brahmanas very emphatically so. Prajapati's character is as far removed from that of Varuna of the Rig Veda as one could well imagine. For example, in various places in the Brahmanas, and in various ways, the story of his incest with his daughter is recounted. Significant also is the prominence given to the Apsarases, heavenly nymphs of loose morals, and to the Asuras or demons, who are constantly at war with the gods. The unethical way of regarding the divine is reflected also in the absence of ethical qualities as a necessary qualification for the priest. Even if the performing priest is no proper Brahman (in the strictest sense), or even pronounced to be an ill-reputed man, this sacrifice nevertheless goes up to the gods, and becomes not polluted by the contagion with a wicked man (as in this case the performing priest is).

All this means that to the writers of the Vedic sacrificial literature the Universe was not constituted on ethical lines. Sacrifice itself is not

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necessarily an unethical thing; indeed it may be questioned whether sacrifice in some form is not an essential element in religion. But as it is here understood and practiced it has no ethical significance. The fact that in the Atharvaveda the gods is recognized does not make the practices there described any less magical. Nor does the fact of the recognition of the gods in the Yajur Veda and the Brahmanas give their sacrifices a character that essentially differentiates them from such magical practices. The distinction drawn by Oldenberg between sacrifice and magic is sound in theory, and applicable in the case of the sacrifices of the Rig Veda; but in the case of the literature now before us it is not applicable. Sacrifice has itself become a magical thing, and ethical thought has been as completely stifled by these sacrificial ideas as it was by the magical ideas of the Atharva Veda. While we recognize all this, it is necessary that we should give due attention to facts of a different character. We must not commit the error of supposing that in this sacrificial literature the whole life and thought of India at that period is represented. Here and there we see traces of the working of different and sometimes contradictory ideas. Notably we see sometimes asserting itself the idea that certain ethical qualifications belong to the characters of the gods and that the same qualities are necessary for the worshipper. In more than one place in the Satapatha Brahmana reference is made to truth as one of the qualities that belong to the nature of the gods. For example: This vow indeed the gods do keep, that they speak the truth; and for this reason they are glorious; glorious therefore is he who, knowing this, speaks the truth. Again:

Attendance on that consecrated fire means the truth. Whosoever speaks the truth acts as if he sprinkled that lighted fire with ghee.... Whosoever speaks the untruth, acts as if he sprinkled that lighted fire with water.... Let him therefore speak nothing but the truth.²¹ But reference to ethical ideas is rare. A few forms of action are condemned as sinful, but these are chiefly of the grosser sort. One of the chief sins to be condemned is adultery, and in one place confession is demanded of the sacrificer's wife at the time of the sacrifice as to her faithfulness to her husband, in order that she may not sacrifice with guilt on her soul.

Murder and theft and such violent crimes are condemned, but we can hardly claim that the condemnation of these reveals more than the most rudimentary ethical sense. Of moral actions that are praised among the most prominent are hospitality and honor to parents.

The treatment of the conception of tapas in the Brahmanas calls for little special attention, though it occupies a place of high importance. We are told that the gods became divine through the practice of austerity, and that by means of austerities the Ribhus obtained the right to a share in the Soma beverage. The gods 'conquered by means of the sacrifice, austerities, penances, and sacrificial oblations the heavenly world'. For purposes of creation Prajapati underwent austerities, and on one occasion he practiced such austerities that lights, the stars which we now see, came forth from all the pores of his body. From austerities the divine Rishis are born. The significance of austerity on the part of men is not dwelt upon, and it is worthy of note that where it is mentioned it is recommended usually as a means for the attainment of selfish ends, for example fame.

A Brahman who, after having completed his Vedic studies, should not attain to any fame, should go to a forest, string together the stalks of darbha grass, with their ends standing upwards, and sitting on the right side of another Brahman, repeat with a loud voice the Chaturhotri mantras. (Should he do so he would attain to fame.) (Aitareya Brahmana 5:23) On the other hand, criticism of the ascetic life is expressed: What is the use of living unwashed, wearing the goat-skin and beard? What is the use of performing austerities? You should wish for a son, O Brahman. (Ait. Bra. 6;13) On the whole, the attitude to tapas is not essentially different from that in the Atharva Veda.

Attention has been drawn to the way in which during this period the ethical has been stifled by magical and sacrificial ideas. Another tendency closely connected with this begins to make its appearance definitely in the Brahmanas. We frequently meet such sentences as these: —'He who has this knowledge conquers all directions', 'He who has such knowledge becomes a light among his own people', &c.... The place of such statements is not difficult to understand. Sacrifice is the most powerful means to the attainment of one's ends, and every step in

the sacrifice must be observed with the greatest care. So knowledge of every step becomes of the highest importance. It marks the beginning of that claim made for the supremacy of the intellectual attitude which is so characteristic of Indian thought.

8.7 KARMA

The doctrines of Karma and transmigration are still in an embryonic state. The reward of heaven and the punishment of hell still constitute important sanctions for right living. But right living generally means little more than right sacrificing. The reward of right sacrificing, according to the Brahmanas, is union with the Sun, Agni, Indra, Varuna, Prajapati, and other gods. Life in the other world is not essentially different in kind from life in this world, and, in the eternal bliss there enjoyed, the joys of love are specially prominent. 'He who has such a knowledge lives in his premises in this world, and in the other with children and cattle.' The tortures undergone by the wicked in hell are sometimes described. In one passage hell is represented as a place where the character of the punishment is determined by the principle of 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth'. 'So they have done to us in yonder world, and so we do to them in return in this world' is the cry of men in hell who cut up and devour other men. In another passage we read of a rebirth in the other world after death when men are weighed in a balance and receive the reward or punishment of their deeds.

8.8 LETS SUM UP

We have already seen how in the Rig Veda a man's *iṣṭhapūrta* is conceived after the manner of a fund. But here the idea of his actions generally as forming a sort of a fund upon which he may draw seems to be crystallizing. The same tendency is revealed in another way. It is clear that if it be conceived that one's good works form a fund that is finite in amount, the fund may run low and finally be exhausted. This idea is actually expressed in places. For example, in the Taittiriya Brahmana ceremonies are mentioned, the object of which is to secure that one's good works should not so perish, and that one should not undergo a

second death. The conception of Karma thus is becoming more definite, but it is not yet connected with the conception of Samsāra. Still there are in the Brahmanas foreshadowings of it also — at any rate the idea of rebirth on earth is mentioned. We are told that he who knows that the spring comes to life again out of the winter is born again in this world. It is interesting to note that in this very early expression of belief in the possibility of rebirth, what in later thought is regarded as an evil and a punishment is bestowed as a reward. We have, however, in the same Brahmana a passage that takes us nearer to the fundamentals of the doctrines of Karma and Samsāra as they are familiar to us. It is said that man is born into whatever world is made by his acts. The world referred to is not this world, but we can see how out of such a conception it was possible for the Indian mind to arrive at the doctrine that one's position in successive births on earth is determined by the actions which he performs. Most of the materials for the doctrine are present. The possibility of rebirth on earth is recognized, and so is the idea of the determination of his destiny by his conduct in this life. In the Upanishads the further step is taken and we have the characteristic doctrine of Karma and Samsāra.

8.9 KEY WORDS

Rta: It represents in a way both natural and moral order, and also that order which characterizes correct worship of the gods through sacrifice and prayer and all else that belongs to service of the gods

8.10 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Explain the role of Rta

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8.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress-1
 - Rita has been shown to be identified with truth: truth is a principle that belongs to the constitution of the universe.
 - As a natural application of this, truthfulness is demanded of man, and lying is condemned as a sin. In one prayer (RV.10:9.8) the Waters are entreated to remove far from the worshipper the sin of lying or false swearing.

UNIT 9 UPANISAD ETHICS

STRUCTURE

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 The Vyavaharika Perspective Of Dharma
- 9.3 Three-Dimensional Character Of Duty
- 9.4 Moral And Spiritual Discipline
- 9.5 The Value System Of Advaita
- 9.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 9.7 Keywords
- 9.8 Questions for review
- 9.9 Suggested Readings
- 9.10 Answer to Check Your Progress

9.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the basic features of upanishadic Ethics
- know the philosophical understanding of Morality

9.1 INTRODUCTION

It is well known that every object requires a material cause for its origination. What is true of an ordinary object is equally true with regard to the world, which is the totality of objects. If the material cause is the support of an object which has originated from it. what, then, is the material cause of the world? If we can identify it, then it must be the support of the world. While it is easy to identify the material cause of any object in the world, it is not possible even by means of reasoning to establish the cause of the world. Though the Naiyayikas have formulated arguments to prove the existence of God, Advaitins and other

Vedantins hold the view that the cause of the world cannot be established by means of reasoning. We can know it only through scripture, as stated in the third aphorism of the Brahma-sutra. There are many Upanisadic texts which declare that Brahman is the cause of the world, and the second aphorism, "janmadyasya yatah brings out the Upanisadic view in this regard. Brahman which is the support of the world is eternal (nitya). Anything that has a beginning and an end is impermanent (anitya). While Brahman is the ultimate Cause of everything in the world, it itself has no cause. For want of a better expression, it is, therefore, characterized as the First Cause, or Unmoved Mover. Some Western theologians like Paul Tillich speak of God, who is the source of the world, as the Ultimate. Since the cause-effect terminology presupposes time, the Advaitins, instead of speaking of Brahman as the cause of the world, would rather characterize it as the ground (adhithana) of the world. It is against this background that we have to understand the significance of the term 'dharma' from the absolute point of view. The Bhagavad-gita and other texts speak of Brahman not only as eternal but also as 'dharma'. Consider the following text of the Bhagavad-gita, 2.17:

Know That [Brahman] to be imperishable by which this is pervaded. None can cause the destruction of That [Brahman], the inexhaustible.

Sankara's commentary on this text is worth quoting: Unlike the unreal objects, Tat, i.e., Brahman or Sat, the real, does not vanish; all this world, including ether is pervaded by it, just as pots and other objects are pervaded by ether. Brahman does not increase or decrease, and is therefore inexhaustible. Brahman, the Sat, is exhausted in itself; for, unlike the body, it has no parts. Nor does it diminish by losing anything which belongs to it; for, nothing belongs to the Self... Nobody, not even Isvara, the Creator-God, can destroy the Self. For, the Self is Brahman itself, and one cannot act upon oneself. There is another text of the Bhagavad-gita, 14.27 which identifies 'dharma' with Brahman. It reads: I am, indeed, the abode of Brahman, the immortal and the immutable, the eternal, the Dharma, and the unfailing bliss.

Sankara in his commentary gives three different interpretations for this text. First of all, he says that Lord Krsna establishes the identity of the

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inward Self, Pratyagcitman and the supreme Self, Paramatman, and then sets forth the nature of Brahman by using five adjectives. Brahman is immortal, immutable, and eternal; it is Dharma; and it is also everlasting bliss. The point to be noted in this explanation is that Brahman, the supreme Reality, is Dharma inasmuch as it is the support (pratistha) of the entire universe. In the second interpretation he explains Lord Krsna as the power (Sakti) of Brahman in the manifested form. To quote Sankara: "(Using the first person singular Krsna says:) I am only that power or sakti in manifestation; and I am, therefore, Brahman himself, for, sakti cannot be different from the one in whom it inheres." In the third explanation, he construes the meaning of the word 'Brahman' which occurs in the text as "conditioned Brahman" who alone can be spoken of by any such word as 'Brahman'. So the idea that is sought to be conveyed in the text is: "I, the Unconditioned and the Unutterable, am the abode of the conditioned Brahman, who is immortal and indestructible. I am also the abode of the eternal Dharma." Even though fire is of the nature of heat and is nothing but heat, still we speak of fire as the abode of heat as if they are different. In the same way, even though Brahman and Dharma are one and the same, still the former is said to be the abode of the latter. Though the language here is suggestive of duality, there is no difference between them. So Brahman is Sanatana, the eternal, and that which is eternal alone is Dharma (sanatanaeva dharma).

It is necessary to clarify the deeper implications of the material causality as enunciated in the Upanisads, as it will help us to appreciate the role of dharma as the support of the entire physical universe. The teaching of the Sandilya-vidya which occurs in the Chandogya Upanisad, 3.14, is relevant in this connection. Sandilya declares, "All this, indeed, is Brahman" (sarvarh khalu idam brahma). Sankara in his commentary on this text points out that the entire manifested world consisting of names and forms has originated from Brahman. In order to clarify how the entire physical universe has originated from Brahman, the text itself in an aphoristic way says 'tajjalan'. It is difficult to understand the full significance of this expression used in the Upanisad without the help of a commentary. Sankara explains this expression as follows:

How can all this world be Brahman? In order to answer this question, the text says, 'tajjalan." Since all creation, through the succession of fire, water, food, and so on is born from that Brahman, it is said to be tajjam; it is said to be tallam since it gets merged in that very Brahman, that is to say, it is wholly identified with that; and it is said to be tadanam since it continues to live, to function in that very Brahman during the state of its existence. Thus, the entire world is non-different from Brahman in all the three states, since it is not perceived apart from Brahman. So this world is undoubtedly that Brahman itself.

The point to be noted here is that the effect, e.g. pot, which has originated from its material cause (here, clay), does not sever its connection with its cause in all the three states-origination, existence, and dissolution-which it goes through. What is true of a pot is equally true of the manifested world. It not only originates from, and merges in, its cause, viz. Brahman, but exists and functions by depending upon the same Brahman. This is how we have to understand Brahman, which is identical with Dharma, the- support of the world.

9.2 THE VYAVAHARIKA PERSPECTIVE OF DHARMA

Sanatana-dharma has a bearing on the transactional world which is governed by the principles of space, time, and causality. It is intended to shape, organize, and regulate the total life of the jiva in the context of physical, moral, and social order which it supports through its three important principles. The first one is that the primal reality which is one is spoken of and viewed as many for the benefit of the people in their secular, moral, and spiritual activities. One expression of this principle is the practice of polytheism right from the Vedic times down to the present day. We have the freedom to worship the supreme Godhead in any form as characterized by different qualities and functions. A text of the Svetasvatara Upanisad, 4.2, gives an eloquent expression to this ideal: That, indeed, is Agni, that is Aditya, that is Vayu, and that is the moon. That, indeed, is the pure. That is Brahma. That is the waters. That is Prajapati.

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There is only one God, but there are many forms of God; and the worship of God in any form is as good as the worship of it in any other form. It may be pointed out in this connection that there are two kinds of polytheism, elevating and degenerate. While the former helps the spiritual aspirant to achieve transcendence of the finitude, the latter leads to bigotry and fanaticism. Advaita has inherited the former variety of polytheism from the great tradition of Sanatana-dharma. The worship of the personal god (ista devat) and the acceptance of the polytheistic outlook as an integral part of spiritual discipline contribute to individual development and social harmony. What is conveyed by the Upanisadic text quoted above finds concrete expression in the daily prayer of the Hindus—a practice commended and approved by the Advaita tradition.

May the Lord of the universe, the remover of evil, whom the devotees of Siva worship as Siva, the Vedantins as Brahman, the Buddhists as Buddha, the followers of the Nyaya philosophy, who are clever in logic, as the Agent, those devoted to the Jaina doctrines as Arhat, the ritualists of the Mimamsa school as Karma—may he grant us all our hearty desires.

That every living being called the jiva is in its essential nature identical with Brahman, the primal Spirit, is the second principle of Sanatana-dharma. Though every living being, high or low in its status, is a jiva, in the present context of the discussion of dharma the focus is on the human being, who is the measure of all things. Sankara highlights the divine nature of the human being when he declares, "jivo brahmaiva na aparah, i.e. the jiva in its essential nature is Brahman itself, and not something different from it. The logic which holds good for solving the problem of one Godhead and a plurality of gods is also applied to harmonize the relation among the human beings and establish their basic unity or oneness. That there are differences among human beings arising from gender, race, colour, age, and so on, is a matter of common knowledge, which does not require any philosophical defense or justification. Sankara, the best exponent of the tradition of Sanatana-dharma, does not deny these differences as noticed in our day-to-day life. To him the important problem is not about the empirical fact of differences, but about their status and origin. These differences among the jivas, he maintains, are accidental or conditional (aupadhika) and not essential (svabhavika).

Though all human beings are essentially one, as the same Brahman / Atman indwells all of them, differences arise because of the mind-sense-body adjunct which is the conditioning or limiting factor. So all human beings are essentially one though there are differences among them arising from the assemblage of the mind, the senses, and the body (karyakarana-sanghata). Differences which are aupadhika, i.e. upadhi-originated and, therefore, are accidental are due to our ignorance (avidya) of the nature of the Self as one and non-dual. An insight into the nature of the Self will help us to live in peace with others as well as with oneself. It may be added that Advaita, and Advaita alone, which holds that oneness is real whereas differences among the jivas are aupadhika, can provide a strong basis for morality. The message of the second principle of Sanatana-dharma is that self-integration and social-integration must go side by side, as taught in the Bhagavad-gita, 12.15. The Lord here extols the importance of the harmonious relation between the individual and the society. Further, the essential oneness of all human beings is stressed by the text of the Svetasvatara Upanisad, 4.3: You are woman. You are man. You are the youth and the maiden too. You, as an old man, totter along with a staff. Being born, you become facing in every direction.

According to the third principle of Sanatana-dharma, the entire physical world composed of the five elements, though material, is spiritual in character inasmuch as Brahman / Atman, which is real, knowledge, and bliss by its very nature, is immanent in it. Advaita, holds that every object in the world which is called a nama-rupa contains five aspects (amsa-pancaka), viz. existence, knowability, bliss, name, and form. Of these five aspects, the first three belong to Brahman/Atman while the last two are the natural characteristics of an object. It means that, though the physical world is material or insentient (jada), still it is spiritual in character because of the presence of Brahman/Atman in it. The hymns of the Rg-veda emphasize the need for love, respect, and admiration for nature.

Life is sustained and nourished by the bounty of the earth and the munificence of the heaven. Between the earth and the heaven there is the mid-region of the wind and the rain, which contributes to the rich

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resources of the earth. It is not, therefore, surprising that the Vedic people have shown their unwavering love and unqualified reverence for nature. There are many hymns in the Rg-veda which praise and adore both earth and heaven together, not only as phenomena of nature, but also as cosmic God. For example, there is a hymn which says:

These Heaven and Earth, bestow prosperity on all, sustainers of the region, Holy ones and wise; two bowls of noble kind: between these, the god, the effulgent Sun, travels by fixed decree. Widely capacious Pair, mighty, that never fail, the Father and the Mother keep all creatures safe...Son of these Parents, he the Priest with power to cleanse, Sage, sanctifies the world with his surpassing power. Among the skillful gods the most skilled is he, who made the two world-halves which bring prosperity to all. Extolled in song, O Heaven and Earth, bestow on us, you mighty Pair, great glory and high lordly sway.

Uddalaka Aruni and five others requested Asvapati Kaikeya to teach them the universal Self. Before teaching them, he asked them, one by one, their conception of the universal Self. They answered him by identifying it with the heaven, the sun, air, ether, water, and earth. Their notions, Asvapati told them, were wrong, because they identified the whole with the parts, just as a blind man would mistake the parts of an elephant for the elephant itself. The heaven and the earth, and other phenomena of nature are parts of the universal Self, and so no one of them can be identified with it. Brahman is the Self of all beings, sentient as well as insentient. If so, the physical world cannot be non-spiritual. Hence the need to protect, preserve, and love the manifested objects of the world, which is today the message of ceo-philosophy. It may be added that, drawing the inspiration from the Vedic texts, Advaita has articulated this message incorporating it in its total philosophy.

Dharma, we said, is the principle which supports or holds together everything at the physical, moral, and social levels. It is necessary in this connection to refer to two other terms which occur in the Mantras. The concept of Rta as it occurs in the Mantras refers to the physical and the moral orders that prevail in the world. While the former has a bearing on the world of facts, the latter signifies the world of values. The Vedic gods, the Mantras tell us, maintained not only the cosmic order, but also

the moral order. For example, Varuna is spoken of as the one who fixed the laws of the physical universe and closely watched and supervised the behaviour of the people. Consider the course and flow of a river, which is controlled by the supernatural power. The river is what it is because it is sourced and sustained by the primal Being. There is a famous text in the brhadaranyaka Upanisad where Yajnavalkya tells Gargi that the sun and the moon, the heaven and the earth remain in their positions at the command of the imperishable. He adds:

At the command of that imperishable, O Gargi, what are called moments, hours, days and nights, half-months, months, seasons, and years stand in their respective positions. At the command of that imperishable, O Gargi, some rivers flow eastward from the white (snowy) mountains, others flowing westward continue in that direction, and still others keep to their respective courses. By the command of that imperishable, O Gargi, men praise those who give; the gods depend on the sacrificer, and the manes on independent offering.

The above passage is significant as it highlights the control and command over the entire manifested world exercised by a mighty power. Sankara's commentary on the text quoted above brings out the distinctive character of every particular object as well as the interconnection among them as they are all supported and controlled by the primal Being. Sankara observes:

Thus there exist their might. Ruler, the immutable, as the lamp has its maker and regulator. Under the mighty rule of this immutable, O Gargi, heaven and earth maintain their positions, although they are by nature subject to disruption because of having parts, inclined to fall owing to their weight, liable to separate, being a compound, and are independent, each being presided over by a conscious deity identifying itself with it. It is this immutable which is like a boundary wall that preserves the distinctions among things-keeps all within their limits; hence the sun and the moon do not transgress the mighty rule of this Immutable. Therefore, its existence is proved. The unfailing sign of this is the fact that heaven and earth obey a fixed order; this would be impossible were there not a conscious, transcendent Ruler. Witness the Mantra, who has made heaven powerful and the earth firm? Rg-veda, 10.111.5) As in life an

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accountant appointed by his master carefully calculates all items of income and expenditure, so are these divisions of time controlled by their master, the Immutable. Similarly, some rivers, such as the Ganga, flow eastward from the White mountains, the Himalayas, for instance, and they, notwithstanding their power to flow otherwise, keep to their original courses; this too indicates a Ruler. Others flowing westward, such as the Indus, continue in that direction, and still others keep to their respective courses, do not deviate from the courses they have taken; this is another indication.

It is obvious that we cannot understand and account for the order and arrangement, sequence and symmetry of the things of the world without reference to the primal Being. Rna the other concept which has played an important role in shaping and regulating the day-to-day life of the people as members of an organized society. Rna means obligation in a very comprehensive sense connecting an individual with the entire world, past, present, and future. Let us explain how the tradition has worked out the connection between the past and the present through the concept of Rna. The Vedic tradition holds that a person becomes eligible for Self-knowledge (atmajnana) only by discharging the three congenital debts, for which the performance of karmas is indispensable. Manu says: Having discharged the three obligations, one is to set one's mind on release. The debt that one owes to the sages should be paid off by the study of the Veda and the observance of celibacy (brahmacharya), the debt to the gods by sacrifices like agnihotra, and the debt to the ancestors by means of progeny. So the performance of yajna is necessary to discharge the three congenital debts, whose liquidation is an indispensable qualification for attaining the knowledge of the Self. The point to be noted here is that there is an invisible, but strong bond between the past and the present which every individual has to acknowledge and act accordingly. The bond extends from the present to the future. The Vedic tradition holds the view that duty by its very nature is other-regarding and that it is not restricted to human society alone. It includes in its purview all beings, sentient as well as insentient. It is necessary in this connection to pay attention to the deeper significance of panca-mahayajnas, which are binding on every human being, who is endowed with

moral consciousness and is capable of deliberate action. The five kinds of sacrifice-pitr-yajna, brahma-yajna, deva-yajna, nr-yajna, and bhuta-yajna-emphasize the need to acknowledge our indebtedness to the five-fold heritage-biological, spiritual, cultural, social, and ecological-that has moulded us and made us what we are.

Answer to Check your Progress-1

1. The theory of five sheaths (panca-kosa)

9.3 THREE-DIMENSIONAL CHARACTER OF DUTY

It may be pointed out in this connection that the individual who aims at self-development should contribute to social development by performing his duties (dharma) to others as well as to oneself. The Hindu ethics lays emphasis on the system of duties rather than on the system of rights. The reason for this is not far to seek. Ethics is concerned with social harmony. The needs and claims of one person have to be adjusted and reconciled with those of others in society. Certain types of conduct which would contribute to harmony, integrity, and solidarity of society have to be enforced and those which would endanger them have to be forbidden. It is for this reason that in every social system there are moral codes and principles, the system of duties, which must be carried out with moral earnestness. Duty is that which, when properly discharged, upholds society, sustains it, and nourishes it; that is why, it is called dharma. The Bhagavad-gita has made us familiar with the concept of loka-samgraha, the maintenance and protection of the world. Lord Krsna says that, if he does not do his duty, he would be causing the ruin of the world.

From the point of view of the individual also, we can bring out the significance of the system of duties. Indian philosophy is a system of

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values. Though it is the individual who pursues values, he does so by remaining within a social framework. The pursuit of dharma, for example, will become meaningless when the individual is all by himself without others in a society. The practice of virtues like charity, compassion, etc., would be impossible when the individual is not a member of a social system. There is social significance in the pursuit and possession of wealth (artha) which is recognized as one of the legitimate ends. Wealth, according to the Indian point of view, is something to be enjoyed and shared with others. Most of our needs are fulfilled and pleasure is attained by depending on others. The cultivation of cardinal virtues and the practice of austerities are enjoined as the necessary requisites for the attainment of perfection. All the virtues that one has to cultivate are brought under the three da's by the Brhadaryanka Upanisad. They are: self-restraint (dama), self-sacrifice (dana), and compassion (daya). Some of the virtues and austerities are of social significance. It is true that the highest value is trans empirical and transmoral, but it is sought to be attained by remaining in a social order. The belief underlying the system of duties is that to help others is to help oneself, and that to help oneself, one has to help others. In short, the individual can pursue his ends only if he does his duty (dharma) and thereby contribute to social harmony and social good. It is obvious from what we have said above that the notion of duty involves social reference. Morality presupposes interaction between people, and wherever there are people living together forming a community or society, there is the system of duties. Duties are, therefore, other-regarding.

Are there duties which can be said to be self-regarding? It is necessary to discuss this question at this stage, because there are those who argue that in the Hindu ethics in general and Advaitic ethics in particular, every duty, strictly speaking, is a duty to oneself and that the conception of duty to others in the sense of moral aid to others is self-contradictory. One can so they argue, no more conduce to the betterment of another's natural life than one can conduce to his moral life.

Let us first analyse the implication of the term 'duty'. The term 'duty' has three dimensions. It carries a reference to (i) a partner, (ii) the ground, and (iii) the content. When we say that it is the duty of X to keep the

promise he made to Y", X is under obligation to Y, and so Y is the partner. X has incurred the obligation under certain circumstances by a previous act of his, and so there is the ground on account of which he has the duty to Y. If we say that his duty consists in repaying the money borrowed from Y, we are referring to the content of his duty. So duty has three dimensions. Further, if one fails to discharge one's duty, it results in inconvenience, disappointment, distress, loss of confidence, the weakening of one's habit of keeping engagements. In short, the failure to discharge one's duty upsets social harmony and jeopardizes social good. The partner to whom one owes a duty has a right to complain until the obligation is discharged. Duties of various kinds arise because of the fact that, when man lives with others in society there is what can be called moral involvement, which is accepted in the Vedantic tradition. There is no living together in a society without moral involvement unless it be in the fictitious State of Nature as depicted by Hobbes. The duty of justice, of beneficence, of non-injury, etc. arise because of the moral involvement of man with man in society.

If so, we have to find out whether there are duties to oneself in the only accepted sense in which we use the term duty. The list of duties enumerated by the Hindu thinkers can be taken up with a view to find out whether there are duties to oneself as well as duties to others. The list of duties provided by Manu is quite handy. The following are the common duties (sadharana dharmas) enjoined on all: (i) steadfastness, (ii) forgiveness, (iii) application, (iv) non-appropriation, (v) cleanliness, (vi) control over the appetites, (vii) wisdom, (viii) learning, (ix) veracity, and (x) restraint of anger. Among the various duties mentioned in the Taittiriya Upanisad, we find the duties of learning, of speaking truth, of adhering to social good conduct, and of self-control. Some of the duties mentioned in both the lists are other-regarding. The duties of forgiveness, non-appropriation, and non-injury have reference to others. They involve the relation ship between at least two people. They are duties to others. Then, what about those which are not other-regarding, but self-regarding? Take, for example, the cases of learning and cleanliness. Are they cases of duties to oneself? It was pointed out earlier that duty is three-dimensional in character. Who is the partner to whom I owe the

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duty of keeping myself clean, or keeping myself healthy, or keeping myself well-informed? It looks odd to say that I have a duty to myself. And, what is the ground on account of which I have the duty to myself? Did I make a promise to myself? Questions of this type relevant to the notion of duty cannot be answered in any intelligible way unless we bring in others to explain the significance of duty.

Strictly speaking, duties which appear to be self-regarding are duties to others. Even in these cases, we have a partner and the ground, in addition to the content, implied in the notion of duty. Society, a collective term standing for others, is the partner to whom I owe the duty to keep myself clean, or to keep myself informed, or to keep myself hale and healthy. Not that I made a promise the moment I was born, or at a subsequent time when I had the necessary maturity of outlook to reflect on the social significance of my existence. I owe the duty to society because of my moral involvement with others in society. We owe our duties to society on account of our membership in society. Our duty consists in maintaining and developing ourselves, keeping ourselves clean and healthy, developing the cognitive and affective aspects of our life in such a way that we will not be a liability on society there is a double advantage here. To contribute to social harmony and social good is to help oneself. It is not as if man is not enriching his personality when he enriches the social good. An individual who discharges his duties to others in society will be found to have certain virtues which are useful to the attainment of right knowledge or supernormal experience. While at one stage he is helped by society whose assistance is necessary for the individual to realize his needs, society in turn is helped by him when he attains the plenary experience. His presence is a source of inspiration to others, and his plenary experience will benefit society.

The notion of duty carries a reference to others, and without involving others either directly or indirectly, we can never use the term 'duty'. In cases where we incur an obligation by a previous act of our own or of others, we can easily show the partner to whom we owe our duty. ·where there is no direct partner, there is an indirect partner, viz. society, which is at the background. The contention that one can no more conduce to the betterment of another's natural life than one can conduce

to his moral life is equally untenable. The aim of moral codes and of the system of obligations is to ensure that people adopt certain courses of action which, when performed, would contribute to the welfare of others and which, when neglected, would lead to distress and disharmony in society. It is true that moral and spiritual development are dependent on the effort and earnestness of the individual concerned. But the conditions absolutely necessary for the development of moral and spiritual life have to be provided for by others. And it is here that the importance of the system of obligations is to be seen. There is, therefore, absurdity, not in the notion of duty to others, but only in the notion of duty to oneself. Right from the first mantra, the Isavasya Upanisad teaches the concept of duty and the social dimension of the life of the jiva in the context of the philosophy of oneness.

Let us now take up the second aspect of duty, viz. its justification. The Hindu ethics recognizes the claims of both deontology and teleology. It does not look at them as irreconcilable claims which must be kept apart. Both of them are relevant in our consideration of duty. The Hindu ethics does not adopt the attitude of 'either-or', but that of 'both-and'.

The Hindu ethics emphasize the binding character of duty. Like modern deontologists, the Hindu thinkers have argued that such actions as promise-keeping, speaking the truth, etc. which are self-evident duties have a rightness of their own. Their validity depends on what they are and not on any end different from, and outside, the fact of duty. A duty is done just because it is duty. Yudhisthira tells Draupadi.

I do not, O Princess, follow dharma with an eye for reward. I give simply because it is my duty to give (*dadami deyam ityeva*); I sacrifice because it is my duty to do so (*yaje ya tavyam iti*). Be there any reward or not, whatever must be performed by a householder, I do it, O Draupadi, according to my ability.

To the deontologists the question of justification of duty is meaningless. They argue that justification of duty is neither necessary nor possible. We do our duty because we see that it is our duty. We cannot justify why we do our duty by citing an end which is outside the fact of duty. In this respect the standpoint of the Hindu ethics is similar to that of the deontologists. But when the deontologists argue that there is no

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connection between duty and goodness, between the rightness of an act and its tendency to produce goodness, they differ from the Hindu ethics. There are two aspects involved in this problem. One is about the validity and the binding character of duty, and the other is about its relation to goodness. Emphasizing the importance of the two aspects, the Bhatta Mimamsakas argue that, while the validity of duty or the rightness of an act is not dependent on the end, it is nevertheless related to the end. According to the Hindu ethics, a right action or duty is always productive of good. Sankara observes in his commentary on the Bhagavad-gita that "Scripture cannot enjoin an act which is productive of no good".

The performance of duty will result in the good, not necessarily in the utilitarian book keeping way, but in the sense that it will maximize the good in the world. A duty that would leave the world no better for the doing of it is an irrational duty, indeed no duty at all. From the Vedantic point of view, duty and goodness do not fall apart. It particularly emphasizes the importance of doing the right, discharging the duty, from morally good motives. The motive must be to do the duty just because it is the duty and not for the sake of the result. The performance of duty does contribute to the good, individual as well as social.

The third aspect of duty relates to its prescriptive character. The purpose of ethical principles and of the system of duties is not just to serve as copy-book maxims to be read and copied and forgotten when inconvenient to oneself and to be pressed conveniently into service against others. Their function is to guide human conduct. They advise and instruct us as to how we have to conduct ourselves in our relations with others in society. In short, all of them are deeply concerned with the social aspect of human conduct. This is how we generally explain moral principles and codes. But there is much more in them than what we ordinarily detect, and that is the prescriptive character of principles and duties. The understanding of the prescriptive character of duties will enable one to bridge the gulf between theory and practice. Duties are prescriptive in the sense that to accept something as duty is to do it. We cannot admit that a certain course of action is our duty and at the same time not perform it, when it is the occasion for performing it and when we are in a position, physically and psychologically, to do it. The

Bhagavad gita says that "the abandonment of an obligatory duty is not proper." In his commentary on this point, Sankara observes that "to hold that a duty is obligatory and then to abandon it involves a self-contradiction." The point is that, if I sincerely admit that a certain course of action is my duty, I should do it, in the same way as I believe a statement when I sincerely assent to it. It is on this prescriptive character of duty that Sankara lays emphasis.

The Upanisad has worked out a hierarchy of things from the ontological point of view. The kind of life that one leads may form a parallel to the hierarchy of things. Broadly speaking, we may speak of outer life and inner life; and correspondingly, we may also speak of outer man and inner man. The Upanisad tells us that, instead of being absorbed in the things of the external world, we have to move inward towards the Self. While the senses drag us towards outward objects, a spiritual aspirant equipped with discrimination and dispassion must undertake the inward journey. The landmarks of the spiritual journey are identified by the Katha Upanisad, 1.3.10-11, when it works out the following hierarchy of things: The sense-objects are higher than the senses, and the mind is higher than the sense-objects; but the intellect is higher than the mind, and the Great Soul (Hiranyagarbha) is higher than the intellect; the Unmanifest is higher than the Great Soul. Purusa (i.e., the Self) is higher than the Unmanifest. There is nothing higher than Purusa. It is the culmination. It is the highest goal.

That dharma is the regulative principle of the life of the people belonging to different classes is set forth in the Brhadaranyaka Upanisad. It says: "Verily, in the beginning this [world comprising different classes] was Brahman [Virin the form of fire], one only. Being one, he did not flourish." Then it goes on to say that he created one after another the different classes for the growth and nourishment of the society. The different classes constitute an organic whole, and each class has a well-defined plan of work for not only the survival, but also for the development of the society. Commenting on the creation of the four classes of society-a classification comparable to the Platonic classes in the ideal state-Radhakrishnan observes:

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Society requires, in addition to wisdom, power, and wealth, service and work. Wisdom conceives the order, power sanctions and enforces it, wealth and production provide the means for carrying out the order, and work carries out. These are the different functions essential for a normal well-ordered society. These distinctions are found among both gods and men.

The creation of different classes alone is not enough. With the view to ensure order and justice in the functioning of the different classes, there is the need for righteousness. The king or the ruler who administers the law must follow the principle of justice, and so he too must be subject to a higher principle which is supreme. That higher principle is called dharma. Therefore, the Upanisad says that after creating the different classes he projected dharma.

This dharma is the controller of the atriya class. There is nothing higher than dharma (dharmat param nasti). So, even a weak man hopes to defeat a strong man by means of dharma as one does through the king. Verily, that which is dharma is truth. Therefore, they say that a man who speaks the truth speaks dharma, or a man who speaks dharma speaks the truth. Verily, both these are the same.

In the course of his commentary on this text, Sankara remarks:

This dharma is the controller of even the ruler, fiercer than that fierce race even. So, since it is the controller of even the ruler, there is nothing higher than that, for it controls all.

Sankara clarifies why the Upanisadic text identifies satyam and dharma and then brings out the pragmatic dimension of dharma. He observes:

That dharma, which is expressed as conduct and also which is practised by people, is verily truth. 'Truth' is that which is in accordance with the teaching of the scriptures. The same thing, when it is practised, is called dharma, and when it is understood to be in accordance with the scriptures, is truth. This being the case, people say that a person who speaks the truth speaks dharma. Conversely also, a person who speaks dharma is said to speak truth (which is in accordance with the scriptures) ... These two stated above, viz. that which is known (jnanyamanam) and that which is practised (anu thiyamanam), are dharma. So dharma in its

dual aspect of knowledge and practice controls all, those who know the scriptures and those who do not.

A few points highlighted by Sankara in his commentary require closer attention. The first point is about the vyavahara-laksana of dharma: that is to say, what is called dharma should have a bearing on our daily life. Secondly, he speaks about dharma as what is practised by the people (laukikaih vyavahriyamah). Thirdly, such being the case with regard to dharma, it deserves to be called 'truth' (satyam). After identifying dharma with 'truth' he further explains what 'truth' means in this context. In the context of dharma, what is relevant and should be emphasized is the practical dimension of truth rather than the cognitive dimension, though the former has to follow the latter. If dharma has a bearing on conduct and if it is the same as truth, then 'truth' means action which is approved by the scriptures, which is in accordance with the teachings of the scriptures. Finally, one should know the teachings of the scriptures and develop the conviction to put them into practice. Mere talk about dharma is of no use. The logic of discourse should be followed by the logic of action. The life-activity of man which is fully reflective is directed towards the pursuit of values of different kinds. Dharma is not only a value in itself, but also a directive principle. Value and action are closely related to each other. If life is value-oriented, then it is also action-oriented. In fact, to know the values of a person, we have to closely examine his conduct, because the consciously performed actions of a person reveal the values he cares for and pursues. When a person accepts something as a value, he cannot but be engaged in activities conducive to the attainment of the value in question. To say something is a value, e.g., charity, or non-violence, is to accept it as a value and also to commend it for others; and to accept something as a value is not just for the purpose of talking, but for the purpose of doing. That is why Sankara says that dharma is jnana-anusthana-laksanah, i.e., it is characterized by the dual aspect of what is known and practised. Dharma in this sense is sarva-niyant, the supreme controller of everyone, the ruler as well as the ruled.

9.4 MORAL AND SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

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Advaita has formulated the scheme of moral and spiritual discipline on the basis of the inherent power of the mind which may contribute to the rise or fall of the jiva. There is a well-known saying that it is the mind which is the cause of liberation as well as of bondage of the human being (*mana eva manusyanam karananbandha-moksayoh*). It means that the mind plays an important role in shaping the life of an individual. There are quite a few Upanisadic texts which speak about the strength as well as the limitation of the mind, what the mind is competent to do and what it cannot do. A text of the Katha Upanisad, 2.1.11, says: "This (Brahman/Atman) is to be attained through the mind alone..." While this text emphasizes the need and importance of the mind for the purpose of knowing Brahman/Atman, there is a text in the Kena Upanisad, 1.6, which declares that Brahman/Atman is such that it cannot be comprehended by the mind. To one who is not acquainted with the Advaita tradition and the hermeneutics of the texts, the Upanisadic teaching, which is *prima facie* contradictory, is puzzling.

According to Advaita, the internal organ (*antah-karana*) which is the cognitive instrument is called by four different names—mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*), memory stuff (*citta*), and ego (*ahmi!uira*)—depending upon the function it does. All the functions of the internal organ can be subsumed under these four aspects. Though the internal organ is one, it is functionally fourfold. It is called *manas* when it is in the state of indetermination or indecision with regard to any object it comes into contact with. It is called *buddhi* when it is in the state of determination in ascertaining the nature of the object presented to it. When it is able to recollect or remember any past event, it is named *citta*. When it develops the sense of "I" or ego, it is called *ahamkara*. We have already said that the jiva in its empirical existence performs three kinds of functions as the subject of knowledge, as the agent of action, and the enjoyer of the consequences of action. It means that all kinds of mental episodes in the form of cogitations, feelings, and volitions are functions of the internal organ. Hence the importance of the internal organ in the constitution of the jiva.

When Sankara draws our attention to the pre-eminence of the human being among all the created beings, it is with reference to the cognitive,

affective, and conative competence of the human being. Instead of using the technical term 'internal organ' (antah-karana), the Advaita tradition, following the lead of the Upanisads, very often uses the term 'mind' when it speaks about the cognitive, or affective, or conative aspect of the internal organ. Taking into consideration the functional aspect of the internal organ, we have to decide how it has to be named whatever be the usage of the term in the context. Though the Upanisadic texts quoted above speak of the mind (manas) as the instrument in the context of knowing Brahman/Atman, the reference contextually is to the intellect (buddhi). It must be borne in mind that very often ordinary language is the medium of the philosophical discourse of the Upanisad. Sankara too in his commentary on these texts follows the ordinary language used by the Upanisad, and clarifies in some cases, e.g., in his commentary on the text of the Kena Upanisad, quoted above how the term 'manas' is used in a suggestive way to refer to the different functions of the internal organ. Just as the mind is required to know any object in our day-to-day life, even so it is required to know Brahman/Atman.

Since the object to be known in the present context is extra-ordinary, the mind should be fit enough to comprehend it and become extra-ordinary. For the purpose of clarity in our analysis, let us speak of two statuses of the mind, ordinary (sadharana) and extraordinary (asadharana). The mind that is involved in the process of knowing any object in our day-to-day life is called the ordinary mind. Advaita holds that the mind which comes into contact with the object in perceptual experience becomes one with the object. It is not necessary to go into the details about the psychology and epistemology of perception. Suffice it to say that, since the mind as the cognitive instrument reflects the object that is presented to it, the Advaitin explains the mind-object relation in perceptual experience through a formula-like statement, "As the object, so the mind." The mind that is drawn towards the external object, which is finite and composite, becomes a differentiated and distracted entity as its focus of attention moves from one object to another, or from one aspect to another of the same object. In other words, as an entity which is subject to change or modification from time to time, it becomes vibrant and volatile, unsteady and disturbing. The changes or modifications it

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undergoes from time to time are called modes or vrttis. Since the object of the transactional world is a differentiated one, even so the mind which reflects the object in perceptual experience becomes differentiated, and its status is just ordinary. But when the object to be known is Brahman/Atman, which is trans empirical and therefore extra-ordinary, the mind through which it has to be grasped must also become extra-ordinary in accordance with the principle, "As the object, so the mind." Since Brahman/Atman is one and homogeneous, i.e. akhanda, the mind also which has to comprehend it has to become undifferentiated or homogeneous (akhanda); that is to say, it has to become extraordinary. How is it possible? It is here that the Advaitin speaks about the purification of the mind (citta-suddhi) for the purpose of its becoming extra-ordinary. While it is easy for us to understand the idea of the purification of the body, it is difficult even to imagine what the Advaitin means by the purification of the mind. To keep the mind steady and quiet without allowing it to be drawn towards the things of the world is to make it pure. It means that the sattva-g1wa becomes predominant in it, overpowering rajas and tamas responsible for dynamism and dullness, respectively. That is why the Gita, 14.17, says that sattvat sanjayate jnanam, i.e. from sattva-guna arises wisdom. Sankara in his commentary on the Katha Upanisad, 2.1.11, says that the mind gets purified and elevated by the teaching of scripture and the guidance of the guru. When the mind remains still and quiescent without developing any desire for an object, without coming into contact with anything, and without dreaming anything, it becomes extra-ordinary; and in that undifferentiated condition, it remains as one, unified, and impetrated (akhanda), capturing the inward Self which is one, undifferentiated, and impartite. Stated differently, what is required for the purpose of knowing Brahman/Atman is akhandakara-vrtti. Once there arises such an extra-ordinary vrtti, then there is the dawning of Self-knowledge, which is liberation.

Is it possible, one may ask, for the mind to become quiescent? Is there any empirical evidence for that? The answer is yes. The Advaitin draws our attention to the description of the state of sleep (susupti) given in the fifth mantra of the Mandukya Upanisad. The text reads:

The state of sleep is one in which the sleeper does not desire any enjoyable thing and does not see any dream. It is the third quarter (state) of Prajna who has deep sleep as his sphere, who is one and undifferentiated and remains as a mass of mere consciousness, who abounds in bliss, who is surely an enjoyer of bliss, and who is the doorway to the experience (of dream and waking state).

In the course of the explanation of this passage, Gaudapada says in his Mandukya-karika, 3.31, that in the state of sleep the mind becomes a non-mind (amanas) as it were with the result that there is no experience of duality whereas when the mind functions as an ordinary mind there is the experience of the world of duality comprising objects which move and do not move. The evidence of the state of sleep is given with a view to show that it is quite possible through training and discipline to make the mind inactive and quiet, though ordinarily it is active and agitated. Sankara points out that the mind can undergo a radical transformation and become a non-mind "through the practice of discriminating insight and detachment" for which the instruction of scriptures and the guidance of the guru are necessary. Gaudapada in his Karika. 3.32, highlights the status of the "purified mind", the mind that has become extra-ordinary due to the moral training.

It may be noted that the mind in the state of sleep does not become a non-mind (amanas), but becomes inoperative or dysfunctional, and so it looks as though it has become a non-mind. It is only by moral discipline, which is comparable to the yoga discipline, that the mind has to be made a non-mind in the normal waking state. Gaudapada is aware of the difficulties that one has to face in controlling the mind. He says that controlling the mind is as laborious and difficult as emptying the ocean drop by drop with the tip of a blade of grass. The example given by him is intended to show that the process of disciplining the mind is a difficult one. He mentions four obstacles that a sadhaka has to face. They are: laya (lapse), viksepa (distraction), kasaya (passion), and rasasvada (satisfaction). During the process of controlling the mind, there is the possibility of the mind lapsing into sleep, or running after objects of various kinds in a distracted condition, or getting overwhelmed by the past impressions which form a thick coating or covering on the mind, or

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getting satisfied with ephemeral things. It is only when the spiritual aspirant is able to control the mind, keep it calm and quiescent, and thereby transform it into a non-mind that he attains Self-realization.

According to Ramana Maharshi, a contemporary Advaitin, the Vedic tradition has formulated two techniques for Self-realization. One technique is controlling the prana which is yoga, while the other one is controlling the mind which is jnana. He points out that these two techniques are the principal means for the "destruction of the mind", i.e. for making the mind a non-mind. He goes on to say that the method of jnana is like subduing a turbulent bull by coaxing it with green grass, whereas the method of yoga is like controlling through the use of force. It will be of interest to note that, as in the case of the Yoga system of Patanjali, the Advaita system also, according to Ramana Maharshi, has "eight limbs of knowledge" (jnana-a tanga). His elucidation of the eight limbs of knowledge is interesting. Controlling the aggregate of the sense organs by understanding the ephemeral nature of the things of the world is yama. With the focus of the mind on the Self, one should avoid all modes of thinking which run counter to the thought-ideas of the Self; and this technique is niyama. The easy posture which helps the spiritual aspirant to practise constant meditation on Brahman/Atman is asana. The fourth limb which is called pranayama is exhaling or eliminating the unreal aspects of name and form (nama-rupa) and then inhaling or retaining the three essential aspects sat, cit, and ananda-of Brahman/Atman. Pratyahara is preventing name and form, which have been removed, from re-entering the mind. Dharana is making the mind steady with the focus on Brahman/Atman. Dhyana is meditation on the idea "I am only pure consciousness". Finally, samadhi is the state in which the sense completely disappears resulting in the direct experience of Brahman/Atman. According to Ramana, the limbs of knowledge can be practised by any spiritual aspirant at all places and at all times. A careful study of the eight limbs of knowledge will reveal to us how the Advaita tradition right from the Upanisadic seers down to Ramana Maharshi accords the central place to the mind in the entire scheme of discipline leading to liberation.

According to Advaita, a spiritual aspirant has to undergo the training in two stages. In the first stage there is the moral discipline. One who has successfully completed the moral training is eligible for spiritual discipline, which is in the second stage. The focus of the spiritual discipline is on the study of scripture under the guidance of a competent teacher and a systematic reflection on the contents of the scripture. The requirements for the study of scripture are undoubtedly stiff, and only a person who has developed the right mental frame as a result of the moral training will get the benefit of the study of scripture. It is sometimes asked whether a person cannot straightaway undertake the study of the Vedanta texts. It must be borne in mind in this connection that the Advaitin is not questioning the possibility of the study of the Upanisadic texts by a person who is not exposed to them and who does not have some preunderstanding of the texts. The study of the Vedanta texts is open to everyone and that any person can buy a copy of a Vedanta text and try to read it, but it may not make any sense to a beginner. It is not mere language competence that is called for as a preparation for the study of the scriptural text. Language competence is certainly needed; but in addition to it, one should, according to Sankara, fulfil four basic requirements which are called sadhana catusaya. These requirements have a bearing on the mental set of the spiritual aspirant.

The question of eligibility for the study of the Vedanta involves a basic issue about the relation between the two sections of the Veda. The ritual-section (karma-kanda) of the Veda deals with karma, its nature, the procedure to be followed when performing it, and its fruit such as heaven (svarga). The knowledge-section (jnana-kanda), on the contrary, is concerned with Brahman which is ever-existent, the means of attaining it, and the fruit, viz. liberation which accrues to one who attains Brahman-knowledge. Thus the two sections of the Veda are different, as also the two Mimamsas of Jaimini and Badarayana, which are expositions of the Veda. The difference between the two sections of the Veda and also the two Mimamsas in respect of subject matter (visaya) and fruit (phala) leads to a third difference between them. The person who is eligible (adhikarin) for the study of the one is different from the one eligible for the study of the other. Thus the threefold difference between

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the two sections of the Veda indicates clearly that they are two different branches which have to be kept apart for all purposes. They do not constitute one body of doctrine, one scriptural authority (eka-sastra). Though they are parts of the Veda, the ritual-section is spoken of as Veda and the knowledge section as Vedanta with a view to emphasize the radical difference between them.

If the two parts of the Veda along with the two Mimamsas, which are expositions thereof, are different, the persons eligible for their study are also different. It is laid down that a person who is to undertake the study of the Vedanta should fulfil the fourfold means of eligibility (sadhana-catustaya), viz. discrimination between what is eternal and what is transitory, non-attachment to the enjoyment of fruit here and hereafter, possession of virtues like control of the mind, control of the senses, indifference to objects, etc., and an intense desire for liberation. It may be noted that there is a logical development in the sequence of the requirements as mentioned here. A brief explanation of each one of the four conditions of eligibility will be helpful to understand their significance.

One should first of all be able to discriminate the eternal from the ephemeral. This is what is traditionally called nityanitya-vastu-viveka. This requirement is concerned with the value system in our life. It is a matter of common experience that what we prefer, care for, and cherish as a value at one time may not be interesting to us at a later time, and cease to be a value. There is no need to illustrate this point which is quite obvious. On the contrary, there are some values which we care for all the time. It means that in our day-to-day life we make a distinction between values which are permanent and those which are impermanent. The Advaita tradition has formulated the first requirement to ensure the right beginning for pursuing the Vedantic studies. As we grow, we become mature leading to changes in our value system. A person who has some preunderstanding of the value system through the initial formal study of the Vedas may be interested in deepening this ability to discriminate between a higher value and a lower one, between that which is permanent or nitya and that which is impermanent or anitya. One who has this ability for discrimination is eligible for the study of the Vedantic

text, and to him the study will be profitable, for he does not settle down on anything less than Brahman/ Atman which is the eternal value. The second requirement is closely connected with the first one. It says that one who is interested in the study of the Vedantic text should develop the spirit of detachment. It is well known that we are drawn towards the external objects through our senses and derive sensuous pleasures from them. Also, it is common knowledge that we are not able to have stable or abiding satisfaction from them. Objects come and go, and so the pleasures derived from them come and go. A serious student of the Vedantic texts should overcome attachment to objects and their enjoyment not only here in this life, but also hereafter. In short, one should develop the spirit of detachment. This is known as ihamutra-phala-bhoga-tyaga. It may be stated here that philosopher-mystics in all the traditions have stated that God is wholly other than the world, and so he is detached from every being, from every object. If God himself is pure detachment, then the way to him is the way of detachment. In this connection we have to understand the distinction between the "inner-man" and the "outer-man". To become an inner-man, one should cultivate six virtues, as stated in the third requirement. The six virtues are so valuable that they are called "treasures". Collectively, they are called, sat-sampat. These disciplinary virtues are control of the mind, control of the senses, renunciation, endurance, concentration, and faith in the scriptural texts. The final requirement is the deep-rooted longing for liberation. When the mind is emptied of all the things of the world, its longing for liberation is virtually fulfilled. In this connection we have to draw attention to the opening aphorism of the Brahma-sutra in which Badarayana summarizes the preliminary requisites in two words, viz. atha which means "then", and atah which means "therefore". He maintains that the inquiry into Brahman should be undertaken by a student only after fulfilling the preliminary requirements. The word "then" conveys the fourfold requirement called sadhana-catustaya. The next word "therefore" purports to convey the sense of reason. Since all values-including those produced by rituals and other karmas-other than the realization of Brahman/Atman are ephemeral, one should inquire into Brahman/Atman and attain Brahman knowledge or Brahman-realization.

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And so, Badarayana has formulated not only the preliminary conditions which a beginner has to fulfil before undertaking the study of a Vedanta text, but also the reason therefore in the context of the value system.

According to Sankara, the fourfold means of eligibility is the condition antecedent for the study of the Vedanta, for the desire to know Brahman arises only when these conditions are fulfilled. There is restriction at both ends-with regard to the candidate on the one hand and the subject of inquiry on the other. Only a person who fulfils these conditions should resort to the study of the Vedanta, and a person who fulfils these conditions should study the Vedanta alone. If a person undertakes the study of the Vedanta without fulfilling the requirements, the fruit aimed at, viz., Brahman-realization, cannot be attained. Since the desire to know Brahman, which arises when one fulfills the fourfold means to eligibility, is intense, it ceases to exist only when Brahman, the object of desire, is realized. So the intense desire to know Brahman (brahma-jijnasa), which is the motivatory force, impels the eligible candidate not only to undertake the inquiry into the Vedanta, but also to pursue it till the goal is reached.

Suresvara sets forth these conditions of eligibility for the study of the Vedanta in different places in his writings. What is interesting in the analysis of the requirements given by him is the detailed enumeration of the specifics. A sannyasin who has a pure mind, who is free from attachment, and who has renounced all rites is eligible for Brahman-knowledge. He says: A person who has become pure in mind by the performance of obligatory rites, etc., and who is free from attachment to the fruits which have accrued in the waking experience, in the same way as one is free from attachment to the son, etc., seen in dream (is eligible for knowledge). In another place he says: "He alone is eligible to study the Vedanta who has renounced all actions without residue, who desires to shake off transmigration, and also to know the unity of the Self. The discipline (necessary for the attainment of knowledge) is of the nature of the quiescence of all activity, of speech, mind, and body. Knowing the perishable nature of the things of the world through perception, inference, and scripture, one can discriminate the permanent from the transitory and be non-attached to the latter comprising the choir of

heaven and the furniture of earth. With faith and devotion as well as a pure mind turned away from all pleasures lower than moksa, one who is desirous of knowing Brahman should approach, says Suresvara, a competent teacher. It may be argued that it is impossible for one to be in possession of the fourfold means of eligibility without the study of the Vedanta. It is only after studying the Vedanta and realizing the nature of Brahman that it will be possible for one to discriminate the eternal from the transitory and develop non-attachment towards transitory things. The problem which has to be solved may be stated in the form of a dilemma. If Brahman is not known, eligibility for knowledge is not possible; and if it is known, eligibility is not necessary.

Suresvara contends that there is a way out of this dilemma as the alternatives are not collectively exhaustive. It is not a case of Brahman/Atman being either known or not known; but it is a case of Brahman/Atman being both known and not known. And so there is a third alternative which has not been taken into consideration by the critic. Even before one begins to inquire into the Vedanta with a view to know Brahman/Atman, one has a general knowledge (apata-jnana) of it through the formal study (adhyayana) of the Veda. There is the injunction that every person shall study his own section of the Veda. One should not only study the Veda, but understand its meaning as well. In the course of the formal study one comes across various scriptural texts which declare that Brahman is eternal, that whatever is got through action is perishable, that everything other than Brahman is perishable, etc. Though one has this knowledge in a general way even before the commencement of the inquiry into Brahman, such a knowledge is not free from doubt, and is not firmly established, because it has not been systematically inquired into. It means that Brahman/Atman is known and also not known. Though to start with one has only a general knowledge as a result of the formal study of the Veda along with the auxiliary disciplines, it has kindled an intense desire for attaining a firm knowledge of Brahman: Such a person is, indeed, eligible for the study of the Vedanta. Suresvara observes: "Eligibility results even for him who, although ignorant, possesses a general knowledge about the truth of Brahman/Atman and who desires knowledge and release.

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As a result of the study of the Veda and its auxiliary disciplines, one must have the urge towards release. Suresvara explains how in the absence of the urge towards release it will not be possible for one to attain the highest end, viz., liberation, as follows: "One who has no urge towards release will not approach a preceptor. In the absence of a preceptor there is no hearing of the sacred text. Without hearing the sacred text, there are no words and meanings to be inquired into. In the absence of words and their meanings on what should rational inquiry rest? Without such an inquiry there is no comprehension of the significance of the sacred sentence. Without that comprehension, ignorance cannot be destroyed. Without the destruction of ignorance, the attainment of the supreme goal is impossible." So a person who has an intense urge towards release and who has renounced all karma is eligible for the study of the Vedanta.

Renunciation is not an affair of a moment which one can resort to in a fit of momentary disgust. Nor does Advaita recommend it indiscriminately to each and every one with a view to become eligible for the study of the Vedanta. One has to climb a steep and arduous path from the stage in which one accepts the world in all its reality to that in which one rejects it as non-real. This will be obvious, if we consider the stages that precede the act of renunciation and the stages that follow it till one attains Brahman-realization .

The act of renunciation for the purpose of knowing Brahman (vividisa-sannyasa) must be preceded by (i) the performance of obligatory and occasional rites (nitya-nairnittikakarmanusthana), (ii) purification of the mind (citta-suddhi), (iii) the conviction about the utter uselessness of the things of the world (samsararata-drsti), (iv) the desire to renounce the world (sarhsara-jihasa), (v) the giving up of desire for son, etc and (vi) an intense desire to know Brahman . It is only when a spiritual aspirant has come to the stage of vividisa-sannyasa, i.e. renunciation of karma as well as the things of the world for the purpose of knowing Brahman, that he is called upon to undertake the inquiry into Brahman/ Atman by means of guided study (Sravana), rational reflection (manana), and repeated contemplation (nididhyasana). When the threefold discipline of sravana, manana, and nididhyasana leads to Brahman-intuition, the wise man who

has realized Brahman/Atman, who remains as Brahman/Atman, has, indeed, renounced everything. Steeped as he is in Brahman/Atman, his is the life of total renunciation; and this renunciation which follows his spiritual awakening is termed vidvat-sannyasa as distinguished from vividisa-sannyasa, which is prescribed as a preparation for Brahman-realization.

One who has successfully completed the moral discipline is required to go through the spiritual discipline. According to Advaita, scripture is the pramana through which one has to attain the knowledge of Brahman/Atman. The Brhadaranyaka Upanisad, 2.4.5, says: "The Self should be seen, heard of, reflected on, and contemplated upon." The direct realization of the Self is possible only through the study of the text, reflection on the meaning of the text, and then repeated contemplation on it. It means that sravana, manana, and nididhyasana are the three steps of this spiritual discipline. The Advaita tradition insists on the importance of the first step for attaining the knowledge of Brahman/Atman. If one does not clear the first step, the remaining two steps are of no use. This, however, does not apply in the case of those who are fortunate enough to get Self-realization through hearing alone. The English rendering of the meanings of these three terms with the help of a lexicon will not serve the purpose. Some may attain Self-realization through sravana alone, some after manana, but some others may have to go through all the three stages. Another text of the Brhadaranyaka Upanisad, 4.4.21, reinforces this idea when it says: "vijñāya prajñam kurvita" It means: knowing that Brahman is the purport of the Vedanta text, one should attain the immediate knowledge of Brahman from the text itself. As in the case of the moral discipline, it is through the mind that the spiritual aspirant has to pursue the spiritual discipline of sravana, manana, and nididhyasana. The word 'sravana', according to the lexicon, means hearing. What is intended here is much more than the lexicon meaning of the term. According to Advaita, the term 'smvāna' means the condition of the mind which, on hearing the texts, enables one to know Brahman/ Atman as the purport of the Vedanta texts by the application of the six purport-indicating marks such as harmony between the beginning and the end of the text, repetition, etc. In the same way, by manana is meant constant

thinking on the non-dual Brahman/ Atman by making use of different kinds of reasoning which will not only prove the oneness of Brahman and Atman, but also disprove their difference. Maintaining the continuous thought-stream of Brahman without allowing it to be disturbed by the ideas of the difference is nididhyasana. The Brhadaranyaka text, 4.4.21, quoted above should be understood in the context of the triple discipline of sravana-manana-nididhyasana, which paves the way for the origination of the saving knowledge, by removing the hindrances on the way.

9.5 THE VALUE SYSTEM OF ADVAITA

The distinction between a fact and a value must be borne in mind when we discuss different kinds of values. Any object that exists in the world is a fact; it is something that is the case. It becomes a value only when it is known, desired, and consciously pursued by the human being for the sake of life. In the Indian tradition a value is called purusartha, which means something which is desired by the human being (purusa). What is desired must first of all be known; and when something is known, one may develop the desire for it as something good; thereafter, one puts forth efforts in order to achieve it. A little reflection will show that there is a causal nexus among three factors-cognition of an object, a desire for it, and the performance of appropriate action for the purpose of fulfilling the desire. The cognition-desire-action series culminates in the realization of an object. It is at the stage of the realization of an object that we speak of the fact becoming a value.

The Vedic tradition has reduced the entire range of values to four-wealth (artha), pleasure (kama), duty (dharma), and liberation (moksa) in a hierarchy. The life of every human being is at two levels-organic and hyper-organic. While the first two values belong to the organic level, the last two belong to the hyper-organic level; and the two pairs are sometimes called empirical and spiritual values, respectively. Bodily and economic values which contribute to material well-being and happiness have been emphasized right from the Vedic times. Prayers and sacrifices which we come across in the Vedas are for a happy, healthy, and full life of a hundred years. As in the case of animals, human beings

too have to go in search of food, water, shelter, and sex instinctively; and all these objects are necessary for their survival. The basic needs that have to be fulfilled for the sake of survival may be characterized as survival values, which are meaningful at the organic level. But unlike animals, human beings pursue higher values, which are assigned to the hyper-organic level. The spiritual side of man which is not satisfied merely with material prosperity and happiness is interested in other values as well. Intellectual, moral, aesthetic, and religious values which are higher values in comparison to bodily and economic values are pursued by a person as a hyper-organic being in fulfilment of the mental and supramental dimensions in him.

The theory of five sheaths (panca-kosa) discussed in the Upanisads has a bearing not only on the moral and spiritual development of the human being from level to level from the bodily to the vital, from the vital to the sensory, from the sensory to the mental and then to the intellectual, and finally to the self-conscious-but also to the realization of values at different levels. According to Advaita, every sheath (kosa) functions as a conditioning factor in the life of every one of us. It is a matter of common experience that in our day-to-day life we have to pay attention to the bodily values such as food, clothing, shelter, and so on. It means that not only do we develop body-consciousness, but also consider as values all those things that we require for bodily sustenance. As we grow, realizing the limitations of bodily, vital, and sensory values at every stage, we care for higher values that are generally termed spiritual values. Though all the sheaths are material, still they are different from one another. The kind of transition from one sheath to another, from one level to another, is what is called spiritual transcendence. The life of human beings reveals different facets. A human being is no doubt an animal in very many things he does; there is also in him a social side such that he cares for society, friendship, and love; as a rational being, he analyses and synthesizes the objects of knowledge and contributes to the development of society of which he is a member; and in him there is also the spiritual dimension which enables him to achieve the transcendence of the finitude associated with the mind-sense-body complex. Though under the spell of the ego or the empirical 'I' he functions as a finite

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being, the same ego or 'I', when chastened, purified, and elevated, helps him to achieve spiritual transcendence. It may be noted that dharma is not only a value, but also a regulative principle which allows the pursuit of both wealth and pleasure without jeopardizing individual well-being and social welfare. Though it has been the convention to explain first artha and kama, and then dharma, the Vedic tradition has placed dharma as the first in the scheme of values as evidenced in the oft-repeated expression "dharmartha-kama-moksa". It is given the first place because it is foundational for the pursuit of other values.

According to Advaita, liberation, which is called by different names such as 'moksa', 'mukti', 'nirvana', 'svaraupa-avasthana', etc. can be attained only by means of knowledge, and so the Advaita tradition speaks of knowledge as purposive in a comprehensive sense emphasizing its importance at the empirical and the trans-empirical levels. It is easy for us to explain the purposive character of knowledge with reference to the existential problem of suffering, which is bondage. When superficially viewed, it may appear that man has not only body, but also Spirit, as if both of them constitute the nature of man. The truth, however, is that man is essentially Spirit having association during empirical existence with a psycho-physical body which is external and accidental to it. If the source of suffering is to be identified, then it is necessary to distinguish the Self or Spirit from the psycho-physical organism which serves as its outfit. The Self by its very nature is ever free and never-bound, and so no experience of any kind-cognitive, or affective, or conative-can be associated with it. If the Self per se is totally free, i.e., free from everything including suffering, then the source of suffering in embodied existence must be the psycho-physical body. The body, when separated from the Self, can have no suffering, because when separated from the Self, it is in no way different from a piece of wood or stone. It is only the sentient body that has the experience of suffering; and the body becomes sentient only when the Self is associated with it. Neither the disembodied Spirit nor the dispirited matter can have the experience of suffering. So there is the existential problem of suffering for man as the embodied Self.

It is not enough if man attains bodily freedom, as it will not solve the problem of suffering. Bodily freedom is freedom for the body from economic, social, political, and other kinds of restraints. Though it is certainly desirable, its attainment does not necessarily terminate suffering. Freedom from the manifold demands of the body becomes equally necessary in the course of one's spiritual development. Nothing short of spiritual freedom, i.e. freedom of the Spirit, will satisfy one who is discerning and reflective. Advaita holds, following the Upanisads, that moksa is the highest value (parama purusartha). To establish the ultimacy of this value, Advaita adopts two approaches, axiological and ontological. On the basis of the dichotomy of the good and the pleasant, as worked out by the Katha Upanisad, 1.2.2, the highest value is called the good (Sreyas), whereas all other values are brought under the category of the pleasant (preyas). In the course of his commentary on this text, Sankara points out that the two goals, viz. liberation and worldly prosperity, are radically different in their nature, calling for different means for their attainment, and that, though both the options, i.e., the pursuit of the good and that of the pleasant, are open to man, it is impossible for him to pursue both of them at the same time. The choice of one means the rejection of the other, though there is no compulsion as to which one he should choose. However, the human being cannot escape from this predicament of value preference, as he has to choose one of them exercising his discrimination.

The Advaita tradition divides knowledge into two kinds on the basis of axiological consideration. The distinction between the good and the pleasant involves a broad classification of knowledge into higher wisdom and lower knowledge. That which is conducive to the attainment of the good, i.e., liberation, is called higher wisdom (para vidya) whereas the knowledge of the objects of the world, which is the means to the attainment of material prosperity and happiness, is called lower knowledge (apara vidya). One who pursues values of various kinds belonging to the sphere of the pleasant is ignorant of the highest reality, whereas one who pursues the good, the highest value, is the enlightened man, the knower of Brahman. The twofold classification of knowledge arises not only from axiological, but also from ontological consideration.

Just as there is the distinction between the good and the pleasant, there is also the distinction between the Self and the not-Self. While the former distinction is axiological, the latter is ontological. The Self and the not-Self are related as reality and appearance. Since Advaita holds that the ultimate reality is one and non-dual, it works out a convergence of the two standpoints and shows that the good (Sreyas) of axiology is non-different from, i.e., identical with, the real (sat) of ontology.

9.6 LETS SUM UP

According to Advaita, liberation is dis-covering the Self, which is not other than Brahman. The Self is ever-existent in the jiva; only, it remains covered by the five sheaths or the bodies. A person who attains the immediate knowledge of the Self by removing or uncovering the coverings which obstruct it attains liberation. One who has realized the Self, or has known the truth of the Nirguna-Brahman has the plenary experience. A brief explanation of the meaning and implication of the term 'plenary experience' will be helpful. Plenary experience means total experience, i.e., direct or immediate experience of the reality in its totality, the reality as a whole. There are two kinds of experience, immediate and mediate. We have immediate experience of an object through perception and not through any other pramana. Many philosophers in the Indian tradition define perception as immediate knowledge (sakat pratitih pratyaksam). The immediate or direct knowledge we have of anything is called anubhava. In perception, the distinction between the subject and the object is overcome inasmuch as consciousness-as-subject and consciousness-as-object become one with the result that there is immediacy or directness of the object. Usually, since the object that is known in our daily experience is limited or finite, the experience that we have of it through our mind is also finite or limited; such an experience is what we call fragmented experience. In the place of fragmented experience, we must have total experience, experience of the reality in its totality. Since Brahman which is identical with the Self in us is the sole reality, to experience it is to experience the total reality. That is why there is the Upanisadic formula, "eka-vijnanena sarva-vijnanam." The liberated person who has, through the

transformation of his mind, direct experience of the Self, which is Brahman, the primal reality, is blessed with plenary experience.

9.7 KEY WORDS

para vidya : That which is conducive to the attainment of the good, i.e., liberation, is called higher wisdom

apara vidya: knowledge of the objects of the world, which is the means to the attainment of material prosperity and happiness, is called lower knowledge

9.8 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Explain the Dharmic nature in Upanishad
2. Write a note on three dimensional nature of duty

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9.10 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress-1

- the moral and spiritual development of the human being from level to level from the bodily to the vital, from the vital to the sensory, from the sensory to the mental and then to the intellectual, and finally to the self-conscious-but also to the realization of values at different levels.

Notes

- According to Advaita, every sheath (kosa) functions as a conditioning factor in the life of every one of us. It is a matter of common experience that in our day-to-day life we have to pay attention to the bodily values such as food, clothing, shelter, and so on.
- It means that not only do we develop body-consciousness, but also consider as values all those things that we require for bodily sustenance.
- As we grow, realizing the limitations of bodily, vital, and sensory values at every stage, we care for higher values that are generally termed spiritual values. Though all the sheaths are material, still they are different from one another. The kind of transition from one sheath to another, from one level to another, is what is called spiritual transcendence.
- The life of human beings reveals different facets. A human being is no doubt an animal in very many things he does; there is also in him a social side such that he cares for society, friendship, and love; as a rational being, he analyses and synthesizes the objects of knowledge and contributes to the development of society of which he is a member; and in him there is also the spiritual dimension which enables him to achieve the transcendence of the finitude associated with the mind-sense-body complex.
- Though under the spell of the ego or the empirical 'I' he functions as a finite being, the same ego or 'I', when chastened, purified, and elevated, helps him to achieve spiritual transcendence. It may be noted that dharma is not only a value, but also a regulative principle which allows the pursuit of both wealth and pleasure without jeopardizing individual well-being and social welfare.
- Though it has been the convention to explain first artha and kama, and then dharma, the Vedic tradition has placed dharma as the first in the scheme of values as evidenced in the oft-repeated expression "dharmartha-kama-moksa". It is given the first place because it is foundational for the pursuit of other values.

UNIT 10 ETHICS IN MAHABHARATA

STRUCTURE

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 The Role Of Dharma
 - 10.2.1 Categories Of Dharma
 - 10.2.2. Yudhisthira, The Symbol Of Dharma
 - 10.2.3 Krsna'S Approach To Dharma
- 10.3 Ethics Of War
- 10.4 Ethics Of Loyalty
- 10.5 Aspects Of Dharma
 - 10.5.1 Dharma as Ahimsa
 - 10.5.2 Dharma as Truth
 - 10.5.3 Dharma as Tyaga
 - 10.5.4 Dharma as Kasma
- 10.6 Varna System
- 10.7 Asrama System
- 10.8 Purusarthas Or Human Values
- 10.9 Karma Doctrine
- 10.10 Rnas
- 10.11 Let Us Sum Up
- 10.12 Keywords
- 10.13 Questions for review
- 10.14 Suggested Readings
- 10.15 Answer to Check Your Progress

10.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the dilemmas in Mahabharat
- know the philosophical understanding of Dharma

10.1 INTRODUCTION

The Mahabharata, which is the largest epic in India, comprises one lakh verses. It may have been, according to scholars, written by more than one author and must have taken four to five centuries for its completion which took place in three stages. Which ethical part of the epic was included at what stage is hard to decide. But much of ethical material is seen in Santiparva and Anusasanaparva which have a comparatively lesser number of upakhyanas or shorter narratives. Therefore, it is possible that the earlier parts of the Mahabharata had more ethical discussions than the later.

The grand epic declares clearly that all the Purusarthas are wholly treated in it Mahabharata 1.2.53). However, the stress is more on Dharma than on the other three, as it is revealed in the famous maxim, 'yato dharmas tato jayah' (Mahabharata 6.65.18). Dharma, in general, means righteousness and in a society in which Brahminic superiority is hailed, the Brahmanas are said to be the custodians of Dharma. The Mahabharata seems to have borrowed mainly the ethical points from Pre-Mahabharatan works, especially from the legendary Manu. The Brahmanas (of Bhrgu family, according to V.S. Sukthankar) included details of Dharma and raised it to the status of Smrti. Significantly some entire parts are devoted to Dharmas, viz. Rajadharma, Apaddharma, Moksadharma and Danadharma, a classification peculiar to the epic. The epic is therefore called Dharma Sastra besides being Arthasastra Kamasashtra, Nitisashtra and Moksashtra. The most important contribution of the Mahabharata is the Bhagavadgita. Though establishing the date of the epic is an extremely difficult task, scholars, in general, believe that the epic in entirety pre-existed Buddhist period.

As the Mahabharata's encyclopaedia dimensions contain more than one lakh verses composed by many authors at different periods of time, it is conjectured by historians that it developed assimilating all the cultural trends of its times. The delineation of the central characters and of those of the upakhyanas or episodes occurring in the main story span a wide range of contemporary ethical thoughts that emerge from the discourses among the characters, especially, of the main story. Some important characters such as Bhishma, Vyasa and Vielma speak on the ethical life of

men and their preaching's as exhibited in the background of religious, socio-political, thoughts. Religion too along with ethics developed during the epic age. We therefore see in the beginning of the epic, the statement that 'by means of itihasa and purana the meaning of the Vedas should be propagated. The Vedas are scared that they may not be understood well without them. This implies that the Vedic religion and ethics, which had taken root during pre-epic period were considered to be worth popularizing. The moral laws were taught throughout the epic as independent of religion, perhaps for the first time, and the values that it stood for, called Dharma, became its focal point. The authors of the epic employed as its means the fascinating epic story and its interwoven episodes for the propagation of Dharma and the emphasis was always on practice and not theory. It is clear that ethics emerging out of the epic was wholly normative in nature. The message of Dharma is so conspicuous that one finds hardly any narrative part without a mention of. This raised the importance of the epic as a smrti although it is styled as itihasa, an occurrence in a given place. If the Vedas became svatahpramana self-testimony, the smrtis became testimonies depending on them, Paratahpramana The origin of the ethics is not hard to trace. The background or contextual concepts of 'varna' and asrama had already got into the system from the Vedic sources. The Mahabharata itself acknowledges its indebtedness to the Vedas but it appears that this belief was disputed in some sections of the then thinkers. This means that there were some who believed in the advent of new trends in ethical life during the epic age. There was also a faith that Dharma would protect those who followed it; it would also destroy those who violated it. Yudhisthira says, If Dharma violated it will destroy him who violates it. If Dharma is protected it will protect him who protects it. I follow Dharma lest it should destroy me otherwise". In other words, it is claimed that an ethical life will assure a secure life while the unethical one will meet with disaster.

10.2 THE ROLE OF DHARMA

'Dharma' is used in the Mahabharata as a multi-vocal concept. Clashes between Dharma and Adharma which, broadly speaking, represent good

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and evil, appear in the narrative parts of the epic. Ultimately the victory of Dharma over Adharma is allegedly established. Teleologically Dharma stands for good and this, in conflict with traits of egoism and arrogance, takes men to higher planes of ethical life when they counter evil. Dharma is described as an accepted path for the attainment of man's highest good. The Vaisesikasutra reflects this faith, namely "That which brings prosperity and eternal good is Dharma. During the days of the epic, Dharma permeated all aspects of life, individual and social. Thus Dharma or moral law is generally thought to have brought Yudhisthira and his brothers to victory, though it is not cent percent true, as they also resorted to some adharma or immoral practices. Even then the Mahabharata repeats the maxim, *yato dharmah tato jayah*, wherever there is Dharma there lays victory. It is also significant that even Drona, the invincible warrior, admits before Yudhisthira that, as long as Krsna is on their side, victory will be on their side though Krsna does instigate Yudhisthira to tell a blatant lie and even prompts it. He says, 'wherever there is Dharma there is Krsna,' Arjuna and Bhima to do some obviously immoral things solely to win the war. Dharma is believed by many to figure in the days of Mahabharata as a way of life reverentially to be followed by all men, though it is not so treated therein. The Mahabharata declares itself as a science of Dharma and a science of economic wellbeing (*dharmasastra* and *arthasastra*) to be studied for the reason, not very convincing, that brahmanas and cows are eulogized in it. It is also a collection of allegedly sacred works. Perhaps the most significant thing is that the epic refers to the four aims of life of which Dharma is an important component, though it refers to the other *purusa arthas*, viz. *kama*, *artha* and *moksa* also, occasionally. The verse says, O bull of Bharata race, with regard to Dharma, *artha*, *kama* and *moksa* whatever is given here is everywhere and whatever is not given here is nowhere. The first two values may be termed as instrumental values and the other two, viz. Dharma and *moksa* are intrinsic values. It is also believed that *kama* (desire) refers to the body, *artha* (economic well-being) to the mind, Dharma (moral law) to the intellect and *moksa* (self-perfection) to the soul. There are references to such other sub-types of dharma as *varnadharma*, *asramadharmā*, etc. With the exception of *moksa* or self-

perfection, the other three values, called trivarga, have an integral approach to the social organization inasmuch as they are pursued by individuals as members of the society.

In the epic, the derivation of the word 'Dharma' occurs twice in identical stanzas. The word is derived from the root dhr, used in the sense, to support or sustain.

Dharma supports men from falling down. It is the one which sustains all. In other words, men who follow Dharma or righteous path will not fall and perish. One has to be guided by Dharma or moral law in order to lead a 'good' life. The epic is replete with the use of Dharma in various senses as, 'conduct', 'duty', 'virtue', essences or nature of a thing, etc. The etymological derivation is of the word, and not an analysis of what 'dharma' denotes, and therefore cannot go a great way in explicating what the concept of dharma, as a moral law or value, really stands for or connotes. The religious significance of Dharma can be seen where dharmic life is insisted to follow scriptural instructions. Three sources of Dharma are given by Dharmavyadha in the course of his conversation with Markandeya. viz.

1. Dharma is taught in the Vedas.
2. Dharma is detailed in the Dharmasastras.
3. Dharma is 'the conduct of the cultured men.

The concept of dharma figures prominently in the epic and it plays an important role in social life in the epic age. Indian masses over the centuries have derived moral laws from the ethics of Dharma. Whether one is literate or illiterate, one understands the ethical significance of Dharma in relation to the stories of the Mahabharata. Notwithstanding this phenomenon there appears to be some confusion even among the sages about the connotation of Dharma. There are statements which reflect the ambiguity of the concept. There are statements like, 'subtle are the ways of Dharma and being subtle it has given rise to many conclusions. In another sequence a wise sage Jajali tells Tuladhara, another sage, 'since Dharma is subtle, one cannot know it exactly and this, therefore, has led to many conclusions.' Significantly, once a group of sages approach Brahma and asks; "which is the Dharma that one

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should follow in this world? We are confused because we get conflicting accounts of Dharma.

A paradoxical situation is given in the epic where a hunter teaches Dharma to a sage. However, the answer of Yudhisthira to a query by Dharma himself who appears in the form of Yaksha is that, 'Logic cannot be a testimony. Scriptures are many. There is no unanimity among the sages about Dharma. So therefore the reality of Dharma is lost in secrecy. Therefore, the path of Dharma is the path trod by the great. Though this appears to be a straightforward statement it is not because it gives no hint as to who can be called a great man cannot be called one who follows dharma because doing that will make it a circular definition.

10.2.1 CATEGORIES OF DHARMA

Dharma in the Mahabharata can be broadly organized under three heads as follows.

1. Yugadharma: Dharma of an epoch.
2. Dharma of the individual in his social life, asramadharma and varnadharma.
3. Dharma in general (treated separately in the epic as noted below):
 - a. Ethics of the King or the ruler (rajadharma).
 - b. Ethics in distress (ripaddharma);
 - c. Ethics in charity (danadharma);
 - d. Ethics in self-perfectionism (moksadharma).

The treatment of yugadharma in the epic is quite brief. Yugadharma reveals how there happens a steady degeneration in moral standards. They are described as high in the beginning and steadily they decline epoch by epoch. Hypothetically, men have a tendency to degenerate as ages pass by. The moral degeneration is a consequence of the violation of Dharma. Once Bhimasena has an encounter with Hanuman (of Tretayuga). Being challenged by Bhima, Hanuman asks him to lift his tail and go. But Bhima could not do it. Then Hanuman explains the condition of Dharma in each epoch; 'As epochs change Dharma declines; and while Dharma declines the world also declines. Hanuman says that each epoch loses a quarter of Dharma and during Kaliyuga only one quarter of Dharma remains. The lord Visnu appears

white in Krtayuga, red in Treta, yellow in Dvayara and black in Kaliyuga. There is no rationale in this account averring the decline dharma. It can at list be taken as a mythical one of no ethical or philosophical significance. It is not even factually true.

10.2.2.YUDHISTHIRA, THE SYMBOL OF DHARMA

The greatest moral character of the epic is Yudhisthira who has no divinity attached to him. He is called "The greatest among those who know Dharma." Yudhisthira's attitude towards Dharma has few parallels in the epic. "I do not aspire for fruits of all that I do" says Yudhisthira, "but I just perform my duty. I give only because a thing has to be given. I perform sacrifice because I should perform it. These words, in reply to Draupadi's arguments that destiny has been adverse to them, show that Yudhisthira did his duty regardless of the consequences. People mistakenly compare it with Kant's notion of goodwill as one which even if it should achieve nothing and then should remain good, then, like a jewel, it should shine by its own light, as a thing which has a whole value in itself. Yudhisthira repeats his stand that he will stick to Dharma without waiting for rewards. "He would emulate the conduct of the noble and act according to the scriptures". But he succumbs to the temptation and tells a blatant lie to win the war. Bhima says, when Draupadi is being disrobed, that "I believe Yudhisthira will renounce the whole of the wealth of the land but he will not give up Dharma. But this is only to pass the buck to him to avoid himself replying to her question and not to declare Yudhisthira a paradigm of a virtuous person.

Yudhisthira first refuses to concede to Draupadi and Bhimasena on waging war against Duryodhana while they were still on exile, though he was the cause of Pandava's miseries because of his addiction to playing dice. But he still says, "Know my firm decision. I prefer following Dharma even to immortality. For me the kingdom, the sons, the fame, the wealth, everything is just a fraction of truth. This only shows that preaching virtue, or intending to be virtuous, does not always get actualised in practice.

It is well-known that in the Dronaparva of the Mahabharata a detailed account of the heroic fight of Drona against the Pandava force is given.

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The invincible warrior Drona shakes the morale of the Pandava force and the Pandavas are perplexed about the future course of action. Then a suggestion comes from Krsna that Yudhisthira should make a loud, though false announcement, that Asvatthama, the son of Drona, is dead. It was only then that Drona would abandon his Veapon and could be killed. The announcement had to be made about the death of Asvatthama, Drona's son, though only an elephant called Asvatthama had been killed. Yudhisthira after Krsna's persuasion shouted loudly that Asvatthama was dead but uttered inaudibly the word 'elephant'. This means that he too agreed ultimately that one could lie in the war to win it a pragmatically defaceable but morally indefensible practice. He could not have the moral courage to refuse to tell the lie which resulted in the killing of his guru Later, he does say, on one accession, "I do not like Bhimasena's act of kicking (the wounded) King, (Duryodhana) so furiously. Alas! his family has come to an end. But then too he does not order Bhima not to do that before he did the immoral thing.

10.2.3 KRSNA'S APPROACH TO DHARMA

Krsna is the only person taken to be a divinity in the Mahabharata in the sense that he is an avatar of Visnu. He is accorded great respect by most of all irrespective of what side one belonged to. He, as a character, plays an important role in the epic in helping the Pandavas on crucial occasions. He employs sometimes ethical and sometimes unethical means to achieve the end because he follows traditionally accepted moral practices without scrutinizing their moral merit. He is shown quite often as possessing superhuman powers. The epic narrates many events when Krsna comes to the rescue of the Pandvas. The most crucial time is when Draupadi was dragged before all in the assembly by Dussasana and he starts disrobing her. When everyone sits helplessly, Lord Krsna comes to her rescue but stealthily and saves her modesty, by making her apparel endless. This can be called a great ethical act of Krsna but for which Dussasana would have outraged her modesty.

Regarding the strategies evolved by Krsna and others in eliminating the invincible warriors of the Kuruksetra war like Bhima, Drona, Karna, Duryodhana and others some unethical means had been employed without which defeat was certain. Krsna causes the death of Bhima by

bringing Sikhandi to fight against him. Bhima has to be killed; no matter if he is old and virtuous; as long as he attacks us he is an enemy in the war. Krsna gets another invincible warrior Drona killed by asking Yudhisthira to tell a lie. Later on, he directs Arjuna to kill Karna taking powerful weapons while Karna is lifting the wheel of the chariot and is unarmed. To kill Duryodhana he tells Arjuna, "If Bhimasena attempts to kill Duryodhana according to Dharma he can never win. He has to violate it in order to kill Duryodhana.

Thus Krsna's strategies for winning the war by eliminating great warriors are morally not acceptable though the end is taken to be good. It is claimed as victory of Dharma. But for Krsna's tactical moves without committing some immoralities Pandavas would not have won. The traditional justification for employing unethical means in winning a war is thus worth noting. Krsna's fear is, if Bhimasena does not kill Duryodhana by unjustifiable means of hitting the thigh he is sure to become the King again. The whole spectrum of ethics is being judged by the results, in this context, at the site of war, with no care for the morality of means: It is a good example of 'The end Justifies even the use of vilest means?'

10.3 ETHICS OF WAR

The ethics of war has other dimensions too. It is astonishing that the two great warriors Bhima and Drona reveal how they could be won in the war when Yudhisathira approaches them. Yudhisthira approaches Bhima with the curiosity to know how he could be killed. Then Bhima explains to him his ethical method of fighting in a war. As long as he wielded his weapons nobody could win against him. Bhima says "I will not fight against him who has laid down his arms, who has fallen on the ground, who has lost his armours, who is running away, who implores that he would belong to me, who has a woman's name, who is the only son of his father or who is an out-caste. If Sikhandi, the eunuch, comes and fights against me I will not fight with him. Let Arjuna seize the opportunity and strike me with powerful arrows.

Yudhisthira goes to Drona on the eve of Kuruksetra war and asks him how he could be killed in the battle. Drona replies, unless I give up my

arms and fall unconscious I cannot be killed. If anyone kills me in that state when I take up fast unto death, you will win.

10.4 ETHICS OF LOYALTY

It is quite interesting to know why Bhima and Drona joined the side of Duryodhana despite that they were aware that Pandavas were fighting for a right cause. Both of them give the same answer when Yudhisthira asks them about it. "Man is a slave of wealth," both of them admit, "but wealth is not a slave of anybody. This is the truth O King! I am now bound by wealth." The implication is obvious. Both of them had a comfortable Duryodhana's care. How could they be disloyal to him at the time of war? They were living at Duryodhana's expenses. They preferred, therefore, to be on his side while realizing that they would be supporting actively a wrong cause, also implying thereby that their moral sense was not strong.

Among the great warriors of the epic, Karna may be said to be next only to Bhima and Drona. An important question of ethics is raised when Kunti reveals to him that he was the eldest among the Pandavas. Kunti, in fact, comes to him to tell about his mysterious birth and to suggest that he should join the side of Pandavas sacrificing his alliance with Duryodhana. The ethical question is, should Karna obey Kunti, his mother, or should he take the side of Duryodhana who came to his aid when he was dubbed to be the son of a Suta? But Karna does not hesitate when Kunti asks him to make his choice. He refuses to admit that it is his Dharma to obey his mother at that point of time. "You never looked after me as my mother," he says, "but now you claim to be so as a well-wishing mother and ask me to serve your purpose". He says that he was morally obliged to take the side of Duryodhana, regardless of consequences, because he alone has given him the social status he now has. His moral conscience does not permit him to change sides. He assures her, however, that he will not kill the Pandavas except Arjuna. The moral judgement of Karna in the given situation is not only a result of his deep sense of gratitude for Duryodhana, but also unlike Bhima's, and Drona's, of his strong moral will.

Among the many incidents which raise ethical questions is the question whether there was any propriety in Yudhistira's pledging Draupadi after having lost himself in the game of dice. A very poignant scene is created in the assembly when Draupadi is dragged into the hall. While Dussasana drags her saree forcibly, Draupadi appeals to the Kauravas in the assembly who are watching the event silently. She puts a question to them, "I want an answer from you all. Am I won by Duryodhana or not. Nobody answers this question. Bhima however opines. "This question does not arise because Yudhistira himself has conceded to his defeat". But he declines to give a straight answer on the pretext that dharma is too subtle to enable him to say 'yes' or 'no' to her. The moral evil that haunted Yudhistira who was trapped into playing dice brought horrendous results. This sowed the seed of the Kuruksetra war which ended in such a calamity. It is in such cases that evils of debasement in morals raise their ugly heads. There are many unethical acts described in the Mahabharata which raise ethical questions but among them this incident is by far the most despicable.

10.5 ASPECTS OF DHARMA

Dharma is referred to in the Mahabharata in various ways namely. Dharma is the right conduct. Non-violence is the supreme Dharma, Truth is Dharma. Kindness is a great Dharma and so on. Ethically each of these is a virtue and therefore has importance in ethical life. At the beginning, the epic refers to three sources of Dharma, viz. the Vedas the Dharmasastras, moral the wisdom of cultured men. Each aspect of Dharma can be understood contextually.

Dharma as right conduct is called *acara*, *sadacara*, *silā* and *vr̥tta*. *Silā* implies character also. Right conduct, *Smṛtis* and the Vedas call Dharma, or conduct in accordance with Dharma. The learned include *artha* or wealth also as of Dharma' according to Bhima. Manu gives the sources of Dharma on similar lines (1-6). He says, they are the Vedas, *Smṛtis*, right conduct and what is beneficial to one self. But later Bhima emphasizes that the basis of Dharma is *acara* or good conduct.

In a conversation between Parasara and Janaka, Parasara points out that one should not give up one's right conduct whether one is happy or is in

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distress. It is here that one can show one's knowledge of sastras. Further, "even the low-born should stick to right conduct for his own uplift. Restraining from Vedic studies he can thus absolve himself from sms." The benefits of right conduct are many. "It brings well-being. It adds to our fame. It gives longevity. It removes bad elements. It is the source of Dharma which, in turn, increases our life-time. As Mackenzie has said, "conduct, like other aspects of human nature, undergoes a steady process of development both in the individual and in the race. Mahabharatan ethics insists that vrta or right conduct or following the path of the noble should be adopted for one's uplift. It is noteworthy that Yudhisthira emphasises one's vrta or conduct as the basis for becoming a Brahmana. "Neither family, nor Vedic study nor scriptural knowledge makes one a Brahmana. It is only conduct which, no doubt., qualifies one to become a Brahmana." He stresses that "conduct has to be guarded always, especially by a Brahmana. He is a Brahmana who never allows his conduct to be ruined. If he allowed it, he would perish. Right conduct needs knowledge of Dharma.

Another word for conduct is Sila used in the epic. Duryodhana is curious to know how Pandavas had conquered the world. To his query Dhrtarara points out that in ancient times Narada taught what right. conduct should be. Prahlada followed that right conduct and secured his kingdom back. Dhrtarastra then says that, "One should behave oneself in such a way among men that one should earn their admiration. That is the right conduct.

10.5.1 Dharma as Ahimsa

Ahimsa is a virtue which has received the highest importance in the Mahabharata. It is declared as the greatest Dharma. Yudhisthira asks Bhima a very interesting question: "you have said that ahimsa is the greatest Dharma several times what then should be the Dharma of him who eats meat? Bhima justifies, with arguments, that eating meat is bad. He quotes Manu for justification, "Svayambhuva Manu has said", argues Bhima, that man is a friend of all animals who neither eats meat nor, for that purpose, kills or hurts any animal. He glorifies ahimsa by saying that 'Ahimsa is the greatest Dharma. It is the greatest restraint. It is the

greatest charity. It is the greatest discipline. It is the greatest sacrifice. It is the greatest fruit. It is the greatest friend. It is the greatest joy. Bhima avers that, "those who are clever and good should know that the other animals are like them. Even learned men want to prosper in life and they are very scared of death. What to speak of those innocent and healthy animals which are scared of being forcibly killed for the purpose of meat for the sake of those sinners who live on it. Jainism and Buddhism too consider non-violence as a great virtue.

In a conversation between sage Markandeya and Dharmavyadha, a righteous hunter, there is an interesting argument on what 'himsa' is and what 'ahimsa' is. The hunter argues, "Many great men who are unselfish have taught ahimsa earlier. But who is there who does not do himsa? After a long reflection I have concluded that there is none who does not do himsa. He puts his point straight: "O Brahmana! there are so many who hunt for animals, kill them and eat them. The men cut the trees and herbs. You know O Brahmana! life exists even in trees and fruits. There are living beings in water too! The point of view of the hunter is not that ahimsa is not a virtue, but that it is not an absolute virtue, since some himsa is unavoidable or normal.

Ahimsa or non-violence had its roots in ancient Indian philosophy going back to the Upanisadic period. It has been a part of Yoga system. Asoka, who lived during, perhaps, the redaction of the Mahabharata, became, in his later life, a champion of the principle of non-violence. The epic thus reflects the then prevailing faith in the virtue of ahimsa.

10.5.2 Dharma as Truth

Truth is a cardinal virtue which is glorified in the Mahabharata. There are some adhyayas which determine what satya and asatya are, mainly occurring in the Santiparva. Bhima exhorts Yudhisthira, to speak truth is good. There is nothing superior (Dharma) to truth. He adds, "If truth (is dangerous to anyone) one should not tell it. If untruth (saves) any one, one should tell untruth. Untruth becomes (then as good as) truth (if it saves life). Otherwise even truth becomes untruth. In other words, the test of truth lies in its benefits rendered to others. "When one's life is in

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danger, at the time of marriage, to save other's property or to save Dharma (one can tell untruth) says Bhishma.

In another context, Bhima enumerates thirteen aspects of Satya. They are, 'truthful speech, equality, self-control, absence of envy, tolerance, shyness, tenacity, freedom from jealousy, sacrifice, meditation on god, noble acts, fortitude and non-violence.' Bhima then elaborates each of these virtues supposed to come under 'satya' because according to him, all these virtues depend on truth. He concludes: "Truth is superior to thousand asvamedhas. There is no Dharma superior to truth." The thirteen aspects of truth relate to the application of truth as well as to its pursuit in life. But if one is not truthful in;" one's activities then there can be no sin worse than untruth in life" warns Bhima. "Untruthful-ness" according to Bhrgu, is "darkness which pulls one down". The exalted place given to truth can be seen in the conversation between Brahma and the sages, "Truth is Brahma, truth is penance, truth is Prajapati. The beings are born on account of truth. The living world is the form of truth" says Brahma Himself.

In Karnaparva Krsna asserts that, given the dangerous situation, telling an untruth is as good as telling the truth. When Arjuna is enraged on account of Yudhisthira's comments he takes his sword and goes to kill him. He had taken a vow not to part with his bow Gandiva which was objected to by Yudhisthira. Krsna prevents Arjuna from this dangerous decision and asks him to reconcile himself to the prevailing situation. He cites the example of a Brahmana called Kausika who, by telling truth as per his vow, causes death to many innocent men at the hands of robbers. Kausika revealed where they were hiding and brought death to them. He went to the hell for telling truth! Krsna therefore points out, "For the sake of Dharma if one tells untruth one will not commit sin."

Self-control or dama is one of the most valued virtues in Indian Philosophy. It is this quality in human beings which make them different from other animals. It is considered as one of the three means (sadhanatraya) for liberation according to the Brhadaranyakopanisad (5.2.1).

As Duryodhana announces in the Kaurava assembly that his forces are well equipped to fight the Pandavas, Vidura, the wise old man, cautions

him not to be too boastful and control himself. He explains what self-control or 'dama' is and asks Duryodhana to control himself. He says, "self-control is an ancient Dharma to be followed especially by a Brahmana. It is this quality which provides a disposition for charity, penance, knowledge and study. It adds to one's strength. A man without self-control behaves like a brute. It is possible to acquire noble qualities through self-control. He is as tranquil as an ocean.

Vidura's views are pragmatic and they were intended to open the eyes of Duryodhana. It is worth noting here what Aristotle said, "The excessively self-indulgent man is a victim of licentiousness whose ravenous appetite and temptations prove unconquerable obstacles; such a person regularly succumbs or suffers acute pain whenever compelled to forego the satisfaction of his pleasures.

The epic gives details on what 'dama' is when Bhima explains to Yudhisthira what it is. "Dama has to be practised by all because without self-control nothing can be achieved. A self-controlled man is free from anxiety and his mind will always be cheerful. From self-control originate a number of virtues. He remains calm at the time of distress and entertains no ill will against anyone." Bhima points out that, "Rich in scriptural knowledge, being pure following the conduct of the noble and being endowed with self-control one attains exceptional fruits.

10.5.3Dharma as Tyaga

The virtue of renunciation or tyaga is another virtue which is hailed in the Upanisads. The epic deals with this virtue as tyaga. In a section called Mankigita, cited by Bhima, the virtue of non-possession or renunciation is described. "Between him who accumulates all that he wants and he who renounces all that he possesses, the latter deserves appreciation. Being mad after possession one loses one's calmness. He whose mind is not enveloped by greed enjoys peace. The more one possesses the more he loses the latter." Manki makes a fine point in telling. "None, either in the past nor in the present, has reached the end of desire. Only when I give away things I wake up and become alert." Lord Visnu himself declares, "renunciation is the best (among virtues)".

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Bhisma recollects the words of a Brahmana by name Sampaka who, clad in rags, was looking quite emaciated. He would say, non-possession is better than possessing the whole kingdom. "Between a non-possessor and a rich man the non-possessor is superior. A rich man is always in tension as if he is in the mouth of death. Sampaka adds, "But a wealthy man becomes arrogant and thinks that he is born in a high family, he has made achievements and he is not an ordinary person." In other words, as his ego grows he becomes insolent. Sampaka concludes. "One cannot be happy without renunciation. One cannot get self-perfection without it. One can sleep not without fear. May you be happy having given up everything".

The Brahmanas are described as being delighted when they parted with their possessions. Janaka is well known as a philosopher-king in Indian legends. The epic gives a small anecdote to show how Janaka little regard for possessions. In order to test this quality in Janaka, Lord Visnu Himself comes in the form of a Brahmana. He sets fire to Mithila where the wealth of Janaka existed. Janaka, after coming to know of the incident, makes the famous statement. 'My wealth is infinite and I have no aspirations to possess. Even when Mithila is burnt nothing (of my wealth) is lost.

The psychological satisfaction that one derives from renunciation brings its own rewards. It enables one to dedicate oneself, according to Indian tradition, to a life of simplicity and humaneness. Swami Vivekananda hailed tyaga throughout his lectures and he quoted the upanisadic statement to substantiate it. "Neither through wealth, nor through Progeny, but by giving up alone immortality is to be reached." The epic reflects this spirit of tyaga in several passages.

10.5.4 Dharma as Kasma

Ksama or forgiveness is another important virtue described in the epic. The epic hero Yudhisthira is described as a personification of tolerance and though sinned against he had the magnanimity to condone it. While others, especially Draupadi, want not to forgive what Duryodhana did, Yudhisthira pursues his path of patience and refuses to retaliate. He condemns anger calling it a detestable condition and explains to

Draupadi its evil effects. "An angry man," says Yudhishthira, "does not know what to speak and what not to. He will not know what he does or speak. Forgiveness is not on Duryodhana's side as he is unfit for it. Forgiveness, on the other hand, is on my side because I have the magnanimity to nurse it. Forgiveness is a virtue which Duryodhana cannot entertain because he is vindictive by nature. Yudhishthira glorifies forgiveness in all its splendour. "Forgiveness is Brahman. It is truth. Ksama is past and future. It is penance. It is Purity. The world is supported by forgiveness."

Ksama or forgiveness is very important for a 'sadhaka', for one pursuing a high value. Samika instructs his son Srngi, 'an ascetic should always practise self-control. He can attain his goal by forgiveness. This world and the other world, both will be (benevolent) to those endowed with forgiveness.

We have so far reviewed important virtues highlighted in the epic. These represent the approach of the epic to ethics which had a tradition already laid down. The explanatory parts of the ethical discussion in the epic are meant to convince people of the merit of practicing them. As Mackenzie observes, "the term virtue is employed to denote a good habit of character, as distinguished from a duty which denotes rather some particular kind of action which we ought to perform. Thus a man does his duty, but he who possesses a virtue, is virtuous.

1, Check your Progress

1. ASPECTS OF DHARMA

10.6 VARNA SYSTEM

Value is that which an individual or the society endeavours to possess. Absolute values are said to be unconditional while instrumental values are conditional. Values can also be, objective or subjective. As Radhakamal Mukherjee says "values indispensable, encountered by man

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everywhere and in all thoughts, relations and activities, no matter what he thinks or believes or how he responds to his fellow men, society and cosmos. They are subjective, laden with feelings and flexible; at the same time, objective, rational and regulative. As values are dynamic the values discussed in the epic evolved out of Vedic values, in a manner commensurate with the age of the epic. The men seem to be concordant with the nuances of the varnasrama system, the theory of Purusarthas and the Karma doctrine as each of these had become an integral part of the then culture.

The varna system is said to have evolved as a consequence of division of labour. This theory is based on the principle of orderly development of social organization and the division, it is conjectured, happened due to natural tendencies. At the time of the epic this social organization must have developed adequately with well-defined duties of each varna. Furthermore, the inevitable interaction among the divisions or classes of society persisted in some quarters, despite resistance, leading to intermingling of dissimilar classes in family bandages. This resulted in what is known as 'Vamasankara' or mixture of classes. One of the duties of the king was, however, to guard the purity of the varnas. Varna, in Sanskrit, means colour. There is an interesting dialogue between Bhrgu and Bharadvaja on Varna origin related to colour of the persons. Bhrgu says, 'In the beginning the lord created only the Brahmanas. Then he created, out of his light, the prajapatis who were shining like the fire of the sun.

Bharadvaja asks how different colours can be seen among men if each class has a particular colour. Then Bhrgu gives a detailed account of how it happened.

Initially all were Brahmanas when Brahma created men but later they got classified into different classes on account of their actions. Among the Brahmanas those who loved pleasures, harsh by nature, wrathful and adventurous became ksatriyas, turning red. Those who engaged themselves in agriculture and cattle-care became yellow and came under vaisya class. Those who loved violence and untruth, engaged in all kinds of jobs and became impure, came under the sudra class turning dark in colour.

What is noteworthy here is that the classification was done according to their attitudes. Among these four classes the first three classes were entitled to study the Vedas while Sudras were forbidden from studying them. What are the rights and duties of each class? What are their general characteristics? Bhrgu continues.

A Brahmana should be purified by performing rituals. He is called Brahmana because of the study of the Veda and engaging himself in six-fold duties, by means of his pursuit of pure and right conduct, by receiving the left-overs of sacrifice, by showing regard to the teacher, by following the rituals and by being truthful.

A Katriya however should engage himself in such acts as participating in war, etc. He is supposed to study the Vedas. He should collect tax from the people and guard them. Commerce, cattle-breeding and agriculture are the professions of the Vaisyas. He is also entitled to study the Vedas. A Sudra can eat anything, do anything but he is not entitled to study the Vedas; One becomes a Sudra if one does not strictly follow right conduct.

Bhrgu strikes a note of warning when he says, "If a Brahmana does not possess these qualities (stated in the verses) and a Sudra happens to possess them then a Brahmana does not remain a Brahmana and a Sudra does not remain a Sudra. In other words, it was these qualities which qualify one to become a Brahmana and not his birth. Even so a Sudra possessing them ceases to be a Sudra if he is born so.

The epic makes occasional references to the glorifications of the Brahmanas made by some special characters. Brahmanas are called the gods of the earth. In one context it is said, "the lord Brahma, the creator, created the Brahmanas, the gods of the earth, on the earth of mortals to uplift the world having consideration for perpetuating virtues.

In other words, Brahmanas were meant to help men to pursue values in life. The exalted place given to the Brahmanas was in consideration of their intellectual abilities and high ethical standards. Another important function of the Brahmanas was to maintain Dharma in the community. They are therefore called bridges of Dharma. "The Brahmanas are the great men who guard the Dharma as it bridges all over the world. They love to part from their wealth and they are, by nature, reticent says

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Bhima to Yudhisthira. The Brahmanas were therefore reckoned as the custodians of Vedic culture. 'A moral fall of a Brahmana was a serious event and he would then lose all privileges' cautions Yudhisthira.

The fact that the Brahmanas were considered superior even to the Ksatriyas and the mystic power of penance they were supposed to acquire led to events where eminent Ksatriyas and others of lower classes aspired to become Brahmanas by means of penance, a phenomenon termed in modern sociology as Sanskritization. The greatest event in this respect is the ascent of Visvamitra from atriya-hood to Brahmana-hood, an event which is narrated not only in theMahabharata but more elaborately, in the Ramayana too.

There are the others viz. Matanga, Devapi, Sindhudvipa and Vitahavya who, belonging to other classes, aspired to become Brahmanas. It was a prevalent practice, however, as narrated in the epic, upper caste men to marry women of the lower castes, and it was rare for a lower caste man to marry an upper caste women. But some instances of this practice also happened. Yayati, a ksatriya, married Devayani, a Brahmana woman, Santanu marries a low born woman, Satyavati.

The regard shown to the Brahmanas appear to reach ridiculous heights. It is ethically reprehensible. Bhima says, "What is left over after being eaten by the Brahmanas is like amrta for other classes. It is equal to mother's milk. Whoever takes them will reach the abode of Brahman truly! They were also exempted from being punished by the state.

It will be relevant to point out that it is stressed at places, as already said, that it is only the conduct that would make one a Brahmana and not the birth. Yudhisthira makes this point clear while answering Yaksha. "It not the family, nor learning nor scriptural knowledge that makes one a Brahmana, answers Yudhisthira, it is only conduct, no doubt, which makes one Brahmana. But there are also places in the epic and in other works where all castes are said to be birth-determined. Vidura, a great scholar and saintly person is generally addressed as the son of sudra dasi a sudra maid servant, in the epic.

As far as the duties of the other classes are concerned, ksatriya's main Dharma is to protect the people. He should never return from the battle

field without any visible injuries. Fighting in a war is more important for him, than sacrifices, studies and charity.

A Vaisya should earn his wealth from business and perform charity, study and do other duties. He should look after his cattle like his own children. A Sudra has to perform the duty of serving the other three classes. He is not supposed to accumulate wealth. He should serve his master no matter what condition he is reduced to. Sacrifices assigned to Sudras do not include Vedic rituals. All people, according to Bhima, should practise some dharmas, irrespective of the class they belong to, viz. freedom from anger, truthfulness, sharing with others, forbearance, getting children from one's own wife, purity, non-treacherousness, simplicity, looking after dependents. These virtues help an individual build up his personality and provide a social status. Brahmanas enjoyed a high status and Sudras were reduced to dasas or slaves. But there was some intermingling of these classes despite the classification.

10.7 ASRAMA SYSTEM

While Varnadharma was followed by men at the social level asramadharma was followed at the individual level. It is a discipline aimed at moralizing the animal instincts of men and raising one's own self from an innocent youth to a mellow citizen ship. The ascent had to be made by four stages pursuing traditions laid down in the religion. This is what Vyasa calls a nissreni, ladder taking man to higher goals step by step. He says, "The four asramas laid in Brahmana are like a ladder of four steps taking one to the ultimate goal of Brahmana. All these, celibate (Brahmacari,) householder, forest-dweller and an ascetic will attain the supreme abode by devotedly following the ordainments of the scriptures. Etymologically the word asrama conveys the sense that (at each stage) people follow their disciplines as ordained. Bhima points out those who follow these four asramas should be Brahmanas. People of other classes need not follow all the four asramas. The student life of Brahmanas is quite rigorous compared to the other classes.

A brahmachari's life required, according to the epic, a severe self-control and adherence to student discipline. He leads a new life under a teacher in which all animal instincts are cultured. Given the opportunity to study

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he will study at the feet of his teacher. He should give up all the comforts of life and be pure in body and mind.

The life of brahmachari extends upto a fourth part of life i.e., for twenty-five years, during which, he will learn Dharma and Artha. Dwelling at the preceptor's place he will serve his preceptor and learn at his instance.

Grhasthasrama, or a householder's life, is hailed as the best part of life not only from the point of view of taking moral responsibility of running the family but from the ritualistic as well. "As animals live depending on their mother the other asramas progress depending on house-holder's life. He has to collect money in order to perform duties under the trivargas, viz. Dharma. Artha and Kama. "A house-holder should perform sacrifices out of the wealth acquired through honest means." He should honour the guests and give gifts liberally. He should not receive what is not offered to him. This is the secret of a householder's life according to ancient tradition according to Astaka.

Aside from these general ways of life of an ordinary householder some special norms of life are laid down for the Brahmans. "He should engage himself in six-fold duties. He should not cook food for himself. He should not sleep in the day time. He should be hospitable to the guests. He should lead an ethical and religious life."

Being called the best part of life, however, one is called upon to take care of one's family and be engaged in the Vedic studies. When Yudhisthira glorifies Vanaprastha and Samnyasa his brothers argue that householders' life is better than the other two. Vanaprastha is a period when, in the third quarter of one's life, one goes to the forest for dwelling away from the noise of the city life. It is the time, according to the epic, for a householder to leave for the forest when his hair turns grey, wrinkles start setting in and a grandson is born. He should continue the rituals of worshipping the sacred fire in Vanaprastha period as well. Being a forest-dweller he should go on pilgrimage. The person of Vanaprastha period should live on whatever food that is available in the forest. He should give up all the pleasures of a householder. He should not be deterred if he gets emaciated. "This rigorous discipline will burn up all his sins."

Vyasa mentions some more rigours of a Vanaprastha life. He should eat grains grown on their own. Some save grains for a year, some for a month and some for a day only. They drench themselves in rain and are exposed to sun. Some eat raw food, some crush grains on rocks and take. The life of Vanaprastha was conceived to harness the sensual pleasures of men and initiate them to move towards spiritualization of their life.

The last quarter of the asrama was sanyasa in which one has to make supreme sacrifice of all the worldly pleasures. This is a time when the three desires (esanatrayas) namely of a son, of wealth and of the world, are given up. Samnyasa is a value adopted to attain liberation from worldly bondage. Vyasa gives the illustration of many sages like the Saptarsis who attained heaven. They practised self-control. A samnyasi, according to Vyasa, should practise silence, eat whatever is available, and live beneath a tree. Such qualities as above are also found in a sthitaprajna, as described in the Gita. It is a state when, mellow with knowledge, one transcends the limits of the experience of the mundane world and one's frontiers of experience reach the infinite universe. This is a state of self-perfection where the joy of non-dualism or communion with god is experienced.

Bhrgu, in another context, adds, "he will give up all the rituals. He goes to any place anywhere hut does not stay too long. Whatever he gets in the form of alms he is satisfied with them. He is free from all evil qualities. 'Samnyasa' is penance (tapas) according to the enlightened men who speak decisively. This 'tapas' leads one to the knowledge which is supreme Brahman himself." The asramas are a legacy inherited by the people of the epic period. They had their roots in the upanisads. They had their ramifications through the ages but the spirit especially of samnyasa, to which the upanisads give great importance, continued unabated. The subjective interpretation of moral action continues in the epic under religio-ethical parametres. The asrama system is peculiar to Indian tradition.

10.8 PURUSARTHAS OR HUMAN VALUES

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The Purusarthas, aims of men, are values which have to be attained or aimed at by men. Among them moksa or liberation is an aim which can be achieved only after life according to some and worldly life, according to some others. But Kama, Artha and Dharma are to be attained in life. The three, the 'trivarga' are fundamental to all men. Kama is a natural hankering for possession. Wealth is a means of fulfilling Kama. Consequently, 'Artha' is sought after to fulfil Kama and other needs of life. Dharma and Moksa are higher values inasmuch as they fulfil our higher, earthly, social as well as spiritual need. The epic declares that it deals with all the four Purusa arthas so comprehensively that nothing is left over. It is believed that Kama relates to the body, Artha to the mind, Dharma to the intellect and Moksa to the soul. The author of the epic declares that actions for the fulfilment of Artha and Kama, the mental and physical needs, have to be guided by Dharma or ethical means lest one should get lost under the sway of these worldly needs. In a poignant note at the end of the epic the author laments, "holding my hands up I am shouting before all, but alas! nobody listens to me. (I am shouting) it is through Dharma that Artha and Kama can be acquired. Why are you not following Dharma?"

The word 'trivarga' relating to Dharma, Artha and Kama occurs in the latter part of the epic. When the trivarga is under one's control the three will be benevolent to that person. In the course of a conversation between the two, Mahdvara replies to the queries of Uma on the three human values. He says: "A learned man earns wealth by means of professions and distributes his wealth into four parts, each part dedicated to Dharma, Artha, Kama and for distress." Mahdvara points out, "even if one puts in hundred efforts one, sometimes, does not get money. Therefore one should save money and give it methodically as charity." Money should also be spent for nutritious food and such other things which one desires to have (kama).

What is kama? While stressing the need for waging war against Duryodhana, Bhimasena asks Yudhisthira to take up arms against Duryodhana. Bhimasena, in course of his arguments, defines Kama as "the desire for the pleasures of the senses, mind and heart. That is the result aimed at in all our actions."

There is an interesting discussion on the purusarthas among the pandavas and Vidura. Vidura says that Dharma is the foremost among the three purusarthas. He asserts: "The sages crossed over the cycle of rebirths by means of Dharma. All the worlds are held by Dharma. The gods prospered on Dharma. Artha indeed lies in Dharma." But according to Arjuna, Artha is more important and without 'Artha' the other two cannot exist. Even the ascetics who have renounced worldly pleasures seek economic well-being. "Dharma and Kama depend on Artha, wealth. If wealth is secured the other two can be secured." Nakula endorses the views of Arjuna but insists that Dharma should be followed before Artha is sought after. Wealth acquired through Dharma can be sought later. Fulfilment of one's desires can follow later. This will enable one to accomplish all the three. But Bhimasena takes a different view. His arguments are based on desire in a general sense which does not reflect a hedonist's view. He says that "without desire one cannot get either Dharma or Kama. Even the sages, ascetics not to speak of men in general, nurse desires." "Desire has," he argues, "many forms. Everything is done with desire only. "As nectar is more tasty than flower, Kama is better than the other two. Kama is the originator of Dharma and Artha. Hence it has the form of Artha and Dharma also."

Having heard the views of his brothers and Vidura, Yudhishthira ends the debate with a note on self-perfectionism. Reflecting on liberation is important, says Yudhishthira, and not doing as one desires. I carry on my work as I am destined to. Destiny guides all beings to do what they are destined to do. All of you, therefore, know that destiny is more powerful than any other one."

The conviction of Yudhishthira, however, is that values other than liberation are transitory values and self-perfection transcends these values. The hedonistic arguments of Bhimasena and the ethics of economic well-being of Arjuna and of Dharma as supreme according to, Vidura, all these are held to ultimately culminate in self-perfectionism as steps to its attainment.

10.9 KARMA DOCTRINE

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Karma doctrine accounts for rebirth and man's joys and miseries. One has to reap the fruits of what one does. "As one does, so one reaps the fruit. One gets the fruit of what one does and any other one cannot read it," says a verse in Anusasanaparva. Yudhisthira says that "No matter whether one is young boy or a youth or an old man one has to experience at the same age the fruits of actions, good or bad, in each birth." Karma is sure to follow a person wherever he is, like a calf running to its own mother amidst thousands of cow. This is intimately related to determinism because antecedent events determine what action one does. Though some impulses are strongest at a given moment, there is the force of samskara or tendency acquired by earlier actions (purvakarmavasana). Thus, the motives are generated from earlier experiences. According to J.S. Mill, "volitions are desires, aversions, habits and dispositions, combined with outward circumstances suited to all those incentives into action. All these, again, are effects of causes, those of them which are mental being consequences of education and of other moral and physical influences." The cause-effect or Karma and phala concept is such that they remain inseparable according to Bhima, "However fast one may run Karma will follow him. When one sleeps, Karma sleeps with him. When one stands up, it also stands up. When one walks along, Karma also walks along. Any action one does, Karma follows one like a shadow." Ethically the theory of Karma is supposed to work as a deterrent to anybody who entertains evil thoughts.

10.10 RNAS

Rnas are debts one has to pay back to those to whom one is indebted. This concept of Rnas or debts goes back to the Vedic period. The Satapatha Brahmana mentions four rnas, viz debts to gods, debts to seers, debts to ancestors and debts to fellow beings. But generally Rnas are taken to be of three types, in Indian tradition, namely debts to ancestors, debts to seers and debts to gods. The debts to seers should be paid back by brahmacharya (brahmacharyena devebhyah) i.e., by pursuing knowledge, debts to gods by yajnas (yajnena devebhyah) and debts to ancestors by begetting children (prajaya pitrbhyah). These debts are inherited by birth and they are to be paid back without expecting benefits. The

Maharabharata gives five kinds of rnas instead of three or four. It is Parasara who mentions some details about the debts and the methods of paying them back. He says that "everyone should liberate himself from the debts to the gods, the guests, the dependents, the ancestors and one's own self which are inherited by birth. To pay back the rnas of the seers, he should study the Vedas, those of the gods by means of sacrifices, those of the ancestors by means of offering libation and those of the guests by means of hospitality. He can also liberate himself from the debts by reciting the Vedas, by eating what is left in a sacrifice, by protecting himself. He should arrange for the protection of dependents from the beginning.

10.11 LETS SUM UP

Aside from calling itself Dharmasastra and arthasastra, the epic calls itself also a Moksasastra (significantly it does also call itself Karnasastra). A large section of Santiparva is devoted to Moksadharma in which a number of ethical points are discussed in addition to philosophy and metaphysics. It should also be noted that Moksa is described mainly in a theological background. Bhisma's categorical view is that, "One, who reflects on the self, after being enlightened in spiritual knowledge, will carefully avoid getting entangled in undesirable fruits of actions and lives unattached like the lotus leaf floating on water." This is the concept of detachment from worldly bondage in the Indian philosophic tradition. Vyasa's view is that "the liberated soul has the vision of the lord, the unborn, the eternal, ever-young, ever-existing, ever-liberated, smaller than the smallest and bigger than the biggest." Such descriptions are like some Upanisadic remarks and the epic appears to breathe in an Advaiticair. "It is the spiritual knowledge that takes one to self-experience, a state of oneness with Brahman. (Brahmabhuta). That is the end of the cycle of birth and deaths. That is a state of bliss." Some theistic parts describe attainment of moksa as a vision of particular gods. For instance, Bhima says that "when one realizes that Hari dwells at heart one never returns to samsara, the cycle of birth and death. They attain bliss after getting the supreme state of that eternal and immutable Being.

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This ideal of liberation was cherished as paramapurushartha or the supreme goal of human life in the Indian tradition. The concept of Moksha differs from Hegel's ideal inasmuch as while the former conceives of an end to births and rebirths the latter believes in the bliss of absolute universality. "Therefore the last end of the whole man," said St. Thomas Aquinas, "and of all his deeds is to know the first truth, namely, god."

10.12 KEY WORDS

Rna :Rnas are debts one has to pay back to those to whom one is indebted. This concept of Rnas or debts goes back to the Vedic period. The Satapatha Brahmana mentions four rnas, viz debts to gods, debts to seers, debts to ancestors and debts to fellow beings

Purusharthas: Goals of life. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha

Varna:Four Sections of Society based on Skills, Brahmans, Ksatriya, Vaisya, Shudra

Ashrama:Four Stages of Life : Brahmacharya, Grahastham Vanaprastha, Sanyasa

10.13 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Write a note on key features of Mahabharata underlying its ethical dilemmas

10.14 SUGGESTED READINGS

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10.15 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answers to Check your Progress -1

- Dharma as Ahimsa
- Dharma as Truth
- Dharma as Tyaga
- Dharma as Kasma

UNIT 11 ETHICS OF BHAGVADGITA

STRUCTURE

- 11.0 Objectives
- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 A Brief Note On The Gita Literature
- 11.3. The Philosophy of War
- 11.4 The World-View
- 11.5 The Theory of Action
- 11.6 Determinism and Freedom
- 11.7 Action and Renunciation
- 11.8 The Central Teaching
- 11.9 Morality in the Gita
- 11.10 Let's Sum up
- 11.11 Keywords
- 11.12 Questions for review
- 11.13 Suggested Readings
- 11.14 Answer t Check Your Progress

11.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the basic features of BhagvadGita
- know the philosophical understanding of Karmayoga

11.1 INTRODUCTION

The Bhagavad-Gita is one of the celebrated sacred works of Hindus. It consists of the spiritual teaching of Lord Krsna to Arjuna and thus acquires the name 'Bhagavad-Gita which means 'the songs of the Lord'. The Gita comes to us as a part of Bhisma Parva of the Mahabharata, one of the grand Indian epics. The Gita is narrated by Samjaya to the blind

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king Dhrtarastra and it contains seven hundred verses spread over eighteen chapters or discoverers. Not only by virtue of being a part of the Mahabharata, but also by its independent character, the Gita is considered as an important piece of Smṛti literature. Keeping in view the significance of spiritual and moral teaching in it, the Gita can be described as the heart of the epic. As a Smṛti, the Gita is supposed to contain the essence of Vedic wisdom. The Gita is often considered as an Upanisad by itself. The pronounced theism in the Gita makes it a foundational text for Hindu religion in general and Vaisnava sect in particular. However, it enjoys popular esteem not only for its theistic inclinations but also for its practical ethical purport. The ethical teaching of the Gita decisively moulded the moral consciousness of Hindus over the ages. Even today, the Gita is recited with utmost reverence in religious gatherings and on auspicious occasions. The striking feature of the Gita is the way it unified different methods of spiritual development into a profound ethical vision. This ethical vision is backed up by a host of philosophical ideas borrowed from the speculations on Self, current in the Upanisadic period, and the theory of gunas which later came down to us as the classical Sāṃkhya system. These philosophical ideas are integrated with the theistic doctrines of Bhagavata tradition which treats Vasudeva or Kṛṣṇa as the Lord. The synthesis of philosophical and theistic doctrines makes one hesitant to call the Gita a philosophical treatise. In fact, the Gita is more a treatise on ethics than a serious philosophical text. As is the case with classical Indian Smṛtis, the religion is inseparable from the ethical thought in the Gita. It lays more emphasis on moral teaching than on philosophical debates. One may find the philosophical ideas in the Gita loosely connected but the moral teaching of it is nevertheless simple, direct and practical. In the Upanisads, we find a declining interest towards ritualistic practices. Knowledge of the soul is deemed to be superior to the practice of rituals. While the Brahmanas conceived Heaven (svarga) as the highest goal, the Upanisadic thought aims at self-realization and internal peace. The change in the conception of summum bonum resulted in looking down upon material sacrifices. The domination of theoretical philosophical speculations over the ritualistic practice is evident in

Chadndogya and Mundaka Upanisads. The Gita shares the same attitude towards the ritualistic practice and conceives knowledge of the soul as superior to ritualism. The Veda which prescribes specific acts for specific purposes is said to be of no use for an enlightened brahmana. Here, the Veda is compared to a small reservoir of water whereas the knowledge of the soul is described as all flooding water, the Gita also suggests indifference to the Veda. Here, the point to be noted is that by the word 'the Veda both the Gita and Upanisads mean 'repository of sacrificial commands'.

11. 2 A BRIEF NOTE ON THE GITA LITERATURE

There are numerous commentaries on the Gita by various distinguished scholars with different philosophical and religious affiliations. The lack of philosophical rigour in the text gave room for these commentators either to interpret its doctrines as supporting **their own** systems or to graft their own doctrines on the Gita. This resulted in a variety of interpretations, sometimes amazingly incommensurable, each claiming fidelity to the **original** teaching of the Gita. However, the Gita still stands as an independent text, inspiring even modern thinkers, as a source of valuable ethical and spiritual precepts.

The foremost among the commentators is Samkaracharya of Advaita school, whose commentary is called Bhagavad-Gita Bhdasya. Among the other commentators Ramanujacharyi Sridhara, Madhavacharya, Nilakanta are the most prominent, while among the modern scholars Tilak and Aurabindo are considered to be the most prolific. Samkara's commentary was not the first but the earliest commentary available. Samkara himself refers to the existence of earlier commentaries in his Bhasya Anandagiri, one of the commentators on Samkara's Bhashya, suggests that Samkara refers to Bodhayana, the Vrttikara of Brahma Sutras who also might have written a Vrtti on the Gita. However, while we are not certain about the predecessors of Samkara, we are nevertheless certain that Samkara was not the first to comment on the Gita. There are two commentators on Samkara's Bhasya- Ramananda and

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Anandagiri. Anandagiri's work is called Bhagavad-Gita Bhasya Vivarana and Ramananda's work is known as Bhagavad-Gita Bhasya Vyakhya. Samkara's Bhasya ascribes a thorough going Vedantic view to the Gita and attempts to explain its doctrines in the light of Vedantic doctrines. The main thesis of Samkara's commentary is that works and knowledge cannot be combined for they are mutually incompatible as the works presuppose 'agency and multiplicity' while knowledge denies agency and teaches unity'. Knowledge of ultimate reality leads to natural cessation of **all** activity. The works have only marginal significance as they lead to purification of **mind** (sattvasuddhi) and the final liberation necessarily involves renunciation. Samkara understands that injunctions of the Vedas and Smrtis are only meant for the ignorant but not for the wise. The wise who realize the ultimate reality need not obey those injunctions. The non-performance of obligatory duties, by a samnyasin does not accrue sin, for nothing positive results from a mere negation. The non-performance of scriptural duties, thus, cannot result in a positive sin. On this point, Ramanuja holds a diametrically opposite view to that of Samkara.

Ramanuja interprets the Gita on Vis'istadvaita lines and follows the views of his preceptor Yamunacharya whose brief work on the Gita is known as Gitartha Samgraha. Yamuna and Ramanuja conceive devotion (bhakti) as the highest ideal preached by the Gita. Ramanuja asserts that the path of action (Karma Yoga) is superior to the path of knowledge (Jnana Yoga) for, he thinks, the former naturally leads to and includes the latter. No one can transgress the allotted duties, even one who pursues the path of knowledge. So, Ramanuja, contrary to Samkara, makes the scriptural duties imperative even to a man of wisdom. According to Ramanuja, the path of knowledge cannot itself lead to liberation and it can be attained only through observing obligatory and occasional duties (nitya-naimittika) with sincere devotion to God. Hence, he subordinates both knowledge and action to devotion and highlights the theistic aspect of the Gita. Madhvacharya in his Gita-Bhasya explains the ontological superiority and excellence of God over everything. Everything follows the will of God and hence, there is no wisdom in our attachment to the external objects. Madhava's theory sounds like a **kind of fatalism** with God as the source. Madhva also

differs from Samkara with reference to ontological Monism. Madhva holds that God is ontologically and substantially different **from** His creation.

The later commentators follow either Samkara or Ramanuja in their exposition of the Gita's ideas, and occasionally differ as to the minor details. Tilak, the modern commentator, emphasizes that the Gita essentially preaches action rather than renunciation. Aurobindo conceives the divine action, preached by the Gita, as the central teaching of the text. Irrespective of their theoretical differences, all the commentators unanimously accept that the Gita, aims at spiritually elevated moral conduct of men and that its teaching is essentially ethical.

11.3. THE PHILOSOPHY OF WAR

The holy dialogue of the Gita itself is peculiar and when viewed from the ethical point of view, it is immensely interesting. The Gita takes place on the battle field, amidst the two great armies of Kauravas and Pandavas. The war is remembered as the greatest legend in India. The best of warriors of the time participated in the war. The whole Ksatriya class itself appears to have got ready for the doom. The beginning of such a grand war gave rise to the holy dialogue recorded in the Gita. Arjuna, the chief warrior among the Pandavas asked his Charioteer Lord Krsna to place the chariot in the midst of the two warring factions. Then he was depressed by the sight of the warriors who are all his friends, teachers and relatives whom he had to fight. Arjuna was overcome by grief thinking that he had to kill them all and therefore refuses to fight. What is highly significant is that the reasons for which Arjuna wants to withdraw from war are ethical rather than physical or psychological. It is very important to note the reasons given by Arjuna for his grief and reluctance to fight. Arjuna supposes that the wealth, dominion and pleasures are sought for the sake of friends, relatives and Kinsmen. It being the case, he does not see any point in killing them for the sake of dominion or wealth. He questions Krsna 'how can we be happy, O Madhava, after slaying our own people?' This reminds us of the spirit of RgVedic people who sought all the dominion, wealth, progeny and

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welfare for the sake of the community as a whole comprising of their kinsmen, relatives and friends. The RgVedic hymns exhibit a similar spirit of attachment for the collective communal life which is expressed by Arjuna. Samkara rightly explains that the cause of Arjunas despondency is his feeling that 'I am theirs and they are mine.' It has to be noted here that it is an intra-tribal war in which both the warring factions belong to the tribe. This war is against the fundamental principle of tribal unity. Further, Arjuna supplements the cause of his despondency saying that extinction of families in the war results in disappearance of the immemorial family rites, impiety among women and intermingling of castes.²⁹ Hence, Arjuna opposes war on the grounds of community spirit on the one hand and its social consequences on the other. Here, we find the seeds of reflective morality which advances a critique of existing system based on the grounds of earlier Rg- Vedic spirit of life and war. This critical reflection of Arjuna naturally makes him think that the war is unwarranted and evil producing. What is remarkable about the reflection is that it is truly ethical in nature. Lord Krsna explains Arjuna that his grief is baseless and unbecoming of a warrior. He begins with a statement that the wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead.³⁰ He justifies the war and killing people by referring to the wisdom which He names 'Samkhya' **and** the art of discharging duties which He calls 'Yoga' The Wisdom of Samkhya is the realization that soul is different from body, and is eternal and imperishable and passes through different perishable bodies; that all experience is transitory and does not affect the soul; and that soul is neither the agent nor the object of action. From this doctrine, the Lord deduces the justification for war, explaining that the indestructible soul neither slays nor is slain and that the bodies which are slain anyway have an end. Hence, one need not grieve either for the soul, because it is indestructible, or for the body, because it is anyway destructible. The Lord also suggests that if one thinks the soul to be impermanent and perishable with the body, even then there is no reason for grief, because whatever born is certain to perish.³³ In both the cases i.e., whether the soul is taken to be eternal or otherwise, there is no point in grieving. With this the Lord shows Arjuna's despondency as baseless. He justifies killing in the war with reference to the permanence of the

soul in everyone's body which can never be killed. Therefore Arjuna should not grieve for any creature.³⁴ The Samkhya wisdom enlightens one to discharge one's bounden duty without any regard for pain or pleasure which arises from it. Hence, the Lord preaches Arjuna to discharge his lawful duty, as a warrior, and to take part in the war. The Lord also shows the consequences, if Arjuna refuses to perform his own duty. If Arjuna fails at discharging his bounden duty as a Ksatriya, he not only incurs sin but also contempt of other warriors and shame. The Lord finally makes the point that there is no loss in the war: 'if you win you will enjoy the earth (dominion) and if you lose your life in the battle, you will enjoy the heaven'. After teaching the wisdom of Samkhya, the Lord teaches Arjuna what Yoga is. Yoga is defined as the equanimity of mind. Yoga is the only way to peace and is described as the Brahmic state. The precondition for Yoga is subjugation of passions and discharging duties without an eye for their fruits. Yoga is attained through withdrawing senses from the attachment of their objects, casting off desires, and transcending the pairs of extremes. Yoga thus consists in the discharge of one's duty with control over senses, passions and desires. Yoga, in brief, is the art of performing actions. Though Samkhya and Yoga appear to be two different paths, on a closer look they both culminate in passion-free moral attitude towards the world. Hence, Samkhya and Yoga form the theoretical and practical aspects of the same teaching. They both aim at internal peace through equanimity of mind. The Gita suggests, through Samkhya and Yoga, internal peace as the remedy for external turbulences.

The gist of the whole discussion is that the Gita addresses itself to an ethical problem and thus it is more an ethical treatise than anything else. Arjuna's problem and the Lord's solution to it pertain to the ethical conduct of man in general and moral dilemma concerning war in particular. The ethical solution given by the Lord chiefly consists in raising above the pretty material interests and acting with an unprejudiced mind devoid of all attachments.

Here, we see the germs of reflective morality taking the place of objective ritualism. The Gita exhibits a new spirit of looking at problems of life, both social and individual.

The Society, witnessing frequent wars and unreflective ritualism, was in search of ideals of peace and meaningful moral life. The Gita, as an attempt towards these ideals, advances a world-view which seeks to give rise to a better ethical understanding of man and his conduct.

11.4 THE WORLD-VIEW

The Gita's world-view is predominantly Samkhyan. It incorporates the doctrines of Purusa, Prakrti and its evolutes as its cardinal points. The Gita explicitly commits itself to Satkdryavdda by saying that what exists cannot perish and what does not exist cannot come into being. The Gita accepts Prakrti and Purusa i.e., matter and spirit as the two ontological categories which cause the world. However, the Gita conceives a supernatural devine entity called God who is above the matter and spirit, he is called Purusottama or the Supreme Self who possesses matter and spirit as His two-fold nature. The two ontological categories are viewed as integral to the super natural personality of God. God, through His two-fold nature prakrti i.e., Matter and Spirit, produces the world. God places His germ in Prakrti, which is described as His womb, and this fertilization by God results in the origin of living beings.' Prakrti, thus fertilized, gives rise to the three characteristic qualities or dynamic tendencies called Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. These gunas produce all other forms. They pervade all material manifestations of Prakrti and all existences including the Gods in the heaven. Prakrti, thus under the supervision of God, produces all moving and unmoving world. This divine fertilization is nothing but figurative description of the process in which matter and spirit come together. God is held responsible for the contact between spirit and matter, which are treated as His twofold nature. Through the introduction of God, the Gita overcomes the difficulty of explaining how spirit and matter come together to form an individual entity. The two-fold nature of God i.e., Purusa and Prakrti are held to be eternal and beginningless entities which together produce the world. Prakrti is the cause of all effects, instruments and agency while Purusa is the cause which hold together all experience of pleasure and pain. Purusa when seated in Prakrti i.e., as an individual soul in a

corporeal body, experiences the qualities of Prakrti and through his attachment to those qualities undergoes transmigration and rebirth. Purusa, which is called the higher nature of God, is the life principle (Jivabhuta) of the universe. Prakrti, the lower nature of God, constitutes the eight-fold categories of Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether, thought (manas), Intellect (buddhi) and Egoism.⁴⁶ Among these categories, mind (manas) is higher to senses. Intellect (buddhi) is higher to manas, and Ego is higher to intellect. The most important feature of this doctrine is that it makes the Samkhya concepts of Prakrti and Purusa as integrally belonging to the nature of God. Though a distinction is maintained between matter and spirit, the world is said to have a unitary source in God, because matter and spirit form the super natural personality of God. The reality of matter is unambiguously or clearly accepted, though as God's nature. Prakrti is said to be the female element and God is viewed as the father with reference to the world.⁴⁸ Commenting on this, Samkara brings in the concept of Maya in between God and Prakrti. In order to bring the metaphysics of the Gita in line with that of Vedanta, Samkara introduces Maya as the illusion which creates the world. According to Samkara the supreme Self, which is referred to as God in the Gita, alone is real as the cause of the world and the world as an effect is unreal or illusory. The Self is the only reality without a second. The gunas are only forms of avidya or nescience. Prakrti is the Maya made up of three gunas. Samkara thus reduces Prakrti to illusory creation or Maya.

However, the Gita does not view the world as an illusion and nowhere does it appear to think on those lines. For the Gita, people live in a real world and perform real actions. The multiplicity of objects is not an appearance though it has its source in the Supreme Spirit. The world is not an illusion but an emanation from the Supreme Self. Though the word 'Maya' occurs in the Gita, it does not correspond to the illusory appearance of the world, as in Vedanta, but means the unpenetrable power of the God. This defusive power consists of gunas because, due to the operation of gunas on mind, man cannot know God. Prakrti being part of God's nature, the defusive power of gunas also belongs to God. But this does not mean Prakrti and gunas are not real. They only delude a

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person by covering his wisdom. Now, coming to the Gita's conception of an individual, it treats an individual as the combination of the mind-body complex is called Ksetra and the individual Self is called Ksetrajna or the knower of Ksetra. Ksetra consists of the five great elements (Earth, Water etc.,) Egoism, Intellect, the Unmanifest, Mind, senses (cognitive and conative), five objects of senses (like sound, smell etc.,) The modifications of Ksetra are desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, body, consciousness (cetana) and courage. Ksetra thus corresponds to the constituent categories of mind-body complex as well as all their modifications as forms of experience. What is remarkable about this description of Ksetra is that even consciousness, which is generally attributed to the Self, is also part of the Ksetra. Ksetrajna is the individual Self which illumines the body as the sun illumines the world. He is the enjoyer of gunas and experiences all forms of gunas through the body and senses. He is a passive on-looker and all activity belongs to gunas. Ksetrajna is said to be a ray of the Supreme Self or God. God is the Ksetrajna in all bodies. Hence, God is the higher Purusa or Paramdtman and the individual Self is nothing but a ray or reflection of the Supreme Self. God, as the higher Purusa, is present in the heart of everyone. Hence, the presence of Ksetrajna implies the presence of God as the higher Self in the body. However, the higher Purusa is unattached to the gunas and their forms while the lower Purusa or the individual Self is affected by them. It is this divine presence or the presence of higher Purusa in the individual accounts for moral elevation and spiritual development. While the union with this Paramatan stands as the positive moral ideal for the individual Self, detachment from the influence of gunas forms the negative aspect of the moral ideal. The moral progress of an individual consists in elevation of the Self by the Self.⁵⁶ The Gita prescribes various methods for self-elevation i.e., wisdom, meditation, performing works, worship etc., These methods of union with the higher Self are dealt with by different discourses in the Gita. The Gita calls for rising above the gunas through sense-control and seeking the higher Self which is the ultimate goal of morally commendable life. The Gita also speaks of Brahman as the essence of God. Brahman is the undevided and unmanifest essence of God. God is the abode of the undifferentiated

ultimate which is described as the immortal, the immutable, the eternal dharma and the unending bliss. Unlike Vedanta, the Gita does not describe Brahman as pure consciousness. Brahman is primarily seen as the differenceless unmanifest essence of God. The word 'Brahman' is also used sometimes synonymous to God and at places, it is used to denote the Vedas. The gunas are the dynamic tendencies which act as a downward pull and make the Self indulge in sense-objects. They inevitably lead to action and make an individual helpless in this regard. However, the scope for human exertion lies in man's capacity to be unattached to the fruits of action and desire thereof. Man can participate in the world of affairs with an equanimous mind. He can see things right even while being engaged in them. In fact, the central teaching of the Gita consists in this. We will discuss in a later section various ways prescribed by the Gita to attain the state of perfect moral vision. The Gita's world-view, in many respects, resembles that of Kapila's Samkhya. However, it differs from the latter on certain important points. Though the Gita accepts Satkaryavada, it differs from Samkhya proper with regard to the doctrine of creation. While Samkhya conceives the world as a product of self-transforming evolution of Prakrit, the Gita regards it as a creation. This creation has its source in the ultimate principle called God. Again, while in Samkhya Prakriti is conceived as an independent ontological principle, the Gita treats Prakriti primarily as a part of God's nature. Even though Prakriti is referred to as a beginningless entity, it is made subservient to God and functionally dependent on him. The gunas are said to be produced from Prakriti as a result of God's fertilization or impregnation while in Samkhya the gunas verily constitute Prakriti. The Gita does not talk about the state of existence of Prakriti, before such impregnation. 'Avyakta' is used to mean 'unknowable' and 'unmanifest' and God is said to be Avyaktam. Avyakta is also spoken of as different from God from whom all manifest world comes. Hence, **two** Avyaktas are referred to, the other being imperishable Avyakta. However, it is not clear whether the inferior Avyakta corresponds to the pre-evolutionary state of Prakriti, because nowhere it is mentioned as pertaining to Prakriti. The Gita lacks precision in relating various aspects of God i.e., Brahman, Prakriti, Avyakta, categories, and Purusa. However, we find an attempt in

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the Gita to present a world-view in terms of Samkhya principles however loosely connected. As Prof. S.N. Dasgupta rightly comments, "it is easy to notice here the beginnings of a system of thought which in the hands of other thinkers might well be developed into the traditional Samkhya philosophy". The Gita also records some of the traditional views concerning the world. The worldly life is figuratively described as the indestructible Banyan (Asvattha) tree having its roots above and branches below. The gunas are described as its branches, sense objects as its buds, Vedic hymns as its leaves and actions as its roots. This figurative tree can be cut at its root by dispassion. The idea of Asvattha tree also appears in hatha Upanisada and in some of the Puranas.

11.5 THE THEORY OF ACTION

Given the Satkaryavada and the conception of the material world as a modification of Prakrti and gunas, the Gita pays special attention to the analysis of human action in view of centrality of this to its ethical vision. Probably, the Gita is the first text which endeavors a systematic exposition of human action. It presents a strictly materialistic analysis of action and explains it in terms of materialistic gunas. Action is primarily viewed as a function of gunas acting upon gunas. The objects of senses, the senses, the impulse for action and the body, which stands as locus for action, are all conditioned by gunas, and the action is nothing but a product of gunas and is characterized by them. The mechanism of action consists in the function of five elements or factors. They are the substratum (adhistanam), the agent (karta), the instruments (karanam), the movement (chesta) and unseen forces (daivam). All actions have these five constituent elements. Ksetra is the substratum of action. The body which is the abode of senses, mind and intellect acts as the locus of action. The second factor i.e., the agent needs a brief discussion. What constitutes the agent has to be carefully analysed. The Gita time and again mentions that Self is not the agent. This is a queer observation because the agency, in all most all the systems of philosophy, is generally attributed to the Self. But the Gita attributes agency to Prakrti

than to Self. It clearly states that the right understanding of action lies in the realization that it is Prakrti alone that acts and not the Self.⁶⁶ Having no beginning and no qualities, the supreme Self, though dwelling in the body neither acts nor is tainted. As the all-pervading akasa is, from its subtlety, never soiled, so the Self seated in the body is not soiled. Those who think 'I am doing', I am acting are supposed to be deluded. They are attributing the agency to Self while Prakrti alone is acting. A wise man rightly sees that all actions are done by gunas and realizes the Self to be above these gunas, while the deluded suppose the Self to be the agent. Now arises the question — if gunas are the real agent in action, what is the role of the Self in action? The answer is clear — the Self is just an on-looker. The Self sustains and illumines the senses and other categories of Ksetra indifferently. The Self on its own does not lead to action. The impulse for action, volition and deliberation are subscribed by gunas. As we have already noted, even consciousness is attributed to Ksetra and thus volition also belongs to Ksetra and not to the Self, gunas make the passive Self to take up action and experience the fruits thereof. It is svabhava or disposition, which is determined by gunas that leads to action. While the Self is unconcerned with action, gunas make the Self bound to action. The Self, being devoid of qualities, cannot act on its own except making the senses and other categories function. The Self is described as the spectator, permitter, supporter and enjoyer of the action but not as the agent of action. The Self does not instigate actions nor does it tend towards fruits of those actions. The Self stands as the enjoyer or experiencer only in relation to the body. Though it experiences the outcome of actions, it does not stand in need of them. It only makes pain and pleasure possible and holds together all experience. It is explicitly said that Prakrti is the cause of effects, instruments and agency (Karya karana karthrtva hetu), while the soul is the cause of experiencing pleasure and pain which accrue from an action. Hence, the place of Self in the texture of action is that of a passive enjoyer, rather than an active agent. Among the gunas, which are together held to be the agent, it is Rajas which is mainly responsible for action and attachment. Rajas is the source of thirst, passion, attachment. However, the existence of gunas, on the whole, makes action indispensable. The gunas characterize the

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individual's subjective disposition which is called svabhava. Action follows the svabhava, or naturally flows from svabhava. In this way, gunas manifest through svabhava. In terms of the gunas that predominate an individual's svabhava, agents are divided into three types — Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic. When an individual's svabhava is characterized by non-attachment, non-egoism, firmness, vigour, and indifference to success and failure, the agent is Sattvic. Rajasic agent is passionate, aspirant for fruits of action, greedy, cruel, impure and subject to joy and sorrow. Tamasic agent is one who is unsteady, vulgar, unbending, deceptive, indolent, desponding and procrastinating. Hence, the agent is primarily determined and characterized by gunas. Samkara takes it to mean various sense-organs. Sense-organs by perceiving their respective sense-objects, discharge the function of instruments. Coming to the last factor i.e., daiva, there appears some ambiguity among commentators and scholars. Samkara suggests that this factor corresponds to the gods like Aditya who aid the eye and other organs discharge their functions. Following Samkara, Mr. Telang translates 'daiva as deities. Allusion to the deities presiding over sense-organs is found in Aitareya, Prasna and Mundaka Upanisads. However, this notion of deities forming a factor in human action appears to be unacceptable, because, nowhere else in the Gita do we find such idea. Nowhere deities are said to have any control over human action in any manner. Moreover, in such case, deities should be included in the instrumental cause along with the senses but need not be mentioned as a separate factor. The Gita explicitly states that God does not create agency or objects for the world. Nor does He unite fruits with action. Hence, daiva might mean uncontrollable external contingencies than the power of God. 'Daiva in the sense of destiny or uncontrollable external force operating on the action is found in Yogavashista. The destiny of action is determined by external forces on which man does not have any control. This might be due to counter-acting efforts of other or due to one's own past actions. Tilak also takes daiva in somewhat similar sense: " there are also several other activities in the world, of which men are not aware, and which are either favourable or unfavourable to the efforts he makes; and these are known as DESTINY; and this is said to be the fifth reason for any

particular result coming about". Tilak's understanding of the fifth factor is more appropriate and convincing. All actions by mind, speech or body have these five factors. The Gita mentions this theory as a Samkhya doctrine. Samkara interprets 'Samkhya' in the passage as Vedanta and takes it as a Vedanta doctrine. However, this doctrine of five factors is described in Caraka Samhita as a Samkhya doctrine. Hence, it is a distinctly Samkhya doctrine and cannot be a Vedanta theory as Samkara views. The Gita's conception of Vedic sacrifices as an instance of human action deserves special attention. The origin of sacrifices is attributed to Prajapati who created mankind together with sacrifices. Prajapati prescribed sacrifices to human beings in order to nourish the gods. Gods, nourished by the sacrifices, in turn bestow all kinds of enjoyments on human beings. Whoever enjoys food without offering to gods is a thief. From food creatures come forth, food comes from rain; rain comes forth from sacrifice; sacrifice is born of action; action comes from the Veda (Brahman) and the Veda comes from the eternal imperishable being. This is the wheel set in motion and whoever does not follow this wheel is sinful. The above theory of sacrifice is very archaic. Here, the sacrifice is seen as the cause of living beings through bringing forth rain and food. This idea of living beings supported by the sacrifices is an ancient belief, which is also acknowledged by Manu Smriti. At another place, the Gita defines action in this sense: "the offering which causes the origin of physical beings is called action". Here, the important point to be noted is that the purpose of a sacrifice is to support the living beings and sustain them. The Gita supports performance of sacrifices for the welfare of living beings. Sacrifices undertaken with a view to upholding the cosmic order or the great, wheel of the universe are devoid of bondage brought forth by actions because the motive of sacrifice here is not selfish but altruistic, that is what the Gita means when it says that except in the case of action done for sacrifice's sake, this world is action bound. Hence, sacrifice, in the true sense, is an action without attachment and selfish gains. The Veda prescribes certain sacrifices for personal gains such as obtaining a son, heaven, a village, fame, wealth etc.. The Gita explicitly criticizes performance of sacrifices for selfish gains and individual pleasures. The aim of sacrifices is not heaven but to continue the cosmic

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order. The original sacrifices which once formed the collective activity of Aryan community were at a later period became pursuits for individual gains. The purpose of collective welfare was substituted by personal desires to obtain specific purposes. The Gita seriously opposes the contemporary practice of performing sacrifices with individual motives and supports the older ideal of sacrifices for collective well-being and upholding the cosmic order. As the Lord Says, "no conviction of resolute nature is formed in the minds of those who are attached to pleasures and power, and whose minds are drawn away by that flowery speech which the unwise - enamoured of Vedic utterances, declaring there is nothing else, full of desire, having Svarga as their goal - utter, a speech which promises birth as the reward of actions and which abounds in specific acts for the attainment of pleasure and power.*6 Actions with specific motives and purposes involve gunas while the performance of sacrifices as a duty and for the welfare of the world is devoid of gunas and attachment. Hence, Lord Krsna advises Arjuna to rise above the three gunas, pairs of opposites, and to be free from the sense of acquisition and preservation. A sacrifice which is performed with devotion and without desire yields no bondage to gunas. In the case of such sacrifices, Brahman is the offering, Brahman the oblation, by Brahman is the oblation poured into the fire of Brahman. Brahman verily shall be reached by him who always sees Brahman in action.⁸⁸ Here the point is that when an action is discharged either as a duty or for the welfare of the world or with an intention to please the Lord, such action, being devoid of materialistic individual gains, does not involve gunas and their products as a result. In such an action, the only point of reference and purpose being the Lord or Brahman, it is not said to be an action involving gunas but an action which transcended them. Having transcended the mire of gunas, it does not result in bondage thereof. Here we have a clue as to the notion of freedom in the Gita. The point to be gleaned here is that the Gita supports performing only those sacrifices which are devoid of materialistic individual objective and despises all the Kamya Karma prescribed by the Veda. The Gita criticizes those who undertake Kamya Karmas by saying - "Self - honoured, stubborn, filled with pride and intoxication of wealth, they perform sacrifices in name

with hypocrisy and without regard to ordinance". Further, we find a wide application of the word 'Yajna' in the Gita. It describes various spiritual efforts as Yajna. The Gita refers to wisdom sacrifice, which consists in knowledge of the Self as everything, sacrifices to gods, sacrifice of Self by the Self i.e., subduing lower Self to the higher Self,⁹⁰ Sacrifice of wealth, sacrifice of senses in the fire of self-restraint, sacrifice by austerity, sacrifice by Yoga, sacrifice by reading and reciting, sacrifice by ascetic vows.⁹¹ The Gita's description of self-control, pranayama and other yogic practices, dispassion towards objects, restraint of senses etc., as different types of Yajna are noteworthy. It reflects the growing enthusiasm for symbolic spiritual sacrifices which were taking the place of ritualistic material sacrifices prescribed by the Veda. Meditation and psychophysical discipline were given more significance than the strictly ritualistic practices. Here we find the shift of interest, in the Upanisadic period, from heaven to freedom. While the Vedic rituals aim at heaven, these spiritual practices help towards the goal of internal freedom. This freedom and internal peace find immense importance in the Gita and it conceives freedom in a unique way.

11.6 DETERMINISM AND FREEDOM

Action is indispensable for all living beings. The gunas born of Prakriti would not allow one to remain inactive even for a moment. The body which is conditioned by gunas necessarily leads to some action or other. One is bound to act even for the maintenance of one's body. While the gunas make one helpless to do action, one's svabhava or natural subjective disposition determines the way one acts. One's svabhava determines one's conduct even against one's will. Even a man of knowledge acts in conformity with his own nature. So far, the Gita advocates strict determinism of action by holding gunas as inevitable force and svabhava as the unopposed determinant. Now, the question is how can a man attain freedom from gunas and their attachment? Where is the scope for human exertion and teaching of Sastra? The scope lies in the fact that though man is inevitably led to some action or other, he can

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nevertheless shape mould his attitude towards the action with constant practice and knowledge. Though one cannot physical cease to do actions, he can give up the attachment for fruits and thus avoid the bondage of gunas. Man can transcend attachment to sense-objects in the form of love or hatred towards those objects by willful exertion, and by avoiding love and hatred one can be detached to action.⁹⁶ Though physical abandonment of action is not possible, actions can be abandoned in thought and mind, and this is the only way to abandon actions. The Mind can exercise control over the senses and the intellect can influence the mind. Hence, Arjuna is advised to take shelter in Buddhi which can control the mind.⁹⁷ Before we further discuss freedom, let us first see how bondage arises and operates. When a man thinks of objects, attachment for them arises. By constant brooding over objects, man develops love or hatred towards those objects. This attachment gives rise to desire for either to obtain or to avoid the object. From desire arises wrath; from wrath delusion; failure of memory from delusion; from this loss of conscience and once intelligence or conscience is lost, man loses everything.⁹⁸ In this way senses disturb the mind through desire and all the evils follow due to that. Desire which is born out of Rajas is the chief enemy. Rajas urges man to action through desire and attachment. Desire covers wisdom as smoke covers fire." Senses, mind and intellect are the seat of desire. Wisdom covered by desire does not see things right and leads to bondage of the soul. However, there is a way out. As the first step towards liberation or freedom, man, should first control his senses. Keeping senses in control, one should avoid love and hatred towards objects. When the dangerous senses, which carry away the mind of man, are kept under control, his mind would be steadfast and his wisdom would be clear of all delusion. The mind, which is restless, turbulent, strong and obstinate, is as difficult as wind to be controlled. However, by practice and by indifference or dispassion (abhyasa and vairagya) it can be controlled. Unless mind is restrained, there is no point in restraining organs of action. He who, restraining organs of action, sits thinking in his mind of the sense-objects, self-deluded, he is said to be one of false conduct. On the other hand, one who restraining the senses by mind, evemn if engages in action, he is not bound by organs of action and is

esteemed. The mind which is controlled leads to steadiness of wisdom (prajna). Then wisdom, free from delusion, looks at things in the right way in equanimity. The man whose wisdom or is steady neither loves nor hates objects, neither depressed nor exalted in failure and success. He is called sthita prajna or a wise man. This equanimity of mind is called Yoga. Only steady minded can acquire wisdom and only a wise man can meditate and and only a meditating man can attain peace and happiness can be there only to one who is peaceful. Only in peace there is an end of all miseries. A wise man clearly sees that all actions are function of energies of Prakrti and upholds Self by Self. He kills desire by subjugating his lower Self to the higher Self. He is free from egoism. Free from desire, with the mind and Self-controlled, having relinquished all possessions, doing merely bodily action, he incurs no sin. When action is done without desire and attachment it is equal to inaction, he is liberated from action. Such a liberated man, even if kills all the people, kills not and is not fettered.¹⁰⁵ The man attains peace, who abandoning all desires, moves about without attachment, without selfishness and without vanity. This is the Brahmic state in which none is deluded.¹⁰⁶ The clue to freedom from gunas consists in the possibility of controlling senses through practice and dispassion. The Gita prescribes various methods of self-discipline to animate this process. The higher Self stands as the goal to be attained and by recognizing the unattached divinity in the body one successfully kills desire. While the binding nature of Prakrti suggests determinism, the unbinding nature of the higher Self develops attachment to senses by falling a prey to gunas, and that leads to bondage. When the individual Self raises above the gunas and seeks union with the higher Self, it is liberated. Though gunas lead to action, Sattva is the quality which helps the process of liberation. When Sattva predominates there arises knowledge and wisdom. Hence, though gunas are the source of bondage and they also help in liberation. Rajas when dominated by Sattva, yields to the process of freedom. One has to develop a Sattvic svabhava or temperament in order to attain liberation. One has to make one's mind steady by developing Sattva which helps liberation from action while acting. The concept of liberation according to the Gita is not the same as that of Vedanta. Unlike the Gita, Vedanta

aims at total freedom from worldly affairs. However, according to the Gita, freedom from worldly affairs does not mean giving up active life in the world. Freedom only means giving up attachment but not rejecting the reality of the external world. It suggests detached participation in the world rather than non-participation in the world. Here, Vedanta and the Gita differ as to the significance of action and renunciation.

11.7 ACTION AND RENUNCIATION

As mentioned earlier, the words 'Samkhya' and 'Yoga' do not refer to the systems of Kapila and Patanjali, in the Gita. Though it incorporates the theory of Prakriti and its evolutes, Gita does not subscribe to the Samkhya of Kapila. By 'Samkhya', the Gita means philosophical and discriminated wisdom in general. Similarly, though the Gita is aware of certain Yogic practices like pranayama or breathe control and Dhyana (meditation), it does not use the word 'Yoga' to denote those practices, which are later systematized by Patanjali. It uses the word in a broad sense of association, union, or devotion. There are two aspects of this Yoga. Yoga, in its positive aspect refers to the achievement of equanimity of mind and union with the divine higher Self while in its negative aspect refers to disassociation with lower passions, mundane objects of desire and bonds of action. With these two aspects, Yoga in relation to moral action. Samkara, in his commentary, takes renunciation of all actions as a necessary corollary to philosophical knowledge of soul i.e., Samkhya. Hence, he understands Samkhya as leading to or as synonymous to renunciation. On the other hand, he takes Yoga to mean devotion towards actions and thus incommensurable with philosophical wisdom. Hence, **Samkara** views Samkhya and Yoga as two distinct insulated paths. However, for Samkara, it is only Samkhya that leads to final liberation and Yoga is subordinate or instrumental to the former. Though Samkhya and Yoga are mentioned as separate paths, the Gita does not view them as incommensurable or opposed to each other. In fact, the Gita unmistakably shows the unity of Samkhya and Yoga. Lord Krsna says that it is children, not wise, speak of Samkhya and Yoga as distinct. He who is rightly devoted to even one obtains the fruits of both.

That state which is reached by Samkhyas is reached by Yogins also. He sees, who sees Samkhya and Yoga as one. So, Samkara's analysis of Samkhya and Yoga as opposite to each other is not in the right spirit of the Gita, though it might be on line with the Vedantic philosophy. The Gita differs from Vedanta not only in as much as it treats philosophical wisdom as not opposed to works, but also as to the notion of Samnyasa or renunciation of works. Samkara repeatedly argues that knowledge and works cannot be combined as they presuppose opposing notions of unity and multiplicity respectively. He also conceives renunciation as a natural consequence of philosophical wisdom of the soul. He relentlessly argues in favour of the view that renunciation means abandoning all works, even the obligatory and occasional duties (nitya and naimittika karma) prescribed by the Scriptures.

The Gita's view is quite different from that of Samkara in this regard. The Gita without ambiguity states that Samnyasa is not abandoning action as such but performing duties without depending on or hoping for the gains. A samnyasin is one who acts without attachment to fruits but not one who is without fire (obligatory duty) and without action. Such a man is a samnyasin and yogin, who performs bounden duty being inadvertent about the gains in discharging them. Here, samnyasin and yogin are identified. Samnyasa consists in renouncing love and hatred for action but not action. A perpetual renouncer neither hates nor desires and is free from the pairs of opposites and bondage.¹⁰⁹ Samnyasa is abandoning interested works (Kamyas) but not work as such. Obligatory duties have to be performed without fail. The Gita itself refers to the dilemma concerning renunciation. Some learned men declare that action should be abandoned as an evil. Some others declare that acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity should not be given up. In this regard, the Gita supports the view that practice of sacrifice, gift and austerity should not be given up. They are purifiers of men. However, they should be performed without attachment and being indifferent to the fruits. Abandonment of action is said to be of three kinds. When obligatory duties are abandoned out of ignorance, it is Tamasic abandonment. If they are avoided because it is painful to observe them, it is Rajasic abandonment. Sattvic abandonment consists in due performance of duties

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and giving up the thought of their fruits. This is the real spirit of renunciation. As action cannot be physically avoided, it has to be renounced in thought by being indifferent to the fruits thereof.

Now, the question arises as to why at all the Lord distinguishes Samkhya and Yoga if they result in identical goal. The answer is clear — Samkhya and Yoga are distinguished only in as much as the former consists in theoretical understanding of the nature of the soul while the latter consists in practical attitude towards the world of action. They together make one system of ethical vision. Knowledge and practice are not incommensurable. Unlike Samkara, the Gita views theory and praxis as inseparable and necessarily unified. It does not sacrifice active life of man for the sake of philosophical wisdom but shows how the philosophical wisdom should guide the active life.

11.8 THE CENTRAL TEACHING

The Central teaching of the Gita consists in its viewing ethical self-elevation as possible and its prescription of different methods or paths to achieve that ideal. The aim of such self-elevation is the attainment of steadfastness in wisdom and internal peace or the state of being Brahman or Brahmic state, the union with the higher Self. The Self is said to be both a friend and foe for a man, depending upon its role in this ethical process. If the individual Self seeks union with the higher Self, it is deemed as a friend, and if it seeks the bondage of gunas, it is said to be a foe. The Gita does not stop there but also prescribes various methods of attaining this ethical ideal. It speaks of philosophical wisdom (Samkhya), devoted actions (KarmaYoga), meditation on the supreme Self (Dhyana Yoga), and worship of God (Bhakti Yoga) as the four methods to attain union with the higher Self. Through any of these modes of Yoga, man can attain absolute tranquility of mind and soul. As we have already discussed, the wisdom of Samkhya consists in realization of eternal and unattached nature of the soul. The wisdom leads a man to see all the affairs of the world as a play of gunas and therefore to realize the soul in its transcendental aloofness. Such wisdom is said to be peerless purifier which reduces all actions of a man to ashes and liberates him. The Gita

classifies wisdom into — Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic. Sattvic wisdom consists in seeing the one indestructable Reality in all beings i.e., unity in diversity. Rajasic wisdom differentiates and distinguishes various kinds of entities in all creatures and sees only diversity and multiplicity. Tamasic wisdom clings to one aspect of Reality as if it were the whole, without reason and corresponds to a narrow conception of Reality. Among these, it is the Sattvic wisdom which leads to the highest goal. It leads to equanimity and freedom. This Sattvic wisdom comes through faithful commitment (sraddha) to the pursuit of knowledge.

Such a wise man sees action in inaction and inaction in action. He sees inaction where the unwise see action and vice-versa. He can be active in inaction and can be inactive while acting. He takes off the notion of personal agency from the mechanism of action and is therefore not bound by it. A wise man is of the conviction the 'I do nothing at all'. In whatever he does, he does not claim agency. He casts off both good and bad deeds, in the sense that he transcends good and bad. He is self-content and is satisfied with whatever comes to him by chance. He does not crave for anything. His engagements involve no desire nor purpose. He attains supreme peace. He is called a sage.

Here arises an important question. As the Gita suggests inevitability of action even for a sage, how can there be an action without a purpose or motive? Naiyayikas, especially, cannot conceive an action without a purpose. Even the involuntary bio-motor activity serves the purpose of bodily functions. A voluntary action presupposes a specific purpose or motive for which it is undertaken, no matter whether such purpose is really served or not. However, when the Gita says that a sage's action is devoid of motive, it only means that the action does not involve personal gain or purpose as the sage is free from the sense of agency. The action is not undertaken to satiate one's personal ego. The Gita does not make love or aversion towards objects as a necessary condition for action. The Gita teaches to substitute desire with devotion in the texture of action. Further, Lord Krsna states in clear terms that a sage should undertake actions with

a view to set example to others. He sets himself as an example and says that though he does not have anything to achieve or attain in this world,

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He is still engaged in actions for the purpose of guiding the masses. He also refers to Janaka, the kingly sage, who attained perfection through action. A wise man's actions set a standard for others to follow. Sages undertake actions being intent on the welfare of, all beings. Hence, sage's actions transcend the realm of personal gain. Karma Yoga pertains to performing bounden duty and, in fact, all actions without craving for their fruits. Abandoning fruits (phalatyaga) is the key concept in Karma Yoga. All actions have to be performed, not for personal gains but with a sense of duty. When actions are thus performed with a sense of duty, they lead to the achievement of unperturbed mind and through it to the ultimate goal of ethical perfection. Karma Yoga is the art of performing actions without being affected by them. It is achieving non-action through action. Here, both Samkhya and Yoga culminate in the same attitude towards the object of action. While in Samkhya Yoga, the dispassionate attitude towards the world is attained through philosophical wisdom in Karma Yoga it is attained through devotion to the idea of duty. Action when done with a strict sense of duty, does not bind the Self. Except this difference in origin, Samkhya and Yoga are the same as far as the effect is concerned.

11.9 MORALITY IN THE GITA

According to the Gita, a morally commendable life consists in discharging the normal duties of life without regard to the consequences and attaining tranquility of mind and internal peace thereby. In this regard, self-control forms the negative moral ideal while equanimity of mind and peace form the positive moral ideal. Further, moral value of an action is determined not by external consequences but by the subjective attitude of the agent towards the object of action. In brief, these are the foundational principles of the whole moral discussion in the Gita. Though self-control as the precondition for knowledge and liberation occurs in the Upanisads and other philosophical systems, it finds an important place in the Gita and its moral teaching mainly insists on self-control. Many of the virtues enumerated by the Gita pertain to self-control and thus are negative in character. Fearlessness, harmlessness,

being free from anger, egoism, desire, hatred, pride, ostentation, arrogance, insolence, self-conceit, ignorance, sensual enjoyment are some of such negative virtues which are conducive to self-control. Self-control is the first step in all the paths of perfection. Suppression of sensual cravings and control of mind have to be achieved necessarily for the attainment of Yoga. The Gita also mentions some positive moral virtues such as purity of heart, steadfastness in wisdom and Yoga, alms-giving, worship, austerity, uprightness, study, truthfulness, compassion towards creatures, gentleness, and modesty which are called devine lot for they help the process of perfection. Among these various positive virtues, equanimity of mind needs special mention. The Gita gives a place of honour for equanimity, both internal and external. Passions, desires and attachment are said to be mystifying or obscuring the faculty of judgement, prajna. Prajna is the mental inclination with which man attends the worldly functions. When a man is self-content and casts off all the desires in the mind, his Prajna will be steady and unperturbed. He is called a Sthitaprajna or a man of steady wisdom. He neither exults not hates. For him, all experience is ineffective transitory phenomenon. He is the same in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, and in honour and disgrace. He transcends all pairs of opposites and endures everything silently. This state of equanimity is called Yoga. He is the wise man. He sees the same in a learned Brahmana, in a cow, an elephant, a dog and in a outcast?. For him a lump of earth, stone and gold are equal. He is of the same mind to good hearted, friends, fees, the indifferent, the neutral, the hateful, relatives, the righteous and unrighteous. The Man, who is subjectively equanimous in all subjective experiences and objectively equanimous to all the objects of the world, is said to have crossed beyond gunas and is thus called 'gunatita. This equanimity should not be confused as indifference. Indifference is a negative attitude towards objects while equanimity is a positive attitude towards action. Indifference leads to inaction while equanimity, as a positive attitude, leads to well balanced moral exertion. In fact, an action can be judged properly only by a mind which is devoid of prejudices, preferences and selfishness. All moral contradictions primarily arise from these. Here, the Gita exhibits a great insight into the nature¹ of moral judgement. The

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"Prajna" which corresponds to the faculty of intellectual comprehension is rightly said to be covered by desire, preferences and others passionate attachments. When these elements are cleared off, the 'Prajna will be transparent and such transparent Prajna helps man to look at the world clearly as one can see the objects clearly after removing dust on spectacles. Hence, equanimity is the perfect moral character of the faculty of judgement which leads to right comprehension and right exertion. The Gita recognizes equanimity of mind as the only way to peace. Peace is the ultimate goal of all ethical and spiritual endeavours. Peace is what is aimed at by all knowledge, actions, meditation and devotion. The Gita looks at it as the highest virtue and perfect goal to be achieved. In peace, there is end of all miseries. Only a steady minded (Sthitaprajna) can attain peace and to the peaceless person, there is no happiness. He attains peace, into whom all desires enter as waters enter the ocean, which, though filled from all sides, remains undisturbed. Peace is the characteristic of Godly existence and divine life. Peace is the positive mark of liberation; peace is thus called the Brahmic state which is beyond delusion. Peace is said to be the immediate result of successful practice of Yoga. The man who clings to any one of the four paths of perfection attains peace spontaneously. Knowledge, devoted action, meditation and worship are said to be leading to peace immediately. Peace follows subjugation of senses and mind through any of the prescribed paths. Only a peaceful man can realize the ultimate reality but not a disturbed man. The summum bonum of the Gita's ethics is union with the supreme Self or God. This is called liberation or ultimate freedom. The liberated Self is in constant communion with God and stays in the God's essence. Samkara attempts to graft the Vedantic conception of liberation on the Gita. According to him, liberation is necessarily the result of philosophical knowledge of the Self and there is no other means to it. All other means are only instrumental in gaining the philosophical wisdom. However, the Gita widely differs from the Vedanta in this respect as far as it understands liberation is possible through alternative means. Even on the nature of liberation the Gita differs from the Vedanta philosophy. Liberation in the Gita does not mean absolute cessation of body, mind and all physical phenomenon. It

is not necessarily an after death achievement. It can be attained in the earthly life itself. The Gita conceives liberation as union with God and cessation of rebirth and all that follows. The idea of cessation of transmigratory life needs a bit of discussion. Lord Krsna time and again states that those who reach Him will never return, while even the heaven is subject to return. Those who follow the Vedic prescription of sacrifices attain the heaven as a result but will be back to mortal world after experiencing the fruits of those sacrifices. Even the heaven is said to be pervaded by gunas and thus does not mark cessation of rebirth. But the union with God, which transcends gunas and their afflictions, leads to the cessation of trans migratory life. Liberation from gunas and rebirth is possible through any of the paths mentioned earlier. The Question now is, how can philosophical wisdom, devotion to actions, meditation or worship explain the absolute freedom from rebirth? The clue lies in the Gita's conception of action and rebirth. According to the Gita, Just as in this body the Self passes from childhood to youth and to old age. So also the Self passes from one body to another. This transmigration of the Self is due to the attachment it acquires through various actions and objects. As attachment leads to rebirth, non-attachment leads to cessation of rebirth. As we have already seen, an action without attachment is ethically equal to non-action. In Yoga, the attachment is relinquished and thus action is also relinquished. When there is no action and no attachment, there should naturally be no rebirth. All the paths of self-elevation stop rebirth by stopping aquisition of attachments. This is what corresponds to liberation in its negative aspect. It is freedom 'from' rebirth and samsara or transmigratory life. This is the negative side of freedom i.e.. freedom 'from'. The positive side of liberation consists in the permanent peaceful existence in God or the higher Self. This is what corresponds to freedom from as Lord Krsna unambiguously states as follows: "Having attained to Me, they do not attain birth again, which is the seat of pain and is not eternal, they having reached highest perfection The Vedanta, however, explains cessation of transmigratory life in terms of the illusory character of samsara and rebirth. According to the Vedanta, the world, birth and death are illusory phenomenon caused by avidya or nescience. Avidya is the principle in which the phenomenal

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world has its roots. Even birth and death are nothing but illusions conjured up by this indefinable principle of avidya which is beginningless but not without an end. The beginningless indefinable avidya comes to an end on the dawn of right knowledge concerning Brahman. As a result, along with avidya, the illusory world of birth and death also ceases to exist. The Gita, however, does not view birth, death and the world as illusory. It does not trace their origin to the indefinable metaphysical principle of avidya. The world and all physical phenomenon are rather emanations from God. Hence, they are as real as God Himself. The attachment of sense object is caused by the conjunction of the Self with the corporeal body which is a product of Prakrti. This Prakrti, though said to be capable of deluding, is never viewed as illusory. The Gita, thus, takes desires and attachments as given and prescribes definite methods of uprooting them. Hence, the Gita's views on liberation are not an outcome of strict metaphysical deliberation but a product of moral reflection dressed in a religious garb. It is more ethical than mystical. The Gita always talks about control over mind and never suggests, even remotely, extinction of mental phenomenon. As far as moral action is concerned, the Gita advances a subjectivist theory of morality. The moral value of an action is determined by the motive of the action. If the action is motivated by selfishness, lust or greed, then the action is viewed as evil producing. An ethically commendable action is one which is performed out of a sense of duty and without attachment to consequences or results. The consequences or fruits of an action have no bearing on the moral value of an action. The objective consequences of action are irrelevant as long as the action is done with the sense of duty or welfare of the living beings as its motive. The consequences affect the agent only when he is attached to the results of action. Hence, morality as a value is more a subjective truth than an objective quality. The sense of duty does not correspond to confirmation to external law but is a subjective attitude which is reflected in the performance of all actions. The Gita goes to the extent of saying that one who is without egoism and whose mind is not tainted, even though he kills all the people, and he is not fettered by the deed. On the face of it, the statement appears to be bewilderingly amoralistic as far as it is extremely inadvertent to the

consequences. However, the Gita, means only that when an action is done as a duty and attended with mere sense of duty, without a selfish motive, such action is absolutely moral, irrespective of its consequences. If a man's duty, without a taint of selfish purpose, demands killing of people, it has to be accepted as moral action, precisely in this spirit, Lord Krsna advises Arjuna to fight, without regard **for** external considerations but as a duty of Ksairiya. This advise of the Lord is not only justified in terms of the ethical discussion in the Gita, but is also based on the social duty of Arjuna as a warrior. Here comes the question of social conduct of men. The Gita, as far as social conduct of men is concerned, accepts scriptures and customary moral precepts. It explicitly supports the social and political systems which have **their** source in the tradition. So far, the Gita is orthodox in its attitude towards the **order in the** society. The Gita does not suggest any disturbance in the existing social order. However, it prescribes a definite subjective attitude or inclination with which the social order should be adhered to. The duties demanded by one's caste and particular station in life have to be discharged with utmost sincerity and without a selfish motive. The adherence to one's duties should not involve any personal interest or purpose. The Gita ascribes origin of the four castes, which together constitute the traditional form of Hindu social organisation, to God Himself. Lord Krsna State that He only created the four castes according to the division of nature and actions. Though God is the source of the four castes, He should not be treated as the author of them. God is said to be the Creator only in as much as everything has its source in Him. It is the gun as and actions which determine the division of castes. Duties of the four castes are divided according to the svabhava or individual nature. This svabhava is a product of one's own previous actions, hence, it is the law of Karma which operates in determination of one's caste and God is only the transcendental source of existence of the beings of all the castes. In this sense, man is the author of his own destiny. The Gita's enumeration of caste duties is also interesting. Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness, uprightness, knowledge, wisdom and faith are the duties of a Brahmana. On the other hand, Manu enumerates study of the Veda, teaching of the Veda, sacrificing, officiating other's sacrifices, giving alms and taking gifts as

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the six duties of Brahmana. These are rather social privileges in the guise of duties, through which a Brahmana makes a living. However, the Gita declares the virtues to be held by a Brahman as his duties. They are more responsibilities than privileges. Hence, it is clear, Manu Smriti and other law-books, being later works, show an advanced level of political consciousness, highly stratified social functioning, and strict hierarchy of the castes. Bravery, boldness, fortitude, promptness, not flying from battle, generosity are the duties of Ksatriyas. Ploughing, cattle rearing and trade are the duties of Vaisyas. It is remarkable that Vaisyas are referred as of sinful birth (papa yonaja) along with women and Sudras. But by the time of Manu, Vaisyas gained social ascendancy and respect. Service is the only duty of Sudras. These duties follow from the nature of an individual, in the Gita. Manu, however, derives the social functions, privileges and duties of the four castes from the infallible sanction of the scriptures. The Gita emphasizes more on the subjective qualities than on the objective scriptural sanctions. By being devoted to his own caste duty, man attains perfection. Proper discharge of caste duties, in the spirit of worshipping the supreme lord, leads to perfection. One should stick to one's duty and perform actions demanded by it, in a dispassionate mode. The Gita emphasizes the idea of Svadharma or one's bounden duty and any transgression is viewed as bad. Better one's own duty than the duty of another well discharged. Better is death in one's own duty. The duty of another is productive of danger.¹⁶³ One has to stick to one's duty even if it is faulty, because all endeavours are surrounded with some evil or other as fire with smoke. No duty is absolutely faultless.¹⁶⁴

11.10 LET'S SUM UP

Though the Gita accepts customary moral law as far as the social conduct of men is concerned, it insists that these caste duties and other social functions have to be done with a pure mind devoid of attachment. The so called duty, if it is performed out of selfish motive, is as bad as any other evil action. Hence, duty is more an internal attitude than just a

mechanical observation of ordained action. Though the Gita refers to scriptures as the source of knowledge of what is to be done and what is to be avoided. It prescribes, the specific attitude with which all actions, including caste duties, have to be discharged. Any action which is characterized by lust, wrath and greed is held to be evil-producing, even if it is an ordained action. Lust, wrath and greed are described as the triple gate to hell. Even sacrifices have to be performed as a duty, with the motive of welfare of the world and for the purpose of upholding the cosmic order but not for selfish gains. The Gita explicitly despises Kamyas, even though they are ordained by the Veda. Hence, the Gita does not accept the Veda as immutable in all respects. However, it does not, revolt against the established social order nor does it suggest any objective change in the existing system. It only attempts to show how human actions, including ordained duties, can be carried out with a balanced mind in an unattached manner. The Gita does not advocate a strict code of moral discipline like the law-books but encourages a definite mental inclination in all actions. Though it does not give a rigorous scheme of individual and social behaviour, it distinguishes three kinds of worship, austerities, food, worshippers, gifts, abandonment, knowledge, action, agents, intellect, firmness, pleasures etc., in accordance with Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Here, everything Sattvic is acclaimed as desirable, everything Rajasic as marginally acceptable and everything Tamasic is to be rejected. All actions and phenomenon which are characterized or predominated by Sattva are helpful in the process of ethical perfection. Man has to consciously choose Sattvic things in order to be morally perfect. Hence, man is volitionally free to opt for anything even though he is conditioned by his svabhava to an extent. He has to deliberately attempt to demystify his faculty of judgement, Prajna through self-control and employ his moral freedom in the right path.

11.11 KEY WORDS

Sattva: Goodness

Rajas : Activity

Tamas: Laziness

11.12 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Explain path of morality as explained in Gita.

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11.14 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. The Gita itself refers to the dilemma concerning renunciation.
 - Some learned men declare that action should be abandoned as an evil. Some others declare that acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity should not be given up.
 - Gita support the view that practice of sacrifice, gift and austerity should not be given up. They are purifiers of men. However, they should be performed without attachment and being indifferent to the fruits.
 - Abandonment of action is said to be of three kinds.
 - When obligatory duties are abandoned out of ignorance, it is Tamasic abandonment.
 - If they are avoided because it is painful to observe them, it is Rajasic abandonment. Sattvic abandonment consist in due performance of duties and giving up the thought of their fruits.
 - This is the real spirit of renunciation. As action cannot be physically avoided, it has to be renounced in thought by being indifferent to the fruits thereof.

2. The Central teaching of the Gita
 - ethical self-elevation as possible
 - different methods or paths to achieve that ideal.
 - The aim of such self-elevation is the attainment of steadfastness in wisdom and internal peace or the state of

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being Brahman or Brahmic state, the union with the higher Self.

- The Self is said to be both a friend and foe for a man, depending upon its role in this ethical process.
- If the individual Self seeks union with the higher Self, it is deemed as a friend, and if it seeks the bondage of gunas, it is said to be a foe.
- The Gita does not stop there but also prescribes various methods of attaining this ethical ideal. It speaks of philosophical wisdom (Samkhya), devoted actions (KarmaYoga), meditation on the supreme Self (Dhyana Yoga), and worship of God (Bhakti Yoga) as the four methods to attain union with the higher Self. Through any of these modes of Yoga, man can attain absolute tranquility of mind and soul.

UNIT 12 ETHICS OF ARTHASASTRA

STRUCTURE

- 12.0 Objectives
- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 A Synoptic Account To Be Elaborated
- 12.3 The State And The Virtuous King
- 12.4 The Sovereign State
- 12.5 Foreign Policy
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- 12.7 Dandaniti
- 12.8 War Ethics
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- 12.10 Let's Sum Up
- 12.11 Key Words
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- 12.13 Suggested Readings
- 12.14 Answers to Check Your Progress

12.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the basic features of Arthasastra
- Understand the practical aspect of Ethical principal

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Kautilya is also known by the other names: Canakya and Visnugupta. He was educated in Taxila and is known to have overthrown the last king of the Nanda dynasty and placed the great Candragupta Maurya on the throne. Candragupta Maurya is said to have met Alexander whose troops were invading India. Arthasastra is written during the period 321-296 B.C. This work was meant to help Mauryan kings to rule their

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empire. Candragupta Maurya, his son, Bindusara and his grandson Asoka ruled parts of India from 322 B.C. to 188 B.C.

Kautilya also known as Vishnugupta was popularly called Chanakya since he was instrumental in overthrowing the inefficient and unethical king Nanda and installing Candragupta Maurya. The two works, Arthashastra and Chanakya Niti are attributed to this scholar. He was educated in Taxila and was a professor in the same university. He was highly respected by his students since he commanded knowledge of political administration, philosophy, social organization, ethics etc. He was a teacher who was keen to apply his knowledge to actual affairs of the world.

Arthashastra is a storehouse of traditional wisdom. We find that Kautilya quotes the view of other thinkers on certain issues, such as, appointment of ministers, the number of ministers in a cabinet, the number of ministers a king ought to consult for crucial decisions and so on. He has great respect for the Vedas and the Sastras. He has presented even those views, which are opposed to his, because traditionally some schools of thought, or some learned men, have upheld them. Some views, if not carefully studied, are likely to be mistaken as the view of Kautilya.

Arthashastra and Chanakya Niti deal with varied subject matter of a complex nature. They discuss the internal relationship in a family at one end of the spectrum to the highly professionally designed policies of international relations with those covering war and peace at the other end. There is nothing that is relevant to political administration, business affairs, agriculture etc. that is not discussed in it. Because of the varieties of its subject-matter, the varying degrees of importance that this has from the perspective of governance, that of ethical propriety, or that of economic utilitarianism, etc., it is difficult to pin down the relative importance of an item discussed in Arthashastra or in Chanakya Niti.

Another source of misunderstanding that obscures the import of Kautilya's works is their style. The styles of Arthashastra and Chanakya Niti are not very conducive to a quick comprehension. They do not follow the method of description, discussion and explanation. They are often suggestive, assertive and conclusive in their appearance. This may have something to do with Indian culture itself where the learned are

respected and taken as an authority and their suggestions are taken seriously and acted upon in good faith by one and all. This style of expressing a conclusion without giving any detailed argument must have something to do with the oral tradition as well. Indian tradition, by and large followed the oral tradition and there was immense difficulty in retaining knowledge and passing it on to the next generation. This must be the reason why in most cases, well-considered conclusions are made available without any detailed arguments. From the point of view of actions, conclusions are more important than the arguments leading to them. There are prescriptions without sound arguments in support of those in the Arthashastra and more visibly in the Canakya Niti. For instance, the Arthashastra gives the views of several thinkers on the question of what should be the number of ministers in a cabinet without much argument. It is only Kautilya who gives a reason as to why he believes that the number of cabinet ministers should be flexible depending on the requirement. As presented, others seem to have arrived at some number in an a priori manner without giving any argument in favour of their opinions. Since Canakya Niti is supposed to work like a handbook, it does not deal with arguments in support of the maxims stated in it.

Another source of confusion is whether artha is an intrinsic or an instrumental value. Artha is important because it is a means to dharma and kama. That is to say, if you have artha, you can be charitable and enjoy some sensuous experiences. A keen observer may find, significant importance given to dharma and kama, in Arthashastra, which treats artha as logically prior to dharma and kama, because to do dharma or to enjoy kama, we require artha. In the final analysis we realize that both dharma and kama are superior to artha. To claim that artha is more basic to dharma and kama is to misunderstand the relative value of instrumental good and intrinsic good.

One may find that the principle of division of labour is generally accepted in the works of Kautilya, yet it is purposefully not maintained at the highest level of authority. The king is the head of the state and hence he has multiple roles to play. He is the supreme authority, for instance, of justice, of administration, of military strategy, etc. His ministers too have

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many roles; one minister may be made in-charge of two departments. Spies, of necessity, must have at least two roles. A spy cannot be effective unless he is camouflaged. Given the complexity of the roles assigned to individuals, it is difficult to assess their performance since there are possibilities of assigning differing grades of importance to the roles they play. There is an advantage in such a system since co-ordination would be less of a problem. However, there are disadvantages since it becomes more difficult to assign responsibility unambiguously and to punish anyone for a wrongdoing.

A concise account of Arthasastra and Canakya Niti as treatises seems to be a difficult task since they (i) do not represent the view of a single thinker belonging to a decade or a century, (ii) deal with a variety of subjects, (iii) respect the tradition and yet want to deal with current issues in a pragmatic manner, (iv) generally adopt the style of making recommendations and suggestions rather than giving argumentation, (v) treat artha as instrumental as well as intrinsic, and (vi) assign multiple tasks to the same individual.

12.2 A SYNOPTIC ACCOUNT TO BE ELABORATED

According to Kautilya, a king, the head of the state, has to be highly ethical, given the qualification prescribed for this office. He should have advanced knowledge of four sciences, the first one being the three Vedas, namely, Rg. Yajur and Sama which give him the perspective on what is right and wrong; the second being anviksiki, the knowledge of Sankhya, Yoga and Lokayata which give him the ability to withstand mental and emotional pressures; the third being dandaniti, knowledge of governance through reward and punishment; and the fourth being varta, the knowledge of agriculture, cattle-breeding and trade. However, a successful king would naturally be pragmatic so that he can meet the basic needs of the subjects and provide them protection and keep them happy by providing good means of livelihood. Only a rational person can be pragmatic and therefore, a king is expected to be highly rational as well as visionary.

It is not enough that an ethical person knows ethical principles and follows them meticulously. He should be wise enough to make exceptions to anyone of them wherever necessary so that he achieves higher ethical goals. This becomes necessary especially where two different ethical principles apply to one and the same object. Telling the truth and saving the life of someone, may both 'be applicable in the same context, though there is a conflict between them in that situation. A rational person would make an exception to one of them and make an ethical choice depending on the peculiarities of the context. For instance, he may decide to tell a lie in order to save the life of a person in danger.

A source of trouble, especially in the context of ethics, arises from the double ethical roles of an individual. An individual is a general member of the society and at the same time, he may be a professional governed by the commitment to his profession. It is obvious that a king alone cannot run a government. The ministers, commanders-in-chief and other government officials are recruited on the basis of testimonials, after proper test and scrutiny. Once their knowledge and credentials are established, the king may assign them specific jobs. Spies too have specialized jobs; their integrity and sincerity would be determined before they are appointed. The king seeks suggestions and recommendations of the council of ministers and the main priest for making different appointments. All these personnel, the king, the ministers, the priest and the spies are professionals who possess special knowledge and skill having undergone special training. They have the double obligation to follow general ethics and the ethics of their profession.

All professionals have to be pragmatic. Similarly, the six-fold foreign policy, for example, too has to be a pragmatic policy. It has to be followed to enhance the benefits of the state. There are deterrent types of war, and each of them is justified on the basis of some prudential consideration. Some of these wars involve cheating the enemy, and such acts look unethical from the general point of view. Similarly, there are political strategies, which are pragmatically superior to other strategies. These policies are guiding principles; in a context an appropriate foreign policy is to be followed for maximum benefits. Again, such political strategies may appear to be unethical from the point of view of general

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ethics, but may be professionally justified and worth implementation because of circumstantial demands.

Those who believe that to be ethical is to be altruistic tend to think that pragmatism cannot go well with ethics. However, to be wise and prudent is different from being opportunist and cunning. A good king has to be pragmatic and farsighted, but not opportunist and cunning. A pragmatist has a policy, a policy of enhancing the values he upholds; whereas, an opportunist does not hold any specific value. The latter acts the way he feels at a given moment; acting on a principle he considers less optimizing. A king too ought to be a pragmatist; he has to enhance the happiness and welfare of his citizens. He has to make policies and implement them efficiently. Ministers, government officials, secret agents, military personnel, are all professionals belonging to different wings of the government. All of them ought to be pragmatic and efficient in discharging their duties to further the goals of the state. Some of them, for instance, may appear to be making digressions from a strict observance of ethical principles so as to perform their job efficiently. For instance, secret agents might hide their true nature so that they can collect sensitive information from others. This may be understood as intentionally misleading others, thus amounting to cheating. However, this is inevitable if a profession and its professionals have to serve the society in an efficient manner.

Several scholars seem to have misread Kautilya's works simply because they failed to make the subtle distinction between pragmatism and opportunism. Kautilya was highly rational and hence was highly pragmatic. To be pragmatic is to use opportune moments in an optimal way to achieve laudable goals. Kautilya's goals were noble and ethical and hence what he did and what he preached are politically quite noble and ethically praiseworthy. What we aim to do here is to put things in a defensible perspective by recognizing all ethically relevant ideas presented in Arthashastra and Chanakya Niti.

The primary aim of the two works, is to provide a defensible political philosophy with affordable economic policies within an ethical framework. The guiding, general principles adopted in the works are: pragmatics, rationality, democracy, self-control, balance of mind,

stability in governance, commitment to development, and welfare of citizens including peaceful and harmonious relationship with neighbouring countries.

Some have interpreted Arthashastra as maintaining that any means are justifiable if the end is justified. That is to say, unethical means can be used for ethical ends. This stand, however, is justifiable by citing examples from Arthashastra itself. All that one needs to do is to address the issue of means- end relationship and cite examples from Arthashastra to support the view without deliberating why certain means are chosen for a certain end.

For instance, the institution of espionage, of special taxes to replenish empty treasuries, the torture of criminals to elicit confession, the use of poison by fiery spies to eliminate certain potentially dangerous individuals, etc., are cited as examples of unethical means to achieve just ends. It would be declared that the political authority does all these things in order to give a stable and just government so that citizens are protected and cared for. The goal of the king is noble and the means adopted by him sometimes unethical. The means-end relationship is wrongly understood when someone argues that an unethical means can be used for achieving an ethical and just goal. What is overlooked in this way of thinking is that ethical contexts are complex and several, different ethical principles often apply to one and the same context. One may have one ethical consideration in choosing a course of action, which may appear to be unethical from another point of view. In fact, if it were such a simple thing that by following ethical principles one becomes a virtuous person, then individuals wanting to be virtuous would have become highly ethical without much difficulty. Even those who follow ethical principles blindly would have been virtuous. It is extremely difficult to be virtuous not because one lacks the will to be virtuous, but because it is not easy to fathom which is the right course of action, when one is faced by an ethical dilemma. An ethical dilemma arises when one clearly sees two possible courses of actions and each course of action is justifiable from an ethical point of view but both cannot be done at the same time. It is no wonder then that following an ethical principle blindly does not always lead to ethical actions. Telling, the truth would

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not be ethical when a hired killer asks for details about a targeted person. Though to tell the truth is an ethical principle, this case may be considered as an exception. It is not difficult to imagine situations that compel us to make exceptions to ethical principles.

The stand that unethical means gets justified if the end is ethical is questionable. Whether one can assign ethical value to such a means is not clear at all. Calling a means ethical or unethical is on account of some conceptual muddle. One can talk of efficient, easy means, but not ethical or unethical means without keeping in sight the goals to be achieved by these means. A goal can be ethical or unethical, a value can be ethical or unethical, but a means cannot be on its own. A means derives its value from the goal. Unethical means cannot be used for ethical goals since if the goal is ethical any means to achieve that goal ought to be ethical. For instance, giving charity could be by means of giving donations to educational institutions or giving scholarships to deserving students, or giving food to beggars or building hospitals for the diseased, etc. But none of these could be unethical means. If giving charity were ethical, any way of doing charity would be ethical.

Canakya recommends moral pragmatism or practicalism, but not opportunism of any type. Misreading the acting on an opportune moment in a pragmatic way as being opportunist leads to misunderstanding of some cryptic statements found in the Arthashastra. Saying when should or should not a fiery spy give poison to a revolting prince, for instance, would be misunderstood as being opportunist rather than being taken in the right spirit of the fiery spy's doing his job efficiently and effectively by making use of an opportune moment. Similarly, making peace with a strong neighbour and waging war with a weak neighbour are misunderstood as being opportunist rather than as making use of an opportune moment to buy peace or expand one's territory and rule the empire in a better manner. Note that *kuta-yudha* is one of the commonly recognized tactics that are used on the battlefield. This form of *yudha* is pragmatic and this type of war could not have been permitted if one were to be not pragmatic but strictly ethical.

12.3 THE STATE AND THE VIRTUOUS KING

A king is required to be a mature, sensible, rational and virtuous person by both the Arthashastra and the Canakya Niti. Anger as an emotion is never appreciated by, Kautilya. He believes that anger leads to the fury of the public. Gambling too is rejected because it involves winning and losing and will, lead to enmity. Similarly, addiction to women also is, considered very bad and untimely actions and incapacity to deal with politics etc., would result from this. The effects of drinking too are given in detail by Kautilya. There is the mention of six types of enemies namely, lust, anger, greed, vanity, arrogance and overjoy and the authorities are advised to abandon them. The sole aim of all sciences is restraint of the organs of sense. How lack of self-control has become the cause of ruin of several kings is mentioned as examples. By being in the company of the aged, controlling passion, desire and anger become possible.

12.4 THE SOVEREIGN STATE

The concept of a sovereign state presented in Arthashastra is quite interesting and unique. It is said that the elements of state are the king, the minister, the country, the fort, the treasury, the army and its ally, and the enemy. It is interesting to note that the enemy is also conceived as a part of the sovereign state; The term 'enemy' seems to be defined in a technical way. Any adjacent country is taken as an enemy irrespective of the relation that exists between the two states. Of these seven elements, the king, ministers, the army and the enemy are key human elements. These individuals with special abilities and training occupy important positions in the sovereign state. If any one of these human elements is weak, then the country and be in danger. Utmost care is to be taken in identifying the right persons before they are appointed to these powerful positions so that the element of risk is the least. The relationship with a neighbouring country would mainly depend on the strength and weaknesses of the two countries.

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A king is the most important element of the sovereign state. There is a big list of characteristics, which are associated with a good king in the Arthashastra and Chanakya Niti. He is described as born of a high family, godly, virtuous, disciplined, courageous, truthful, grateful, ambitious, enthusiastic, prompt, powerful, resolute, dignified, humble, balanced, vigilant and intelligent. The preferred rule is one who is a native, who follows sastras who is healthy. He must have qualities that give the subjects confidence in him. He should be easily approachable, kind and pious. He should possess a high quality of intellect, such as the ability to quickly understand, foresight, a brave and enthusiastic nature, promptness in taking decisions, firmness, alertness, etc. He should possess personal qualities such as those of being articulate, bold, of good memory, and free from passions.

It is very rare to find an individual with all these prescribed attributes. A person cannot be a king by birth, though the possibility remains that the son of a king becomes the king by possessing, or acquiring by training, most of the qualities mentioned above. A king is supposed to appoint the eldest prince as the next king if and only if, he has met the minimum criteria, which by normal standard is quite high both in ethical dimensions and in personal abilities. If the prince is likely to revolt under the assumption that he may not be made the next king, then even killing the prince is recommended. One may adopt another member from the same family, or son of his daughter or son of a neighbouring king, so that the right person is put on the throne. Be it noted that the son of a neighbouring king would be the son of an enemy as per the definition given in Arthashastra. Curiously enough, killing one's own son and installing an enemy's son on the throne is recommended if required, from the point of view of the larger interest of the sovereign state.

Sovereignty is possible only with collective work. Referring to the king, Kautilya says, "A single wheel can never move the vehicle, and be in steady balance. Hence he shall employ ministers and hear their opinions. Given this, it is clear that the monarch is not the sole decision maker for political and administrative affairs. A check and balance too is inbuilt in this system. There are ministers and the royal priest to advise and direct the king to do the right thing.

Not everyone is considered for the post of minister. A minister ought to be a native person born of high and influential family. Uneducated persons will not be considered for the post of minister. The individual should be highly trained in the arts, must have a strong memory, be skillful, intelligent, articulate, bold and possessed of foresight. From the ethical point of view, he should be wise, dignified, friendly, pure in character, excellent in conduct. From the psychological point of view, he should be brave, healthy, enduring, emotionally balanced, must be enthusiastic, free from procrastination, fickle-mindedness etc. These qualities in the individuals are verified from certain resources. For instance, educational qualifications are ascertained from professors. Theoretical and practical knowledge, foresight, retentive memory and friendliness are tested from the successful application of these in works. Through narration of stories, their eloquence, skill and intelligence are tested. Endurance, enthusiasm and bravery are tested by their behaviour in troubled situations. Information regarding ethical traits are to be gathered from their intimate friends. Ministers have to pass through tests of honesty and temptations. Spies would do this special job of ascertaining whether a minister is honest.

Apart from the different human elements of a sovereign state, the high priest is another important functionary in an advisory role. The king appoints the high priest after ensuring the following: The character of the person and the family should be highly respected and praised by people. The individual must be highly educated in the Vedas and the six Angas. He must be well versed in the science of government. He must be capable of performing the rituals prescribed in Atharvaveda. Such a person would be appointed as high priest. The relationship between the king and the priest is described as that of a father and a son, or a teacher and a student, or an employer and an employee. Once appointed, the king would seek the advice and guidance of the priest on important matters of running the government.

Depending on the size and different specialized departments, ministers are appointed according to Kautilya. However, there is a difference of opinion among scholars of Arthashastra. Some feel that the number should not be more than twelve, others prescribe that it be fifteen and yet

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another group believes that a state can have twenty ministers. Kautilya thinks that the number of ministers should depend on the need of the country. He points out that an arbitrary manner of fixing some number is not appropriate. The point that is noteworthy is that the number of the members of council of ministers has to be kept reasonably small. The reason for this seems to be that there should be good interaction and understanding among the members of the council. If the number is large, interaction among them would become weak.

Given the manner in which a potential king has to be identified, the fact that there ought to be a council of ministers, all of whom are recruited only after undergoing rigorous tests, indicates that the government visualized is neither fully monarchic nor democratic, but a healthy blend of both. Not anyone can be the head of the state, and only an educated person can be a minister. Given this, one can say that it is not totally democratic. However, the monarch and the ministers are not chosen exclusively on the basis of heredity; the choice is made among the best available persons and hence, it is democratic in spirit.

12.5 FOREIGN POLICY

The six-fold policy would be observed by a wise king in order to build forts, buildings, roads, to exploit mines, timbers, forests, etc. and to harass his enemy. A king who desires to expand his own power shall make use of it. The six-fold policy is a pragmatic international policy. It indicates what is optimum or ackmtageous to a king in a given situation. These six constituents of this are: making peace with a superior king, declaring war against the weak, the policy of remaining neutral with equals, marching on an expedition only if one is very strong, seeking shelter under a superior king, making treaty with one and waging war with another. Kautilya believes that it is power that brings about peace between any two kings.

We have already noted that to be pragmatic is not to be unethical and in fact, ethics is the basis of these policies. Kautilya, for instance, believes that peace by treaty would work. In fact, the maintains that holding someone as a hostage is less effective than the treaty itself, since if the promise is broken by a king, he would have guilt feeling as well as fear

of suffering in the next birth or in the hell when the gain from war and gain from the peace by treaty are equal, then one should go for treaty rather than for war since war leads to destruction.

A neighbouring country cannot be a friendly country for the following reasons. There would invariably be some border issue, water-sharing problem, problem in fishing, cross-border smuggling, atrocities by soldiers on civilians of the neighbouring country, spying and other secret activities, etc., all of which are the sources of tension between two neighbouring countries. It is possible, for the time being for two neighbouring countries to have achieved peace by agreement with pledges, yet this may be a temporary phase. Therefore, it is safer to treat the neighbouring country as an enemy rather than a friend or a neutral country.

An able king is expected to achieve progress. He is supposed to move from the stagnation stage to progress, if not from deterioration to stagnation; deterioration is the worst condition where gains are less and losses are more for the sovereign country than they are for its enemy, An immediate neighbor is considered as an enemy and a farther one as a friend. A circle is formed where the three primary members are the sovereign country, its friend and its friend's friend. And there can be four such primary circles of states involving twelve kings. And all the twelve kings have their elements of sovereignty, power and end, here the end being happiness. All the kings are expected to utilize their power to promote the happiness of their people.

The six-fold policy may be misunderstood if we do not understand the concepts of war and peace. Peace is defined negatively. It is nothing but absence of disturbance in enjoying the fruits of your work. As mentioned earlier, a wise king should decide which policy should be followed so that he is able to build forts, buildings, commercial roads, new plantations and villages, to exploit mines, timbers, elephant forests, etc.

If a king has all the virtues mentioned in our discussion earlier, there is no reason to believe that he would be unjust. Kautilya mentions that every care should be taken to restore confidence by the conqueror in the land. Everything that can be done to console and rehabilitate the citizens of the country, which lost the battle ought to be taken up immediately.

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Moreover, war would not have been announced without proper preparation and resource mobilization. Rehabilitating the disturbed citizens would not take long time when proper care is taken. It is an essential part of ethics that one universalizes the values that one upholds. War in this sense is taken as a necessary evil. However, by expanding one's own kingdom, a competent king contributes to spreading justice and happiness all over the world.

12.6 INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

A large part of the internal affairs is managed well by administrators because they have the required sensitive and valuable information with them. This information is collected by different types of spies and are promptly reported to the concerned authorities and, if required, certain actions are initiated without waiting for the directions from the authorities. The king on the advice of the council of ministers creates the institution of spies. This institution of spies would require a fraudulent disciple, a recluse, a householder, a merchant, an ascetic, a classmate, a firebrand, a poisoner and a mendicant woman.

A spy of a fraudulent disciple is a skillful person capable of guessing the mind of others. A recluse is a person initiated in asceticism and has a foresight and a good character. A householder spy is a person with a good character and foresight. A merchant spy is a person with foresight and a good character. An ascetic will be a spy who wants to earn his livelihood and lead the simple life of an ascetic. All the spies are offered wealth and honour. And those who are dishonest are secretly punished. These five institutions of espionage will ascertain the purity of character of the servants of the king.

As noted earlier, spies are professionals having an important role in the internal affairs and external affairs of the country. Moreover, these individuals are expected to spot troubles early such that the appropriate authority could take corrective measures promptly. If a king is successful, it is due to the spying system that functions efficiently. Trouble for the king could appear from any corner: it could even be from his own sons or queens.

12.7 DANDANITI

The institution of punishment is considered as a valuable resource for the country by Kautilya. This system is used to make acquisitions, to keep them secure, to improve them, and to distribute the wealth among the deserving. The development and progress of the society is achieved through dandaniti by the government. In a sense, a kind of sportive spirit is added to the concept of punishment. A defaulter is made to believe that he has a role even as a criminal by contributing much to his family and the public at large by working hard. This concept is better than the criminal's developing a feeling of guilt or a negative feeling of revenge. Since it is viewed as a good tool in the hands of government to promote development and to do economic justice by distributing wealth among the deserving, the concept of punishment is no more viewed as strongly negative. There may be, strong disapproval of what a criminal did, yet the guilt feeling need not go to the extent that the individual is denied the satisfaction of feeling that he is useful to his family members and the society at large. Some recent experiments on prisoners indicate that such an approach to punishment is very much socially profitable.

Judicial judgements are supposed to be based on four factors: law, transaction, settled custom and edict. The law is based on truth, transaction is based on witness, customs are nothing but the commonly held view of men, and edict is the royal command. There is a hierarchy of these factors. If there is a conflict between the royal edict and the rest of the three, it is the royal edict, which will supersede the other three.

It is a common practice that a suspected criminal is tortured to extract information and unravel the truth. Arthashastra recognizes some limit to this practice. The following persons would not be tortured at all: ignorant, young, the aged, the afflicted, persons under intoxication, lunatics, persons suffering from hunger, thirst, or fatigue from journey, persons who have just partaken of a full meal, persons who have confessed on their own accord, and persons who are very weak.

12.8 WAR ETHICS

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Though Kautilya has not particularly stressed the ethical considerations in war, he does lay down a list of seven categories of people who should not be attacked. They are those who have fallen down, who have turned their back in a fight, who surrender, whose hairs are disheveled as a mark of subjugation, who have abandoned their arms, whose appearance has changed on account of fear, and who are not taking part in the battle.

In the event of victory, Kautilya says the victorious king must do everything in his power to conciliate the conquered people. If their economy has suffered badly, he should declare tax exemption. Ministers of the overpowered king should be won over; law and order should be restored as quickly as possible. While visiting the conquered country, the victorious king should wear the local dress and follow local customs.

12.9 WEALTH AND CHARITY

Wealth, virtue, and enjoyment are supposed to be three kinds of wealth. They are valued in the order in which they occur. Similarly, harm, sin and grief are three kinds of evil. They are also to be valued in the order in which they occur. That is to say, harm comes first, then sin and then grief. There are several indicators, which pointedly show that wealth is important. There are passages stating how a meritorious point made by a poor person is overlooked by others simply because he is poor, a wealthy person is given a higher social status; and a poor person is not given even his due. Charity is given a prominent place in Canakya Niti. One wonders why charity has to have a place in ethics. It is quite natural to think of a mechanism of distribution of wealth equitably by the political authority instead of encouraging charity. However, when charity is talked about in Canakya Niti, what is being said does not seem to be a requirement from the government side, rather one left to the goodwill of the individual. Giving charity is an act of an individual and the individual gains by giving charity. Proper spending of wealth according to Canakya is morally commendable Canakya, to illustrate the value of charity it is said by him that Karna, Bali and King Vikramaditya survive even today only because of their charity.

1. Check your Progress

1. Ethical principles as understood in Arthashastra

12.10 LETS SUM UP

The purpose of Arthashastra or that of Canakya Niti seems is to establish artha as instrumental value and dharma and kama as intrinsic values. The aim of these works seems to be the good of the public in general and that would be achieved when a proper understanding of the lessons in these great works is learnt. Canakya believes that the study of these maxims from the sastras helps one to acquire the knowledge of the most celebrated principles of duty. This understanding helps him to decide what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, and what is good and what is bad. One achieves ethical excellence if one studies these maxims.

In fact, a large part of the wealth of knowledge included in his works was available in Indian tradition; he compiled them together realizing their importance. It is only a rational person who can be ethical, thought mistakenly some think that it is not to ease. The ethical individual may become a pragmatist sometimes. But that is very different from being an opportunist.

12.11 KEY WORDS

Kautilya: One who wrote Arthashastra guru of Chandragupta Maurya

Dandaniti: institution of Punishment

12.12 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Expound the key aspects of Arthashastra

12.13 SUGGESTED READINGS

Notes

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12.14 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress-1

- artha as instrumental value
- dharma and kama as intrinsic values.
- The aim of these works seems to be the good of the public in general and that would be achieved when a proper understanding of the lessons in these great works is learnt.
- Canakya believes that the study of these maxims from the sastras helps one to acquire the knowledge of the most celebrated principles of duty. This understanding helps him to decide what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, and what is good and what is bad. One achieves ethical excellence if one studies these maxims.
- In fact, a large part of the wealth of knowledge included in his works was available in Indian tradition; he compiled them together realizing their importance. It is only a rational person who can be ethical, though mistakenly some think that it is not to ease. The ethical individual may become a pragmatist sometimes. But that is very different from being an opportunist.

UNIT-13 JAIN ETHICS AND YOGA ETHICS

STRUCTURE

- 13.0 Objectives
- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Tri Ratnas
 - 13.2.1 Samyak Drasana
 - 13.2.2 Samyak Jnana
 - 13.2.3 Samyak Caritra
- 13.3 Vratas/Vows
 - 13.3.1 Anu Vrata
 - 13.3.2 Three Guna-vrata
 - 13.3.3 Four Shikshā-Vratas (Disciplinary Restraints)
- 13.4 Sanllekhanā-Vrata
- 13.5 Samkhya Yoga Ethics
- 13.6 Yamas
- 13.7 Niyamas
- 13.8 Rest of five Path on Advancement of Liberation
- 13.9 Let's Sum up
- 13.10 Keywords
- 13.11 Questions for review
- 13.12 Suggested Readings
- 13.13 Answers to Check Your Progress

13.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the basic features of Tri Ratnas
- know the Jain Vows as basis for a good life

- Know the path of Yoga as described by Patanjali

13.1 INTRODUCTION

The association of the soul with karmic matter cripples the inherent powers of the soul. Jain philosophy, therefore, asserts that a person obtains everlasting happiness only when karma is completely removed from the soul. Jainism firmly believes that it is quite possible for one to rid oneself of the karma associated with the soul by one's personal efforts, without any help from an outside source. The highest happiness lies in securing emancipation from the cycle of birth and death, thus attaining liberation. The central theme of Jainism holds religion as a science of ethical practices. The conduct of the present life should be aimed at attaining Moksha, the state of eternal bliss from which there is no return to the cycle of life and death. Each soul can attain liberation, a supreme spiritual state, by realizing its intrinsic purity and perfection.

13.2 TRI RATNAS

The question arises regarding the ways to achieve that objective. Tattvārtha-sutra, a sacred text of Jainism, emphatically states in its first aphoristic rule: Samyag-Darshan-Jñān-Chāritrāni Mokshamārgah Samyag Darshan (Right Faith or Perception), SamyagJñān (Right Knowledge) and Samyag Chāritra (Right Conduct) together constitute the path to liberation. These three basic components are called RatnaTrayi, or the three jewels, in Jain works.

Since all three are emphasized equally, it is obvious that Jainism does not admit any one of these three, individually, is a means to Mokshamārga i.e. the path to liberation. In fact, in Jain works, Mokshamārga, is compared to a ladder with two side poles and central rungs or steps. The side poles of the ladder are Right Faith and Right Knowledge and the rungs or steps of the ladder are the gradual stages of Right Conduct. It is obvious that it is possible to ascend the ladder only when all three components, the two side poles and the steps, are sound. The absence of one makes the ascent impossible.

Right faith or Perception creates an awareness of reality or truth, Right Knowledge impels the person to Right action, and Right Conduct leads him to the attainment of liberation. They must coexist in a person if he is to make any progress on the path of liberation.

Furthermore, the ethical code prescribed by Jainism for both house-holders and ascetics is based on this three-fold path of liberation. Hence, it is necessary to see the appropriate characteristics of these "Three Jewels" which constitute that path.

It is pertinent to note that these three are not severally considered as different paths but are thought to form together a single path. That is why it is firmly maintained that these three must be present together to constitute the path to salvation.

In view of this firm conviction in Jainism, the Jaina works always strongly emphasize that the three must be simultaneously pursued. This conviction is brought home by some effective illustrations. For example, it is contented that to effect a cure of a malady, faith in the efficacy of a medicine, knowledge of its use, and actual taking of it, these three together are essential; so also, to get emancipation, faith in the efficacy of Jainism, its knowledge and actual practicing of it, these three are quite indispensable. Similarly, the Moksamarga, i.e. the path to salvation, is compared in Jaina works to a ladder with its two side poles and the central rungs forming the steps. The side poles of the ladder are right belief and right knowledge and the rungs or steps of the ladder are the gradual stages of right conduct. It is obvious that it is possible to ascent the ladder only when all the three, i.e. the side poles and the rungs, are sound. The absence of one makes the ascent impossible.

Thus a simultaneous pursuit of right belief, right knowledge and right conduct is enjoined upon the people as the only proper path to salvation in the Jaina scriptures. Further, the ethical code prescribed by Jainism for both the house-holders and the ascetics is based on this three-fold path of liberation. Hence it is quite necessary to see the main characteristics of these 'Jewels' which constitute that path.

13.2.1 Samyak Drasana

Notes

(1) Meaning

It is clear that out of the three jewels, mentioned above, right belief comes first and that it forms the basis upon which the other two jewels, viz, right knowledge and right conduct, rest. Hence it has been laid down that one must, by all possible means, first attain right belief, i.e. the basic conviction in the fundamentals of Jainism, because it has been asserted that only on the acquisition of right belief, the knowledge and conduct become right.

The term Right Belief has been defined by Āchārya Umāsvāmi in his authoritative Jaina sacred text entitled Tattvārthādhigama-sutra as follows : “Tattvārtha-sraddhānam samyag-darsanam – chapter I, sutra 2, that is, right belief is the faith in the true nature of the substances as they are. In other words, right belief means true and firm conviction in the seven principles or tattvas of Jainism as they are, without any perverse notions.

Further, it is maintained that right belief consists in believing that

- (i) the Jaina Arthas including the Tirthankaras are the supreme beings
- (ii) the Jaina Sāstras are the true scriptures, and
- (iii) the Jaina Gurus are the true Preceptors.

Moreover, it is also asserted that such right belief

- (a) Should have eight angas, i.e essential requisites
- (b) Should be free from three kinds of mudhatās, i.e. superstitious beliefs, and
- (c) Should be free from eight kinds of mada, i.e. pride or arrogance.

(1) Requisites of Right Belief

The Jaina scriptures state that the right belief should be characterized by eight angas, i.e essential requisites or components or limbs, and that these angas determine the excellence of right belief. These eight angas which support the right belief are:

- (i) Nihsankita-anga, that is, one should be free from doubt about the truth or validity of the tenets of Jainism.

- (ii) Nihkanksita-anga, that is one should have no love of linking or desire for worldly enjoyment as everything is evanescent.
- (iii) Nirvichikitsita-anaga, that is one should decline to have an attitude of scorn towards the body even though it is full of impurities and should have regard for the body as it can be purified by the three jewels of right faith, right knowledge and right conduct.
- (iv) Amudhadrsti-anga, that is, one should have no inclination for the wrong path or one should be free from perversity and superstition.
- (v) Upaguhana-anga, that is one should maintain spiritual excellence and protect the prestige of that faith when it is faced with the risk of being belittled on account of the follies and shortcomings of others. In other words, one should praise the pious but should not deride those who may be faltering in their pursuit of religion.
- (vi) Sthitkarana-anga that is, one should sustain souls in right convictions. One should have the quality of rehabilitating others in the path of right faith or conduct by preaching them or reminding them of the religious truths whenever they are found to be going astray.
- (vii) Vatsalya-anga, that is, one should show affection towards the spiritually advanced by receiving them with courtesy and looking after their comforts.
- (viii) Prabhavana-anga that is , one should endeavour to demonstrate and propagate the greatness of the Jaina tenets and scriptures. One should try to wean people from wrong practices and beliefs by establishing to em the importance of the true religion by arranging religious functions and charities.

(2) Avoidance of Superstitious Beliefs

Notes

It is also laid down in Jaina scriptures that right belief should be free from the following three kinds of mudhata, i.e. superstitious beliefs :

- (i) Loka-mudhata is the false belief in holiness. It relates to taking baths in certain rivers, jumping down the peaks of mountains and entry into fires under the supposition of acquiring merit for themselves or for their kith and kin
- (ii) Deva-mudhata is the belief in false gods. It accepts the efficacy of village gods and goddesses who are endowed with ordinary human qualities and attempts to propitiate them. This superstition consists in believing in gods and goddesses who are credited with passionate and destructive powers, willing to oblige the devotees by grant of favours they pray for.
- (iii) Pakhandi-mudhata is the belief in and respect for dubious ascetics. It shows regard for false ascetics and considers their teaching as gospel of truth. It refers to entertainment of false ascetics and respecting them with a hope to get some favours from them through magical or mysterious powers exercised for personal gain or show of power.

Thus the mind must be freed from such superstitious beliefs and any doubts so that the ground can be made clear for the rise and development of right belief.

- (3) Freedom from Pride : Besides the avoidance of these three kinds of superstitious beliefs, the mind must be made free from the eight kinds of pride: jnana(learning), puja(worship), kula(family), jāti (caste, or contacts and family connections), bala (power or one's own strength) riddhi (wealth or affluence or accomplishments), tapas(penance or religious austerities and vapus (body or person or beautiful form or appearance).

It is obvious that all or any or more of these kinds of pride are likely to disturb the equilibrium of mind, and create likes or dislikes for men and matters. In such a case understanding is likely to be erroneous, if not perverted. Naturally an inflated notion of oneself on any of these grounds is likely to cloud the vision. Hence it is necessary that for the blissful drawn of right belief there should be an effacement of these types of pride.

(4) Glory of Right Belief : The Jaina works describe at length the glory of right belief and enumerate the benefits which can be accrued by a person possessing right belief. They go to the extent of declaring that asceticism without faith is definitely inferior to faith without asceticism and that even a low caste man possessing right belief can be considered better fit to attain moral dignity.

In short, the Right Belief is given precedence over Right Knowledge and Right Conduct, because it acts as a pilot in guiding the soul towards moksa, i.e. salvation. Further, there can be no rise, stability, growth and fulfillment of knowledge and character, unless they are founded on right belief or faith

Transgressions and blemishes of samyagdarśana

The Tattvārthasūtra speaks of following five transgressions of samyagdarśana :

- (i) Śankā (doubt)
- (ii) Ākāṅksā (desire)
- (iii) Vicikitsā (repulsion)
- (iv) Anyadrstipraśā (admiration of followers of other creeds)
- (v) Anyadrstipraśamstava (praise of followers of others creeds)

13.2.2 Samyak Jnana

(1) Relation between Right Belief and Right Knowledge: It is considered desirable that on attaining right belief one should strive after right knowledge. As regards the relationship between right belief and right knowledge it has been specifically stated that although right belief

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and right knowledge and contemporaneous, there is yet a clear relation of cause and effect between them, just as it is between a lamp and its light. It is true that lamp and light go together, still the lamp precedes the light, and light cannot be said to precede the lamp. In the same way there is the relation of cause and effect between right belief and right knowledge, through both are almost simultaneous. Right knowledge cannot precede right belief and from this point of view right knowledge is called the effect and right belief, the cause.

Nature of Right Knowledge : Right knowledge has been described in Jaina scriptures as “ that knowledge which reveals the nature of things neither insufficiently(Naya) , nor with exaggeration, nor falsely, but exactly as it is and with certainty(Pramana) .” It has also been stated that right knowledge consists in having full comprehension of the real nature of soul and non-soul (i.e. matter) and that such knowledge should be free from samsays, i.e. doubt, vimoha, i.e. perversity, and vibhrama, i.e. vagueness or indefiniteness. The Difference Between the Pramānas and Nayas. Both a naya and a pramāna are certainly of the form of cognition but they differ from each other inasmuch as the former acquaints us with but one aspect of a thing while the latter with a number of them. That is to say, a thing is possessed of numerous properties and when it is ascertained on the basis of but one of these properties the ascertainment concerned-e.g. the ascertainment , on the basis of the property eternity, in the form ‘A thing-e.g. a soul, a lamp or the like-is eternal’ – is naya. On the other hand, when a thing is ascertained on the basis of numerous properties the ascertainment concerned-e.g. the ascertainment, on the basis of the properties eternity, transience etc. in the form ‘A thing-e.g. a soul, a lamp or the like-is multiformed because of its multifarious properties like eternity, transience etc’- is pramāna, In other words, a naya is but a part of the corresponding pramāna while a pramāna is but an aggregate of the corresponding nayas; for a naya grasps a thing from but one viewpoint while a pramāna does the same from numerous viewpoints.

13.2. 3 Samyak Caritra

After right belief and right knowledge, the third, but the most important path to the goal or moksha, i.e. salvation, is right conduct. In Jainism utmost importance is attached to the right conduct because right belief and right knowledge equip the individual with freedom from delusion and consequently equip him with true knowledge of the fundamental principles clarifying what are worthy of renunciation and realization and ultimately lead to right conduct as an integral and crowing constituent of the path of salvation. That is why conduct which is inconsistent with right knowledge is considered as wrong conduct or misconduct. Hence conduct becomes perfect only when it is in tune with right belief and right knowledge. It is , therefore, enough to point out that the importance of right conduct in the process of self realization consists in the fact that it is only when right knowledge based on right belief is translated into practical and spiritual discipline that the path of emancipation of soul from the cycle of births and deaths becomes smooth.

It is clear that in accordance with Jaina philosophy right conduct presupposes the presence of right knowledge which presupposes the existence of right belief. Therefore the Jaina scriptures have enjoined upon the persons who have secured right belief and right knowledge to observe the rules of right conduct, as the destruction of karmic matter associated with the soul can be accomplished only through the practice of right conduct.

Right Conduct includes the rules of discipline which (i) restrain all censurable movement of mind, speech and body, (ii) weaken and destroy all passionate activity and (iii) lead to non-attachment and purity.

Further, Right Conduct has been conceived of two kinds or categories according to the degree of intensity of the actual practice of rules of behavior laid down under right conduct. These two kinds are (i) Sakala-chāritram, i.e. complete or perfect or unqualified conduct and (ii) Vikala-chāritra, i.e. partial or imperfect or qualified conduct.

Out of these two kinds of right conduct, the former, i.e. the sakala-chāritra involves the practice of all the rules of conduct with vigour and higher degree of spiritual sensitivity while the latter, that is, the vikala-chāritra, involves the practice of the same with as much increasing degree of diligence, severity and purity as might be possible.

Notes

Further, it may be noted that (i) Sakala-chāritra is meant for and observed by ascetics who have renounced worldly ties, and is also known as muni-dharma; and (ii) Vikala-chāritras is meant for and known as srāvaka-dharma, i.e. the householder's dharma.

1 . Check your Progress

1 Tri Ratnas as decided by Jainism a path to Moksha

13.3 VRATAS/ VOWS

The hallmark of right conduct is right conviction in thought and action, freedom from infatuation or delusion and passions like anger, hatred etc. Therefore, Vrata is to retire from the wrong conduct like violence, non-truth, stealing, sensual pleasure and possessiveness and to get engaged in the true religious activities through the unity of body, mind and speech. We do not take Vrata to please any divine power or any one else. We take Vrata to purify ourselves to continue and enhance the process of liberating ourselves, and to achieve the liberation (Moksha).

Types of Vrata:

The complete renunciation of all worldly attachment is called Mahā-vrata [major vows], practiced by the Sādhus and Sādhvījis, and the partial renunciation of worldly attachments is called Anu-vrata, [minor vows] practiced by Shrāvaks and Shrāvikās. In Jainism, each Anu-vrata has its negative as well as its positive aspects. Each vow has its negative aspect in the form of moral prohibitions and positive aspect in the form of a moral duty. Negative terms are effective restrictions.

Each of these vows has a two-fold purpose. The first is spiritual in that the observance of each of these vows will prevent the influx of new

Karmas. The thought of injury, theft, or falsehood is the cause of sin. The other purpose is social. The same thoughts expressed in action will be punished by the state. By observance of each of the vows, an individual will be discharging his social obligation. To desist from violence or theft is to preserve peace and safety in society. While the spiritual fruit of observance of the vows is self-control and stoppage of the evil propensities of the mind, the mundane fruit is mental peace and the good of the society at large.

Five Main Vows of Limited Nature (Anu-vratas):

Name	Scriptural Name	Meaning
1. Ahinsä	Sthul- Pränätipät- Viraman-Vrata	Non-violence
2. Satya	Sthul-Mrushävädä-Viraman Vrata	Truthfulness
3. Achaurya	Sthul- Adattädäna-Viraman Vrata	Non-stealing
4. Brahmacharya	Sva-Därä-Santosh	Celibacy
5. Aparigraha	Ichchhä Parimäna or Parigraha-Parimäna Vrata	Non-possessiveness

Three Merit or Supporting Vows (Guna-Vratas):

6. Dig Parimäna Vrata	Restraints of Geographical Limitations
7. Bhoga-Upbhoga Vrata	Consumption Restraints
8. Anartha Danda-Vrata	Avoidance of purposeless activities

Four Disciplinary Vows (Shikshä Vratas):

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09. Sämäyika Vrata	48 Minutes of Meditation and equanimity
10. Desäväkäsika Vrata	Stricter Geographical Limitations
11. Paushadha Vrata	Practicing the life of a Monk
12. Atithi Samvibhäg Vrata	Discipline of Share and Care

13.3.1 Five Anu-vratas (Minor Vows)

01. Ahinsä Anu-vrata (Nonviolence)

Samayä Savvabhooesu Sattu-Mittesu Vä Jage

Pänäiväyavirae Jävajjivae Dukkaram.

--- Uttarädhyayan Sutra

Equanimity towards all beings in the universe, to the friends as well as the foes, is Ahinsä (though) it is hard to refrain from hurting the living beings for the entire life.

The First Vrata, in Sanskrit, is called Sthul- Pränätipät Viraman Vrata. Sthul means gross, as distinguished from strict or subtle. Pränätipät means separating the Pränas (life forces). Viraman means giving up.

The following aphorism from Tattvärtha Sutra presents the definition of violence:

'Pramatta Yogät Präna Vyaparopanam Hinsä'

'The destruction of life due to an act involving negligence is violence'.

The term 'Pramäda' yields two meanings:

- Mental state of attachment and aversion
- Negligence

Therefore, to destroy the life of a living being through passions of attachment and aversion is violence; and to destroy the life of a living being through negligence is also violence. The mental state of attachment and aversion, and of negligence, is internal violence (Bhävahinsä). The actual act of destroying the life of a living being is external violence (Dravya- Hinsä).

Now the next thing is to know what killing is, and what particular kinds of killing must be refrained from.

Ahinsā means not hurting. He, who abstains from hurting or harming to any - Jiv or a living being - either intentionally, or through others, or by consenting to another to do so, observes the vow of Ahinsā. Surely, the lack of attachment and passion is Ahinsā. When a person is controlled by passions, he causes Hinsā or injury to his own self, though there may or may not cause injury to any living being. Everything depends upon the state of mind, and intention to abstain from or commit Hinsā, even where actual hurt or injury is not caused.

We cannot but do harm and violence to living beings for the sustenance of our body. We cannot live without killing living beings. Even our breathing involves violence. However, we should do only as much harm or violence as is absolutely necessary for the sustenance of our body. We should make sincere efforts to find out how we can live with minimum violence,

Abstaining from intentionally injuring mobile living beings, through mind, words, or body, in any one of two ways- directly or through somebody is called Sthul Prānātipāt Viraman-Vrata or Ahinsā Anu-Vrata. Householders cannot eliminate Hinsā of immobile living beings but can minimize it.

Jain scriptures have prescribed five rules of restraint for being firm in the observance of the vow of non-injury. Control of speech, control of thought, regulation of movement, care in lifting and placing things or objects, and examination of food and drink before taking in are the five observances. Self-control is of vital importance. Since the vow of Ahinsā requires one to refrain from hurting the feelings of others, control of speech and thought are quite essential. Everyone ought to be careful in his movements for fear of causing harm to a living being through carelessness. Similarly, one ought to be careful while placing down objects lest they should hurt some tiny beings. Such precaution ought to be taken even while lifting up any object. Similarly, it is necessary to examine minutely one's own food or drink before taking it in, making sure that there is no tiny being in it.

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Jainism makes a distinction between Bhäva- Hinsä (intention to hurt) and Dravya- Hinsä (actual causing of hurt). That is why five kinds of restraints have been expressly mentioned above as the cautions to be observed by one who wants to desist from causing hurt. Similarly, a distinction is made between Sukshma-Hinsä and Sthul-Hinsä. The former requires abstention from causing hurt to life in any form, while the latter requires abstention from hurting forms of life possessing two or more senses. It is not possible for a householder to refrain from causing hurt to forms of life with one sense, like plants, trees, crops, etc. He must, however, refrain from causing unnecessary harm to Ekendriya and Sthävar Jivs (one sense living beings). However, it is still ordained that a monk should desist from causing Hinsä to any form of life.

the positive virtues, which a votary of non-violence must possess, are Maitri (love or friendship), Pramod (joy and respect), Karunä (compassion), and Mädhyaatha (tolerance) towards living beings.

Is it bravery to yield to the passion of anger and fury, and to enter into a fight with one's adversary? Bravery consists of non-violence, that is, restraining the mind from being under the sway of anger and cruelty; it consists of keeping the mind cool and calm by using the internal wholesome strength of discretion. The just mentioned mental or spiritual strength, which is of the form of non-violence, is a superior physical strength. Human society achieves progress -religious, spiritual, and even material - in proportion to the cultivation of this strength. The strength of non-violence is the light of intellectual discretion and mental purity. In addition, with this strength, the world of human beings can become rich in friendliness, sympathy, love, spiritual, happiness, and bliss.

Non-violence is a spiritual power. Noble bravery or heroism demands self-sacrifice. Sacrificing violence, supporting, and fostering non-violence is the bravery of high order. Opposing violence only verbally, and running away out of fear when one is required to face and endure physical sufferings and torture, is really not the practice of non-violence. In spite of his having courage and strength to fight, the person who controls his passion and excitement and does not yield to violence is the true follower of non-violence. One who wants to practice non-violence

properly and rightly should have, in addition to right understanding, mental strength and courage.

02. Satya Anu-vrata (Truthfulness)

Musävao Ya Logammi, Savvasähuhim Garihio

Avisäso Ya Bhuyänam, Tamhä Mosam Vivajjae

--- Dash Vaikälika Sutra

All the saints in the universe have denounced telling lie.

Lie causes distrust among the people and should therefore be given up.

It is also known as Sthul-Mrushäväda-Viraman Vrata. It is falsehood to make a wrong statement through careless activity of body, mind and/or speech (Pramäda -yoga).

Like poetry, it is difficult to define “truth” though its nature can be described and understood. Umäsväti says that speaking what is not commendable is falsehood. Commenting on this Sutra, Pujoyapäd says that which causes pain and suffering to a living being is not commendable, whether it refers to actual facts or not. The words that lead to injury constitute falsehood. Samantabhadra says that he who does not speak gross (Sthul) falsehood does not cause others to speak and does not speak the truth even if it is likely to bring danger to him or to anybody else, can be said to abstain from gross falsehood.

Lying is due to some form of passions; therefore, all lying is forbidden, except in cases where the truth is likely to result in greater Hinsä. Satya Anu-Vrata is abstinence from harmful, rough, cruel or secret-revealing speech and requires using harmless and well-balanced language.

One should not utter untruth out of attachment or hatred and even the truth, if it causes destruction of a living being. Gross falsehoods are those in which there is an evil intention and knowledge that the statement is false.

Four kinds of Falsehood:

01. Denying the existence of a thing with reference to its position, time and nature when it actually exists,

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02. Assertion of the existence of a thing with reference to its position, time and nature when it does not exist,
03. Where a thing is represented to be something different from what it is actually,
04. When a speech is ordinarily condemnable, sinful and disagreeable.

Any speech, which is actuated by passion, is false. Back biting, harsh, unbecoming, and unethical speech is condemnable. That speech which provokes another to engage in any kind of injury or destruction of life is sinful. A disagreeable speech causes uneasiness, pain, hostility, grief, anguish etc, to another person. When a saint or a preceptor gives sound advice against vices or questionable habit of life, he cannot be said to indulge in false speech, even though the person affected may feel ashamed or uncomfortable.

03. Achaurya Anu-vrata (Non-Stealing)

It is also known as Sthul- Adattādāna-Virman-vrata. Umāsvāti defines stealing as taking what is not given (Adattādāna). Taking anything that is not given amounts to theft. The gross vow of non-stealing can be observed by desisting from taking away property that is not actually given by the owner.

Theft also involves Hinsā as taking of property, which is not given, not only injures the purity of thought but also pains the person who is deprived of his property. The desire to possess other's property without his consent or knowledge involves spiritual denigration of the self. One must not take anything belonging to others whether in a house or in the street though it may be of unknown ownership or belonging to a government. This view is consistent with modern law in our country.

Picking up goods which have been lost or forgotten by their owners, employing thieves to obtain things for oneself, encouraging and prompting others to steal, approving others' acts of stealing, receiving stolen merchandise, using false weights and measures, secretly adulterating commodities or substituting inferior ones for the original, gaining or storing goods without paying taxes, breaking laws formulated by the state for the good of the people, indulging in smuggling, dealing

in the prohibited items-all these are acts of theft. Buying goods of much value at a very low price taking advantage of the seller's helplessness or keeping the excess material given by the seller by mistake is also an act of theft. In short, taking anything owned by others, through injustice, dishonesty, fraud and unfair means is an act of theft.

Employing unfair means in business, owning another man's property by fraudulent tricks, deceiving others by misleading them, driving others into losses after having won their confidence, damaging others' interests through cunningness, harassing others unnecessarily and unjustly, distressing the innocent-all these are vicious and sinful acts. When society achieves moral elevation through the cultivation of good qualities like contentedness in proper limited possession, self-control, simple living and universal brotherhood, then the sins of immorality, theft, roguery and devilry that have spread over the entire society will automatically disappear.

The results of the observance of this vow are that all people trust you, you are considered a good citizen; and in that way, you prosper; and it develops strength of character.

Based on today's advancements and environments, the vow of Acharya prohibits making illegal copies of software, unauthorized use of copyrighted material, and unauthorized downloading of music and many similar forms.

04. Brahmacharya Anu-vrata (Celibacy)

Mulameyamahamassa Mahadosasamussayam

Tamhä Mehunasansaggam Nigganthä Vajjayanti Nam

--- Dash Vaikälika Sutra

Being the root cause of sins and abode of major faults,
the sensuous contacts are abandoned by saints.

It is also known as Sva-Därä-Santosh and Par-Stree Gaman Viraman Vrata. Brahmacharya term has spiritual as well as physical connotations. Spiritually it is defined as Brahmani Charyate Iti Brahmacharya. Brahman means consciousness or soul, Brahmani means within soul and Charyate means staying. So, the term Brahmacharya

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literally means staying or dwelling in soul. Therefore, when one remains fully aware of his pure consciousness and stays aloof of all the physical as well as the mental involvements, he can be said to be observing Brahmacharya. Equanimity being the principal property of consciousness, the spiritual Brahmacharya also denotes maintaining equanimity by being free from attachments and from all sorts of craving and aversion.

In physical sense, Brahmacharya means celibacy or averting of the sensual activities. Its observance is essential for attaining the state of spiritual Brahmacharya. Thus, physical Brahmacharya is a prerequisite for spiritual Brahmacharya. On the other hand, when one dwells in soul or Self, he gets rid of all attachment. Such detached person cannot indulge in sensual activity that necessarily needs attachment. Physical celibacy is thus the cause as well as the effect of spiritual Brahmacharya. No wonder that celibacy has been accepted as an ideal and is considered highly virtuous in India and other oriental societies, which are spiritually oriented. People observing celibacy are therefore held in high esteem in those countries

The meaning of the vow as far as the words goes is: Sva means own; Dārā means wife; Santosh means being satisfied with. This is the first part of the vow. Para means others; Stree means women; Viraman means refraining from, Gaman means to visit or to go, Vrata means a choice of undertaking.

This vow consists in desisting from having sexual contact with other women and from abetting others to have such contact, for fear of incurring sin. A person ought to be content with a spouse whom he/she has married in the presence of his/her preceptor and others. He should have no sexual desire or sensual look at other women. This vow differs from all others in its double formulation: positive in the sense of contentment with one's own spouse (Sva-dārā-Santosh) and negative as avoidance of contact with other women (Par-Stree- Gaman).

He who wants to observe this vow both in letter and in spirit must studiously avoid all occasions of meeting women in privacy and talking of matters that are likely to stir feelings of sexual or sensual contact.

All Jain philosophers have been unanimous in condemning breach of the vow of celibacy as leading to commission of various kinds of sins. It is also a sin against the society as it disturbs code of common ethics so essential for peace in domestic life and mutual trust. A man or woman given to adultery involves himself or herself in various kinds of deceitful acts, which result in the destruction of all other virtues.

Knowing or being convinced of the usefulness of the restriction placed upon himself, Shrāvaka can help himself to keep the vow by paying attention to the following points. They may be called hedges to keep oneself away from self-injury in the direction of sexual passion.

- Try not to indulge in lustful stories or conversations or talks about woman.
- He should not look with a lustful eye or in the spirit of lust on woman's body, which are factors in arousing the passion.
- One should not listen private conversation of a couple.
- He should not bring to mind the sexual enjoyment he had with his wife in former days.
- He should avoid taking foods that are exciting, intoxicating, or stimulating, especially things that are very oily, containing too much fat, because they produce passion.
- Even non-exciting and non-stimulating food should not be taken in excess; he should not gorge himself, because a too great quantity of food will produce passion.
- He should not embellish his body.

All the foregoing remarks apply equally to women, although they are worded for men.

Thus, this vow requires one to be faithful to his/her own spouse, not to involve in any illicit sexual activities, must view opposite sex person as brother or sister, should not get involved in match making, except for

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his/her own children and should not talk to or look at a person of opposite sex with lust.

05. Aparigraha Anu-vrata (Non-Possessiveness)

Na So Pariggaho Butto Näyaputten Täinä

Muchchhä Pariggaho Butto Ii Buttam Mahesinä

---- Dash-Vaikälika-Sutra

Articles needed for life do not constitute possessiveness;

‘attachment is possessiveness,’ says the graceful Lord.

It is also known as Ichchhä Parimäna or Parigraha-Parimäna-vrata. Parigraha is infatuate attachment to possessions (Muchchhä Parigraha). It is the result of delusion or operation of the Mohaniya Karma. The desire to acquire and possess a number of worldly things like land, houses, heads of cattle, gold, silver and cash is natural to men and women. This desire should not become insensible. When attachment to such objects of possession becomes uncontrollable or unreasonable, the mind becomes affected by passions of greed and delusion; such mind becomes oblivious to right faith, knowledge and conduct. Infatuation or attachment of any kind becomes a source of evil. In safeguarding property, one is likely to resort to violence and falsehood.

For the householder absolute renunciation of Parigraha is not possible.

When the desire to possess is uncontrolled, it becomes an evil. To be free from such evil, one should voluntarily decide upon the extent of property and wealth that one should acquire and refrain from all activities of acquisition after the target is reached; this is called Ichchhä- Parimäna-Vrata.

Complete renunciation of all sense of attachment is Aparigraha. Parigraha or attachment to possession of property is either external or internal. Possession of external things is not possible without internal attachment. Hence, both the internal attachment and the possession of external objects come within the fold of Parigraha.

They are relevant in emphasizing how the purity of the soul becomes affected in various ways in acquisition, possession, enjoyment and protection of property consisting of both animate and inanimate objects.

Attachment, which is the source of Parigraha, will be of various kinds and intensity. Other mental states referred to as internal attachments are attributable to acquisition or protection of various kinds of objects. While greed, deceit and pride are involved in the uncontrollable thirst for accumulation, fear, anger or sorrow are aroused when one has to part with the objects.

The object of the vow is that every householder should impose upon himself restrictions as to the nature and extent of objects (animate and inanimate) of possession so that there could be a check on his greed. Renunciation is the true way of life but it is not possible for everyone to follow it. Hence, there is need for self-imposed limits on acquisitions.

13.3.2 Three Guna-vrata (Supporting Restraints)

The three Guna-vrata Digvrata: Dig Parimāna-Vrata, Bhoga Upabhoga Parimāna and Anartha-danda-vrata are intended to impose restraints of long duration on the activities of a householder so that the chances of his committing transgressions of other vows is considerably, if not totally, reduced. They are supplementary vows, which aids the individual in his observance of the Anu-vrata.

06. Dig Parimāna-Vrata (Geographical Restraints)

Dig-Parimāna Vrata means voluntarily limiting activities in a limited area. The Shrāvaka takes a vow not to travel beyond predetermined limits in the ten directions. The ten directions are: East, West, North, South, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, and Northwest, Up and Down. By fixing the limits in all the ten directions, one's greed, which is at the root of Parigraha, is curtailed. The householder is like a heated iron ball, wherever he goes, he brings in Hinsā. If the area of his movements were fixed, he would be restrained from committing Hinsā beyond that area. He would be able to exercise self-restraint in all matters in relation to the area beyond the limits.

Thus, the primary objective of this vow is to help the householder curtail his activities from all sides, so that his internal passions, particularly Lobha--greed, could be commensurably curbed.

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07. Bhoga-Upabhoga Parimāna Vrata (Consumption Restraints)

Let us first understand the meaning of Bhoga and Upbhoga. Bhoga means items that can be used only once such as food, soft drinks, toiletry, lotions, perfumes, incense, etc. Upbhoga means items that can be used repeatedly such as houses, furniture, clothes, shoes, jewelry, and vehicles.

This vow enjoins the householder to put limitations to the use of objects of senses categorized as those for Bhoga and Upabhoga, with a view to curtailing his sense of attachment to them and, thus, increase his capacity for self-restraint and will-power. Putting limitations, even within the already accepted limits, on the use of objects of senses for the day, or according to one's requirements, and with a view to reducing the sense of attachment to them, is the Bhoga Upbhoga-Parimāna -Vrata.

If a layman can, he should use only those things, which are inanimate. If he cannot, then he will have to use things that are animate; but he must limit them; he should give up flesh foods, also vegetables in which there are infinite lives in the one body such as root vegetables. In regard to the trades in which the layman should engage in order to obtain the things he uses; they should be faultless, sinless. If he is unable to avoid sinless business completely, then he should at least give up such trades that involve cruelty to animals.

Renunciation of Bhogas and Upabhogas is of two kinds: Niyama and Yama. That which has a time limit is Niyama and the other, which is undertaken for life, is Yama. Limitation of time could be for an hour, a day, a night, a fortnight, a month, a season or a year and renunciation could be from food, conveyances, beds, bathing, clothes, ornaments, cohabitation or music etc. Honey, flesh, wine, etc should not be consumed to avoid injury to living beings.

It is not enough if one gives up what is undesirable; he should also limit or give up what is desirable. Considering his own strength, the wise should renounce even those objects of senses, which are not forbidden; and in respect of those objects, which he cannot renounce, he should limit their usage by day or night. Again having regard to one's capacity at the time, a further limit to the already set limits should be put every day. He who being thus contented with limited objects of senses,

renounces a majority of them, observes Ahinsā because of his abstaining from considerable part of Hinsā.

The second part of this Vrata deals with profession. One should not follow or urge others to follow professions wherein violence on a large scale is possibly involved but also that one should not use things produced through them, if one wants to remain undefiled by the defect of large scale violence.

If we want to wear clothes manufactured in mills, want to enjoy the things of leather which is obtained after killing animals, to use clothes and things made of silk which is produced after having killed the four-sensed silk-worms, to put on ornaments of pearls obtained after having killed the five-sensed fish and similarly to use and enjoy other things whose production involves large scale violence or killing, then for us, there is no way out but to register our partnership in that large scale violence.

He should scrupulously avoid the use of those things whose production involves large-scale violence. It is not possible to observe the vows of non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence and non-possession without limiting properly the quantity of things one uses. It is so because man (or society) who indulges in the excessive use and enjoyment of things has to take recourse to the large scale violence in the mass-production of those things for satisfying his inordinate and limitless desire for the use and enjoyment of those things. Vices or sins like telling lies, doing injustice to others, exploiting others, etc., are the results of the unbridled desire for enjoying worldly things. Moreover, to satisfy this ever-growing desire one has to struggle hard to acquire ever more possessions. All sins and vices arise from this dreadful desire. It is the function of strong will power or mental strength to curb properly the desire for worldly enjoyment. In addition, such a strong-willed or strong-minded man can be saved from many sins and vices and can achieve prosperity and spiritual welfare very easily.

The essence of the vow can be put in one sentence: The vow of limiting the quantity of things one uses consists in renouncing the professions in which large scale violence is involved, scrupulously avoiding food, drink, clothes, ornaments, utensils, etc., whose production involves large

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scale violence, and limiting the quantity, for one's use, of even those things whose production involves very little violence.

08. Anartha-Danda Parimāna Vrata (Avoidance of Purposeless Activities)

The Sanskrit name of this vow consists of five words the first of which is 'An' meaning negative; the second word 'Artha' means profit, benefit, motive, aim, object, necessary reason, purpose, etc., the third word 'Danda' means evils or bad effects and the last two words mean undertaking to refrain from.

It prohibits accumulation of all unnecessary accessories of violence and means of injury. One should neither keep means of injury like poisons, spears, arms etc. One should desist from sinful gossips, evil thoughts and sports involving injury or loss of life.

Purposeless evil inactivity due to idleness and evil activity due to negligence;

There are five kinds of Anartha-Danda:

1. Giving advice that will result in sinful activities such as it will cause suffering to animals and birds, or in carrying on their trade. No advice, which stimulates others to pursue harmful activities leading to violence, theft or falsehood, should be given.
2. Giving away or gifting weapons which are likely to be used for causing Himsā, like axe, sword, bow, arrow, spear, shackles, poison, fire, explosives, whip and gun etc. It also includes sale or leasing of such weapons or articles of violence.
3. The Jain thinkers have recognized two types of evil brooding or inauspicious concentration, (Dhyāna) viz., one pertaining to pains (Ārta) and the other pertaining to terribly harmful ideas (Raudra). The latter is included in the purposeless evil activities. It is a constant reflection related to violence, untruthfulness, and theft, protection-of-an-acquisition. It consists in caressing the ideas of overpowering, imprisoning, beating, torturing, mutilating, lying, despoiling, thieving, doing injustice to others, accumulating wealth by sinful means, protecting acquired wealth, brooding over the enjoyments of the forbidden sexual and other worldly

pleasures. To revel in the constant thoughts of one's achievements in the fields of sinful and vicious activities is also a form of evil brooding of this type.

4. Listening to or expounding matters related to various occupations such as learning, trade, sculpture, riches, scriptures etc, which arouse false faith, avarice, anger, hatred and lust. Hearing stories relating to violence, superstition or lust which will arouse false beliefs or throw doubts on one's own right beliefs are all cases falling under this category of Anartha Danda;

Though one has strength, skill and time to work for one's own comforts and to do one's own personal works, yet if one throws the burden of one's own personal works and comforts on others (that is, on one's servants and dependents) and remains idle for oneself, then one is defiled by purposeless evil inactivity due to idleness. Also included is the type of negligence that will cause violence such as keeping food dishes or containers of oil or juice uncovered which may attract bugs or turning on stove without checking for presence of insects or not cleaning soiled dishes promptly.

Though an individual and a society can meet their necessities by production of things involving very little violence, yet if they use those things whose production involves large scale violence, then they do incur the defect of purposeless evil activity due to negligence.

13.3.3 Four Shikshā-Vratas (Disciplinary Restraints)

The regulation of work, food and enjoyment that is the object of the Guna-Vratas to secure would not by itself be sufficient to purify the mind and contribute to the spiritual advancement of the individual. If life were to be meaningful, it must be a constant exercise in righteousness and renunciation. Unless the moral and spiritual excellence of an individual is progressive both in spirit and action, there cannot be advancement in right knowledge and right conduct. While the five Anu-vratas provide a solution for the evils of daily life and endow it with purity in thought and action, the three Guna-vrata teach lessons of restraints in work, food and enjoyment in daily life. The Shikshā-vratas broaden the mind and provide a regular opportunity for growth of scriptural knowledge. The

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practice of the vows is a lesson in spiritual training and experience; it affirms our conviction in the efficacy of right faith and knowledge. It inspires the votary to a life of piety and renunciation, as a preparation for a rigorous life of an ascetic.

09. Sämâyika (Forty Eight Minutes of Meditation and Equanimity)

Na Sämyen Vinä Dhyänam Na Dhyänen Vinä Cha Tat

Nishkampam Jäyate Tasmät, Dvayamanyonyakäranam

--- Yoga-shästra

No meditation without equanimity; No equanimity without meditation;

Both are interdependent; Thereby can be gained stability

This is the first of the disciplinary vows (Shikshä-vrata).

All scriptures have emphasized the observance of this vow as an exercise for securing equanimity of mind and concentration on the contemplation of the nature of the real self. The time taken should be forty-eight consecutive minutes, predetermined, and the vow should be taken to practice it a definite number of times a year.

The observance of this vow endows the practice of the five vows (Anuvratas) with perfection, as the householder is then free from all activities, occupational or physical.

The practice of the vow, with a mind purged from love and hatred towards all beings and with complete equanimity by contemplating on the true principles, leads to self-realization: Attainment of equanimity by practice of the vow will result in abstinence from sinful activities. Sämâyika, if practiced regularly, brings about equanimity of mind and mental concentration on the soul.

The term Sämâyika is made up of the words Sama meaning equanimity and Äya meaning incoming. The termination Ika has been applied to show that what brings forth equanimity is Sämâyika. Alternately, the term can be derived from Samay, which means soul. As such, the activity that deals with soul is Sämâyika. Bhagawati Sutra defines Sämâyika as dwelling in equanimous Self. This is given from the absolute point of view. From the practical point of view, Ächärya Hemchandra defines it as giving up all the worldly involvement and

staying in equanimity for 48 minutes. As such, equanimity, soul orientation, peace of mind etc. can be considered synonyms of Sāmāyika. Samay is the process of becoming one with own-self, Ātmā, the process of giving up material activities of body, mind and speech for the duration. Sāmāyika is a positive way of submerging the activities of one's body, mind and speech in the spiritual harmony. Sama is the state of freedom from attachment and aversion (Rāga- Dvesha); therefore, Sāmāyika is the practice for accomplishing the state of freedom from attachment and aversion. Sāmāyika should be performed with a cheerful heart in an undisturbed solitude, in forests, temples or houses. Sāmāyika is helpful in the observance of the five vows, and should be practiced daily with a resolute mind and casting off laziness.

During the period of practice of the Sāmāyika, all kinds of attachment and undertaking are absent; and therefore the householder, then, assumes the state of asceticism and, looks like an ascetic. Those who intend to perfect themselves in the Sāmāyika vow should calmly bear the hardships of cold, heat, mosquito bite, insect stings, and other troubles, maintaining perfect silence and control over the activities of body, mind and speech. One should also meditate upon the transitory nature of the world, the true nature of the self and liberation.

The purpose of Sāmāyika is the cultivation of equal goodwill (sympathy), equality and evenness, and tranquility.

- Equal goodwill (sympathy) (a) towards all religions (b) towards all races and castes (c) towards a man and a woman
- Equality and evenness (a) to regard all living beings equal with one's one self (b) to maintain evenness (equanimity) of mind on all occasions, favorable and adverse
- Tranquility to suppress and weaken passions.

10. Desāvākāsika (Stricter Geographical Restrictions)

From the nature of this vow, it is another aspect of Digvrata. This vow requires an individual to determine and limit his movements to a house, to a part of it, to a village or a town. The period for the observance of this vow may vary from a day to a few days, month, a few months or a

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year. The basic idea underlying both the Digvrata and the Desāvākāsika Vrata is that if a man reduces his freedom of movement to a restricted area, small or large, his absence from all the area not comprised within the self-imposed limits, will mean that he can be said to be keeping the Mahā Vratas, the rigid vows of an ascetic, in that wider area. At the same time, constant awareness of these spatial limits will result in added vigilance in the observation of the Anu-vratas within them.

Five ways of Transgressions (Atichār) of the Vow:

- Sending for someone who is from beyond the fixed limit,
- Sending someone beyond the limit,
- Drawing attention through coughing or such other gestures,
- Revealing thoughts by signals or peeping out
- Revealing one's presence by throwing stones etc.

11. Posadhovāvāsa Vrata (Practicing the Life of a Monk)

The eleventh vow is the same as the ninth Vrata (Sāmāyika), but continued for twelve or twenty-four hours and accompanied by some fasting. By fasting, we remove impurities. If the vow is taken, it must be practiced at least once a year.

The term is derived from the Sanskrit verb 'Push' which means to nourish or to support. What nourishes the spiritual aspect is therefore Paushadha, which is popularly known as Posaha. It is observed by refraining from the activities that are not conducive to the spiritual life. Observance of this restraint is also supposed to be accompanied by staying close to the true nature of the soul. Such staying is the 'Upavās' in the real sense of the term. This restraint is therefore also known as Paushadhovās, which is a compound word made of Paushadha and Upavās. For convenience sake, however, we shall use the term Paushadha for the present discussion.

The Prakṛt term Posaha (Paushadha, Posadha and Prosadha etc.) means the Parva, the 8th and the 14th day of the lunar fortnight (15th day according to Sthānakavāsi) and Posadhovāvāsa means fasting on the

Parva day. The place for observance of the fast could be one's home, forest, temple, monastery or the Prosadha Shälä (hall for the Prosadha). One should pass the day immersed in righteous contemplation, study of scriptural works (Swädhyäy), and engage in the adoration of the Jin etc. Basically, he spends a day as if he is a Sädhu and spiritually observes a 12 or 24-hour Sämäyika. That way, he frees himself from all harmful activities and, observes the equanimity and the vow of Ahinsä thoroughly. The intention is to get training so as to adopt that type of life whenever possible.

Four aspects to be observed in the Posadha, (which could be partial or complete)

- In respect of food,
- In respect of bodily care,
- In respect of celibacy
- In respect of worldly occupations or activities.

12. Atithi Samvibhäg Vrata (Share and Care Discipline)

Annädinäm Shuddhänäm Kalpaniyänäm Deshakälayutam

Dänam Yatibhyah Uchitam Grihinäm Shikshävritam Bhanitam

--- Samansuttam

Offering acceptable pure foods etc. to the monks

at the appropriate time and place is called the disciplinary restraint for the householders

This vow, which is also known as Atithi-Samvibhäg Vrata consists in offering alms; it also includes service as is necessary to remove obstacles in his path (monk') of penance and renunciation. It is also known as Vaiyävruttya Or (Yathä Samvibhäg).

The vow is to be practiced as a matter of religious duty (Dharma).

Atithi normally means guest. The Sanskrit definition of the term states that

Na Vidyate Tithih Yasya Sah Atithi.

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It means that one whose arrival is not fixed is called Atithi. Samvibhäg means sharing. Therefore, Atithi Samvibhäg literally means sharing with some one who does not have prior appointment. Thus, guests arriving as per planned schedule do not strictly fall within the purview of this discipline. However, the monks and nuns, who arrive for alms without prior invitation, are real Atithi. Similarly, the poor, destitute and other afflicted persons, who come for help at any time without appointment, are covered within the purview of this discipline.

In our tradition, the concept of Vaiyāvruttya, also known as Veyāvachcham, is closely associated with this discipline. By Vaiyāvruttya, we generally mean rendering service to the monks and nuns. Such servicing is usually extended also to the persons (householders) observing austerities. The concept of Vaiyāvruttya is however not confined to such cases. It extends to caring for every one who needs to be cared for. Such care should be purely compassionate and should be extended, irrespective of the age, sex, caste, color or creed of the recipients. This discipline can therefore be more accurately translated as sharing with and caring for all, who are in need of help. It is worthwhile to note that service to Sādhu should be carried out with devotion and respect while service to needy with compassion.

The vow includes giving to those only who are worthy of receiving Dāna (charity) and are in true need of it. It includes giving food, water and other things, necessary for existence, to Sādhus and Sādhvis, Shrāvaks and Shrāvikās and to others according to one's ability and means with a feeling of selflessness and with love and respect.

Though generally known as Dāna, this vow is also designated as Atithi-Samvibhäg (sharing with the Atithi). Here the word Atithi carries a special Jain meaning, the ascetic or Sādhu.

So sharing amounts to parting with something of our own. Such parting or giving away is charity or donation and is known as Dāna. All the religions extol the virtue of such Dāna, but Jainism lays special emphasis on Dāna by giving it the first place among the four foremost virtues of the householders [Dāna (charity), Sheel (conduct), Tapa (austerity), Bhāva (thought)]. It is also considered highly rewarding in the present and subsequent lives.

Dāna is one of the householder's six duties to be carried out daily (They are: Dāna (charity), Pujā (adoration), Swādhyāy (self study), Sanyam (practice of minor vows), Gurupāsti (adoration to Gurus) and Tapa (fasting or some austerity).

Atithi-Samvibhāg Vrata is divided into five aspects:

30. The recipient
31. The donor
32. The object to be given
33. The manner of giving
34. The fruit of giving.

The recipients are of three kinds:

35. The best recipient, the Jain ascetic equipped with all vows and self-restraint
36. The mediocre recipient, the Jain Shrāvaka who has right faith and has taken minor vows
37. The least satisfactory recipient, the one on the Shrāvaka's path and has acquired the right faith.

It should be extended to the young and old, the blind, the dumb, the deaf and also the diseased and wanderers from other lands, treating it as Karunā Dāna-- the compassionate giving.

There are seven qualities of a donor. A donor should have faith, devotion, contentment, energy and zeal, capacity for discrimination, lack of greed or self-interest and forbearance.

The Dāna is of four types:

Āhār-Dāna	Gift of food, water
Aushadhi-Dāna	Gift of medicines and helping sick
Abhay-Dāna	Extending fearlessness, Gift of shelter to living beings who are at risk of their life, providing protection from danger, attack, intimidation, or threat
Vidhyā (Jnān)-Dāna	Gift of books, imparting of knowledge, and helping educational institutions

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Out of all these, Abhay-Dāna (extending fearlessness) is the best Dāna. One should also include the practice of the Chaturvidha Dāna - donation for four-fold Jain organization (Sangha); this type of Dāna has played a significant role in the history of Jainism. This vow holds a significant position in the Jain tradition and in the Jain social organization (the Jain Sangha). Giving Dāna is a good Karma (Punya) for the giver and helps ascetics or Sādhus to lead their religious life, and protect, interpret and transmit the religion.

Regarding the fruits of Dāna: giving alms with devotion to ascetics washes away the Karma bound due to the activities of household life, just as water washes away dirt. Dāna overcomes the greed, which is a form of Hinsā or violence.

One should also donate for Jin-images, Jin temples and Jain scriptures in addition to Sādhus, Sādhvis, Shrāvaks, and Shrāvikās.

13.4 SALLEKHANĀ-VRATA

Sallekhanā-vrata is an end of life while in ultra-pure meditation.

It is a well-ordered voluntarily chosen death which is not inspired by any passion and is the result of conscientious gradual withdrawal from the taking of food in such a manner as would never disrupt one's inner peace and dispassionate mindfulness. So there is a fundamental difference between suicide and Sallekhanā. Suicide is the result of the outburst of passions, whereas Sallekhanā is the result of dispassionateness. It is recommended only when the body is completely disabled by extreme old age or by incurable diseases and the person becomes conscious of the impending unavoidable death and of the necessity of concentrating on the pure qualities of the soul. For the aspirant, there is no dissatisfaction, no sorrow, no fear, no dejection, no sinfulness; the mind is cool, calm, composed; the heart is filled with the feeling of universal love and compassion. It is also called the death with equanimity.

Sallekhanā means emaciation of passions and body leading to emancipation. Sanllekhanā is of two-folds:

Kashāya-Sanllekhanā – Emaciation of passions to be accomplished by internal austerities (Tapa) like subduing anger by forgiveness etc.

Sharira - Sanllekhanä – Emaciation of body to be accomplished by external austerities (Tapa) like fasting etc.

- It involves giving up enmity, and attachment to possessions etc., and with pure mind, forgiving one's kinsmen and others, and asking for forgiveness.
- Casting aside grief, fear, anguish, wickedness etc., with all sincerity and zeal, one should allay the innermost passions by scriptural words.
- Reflecting on the sins committed in the three ways, one should adopt the Mahä-vrata for rest of the life.
- One should slowly give up, first solid food, then liquid, then water and, in the end observe the total fast with all determination, and fixing the mind on Namokär Mantra. Thus, he peacefully and blissfully abandons the body.

Five Transgressions (Atichär) of this vow:

- Desire to prolong life (for fame of having endured a long Sanllekhanä)
- Desire to die soon (if it is painful)
- Wishing for pleasures of this world as a reward in the next life
- Wishing to be born as a Heavenly Being (in Devaloka) as a reward.
- Desire for sensory pleasures in the next life

These twelve special vows and Sanllekhanä are for helping to change ourselves from what we actually are; ignorant, mistaken, weak, and injurious beings to what we potentially are capable of developing spiritual qualities like the Omniscients, who have developed their spiritual qualities to perfection. The rules are based upon a certain foundation of character already developed - kindness of heart, self-

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control, desire for right knowledge and relish of truth, the internal attitude accompanying the external, and visible practice of the rules. These rules bring out further knowledge, increased strength of character, greater peace of mind, sympathy and kindness, and lead to higher levels on the way towards an everlasting, blissful omniscience in a state of life which is natural to the real pure self and which is open to all who wish to attain it.

It will be seen that the Jain ethics are founded on the principle of Ahinsä and love for all living beings. While a layman ought to have a rational faith in Jainism, his daily conduct must exhibit the true ideals of non-violence and truth. In his dealings, he must be upright to the core and practice charity not only by giving but also by cultivation of non-attachment towards worldly possessions. He must be constantly aware of his duties towards himself and to the society. His life as a layman should pave the way to the ultimate goal of self-realization. Possession of right faith and knowledge should not be a matter of mere theory but should be constantly reflected in daily conduct.

13.5 SAMKHYA YOGA ETHICS

The chief sources of information in regard to the Sankhya-yoga school are:

- I. The Sankhya-karika of Isvarakrsna (A.D. 200) and the Sankhya-tattva-kaumudi of Vacaspatimisra (A.D. 841) on it; and, the Sankhya- pravacana-bhasya of Vijnanabhiksu (A.D. 1600) on the Sankhya-sutra of Kapila.
- II. The Yoga-sutra of Patanjali (200 B.C.) and the bhasya of Vyasa (A.D.500) on it; the commentary, Vivarana attributed to Sankara, the Tattva-vaisharadi of Vacaspatimisra (A.D.841), the Yoga-varttika of Vijnanabhiksu (A.D.1600) and the Bhasvati of Haiharanandaranya on the Vyasa-bhasya; the Vrtti of Bhavaganesa and of Nagesa (A.D.1670-1750); Rajamartanda or Bhoja-vrtti by Bhojadeva (A.D.1000); the Yogasara-sangraha of

Vijnanabhiksu; the Yoga-mani-prabha of Ramananda (A.D. 600); the Yoga-sudhakara of Sadasivabrahmendra (A.D.1700); and, the Yoga-siddhantacandrika of Narayanatirtha (A.D. 1800).

THE SANKHYA-YOGA METHOD OF ATTAINING THE HIGHEST VALUE

Like the other Indian philosophical schools the Sankhya-Yoga school considers the existence of suffering a great moral evil. Complete freedom from it may be had when one attains liberation. Again, like the others, excepting the Carvakas, the Sankhya-Yoga ethicists hold that attachment to worldly things, worldliness, is the cause of suffering, or bondage. Bondage means having been caught up by the chain of birth-death-rebirth. As long as one is chained, he is found to have some suffering. The way to attain freedom from it is to get rid of attachment to worldly things which can be done by controlling one's mental operations, or mind. This could be achieved by the practice of the eightfold discipline as claimed by Patanjali, the founder of Yoga school, in his Yoga-sutra. And the Yoga discipline is, in one form or other, accepted in nearly all the systems as an indispensable means of attaining mind-control.

Patanjali lays down the discipline familiarly known as Yoga, against the backdrop of the metaphysics of the Sankhya which he adopts with slight variations. That is why the Yoga school is regarded as its sister system. We shall give a brief account of the Sankhya Yoga school first by highlighting such features that will help us in identifying its ethics.

The Sankhya system is plainly dualistic. It admits two ultimates, purusa and prakrti. Prakrti, is consciousness by nature, a mere on-looker, and supra-relational. It is manifold. Prakrti, on the other hand, is insentient, ever active, and the ultimate source of the universe. It is one only, and is totally independent of purusa. It is constituted of three gunas, viz. sattva, rajas, and tamas. These three are not to be viewed as its qualities; they are its component parts. Each of the three gunas represents a distinct aspect of reality. Sattva signifies whatever is pure; rajas, whatever is active; and tamas, what is dull and offers resistance. They are described as being of the nature, respectively, of pleasure (sukha), pain (duhkha), and bewilderment (moha), as they give rise to such feelings.

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The three gunas, are in a state of perfect equilibrium prior to the evolution of the world. At the beginning of a period of evolution, the equilibrium of the gunas is disturbed by the proximity of puma according to the Sankhya. The gunas come to be related to each other through the primary-subsidiary relation, and the creation of the world whereby the manifestation of what is latent into gross form proceeds. The first thing to emerge from prakrti is the mahat-tattva or buddhi which, in turn, gives rise to ahamkara or the ego-sense. From the sattva phase of ahamkara come out the five senses of knowledge, the five senses of action, and the mind (manas). From the tamas phase of it spring forth the five subtle elements; and, the five gross elements come into existence from the latter. According to the Yoga school, the five subtle elements are derived from the tamas phase of the mahat-tattva itself.

Of these, buddhi, ahamkara, manas, the senses of knowledge and of action, and the five subtle elements constitute what is known as the subtle body (sukhma-sarira or linga sarira). It is specific to each purusa and is its empirical home till liberation is achieved. The purusa which is mere sentience and is immutable becomes the experiment of the objects of the world by being reflected in the buddhi and its modes which arise because of the contact of the sense organs with their respective objects. Consequently, it falsely identifies itself with the subtle body and the gross body and attains the state of the jiva or the empirical soul. In other words, the purusa which is the transcendent subject becomes the enworlded subject. The cause of such identification is avidya or ajnana. The sattva phase of the buddhi consists of the characteristics, viz. merit (dharma), discriminative knowledge between the purusa and the prakrti and its evolutes (jnana), detachment from worldly objects (viraga), and lordly powers (aisvarya). The tamas phase of it is characterized by the qualities, viz. demerit (adharma), non-discrimination between the purusa and the buddhi (ajnana), desire for worldly objects (avairagya), and absence of lordly powers (anaisvarya). It may be noted here that the rajas phase of the buddhi has the qualities of desire (iccha.), hatred (dvesa), and volition (prayatna). The purusa, owing to its confusion with the buddhi, superimposes the characteristics of the latter upon it.

Avidya, Patanjali states, consists in viewing what is transitory to be permanent, impure to be pure, painful to be bliss, and the not-self to be the self. It is the root-cause of afflictions, viz. asmita, raga, dvesa and abhiniveia. It is, therefore characterized as tamas. Asmita is false cognition of identity between the purusa and the buddhi. It is known as moha. When there is recollection subsequent to the experience of happiness, there arises an intense longing for happiness of the same kind and for the means thereof. It is this longing for happiness which is the mode of the buddhi that is known as raga. It is also termed maha-moha. When there is recollection of misery experienced earlier, there arises the feeling of rage in respect of misery of the same kind and of its means. This too is the mode of the buddhi, and it is known as dvesa or tamisra. Abhinivesa is fear that obsesses the mind and keeps one anxious and worried concerning one's lifespan. It is characterized as andhatamisra. Madhusudana cites the following text from the Visnu purana in this connection:

tamo mohah mahamomah tamisro hi andhasamjitah avidya pancaparva
esa pradurbhuta mahatmanah.

He adds that asmita, etc. are specific forms of erroneous cognitions. These five, viz., avidya, asmita, raga, dvesa, and abhinivesa are termed klesas on the ground that they actuate the jiva to perform kama by manifesting the congenital tendencies present in the buddhi.

Karma is three-fold as morally pure (Sukla), morally evil (krsna), and morally pure and evil at once (Sukla-krsna). Of these, the morally pure karma consists in the study of scriptures and meditation upon one's chosen deity. This is pursued with a desire to attain something good either here or hereafter when the sattva-guna of the buddhi is predominant and the two other gunas remain subordinate to it. This kind of karma produces merit (punya). The morally evil karmas are those which are committed out of greed, or rage, or delusion when the rajo-guna is active. They give rise to demerit (papa). The morally pure and impure karmas are the sacrificial acts. They are pure insofar as they are taught in the Veda, and they are impure as they involve injury to animals. They give rise to both merit and demerit, and the fruit that ensues from them is not unalloyed happiness. It is clear from this that the followers of

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the Sankhya-Yoga recognize a sharp difference between morality and ritual. The ritual-act, according to them, is morally evil by nature.

Under the influence of greed, aversion, and delusion which are the effects of rajoguna, some may directly commit the unrighteous acts, some again may actively prompt others to carry them out, while some may approve of such acts perpetrated by others. Each one of these, according to Patanjali, is morally evil and would yield demerit.

The direct results of actions-righteous and unrighteous, are merits and demerits. They also establish in us a disposition (vasana or samskara) to repeat the same deeds in future. Further, the experience of the fruits of merits and demerits, viz. pleasure and pain, leave behind them a tendency to pursue actions to attain a similar kind of pleasure and to desist from actions to avoid a similar kind of pain. All these, viz. merits and demerits and also vasanas, are stored up in the buddhi, tattva. The jiva carries them along with it in all its transmigrations. It has no control over the direct fruits of its past merits and demerits, namely, birth characterized by age, lifespan, and experience of pleasure and pain. These are unalterably fixed and cannot be changed on any account. The vasanas that are appropriate to the particular birth which the jiva attains by its past merits and demerits will be manifested. If they are ignoble, they can be counteracted by cultivating the will to turn away the buddhi-tattva from their influence. The Apastamba-dharma sutra, And the Yoga-sutra speak of the need and possibility of cultivating the will to turn the buddhi-tattva toward righteous thoughts when it is troubled with sinful ones.

It follows from the above that the jiva falsely identifies itself with the psycho-physical organism, performs deeds-righteous and unrighteous- and experiences their fruits by undergoing an unending cycle of births and deaths. This process of cyclic existence involves suffering caused by the disorders of the body or mental unrest (adhyatmika), by men, beasts, and birds (adhibhautika), and by the influence of planets and the elemental agencies (adhidaivika), and it is dismaying and oppressive. The jiva can hope to find permanent freedom from this suffering only by completely getting rid of avidya, i.e. by attaining non-discrimination (aviveka) between the purusa and prakrti and its evolutes which has

resulted in the confounding of the two. The extinction of avidya is possible only through the direct knowledge that the purusa is absolutely distinct from prakrti and its evolutes (viveha-khyati).

The Sankhya is silent regarding the method of attaining the direct knowledge that results in liberation. The Yoga, on the other hand, is mainly concerned with its elaboration. In the scheme of practical discipline, Patanjali assigns an important place to God. God is a unique kind of purusa. He is free from afflictions, merits or demerits, and also from latent impressions in the three divisions of time. He is endowed with the power conducive to knowledge and action, and also with supreme lordship. His buddhi tattva is of pure sattva-guna and so it is characterized by omniscience. And, God is, therefore, omniscient. In his infinite mercy, Patanjali says, he bestows the direct knowledge which results in release to those aspirants who are worthy of receiving it. We shall deal with this point in some detail in the sequel.

The means of achieving direct knowledge of the purusa as distinct from prakrti and its evolutes lies in the subjugation of the modes of the rajo-guna and the tamo-guna of the buddhi-tattva and of the sattva-guna later on. This is what is described as citta-vrtti nirodha. To realize this, the technique prescribed by Patanjali is as much intellectual as it is moral. The discipline is well-known as yoga. It is eight-fold as yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, and Samadhi. Of these, the first two, viz. yama and niyama comprehend moral training, while the next three, viz. asana, pranayama, and pratyahara, yogic training, the chief aim of which is to restrain the mind from the physical side. The last three, viz., dharana, dhyana, and samadhi are the different forms of concentration directly aiming at controlling the mind. Of the eight-fold means, yama consists of ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacarya, and aparigraha. We shall explain each one of these also in some detail.

13.6 YAMAS

1. Ahimsa consists in not inflicting injury by mind, or by speech, or by body on any being. This implies absence of malevolence or disposition to do or to inflict evil in any manner at any point of time (sarvatha sarvada

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sarva-bhutanam anabhidrah). This is the highest virtue, the mother of all virtues. In order that it may become firmly rooted, the other factors of yama and niyama are to be practised.

2. Satya or truthfulness consists in stating a fact as it is, for the good of others, which may be known through perception, or inference, or verbal testimony. This lays stress on honesty and a complete absence of the intent to deceive others. One should not utter any statement out of ignorance or misconception of the truth. There should not be any lack of explicitness, and equivocal statements or expressions must be scrupulously avoided; for equivocation is halfway to lying. But, one should not utter statements which would be harmful to others, even though they are in accordance with factual reality. The utterance of such statements is reckoned as a form of unrighteousness, as it would cause suffering to others. It follows from this that the virtue of truthfulness must be cultivated in such a way that it would not be harmful to other by causing mental or bodily pain.

3. Asteya is abstention from stealing other's wealth either by force or without their knowledge. This implies absence of longing for something that rightfully belongs to another person. Vijnanbhiksu however, is of the view that the very idea of ownership is rooted in error (mithyajnana) and so asteya means complete indifference to material possessions.

4. Brahmacharya or continence stresses self-restraint in sexual indulgence. This implies absolute obedience to moral laws pertaining to sex relations between men and women.

5. Aparigraha is deliberate avoidance of material possessions more than what is required for the bare sustenance of one's life. This results from the discernment that such possessions cannot be had without harm to others. This implies a high degree of unselfishness.

From this it follows that the four virtues, viz., satya, asteya, brahmacharya and aparigraha must be rooted in ahimsa and their cultivation enables it to attain the peak of perfection so that it may be practised without reference to time, place, and circumstance.

The virtues that comprise yama are mostly negative.

13.7 NIYAMAS

Niyama, on the other hand, signifies the cultivation of positive virtues. It comprises sauca, santosa, tapas, svadhyaya and isvara-pranidhana. Sauca is cleanliness, both external and internal, the external one consisting in purifying the body, and the internal one consisting in the mind being free from jealousy, etc. Santosa is contentment. It implies the feeling of satisfaction to the point where one is not disquieted or disturbed by a desire for what he does not have, even though his every wish is not fully gratified. Tapas is fortitude, i.e. strength and firmness of mind to endure opposites like pain and pleasure, heat and cold. Svadhyaya is study of scriptural texts and meditation upon God, the significance of the mystical syllable (pranava). Isvara-pranidhana consists in dedicating every activity to Isvara. These five, thus, are the factors comprised by niyama.

Of the eightfold means, the first two, viz. yama and niyama constitute what may be called ascetic morality. It is the prerequisite to the pursuit of yogic training comprising the six means of asana, etc. At this stage Patanjali prescribes, according to the author of the Yoga-siddhanta-candrika, carya-yoga as the means of removing the impurities of the mind. For, the aspirant whose mind is associated with asitya and other similar ignoble features of the rajoguna cannot engage in yogic training. The carya-yoga consists in the cultivation of the feeling of friendliness (maitri) towards those who are fortunate and happy; of tenderness and understanding as well as an urgent desire to help even one's enemy when he is in distress; of happiness in respect of those who perform meritorious deeds; and, of impassiveness with reference to those who do forbidden actions. The cultivation of these virtues helps one to overcome the feeling of envy towards those who are fortunate and happy; of malicious pleasure in seeing others suffer; of jealousy in regard to those who perform meritorious deeds; and of anger or wrath with reference to those who are sinful. The mind, being thus cleansed of lower impulses, will not swerve from the object on which it is concentrated.

Further a clear recognition of the defects (dosa-darsana) of pleasure derived from indulging in sensual objects is essential for pursuing yogic training. Patanjali states that for a person of discerning intellect every

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form of sensual pleasure is mixed with pain or sorrow. He explains this as follows:

Firstly, all experience of pleasure, without exception, is based on attachment for the object of enjoyment. If the desired object is not attained, grief inevitably results. Even when the object is attained, if the experience of happiness is somehow checked, then also there ensues sorrow.

Secondly, at the time of the experience of pleasure there is the fear that the object that provides pleasure may be lost through some means. There then arises hatred towards that means. All this leads to depression and disappointment associated with discomfort and grief.

Thirdly, pleasure, when it ceases, leaves its residual impression. The latter when revived gives rise to recollection of the pleasure that has been experienced already; and, through this there arises attachment toward the object that would give forth similar kind of pleasure. To attain the desired object, one may adopt righteous means or unrighteous ones. There is thus accumulation of merits and demerits which, in due course, would lead to fresh birth.

Fourthly, pleasure by nature is of the form of misery. This is because it is the transformation of the sattva-guna of the mind associated with the rajo-guna which is of the nature of misery. But, at the time of the experience of pleasure, the rajo-guna is subdued by the sattva-guna and so its being of the nature of misery is not manifest. The point that is of relevance here is that every form of pleasure is associated with a trace of misery, and therefore the seeker after liberation must develop a sense of commendable aloofness (vairagya) from it.

Vairagya is four-fold as yatamana, vyatireka, ekendriya, and vasikara. Of these, the first one consists in the cultivation of virtues like friendliness, etc., and in overcoming attachment, hatred, jealousy and other similar ignoble features of the mind. The second one lies in ascertaining the distinction between the impurities which are already subjugated and the others that are still existent, and in making a conscious effort to overcome the latter. The third one represents the state of the mind wherein exist desire, etc. whose grossness is eliminated by the cultivation of moral virtues, and which are, therefore, inefficacious to direct sense

organs towards their respective objects. The last one is absence of desire for securing pleasure either here or in the afterlife. It is detachment from all kinds of pleasure, either visible or known through the Veda; and, it is the result of a conviction attained from experience that their pursuit brings no final satisfaction and ends in misery. These forms of detachment are only provisional (aparavairagya) and they gradually lead to the higher form of it (para-vairagya) which has as a necessary condition the attainment of direct knowledge of the purusa as distinct from prakrti.

The aspirant by possessing moral virtues set forth above could embark upon yogic training which may be divided into two stages-the first comprising asana, pranayama, and pratyahara, and the second, dharana, dhyana, and Samadhi.

13.8 REST OF FIVE PATH ON ADVANCEMENT OF LIBERATION

1. Asana is posture which consists in disposition of hands and feet conducive to steadiness and ease for the body.
2. Pranayama means control of breath. It is three-fold as recaka, puraka and kumbhaka. Recaka is exhalation of abdominal air outward; and, puraka is inhalation of external air inside. Retention of breath outside the body after exhalation is known as bhasya, kumbhaka and inside the body after inhalation, antara-kumbhaka. There is the third type of kumbhaka which is retention of breath not preceded by either exhalation or inhalation. Pratyahara stands for withdrawal of the senses from their respective objects. The pursuit of pratyahara enables one to attain supreme control over the senses. One thereby becomes fit to pursue dharana, dhyana and samadhi.
3. Dharara is concentrating the mind upon an object in a particular locus such as the heart.
4. Dhyana consists in an even flow of mental states with reference to the object of dharana itself. But this flow would be intervened by contrary mental states.
5. Samadhi is the advanced stage of dhyana wherein there is continuous flow of mental states relating to the object of dharana and dhyana not

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intervened by any contrary mental state. It is two-fold, conscious and super-conscious, samprajnata and a-samprajnata.

Intellect has five stages, viz. restless (ksipta), stupified (mudha), distracted (viksipta), one-pointed (ekagra) and niruddha (restrained). Among them, the ksipta is that in which the intellect, through the mind, becomes absorbed in objects owing to the predominance of the rajo-guna; the mudha is that which is overpowered by drowsiness, laziness, etc. owing to the preponderance of the tamo-guna; viksipta is that which, although engrossed in objects, becomes occasionally engaged in dhyana. In the cases of the intellect which is ksipta or mudha there is no possibility of the attainment of samadhi or concentration. The samadhi that may come to the intellect that is viksipta is not useful to attain the direct knowledge of the distinction between the purusa and the prakrti as it occurs only occasionally. It would cease to exist like a lamp that is extinguished by a strong wind. Intellect is said to be one-pointed (ekagra) when it is capable of maintaining an incessant flow of its modifications with regard to an object owing to the preponderance of the sattva-guna. This is known as the state of samprajnata-samadhi. Herein, exists the act of dhyana relating to the object that is meditated upon. Patanjali defines this state as: *tadeva arthamatranirbhasam svaritpasunyam iva samadhih*. In the state known as samprajnata samadhi the object alone that is meditated upon is manifested. Intellect continues to exist although it is wholly absorbed in the contemplation of the object.

The aspirant who has undergone the first five limbs of yoga, viz., yama, niyama, asana, Pranayama and pratyahara and whose intellect has become one-pointed would fix his mind upon the gross objects first and then upon the subtle objects beginning with tanmatras and ending with the prakrti. The modification of the intellect into the form of samprajnata-samadhi is only the subjugation of the intellect in the form of objects and the manifestation of one-pointedness. The yogin who meditates upon the distinction between the purusa and the prakrti along with its evolutes at this stage acquires absolute control over every object and also the knowledge of all the modifications, past, present and future. This power is known as visoka, i.e. one which is devoid of sorrow. The yogin attains supreme detachment towards the evolutes of prakrti. It

subjugates the latent impression of the state of samprajnata-samadhi too and leaves as residue its latent impressions. This state is known as seedless samadhi. It is also referred to as dharma megha. It must be noted here that supreme detachment results from the discriminating knowledge between the purusa and prakrti along with its evolutes. The latter has arisen from the practice of samprajnata-samadhi. Supreme detachment subjugates earlier latent impressions and leaves its own impressions. Hence in the state of a-samprajnata-samadhi, the intellect remains with latent impressions only and it does not undergo any modification. The latent impressions also get themselves eliminated as the intellect fully gets merged in the prakrti leaving the purusa by itself and all alone. And, this is liberation.

2 . Check your Progress

- 2. Eight fold path as described by Yoga

13.9 LET'SSUM UP

Lets sum up: Jainism and Sankhya-Yoga, like the other schools of Indian thought emphasizes that man must first rise above the life of sensual impulse and act as a fully moral being before he can embark upon the path to liberation. This means that liberation can be attained only by a morally elevated person, and thus implies that leading a moral life is a necessary condition for attaining liberation.

13.10 KEY WORDS

Notes

Samyag Darsana: Right faith or Perception creates an awareness of reality or truth,

Samyag Jnana: Right Knowledge impels the person to Right action, and

Samyag Charitra : Right Conduct leads him to the attainment of liberation.

13.11 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Explain the 12 vows of Jainism
2. Write in detail the 8 fold path of Yoga

13.12 SUGGESTED READING

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13.13 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer to Check your Progress

- Samyag Darshan (Right Faith or Perception),
- SamyagJnän (Right Knowledge)
- Samyag Chäritra (Right Conduct) together constitute the path to liberation.
- These three basic components are called RatnaTrayi, or the three jewels, in Jain works.

2. Answer to Check your Progress

- yama,
- niyama,
- asana,
- pranayama,
- pratyahara,
- dharana,
- dhyana,
- Samadhi.

UNIT 14 BUDDHIST ETHICS

STRUCTURE

- 14.0 Objectives
- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 Dukkha
- 14.3 Social Misery
- 14.4 Psychological Suffering
- 14.5 Brahma Vihara Bhavana
 - 14.5.1 Metta (Loving - kindness).
 - 14.5.2 Karuna (Compassion).
 - 14.5.3 Mudita (Empathetic joy).
 - 14.5.4 Upekkha (Equanimity).
- 14.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 14.7 Keywords
- 14.8 Questions for review
- 14.9 Suggested Readings
- 14.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

14.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Learn about the basic features of Buddhist Morality
- know the philosophical understanding Dhammpada

14.1 INTRODUCTION

The Buddhists begin their inquiry with dukkha or misery. It may borne in mind that it is not 'my' misery but the human misery with which they are concerned. Sankhya also talks of misery. It is not material to me which is the earlier doctrine. But I must point out that they are two different doctrines. Buddhism talks of dukkha in terms of relation

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between one man and another. The gatha in the Dhammapada (Dhp.) clearly indicates this:

Nahi verena verani sanmantaha kudamcama |
Averena ca sammanti esa dhammo sanantano ||

Sankhya talks of Duhkhatraya - Duhkhatrayabhighatah jijnasa tadabhighatake hetau.

The vaira or enmity cannot exist between a man and an animal. It clearly shows a relationship between man and man. Buddhism also talks of Karma which is evidently different from individual duhkha but is nevertheless a kind of duhkha. It is definitely a state of mind which has sadness as an element. It mentions Ahimsa in the Pancasila but there it does not necessarily indicate an attitude between man and animal.

Lord Buddha also talks of Sukha. He says:

Upasanto sukham seti hitva jayaparajayam Dhp. 201
Susukham bata jivama yesam no natthi kimcanam Ibid, 200

We who have nothing, how happily do we live! Thus he not only talks of duhkha but also talks of sukha. It is from this point of view that 'Dvadasa Nidana' has to be looked at.

14.2 DUKKHA

Let us see how Buddha formulated the problem of dukkha and built up his theory of Dvadasa Nidana. The word duhkha is ambiguously used. As pointed out above it may mean pain or it may mean misery. In the story of Gautama Buddha, when he went from his palace to the court, he came across an old man, a man suffering with disease and a dead body. Perhaps, some of these duhkhas can be classified under pain and are individual duhkhas. But when one begins to talk of misery one also transcends the individuality of duhkhas and considers them in social context. For whether conscious or unconscious, misery presupposes a certain communication amongst men. It also presupposes self-consciousness and awareness of man's suffering. This misery, again may be of two types. Suppose A is prosperous and B is jealous of A's prosperity. Here is a situation where we will find that B's misery is due to A's prosperity and B's knowledge of A's prosperity. What our seers have enumerated under the category 'Sadripu'-Kama, krodha, moha, lobha,

mada, matsara-these duhkhas (or the generator of the duhkhas) can be classified under the first. But all these duhkhas will, of course, be social. This is also the case when we want something but do not get it.

There will be another category of dukkhas also. A is in misery and B notices this misery. Suppose A is starving and B is unhappy on that account; B's unhappiness is due to sympathy for A. B's misery is of a different kind, different order. It is dependent upon and generated from A's misery. Such misery is called karuna. Karuna is a cousin of misery. There is inbuilt sadness in it. There is indeed a difference between karuna and misery that arises through kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsara etc. Karuna has strength to reduce misery, to remove the misery of others. Karuna also presupposes certain order of self-consciousness. But this order of self-consciousness is far higher than, and different from the self-consciousness which is required when man is under the spell of kama, "krodha, lobha or even fear. Unlike karuna the misery arising out of jealousy etc., increases misery. But both these require a social context and it can be seen from the context of sermons and parables that Buddha definitely had social misery in his mind. Buddha's problem of duhkha, therefore, is of a different kind from the one about which one talks in Sankhya Philosophy. Sankhya says, Duhkhatrayabhighatat jijnasa tadabhighatake hetau. What are these Dukhatrayas? They are adhibhautika, adhidaivika and adhyatmika. In a sense, they also have a social context. For man is a social being. But the social context of these miseries does not seem to have been taken notice of, by the Sankhya system. That is why Sankhya talks of Kaivalya or loneliness. It is individualistic and having no social significance. Buddha does not talk of such purely individualistic duhkhas. Of course, in a way all our social duhkhas are adhyatmika duhkhas, they are concerned with our awareness and have a reference outside the concerned individual. But sometimes adhyatmika duhkhas seem to be projected outside this world. The duhkhas about which Buddha talks are concerned with this world, concerned with society. This is clear from the Dhammapada, verses 197, 198, 200 and 201.

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It is very interesting to see how Buddha talks of duhkha or misery in the Dhammapada. He says, "Oh, Bhikkhu, misery is a prime truth, birth is misery, ailment is misery, death is misery. A relationship with dislike is misery, and the viyoga of the liked is also misery". But Buddha does not ask the question as to why misery arises in this world, or what the cause of misery is. In the fashion of a physician he wants to diagnose several aspects or dimensions of misery and calls them Dvadasa Nidana. In fact, Buddha does not, like Mrs. Rhys Davis, say that Pratityasamutpada was the law of causation. I would like to point out that when Buddha talks of Dvadasa Nidana, he is, in fact, talking of twelve symptoms. Nidana is a medical term of diagnosis. Avidya, for example, is one of these twelve. We have seen that Buddha says that misery arises due to avidya. Avidya means ignorance. It is one of the necessary conditions for the manifestation of misery. (It also develops through Samskara i.e. through culture). Avidya, it must be remembered is an epistemic category. It is not a negation of knowledge. Awareness is as much implied in avidya as it is in Prajna. As a matter of fact, the whole development of the human world is two-fold., Either it develops through avidya i.e. through the belief system or it is developed through Prajna i.e. through the knowledge system and through samyama i.e. through control and samkalpa i.e. determination. As we have seen earlier, Buddha refers to both these epistemic concepts, avidya and prajna, and also to the concepts of samyama (control) and samkalpa (determination). Why does misery arise? The basic answer is, because man has vedana developing into trsna (blind appetites); avidya and samskara help the continuation of growth of this trsna. For so long as human being is living and so long as he is not controlled rationally by prajna and by samyama, there is no possibility of Duhkkhanasa or sukha or Nirvana; for there would be neither trsna- ksaya nor trsnanasa Buddha in verses 190, 191, and 192 talks of four noble truths. Two of them are concerned with misery itself. Duhkkha and duhkha samudaya, and the remaining two are concerned with control of duhkha and the eight-fold path (astangikamarga) by which the duhkha can be controlled. This path of control of duhkha is called marga and consists of eight constituents, proper reason (samyaka prajna), proper determination (samyak samkalpa), proper speech (vac),

proper action (karmanta), proper ajiva, proper vyayama, proper smrti and proper samadhi. It means that misery can be controlled if one follows proper discipline. Buddha also tells us here that misery is concerned with transitoriness or anityata. The base of misery is trsna. It is the development of sparsa and vedana, through avidya. Sparsa, vedana and trsna (partly) are the constituent conditions of misery. Avidya and samskara are its epistemic conditions. Prajna supplies such a focus. The vedana becomes trsna. It takes the form of enmity. It arises in our blind desire to have more and more.

Buddha tells us that sparsa and vedana are two important concepts which cannot be got rid of if a man is living. He is bound to have sensation and feelings. But very soon these sensations and feelings take the form of appetites and desires and attachment. Through all these, man develops a world of his own. He wants to get rid of miseries; but what happens is exactly the opposite. Trsna starts controlling the man and once this happens, instead of getting rid of miseries, he gets more and more involved in miseries. The only way, therefore, to get rid of miseries is through the Astangikamarga, the eight-fold path. This leads to peace. But rational efforts have to be made in every respect in order to be on the right track. Instead of a vidya controlling one's feelings, one must now be controlled by prajna. Instead of samskara, you must now have samkalpa i.e. will to do. You must not only have the will, you must also speak it out and communicate it to others. It must also develop into action. It must continue throughout your life. This must be like an exercise. This must be like memory. This must be like samadhi. Only then can the social misery be controlled.

Although Buddha talks of twelve-fold diagnosis of duhkha, to my mind three of them sparsa, vedana and trsna, as pointed out above, are basic. In fact the only difference between sparsa and vedana on the one hand and trsna on the other is that trsna gives us not just a fact of experience but a tendency to have vedana or sparsa. Trsna indicates a tendency, a disposition, manifesting itself from time to time, of certain kind of feeling, of our not having something or others having something. On account of avidya and samskara, this concept of our owning or possessing something develops. One starts having a fixed idea of

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possessing something and this is what is called asakti, this is also parigraha. This naturally requires an epistemic state. The person who has vedana would be conscious of what he wants and also conscious of what others should not have and he alone should have. But this is not rational awareness. It is blind and to indicate this Buddha brings in the (epistemic) factor of avidya. This tendency develops and becomes complex on account of the social habit which is called samaskara. Sparsa the sensation and vedana the feeling thus get transformed into emotional dispositions and tendencies. And if these dispositions and tendencies are to be got rid of, one must know that the basic sparsa or vedana cannot be got rid of. It can only be controlled and this control must also have awareness as a constituent. But such an awareness will be rational awareness. Buddha therefore brings in the factors of samyama and prajna. These are again the epistemic factors though of a different kind. It must be remembered that samyama is also determined by prajna. And when samyama plays its part, although the sparsa and vedana have developed into trsna due to avidya, trsna starts withering away. But for this withering away, one more epistemic factor has to be necessarily thought of. And this is the factor of 'will' which is at the back of samyama. This 'will' is indicated in Buddhist theory by samkalpa. So just as through avidya and samskara, sparsa and vedana grow into trsna, similarly through prajna and samkalpa, samyama is established and it leads to the decay of trsna. Thus when trsna decays although the basic sparsa and vedana remain, they do not develop into hatred of others and selfishness. Of course, this samkalpa cannot merely remain as samkalpa, it has to be brought into practice, it has to be expressed, it is to be practised with devotion as an exercise, it has to be continuously remembered. Because of this Buddha also talks of vaca, karmanta, ajiva, vyayama, smrti and samadhi. Just as Dvadasa Nidana gives us the diagnosis of duhkha, similarly Astangikamarga gives us the steps in the cure of the trsna or duhkha itself.

Check your Progress-1

1. What is Dukkha

14.3 SOCIAL MISERY

Let us begin with the concept of *vaira* or social misery. How is it to be understood? First, it is a relation between two or more terms. Secondly, the terms of this relation must necessarily be men, that is, self-conscious beings. There cannot exist a relation of *vaira* between two trees or two animals other than men. Again, this relation though asymmetrical in logic appears symmetrical in practice, perhaps due to *ajnana*. That is, if there is a relation of *vaira* between A and B, then the counter-relation between B and A will also usually be the relation of *vaira*. So in practice i.e. in human world it would not be one-sided necessarily. For if A has a relation of *vaira* with B, then in this human world it would be usually found that B has also the same relation with A. That such a relation must naturally be between two self-conscious beings is clearly indicated in the very first verse of Pali Dhammapada. It points out this unambiguously when it says that mind is the source of all human attitudes and action. 'It pursues man's behaviour and generates *duhkkha* in the same way as a wheel of a cart follows the steps of an ox'.

Buddha's solution to the problem of *vaira* has also to be understood properly. Buddha wants to tell us that we should recognise that if A has enmity with B it is not necessary that B should have enmity with A. In fact, it is a recognition of this fact which is going to reduce or abolish enmity altogether and bring about peace. The fifth verse in the Dhammpada is very eloquent in this regard It says, enmity does not ends enmity. It is the non-enmity on the part of one which could end enmity.

It is against this concept or tendency of *vaira* or enmity that Gautama the Buddha is protesting or reacting. He is pleading for *avaira* (or *avera* in Pali). The *vaira* cannot end *vaira*' it can be ended only with *avaira*. And this is possible because, as a matter of fact, *vaira* is not a symmetrical relation. *Vaira* seems to be the psychological or natural tendency, *avaira* seems to be the human answer to it. In the Dhammapada it is clearly stated that those who do not give abode to such thoughts as he has

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abused me', 'he has beaten me', 'he has conquered me' from them the *vaira* withers away. In Tripitaka there is a story of the people from two (different) *ganarajyas*; one of them was *Sakya ganarajya*. A dispute had arisen between the kingdoms on the question of the rights to own, possess or use some river water. The dispute grew so intense that almost every man and woman on each side appeared on the scene with the determination to exterminate the other. Hearing about the dispute Lord Buddha appeared on the scene and said, "Can the fight between you bring peace to this holy land? Will your problem be settled if you resort to fight? The waters of the river are for the use of both. If you start quarrelling about the river waters, you will only kill one another and no one will get the water for which you are quarrelling?" It is only when by some sustained thought you get over the concept of *vaira* and refuse to quarrel then alone the quarrel comes to end. If there is a quarrel or *vaira* between A and B then both A and B must give up *vaira*. If this is not possible wisdom must dawn either on A or on B. Then *vaira* would be futile. In such a case, the situation would be very interesting: 'A wants to quarrel, but B does not want to'. He would not just submit to the other as the *kapota* submitted to *syena* in the *Mahabharata* story. He would now 'fight' with non-violent means. He would insist on what is today known as *satyagraha*. That *vaira* does not end *vaira*, is *satya*, an eternal truth and one has to insist on it. The teaching of *Dhammapada* was not only the teaching of Buddha, it was also the teaching of Christ and Gandhi, if the import of this teaching is properly understood. If somebody slaps you on one cheek, give him the other, Christ said. This was certainly not a case of cowardice or weakness; this was a case of strength. Gandhi did the same thing. When he was awakening the Indian masses he asked the revolutionaries whether their handgrenades- or revolvers, could bring about freedom and peace in India. Ultimately peace comes by converting others' heart. This was the message of Buddha when he said

Nahi verena verani sammantihā kudacana I

Averena ca sammanti esa dhammo sanantano II

What Gandhi called, *satya* was for Buddha the *dhamma*, the human nature.

Lord Buddha talks of sukha or happiness. He says, "One who has given up vaira can happily live amongst those who are still inhaling the concept of vaira. How happy all of them would be if all of them had given up the concept of vaira". Dhammapada,197-201

Although avaira, non-enmity has to be distinguished from ahimsa or non-violence, the basic concept of affection or kindness must be at the back of both ahimsa and avaira. That is why Buddha when he talks of Panchasiila, talks of ahimsa. It is the basic element in every individual and has a potentiality to end enmity. But Buddha's philosophy seems to be basically concerned with human relations. This is very clearly seen if we try to understand the verses 203 and 204 in Dhammpada. In 204, he says health is the great gain, satisfaction is the great wealth, trust is the great relation (of binding one man to another) and Nirvana i.e. complete extinction is the greatest happiness. Now one can easily see that barring health, everything else is really of social nature. Both in the hands of Jnanesvara and Gandhi the concept of ahimsa is magnified. Jnanesvara, for example, says-Anijagaciya sukhoddese kayavacha manase, rahatane teahimse, rupajana. But Buddha does not seem to philosophise this concept of Ahimsa.

All duhkkhas, that we have seen, are basically mental and because they are mental, and belong to the human world, it is possible to get rid of them. The duhkkhas originate in relation of one man to another. They arise from my reaction to what others have and what I do not have. It is clearly indicated in the 3rd and 4th verse of the Dhammapada-Akochhi mam avadhi mam ajini mam ahasi me'. So long as one has an ill-will towards others, one is not going to get rid of duhkkhas. But if we are able to control them, man's duhkkha can wither away.

Ye tam no upanahyanti vairam teyu upasammati (Dhp.4). One who does not give abode to such thoughts as the other has abused me'. 'the other has beaten me', 'the other has conquered me', alone can get rid of the vaira. Thus the duhkkha which arises in the human mind always arises in contrast with others' state of affairs. It is a relationship of me with others and therefore the duhkkha which Buddha talks of is asocial evil, social duhkkha This duhkkha is not of the nature of pain, it is of the nature of vaira or hatred. Sparsa and vedana which have already grown into trsna

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take the form of *vaira* when one finds that one does not have what one wants whereas others have it. The problem of *duhkkha* which Buddha raises thus belongs to the human world. Buddha thinks that if I know that my life itself is transitory and that I would not be able to possess anything beyond a certain time I would easily understand that if somebody hated me it did not mean that I should hate him too. So long as I begin to hate somebody when he hates me, the hate grows, the hatred grows. When it dawns on me that I need not hate somebody when he hates me, the hate decays and ultimately vanishes. Recognition of this is the recognition of the fact that X hates Y is not a symmetrical relationship, that is, the counter relation. 'Y hates X' need not necessarily be true. And that which is not necessarily true can and has to be realized. One must also know that the opposite of hatred, for example, friendship, is a symmetrical relation. If I am a friend of B there cannot be a friendship between me and B unless B is also my friend. So the only solution for the elimination of *vaira* is the inculcation of friendship. Friendship also required awareness as a constituent. But this awareness is not of *avidya*. It is a conscious awareness, not a blind one. *Duhkkha* in human world, thus, can be got rid of only by invoking friendship, only by invoking love of other's, only by compassion for other's misery, and not by hatred. One can easily see that this message of Buddha is very pregnant with truth even today.

Today we are on the brink of destruction. Each one is living in the shadow of the atom-bomb. Great powers are manufacturing atom bomb and common man has to live continuously in an atmosphere of fear generated by the atom-bomb. How is this problem going to be solved? Is it going to be solved by creating more atom-bombs? If one party wins and the other is destroyed, will the problem be over? The answer is no. The great Mahabharata war is an instance of it. Pandavas and Kauravas fought this great war to become the rulers of Hastinapur. What happened in the end? Only five Pandavas, Draupadi and Subhadra remained on the Pandava's side and Drona and Gandhara remained on the Kaurava's side. The Pandavas could not even rule over the people, over whom they wanted to rule. Lord Buddha very correctly says:

Jayam vairam pasavati duhkkham seti parajito I

Upaianto sukham seti hitva jayaparajayam II

Victory gives rise to *vaira*. The man defeated sleeps in agony or misery. It is only one who has gone beyond victory or defeat can sleep happily. The story of Angulimala is very relevant in the context where Buddha proves that love, fearlessness and absence of enmity can alone change the world. This is only solution to the world problem. "Only one who is able to transcend the concept of victory or defeat can reach the state of happiness and perfect peace" [Dhp. 179 and 291].

It is of significance here that after discussing the concepts of *dukkha* and *sukka*, Buddha also gives the criterion for deciding which is a good act and which is a bad act. According to him, if the action does not lead to repentance or lamentation then that action can be regarded as good. It is certain that this criterion is also social, and it is forgetting of this criterion which has brought about misery today, even in the international sphere. Let us take the case of the atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Perhaps, at the time of bombing the Americans were not aware of what they were doing, but after seeing the havoc that had taken place, even they must have been shocked. They must have had repentance and would lament for what they had done. Thus, bombing with atom-bomb would never be justified.

14.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING

According to Buddha the misery or *dukkha*, the basic truth has several constituents. First as suggested above it is mental, i.e. belongs to the human world, naturally, that which belongs to the humans world must be of the nature of correlation between two or more human beings or it might be a correlation between the natural world and the human beings. To me it appears that the concepts of *sparsa* (and *vedana*) suggest this contact. *Sparsa* gives us the relationship of either man or the natural world to human beings. It suggests a sensation of some kind of cognizing element which brings about this contact. But the *sparsa* does not merely remain *sparsa*, it evolves into some kind of feeling which is suggested by the word *vedana*. Both *Sparsa* and *vedana* have an epistemic element in them and this is very clearly stated in *Dhammapada*, when it is pointed out that all miseries are *manasika* or mental. This, of course, means that

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misereries maybe all epistemic or they may arise due to interaction with natural things although epistemic elements would be their accompaniment. But if vedana had been the only element in misery then it would have been only momentary. It should be momentary. But due to its epistemic nature, that is due to avidya it appears to be continuous and grows in the fashion of a foetus. This vedana takes the form of an appetite and a blind desire to get more and more. It is just not one vedana which controls human beings, it is vedana-vaipulya, it is the multitude of vedana, which gives a feeling of length in time and the beginning of the problem. Although this is of the nature of misery, man has a desire to possess it. It is colourful, it is tasteful and man feels a strong aptitude to have it. This element is called asakti. Jains call it parigraha. But what is important to understand is that all these are the elements of ego. The ego itself is of the nature of epistemy and on account of the feeling of continuation the ego begins to act as something permanent. My identity is marked by a continuity in time and my ego becomes a proto-universe. If there are number of men then naturally their different aptitudes will determine the relation amongst them and the most dominant ego will rule. This concept of ego is called Atman and the, Buddhists have tried to disown the Atman by bringing in the concept of impermanence - anityata - Ksanikta. But the fact is that a human being is continuously under the epistemic spell which creates an impression that the ego is constant and our desires are also constant. Thus in This pseudo-constant world the sparsa and vedana tend to become continuous and persecute. The continuous tendency that should have something is suggested by the word tanha or trsna and therefore it would be adequate to say that our misereries in which we get lost have their origin in ignorance .This tendency of trsna must have been called 'interest' sometimes, and each individual may have his own interest. If the interests are conflicting, then sometimes it may take the form of violence or atleast enmity vaira. If the self-interest becomes a common interest then it would result in friendship or maitri. This common interest may also be due to two things. It may become a more developed trsna not of one man but of group. One may remember here the word 'mamata' in the Bhagavatgita. In that case the nature of misery would remain as it is. Or one may transcend one's ego

and look to others' misery with compassion and sympathy. This would take the form of Karuna. Karuna itself is like misery; but it has the capacity to make others' misery bearable and reduce one's own misery also. It is cognition of the fact that there are other beings. When this dawns on man he has already transcended the selfish universe and is now looking at the universe from an objective point of view. This is again due to awareness. But this awareness is of a different kind. It is no more avidya. It is now vidya or prajna. When prajna dawns on us, one begins to look on trsna vedana and sparsa in a different way. The feeling that I should want more and more no longer exists. I am not controlled by the appetites; prajna now begins to control the appetites. This is called samyama. That something has to be controlled gives us one more factor in the analysis, the factor of samkalpa. There is a determination to do something. Without such determination the cannot be reduced to mere vedana which ipso facto must continue all the while with its temporal length reduced to a point. One cannot get rid of vedana but one can get rid of trsna. To be able to get rid of trsna is to be able to get rid of duhkha, to be able to get rid of vaira (enmity), the cause of social misery. This removes the multiplicity (or vaipulya) or the attachment of ours to things. Prajna removes this asakti or attachment.

14.5 BRAHMA VIHARA BHAVANA

(The Four Sublime States)

The Brahma vihara bhavana occupies a central position in the field of mental training in Buddhism. Brahma' means 'sublime' and 'vihara' means 'abode' or 'state of living' or spending one's time. Thus 'Brahmavihara' means 'sublime abode' or 'sublime state of living' also called the four 'boundless' states ; it is a person has the divine abiding, the four mental attributes of a being that is sublime or grand-minded like a good. Bhavana, means 'to be practiced in life'. There are four such abode, namely, Metta, Karuna, Mutita and uppekkha-bhavana which form an essential aspect of the Buddhist ethics too. These are considered as the key Buddhist Values. They are both regulative and normative principles for a good life. They are both spiritual and moral in nature. These four attitudes are said to be excellent or sublime because they are

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the right or ideal way of conduct towards living beings (sattesu samma patipatti). They provide, in fact, the answer to all situations arising from social contact. They are the great removers of tension, the great peace-makers in social conflict, and the great healers of wounds suffered in the struggle of existence.. The Brahma-vihara-s are incompatible with a hating state of mind, and in that they are akin to Brahma—the divine but transient ruler of the higher heavens in the traditional Buddhist picture of the universe. In contrast to many other conceptions of deities, East and West, who are said to show anger, wrath, jealousy and “righteous indignation,” Brahma is free from hate; and one who assiduously develops these four sublime states by conduct and meditation, is said to become equal of Brahma' (brahma-sama). If they become the dominant influence in one's mind, she/he will be reborn in congenial worlds, the realms of Brahma. Therefore, these states of mind are called god-like, Brahma-like. The scheme of meditation called Brahmavihara-bhavanas. Its exercises include the cultivation of the four higher values, namely loving kindness (metta), compassion (-karuna), altruistic joy (mudita) and equanimity (upekkha) as key values, which form an essential preliminary to the whole training of the religious aspirant.

14.5.1 Metta (Loving - kindness).

The term Metta (loving-kindness), an essential virtue in Buddhist ethics, is also one of the ten perfections (paramita, dasa paramiyo) in Theravada Buddhism which are given in later Pali literature. This perfection is practiced as ideal principles by sages in order to obtain their goals of Nibbana. The Buddha, who was the epitome of ethical conduct in his many lives, taught all his lessons out of loving-kindness (metta) and compassion (karuna) in order to liberate human beings and Gods from the suffering (dukkha) of cyclical existence.⁹ Metta is loving-kindness, benevolent state of lovingkindness that is mental freedom from illwill.¹⁰ It is defined as that which softens one's heart. It is the wish for the good, safety and happiness of all beings. Benevolent attitude is its chief characteristic. It is not carnal love (raga) or personal affection (pema). Its

direct enemy is hatred or illwill (dosa) or aversion (kodha). Its indirect enemy is greed (lobha). It has the ability to quench illwill. The culmination of Metta is the identification of oneself with all being, i.e. one no longer differentiates between oneself and the others in the order of priority.

According to Piyadassi Thera, the word Metta (lovingkindness) is derived from the Pali term Mejjati (Mai tri, in Sanskrit) which means the state of love. There is no equivalent term for Metta in English and hence it can be taken to refer friendliness, benevolence, good-will, loving-kindness, universal love and goodwill. It is one of the ten perfection called Paramitas and is one of the four sublime abodes. It can be taken as the first sublime state of mind. It is the wish for the welfare and happiness of all beings. It is free from all carnal desires, attachment, and self-centered ideas. It is ultimate love that does not have any boundaries.

“Metta is a very pure sublime state of human mind; like a quicksilver it cannot attach itself to anything. It is a calm, non-assertive super-solvent among virtues”. Metta literally means “friendliness” and signifies the state of a friend (mittassa bhavo metta). It means fraternal affection, unbounded love, or friendly feelings, free from lustful attachment. It has the characteristic of beneficence, or the promotion of good-will. Functioning for the good of others is its essence or property. Its manifestation or effect is the filling of the heart with love, and the removal of hatred. The linking of others with oneself in affection is its proximate cause. The suppression of ill-will is its consummation. Selfish love, or lust, is its failure, or “near enemy”. We can practice the Metta-bhavana in order to get rid of anger or ill-will, and make a general extension of lovingkindness by chanting the following passage. Sabbe satta all beings aver a hontu, may they be free of enmity, abyapajjha hontu, may they be free from hurtfulness, anlgha hontu, may they be free from troubles, sukhlattanam may they be able to protect pariharantu. their own happiness. The significance is this Metta-bhavana is that the welfare and good of one’s own is permissible only in and through doing the good and welfare of others. Buddhaghosa explicates it with the metaphor of a mother’s love to her only child when she wishes for the

youth of that child. The mother protects her only child even at the cost of her own life.

14.5.2 Karuna (Compassion)

Karuna or compassion is the second constituent of Brahma-vihara-bhavana. Karuna is defined as “the quality which makes the heart of the good man tremble and quiver at the distress of other”. The heart that melts due to sufferings of other is said to be compassionate. One should be compassionate to the virtuous and the vile. In Pali *ika'* stands for happiness. Etymologically Karuna means a meditational practice which shapes our mental attitude in order to shut all ways of selfhappiness for the sake of happiness of other. It is the aspiration that all creatures be free from fear and suffering. It is the foundation of human existence and is more than the feeling of pity for other. In this mental attitude we apart from realizing the suffering of other do have a close determination to eradicate that suffering. As put forward by Anuruddha ‘Always be compassionate to all creatures, always be ready to eradicate suffering of all and in this way realizing suffering of all, be compassionate to all Karuna is compassion, being compassionate, state of being compassionate, compassion that is mental freedom from cruelty. The Dhammapada verses 17 and 18 elucidate the comparative results of cruelty as terrible suffering and of compassion as wonderful happiness as follows: *Idha tappati, pecca tappati, papakari ubhayatth tappati ‘papam me kataiii’ ti tappati, bhiyo tappati duggatim gato.* The evil-doer suffers in this world, he suffers in the next; he suffers in both. He suffers (thinking) ‘evil has been done by me He suffers even more when he has gone to the evil place. *Idha nandati, pecca mandati, katapunno ubhayatth nandati. ‘punnam me katam’ ti nandati, bhiyo nandati suggatimi gato.* The righteous man rejoices in this world, he rejoices in the next; he rejoices in both. He rejoices (thinking) ‘good has been done by me \ He rejoices still more when he has gone to the good place. Karuna or compassion is an act to help others to free themselves from their suffering. It is explained by Buddhaghosa in the following Pali words: “Paradukkha sati sadhunam hadayakamayanam karoti ” —That is to say,

“ When there is suffering in the others it cause good people’s heart to be moved, thus it is Karuna According to Piyadassi Thera, Karuna means “the quality rouses tender feeling in the good man at the sight of other’s suffering”. We can practice Karuna-bhavana, in order to get rid of violence and to cultivate the virtue of compassion which is the desire to help those in any kind of suffering. The following passage is for the cultivation of karuna Sabbe satta All beings dukkhapamuccantu may they be free from suffering.²⁵ Therefore, Karuna is the desire to help another person escape from their suffering or the determination to free all human beings, both human and animal, of their hardships and miseries. We should have compassion for ourselves and all who suffer. If we have compassion, then we would like them, ourselves, and all other, to be free from suffering. Compassion is good mental habit to adopt too.

14.5.3Mudita (Empathetic joy)

The term Mudita is derived from Pali root Modanti meaning that which itself is associated with the gladness or Modanti meaning that which itself is gladness or Modand meaning the mere act of being glad and therefore Mudita can be defined as gladness.

Mudita is a feeling of “sharing” the happiness of others. It keeps one away from jealousy. It cultivates a positive attitude that accepts the progress of the other. Mudita is the virtue of empathetic joy. This is considered as the third pillar of Brahmavihara. This is said to be a kind of altruistic attitude of joy that arises out of feeling of empathy and concern for others. Naturally it acts as the antidote to enmity and discontent. It is different from ‘giddy merriment’³⁴ Empathetic or the word for Sympathetic Joy is Mudita and this word has been variously translated as “appreciation”, “satisfaction”, “delightfulness”, and “happiness in the happiness of all” Harvey B. Aronson defined, “Sympathetic joy means to take joy in other’s success. It becomes mistaken when merriment or giddiness are produced and one is carried away with other’s success”. The practice of Mudita-bhavana enables as to get rid of envy by being joyful about the happiness and prosperity of other and to cultivate sympathetic joy, the following passage is for the cultivation of Mudita : Sabbe satta All beings ma laddhasampattito may

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they not be parted from vigacchantu. the good fortune obtained by them. Mudita is the state when seeing other happy; one feels glad; when seeing another do good actions or attain success in life and advancement, one responds with gladness and is ready to help and support them. We should, therefore, congratulate them and share in the joy of their success.

14.5.4 Upekkha (Equanimity)

It is the fourth key value in Buddhism. In the context of Brahmavihara, Upekkha means equal love towards all. Upekkha (equanimity) is known as the fourth pillar of Brahma-vihara. The term “Upekkha can be understood as formed from the prefix “upa” meaning “toward” and derivative of verb “ikka” meaning “to see”. The term has come to have several meanings, which flow from the notion of over looking a situation from a distance. These meanings range from “ the feeling of neither pleasure nor pain,” which can be understood to be akin to the experience of the distant, disengaged over-looker, to “pure and stable mental balance,” which is akin to the attitudinal perspective of the wise overseer. In the Visuddhimagga. Buddhaghosa explicates Upekkhabhavana metaphorically as the attitude of the mother who has no anxiety for her adult son or daughter who is able and selfdependent. By developing equanimity, a person becomes balanced, impartial and emptied of clinging attitude and for these qualities he is often compared to a mountain. Such a person with the virtue of equanimity cannot be upset or disturbed by worldly greed and other passions just like no forceful wind from any direction can displace a High Mountain. It may be described as the ideal of non-attachment which destroys all kinds of revengeful attitudes. The practice of Upekkha-bhavana enables us to get rid of extreme emotions, i.e. too much of joy, too much of grief, depressed feeling when seeing the disaster of other beings caused by their own previous deeds (kamma) that cannot be helped, and also to promote the neutral feeling that should be maintained. The following passage reflects Karma and its result, chanted for the development of this quality as follows: All beings are the owners of their Karma, heirs to their Karma, born of their Karma, related to their Karma, abide supported

by their Kamma, whatever kamma they shall do, good or evil, of that they will be the heirs. Sabbe satta kammassaka kammadayada, kammyonl kammbandhu, kammapatisarana yam kammaiii karissanti, kalyanam vapapakam va tassa dayada bhavissanti. So, Upekkha is the seeing things as they are with a mind that is even, stead firm and fair like a pair of scales; understanding that all being experience good and evil in accordance with the cause they have created; ready to judge, position one self and act in accordance with principle, reason and equity.

2 Check your Progress

1. Four higher values(Brahmaviharas)

14.6 LETS SUM UP

Dhammapada means "a step of dhamma". It is concerned with the diagnosis of (human) nature, the misery and how to get over it. What kind of misery of duhkkha, was in the mind of Lord Buddha? Duhkkha is an ambiguous word. It means both physical pain and misery. That which cannot be destroyed has to be borne by us. This is the case with the physical calamities or pains. But this is not necessarily so with miseries which are mental and social.

14.7 KEY WORDS

Brahmavihara' means 'sublime abode' or 'sublime state of living' also called the four 'boundless' states ;

Trsna: Desire

Vedana: Sensation

14.8 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Buddhist concept of dukkha and way to overcome it.

14.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

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14.10 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1 Answer to Check your Progress-1

- Oh, Bhikkhu, misery is a prime truth, birth is misery, ailment is misery, death is misery. A relationship with dislike is misery, and the viyoga of the liked is also misery". But Buddha does not ask the question as to why misery arises in this world, or what the cause of misery is. In the fashion of a physician he wants to diagnose several aspects or dimensions of misery and calls them Dvadasa Nidana.

2. Answer to Check your Progress-1

- loving kindness (metta),
- compassion (-karuna),
- altruistic joy (mudita)
- equanimity (upekkha)