

Philosophy of Non-Violence

Pamphlet, 33 pages, translated from Hindi.

Talks given from 1/1/66

Original in Hindi

CHAPTER 1

1 January 1966

Fearlessness is the first condition for the life of spiritualism. One who cannot take courage to that, cannot dive deep into his own self. The courage which is required for going alone in dark nights, in darkness and in unknown and fierce path, a greater courage than that is required to go into the self, because it breaks the sweet dreams which one has built up about his own self and because as one has to face such ugly and condemnable sins from which one has taken himself to he entirely free.

Look at yourself after removing all your clothes. Look what you are after removing all your doctrines.

Take your face out of the sands and see.... This opening of eyes.... to see that way is a change....

a beginning of a new life. The change begins as soon as the eyes open and whatever we do after that leads us to truth.

We are to walk to the light removing the layers of darkness, to walk to the Lord removing the layers of sin, to attain the self by destroying ignorance. This is the right path of spiritualism. We are not to dream before that... We are not to dream of the self and the God..... We are not to dream of the Brahman which is the existence the knowledge and the bliss.....

These all are the ways of an ostrich for hiding his face in the sand... This is not the way of human exertion. This is the false satisfaction of those who

are devoid of power for exertion.

Question

PHILOSOPHY OF NON-VIOLENCE

I peep into your eyes. I see there a torture, an intense pain and a deep sorrow. I find in them not the light and cheer of life, but a thick darkness and disappointment, which is opposed to life. I find there not the music of individuality but a sorrowful tune of disorder. All beauty, all tunefulness, all proportions have been shattered. Perhaps to call ourselves as individuals may also be incorrect. To be an individual, we require a focus, a definite organization; that is not there. We are in a state of disorder in the absence of that individuality, organization and focus.

Man has broken down. Something very valuable in him has been lost and shattered. It looks as though we are the remnants of a broken order. That order could be seen in Mahavira, Buddha and Christ. They were individuals because they were not a disorderly cluster of broken tunes; they were music; because they were not the blind race full of self-contradictions; they had a definite motion and direction.

Life gets into motion in happiness after finding its focus and direction. To attain the individuality, and the tunefulness hidden in it, is like opening the gates of real life. Before that, life is not a reality but only a possibility; it is a future.

The tragedy of the split of man’s individuality has occurred all over the world. We have broken away and got separated from our own selves. It is like a circle which has lost its centre and of which only the circumference remains. We are running on the circumference of life, will keep running, and then fall down; and even for a moment we will not know what is called rest and peace. Our condition is like that of the bullock yoked in an oil-expeller.

Life is not the circumference alone; it is also the centre. Without knowing this, all efforts, all motions are ultimately useless, meaningless. In the absence of this knowledge, all streams of labour take to the ocean of misery.

There are only actions on the circumference of life; the power is not there. I, my existence, my being is not there. In my proved existence I am absent on the surface. I cannot be found on the surface of action. What I am can be found far deeper and in other depths. Without knowing that depth, without establishing a relation in a very familiar way with the inner self, life is an illusion; it is a tiresome journey. Without establishing relation with this self and this power, life cannot get transformed into a pleasure-trip.

I am reminded of an uprooted tree. When I think about the man, the tree automatically comes to my mind. I do not know why, I cannot think of man as different from the tree. Perhaps because of the roots, this similarity surrounds my mind. If an individual gets uprooted from the centre of his existence, he looks like an uprooted tree. He who does not know his own form is losing roots in his existence. How surprising it is that we are getting unfamiliar with our own selves, as if that side is not worth knowing, as if that is no side at all! If per chance, it meets us, if suddenly we meet the self, then we will have to become speechless on seeing the one that meets; it will in no case be possible to recognize it. Our roots have lost ground from the self, from our own nature. We are present but not in ourselves. We know everyone else, but are unfamiliar and strangers to ourselves. On the outside, knowledge has increased, but inside ignorance has become thicker. ’Darkness under the lamp’ has become a true saying. Power has been gained but peace has been lost. There has been expansion, but no depth has been gained.We have been surrounded by imbalance and partiality.

As though a tree has grown larger on the outside but hollow in its roots; the man has also met a similar fate. This has given birth to pain, sadness and sorrow. The shadow of disappointment and of the coming death persists, just as it so happens when the roots of a tree become loose in the earth. Man too has his roots and his earth; this truth has to be re-announced. This very basic truth has been forgotten. Because of this oblivion, we are gradually losing our roots by ourselves. We are busy in a continuous process of suicide. This loss of roots is continually taking us to the deepest of pain, sorrow and death.

I find individual after individual circumscribed by unhappiness; and it may be remembered that if one individual is unhappy, he becomes the cause of

unhappiness for many others. If I am unhappy I will inevitably become the cause of unhappiness for others. Whatever I am, is revealed in my behaviour; this is only natural, because in my relations, I put and pour my own self; anything else is not possible.

In my relations, my own picture and my own tunes are there. I am myself reflected and resounding in them. I am myself present there. If therefore, I am unhappy, if I am in pain, then unhappiness alone will flow from me and spread out. As in a tank, ripples start from a small centre and spread out to long distances, similarly the ripples that gain life from my individual centre do not remain limited to me alone; their echoes can be heard far, far away. What happens in an individual, spreads out in the atmosphere very quickly. Between the individual and the universal, there are no set boundaries.

They are connected and co-communicative in several ways.

If I am unhappy, I will also give unhappiness to others. Even if I do not wish, it will keep on flowing from me every moment. That is helplessness, because I can give only what I possess. I cannot give what I do not have even if I wish. In our relations, we give our own selves, not our wishes. Not merely my wishes, but my goodness is necessary. It is not the dream, it is the reality which can be received or given. Therefore, many people are unable to give happiness, peace or love to others in spite of their wish. Their good intentions are beyond doubt, but that is not enough. Their dreams are, no doubt, beautiful; but in the world of reality their effect is not more than the effect of lines drawn on water. They can be used for literature, but not for life. We wish to impart happiness – and who would not like to do so – but we can give only unhappiness and misery. We want to give love, but what we are able to give does not produce even a distant tune of love; and then what an emptiness, failure and futility do we experience. How lost and defeated everything looks. In these moments of defeat, all sense of direction is lost, all purposefulness is lost, all meaning is lost, what is left behind is the misery of loneliness. as if we have been left all alone iII the world. In these moments, we can realise our own powerlessness and helplessness.

The results of good intentions and dreams are not favourable because reality is against them. The river of life does not reach the ocean of

meaningfulness and success; it seems to be disappearing and drying up in the desert of uselessness and dissatisfaction. If in this state of realisation of the meaninglessness of mind there is the slightest awakening, then a very deep-seated illusion can be broken; and in the light emanating from the breaking of that illusion the individual can be awakened to the basic truth of life. In the light of that awakening, it can be seen that the meaninglessness is not born from the inner reality of life; it is both from the unreal conviction that what is not possessed by the self can also be given to someone else; from the ignorance that the fragrance which is not in me can also be diffused. This ignorance is very deep-rooted. Those who are devoid of love, want to give love; those who are devoid of pleasure want to distribute pleasure; the poor get afflicted and agitated with the dreams of distributing riches.

I find that what is not will the self cannot be given either. No logic or evidence is necessary to prove it. It is clear and self-evident like the sun; perhaps it is clearer than the sun itself, because even if the eyes are not there this can be seen. But this is only one side of the coin; there is the other side also. That is more invisible. Sometimes it is so surprising that what is so close and easy to know can be forgotten by us. Perhaps what is very clear and very close stops being visible because of its very nearness.

The other side is that what is not with the self cannot be obtained from others. It is of course not possible to give what is not in the self; it is also not possible to receive it. Whatever can be received from others should be available in the self before it can be received. Then alone there can be amnity and receptivity for it. I can accept only what I am. I have the doors and the power to attract that alone. We see how from the same earth different plants absorb different forms, colours and smells.

Whatever is natural in them also comes to them. Whatever they are, they also receive. This is the law; this is the eternal scheme. In order to get love, it is necessary to be full of love. I He who is full of hatred, invites only hatred. He who has filled himself with poison invites only a flow of poison towards him from the whole world. The like call for and are thirsty for the like; so also the persons of the same class. He who wants nectar will have to get filled with nectar. He who wants God will have to awaken his God in

himself. Whatever you want you should become. Whomsoever you want to meet, you should become like him. In order to be happy, it is necessary to have happiness in you.

It is necessary to become happiness itself. Happiness alone can welcome and accept happiness.

Do not we observe that a miserable mind can search out miseries even where they hardly exist?

The tortured one finds out torture. The depressed one finds out depression. In fact, they select with what they have affinity. Whatsoever is inside is selected; and the same is thrown out and installed in others. whatever we are, we search out. The world and its conditions are a mirror in which, from different angles and in different forms, we can see ourselves.

Whatever I give, is myself. Whatever I receive is also myself. Except my own self, I have no existence and no experience. It is not possible to go outside it. That is the world, that is salvation, that is pain and that is pleasure; that is violence and that is non-violence; that is poison and that is nectar.

I am reminded of a discussion held on the gate of a temple. The flag of the temple was fluttering in the morning breeze. Seeing that flag flying, in the golden rays of the sun, to monks were discussing between themselves whether the stir was in the flag or in the wind. A third monk passing near by, said: ”Friend, the stir is in the mind.”

True! All agitation is in the mind and of the mind.

If I do not forget, Mahavir, who said: This soul is the enemy; the self itself is the friend.”

The pure development of soul is non-violence; the impure development of the soul is violence.

That is not an indication of behaviour but mainly of the spirit. There is lot of consideration given to purity of behaviour. That grasp and reach, as I see,

is wrong. We have to achieve the purity of spirit rather than that of behaviour. Behaviour can change on its own. It is the follower of spirit.

If the knowledge is changed, behaviour also changes. Knowledge is the base and the centre; behaviour is the reflection of the same. The former is the life; behaviour has its throb. Socrates has said: ”Knowledge itself is character”. The meaning of knowledge is not the ’information’ or learnedness; the meaning of knowledge is: realization received from the perception of intellect, spirit and existence. This knowledge, this awakening, is the revolution of the intellect itself. The so-called knowledge, born from the collected thoughts, is unable to bring about this revolution, because in reality that is no knowledge at all. That is neither genuine nor does it belong to the self; that is all borrowed. That is taken out from some body else’s experience; and is, therefore, dead and lifeless.

The experience of the self becomes dead when it changes hands. There is no way of transferring it alive and living. Not the truth, but only the words that can reach. The knowledge that is based merely on those words can surely increase the burden; but salvation is not attained through it.

The knowledge which I have been calling revolution is not collected from others, it is awakened within the self. That is not imported; that is to be awakened; that has to be discovered within the self. After its awakening, conduct is not to be directed; it follows; and it comes, just as our shadow follows. The Agamas refer to this knowledge and say: [Hindi script] (first knowledge; then compassion). First knowledge; then non-violence and then conduct.

This is the way to change the circumference from the change of centre. This is the correct way. He who acts against it, makes a basic mistake. He wants to substitute the living by the dead; he wants to substitute the big by the small; he wants to substitute the root by the branches. Such a person sows the seeds of his failure right from the beginning.

Let this golden rule be remembered: that the self cannot be converted through conduct; it is the conduct that is converted by the self. Correct knowledge is the basis of correct conduct. Therefore, Hari Bhadra has said: ”The soul is non-violence and the same is violence; because non-violence

comes into play through the vigilance of the soul and violence follows negligence. Soul alone is non-violence; ”soul also commits violence. This is certain. He who is vigilant is non-violent; the other one is violent”.

If I am awakened within myself, vigilant and conscious, then my conduct is ’non-violent.

If I am established within myself, steady-minded and drowned in God, then my movement on the circumference of life is ’nonviolence’.

Non-violence is the manifestation of the awakened mind on the surface of the world.

Non-violence is the spread of happiness from a consciousness which is established in bliss. As light spreads from a lamp, similarly non-violence spreads from the consciousness which has attained bliss. That light is not for the sake of somebody; that is natural and auto-matic; that is the nature of bliss.

I have read in the life of a saint. Somebody told him: Satan must be hated and he replied: ’This is very difficult, because hatred now no longer exists in me; now there is only love, whether it be the satan or God. Except that, there is nothing in me to give to others. I may not even be able to differentiate between the two, because the eye of love has never been able to differentiate.’

When I hear that showing compassion to others is non-violence, I am very much surprised. What different ways can ego find for self-satisfaction! Its inventive power is wonderful! Non-violence has, in truth, no relation to any such thing. That is light born out of the soul. On whomsoever it falls, they might experience love and compassion; but it is not motivated by that object.

I also hear that non-violence should be practised, as if that also is an action which could or could not be performed. At times, how useless and misinformed apparently beautiful discourses can be!

We can understand that, on hearing such things. Love is not an action;, that is a state of the self.

Love is not done; it just happens; that is not a relation, that is a good feeling.

If there is the slightest feeling in me that I love, the love is not real. When love or bliss becomes my nature, then the experience of its presence, the experience that I love, indicates a difference between the action and the nature. If that difference is present, then love is artificial. Existence is not real, and that love is not love. When love manifests from the entire existence, the entire individuality, then after that there is nobody who knows it. Then there is no lover; there is only love.

I understand non-violence to mean love. That is the pure and perfect experience of love. The negative expression of non-violence has been used only to remove the feeling of relationship in love. In that negativeness there is no denial of love; there is denial only of love being a relation.

Love is not a relation; it is a state. The word non-violence has been used to emphasize this truth.

But those who start considering it as absence of love, make a big mistake. It is not the absence of love; it is the absence of only those elements which do not allow love to become perfect and pure. That is, no doubt, an absence of those elements which do not allow it to rise from the state of relationship to the nature of the self. That is the absence of love and hatred, attachment and non-attachment. Rising above these bonds, love becomes devoid of attachment.

I call love-without-attachment as ’non-violence’.

Non-violence is love and, therefore, it is not negative.

The word non-violence, is negative, but non-violence itself is not negative. That state of feeling is very positive. Nothing can be more positive than that. What can be more living and positive than love?

Violence in which there is absence of love is negative; because that is against nature. I do not want the lack of love or violence towards myself; nobody else wants it. Everyone is thirsty for love. Why no one has the thirst for the opposite of love?

I feel that we love, and can love, only our own selves; and if we can understand our own desire, then in that desire we can find hidden pointers to our own hidden self.

I want love; that is to say my own self is love.

I want bliss; that means my own self is bliss.

I want immortality; that means my own self is immortal.

I want godliness; that means my own self is God.

And it has to be remembered that I want, all others want. How similar are our wants! Then do not our similar wants pronounce the similarity of ourselves?

What is sitting inside the self and the non-self is not different. The ambition of this unseparable consciousness is not the opposite of love or non-violence. Therefore, I said that violence is negative, because that is opposed to nature; and what is negative is destructive. Non-love is a destructive force; that is the maid-servant of death. He who moves from that direction goes down deeper and deeper into destruction, death and darkness. That is death, because that is a move against the nature of the self.

Non-violence is the announcement of life; love is life.

There is prohibition against the negativeness of violence in the word non-violence and I have heard that two negatives make a positive. Perhaps, in the word non-violence there is an indication of the same positiveness. Then the cover of the word is meaningless. The living re which is hidden underneath the ashes of the word has to be understood. That fire is the fire of love, and love is creative. The opposite of love I have called destructive; love I call creative. In life, love alone is the source of creation. It is because

of the origin and manifestation of positiveness and creativeness of love that Christ has been able to describe love as God, and God as love. Truly, it is difficult to search out any manifestation of creativeness better and more demonstrative than love.

I find that if this constructiveness and self-strength of non-violence is not keep in view then it just becomes a prohibition of violence. Non-indulgence in violence alone is not non-violence. Nonviolence is much more than that. Absence of enmity is not love; love is much more than that.

Absence of enmity is not love; love is much more than that. If this difference is not borne in mind then attainment of non-violence is just converted into prohibition of violence. and renunciation of violence. The results of this are killing. The attitude of negativeness and prohibition does not provide broadness to life; it gives narrowness, stagnation and bondage. The individual does not grow; he becomes narrower. Thereby the magnificent life does not grow into the Brahma; it gets narrowed down to the small and to self-conceit. It could have become a river and reached the ocean, but it starts drying up as a tank. To awaken non-violence is like becoming a river; getting involved in mere renunciation of violence is like becoming a tank. Achievement of the negative does not take to prosperity, beauty and perfection; it takes to ugliness and deformity. That path is to be abandoned; not to be sought and followed. Just as a person aspiring for health might consider mere prevention of disease as health, similarly is this mistake. Health is not merely the non-existence of sickness; it is also the awakening of the power of life; it is the awakening and realization of the sleeping and basic powers of life. Even a dead person can be saved from sickness; but he cannot be given health.

By escaping diseases one can keep himself alive; but it is different to find health and life.

It is very useful to remember this science of keeping good health in relation to religion. A monk was a guest in a monastery. A welcome function was arranged in his honour. The head of the monastery, during the course of his introduction to it and its residents, said: ”We do not commit violence. We do not use intoxicants. We do not gather wealth.” In the same tone he mentioned several other things which the monks would not do. That guest

kept listening to all those for a long time and in the end he asked: ”I have understood what you do not do; now kindly tell me what you do?”

Surely, I also want to ask the same thing. I also want to remind you about this very valuable difference between ’not doing’ and ’doing.’

Whoever has understood non-violence, or from that point of view the religion, in the language of ’not doing’ has fallen into a very basic mistake. What Schweitzer called prohibitions in life, becomes his daily routine. His relations with the objects of life are completely broken. He loses the ladder for attainment and becomes busy in ’losing’ and ’not doing’; and the biggest surprise is that, in spite of this constant effort and persistence, he cannot lose what he wants to give up. What he renounces through struggle, continues to be with him in some mysterious way. He can hardly rest when he find that what he had left far behind have all returned to him. The currents that he suppresses appear to be gaining speed and he does not know why. The desires with he is at war, whose heads he cuts off from the body and throws away, stand surrounding him again and again, with thousand heads, to his utter surprise!

Neither violence, anger nor lust can be made to disappear through suppression alone. These currents do not end through negation and opposition. That way they become still more subtle and act on the deeper surfaces of the mind. What Freud has called the ’subconscious mind’ becomes their field of activity through suppression. After passing through this state of suppression and opposition, the individual cannot become free; he certainly becomes confused.

In fact, in the world of experiences of life nothing has ever been achieved through negation nor can anything be achieved; neither anything has ever be renounced, nor can it ever be renounced. That is not the way of finding or renouncing anything. In reality before renouncing anything it has to be found. Finding of the good itself becomes a renunciation of the bad. On finding the gems one does not have to open his fist to throw off the pebbles; it opens automatically.

I look at all renunciation in the same way. It is nothing more than making room to receive the good when it comes. It is not the forerunner of

knowledge, it is the follower; just as the wheels of a cart leave behind their traces without any effort, similar is the case of arrival of renunciation. That is a natural reflection of knowledge.

I call violence, irreligion and ignorance as negative in the same way as darkness is negative.

Darkness has no existence of its own. It has no importance in itself. It is not a power; it is a want.

It is not the existence of self; it is the non-existence of light; it is the absence of light. What shall we do if in this room there is darkness and we want to remove it? Can it be thrown out through struggle or by push? Can the darkness be killed as a result of a direct war waged against it? Friend, this will never be! That way the darkness cannot, but those attempting to remove it, might be destroyed.

The way to remove darkness is not to destroy it but to switch on light. It is impossible to destroy through negation what does not have its own existence. The non-existent can neither be brought in, nor removed. it is not possible even to take away darkness somewhere. Only the existent can be brought in and removed. With the non-existent, there can be no direct action; with that all behaviour is invisible. All dealings with that can take place through the medium of what it is the negative.

Non-violence, love, bliss and God, are all positive and concrete. They have their existence. They are not negatives or merely absence of others. They exist in themselves. Therefore, the absence of something does not form their existence; although when they come, violence, pain, ignorance, etc. run away like darkness. Perhaps it is wrong even to say that the darkness disappears; because it has never been there. In fact, on arrival of light, the truth, that it was not there and is not there, becomes clear.

Now it can be stated that non-violence is not the renunciation of violence but is awakening of the self. It is not a salvation from pain; it is establishment in bliss. It is not renunciation but attainment; even though after its coming, violence may disappear, pain may stop and the great renunciation may follow.

If non-violence is to be achieved, the soul will have to be discovered. Non-violence is a result of the same discovery. It can be cultivated. Krishnamurthy has asked: ”Can love also be cultivated?”

Surely, the cultivated love cannot be love. It is either there or is not there. There is no third alternative.

If it flows automatically, it is all right; otherwise it is violence; it is mere acting. What is superimposed with thought and effort is untrue. The true non-violence flows from the intellect, just as heat flows from fire. What becomes manifest in action through superimposition is not in the inner-self, it cannot be there. Contradiction of the conduct and the innser self causes a constant struggle within. What is won has to be won over again and again; but the victory is never complete; it cannot be. In fact, the circumference can never win over the centre; the conduct can never win over ht inner-self. The flow of change is the other way about, it is not from the circumference to the centre but from the centre to the circumference. the inner-self passes through a revolution and there is a change in conduct.

The conduct, brought about by effort, can never be natural. It cannot be more than habit. Its value is not more than that. It can never become the nature. There is no question of making what is nature.

Habit is created; nature is not created. One has to reveal it.

Friend, nature is not born, it is there. It has merely to be revealed. It has only to be uncovered; just as some one sleeps and he has to be wakened up; the same has to be done with nature.

I saw a well being dug up; and then I remembered that nature had also to be dug up just like that.

The sources of water were there but they were covered. They were anxious to flow and burst forth, but they were obstructed; and when the layers of the obstructing mud were removed they started flowing so nicely. Something similar is true about the nature. There also is a constant desire for flowing, developing and flowering. A little digging is necessary; then life flows out

on an entirely new plane. What was not available even after attempts till yesterday becomes available so naturally.

What could not be given up till yesterday even after several attempts cannot now be found even after a search. To know this process of the change of life is religion. Alchemist was in search of this alone. He was in search of a chemical which could convert iron into gold. Life as it is, is iron; life as it can be is gold.

And if we look at it a little more closely, iron is merely the cover, the cloth; gold is always present inside.

Good conduct and non-violence are the revelation of nature; they are the uncovering of the face.

Mahavira accepted them in the same meaning. Whatever exists in the self, that alone is available to non-violence. That action which is merely a conduct and not a natural product of character does not take to the Brahma; it takes to the deeper layers of self-conceit. From that ego gains strength.

It gets fed from all directions and becomes powerful. The deep pride that we find in the so-called saints and renouncers is not something sudden. At the root of it, there is the conduct resulting from forced efforts and the habit which has developed through efforts. This cultivated character becomes the source of development of pride, just like earned money. Character also assumes the form of collections and wealth.

In fact, whatever is earned and collected puffs up the ego; because collection takes the form of the victory of ego. How surprising it is that the collected renunciation also takes the form of the collections and the collected humility also has ego? Do not you often observe in the heads, bowed in so-called humility, the heads raised in pride?

I met a monk once and he told me: I have spurned property worth lakhs of rupees. I was surely surprised to hear it. Then I asked him: ”When did you do this”? He said, with a sense of achievement about thirty years ago.” After meeting him, and on my return, I was thinking that what was renounced had not taken him out of pride. One day, he must have been

proud of the fact that he possessed lakhs; today he was proud that he had spurned them!

Renunciation is all right if it comes naturally, but if it is attempted and done, it is not all right; and this is true in respect of all aspirations in relation to religion. The paths of pride are very subtle; they are very mysterious; and pride call be found even in those places where its presence cannot be suspected and where outwardly it is not at all visible. Its thicker forms are visible, and therefore they are not so dangerous; but the subtler forms are very dangerous because they are not normally visible, and therefore they lead to lot of self-deception. The pride of being religious, renouncing, learned and non-violent belongs to the latter form.

Good conduct is the inspiration of religious knowledge and those who get puffed up with the so-called transplanted good conduct become devoid of that supernatural inspiration of religion where even the shadow of pride cannot enter. Just as the dew-drops disappear in the sunshine similarly in the light of self-realization, pride evaporates. That is a companion of ignorance and darkness. Its life and breath are made of it. The the absence of ignorance, its life is not possible.

Ignorance is pride; knowledge is freedom from pride. conduct of ignorance goes with self-conceit; conduct of knowledge goes with God. Egoistic conduct is violence; Godly conduct is non-violence.

The feeling of self-conceit drags to violence. That feeling is offensive. All violence turns around that axis. In ignorance, conceit prevails on the self. The soul gets drowned in it. What really does not exist appears to be there. This conceit stands separated and in opposition to the ’Power of the world’. Then it has to engage itself in constant self-defence. Constant extinction surrounds it. A feeling of unsafety keeps him company for twenty-four hours. That is a boat of paper which can drown any moment. It is a house of cards and any stir of the air can shatter it. This fear is the birth of violence. In its original mental form violence is fear itself. This fear can develop from self-defence to offence. In truth, even offence is another form of self-defence. Perhaps, Machiavelli has said:

”Offence is the best form of defence”. If fear remains confined to self-defence alone then ultimately it leads to cowardice. The same fear looks like bravery when it becomes offensive. But whether it is cowardice or the so-called bravery, fear is present in both; and that is the motive power for both.

Those who wield the sword, as also those who keep themselves in hiding, are both moved by fear.

It is necessary to know what fear is, because he who is afraid can never be non-violent; and if a man-in-fear tries to be non-violent, he becomes merely a coward, not non-violent. History and experience offer many and powerful proofs of this. The basis of non-violence is fearlessness. In the absence of fearlessness, non-violence is not possible. Mahavira and Buddha have considered fearlessness as an essential pre-requisite for non-violence.

I find that the entire consciousness of man is surrounded by, and is made of fear. It is always present on some surface of his mind. This fear, whatever be the form of its manifestation, is basically the fear of death. Death surrounds all through life. It is drawing near at all moments. It can come at any moment and from any direction. From this death, which is possible at any time, fear is only natural. For one thing, it is absolutely unfamiliar; and then the man is absolutely helpless before it.

Fear is natural from the unknown and the unfamiliar. Life, even if it be intolerable, is at least familiar.

Death carries into the unknown. This unknown gives fear; and then we have no control over it. We cannot do anything with it. This helplessness destroys our ego from its very roots. The ego, whose development we had taken for life, appears to be breaking and destroyed. That alone was our being; that alone were we; and therefore death appears to be the end of our life. What are we? Body and mind and the ego resulting from the union of both; but the flames of death appear to turn them into ashes. On the other side, and beyond them, nothing appears to remain. Why then should man not feel afraid? How should he console himself? In such state, fear is natural; and to save himself from this fear, man becomes ready to do anything from this fear alone, several forms of violence take birth. Therefore, I say that fear

itself is violence, and fearlessness is non-violence. To be free from violence, one has to be free from fear; to be free from fear, one has to be free from death; to be free from death, one has to know oneself.

I know others; but I do not know myself. How surprising it is? Can there be anything more surprising than that?

How mysterious it is that I am familiar with the outside and unfamiliar with the inner self!

this ignorance of the self alone is the cause of all pain, bad conduct and non-salvation.

The power of knowledge is in me; otherwise how could I know others or the exterior? That is intact in me. If I am awake, it is there; if I sleep, it is there; if I dream, it is there; if I sleep without dreams, it is there I know the states of being awake, being in sleep, being in dream and being in sound sleep.

I can see them. I know them. I know them, because what is intact in me is my own form. There is nothing intact in me except knowledge. In fact, I am not separate from knowledge. I am knowledge itself. This knowledge is my existence, my soul.

Because I am knowledge I know others; because I am knowledge I can know myself.

The knowledge that I do not know myself is in itself a big step towards self-knowledge.

Because I see others, I know them. If I do not see others, if that ’something else’ is removed from the mind, then what will remain will be only the self.

The self cannot be seen. To see the self is to see someone else. the self is the seer; it is the one who sees. It cannot be converted into the object of sight. Therefore, the self is also not visible; and when nothing is visible then what remains is the ’self’.

The experience of the pure consciousness is the experience of the self.

I am surrounded by others; therefore, I ask how to remove others in order to attain self-realization.

They are always surrounding me.

The ’other’ disappears as soon as you close your eyes. Therefore it is no problem.

What is to be considered is the real problem. The reflections and the impressions of the ’others’

Which are left on the mind and which surround us are the problem. Because we are absorbed in them, we cannot know the self which knows them too. Because of those thoughts our consciousness remains hidden. There is awakening in that which is an eye-witness to the flow of thoughts. There is awakening in the eye-witness and the same has to be awakened. This is the problem.

From the conscious perception of thought; from the proper awakening of it, we experience the gap between the flow of thought and the inner flow. This gap gradually becomes wider. By merely seeing the thought by merely becoming its seer, without any suppression or struggle, it gets realised. The sight of the flow of thought takes to negation of thought and beyond the thought.

Negation of thought is concentration. Experience of God in the negation of thought is meditation.

Meditation is the sight of truth. The experience of meditation is the truth. The conduct of meditation is non-violence.

In meditation it appears that what is visible is in1mortal. The illusion of death is gone. With death fear also disappears and fearlessness is born.

From fearlessness non-violence flows.

One reaches the state of meditation through the self. But on reaching that state, the self and the non-self disappear. That difference was due to thought. Meditation is beyond difference and dualism. It has no difference, no twos. Just as the lamp-thread burns the lamp – oil and ultimately also burns up itself, similarly the self, after getting free from the non-self, becomes free itself. the salvation of the self is also salvation from the self.

Meditation is god incarnate. From realization of God, godly conduct emanates. The centre of godly conduct truth and its circumference is non-violence. In meditation, there grow the flowers of truth and fragrance of non-violence.

It is necessary to know in complete nakedness, after breaking false conceptions about the self what I am and who I am, because steps can be taken in the real direction of any practice in life only after that. A man cannot enter in the realm of truth... by remaining under the illusion of taking the mock individuality to be real, and by retaining false conceptions about himself. We will have to put to fire the imaginary individuality which we have taken over ourselves.... before we know God or the existence of the self or the truth. The skin of hypocrisy does not allow us to rise to the real life from the unreal dramatic life. It is necessary to awaken from this shadow drama if we desire to walk on the path of truth.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1