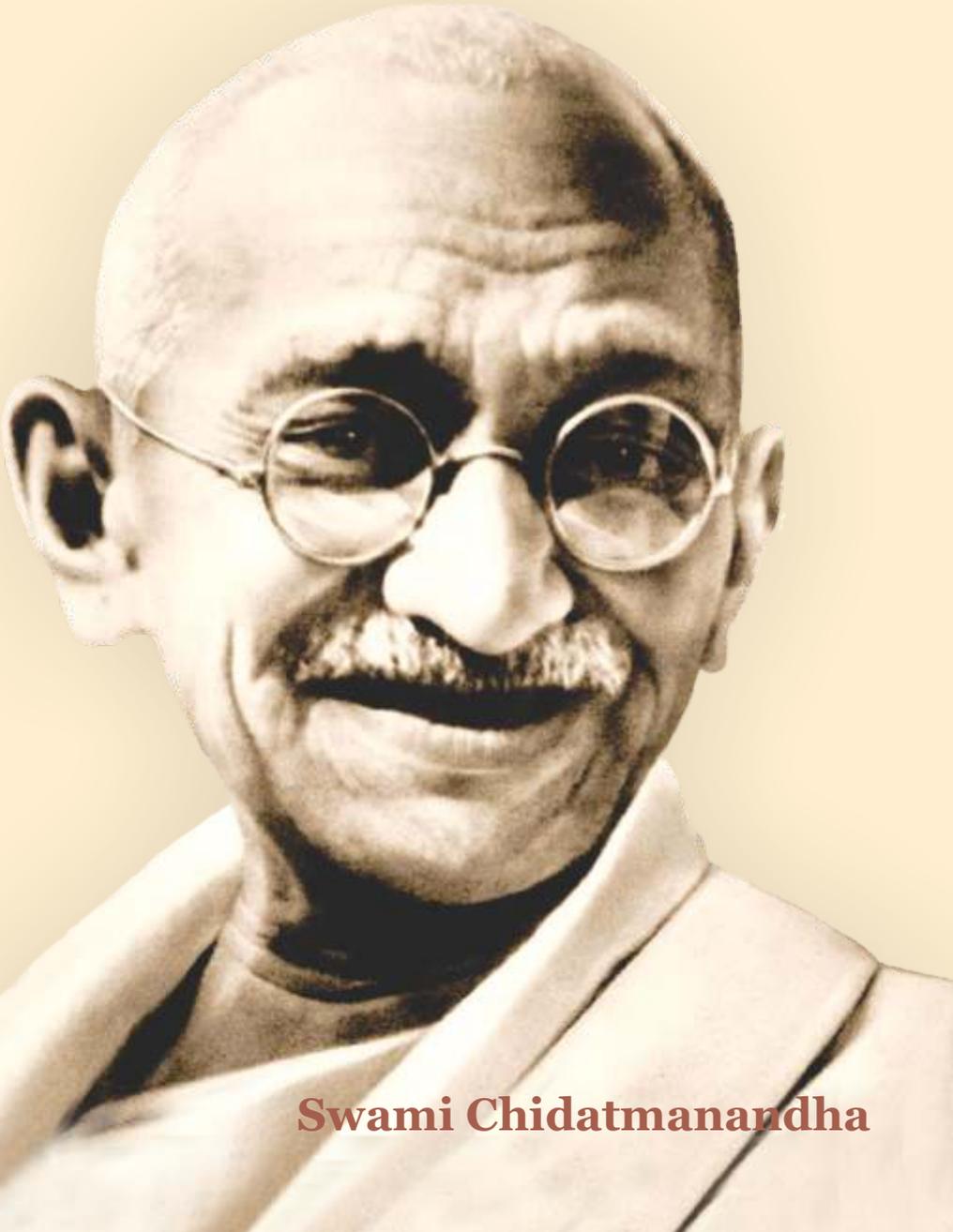
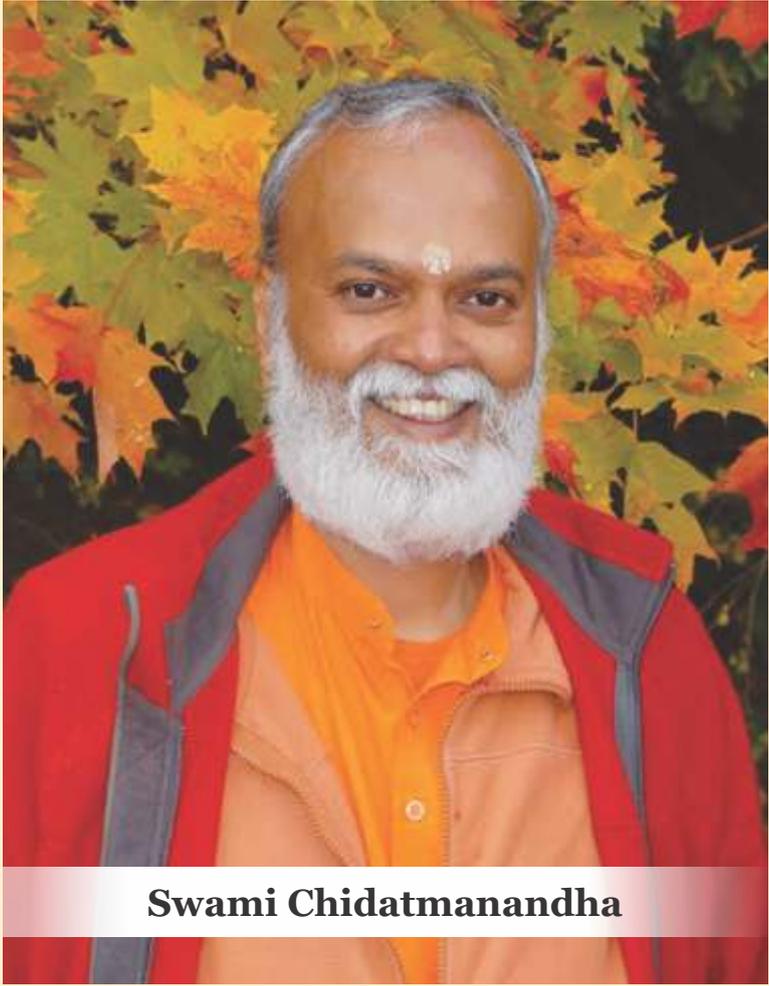


Essential Values of Mahatma Gandhi



Swami Chidatmanandha



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Chinmaya Dhyana Nilayam - Hyderabad

Essential Values of Mahatma Gandhi

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VALUE - PRICELESS

PAYMENT - FOLLOWING THE TEACHINGS OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Swami Chidatmanandha is a spiritual teacher whose core teaching emphasize the oneness (non-duality) of all beings. Swamiji travels across the globe delivering rich and profound lectures yet simple even for a novice. Swamiji's humility and pleasant demeanor makes him very approachable to people from all walks of life. Those seeking relief from ordinary issues to the deeply held misperceptions on life that cause immense stress and suffering find solace in swamiji's words. Swami Chidatmanandha brings out a variety of creative and scientific presentations by unearthing the ancient philosophies that appeal to the modern and rational minds thereby transforming them for the better. An element of humor is seen in his style that smoothens and simplifies the subject delivered and also has a healing effect on the audience.

Swami Chidatmanandha with his dynamic and inspirational teachings has touched the hearts of many people. After his sessions in the form of workshops, meditation retreats and lectures, the audience feels uplifted and discovers spiritual direction in their lives. Many feel

peace, solace and guidance in his loving presence. Countless people benefit from his regular discourses through Indian television channels.

Swamiji's topics like 'Art of Healing', 'Beyond Suffering', 'Learning through Relationships', 'Success in Married Life' and 'The Greatness of Mind' address the core problems of humanity. Swamiji's workshops that include guided meditation sessions give relaxation, peace and inner happiness. The spiritual sessions on 'Achieving Success with Values' to political leaders are well acclaimed. He is the author of the popular Telugu book on 'Learning through relationships'.

Swamiji graduated with a Law degree from Osmania University. In 1989, inspired by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandaji, he joined Sandeepany Sadhanalaya in Mumbai under the tutelage of Swami Purushottamanandaji. In 1993, he was initiated into brahmacharya deeksha by Pujya Gurudev and posted as the Acharya of the mission center at Hyderabad. In 1999, he was initiated into sanyasa deeksha by Swami Tejomayanandaji. At present, he is Acharya (Teacher in Charge) of Chinmaya Mission Hyderabad and Regional Head of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, India.

FOREWORD

Bhagawan Shri Krishna propounded the Highest Truth and its practical application to Arjuna in the battle field, to lift his sinking heart with despondency. Arjuna was facing life-death situation outwardly and was terrified within due to the pain and suffering that the loss of his dear one's would bring.

Is the situation not the same today? In today's world, actions speak louder than words. In his talks, Swami Chidatmanandhaji beautifully expounds how Gandhiji lived and demonstrated the values enumerated in Bhagawad Gita and Upanishad. These values helped him to uproot injustice while maintaining his inner-tranquility. During British rule, they helped him to face life and death situations and overcome petty self-interest to work for the higher cause of liberating India from slavery. Gandhiji's purity, simplicity and adherence to truth and non-violence inspired millions in India and around the world to attain true "Swarajya" internally and externally.

The talks given by Swami Chidatmanandhaji kindles the soft, pure emotions that help to bloom the lotus flower

of love, peace, joy and contentment in the otherwise dry and parched heart caused by selfishness that is rampant all over the world. His talks compiled into this book, if placed in the hands of the youth, will make them feel proud of their glorious leaders and countrymen of the independence era, and also to be a proud Indian. It also has the potential to inspire human beings to follow the “Essential values of Gandhiji” in day to day life, in order to attain the goal of “Vasudaiva Kutumbakam”- One Universe, One humanity, One Truth and Love!

Samastha lokaha sukhino bhavanthu.

Smt. Chitra Sairam

Former Principal, Chinmaya Vidyalaya,
Begumpet, Hyderabad.

Former Joint Treasurer & Executive Committee member,
Chinmaya mission Hyderabad.

GRATITUDE

I express my sincere gratitude to all those who have helped to organise, record, compile and edit the talks on “Essential Values of Mahatma Gandhi” which have become this book. [also available as e.book and in pdf format].

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SWAMI CHIDATMANANDHA

PREFACE

In the year 2015-16, Chinmaya Mission conducted a series of talks and major events to mark the Birth Centenary Celebrations of Swami Chinmayananda.

As part of a series of major events organised by Chinmaya Mission, Swami Chidatmanandha, Head of Chinmaya Mission in Andhra Pradesh, gave talks entitled “Essential Values of Mahatma Gandhi” at various places all over the world.

These talks aim at bringing the life history of Gandhiji to the fore. Chinmaya Mission believes that Gandhiji’s life story is an incredible journey of extraordinary achievement by an ordinary man of average intelligence. Through Gandhiji’s resolute commitment to the Indian independence movement. And total identification with his Nation’s people and their plight, he took on the mighty British Empire with his powerful non-violent resistance movement. He rendered millions to adopt a noble and peaceful approach to fight oppression. It was an approach that has inspired other great freedom fighters and ordinary people alike. Gandhiji with his exemplary living impressed and influenced many.

Following are some examples of notable individuals who were impressed by his life and message.

H.H. Chandrashekara Saraswati – Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam

“Gandhiji completely eschewed hatred. A more perfect ideal of ‘ahimsa (non-violence) and love, cannot be conceived. Gandhiji utilised every evil incident to test his inner purity.”

Albert Einstein

“Gandhi is a leader of his people, who is unsupported by only cultured authority. [Britishers] He is a politician whose success rests not upon craft nor mastery of technical devices but simply on the convincing power of his personality. He is a victorious fighter who has confronted the brutality of Europe with the dignity of a simple human being and has at all times risen superior! Generations to come will scarcely believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon the earth. With his belief (non-violence) in heart and mind he has lead a great nation onto its liberation. He has demonstrated that a powerful human following can be assembled not only through the cunning game of the usual political maneuvers and trickeries but through the cogent example of morally superior conduct of Life.”

Will Durant

“Not since Buddha has India so revered any man. Not since St. Francis of Assisi has any life known to history been so marked by gentleness, disinterestedness, simplicity of soul and forgiveness of enemies. We have the astonishing phenomenon of a revolution led by a saint.”

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (USA)

“Like most people, I had heard of Gandhi, but I had never studied him seriously. As I read, I became deeply fascinated by his campaigns of non-violent resistance. The whole concept of Satyagraha was profoundly significant to me. Gandhi was probably the first person in history to take the ‘Love Ethic of Jesus’ beyond mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale.

The intellectual and moral satisfaction that I failed to gain from the utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill, the revolutionary methods of Marx and Lenin, the social contract theory of Hobbes, the back to nature optimism of ‘Rousseau’, and the super human philosophy of ‘Nietzsche’, I found in the non-violent resistance philosophy of Gandhi.”

C. Rajagopalachari

“Gandhiji was going to the seat of his prayer to speak to his Rama. He did not die in bed calling for hot water, doctors

or nurses. He did not die after mumbling incoherent words in the sick bed. He died standing not even sitting down. Rama was too eager to take him.”

Lord Mountbatten

“India and indeed the world will not see the like of him again, perhaps for centuries. His life of Truth tolerance and love towards his fellow-men may inspire our troubled world to save itself by following his noble example. Mahatma Gandhi will go down in history on par with Buddha and Jesus Christ.”

S. Radhakrishnan

“When problems material or spiritual, crowd upon Gandhiji when conflicting emotions shake him, when troubles oppress him, he retires into the recesses of the Soul, the secret corridors of the Spirit to gain strength and nourishment. Such men who are filled with spiritual poise and yet who take upon themselves the task of shouldering the burden of suffering humanity are rarely born, and at long interval in the history of humanities to progress.

John Haynes Holmes

“As a proponent of unfaltering love MG can be remembered alongside Saint Francis, Thoreau and Tolstoy. He can also be counted among the greatest Messiahs of all times along with Laotse, Buddha, Zarathustra and Christ.

MG is very polite, sophisticated and affectionate. He has an unbeatable sense of humor. He possesses an alluring simplicity and he is the lord of Peace. He has the heart as soft as a flower but his physique is as tough as a diamond. He possesses a transparent power of concentration and his worship of truth is unwavering.”

Romain Rolland

“Gandhiji is the man who has stirred 300 million people to revolt and shaken the foundation of British empire. He has introduced in to human politics the stronger religious force of the last 2000 years. Gandhi is a hero of national history not only for India where his legendary memory will be enshrined in the millennial period but Gandhi has also revived for all the western people, the message of their Christ that was forgotten or betrayed. For many he was like the return of the Christ and for others he was new incarnation of Rosseau and Tolstoy. Gandhian approach has transformed the face of entire world. Awakened a new consciousness with a desire for liberation of mankind.”

While there were many things that influenced the life of Gandhiji, the effect of Hindu scriptures and in particular the Bhagavad Gita is undeniable. He once said, “When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the Bhagavad Gita and find a verse to comfort me and I

immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow.”

His life and legacy are testament to the power of a philosophy lived. Through his subjective experiments with his own life and his perpetual quest for truth, he was a living example of how an imperfect man who internalises and attempts to dynamically live universal teachings can transform himself and the world around him.

Chinmaya Mission hopes to remind us of this ever-inspiring message of Gandhiji through these talks and expects that we can ultimately adopt some of these essential values and experience their beauty in our own lives.

In order to spread the message of Gandhiji at the National and International level, the Government of India decided to commemorate his 150th birth anniversary on October 2, 2019.

As a tribute to Gandhiji, to commemorate his 150th birth anniversary celebration excerpts of the talk given by Swami. Chidatmanandhaji have been compiled into this book [also as e-book and in pdf format] as a humble offering at the feet of Mahatma Gandhiji.

Sevak

Chinmaya Seva Trust , Hyderabad, A.P, INDIA.

PRAYER

om

Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnu Gurur Devo Maheshwaraha
Gurureva Parabrahma tasmai Shri Guruvey Namaha

Chinmayam Vyapiyat Sarvam trayee lokyam sa
characharam tad padam darshitham yena tasmai Shri
Gurvey namaha

Vakratunda Mahakaya Suryakoti samaprabha nirvighnam
kurume Deva Sarva karyeshu Sarvada

Vasudeva sutam Devam kamsa chanoor mardhanam devaki
paramanandam Krishnam vandey Jagath Gurum

Bhavani Shankarao vandey shradha vishwas rupinou
yabhyam vinana pashyanthi sidha swanthastha meswaram

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HARI OM

[EXCERPTS FROM THE TALKS OF SWAMI CHIDATMANANDHAJI]

Chapter 1

LIVING POWER

Before we venture into the topic let us have a namasmarana. I request those of you who are comfortable, to repeat after me. Generally we have namasmarana connected to Bhagawan. However, this topic is unique in connection to jnana yagna generally conducted by Chinmaya mission It is usually related to spiritual text. But this time, it is connected to a great Mahatma and his values which he imbibed in his life. But of course, all of his essential values are connected with scriptures only. Therefore, it is an indirect way of looking at the scriptural knowledge through the viewpoint of great personality. Since the topic is connected with a great Mahatma, this namasmarana will be connected unto this great soul depicting his unique qualities. So let us focus our mind on that great giant who showed us the path of freedom, truthfulness, dharma, ahimsa, and love.

NAMASMARANA

Sathya dharma vrathaya [2]

Mahatama jathi pitha Karuna rasa hrudaya [2]

*Mahatma jathi pitha Sathya dharma vrathaya
mahatma jathi pitha*

Karuna rasa hrudaya mahatma jathi pitha

Ahimsa guna gami [2]

Mahatma jathi pitha Sahana sheele shantha premi [2]

Mahatma jathi pitha Sneha sheele dwesha rahitha [2]

Mahatma jathi pitha [2]

Tyaga sheele tapaswi [2]

Mahatma jathi pitha Sadarama nama vrata [2]

Mahatma jathi pitha [2]

Sada loka seva vratha [2]

Mahatama jathi pitha [2]

Daya prem-maya bapu [2]

Mahatma jathi pitha [2]

Sathya dharma vrataya karuna rasa hrudaya,

Ahimsa guna gami Sahana sheele shantha premi,

Sneha sheele dwesha rahitha

Tyaga sheele tapaswi Sada rama nama vrata [2]

Sada loka seva vrata [2]

Daya prem- maya bapu [2]

Mahatma jathi pitha [2]

LIVING POWER

The glory or greatness of an individual lies not only in the deeds but in the way in which one thinks and views the world around oneself. It also depends how one relates to the beings in this creation and his attitude toward fellow beings in the community and society. The wishes and ideals of the individual, depict his or her greatness. For some individuals, the title brings glory and in some very rare individuals, the individual brings glory to the title. In the case of Gandhiji, the word Mahatma gathered greatness because it is associated with Gandhiji. He was great even before he was given the title. His way of thinking surprises us. A few of the Westerners had such an esteemed opinion of Gandhiji, I am afraid we Indians may not have appreciated him in the same way.

Once Mahatma Gandhiji described about the world and the very creation in Vedantic terms. He said, “I too dimly perceive that everything around me is ever changing and ever dying. Underlying this change is a living power that is changeless.” The substratum of this creation, the ‘adhishtanam’ of this jagath and the one who is making everything happen in this creation is changeless. This is an Upanishadic statement. This is the Truth. But in case of Gandhiji, his words are emanating from his own experience. When he saw the world around him, he recognized that everything around is ever-changing and ever disappearing

into death but, he also recognized that underlying all that change there is something which is a living-power, that is changeless. One who recognizes the ‘changelessness’ in the world of change, has recognized the very essence of this Universe.

Gandhiji said, “It is that living-power which is changeless, holds all of us together.” Continuing further, Gandhiji said, “It is that living-power which is changeless, this informing power or spirit, which creates, sustains, dissolves, and again brings everything back into creation is called God or Bhagawan.” He said something very important after that. He said, “This changeless living power is God and God alone is real”. He also proved this point in his own unique way. He said that everything that he saw through his senses does not persist and cannot persist. This means that it does not remain the same. So he said, “As nothing else which is merely seen through the senses cannot persist or will not persist, it will not remain the same; it will vanish, disappear or go out of existence, therefore I say God alone is real. The divinity alone is real, that changeless living power alone is real. Everything else is not real. God is that changelessness.” Rishi of the Upanishads and Gandhiji are they not alike in their thinking? It is like an experiential Upanishadic statement coming out of this Mahatma. Seeing that changeless, recognizing the changeless, knowing that changeless, is being “One” with the changeless. When we

look into various life incidents of Gandhiji, then we can understand that Mahatmaji knew about the reality, about the Truth, and there was that strict adherence to the principles he held on to, uncompromisingly.

He further said, “This living power which is changeless is a benevolent power, full of blessings.” He continued to say that, “I can see that amid death, life persists; amid untruth, truth persists; amid darkness, light persists. So it is a purely benevolent power.” Thus Gandhiji concluded that God is life, God is truth, God is light, God is love and God is the supreme good! In the viewpoint of Gandhiji, all these are God, divine and divinity alone. He said, “He is no God, who merely satisfies the intellect.” According to Gandhiji, for God to be God, he must rule the heart and transform it. He further said that this cannot be proved by external evidence but by a definite realization which is beyond all the five senses. When an individual has the realization that he is beyond the five senses, it makes him recognize the presence of God within.

Those who recognize the presence of God within, transform themselves. Their conduct and character changes. By looking at the transformation in their character and conduct one can know that they have perceived the presence of God within. This is the proof, according to Gandhiji. That God to be God, must rule the heart and transform it! Great masters go beyond all worldly entanglements and

attachments. The proof is that changes happens not outside, but inside. And that which happens inside automatically influences the outside.

When these great people who undergo this transformation, move around in this world, other people also change by looking at them, interacting with them and by getting influenced by them. That is the proof, that God is present in their heart, God rules the heart and God transforms the heart! Gandhiji is a person who recognized the presence of God outside, in the world of change, and also recognized the presence of God within every living being, in creation. From his standpoint, all are equal. He never saw any disparity or any difference. What would we call such a person? In the light of the scriptural understanding, we would say that such a person is an “Enlightened being.” But in his own words, he says, “I am not there”.

Similarly Gurudev also was asked once, “Are you there?” ‘There’ means established in the highest state of realization. But Gurudev didn’t want to create the gap between him and his listeners and followers. So he said, “I am not yet, I am waiting for all of you to come. Then all of us together, we will enter into it.” So this makes us feel closer to Gurudev. Otherwise we think.. ‘app chale gaye Ham idhar hi rah gaye.’ [you went, and we are all left behind here].

Explaining the role of Bhagavad Gita in his life, Gandhiji said, “When doubts haunt me and when disappointments stare at me in my face and when there is not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to Bhagavad Gita and find a verse that comforts me. Immediately, I begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrows.” Gandhiji said that his life had been full of external tragedies and if they had not left any visible and indelible effect on him, he owed it to the teachings of Bhagavad Gita. In general, external tragedies if they have no effect upon an individual, then in the opinion of Gandhiji that is because of the reflections of the teachings of Bhagavad Gita. In our spiritual parlance, Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita stand at the highest level and what Mahatma Gandhi said also is the same.

An incident happened in Gandhiji’s life which gives us a glimpse of his firmness in practicing his values. Gandhiji went from India to England to study law. Then he returned to India. After which he got an invitation to work in the field of law in South Africa. He stayed there alone for a few years. When he returned to India briefly after his second visit to South Africa, he met Gopal Krishna Gokhaleji, Lokmanya Tilakji, all other great freedom fighters and selfless individuals.-He decided to take his family along with him to South Africa. On January 13, 1897, he arrived in Durban. Before he arrived, there was some misrepresentation of facts in the press. In those days also it used to happen! What

Gandhiji never meant or never said was reported, about the Whites in Natal, South Africa. So when he arrived, there was already a group of White people waiting to take revenge on Gandhiji. And here it is important to know how Gandhiji faced it, accepted it, and responded to this challenge. That shows that he was rooted within. He did not merely talk about or discuss the values and the principles, but he was a person, who lived all of them. His living itself was preaching. He was living every single principle and value. The same group then started shouting, “Gandhi has come, Gandhi has come!” and then the word spread and slowly more people started gathering there. The person who had come to take Gandhiji to a particular destination was frightened and worried that at any moment this crowd could attack Gandhiji. A few of them started pelting stones. Not flowers or chocolates but pelting stones at Gandhiji! They also threw brickbats and rotten eggs on him. A couple of them came ahead. They pulled and snatched the turban which Gandhiji was wearing, and started battering him. Few started kicking him. This is not a movie story but a real life incident of Gandhiji. When we see such things happen in the movie, it is all direction and acting. But this is reality! Those people that were there, were all trying to get involved and play a role. He held on to the railings that were in front of the house because he could not go anywhere. He didn't say anything because even if he said anything, they would not listen, so he just accepted the situation as it was.

And then when it was beyond his capacity to withstand anymore he fainted. By the time he regained consciousness, a brave lady, Mrs. Alexander, who was wife of the Superintendent of police and knew Gandhiji, his value system and his principles, came and stood between the crowd and Gandhiji. She obstructed them from touching Gandhiji. Of course, she was the wife of the police superintendent, but still very brave. She stood there because she knew what Gandhiji stood for. Meanwhile, she communicated a message through others to her husband Mr. Alexander, the superintendent. He sent the police force to prevent further damage to Gandhiji. They came and picked him up. Later on, this message went to the great leaders, and thereafter Mr. Accoubay said to Gandhiji "If you can identify the assailants, I am prepared to arrest them, and prosecute them. Please recognize them. Tell me who they are? You can identify them because you have been here for a few years." Gandhiji said, "I do not want to prosecute anyone. What is the use of getting them punished? I do not blame the assailants. They were told that I had made exaggerated statements in India, about the Whites." It is astonishing that he was not blaming them. Who could say that? Can an ordinary individual say that? After receiving beatings from the mob, he fainted, and could have died! We know when the mob starts to attack a single individual, do they calculate and then hit? They do whatever they feel like. Destructive mind can only destroy and harm. In his brief visit to India, the press reported that he made exaggerated

statement about Whites in Natal and defamed them by making false statements. They understood that way and also believed that to be the truth! That is why they were enraged. Gandhiji said, they believed the report, so they got enraged, and that was the reason, they took revenge. How could they be blamed? Then he said to Mr. Accoubay, “You leaders have to clarify it to them, but I am sure when truth becomes known, they will be sorry for their conduct.”

An interesting incident took place when on the same day Gandhiji was interviewed by a leading newspaper ‘Natal Advertiser.’ In the interview with Gandhiji, they highlighted the point that he refused to prosecute the assailants. When this news was published, it produced such a profound impression. All the Europeans of Durban felt ashamed about their conduct. Gandhiji had already said that, “When the truth becomes known, they will be sorry for their conduct.” He didn’t try to advertise. That was not the age of messages in Facebook, Twitter, I-messages, Android messages. That was not the age of television. It was a different age, but even then, Gandhiji relied on his principles alone. He relied on Truth - Satyam. He said, “Truth will be known because it cannot be covered, and when the truth becomes known, they will be sorry for their conduct.” ‘Natal Advertiser’ published this, that is how everybody came to know. They also mentioned in their comments that the entire press supported Gandhiji as they thought he was innocent.” They condemned the

mob and their activities. All those who participated in the attack also read this in the newspaper and we can understand what they must have gone through! Everybody felt sorry, everyone felt that they had made a mistake. They agreed that a false report got them enraged, and they attacked Gandhiji.

This incident enhanced the prestige of the Indian community in South Africa. One individual stood up for truth, he did not prosecute or blame anybody. He only said that when the truth will be known, they will feel sorry for it. He had that infinite patience and the willingness to face anything, and finally when the truth was revealed it enhanced the prestige of the Indian community in South Africa. Everybody benefited from his behaviour. South African's started treating the Indians with more respect and value. Thereafter, the work of Gandhiji became very easy. Please note here that, amid such a situation, Gandhiji kept quiet, and received the battering of the mob. He faced the situation as it was, trusting the Truth, as to him Truth was God. He held on to the Truth, with firm conviction that Truth alone will protect and save him. Ultimately that is exactly what happened!

He did not send any message to anybody. He did not call anybody to be saved. That Truth which he was holding on to, and principle as that he was holding on to, prompted Mrs. Alexander to daringly stand between the crowd and Gandhiji and prevented the mob from reaching him. Thereafter, the

press also arrived without anyone inviting them. How did all that happen? That underlying changeless principle, which is the “Living Power” that Gandhiji calls love, supreme good, truth, life, and light took care! Gandhiji was completely under its care. And when we look at the common lot, we have to scan, to discover people, who can hold onto the Truth, with that amount of faith and trust; and consider Truth as God. Given a chance, nobody would want to hold on to Truth. ‘In this 21st century do you think you can hold on to Truth and still be successful?’ This is the notion people have! Truth is “Truth” anytime.

Once, it so happened that a person was driving through a muddy road. There was a ditch filled with water and mud which he did not see. Sometimes one is not able to see the potholes during the rainy season because they are filled with water. Only when the car tyres go into it, then only, one realizes the impact and the effect of it. Sometimes the tyres come out and sometimes they don’t come out or they come off totally! So what happened in this incident is that this person’s car tyre went inside the pot-hole and got stuck. He looked around for help. A person who looked like a farmer driving his tractor, came and said, “Oh! Do you need help? If you give me hundred rupees, I will pull your car out of this.” So the owner of the car immediately agreed and said, “Please take hundred rupees and pull the car out.” The farmer took the amount and with great enthusiasm, he

He tied a rope to the car from the tractor and pulled the car out of the pothole. As the driver thanked him and sat in his car to leave, the farmer said, "This is the tenth car today that I have pulled out." "This is the tenth car?" asked the car owner. With lot of interest he enquired, "Ah! what a great service you are doing, is it the tenth car you pulled out today? Now, but if the whole day is spent like this, when will you attend to your fields? When will you do the farming? Is it at night you attend to your fields?" And the farmer with all honesty said, "At night time I fill this hole with water!" At night time, the farmer fills the pothole with water and during day time when car tyres get stuck in it he pulls them out. He has his own ways of earning. Create an issue, act as a saviour and then extract the money. There are people from various walks of life, who are like that. They simply frighten and threaten. When everything is going on well, smoothly, and comfortably they are not happy. Their value is not felt by others, as they have no value of their own. In order to frighten, they suddenly will show something which is not there. That is maya! Frighten the people, by threatening them and then act as their saviour. That is how they make others feel that their presence is important. We can see such people in various organizations, and committees. Why? Because principles 'Nahin Hai' [principles are not there]. They want to be important, How? 'darao....darao doosaroun ko' [by frightening others]. Frighten them, threaten them, tell what

is not there, falsify, and then make one-self very important. Then they say, “You are frightened. I will show you the idea, a way out!” They will never bring anybody out, as there is no need for it.

Two lawyers went to a famous restaurant and ordered some drinks, and then they took out the bags they had. From those bags they took out their lunch packets, opened them and were about to eat them. Just then the manager of that famous restaurant said, “Sir you cannot eat your food here.” They asked, “Meaning?” The manager continued, “You have to eat our food. If you come here and eat your own food then what are we supposed to do? Therefore, you cannot eat your food here.” Both the lawyers looked at each other, shrugged their shoulders and exchanged their lunch packets, and said “We are following your rule, we are not eating our food. I am eating his food, and he is eating mine.”

What could one say? And when the restaurant owner tried to argue, they said, “What is your statement? You said that we cannot eat our food. Are we eating our food? No! How can you hold us responsible now for breaking the rule?” A rule can be followed truthfully and sincerely, but the rule can be broken into a very different way also. Principled living is different. A principled person holds on to the values that he follows and practices.

Once a philosopher went to a doctor and said, ‘I am undergoing a lot of pain due to ill health, please help me.’

The doctor conducted all the tests immediately, brought all the reports, and sat down in front of the philosopher and said, “A very good thing that you have done is, you have come to me and a very nice thing that has happened is you have gone through all the tests. Even better thing is that now I have all your reports. Unfortunately, I have to tell you that you will live only as long as I count.” Meaning that the doctor will start counting, and by the time he finishes counting, the philosopher will be no more. That was the bad news. “Do you have any last wish?” the doctor asked. The philosopher said, “One wish I have! You start counting backwards from 100 trillion” The doctor was shocked. The external situation can frighten and threaten you, but internal understanding, internal stability, which is based on the values and principles, will give you a different strength within.

Once, when Gandhiji’s secretary Mahadev Desaiji was reciting certain verses from the Bhagavad Gita, Gandhiji told him and others that were there at the time, “Arjuna who represents you and me, once asked Bhagawan Shri Krishna, “Oh lord within me! How can one recognize a person who is aware of God every moment of his life?” And then Gandhiji continued to say that in His reply, Shri Krishna delivered 18 magnificent verses, unparalleled in the Spiritual literature of the world. According to Gandhiji, these are 18 verses connected with the second chapter of Sthitaprajna-Lakshana that he holds in high esteem. He said, they are unparalleled

in the spiritual literature of the world, and he believes that one who lives in wisdom, sees himself in all and all in him. Referring to the word “who” in the statement of Bhagawan Shri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, Gandhiji said, that Bhagawan Shri Krishna meant, he ‘who’ sees himself in all and all in him and the one who has renounced every selfish desire and every sense craving tormenting the heart is said to be living in steady wisdom.

He was referring to the sloka of the Sthith Pragna lakshanas:

*prajahati yada kaman sarvan partha mano-gatan
atmany evatmana tustah sthita-pragnas tadocyate*

‘Partha yada prajahati sarvan kaman mano-gatan’-
meaning: Oh Arjuna, when a person gives up all the desires that are there in the mind, that are emanating in the mind;

‘atmana tustah atmany eva’- meaning: by remaining contented, established in one’s own Self;

‘tado cyate sthitapragna’- meaning: then he is called a wise man. When a person gives up all kinds of vrittis and desires that are there in the mind, and when he remains contented, independent of them.

‘atmanyeva atmana tushtah’- meaning: such a person is said to be living in the state of highest wisdom. He always lives in that state of wisdom, whatever might be the external situation.

Once it so happened that Gandhiji was traveling uphill in Darjeeling, a very small hill station, in a narrow-gauge train. A few people were going along with him. One important person, Pandit Sudhakar Chaturvedi was also travelling with Gandhiji and was taking dictation of Gandhiji's letters. After a while, they saw many people in the compartment started panicking, and getting frightened. They were moving here and there, and did not know what to do because they found out that the engine that was pulling all the bogies going uphill, got disconnected. So the entire train was without an engine! All the bogies, instead of going up the hill, started going downwards. Slowly it started gaining more and more speed. Nobody knew, how it would end, because it was a steep hill, and there were valleys. It could derail or fall into the valley any moment. All the people who were on-board, may get injured or killed. And at that time Gandhiji was busy giving dictation to Pandit Sudhakar Chaturvedi. When Sudhakar Chaturvedi got to know about all this, he said, "Mahatmaji, "Do you know what is happening?" Gandhiji said, "What?" Sudhakarji said, "The engine got disconnected, and the entire train is going backwards. It is a steep hill and there are valleys. Anytime it can derail and fall into the valley. We will all die. It is a state between life and death. Nobody is there to stop the train and it is gaining speed. We will all die." Gandhiji said, "If we die, we die. But suppose if we get saved". Ponder over the words of Gandhiji-"If we die, we

die but suppose if we get saved, then we have wasted all this time.” Can we imagine such a person? Einstein was right when he said, “Generations to come will scarcely believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth.” Gandhiji’s attitude was, “if we die, we die, but suppose we get saved, we would have wasted this time. Why should we waste time? Come on, sit and take my dictation.” Bap rey![Oh God!] Pandit Sudhakar Chaturvedi later narrated this incident at some place and said that his hands were shaking, so what dictation could he take? Gandhiji was giving dictation, but Sudhakarji also should have been in a position to take the dictation without wasting a moment!

We have heard stories of Gurudev and also have seen Gurudev like that- not wasting a moment. Look at Gandhiji, in that situation of life and death, when any moment he could be dead, he was still fearless with his focus on values and principles and not shaken at all by the news or the message that reached him. He had the courage to say, “If we die, we die...” He was going to face death, just like that! Tremendous amount of courage is required for that! Whenever he faced such deadly situations, he faced them like that - with courage! What amount of strength there must be within him - to say like that, to be like that and to do like that. No wonder Rabindranath Tagoreji called him a Mahatma. Not an ordinary atma, but a Mahatma! He called him a Mahatma not only because he obtained freedom, but

more so because his living itself was a teaching and each incident in his life, teaches us something.

Gandhiji's secretary Mahadev Desaiji was once reading following verse which Gandhiji liked:

*Dukhesv anudvigna manaha sukheshu vigata
spruhaha veeta raga bhaya krodhaha sthidadeehi
muniruchyate*

'*munihi*' means the discriminating person, '*vigataspruhaha sukheshu*' means who is free from the longings of the sources of pleasure, '*anudvigna manaha dukheshv*' means whose mind is unperturbed by the sources of sorrow, '*vita raga bhaya krodha*' meaning who is free from attachment (raga), fear (bhaya), anger (krodha), '*uchyate sthidadeehi*' means he is called a wise person. Gandhiji said, a wise person is always in equanimity, and that we can witness in his life. On February 22nd, 1944, despite all efforts of the people, Gandhiji's wife was on the verge of death. When this message reached him, he said, "Today is the day of my trial, to find out if I am able maintain my equanimity." While he was saying this, tears were rolling down his cheeks. Those tears were not because of any low-level emotion that we know of; it was out of the love, gratitude, respect, and the gratefulness he felt for his wife.

Gandhiji was not even in his 20's when he was married. For decades, his wife was his companion, she was his strength

and his inspiration. Gandhiji spoke about his wife and what he shared was very significant. He said, she accepted all my negativities and weaknesses. Because Gandhiji did all kinds of experiments; she went along. Truthfulness in Gandhiji meant that even about his own self he spoke only the truth; what he is and what he was. He was not like people who paint their autobiography or their introduction in a very diverse way once they become public figures whether it is in the political field or in the spiritual field. They act as if they descended directly from heaven and have appeared in the Himalayas to bless the world. Gandhiji was not like that. With truthfulness to the core, he talked with no hesitation about what he is and what he was. He said, his wife accepted and swallowed all his negativities and weakness and stood by his side all these years. What a glory he gave to his wife! He continued to say that today she will be no more. Meaning, not that he was not bothered that his wife is leaving the earthly sojourn, and he is in equanimity, no way! He said, “when I observe and look at myself, I understand what is happening within me, and this makes a big difference in my life.” And he told others also that when an individual breaks, when he is facing tough situations, he should look within and notice what is happening. He should notice how he is facing the situation, what is it that he is undergoing. This will bring a major difference in their life. This had brought a big difference in his own life also. The highest teachings bring

a big difference in life only if they are practiced and tested within oneself, not outside and not for the sake of any award, reward, glorification or praises. But nowadays people are only for praises, recognition, and rewards. If there is nobody to give, they sponsor their own awards and compel others to honour them. Gandhiji never sent anything to anybody for such a purpose.

Even Swami Chinmayanandji was like that. In his entire life he never expected any award, reward, or any recognition. Never wanted anybody to praise, or recognize him. These great men are so happy in doing what they want to do and they enjoy the work they do to the core because '*atmany eva atmana tustaha.*' They are so contented, happy and fulfilled as they are not expecting anything, not wanting anything, not desiring anything, nor missing anything. They only wish well and progress for others and nothing else. The life of such a great masters depicts a different spiritual living to all of us. We cannot even envision such type of living as one of the gunas (attributes). Externally we may have to say it is *satwa guna, tamo guna, rajo guna* but deep within themselves, these gunas also do not have any influence or impact on them. Their minds do not fluctuate between '*praptha and a-praptha*' (gained and not gained) like a common man. For a common individual, the mind will always be fluctuating between what I have gained and not gained. Constantly all actions are oriented towards that.

His mind is constantly wavering in his interest, charm and appeal of things. He is never contented and always wants to gain more and new things. He goes through various kinds of states of thoughts and the *bhumikas* of the *chitha*.

Most of the people, are under the influence of '*mudabhūmika*,' means to become one with jada, the inert, and get influenced by the inert. '*Shubda bhūmika*' means the turbulent and wild and to think about the objects for the sake of the body. '*Vikshiptha Bhūmika*' means full of agitations, thoughts run here and there. Whenever an individual wants to meditate, it doesn't remain focused. Then there is '*ekagra bhūmika*' meaning to be '*tanmaya*' one-pointed in thinking. '*Nirudha bhūmika*' means, withdrawing from all sides, to turn the mind to a higher realm. Ultimately they go beyond the first three bhūmikas. Finally, even the other two also because there is no need to get into any concentration, (*ekagratha, nirudha*) because they see themselves in all and all in themselves. Everything in himself, as in their own self, then from where can they take their mind away? And in their understanding what is not divine? So they go even beyond those things. Avidya (ignorance) has no place in them, asmita (egoism) cannot influence them. Likes (raga) cannot impact them, hatred (dwesha) cannot take roots in them, and attachments (agnivesha) or in other words, deep-rooted inside fear-based attachments towards the things one holds onto, also cannot be there. Then what will exist in them when

these things avidya raga dwesha asmitha agnivesha are not there? There will be: *atma rathi, atma trupthi, atma tushti*.

The pleasure they derive is from the very source, which is their own Self. The satisfaction if they derive, then that they derive from the Self. The contentment too they derive from the Self. *Rati Trupati pushti* (pleasure satisfaction contentment, happiness) whatever they experience is derived from within. They are not dependent on anything outside and they hold onto that highest level of wisdom within themselves. That is why they are called '*sthithey achaley brahmani pragyana yesya cha-sthitha pragyna* : One whose intellect and wisdom is rooted steadily in the highest truth or highest state that is called Brahman or Supreme consciousness.

One day Mr. Jack walked into his house, breathless and exhausted. His wife looked at him and asked, "What happened Jack?" He said, 'It was a great deal! I ran behind the city bus all the way from my workplace to reach home, and saved myself five rupees.' His wife shouted at him, "Why do you always think so small? Why can't you run behind a taxi and save 500 rupees? If you had run behind a taxi you would have saved five hundred rupees for yourself.' When the mind is not properly linked or connected to the right ways of living, it will think of this kind of thoughts.

Once a beggar who was in need of alms, was waiting near a place of worship. A very rich lady got off from her car,

Bugatti Veyron that costs only 38 crore rupees! The beggar approached her and said, “Madam, I have not eaten for seven days, please act in response.” That lady looks at him and says, ‘I wish I had your will power’. And goes away! He is asking for money to satisfy his hunger but she is looking at it differently and says I wish I had your will power to stay without food for seven days. Even we don’t understand the actuality unless the heart is there to confront a situation. Even though we see the situation, listen to it, and think we understand the situation but actually we don’t understand it in a right perspective.

Once someone filed a case against a psychiatrist. The case came up before a judge. The judge looked at the defending psychiatrist and asked him, “Where do you work?” He replied that he worked here and there. ‘What do you do?’ - was the second question. His reply was, “this and that.” Then the judge asked, “How are you?” He said, “Fine and not fine.” The judge understood the case and started writing the judgment. Then the man asked, “When will I get out?” The judge said, “Sooner or later”. The man asked, “What is the judgment or the sentence you are writing?” The judge said, “Life or death.”

If we have confusion and conflict in the mind, the external world also reciprocates in that manner. If we involve the same conflicting mind to interact with others, the external

world also will respond in the same manner; unless we get exposed to the great Masters who lived their life holding on to the values and principles, if not the scriptures.

A daughter told her Dad, “Dad my boyfriend was forcing me to let him inside my room in our house.” Dad became anxious and tense and he asked, “Hope you did not lose your strength? Hope you did not become weak?” The daughter replied, “I told him my father doesn’t like this. He will get disturbed and annoyed, so I can’t allow you. But he was insisting again and again.” Dad said, “Hope you did not succumb to the pressure.” And his daughter said, “Dad I am your daughter. How can I disturb you Dad?” The Dad felt very proud and then she said, “Dad that is why I suggested that we transfer this disturbance to his Dad. I told him that I will come to your room and we went.”

When one thinks, one is very clever and handles the situations without being connected with values and principles, one cannot really guide oneself and also others in the right direction. We notice that Gandhiji lived the values. With that indomitable courage inside, nothing from the external world could influence him. If he held on to something, it was firmly. Each day of the satsangh, we will continue to discuss core and essential values that he practiced. Because of these values, he was able to influence millions of people and was able to guide them towards the chosen goal. It will

be a great revelation to all of us, to see this humane side of Gandhiji, to help us to reach our goal, and to dive deep within ourselves. We will also be able to observe ourselves, see where we stand in the practice of the values and whether we are living life according to the principles.



HARI OM

Chapter 2

NON-POSSESSION

We will now have the namasmarana, depicting the noble and divine qualities of Gandhiji. The namasmarana is connected with the most essential values that Gandhiji lived and practiced in his life. He also inspired the people to imbibe these values in their lives. The path advocated by Gandhiji like various other paths is called ‘Gandheya vadam’. ‘Vadam’ means a demonstrated doctrine. It is not merely talking about it, but a doctrine, that is demonstrated by living it. This helps in the path of evolution. In this namasmarana, all the values that Gandhiji lived and practiced are touched upon. Through namasmarana we can reflect upon all of them.

NAMASMARANA

Mohan dasam [2] karama chandam[2]

Gandhi Jivan [2] Gandheyavadam[2]

Mohan dasam Mohan dasam

Karama chandam, karama chandam Gandhi jeevan

Gandheya vadam [2]

Brahmacharyam brahmacharyam

Sahana samatvam Sahana samatvam

Astheya ahimsa [2] Khula rahityam Khula rahityam

Brahmacharyam[2] Sahana samatvam[2]

Astheya ahimsa [2] Khula rahityam Khula rahityam

Brahmacharyam sahana samatvam

Astheya ahimsa Khula rahityam

Mohandasam[2]karamachandam[2]

Gandhi jivan Gandheya vadam[2]

Sathya aagraham [2]swadeshi dharmam[2]

Sarva udayam nirbhayatwam[2] Mohandasam[2]

Karamchandam [2] Gandhi Jivan Gandhi Jivan Gandheya

vadam[2]

Aparigraham yagyna bhavam, Namratatwam Satya shrama

danam Aparigraham yagyna Bhavam namratatwam

Satya shrama danam Mohandasam Mohandasam

Karamachandam Karamachandam

Gandhi jivan[2] Gandheya vadam Gandheya vadam[2]

NON-POSSESSION

The valuable practices of Gandhiji are crucial for our path of evolution. Every single quality or value that was mentioned is very precious in our lives and it will take us very far in the path of progress. The strides in our progress will not be for spiritual purpose only but it will be for the progress of the whole society. The betterment of mankind enhancement of living conditions and for the oneness of all. Talking about non-possession Gandhiji said, “I understand that the Bhagavad Gita and its teaching of non-possession are for those who desire moksha (union with divinity and salvation). One should act as a trustee of all the valuables that one owns.” This means that one should inculcate the quality of trusteeship. However much control one may have upon his status, belongings or property, one needs to internally think and understand that he does not own even an iota of any of these possessions. All these possessions belong to God, they belong to the Divine! Gandhiji felt that this value of non-possession will take all of us a long way into the deepest interiors of spirituality. The way Gandhiji lived is reflected in these words.

To illustrate this, there is an incident from Gandhiji’s life. When he was working in South Africa, he sent a lot of money to his brother so that the family members could meet their requirements at home. Gandhiji allowed the insurance policy he had in South Africa, to lapse. Today,

if anybody does that people may think, he has gone crazy! His belief and faith in God was immeasurable and beyond our comprehension. Gandhiji's thinking was that God who created him, his wife and his children would certainly protect and take care of them. Even while he was practicing as a lawyer he never used to charge anything more than his expenses. His principles were totally different. He was there as a lawyer not to make money but to serve the right cause, help people, and enlighten them about their rights, dignity and getting respect in society. Even in that situation, whatever he saved, despite such a selfless living, he used to send to his brother. He said, "Till now I have sent you all of my savings. Hereafter, all these savings will be spent for the service of humanity." Because he decided that there should be nothing to possess, he put into practice by applying it to himself to the core. He mentioned that in the beginning the process was not easy. It was slow and painful. He started discarding whatever he considered as 'I and mine'. That was his resolution so he started implementing it. We hear of these things many times in the spiritual discourses but they do not have any effect on us. Even the people who give spiritual discourses from the platforms seem unaffected too. It is easy to talk and much easier to listen but to put these values into practice is not easy. Gandhiji said, even though initially it was painful, eventually it became a joy. He started enjoying the experience of leading such a life. Gandhiji felt that the only thing that can be possessed is "non-possession." Meaning

not to have anything whatsoever and to willingly surrender everything to God.

When Gandhiji wrote about his decision of “Non-Possession” in his letter, his brother reacted negatively to it. He stopped talking to Gandhiji because he was depending on Gandhiji’s savings. Gandhiji did not mind, because he knew that he did for a greater cause. Slowly his brother understood what Gandhiji stood for. And towards the end of his life he appreciated Gandhiji and told him, “After me, please take care of my children because if you take care of them, they will evolve.” But Gandhiji felt and later articulated that nobody can change the impressions with which one’s own children or wards are born. They carry their own impressions, samskaras and vasanas. Nobody can change them and they will not necessarily follow the path of evolution which the father, mother, or the guardian follows. It happened exactly so in the life of Gandhiji.

Satyam to Gandhiji was God and Brahman, nothing less than that! From his experience, he said that from the standpoint of Satyam (truth) even the body is a possession. It has been truly said that desires create bodies for the soul. He said even this very body is a possession! When man has cravings and desires for pleasure, the soul has to experience them. In order for the desires to be satisfied, the soul creates the body so that it can have these experiences. Gandhiji continued to say that when these desires vanish, there is no

more need for any 'body' and then the individual comes out of the vicious circle of birth and death.

What to say about such a Mahatma? He was an enlightened being. Highly proficient in this knowledge. He doesn't look, claim, or accept when anybody tells him anything other than "That Truth." Continuing further Gandhiji said, the concept of total renunciation demands that everything has to be discarded, even body! He said, we have to learn to use the body for service and not for indulging in senses as that is a waste of energy according to Gandhiji. Therefore, as long as the body exists it should be utilized for service only. Gandhiji said service alone should become our support and our inspiration. We should eat, drink, sleep, and wake up only to do service. That should be our way of living! "Such an attitude of mind, brings real happiness", said Gandhiji.

Something very interesting was mentioned by Gandhiji. People always think that when we discard, disown, or dispossess everything then what do we have left? How will we live? How will we get whatever we want? Forget all that, how will we even survive? These are the doubts that arise in human beings but Gandhiji had a very clear understanding. He said that when we practice non-possession divinity takes care. He said, "When you dispossess everything you have in the world, you really possess all the treasures of the world". Swami Vivekananda ji also made somewhat similar

statement. He said that as long as we chase, crave, and run after the world, it eludes us. When we decide that we don't want the world it will chase us. Gandhiji told the same thing but in different words. Gandhiji said, "Our body must be surrendered for a higher purpose, for a diviner cause. While our body is at our disposal, it must not be used for dissipation of energies, on self- indulgence or pleasure but only for service. Service alone should be our sole purpose and aim." Even the clothes that we wear according to Gandhiji should be connected with the service alone. We must therefore learn to live only to serve. Gandhiji lived all his life like that.

Once Gandhiji and his group of people who were on a mission of peace were traveling from Lahore to Patna by train. The compartment in which Gandhiji and his group were travelling started to leak because of the rain outside. Not at one place but from many places the water was dripping through the roof of the compartment. Because the floor also was not sloped properly, the water collected in small pools inside the compartment. Gandhiji noticed that people were trying their best to adjust. First by keeping themselves away from getting drenched with the water leaking through the roof and then from these pools of water on the floor. Water was also coming in because the windows were open. Nowadays people pay to enjoy these facilities in a water park! Those days it was free in the compartments of the trains. Gandhiji was observing all this. When the train halted in one station,

one of the group members went to the railway guard and told him about the situation of the compartment in which Gandhiji was traveling. As soon as he heard that he came running to Gandhiji who was very famous all over India and the world by then. He immediately came to Gandhiji and said, "Please forgive me, as you have been put through so much trouble. Please come with me I will provide another compartment to all of you where there is no leakage and where there are no pools of water." And then Gandhiji asked, "What will happen to this compartment?" He replied, "Sir, we will make it available for other passengers." Gandhiji said, "If this leaky compartment is good enough for other passengers, then it is good enough for all of us too. How can I take comfort at the expense of others? I do not want it. I will continue to travel in the same compartment." What Gandhiji said he lived. What he lived was what he asked the people to practice. And then Gandhiji told the guard, "Don't harass the passengers by making their travel uncomfortable and troublesome. Don't take bribes. If you don't take bribes and don't harass passengers you will be doing a great service to them." Gandhiji uttered such a statement in those days, as he knew what was happening in the trains.

Anybody else in his position because of the status, position, popularity and the so called service rendered would have claimed a change of compartment! Not Gandhiji! Although Gandhiji worked tirelessly for the people and

country, he never claimed from any platform or said to anybody that he has rendered so much of service to the people. These days when we look at the political leaders, we do not know how much they do but they claim that THEY only did everything and also claim that THEY are followers of Gandhiji. To impress people that they are followers of Gandhiji they hang photos of him on the walls. They show off and keep Gandhiji's photos or portraits near the flag of India on Independence Day and on other important occasions. But do they really know what Gandhiji stood for?

Martin Luther King Jr. one of the great pioneers of a social revolution and the movement of equality of Blacks and Whites in America said, "If humanity has to progress Gandhi is inevitable, Gandhi is in-escapable. If you ignore Gandhi, you may do so at your own risk." Martin Luther King was inspired by Gandhiji and brought about a revolution in America by mid twentieth century. Nowadays the leaders boast of such big equality, but those were the days when none of the Blacks were allowed anywhere near the whites. They were ill-treated, oppressed and suppressed. But Martin Luther King was the person who brought about a big movement that was a great success. And who inspired him? Gandhiji! Gandhiji indirectly inspired the revolution in America and directly Gandhiji brought about the movement for equality in South Africa. In various ways, all over the world, many-many people drew inspiration from him.

Gandhiji was also an inspiration for many to become leaders too. In India we may forget Gandhiji but outside India, there is great respect for him. They appreciate him and realize his value, importance, and greatness.

Once there were a few students around him and he told them, “the life of students should be lived in a totally disciplined manner like that of a sanyasi.” He continued to say that students should take pleasure only in reading, studying, and learning because they are moving from knowledge of one level to the knowledge of another level. From knowledge to greater knowledge! It is that joy, that pleasure of acquiring knowledge that the students must derive. Student must be the embodiment of simple living and high thinking. According to Gandhiji, students must be discipline incarnate. Gandhiji believed that students should never become involved in movements, in revolutions or any such activities. But nowadays the leaders sitting inside their offices give wrong directions to the students. Every single political movement that is brought about attracts only students and they destroy social property. Gandhiji advocated ahimsa (non-violence). No destruction anywhere, whether it be thought level, action level, or at the word level. How many of us can follow this? Nowadays leaders at the centre of power from all political parties only politicize this. Even the value to be practiced, if somebody holding on to the power says, like our Prime Minister, Mr. Modi, everybody

else politicize it. Because if he advocates some value and we follow it, then his reputation will increase. Who wants that to happen? It is not for the sake of name, it is for the sake of benefiting humanity, society, community, and nation. That point nobody understands. Where is the concern for the people? The ideals of Gandhiji are not like that. Gandhiji never felt politics and religion should be separate. Gandhiji felt that one who knows the essence of religion must be in politics. Like what Swami Chinmayananda also felt, the selfless people should enter politics. When spiritual selfless people enter politics they work selflessly for the people without any self interest. That is what is the need of the hour. Gandhiji highlighted this long ago!

Gandhiji was very famous for his practice of vratas (vows). Vow means “unflinching determination that helps us against temptations.” To rise above the temptations, he used to practice certain vratas and also advise people to do the same. Gandhiji said, “Determination is nothing if it bends before a comfort.” There are people who proclaim that they are strongly determined and highly motivated to take up the rigorous work that will be required and very quickly they bend before comfort. We can see that in today’s world. If the amount of money spent on protection and welfare of politicians was directed towards the people it would be sufficient to provide food, clothing, and shelter to millions in our country. Many times Gandhiji was asked whether or

not he would accept police protection. He never accepted it. He said, "If God wants to keep me, he will keep me, if God wants to take me, he will take me." Whenever he came close to death, he was never afraid and he came back unscathed. Because of this attitude, when he was about to die even at that moment, he just lived that value, that principle which he cherished most! Remembering his Lord and uttering His name, he dropped his mortal coil. Gandhiji said, "Progress is impossible without inflexible determination." If we have such determination, definitely we can achieve our goal. Gandhiji quotes, "God is an image of vows. We can observe that God follows his laws, which he has put forth into motion, in His creation, very minutely without fail. It is as if he has taken a vow how to run this whole world." Hence Gandhiji felt that since God follows all the laws of this world, so why shouldn't we?

Once three people were taken to jail. They did not realize that they were brought to a jail as they were drunk at the time. After they regained consciousness they came to know that they were sentenced to death. The judgment given was that they were to be executed, by sitting on an electric chair. They were surprised because they couldn't recall or recollect what had happened. They were supposed to be electrocuted and there was only one electric chair in the jail, so one after another they were called in. The first one was asked to sit on the chair and then the jailer asked what his last words were?

He said, "I am from Yale Divinity school. I believe in the power of God to intervene on behalf of the innocent." The electric chair was switched on but nothing happened to the man. Then the jailer felt that God wants him to live and not die, so he released him and told him he would not be executed. Then the second person was made to sit in the chair and asked for his last words. He said, "I am from Harvard Law School and I believe in the power of justice to intervene on behalf of the innocent." The electric chair was switched on for the second time and again nothing happened. So the jailor felt that the law and justice was on the side of this person so he too was also released. Then the third person was made to sit on the electric chair and asked for his last words. That fellow said, "I am an electrical engineer from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. As long as those two loose wires below the chair are not fixed properly, you will be not able to electrocute anybody." And now we can guess what would have happened. They were fixed, button switched on and he died! Intelligence need not be displayed in such a manner, that it will endanger one's own living. People are eager to display their talents, show off their achievements, and project their uniqueness. When others appreciate, recognize, award, reward, and glorify them, then they feel comfortable. But Gandhiji was never comfortable with such things. When anybody came to him and said that they benefitted because of his instructions, guidelines, suggestions, and preaching Gandhiji never accepted the appreciation. He always said, it

was only because of their untiring efforts, God's will, grace, and blessings.

Once a person went to a doctor and said that when he placed his finger on the forehead and pressed, it hurt. When he pressed his chest that also hurt. When he tried to press his stomach that was also very painful. The doctor was confused. What kind of disease could that be? Was it bacteria or virus? The doctor could see that the person was in pain when he was demonstrating by pressing his body. Doctor conducted all the tests but was unable to conclude what the diagnosis should be. So he sent him to a renowned specialist, who conducted a check up and then sent a note to this doctor. The note said that the person's finger was fractured! That was the reason for his pain when he pressed his forehead, chest or stomach with that finger. The first doctor had conducted all the tests. When the person said, his head was paining, a CT scan was done. For the chest and heart so many other tests were done. For the stomach endoscopy was done but nothing was found. Everything appeared fine. The first doctor did not notice that the finger the man used to press his body was fractured. Similarly, when we do not follow the values and principles or live by them we see many painful things and their causes in the society. Actually, according to the great teachings of our scriptures the cause is within ourselves. It depends how we live and see things that are happening around us. For ourselves we need to set right our values and

principles, if they are incorrect and faulty. After that when we look at the world from that pure and higher viewpoint, the very same world which was full of ills, appears to us as something noble and greatly divine.

Once a woman went to a medical shop with a prescription to buy arsenic which is a poison. The pharmacist asked her, why she needed it. She said that she wanted to administer it to her boyfriend who had cheated on her. She discovered that he was roaming around with another girl, his new girlfriend. The pharmacist told her, even if it was true, giving arsenic to him was not the way to deal with the issue. He suggested that through her love, her behaviour, communication, interaction, and discussion she should try to bring about a change in him. While he was preaching, this girl took out a photograph and showed it to the pharmacist. The moment the pharmacist looked at the photograph his face turned pale. He felt lost in shock and he felt dejected. The person in the photograph happened to be the pharmacist's girlfriend! He then said to the woman since she had this prescription with her for arsenic she could buy it. His value system had vanished. It was easy for him to advise her about how to resolve her problems with her boyfriend, but when it came to him it became difficult for him to handle. He felt like doing the same thing, what that girl wanted to do. He wanted to give arsenic to his girlfriend. In contrast, when Gandhiji faced problems and issues he just lived according to the values and principles and held on to

them uncompromisingly. The way he faced tough situations in his life is a lesson for all of us to imbibe. Had anybody else faced the problems Gandhiji faced they would have run away from them.

Gandhiji emphasized that ‘truth’ and ‘non-violence’ are the only way to solve the problems in the world. The meaning of ahimsa is non-injury but in a broader sense it is non-violence. When we lead the movement with Ahimsa and Sathyam, there should be no destruction of the property or life.

What is happening today? When any movement takes place people first destroy property and then they destroy lives. Whereas, the leaders keep themselves safe, locked up in their offices and complain that the movement is not bearing any results. Then they complain that the Government is enjoying their life by watching from a distance and not making things happen. The leaders motivate the students to get involved and in the process these ignorant and innocent fellows die but not the leaders. The leaders interest is in power, position and money so they keep themselves safe.

Just imagine if Gandhiji’s values were practiced by these politicians, political system in India could change. That is why once Gandhiji expressed his opinion to the congress that if they did not want to follow the values which it is supposed to, then it is better to dissolve Congress. Do

you think they would have followed Gandhiji's advice and dissolve it? They actually stopped listening to Gandhiji. Congress had so much fame, position and power; how could they have abandoned it? It was easy for Gandhiji to ask them to dissolve Congress because he did not benefit from it nor did he possess it. Because of his values, the conviction, and determination with which he practiced these values, he knew greater goodwill would befall upon him and on any individual who lived these values. Generally people compromise for profits and benefits. That is the trend today! So that is why Gandhiji had proclaimed that if Ahimsa leads the constructive movements then there will be a constructive gain without loss of property or life. Gandhiji never wanted destructive gain that is why his path of freedom struggle was entirely different, with no destruction anywhere. Gandhiji tolerated ill treatment and battering from Britishers and also told the people to do the same. His view was that if they tolerated it and suffered, then that would motivate and inspire many other people to join the movement. The crowds would swell and the movement would be successful and that's exactly what happened! When he led the movement and asked people to join, not only did thousands follow but they were also ready to face any trouble, difficulty, or any hardship with a smile on their faces to fulfill the purpose of the call. It was the conviction that Gandhiji provided results, without any kind of destruction anywhere. His words had that magic.

These days, when any movement takes place it starts with destruction. They destroy the Government property which belongs to the society and the nation. Destructive minds feel that their words will be given attention only when they create a loss of property and life. This is wrong thinking, wrong path and the whole structure of value is wrong! Even today if Gandhiji's values are followed then results will be totally different; there will be no loss of property or life. Truth and Ahimsa form the basis of all vratas (vows). The first vrata which Gandhiji advocated is Satyam which means truth. Gandhiji said Sathya is derived from the word Sath the Supreme being. Nothing in reality exists except Sathya or Truth. Unfortunately, for the common people everything exists except Truth. That is the difference! Truth is another name for God. Truth alone exists. Sath alone is real, Sath alone exists. Everything else is a superimposition upon that Sath. This is a Vedanthic statement by a Mahatma!

Gandhiji believed that whatever we see through senses does not persist so, what really persists and continues to exist is God alone. That was the reason for Gandhiji to say that God alone is real and all other things are unreal. He lived his life with that firm belief. He said that if we are practicing the vow of truth then we are with God. He continued to say that Sath is existence and that alone is real. Sath is truth, chith is consciousness and knowledge. When an individual gains Sath through the experiential knowledge (chith) then

that individual experiences Ananda (bliss). This he didn't quote from an extract of Vedanta-shastra, Upanishad, or from any research done in the field of Vedanta, but from his experiential knowledge. Gandhiji's interpretation of satchidananda is very different. He said, "Be truthful and hold on to the truth. Truth is God. Have the knowledge of the truth. View the world with this knowledge and serve the society. Live in this world only to serve and then you will achieve ananda." When we have sath and chith, ananda will follow. We don't have to chase, seek or have desire for ananda. We don't have to long, sweat and toil for ananda, like we are all doing right now. We are neither holding onto truth nor do we have the knowledge of the truth, that is why ananda is eluding us.

We gain property, possessions, enjoy the company of people, enjoy pleasures, visit different places, and accumulate money and still ananda eludes us. We have not yet discovered the real ananda which persists. Gandhiji said, "It is so simple and the simplest way to attain ananda is, to hold onto truth and gain the knowledge of the truth."

Once we experience this ananda, then we will not desire anything else or need anything else? Will there be any corruption, compromising with values? Is there any need for it? Then we will lead our life uncompromisingly for the service of the society, community, and humanity. That is what Gandhiji did. Gandhiji said that then there would

be no place for sorrow within us. Externally, there might be sorrowful situations for the people who look at the incidents, events, experiences, but internally we will be experiencing ananda, as there will be no room for any sorrow. Rooted in sath, chith and cnanda, we can then face any kind of difficult situations.

Gandhiji lead the political movement being in sath, chith and ananda. He did not sit in the cave or had a title that he is in ananda or sath or chith. He did not preach sath, chith, or ananda philosophy to anybody. He lived by this philosophy and said, ‘God is Sath, God is chith, and God is ananda. God in expression in thinking is Truth, God in expression in speaking is Truth, and God in expression in action is Truth. Who can say that? Only one who is living and experiencing can say this. Thus, Gandhiji lived with God through his thoughts, words, and actions. When one is connected with truth through thought, speech, and actions one will lead a Godly life, a divine Life, regardless of which field one is in. That is why being the leader of a political movement even in the political field, he lived with God always. This is the vrata which he held on to!

Gandhiji reiterated what was said in Bhagawad gita - ‘abhayasena tu kaunteya, vairagyena cha grihyate!’

If we want to achieve anything in life, even if it is the highest thing i.e. ‘the realisation of Truth’ we require

two things: ‘abhyasa and vairagya.’ Gandhiji also said the same thing, but he gave it a different meaning . He said, “Abhyasa means single-minded devotion.” ‘Abhi asa’ means repeatedly practicing the spiritual discipline to achieve the Highest. Repeated practice that is abhyasa is required to achieve anything and to follow any discipline. Abhyasa is also required to achieve a particular goal, a particular aim, or a particular purpose. Gandhiji said, “Single-minded devotion is abhyasa and lack of interest in all other activities in life is vairagya.” According to Gandhiji, single-minded devotion and vairagya will lead certainly to the realization of Truth. And the pursuit of this Truth is bhakthi which means devotion. Gandhiji believed living, working, and serving in the political field is also being with God. So from this angle politics also becomes divine. These days it is considered a dirty game. Nowadays if anything anywhere goes wrong, people say politics has been played. Otherwise, politics has its own standard, its own system and its own status. It is now considered a very evil thing because of the people who are involved in politics. They have brought disgrace to it.

Politics is everywhere and in every field. Even in temples people play politics. Inmates of the most famous temple also agreed that there is politics in the place of worship also. Politics has now entered all places. But what did Gandhiji do in his time? Gandhiji brought God into politics! That was the difference! Because he had God, he brought God into

politics. Whereas, others brought politics into God. For him God was not sitting and meditating. For him God is living and has to be served by him, by lessening the sufferings of others, by bringing about peace in the society, and by enhancing the living conditions of the people. That is what represented God to him, and he practiced to achieve that God. The present-day political system can only be cleansed, if they follow this great Mahatma who lived and practiced values in politics. He was never away from politics. These are the principles we all require today. These days, it is a shame that people get involved in the scams, thousands and crores of rupees from the country are looted away. If we followed his principles will there be scams?

There was once a newly appointed sub-inspector who pursued a case and caught people involved in a scam and arrested them. He brought them into the police station, and filed an FIR with all the proofs. The highest police official came there for a visit and learnt about the case. He told the sub-inspector, “Do you know what a scam means? Do you mean to say an amount of three crores is a scam? You chased these people and wasted a lot of time and energy. Unless it is 3000 crore, it is not a scam!” Look at the value system we have. The scam also has its own level for getting recognized. This is the extent of corruption. Politics is sacred but people made it dirty because of their deeds. When people like Gandhiji, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Lokamanya Tilak, and Gopal

Krishna Gokhale were involved in politics, it was Divine. Who said politics was dirty at that time? Awareness of this mess is enough, we don't have to discuss it. How can this political system change? When we bring the essential values preached, lived, and practiced by Gandhiji into the system and into the people then only transformation will take place otherwise, it will not change.

When Gandhiji was very young, he watched a couple of natakas (play, drama). One of them was Shraavan Kumar's Pitru Bhakti Nataka (drama). From that play he learnt to respect parents and elders. He learnt how one should sacrifice everything for the sake of a noble cause. He also watched Harish Chandra, a beautiful play. Sathya Harish Chandra, lead of this play stands for Sathya (truth). The day he watched this play, he decided to always follow truth without any compromise. Many people might have watched the Sathya Harish Chandra movies many times, but nobody really takes it very seriously. People feel it is fine because in those days it was the way, that is why it is depicted in the movie like that. But Gandhiji is of our times, only a few decades ago he was amidst us. That is why Einstein said, "After few years people will scarcely believe that such a man existed in flesh and blood." Einstein who gave the theory of relativity was very impressed by Gandhiji's way of living, with his values. When Gandhiji watched the play Sathya Harish Chandra, it had such a great influence on him that he learnt to hold on

to truth and when he saw the play about Shraavan Kumar he became a loving personality. Whenever he went to watch a play for entertainment, he picked up a value from it and practiced it. Notice the insight he had. ‘Take the good from whatever you watch’ is the message! He picked the good and practiced it. He became a loving person and always held onto truth. He became renowned for following Truth and Love.

The next most essential value of Mahatma Gandhi is Ahimsa which means nonviolence. Non-injury, not hurting anyone this is real meaning of ahimsa according to Gandhiji. But according to him hurting anyone by undue haste, sidelining, neglecting, overlooking is also violence. Undue haste which creates so much stress and tension also is violence in a way. Ignoring somebody, neglecting one’s duty, and sidelining one’s responsibility is also violence. Hurting others by lying, hating, and entertaining evil thoughts about them is also violence. If we hate people at thought level that also is violence because a thought is a ‘living’ thing. It remains in the atmosphere as it does not die. If we tune our mind to hatred in our surroundings, it enters into us. Just like we tune our cell phone to a cell tower. If we let ourselves tune into this hatred layer, it will enter into us causing us to become hateful. And we might even not know as to why we are hating everybody so much? We become a channel for hatred. Like a TV channel, we become a hatred channel!

Nonviolence means not wishing ill, or wishing nothing bad to happen to anybody. It is also treating our own self as an instrument in the hands of the Divine, which would free us from all attachments. People become violent because of attachment only. When we lose interest in all our attachments, the violence also leaves us. Gandhiji said that the people become violent because they move away from truth.

During Gandhiji's times, this incident took place in his ashram. Gandhiji's watch went missing. In those days it was a big thing, a big loss to lose a watch. People searched all over and found that a person had taken it. So they brought him in front of Gandhiji. They said this is the thief, Gandhiji. Gandhiji said, "No, he has a greater need for the watch than I. That is why he took it so leave him and let him use it. Don't call him thief." Then Gandhiji said, "If you want to rehabilitate thieves, you should not hate them and you should not wish ill for them. You try to educate them, shower your affection on them. Try to mould them by spending some time with them because there is every possibility that they change. They will withdraw themselves totally from that habit of stealing. Considering them as your own, looking after them and bringing about a change in them that is also a part of Ahimsa according to Gandhiji. Ahimsa has such a broad meaning for him.

Once an engineering student asked his friend, "Oh wow! what a lovely bike you have. I have never seen such

a gorgeous motorbike. From where did you get it?” The engineering student said, “Miss universe one day came to me on this bike. She got off from the bike and stood beside me. She took off her shoes, and placed them beside her. Then she looked at me and asked me to select one thing out of the three: the motorbike, shoes or herself . She said, that one thing which would remain for life with me. “I immediately selected the motorbike,” he said. Then his friend said, “Good that you selected motorbike because her shoes would not have fit your feet.” If we have values in us, our selection and choice will be correct. They would also help us to learn not only accepting but also the art of rejecting. Therefore, we should reject things which we do not want and only accept things that we need.

A local charitable institution was scrutinizing the charities that had been donated to their institution. They discovered that one famous businessman who had immeasurable wealth, in trillions had not made a donation to them for many years. So the committee of this charitable institution decided to approach this businessman, for funding their social service activities. The President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the charitable institution went to meet the businessman. They said in one voice, “Sir, we have done research on the charities we have received and discovered that you have never given anything in charity to us. You are so wealthy, please think of giving some in charity.” The

businessman said,” In your research, did you not find that I have a mother who has the most incurable disease? And I have to pay lakhs every month to the hospital.” Suddenly President, Secretary, and Treasurer were all shocked and their thinking started changing. The businessman continued, “You did not find out in your research that I have a brother who is specially-abled (meaning handicapped). He cannot take care of himself and I have to spend lakhs of rupees on him also? Did you not find in your research that my brother-in-law died in a road accident, leaving behind six children and my sister to survive, without leaving a penny for them? How much money do you think is required for taking care of them? Is it not in lakhs and crores of rupees?” By this time, the President, Secretary, and Treasurer all felt terrible and said, “Sir we did not know your background. We are very sorry that we have come to ask for donations from you. Sir, please excuse us. We did not know that you are going through so much pain and trouble.” Business man with a smile on his lips said, “Wait I have not yet completed my statement. There are many around me who need my money. I have not given even a single penny to them. Why will I give you anything? I did not give any money to my mother, to my brother, or to my sister, then why will I give it to you?” They were speechless and returned empty handed. Here the businessman told his story, the situation he was in and then suddenly he changed his statement! Unless our actions and

thoughts are connected with higher principles and values, we will not be able to respond positively and aptly to the call and demands of the situations and people around us. We tend to think that whatever we decide or follow is right. But many times it may not be so. That is why we need to connect ourselves with the value system.

Brahmacharyam is the next value advocated by Gandhiji. According to Gandhiji, the meaning of Brahmacharyam is self-discipline or chastity. Control of all sensory organs helps to search Brahman ie Divinity. That is why it is important that Brahmacharyam should be practiced not only at the level of the body but at the mind level also. He said after a stage in married life, one should stop involving in sensory pleasures and lead a life of Brahmacharyam. In Gandhiji's viewpoint, the vital energies should not be dissipated after you have raised and taken care of your children. He himself lived like that. He decided that he should practice Brahmacharyam and all that vitality should be utilised for the sake of attaining the Highest. Gandhiji felt that fulfillment of ahimsa is not possible without selflessness. If we want to practice ahimsa, it is not possible without selflessness and selflessness is not possible without brahmacharyam. Gandhiji also said that not allowing the tongue to taste anything and everything, is control of the tongue. That control is also Brahmacharyam. Gandhiji was of the opinion that overeating should be avoided and food must be taken, like medicine. We are

familiar with the quote ‘eat to live, not live to eat’. That is Gandhiji’s statement that he preached and lived.

The next value is *astheya*, non-stealing. Non-stealing is not to steal what belongs to others but it also includes not to steal what belongs to us. For example, if in a house, a parent hides food from the kids and then he/she starts eating without letting the kids know that is also stealing, according to Gandhiji. If a common property belongs to the whole family and one individual enjoys it, without others permission, that also is stealing. Gandhiji said, “If there is some object that we think it has no owner and start enjoying it. It is also stealing.” Gandhiji said, “If anybody gives you something and you don’t need it and you still take it that also is stealing.” If we accept what we don’t need or if we don’t know how to use what we accepted that amounts to stealing as well. Notice the level to which Gandhiji’s *astheya* goes! Oh God! If our political leaders lived in such a manner, would we have corruption? Where can we find a delay in the process of approval or sanction of any document?

These days if somebody wants to do service, they have to pay a lot of bribe to get it approved. There is a family who took lot of interest in taking care of orphan girls. At present there are more than 200 orphan girls in their orphanage. But when they started the orphanage, they had to get clearance from the local unit in Government. The attitude of the official was “Paisa Nahin tho permission nahin (means if you don’t

have money you can't get permission). Just imagine what kind of service this government department is providing? The attitude here is that if you want sanction you have to serve the local unit with money first. Then only the issue will move forward. What is the level of ahimsa and asthaya in Gandhiji? He said, even if somebody gave you a gift, which you don't need, don't take it. It is stealing.

These days there is a fixed price for everything. But this price gets manipulated based on the facts that are always changing. There is a price for one who has not faltered from facts or truth and a price for the one who has. This is the reality these days! It is not a joke. In Gandhiji's days everything was based on truth and facts and there was one price. We worship Gandhiji on Gandhi Jayanti day. What do we gain by doing so? In actual fact, Gandhiji's teachings have to sink into our lives. This is the way we have to remember Gandhiji! His way of living is one remedy for all the ills in today's society. The reason for this is that his values are tried and tested by him as he lived them while others only preached. Gandhiji lived in situations like the ones we face today. All the while, he was successful in facing them only because he lived his values.

To change and purify our lives, we only need to practise one if not all of Gandhiji's values that he preached and practiced.

May we all be blessed by Bhagawan Shri Ramchandraji, ishta devatha of Gandhiji, so that we may also be inspired to live and practice as per Gandhiji's way of living and practicing. Many people around the world have so much regard and respect for Gandhiji. Many people's lives were changed and transformed because of Gandhiji. Some may be skeptical as to whether or not it is possible to live a life like his? Yes, it is possible as he lived and proved it to us. So why don't we start living and imbibing his values. Many people in many places outside India follow him. This means that this is the way. It can be done! As a minimum, we are remembering him which will make the Gandhi channel become alive for people to tune in. And all these thoughts that are expressed here and all these words that are uttered here will be reverberating in the cosmos. They will benefit anybody who wants to tune into them.



HARI OM

Chapter 3

FEARLESSNESS

NAMASMARANA

*Shanti dootha heymaha neta, shanti dootha shanthi
dootha, Heymaha netha hey maha netha, abhaya datha
Abhaya datha [2] jana mana haritha ,jana mana haritha,
Satya netha sathya netha prema prabhatha,
prema prabhatha
Shanti dootha shanti dootha hey maha neta,
hey maha neta,
Abhaya datha abhaya datha jana mana haritha
jana mana haritha
Satya netha [2]prema prabhatha[2],
Swatantra jnanatha[2] swecha vidatha[2],
Swa prana huta[2]ahimsa thatha[2], shanti dootha,
Heymaha neta, abhaya datha, jana mana haritha,
jana mana haritha,*

*Samara swanitha[2] swarajya swantha[2],
 Achalitha charitha[2]smitha ati hasitha[2]
 Samara swanitha[2] swarajya swantha[2]
 Achalitha charitha achalitha charitha smitha ati hasitha[2]
 Shanthi dootha[2] hey maha netha[2] abhaya datha[2]
 jana mana haritha[2] jana mana haritha*

FEARLESSNESS

Haritha means one who takes away[attracts] the minds of others. In those days if we observe, thousands and lakhs of people were attracted to Mahatma Gandhiji. Any call for freedom movement given by him was acceptable to all people. Such was the power of his principles and values. So, Jana Mana “Haritha” means, he was such a personality, which attracted all the minds, not only of Indians but also of the foreigners. Not only in one country and one continent, in many countries and many continents.

Another word which is again important is “Swa prana hutha,” meaning he is always ready to offer his life into the sacrificial fire. Hutha is homa fire, in homa fire we only offer oblations, so he was ready to offer his life as an oblation, for a great cause, swa- prana hutha.

“Ahimsa thatha” is one who spreads it and expands it. He spread the message of non-violence everywhere. He expanded it and broadened the vision of the people by

spreading the message of ahimsa. Many countries were influenced and impressed by this Mahatma Gandhi's message of "non-violence".

"Samara swanita" is one who bears the burden of freedom struggle. Gandhiji was 'samara swanitha'. He was the one bearing the burden 'samara', of freedom struggle. Swantha means- that which speaks. Gandhiji spoke about Swarajya, which means that we will rule ourselves [Self-governance]. He made it very clear to the British, that he is not going to hate them, will be a friend of them. At the same time he was rebelling evil, to fight for freedom. They have never faced a person like him. They faced people who were violent and who fought with them. They faced people who hated them and revolted against them. But Gandhiji was never against them. He was against slavery and domination. That is why when he went to various countries, every-body welcomed him. He was the person of love and forgiveness that was the reason, the fight was taken into a different dimension. Normally we see when people fight, the opponent starts hating. But Gandhiji loved his opponent, instead of hating them. Where can we find such a person that doesn't hate the opponent, yet fights for the cause and he fights it in such a way that there is no violence and there is no loss of life or property.

"Smitha ati hasitha" – thousands of people came to receive him, whether he was in Europe, South Africa, UK,

Italy, Switzerland and France. Different countries, different cultures, he didn't contribute to them much, but he just loved them, hence this kind of response from people all over the world. And where-ever he went, he expressed his support and solidarity to the poorer sections of the society. When he went to England, he was offered a five-star hotel. Instead he stayed in a place, where there were only four people around. These four people, were very touched by his love and affection for them. When he went and met their children, he said, 'they are all my children'. But at the same time, he was fighting the British rule. There were people, great Stalwarts of those times, who were thinking, 'is it that Christ has come back again with the message of Love?'

Gandhiji was "Smitha ati hasitha" which means, one who smiles and smiles. He used to make everybody comfortable. When one smiles, people become comfortable automatically. If one stares or frowns, people naturally feel uncomfortable. He was always smiling, greeted everybody with a smile because he had no hatred, ill-will, or negativity in him. He would just present his point, very firmly and in an un-compromising manner. Even Gandhiji's opponent loved him and respected him. For this reason he was welcomed everywhere. Gandhiji was very respectful and loving even towards the people who sent him to the most troublesome, rigorous imprisonment. They themselves were shocked, at what kind of person he is. He was only against the rule, the

oppression. He was a very unique kind of personality. It was not easy to fight against him. For this reason, even the whole British empire could not fight against him.

Romain Roland, who is a sage, he said about Gandhi at that time from Switzerland, “one person was enough to shake the whole British Empire.” Therefore we should feel very fortunate, to spend some precious moment in thinking about his way of life. How he led and guided people by his living, by following the most essential values of him, which he cherished the most. We truly are fortunate to spend this moment in contemplation of those beautiful ideals. Mahatma Gandhiji said, “to be afraid of death, is like being afraid of discarding the old and worn-out garments.” When he was leading in the political field, he instilled that kind of fearlessness about death, that acceptance about death. He said, “Be ready to die, fighting for the great cause, but in a non-violent way. If they kill, be ready.” He had to instill this thought, this acceptability, in the minds of people, not one or two, but thousands and lakhs of people. Is there anybody who would be afraid to discard the old and worn-out garments? So Gandhiji said, “just don’t be afraid of it, just as you discard the old and worn-out garments, discard this body also for a great noble cause.” He said, “it is sheer ignorance which makes us afraid of death”. This is high Vedantic statement. He said, “I will acquire the necessary strength, to welcome death, whenever and however it may come.” That is to say, he was always ready to fearlessly welcome death.

“We die, to live once more”, what a statement from Mahatma Gandhiji! He said, anyway, we are going to live again, then why be afraid of death? We die to live once more. Even as we live, it is to die at last. And we die, only to live once more. So why feel afraid? He made it look so simple to the common masses. It was not philosophical classes he was addressing, not the students of a higher caliber, who were already trained in the basics of spirituality. No! He was talking to the common man. It was coming from the purest heart, so it entered into the hearts of others. Not because of scholarliness, not because of the intelligence or intellectualism, it is because of the purity of the heart. So Gandhiji said, “we die to live once more, even as we live, only to die at last.

He said, “Life is therefore not an occasion for sorrow.” What should we do in life? We must ascertain our duty and continue to discharge the duties until we die, very simple. “We must ascertain our duty, we must find out what our duty is, we should be very clear about it, and should keep doing the duty, till we die.” He said, any way we have to die, so why should we die differently? Die while doing the duty. And Gandhiji also said, “you know what is your duty, either by faith or by conviction.” How to know what is our duty? Either by faith or conviction. He was a great leader and there was every chance for him to undertake fast, undertake so many other things like defying unjust law, risking his life,

so the people were worried, that Gandhi may die, he may sacrifice his life. So Gandhiji said, continue your duty as if nothing had happened and thus falsify the news, even of my passing away. “Just because I pass away, don’t stop doing your duty. Continue to do your duty. You don’t bother when I leave my body. When I drop my body in this struggle, if I leave, just act in such a way, as if nothing has happened. Continue to do your duty.” Who can say such a thing? All fear according to Mahatma Gandhiji is a sign of want of faith. Because we don’t have faith there is fear. He is very clear about this. All fear is a sign of want of faith and Gandhiji had said, faith cannot be acquired by force of intellect and we need to go into deep meditation and spiritual practices.

In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, when we go into deep meditation and spiritual practices, we gradually come to understand and develop that faith and trust in divinity. Gandhiji said, “do everything with one view of doing your duty and through that serving the Divinity.” Once we do our duty as an offering unto God, Mahatma Gandhiji said that then, we will never have a feeling that we are doing all this. When we never have a feeling that we are doing all these, then we will not have ill will for anybody. Ill will begins only when we have a feeling that “I am doing this”. So when we feel that I am not at all doing anything, then we will have no ill-will towards anybody and then we will be generous towards everyone.

Continuing further about the values sathyam, brahmacharyam astheyam etc, we move on to “aparigraha”-non-possession. What Gandhiji understands by non-possession, as per Gita is, non-possession is connected with non-stealing. If each one possess only what one needs, no one would be in want and we would all live in contentment. Only what one needs, not what one desires, not what one wishes, not what one craves, only what one needs! Nobody will be wanting because everybody will be contented. Therefore so much will be available. Why is it that there is not enough availability for all the people? It is only because we hoard and possess more than what we actually need. That is the main point!

Gandhiji gave the example of birds. He said, “birds don’t have a roof or clothes. So if we don’t have a roof and clothes, don’t feel bad about it. God loves the birds the way they live and God also loves us.” Gandhiji was of the opinion that we do not need to worry about tomorrow. If we take care of today, rest will be taken care of. One must keep the desire to possess to what is necessary or important, depending upon one’s life stage or context. Gandhiji also advocated self-restraint from greed, for once material gain and happiness, at others cost. We should not try to become happy at others cost. Just think, if the people who are doing their official duty, if they have this one value of self-restraint of possession in their mind, then why should anybody who

is working as an officer or in a responsible Government position will seek more than what he is getting? Then, where can there be corruption. There is no doubt toughness of the law has to be enhanced and one has to be more vigilant; but that is all external, this is internal. If a person understands aparigraha, [non-possession] corruption will be eradicated. Everybody will enjoy doing their duty because they will feel doing duty itself is the greatest fulfillment.

“Nirbhayatvam” [fearlessness] is the next value which Gandhiji advocated. Gandhiji said, fearlessness connotes freedom from all external fear: fear of injury, fear of disease, fear of death, fear of losing near and dear, fear of losing reputation, etc. According to Gandhiji, we need to get out of that fear. Another point is that, inside our mind there are many animalistic passions, which are our enemies and cause fear. Therefore, we need to rise above them and overcome them. Gandhiji mentions that we have to keep in mind that our wealth, our family, our body, our property all these things actually belong to God. They are God’s and not ours. The moment we leave it unto God’s care and the moment we accept that they all belong to God, we become fearless because it is now God’s responsibility to take care of them. He did not only talk about it but he lived it, surrendering completely to God.

In the year 1915, Mahatma Gandhiji went on an extensive tour of India. He understood, how people live in poverty and

what poverty means in India. Once in Madurai, South India, he addressed a public meeting, largely attended by men and women of that place. He observed all of them. They were all half-clad men and women, meaning they were not fully clothed. That night, the picture of these half-clad men and women, disturbed the mind of Gandhiji. The next day, Mr. Rajan, who was translating Gandhiji's English speeches into Tamil, came to fetch him, to take him to the public meeting. Gandhiji was wearing a loins cloth. Afterwards he wore only that. We do notice in the photographs, that Gandhiji wore nothing on top and nothing below the knee, only in between he has a small piece of cloth.

And then Rajan said, "Gandhiji please get ready. We have to go to a meeting."

Gandhiji replied, "I am ready".

"Get ready, you have to dress up" urged Rajan

Gandhiji said, "This is the dress of common Indians and from today onwards I will wear this dress only."

Did he ever look back? Never! Even when he went to England and other countries in Europe, in the month of December, he wore only that piece of cloth to cover his body. No caps, no shoes! In the documentaries we watch, we see all other people wearing all sorts of winter clothes, but not Gandhiji. Even during a morning walk in the month

of December, in Switzerland, we see him wearing the same dress. When he landed in London in the winter, he still wore the same dress. People around him asked, “why Gandhiji? He said, “I represent the common people of India. This is the dress that belongs to India.” There were so many people, who were impressed by his way of living. Anybody in those European countries, would have gotten him a suit, boots and coat. However Gandhiji would not have accepted it.

“Sheeta ushna sukha dukheshu samaha sanga vivarjitah” [one who remains equanimous in heat and cold, joy and sorrow] In actuality we can see in him! People can talk from the stage, we should have ‘samatwa’, but when they go to cooler places, they will cover themselves in such a way, that nobody will be able to recognise them. The only extra thing he had was, a little bit of cloth on the top because he was told that, in European countries he will not be accepted without top covered. So he went with a small cloth above to cover the top part of his body. He was always very simple. When he saw half clad men and women in India, that day he decided, this will be his dress. Afterwards, he never looked back, held firm to his decision.

Once the famous Winston Churchill said to then labor Prime Minister Clement Tattlee,”We built the glory of British Empire for Hundred and Fifty years and you are surrendering to Gandhi, who has no arms, no bullets, no

guns, no ammunition ?” What a statement made by Winston. No arms, no bullet, no guns, no ammunition and still the British Empire surrenders! Then the Prime Minister Attlee gave a befitting reply, he said, “it is true that we quit India, but we quit with grace”.

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose already was very popular when he started the ‘Indian National Army’. The British were ruling India with the support of the navy and the army. People who were joining in Indian National Army and Navy, they started revolting British rule. Clement Attlee said, even though this was not blessed by Mahatma Gandhi, as he was not for violence or for war, but these were the consequences of the “patriotic mass awakening” that Gandhi had created in India.” Clement Attlee further said, “we found it difficult to sustain our Empire in India, as we were dependent upon navy and army and when that revolt became a reality, it was better to quit with grace.” Only then the British Empire understood, because till then they were winning everywhere with guns, bullets, arms and ammunition. For the first time in the history of British Empire, they lost, they had to quit gracefully, because Gandhiji inspired people, and then they went on to fight for freedom, with no guns, no bullets, no arms, no ammunition. The whole world was really taken by surprise. They couldn’t believe that it was possible, achievable and real. All this was possible because of Gandhiji, the values he lived, the principles he followed. Gandhiji never accepted

politics without principles. He said that if anybody entered politics, he should have principles.

Another principle dear to Gandhiji was removal of untouchability which he advocated. This untouchability was raging through out the country, particularly among the Hindus. It was the belief that by birth certain people are untouchables and if anybody else touches them, they will get sullied and become impure. But Gandhiji believed that no one can be born untouchables, as all are sparks of the same fire, that is God! And Gandhiji continued to emphasise that when we serve with love, that service is extended to the whole world and all barriers between man and a man are removed; man and various other forms of life is also removed. According to Gandhiji's viewpoint, the Highest standpoint of his spiritual evolution, what he saw was, the same divinity in all.

The next principle is "shrama danam" that later on was called as bread labor. According to Gandhiji, one has to work and earn bread, by laboring with one's own hands. One who eats his bread without offering and sacrificing it for others, is like eating a portion of stolen food. Even in Bhagwat Geeta also Bhagawan Shri Krishna mentions the same thing, "if a person is eating his own food, without partaking it with others, with the sacrificing attitude, he is eating a stolen food." And he also said, "one who doesn't do bodily labor, has no right to eat. Meaning don't simply eat without doing

something.”Therefore shramadana should be done. In other words, shrama dana means, that manual work done by an individual or by the group of people, for the benefit of the community. For example, activities like agriculture, building houses, roads, wells, and likewise various other activities could be done for the benefit of the community.

Once during his Saptaha days, Mahatma Gandhiji was staying in a village called Karadi. One morning, he heard some peculiar sounds outside. There were sounds of some music and loud musical instruments being played. He peeped through the window, he saw a large number of people were going in a procession. Women were leading that with national flags in their hands and men were walking behind the woman carrying flowers, fruits, and money. The entire procession came and halted in front of the place where Gandhiji was staying. When Gandhiji came out, they all started placing flowers, fruits, and money at his feet. He said, “what are you doing? What is all this?” The heads of that village and various other important people said, “Mahatmaji, every year we face water problems in this village. We struggle very much to fetch water, especially at the time of the onset of summer. In summer all wells go dry and there is no water. Believe us, when you stepped into our village, suddenly all the wells are full with water!” It is no joke, it is not a movie-style story, It is a fact, this has happened. They said,” so we wanted to express our devotion and faith in you, that is

the reason we brought all these things.” Gandhiji responded, “in front of God, your prayers has as much value as my prayer. God must have answered your prayers. Personally I did not do anything and don’t be childish in fascinating and imagining, all these things. There might have been some disturbance in the earth inside and that released water into the wells.” Gandhiji never accepted that he was the cause for all the wells to fill.

But our tradition says that when a pure soul travels from place to place, even nature responds. Even if we agree with Gandhiji that the disturbance inside the earth caused the water to surge up, then why on that particular day? Just think! There are great Masters, who do miraculous things but do not accept the credit. When such Mahatmas travel they bless all the places where they go to.

The next value which Gandhiji practiced is “tolerance or equality of religions.” Mahatma Gandhiji himself went through scriptures of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism & so on. He discovered that they all speak of the same God and Universal principle of Love. Deep inside, they speak about the same TRUTH. People who really understand the deep message in their own spiritual text, they are all fine. But the problems are created by people, who are on the superficial upper layer and misunderstand. They start hating. Then they start teaching and building up hatred against other religion and other religious people. So Gandhiji

said, tolerance is very important, which meant giving the same place to all religions. Gandhiji said, “in reality, there is only One God and there is only one true religion. But this One true religion becomes many when it passes through a human medium.” One becomes many and Gandhiji gave an example,” There is one tree and there are so many branches. Branches might be different in appearance, leaves may be different in their shapes but they all belong to one tree. Each religion is like a branch but they all are connected to One tree. When one goes deep into the roots, one discovers it is only One, the same One God and the same Universal principle of Love.”

Mahatma Gandhiji used to conduct prayer sessions, ‘satsangh’, where people used to sing bhajans. The people who attended, all knew about his religious tolerance and Oneness of all religions. One day one devotee came who was participating in bhajans and said,” may I replace Rama with ‘Hamas’. Another person came inside and said, “in your famous bhajan “Vaishnav Janato”, may I replace Vaishnava with “Christian.” Gandhiji said, it was okay. Then they all sang replacing those names and everybody enjoyed it. Religious tolerance and one-ness are not merely to talk, but really to live. And in the presence of Gandhiji, everybody used to feel so humble; as well as so accepted. His presence was such!

Gandhiji towards the later years of his life, spent most of the time putting out the fires of partition. The moment people heard that there would be partition, there were so many riots, religious atrocities. This is a fact, which is recorded in history. And Gandhiji was more vigorously striving to bring peace. He was striving even more vigorously in comparison to the freedom struggle to stop riots. His love for bringing peace amidst all the violence was such that when the flag was being hoisted on 15th August 1947, he was not present. He was busy trying to put down the fires and to bring peace. Even Lord Mountbatten said, "we missed you, during the flag hoisting." Gandhiji was not bothered. For him, that was not important. For him, peace was more important because people were killing each other. Gandhiji described the violent behavior of men as, 'they were destroying like beasts'. They were behaving not like men but rather like beasts.

He went to a particular place, for "Mohali peace mission" to make peace between the fighting communities and even went from village to village, to stop the Hindu-Muslim riots. Generally, when Mahatma Gandhiji used to conduct prayer meetings or peace meetings, hundreds and thousands of people used to come. But nobody came that day. Gandhiji was there with a few people who went with him for the peace mission but nobody else came out. They didn't want to open their doors and leave their homes because if they come out, the different communities would start

fighting. The groups were ready to kill each other. Gandhiji went to such a place without any protection. He was offered protection by the people and Government but he refused saying that God is there to protect him. He called elders to come out and join but nobody did.

Then Gandhiji asked people who were with him to give him a ball. Then he started calling Hindu children, Muslim children, to come out and play the ball game with him. He said, "I will throw the ball to you, you will throw the ball to me". People and children were thrilled. They had heard from elders about Gandhiji's greatness. Gradually more children started joining the game. They all joined this play. He played with them for thirty minutes. Then he said to all the elders, who were inside their home and who were not coming out to gain courage from their children. He said, 'notice the feeling children have. The Muslim child is not afraid of a Hindu child, Hindu child is not afraid of a Muslim child and they are not fighting and hating each other. They are not afraid and are together, playing with me.' He encouraged them to come out and asked them to induct in them, the courage and friendliness of their children, which were missing in all elders. As he requested people started coming out. He made the elders sit and he conducted the prayer meeting. He made them to pledge that from this time onwards, nobody will fight. Thus the fighting stopped and the peace mission was a success! Who could achieve success like that? Generally,

brutal force is used to put down the violence, but he went there with love, generated that love, that acceptance, that fearlessness, that togetherness, that friendliness, by his presence, by his talk and by his prayer-meetings.

Lord Mountbatten wrote a letter dated 26th August 1947 about Gandhiji's peace mission. He wrote, "my dear Gandhiji, in Punjab 55000 soldiers are trying to control the riots but despite that, what is happening is, rioting and fighting are continuing. In Punjab our force of 55,000 soldiers could not control and In Bengal, our force is one man and there is no riot. Needless to say who is that one man? Gandhi." Who said this? Lord Mountbatten! The presence of Gandhiji, the love from his heart, the real peace intention inside, that truthfulness, the values which he stood for, the sincerity in the approach that peace has to somehow happen, and the daringness in his approach, made the peace mission possible. Nobody would have dared to go there under the given circumstances, but Gandhiji went and achieved success in his peace mission. Just think!

Gandhiji was not for partition. In the last 'Congress working committee' meeting, which he attended, the British Empire was about to decide on partition. He got up and said, "now it is time for me to leave." The then President also at that time said, "yes we have to respect him and allow him to go." At that time in 1942, Gandhiji said, "you all allowed me to announce "do or die mission", "quit India"... Even

now this old man is ready to get into that “do or die” mode, are you ready to achieve peace? Gandhiji left before they took the resolution of partition. Gandhiji gave the call for freedom, it gained momentum and that became so powerful, that finally it achieved success. Even Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, had a different view. Gandhiji was of the view that if they had the strength to fight with more vigor, peace could be achieved, but they were not interested.

Mr. Alexander, a British journalist, reported this incident. This British journalist reported that once when Gandhiji was offering a prayer during riots, suddenly one Muslim youth surfaced from no-where, pounced upon Gandhiji, and held him by his throat, because of hatred towards him. Gandhiji almost collapsed. Before he collapsed, Gandhiji recited a verse from the Quran. The moment, this Muslim youth heard the verse from Quran, he was shocked. He immediately withdrew his action and then touched the feet of Mahatma Gandhi and asked for forgiveness for his sin. He then requested Gandhiji to give him the opportunity to serve and allow him to be with him, in order to protect him from such further attacks. Gandhiji smiled and asked him to go back to his place and told him if he wants to help him, then he should not tell anyone about what happened, otherwise it will encourage riots. That fearlessness! He never said, when youth pounced and then held his throat, ‘arey kya kar rahey ho’ {hey what are you doing.} He just

recited a verse from the Quran and he knew that would touch this young man. It is not the verse from the Quran, it was due to the purity, sincerity and honesty with which he recited, touched that young man's heart. Even other souls are moved only because of Gandhiji's sincerity, honesty and that truthfulness within him. We have heard about Angulimalika trying to kill Buddha. Buddha just looked at him and suddenly Angulimalika stopped. He could not do anything. Like that there are many instances, with Mahatmas. And no wonder why Gandhiji was called a Mahatma Gandhi. That daringness, that courage and fearlessness to face any kind of situation made him unique. He did not merely talk about fearlessness, but he lived fearlessly.

About the value "namratha" :humility, vinaya, Gandhiji says, "humility should make the possessor realize, that he is nothing". When we imagine ourselves to be something, we develop a false ego, and then barriers start developing, between man and man, man and God. Because we start thinking, we are something. [-hum kuch hain, hum kuch kar sakte hain, ham kuch cheej hain" [I am something, I can do something, my existence is important]. So Gandhiji says, to overcome all barriers, we must be humble and remain in humility, consider that we are nothing. True humility according to Mahatma Gandhiji is, constant and strenuous effort directed towards the service of the humanity. Constantly being in service of others dissolves the 'I' in us, and that is,

to remain humble. Gandhiji said, one who sacrifices one's life for the sake of humanity, will not have time to think about himself and have any kind of ego. Where will be the time to think about oneself when one is always involved in the service of humanity?

Humility also means reverential submission and bowing down. When the ego in oneself expresses, like a tinge, and when egos are surfaced in a team, at that moment if everybody feels one is nothing and can see the bond and strength of unity of that team, then there will be no disparities in a team. Differences and conflicts arise when each member of the team thinks, he /she is something. They not only think that I am something but also you are nothing or at least you are not equal to me, or as good as me. This attitude is what is prevalent in all teams, in all groups. If we see anywhere, in any team, in any group, in any organization, in any committee, any community, when the fight happens, it is only because of this attitude," I am something I want to prove something, I want to do something, I want to see that you understand that I am something" and it starts... shuru , conflicts shuru[starts], ego shuru[starts], gad-bad shuru,[chaos starts] backbiting shuru[starts], talking ill shuru[starts] infighting-out fighting, groupism, enmity all starts. Even today in any group, if there is a division, if there is a conflict, if there is a disparity, that is only because of this. One fellow thinks that I am something and other fellow

also thinks, I am something', two somethings, which are actually nothing, want to prove that they are something and reduce everything to nothing. That is what is happening, anywhere. If one value of Mahatma Gandhiji, humility that is "I am nothing", if this is taken up, then in any society, any committee, there will be no disparity, there will be no conflict and no fighting, because of the understanding that 'I am nothing'.

Which value of Mahatmaji is not relevant today? Every single value is relevant today! In fact, Gandhiji is required more today, than ever. The presence of Mahatma Gandhi and the values of Mahatma Gandhi are required today because where-ever we see any problem or any social evil anywhere, it is because none of the values are there. If at all any success or progress is there, that is because of a few rare individuals, who are really following these values. Because of these few individuals, we are all surviving. According to the great research done by some Spiritual Masters, one person of a pure heart can counter thousands of negative hearts and negative vibrations. One person of the purer heart is enough to balance!

The next one to ponder is Swadeshi. Swadeshi is another beautiful term coined by Mahatma Gandhiji which has a totally different kind of meaning. Swadeshi refers to the final escape of the soul from earthly bondages and trying to be one with God by removing all worldly bondages. How? The

link is, one has to dedicate himself to the service of others. Sincere service taken up selflessly to remove all bondages and Gandhiji said, our service should start from serving our own neighbors. The first principle of swadeshi is to serve all the people. Swadharma which is mentioned in Bhagavad Gita is Swadeshi of Gandhiji. That means Gandhiji's Swadeshi and Bhagwat Geeta Swadharma both are same. According to Mahatma Gandhiji, one should do his duty selflessly. What is the most important duty? Service of others. In the Swadeshi movement of Gandhiji, there is no room for selfishness, and people who are in this movement should be ready to sacrifice everything that belongs to oneself, for the sake of humanity. Gandhiji felt, that is how transformation happens, and good happens to the society, to the community, and the nation. Don't we need such teams now? Swadeshi teams! Is it not that such people are required today more, to bring about a transformation in society?

Another characteristic of Swadeshi is that Gandhiji's call to use khadi only. An interesting incident that happened is, Gandhiji who is against foreign cloth, when he went to London, he was invited by the cloth merchants of that place for a meeting. He went and addressed the cloth merchants, producers, manufacturers and distributors of the cloth, in London. He said that he was not against them and he gave the economical numbers of that time, employment, the unemployment rate in India and England. He said that at

that time, in England 3 million people were unemployed because Indians did not purchase foreign cloth and foreign goods. Indians purchased only Indian goods to promote local manufacturers and to support them. That is how the economy of India can grow. Is it not the need of today? What is the call given by the Prime Minister, Mr. Modi ? “Make in India” is nothing but Swadeshi of Mahatma Gandhi in another way. Think about it! He might have put it in a different format, but it is the same thing. ‘Make in India’ should be supported because the economy of India grows. Gandhiji was not only a freedom fighter, he knew the economy also equally well, that is how he brought this change in the system. If selfless people work for the sake of humanity, sacrificing their personal interest in the Swadeshi Movement, then what to say of that!

There was an occasion, when one woman was arrested, during the freedom struggle. When women were arrested they were allowed to go home, meet the family members, could leave their valuables at home and afterward go to the jail. There was one woman, her name also is mentioned in the historical record, she was arrested as she was following Gandhiji’s call. She was asked if she wanted to go home. She said, ‘no, straight from here I want to go to jail’ unlike all other women. When she was about to go to jail, she saw a gathering and there were people who were wearing Khadi. She called one person who was wearing khadi, took out all

her ornaments and gave it to him. She gave her house address to him and requested him to deliver it in her house as it might be useful for the family members. That person said, “how come you trust me when we don’t know each other and also believe that I will go and deliver all your ornaments at your house?” She replied, “it is the Khadi that you are wearing, makes me trust you.” What a trust Mahatma Gandhi’s Khadi generated! The one who wears a Khadi cloth can be trusted, as they are true to their principles and values. A woman trusted that man and gave all her ornaments because he was wearing Khadi! What is the value of Khadi now and what was the value of khadi, then?

Nowadays politicians wear khadi only to cover up their negativities. Khadi covers them and those days khadi was un-covering everything. Khadi gave belief to the people that they stand for the principles and values. People when they saw somebody wearing khadi, they knew he had a standard of moral values as he was a part of the Swadeshi Movement. If somebody followed the call given by Gandhiji then that person was accepted by people as they knew he will be true, selfless, without any trace of selfishness, ready to sacrifice himself for the service of humanity and will be freed from worldly bondages. That is what is Swadeshi, that is what is Khadi. The economy also improved, trustworthiness was also generated, what a call was given by Gandhi! What amount of trust was generated in people by Gandhiji? Is this

possible for an ordinary individual? Just think about it. It is because of that inner purity, inner sanctity which made Gandhi, what he was.

Gandhiji advocated that the merchants must actively participate, observe the quality of the local manufacturers, should meet and tell them to improve the quality, to get better returns. He gave importance to the quality and asked the merchants to convince the local manufacturers that if the quality is improved, then the sales will be more. Then Gandhiji said, “this way if you follow the principle of Swadeshi, then the poverty in India can be lessened.” When he went to attend the meeting in London, he said, there are 3 million unemployed in England, there are 300 million unemployed or under-employed in India. He asked them, whether still they want to earn profits, leaving the people of India to their fate. They all agreed and supported his cause. See the greatness of this person. He made the people in London, in England, support his cause. They were facing losses because of this Swadeshi movement, but yet they agreed with him. Mahatma Gandhiji was never a person of empty words. If only his spirit is understood, if only his value is understood, by Indians, never mind about the people of other countries, the whole system will be cleansed. The people who claim to be the followers of Mahatma Gandhi, it is important, they understand this.

Will Durant a famous philosopher, interviewed many Saints and sages. They all had one view point in common, that not since Buddha, in India, revered any man; not since Saint Francis of Assisi has anyone's life known to history, being so marked by gentleness, by dis-interestedness, by the simplicity of soul and forgiveness of enemies. This astonishing phenomenon of a Revolution is led by a saint, that is Gandhi. Just think! Another famous personality of America doctor Martin Luther King, he was the one who was behind the great movement, for bringing equality in America between blacks and whites. What Mahatma Gandhiji faced in South Africa, they were facing the same thing in America. He was the champion of that cause. So a very important thing for us to see is, how a great movement in America, was inspired by Mahatma Gandhiji and indirectly he was the leader. Martin Luther King Junior says, "like most people I have heard of Gandhi, but I had never studied him seriously. As I read, I became deeply fascinated by his campaigns of nonviolent resistance. The whole concept of Satyagraha was profoundly significant to me." Only by drawing inspiration from Mahatma Gandhiji's non-violent Satyagraha movement, he wanted to lead the movement in America. He said that Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus, above mere interaction between individuals, to a powerful and effective social force on a larger scale, and also added, nobody has ever done that. He gave the list of books he read, to find inspiration, for his movement. He said, "the

intellectual and moral satisfaction that I failed to gain from the utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill, the Revolutionary methods of Marx and Lenin, the social contract theory of Hobbes, the back to nature optimism –of Rousseau and the superhuman philosophy of Nietzsche, I have found in the non-violent resistance philosophy of Gandhi.” What a glory it is to Mahatma Gandhi’s philosophy. Martin Luther King Jr, read so much of the work and philosophy of different great people, of different places and said nothing satisfied his intellect, nothing gave him that moral satisfaction, except the non-violent resistance philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. That is why he stated, “Gandhi is inevitable. If humanity is to progress Gandhi is inescapable.” See his words- if humanity is to progress, Gandhi is inescapable! He lived, thought and acted, inspired by the vision of humanity, evolving towards a wave of world peace and harmony. And we may ignore him at our own risk. What Martin Luther King Junior said is very unique because he studied Mahatma Gandhiji very deeply. He said that Gandhiji resisted evil with as much vigor and power, as the violent resistor, but he resisted with love, instead of hate. True pessimism is not unrealistic submission to the evil power, it is rather a courageous confrontation of evil, by the power of love. Martin Luther King Junior was the one, who said this to the whole world that Gandhiji faced evil, with the power of love. Who can do this? Only one who really has the true power of love, within oneself only, can do this!

Romain Rolland of Switzerland, he said, this is the man who stirred 300 million people to revolt, who has shaken the foundation of the British empire and who has introduced into human politics the strongest religious impetus of the 200 years. He said, Gandhi is not only for India, a hero of national history whose legendary memory will be explained in the millennium epic. Gandhiji has renewed for all the peoples of the west, the message of their Christ, forgotten or betrayed. Romain Rolland said, he renewed the message of the Christ, that is the power of love and not hating anybody. With that weapon of love only, Gandhiji fought and won.

Romain Rolland says, “for many, he was like the return of Christ.” What more? He made people in the west, in Europe, every-where accept him, as a great divine personality. People felt that after they heard about Christ in their part of the world, they were now witnessing Mahatma Gandhiji who was only living, preaching, demonstrating love, without hatred; service without selfishness. The whole world recognised his greatness, his glory. Lord Mountbatten said that India and the world will not see as the light of him again, perhaps for centuries. His life of truth, tolerance, and love towards his fellows may inspire our troubled world, to save itself, by following his Noble example.

Shri Rajagopalacharji, when got the message that Gandhiji’s is no more, he said, “Gandhiji did not die in bed calling for hot water or calling for doctors and nurses, he

did not die after mumbling in-coherent words in the sickbed, he died standing, not even sitting. Bhagawan Rama was too eager to take him.” Just think, not Indians, all over the world, how much of reverence is there for Mahatma Gandhiji. So if we can imbibe and practice any one value, which Gandhiji lived and preached, it will bring about the greatest transformation in not only our life, but it will bring about a transformation in the Nation and the entire World.



HARI OM

Chapter 4

GOD IN ALL

NAMASMARANA

Nischala manasa[2]satyavrata tejasa[2]

Nischal manasa[2] satyavrata tejasa [2]

Achala sadhaka[2] sthir mana sevaka[2]

Bapu nayaka[2] yagna bhava vardhaka[2]

Gandhi naamaka[2] tyaga dhan preraka[2]

Nischal Manasa satyavrata tejasa

Achala sadhaka sthir mana sevaka

Bapu nayaka yagna bhava vardhaka

Gandhi namaka, tyaga dhana preraka[2]

Prem dhana vardhaka [2] raga bhaya nashaka[2]

Dweshha dwamshka [2] krodha virnirmulaka[2]

Nyaya sainika [2]desha bhakthi vardhaka[2]Nishchal

manasa [2] sathya vrata tejasa[2] achala sadhaka, sthir-

mana sevaka[2] sathya vrata tejasa[2]

GOD IN ALL

In comparison with the common lot, Gandhiji's faith and belief in God were of a very different kind. Usually, people have belief in God for various reasons. It may be to meet their personal ends, fulfill their wishes, wants, etc. But Gandhiji, from the evolutionary state he was in, said "I believe in God, not only as a theory but as fact that is more real than life itself." For us, we know that, we are living beings and have power to recognize that there is so much creation going on and things happening around us. They are all real. But for Gandhiji, Bhagawan or God is more real than life. So for the sake of Bhagawan, anything that is connected with life can be offered. He felt that Bhagawan is not confined to one particular place or one particular form.

He also said, "If we have listening ears, then God will speak to us, in our own language." Whatever the language may be God will listen, was Gandhiji's thinking. He not only felt that the presence of God is Universal, but he made all the people feel and believe that Bhagawan's presence is Universal. He made people believe in the presence of God. During his times when he was leading the movement of Swaraj, 'Swatantratha Sangram', the freedom movement, as an offering to God, he made them fight for the sake of the nation and connected the patriotic feeling with the divinity. That is why a lot of westerners perceived him as a person who

was demonstrating love, like Jesus; though Jesus expressed it on a larger scale.

Mahatma Gandhi said, “A non-violent person can do nothing without the grace of God.” We have to notice the way he equated the movement, he was leading for the sake of freedom and the main weapon which he was using was non-violence. Gandhiji felt that only due to the grace of God, a non-violent person can have the courage to face death and offer himself for the sake of the nation, ideal and freedom for all. Think of how he faced death? With courage! How did he have so much courage? Only because of belief in God and the grace of God. Gandhiji believed that an individual who follows the non-violence path for the sake of freedom not only has the courage to face death, but also does not have anger within him. He took the common people, the common citizens, he was leading to a much higher stage. They were not scholars, enlightened beings, or intelligent lot, but common folks. When he spoke to them, they understood the importance of what he was trying to communicate to them. So they were ready to be led by him, ready to give up anything and everything.

It is a history, it is not a mystery; it was not a myth, it is a fact. It happened not too long ago. It didn't happen in the time period of which you and I have no track or record. So we cannot say that it's just myth or fiction because somebody penned a story by creating a character called

Gandhi depicting whatever qualities they wanted in him. Nowadays, many people are sceptical. They think about Rama and Krishna in this manner. That is why Einstein said, “After many years people will think, was Gandhi real?” Gandhiji had said, “Only because of the grace of God, a non-violent person will have the courage to face death and also at the time of facing death, there will be neither anger nor fear.” It is not receiving a greeting card or an award, reward, praise, or a gift but death!! No fear! No retaliation inside. No retaliation at the thought level either. According to Gandhiji, no retaliation, no revenge, no anger, no fear, and lot of courage is the characteristic of a non-violent person.

Gandhiji continued to say that such courage comes from the belief that God is present everywhere. God is present in the hearts of all. When the belief is very clear that God is present in the hearts of all, then where ever we are and whom-so-ever we are with, God is present in that space and that person. So Gandhiji said, “If God is in that person and your belief is clear, then why fear?” See the level of acceptance of divinity! Gandhiji said, “Even in the person who is trying to attack you, feel God’s presence in him also.” When we are aware that God is present in that person also there will be no fear and no anger. Then why will anybody retaliate? With whom one will retaliate? This belief that God is there in everyone, is not a blind belief, it is the Truth! It is well established by Upanishads, by many experiences of the

great masters, rishis, and saints. God is present, in fact, God alone is present everywhere and in everyone. Gandhiji said, “When that is clear then why should there be any fear in the presence of God?”

Satyagraha releases such a force, a kind of power. Gandhiji calls it ‘soul force’. It is stronger than any weapon. It is a force born out of intense love, born in absence of selfishness and in absence of self-interest. When love is not for oneself but for everyone, then out of that intense love, this force is born. He said, “This is an active way of seeking Truth. People are seeking Truth, but it is not an active way of seeking the Truth, as it should be devoid of hostility, devoid of anger and devoid of violence. Gandhiji was at that level. He uplifted people also to that level. And Gandhiji said, “With this belief in God, the victim views himself as one with the attacker.” In the non-violent movement, any freedom fighter could become a victim because the Government utilized force to oppress, suppress, imprison and tried to finish off people. And the people were ready to face all this. When the attacker comes to attack ,the victims (people) have to view themselves as one with the attacker, as the same God resides in both. They were not sages, saints, or realized masters, who were fighting for the sake of freedom. They were common people and he made them believe that they are one with those people who are attacking them. What level of upliftment! Gandhiji uplifted people to that level.

It was not a meditation room where people were trained and tuned in meditation, to focus on the self within, with their eyes closed. It was not a devotional place, where nice melodious bhajans were sung or where they just enjoyed the music, swaying to the tune and felt that oneness. It was not a party place where they were offered delicious things to eat and drink, and then afterward asked to attend Satsang. It was a battlefield! The people might have died, been hurt, bones might have broken, heads might have been split open or might have lived. Anything could have happened. In that field, he made them fight, in a non-violent way. He also instilled in them the courage to fight, without anger, without retaliation, without fear, without hostility, without hatred, and without violence. But at the same time, also taught them to feel that the victim is one with the attacker who is coming to finish him off. What an intensity!

We have heard stories connected with the realized masters, where they depict this level of identification of oneness. They were aware that the same God present in them, is present in others also. There were many occasions, where realized Masters were confronted with people who were moorkhas (fools), who never understood their glory but, even then, they did not do anything. They just felt that the same God is there in them also. But in this case, they were common people and Gandhiji made the common people feel like realized masters. Who can make the common people

feel like that? He not only taught them but, also led them by making himself an example. Not one, not two but millions of people followed him when he gave a call. When we go into the depths of Gandhiji's thinking and understanding then, only we come to know about the level he uplifted people to. Is it anyway lesser than a meditation? Is it anyway less than the greatest gyana-yoga, and samadhi sthithi. Just think! During the freedom struggle, he uplifted the minds of the people to that highest level and made them feel that Oneness with the person who came to attack them.

The next essential value is “yagna”. Yagna bhava is an act done for the sake of and for the welfare of others. It is done without desiring anything in return. It is called the spirit of yagna, a spirit of sacrifice (yagna- bhava). In the 3rd chapter of the Bhagwad Geeta, Bhagawan Shri Krishna mentioned about this: “Parasparam bhava yantah, sreyah param avapsyatha”. Means that by helping each other, cooperating with each other, supporting each other you attain the Highest Good. But yagna bhava is when we are sacrificing for the sake of others, for the welfare of others, and when we undertake some activity without desiring anything in return. And this Gandhiji said, “It need not necessarily be done at the action level but, it can also be done at the word level and the thought level. At the ‘Thought level’ there are many prayers that are for the welfare of the whole of humanity. At the ‘Word level’ we can make others feel very pleasant by our speech. At the

‘action level’ by doing actions for the welfare of others with ‘manasa, vacha, karmana’(mind, speech, action) without seeking anything in return. Gandhiji continued and said that any action done not per the yagna spirit leads to bondage. If we want to be free from all bondages then we have to act in yagna spirit. Gandhiji said, “When you act in yagna spirit, then don’t worry about anything or about yourself. Leave all your worries to God. Let Bhagawan sit and worry about you”.

Gandhiji said, “Do all activities, including your duties with complete non-attachment.” This type of life of true sacrifice will give us true happiness. And when a person experiences true happiness then, such a person doesn’t need anything more than what is essential for him to live a life. Such a person is already happy, by being in yagna spirit so, he doesn’t desire more, doesn’t seek more, doesn’t crave for more, doesn’t grab anything, doesn’t hoard anything, doesn’t steal anything, and doesn’t deprive anybody of anything! He enjoys the yagna bhava, rendering service for the welfare of others, for the welfare of the community, and society. When social welfare of the whole community is taken care of, the individual’s welfare also is taken care of because he is also a member of the community. According to Gandhiji, a person will have a calm mind and will be contented in life if, he has this positive bent of mind that he is working for the welfare of others and seeking nothing for himself. In the opinion of Gandhiji, a heart full of love for all and working for the

welfare of all is a happy life. Just think! What he was giving to people and how he was leading them!

Gandhiji gave an example of a merchant to explain and said, “If a merchant understands this bhava and wants to live life according to the principles of the yagna then, such a person when he does business to earn his livelihood, will utilize a required portion of the money which is necessary to meet the needs and necessities of his life. The balance he will use for the welfare of the community and society. He will not hoard for himself but, give it to the people who need it. This is the ideal that Mahatma Gandhiji was setting for the people. He said this was ‘The way’ to lead one’s life!

Gandhiji’s Non-violence movement did not start in India. We all know that he attained higher education in England. He was awarded a law degree and called to the English bar on June 10, 1891. Right after, he promptly left for India. He opened a law practice in Mumbai (Bombay) but it failed to attract clients. Then he left for South Africa where he got a one year contract for a job. In South Africa, series of life changing incidents happened in his life. That made him fight for the dignity of the Indians in South Africa.

There was an act called a ‘Black Act’ in South Africa. All the people who were not White were under this ‘Black Act’. They were all treated very badly and were humiliated. The same thing happened in India also but, that is another

story. So in August 1906, in Transvaal, South Africa, the Government issued an ordinance that all Indians (all men, women, and children) living in South Africa must register themselves and obtain a personal certificate with name and thumb impression. All the Indians were given a card which they were supposed to carry at all times. If the police or the authority in charge found out that they were not carrying the card then such a person could be fined, imprisoned, and could also be deported back to India. This was the 'Black Act' connected with Indians. Gandhiji took serious objection to this and he asked all Indians not to submit to this humiliation and insult. He resisted that and that's how he started the movement 'Satyagraha'. He started 'Satyagraha' which means passive resistance or absolute non-violence. And he told people there that their resistance is passive therefore, there should be no violence. And in the spirit of 'Satyagraha' there should be no hatred in the hearts, no hatred for Whites, no hatred for the police, no hatred for the people who are under the rule of the Government, no hatred whatsoever! And he also asked them to shed all their fears. Gandhiji called out and hundreds of Indians responded. They all followed him and protested without any violence. They all disobeyed the provisions of the 'Black Act'. Hundreds of Indians were tried in courts and were imprisoned. They all pleaded guilty and went to jail without any resistance. They were treated badly. They allowed themselves to be treated badly. Whatever be the situation, they bore it quietly. And

this continued. Then along with them, Gandhiji was also imprisoned one day because he was leading the movement. Gandhiji was taken to Pretoria to see the then General Smuts. General Smuts was in-charge and he asked, “You led this movement?” Gandhiji smiled. And then Smuts said, “You must obey the law”. Gandhiji told on that day in 1906, “I would rather die than submit to the law. This law is meant to humiliate Indians, we will not obey this law.” Gandhiji knew the law, as he studied law in England. He was also working as a lawyer in South Africa so General Smuts couldn’t rebuff him. General Smuts was representing the force of the British, so the argument went on for a long period of time. General Smuts saw that whatever argument Gandhiji presented, it carried weight. Even though he never wanted to accept it but, inside his mind he was being aware that there is sense in Gandhiji statements. Gandhiji argued as he was a man of truth. He never said anything that he never meant, just for the sake of saying something. Whatever he believed, whatever he knew as truth, that only Gandhiji spoke!

Both of them continued the argument and eventually a compromise was reached. What was the compromise? General Smuts said, “I will see to it that all these provisions of the ‘Black Act’ which you find humiliating are repealed.” It meant that the act will be removed and not only that, he added, “All the prisoners who are arrested till now whom Gandhiji wants released will also be released but on one

condition”. What was the condition? He said, “All the Indians must register voluntarily. We will not make it compulsory or force you. We will not utilize police or give injunctions. You will voluntarily go and register yourself. Then I will see to it that this ‘Black Act’ is repealed and all prisoners are released.” Gandhiji trusted General Smut’s words. He came back and told all the Indians residing there, “Let us all go and register voluntarily.” And then General Smut said, “What is the guarantee that you will not bring Indians by fraud into South Africa and not register them.” Gandhiji assured him that he will prove it by voluntarily registering everyone and further assured that no Indians will be brought by fraud into South Africa. Gandhiji addressed the Indians residing there and said that if we show goodwill by registering then General Smuts will help us and see to it that ‘Black Act’ is repealed. So most of the people who were with Gandhiji at the meeting, agreed.

There was one Pathan, Mir Alam, he disagreed. When he disagreed his followers said, “Gandhiji you told us to disobey the Act and not accept it as it is humiliation. You told us to start this non-violent movement ‘Satyagraha’. And now after speaking to General Smuts you are telling us to go and register voluntarily.” Gandhiji tried to explain, but they didn’t listen. Mir Alam was very angry. But Gandhiji continued to say that they had to show good-will by voluntarily registering. Finally they all decided to go

voluntarily to register. Mahatma Gandhi gave them the time to assemble. Gandhiji was there with many other people and they all went to the registrar's office to register. Mir Alam came and pulled Gandhiji aside and started hitting him with a heavy stick. Not only he was hitting but also the people who were with him started hitting Gandhiji. This happened in 1906! Gandhiji preached, no anger, no fear, no hatred, just accept because the attacker and one's own self are the same. So Mahatma Gandhiji just accepted the beating! They went on hitting Gandhiji. Do you think the person who is hitting in anger and hatred will be careful while hitting? They went on hitting Gandhiji until he was unconscious. And then some people came to his rescue. Later when he regained consciousness, he found himself in a couch in the house of an Englishman, whom he didn't even know. They beat him so badly that there was every possibility that had he been not rescued, he would have been killed.

Gandhiji faced very difficult situations. How did he face them? By not running away and with no fear, no ill-will, no hatred, no anger. But only with the force of love coming from inside. When Gandhiji struggled to get up and sit after getting beaten up, his voice was weak but he said, "Do not blame Mir Alam as he did not understand what I was trying to tell him. He was in anger and that is why he behaved like that." Who can do this? He did not blame Mir Alam! As Gandhiji was not in a position to go to the registrar's office,

he insisted that clerk from the registrar office come and take the thumb impression and signature to issue the certificate. Even in this state his commitment, irrespective of the state of his body and level of his strength, was commendable! Whatever it is, Gandhiji was a very strong man internally. That is why he could shake the whole British Empire with his principles and values. And when Gandhiji acted like this, so many of the Indians there followed suit and then they all got registered and waited for General Smuts to help them.

As time went on, they discovered that General Smuts did not live up to his words and did not repeal the 'Black Act'. All the Indians were disappointed and they demanded General Smuts and the Government return their applications. The Government did not pay any respect or heed to their wishes. So Gandhiji gave an ultimatum to them that if the 'Black Act' is not repealed before a fixed date all certificates collected by Indians will be burnt. It was the second time that Gandhiji had disobeyed the law. They did not listen so Indians collected all the 2000 certificates and burnt them. Afterwards, they tried to enter into Transvaal where their presence according to the law had become illegal because they didn't have the certificates. Gandhiji and his compatriots were imprisoned several times and the history tells us that General Smut was very tough and hard in his approach. It is recorded as a statement given by General Smuts that he sent Gandhiji to rigorous imprisonments repeatedly.

When Gandhiji came out of the jail for the third time, he decided in that meeting that a representation or a delegation should be sent to England to inform them of the current situation in South Africa. He wanted to inform them that General Smuts had promised something and delivered something else and also inform them about the way he treated people. He thought if delegation goes there and presents its case to the British Government something good will come out of it. So he sent Seth Haji Habib to London but nothing happened. He came back, his visit was a failure.

Gandhiji then decided that now was the time to take this movement to heart and get involved in it more seriously. He gave up his law practice as he could not earn his living by practicing the same law that he himself was defying. He got involved in the struggle full-time for bringing grace and dignity to the Indians. Gandhiji said once, "If I had no sense of humor I would have committed suicide long ago." He said, "It is not that I am incapable of anger. I am capable of anger but, I succeed almost all the time to keep my feelings under control. This struggle has made me stronger and such a struggle can make anyone stronger. The more I worked on controlling anger the more I felt delighted in myself." More he controlled and overcame these feelings, the better he got at managing them. Gandhiji said, "I felt delighted with a great inner joy in my life and not only that I also started experiencing delight in the Universe and in the scheme of the universe. It started giving

me peace. I learnt the meaning of the mysteries of nature that I cannot describe or put into words.”

Gandhiji said because he lived his life by following these values and principles, he was able to experience that inner delight in himself, in the nature, its scheme and also could experience the peace. He was able to overcome all the temptations of the feelings and all the pulls and pushes of the emotions. And he said anyone could do that; anyone could experience that. Gandhiji said, “This perfect state can be reached only when the mind, the body and the speech are in proper coordination”. Meaning ‘Manasa Vacha Karmana’ when all of them are in proper co-ordination one can reach this level but, it is not easy to attain it. It is a mental struggle but one can definitely attain that state. A person who is practicing these beautiful principles and values will never waste one’s time in worrying.

Gandhiji said there is nothing that wastes body like worry does. Gandhiji felt that when we believe in God and have faith in Him then He is present everywhere and in everybody. Then we should feel reluctant to worry! What is meant by worry? We feel that we can do better than God? And can plan better than God? We think that we can take care of the situation better than God? It is only when we don’t have the belief that God is everywhere do we tend to worry. Gandhiji said, “We work for God and we work for the

schemes of God. Once this is clear then everything in life will be clear as the daylight. Then he said, “We will come to understand in life that nothing perishes.” Gandhiji went to the extent of saying that people who live life based on values move into a higher state. Such a person feels that death and destruction are not a reality and it only means ‘change’.

Gandhiji gave an example to illustrate this point. He said in olden days some of the artists used the same canvas twice - same one for a second painting. In order to use that same canvas for another painting, first they had to apply black paint over the original painting and then apply white paint to make the earlier picture invisible as all earlier forms would merge into the black paint. After painting it black then again they would paint it white and it became a fresh canvas ready for the next painting. Nowadays they print it in no time, by putting it in computer and printing it. A few decades ago, when there was no offset printing or computer printing, all the movie signboards too were painted by artists who used to take photograph and then choose a huge screen to paint the photograph on it. Then they used to carry these paintings on bicycles. Eight or ten people used to carry it on their head bicycling in a synchronized manner to fix it where ever it was required. Some of these artists also would pull the paintings down after the contract for hanging was over. Then they used the same canvas for painting another photograph from another movie or for another advertisement. So that is

how Gandhiji tried to explain that death and destruction are just a change like one painting to another.

He gave another example of a watchmaker. Suppose the watchmaker discovers that one spring is not functioning well because it is broken. He removes that spring and puts in a new spring. Destruction and death are like that. Leaving one body and getting into another body. If a person has this type of understanding then there can be no fear nor a second thought. Gandhiji was thus leading people towards this spirit of fearlessness and towards the spirit of surrender unto divinity. This way he used to uplift people. People also started feeling the way Gandhiji felt.

Once, it so happened that a man was seated inside a plane that was about to take off. Few minutes were left in take off when one very attractive, charming, and beautiful young girl came and stopped right beside him. She said, "If those seats are vacant, may I take the seat? Do I have your permission? Is there anybody else occupying the seat?" And the man looks at the girl who is very beautiful, attractive, and charming and is asking him if she can take a seat beside him. He felt wow! What an opportunity! The whole journey he will have the most charming and beautiful girl sitting beside him. He said, "Welcome!" He was very happy and very thrilled. His ego and wishes inside him went skyrocketing. He chatted with her for a while then his thoughts started running inside him. He thought since she is so beautiful, nice and

charming and he should gradually work on making her his girlfriend. Now where is the control on wishes and desires? He definitely is not a follower of Gandhiji. That girl in due course while chatting said, “I have boarded the plane for the first time. And my mother told me that since you are going to a different place and are boarding the plane for the first time, you should not sit wherever you like. You should only sit beside a person whom you think you can trust. So I feel that I can trust you. Hearing this the man became very happy. And she continued to say, “I think I can trust you because you look like my daddy.” That ended it all! Whatever he was thinking inside was all wiped off with one stroke when she said ‘you look like my daddy’. When people interact with us, we do not know their intentions or their thoughts. We should not imagine the way we want and also expect the people to accept us the way we think. If we follow values, we will not even expect anything from others because we understand that whatever is destined will happen. So only those expectations that is according to dharma (righteous living) alone will be entertained by us.

There was another occasion where the plane was about to take off. Suddenly, it was announced that the runway was not safe to take off so it did not have permission from the authorities. Passengers stayed inside for half an hour and then that stretched to one hour. Finally, the people started feeling restless. Few of them approached the authorities

and asked, “How long can we stay inside the plane without moving and just seated in one place? Can’t we go near the gate and stay there so that we can have something to drink or some-where to move around for a while?” As the situation was still not clear, the authorities gave the permission. After half an hour, an announcement was made “To all the people who were supposed to go to a particular destination, there is a gate change!” All the passengers rushed to another gate where they stayed for a while and again it was announced: Gate has changed! So all those who were there walked away from one corner to the other corner to another gate. Then again another gate change was announced. Finally, they were allowed to board the plane. The doors were just about to be closed when suddenly the flight attendant got a call and she gave out a big sigh! She announced to the passengers, “We feel very sorry as we apologize for the inconvenience caused. Due to many gate changes passengers have gotten mixed up so, all those people who are not going to Washington, DC from Chicago please leave the plane because this plane is going to Washington, DC.” She looked at all the passengers and nobody was in the mood to get up. Suddenly the cockpit opened and the pilot came out and said, “Sorry I boarded the wrong plane,” and went away. Imagine pilots also boarding the wrong planes and taking them to the wrong destinations. A pilot is a leader. The leaders who lead should be very clear as to where they are heading and who are they leading. And nowadays if we look at the leaders, what values and

principles do they have? Compare them with principles and values in Gandhiji's times. We know what the state is now!

Gandhiji continued to preach about love. If we really have love in our heart, it doesn't claim anything instead it always gives. Especially in the freedom movement, it was ready to suffer, it never resisted, it never sought revenge. There was only Love for the Nation. Especially in the non-cooperation movement, non-violent movement, and Satyagraha movement, there would be no feeling of revenge and no feeling of resentment. One would continue to give love and be ready to suffer for the higher cause. Gandhiji said, "Human beings are products of their thoughts so, whatever you think you become. If you think you are one with God then you will feel the oneness, if you recognize God in oneself and others, then you will be in love with everyone around and if you think God is present everywhere, you will feel His presence everywhere." And Gandhiji said, "Our ability to reach unity in diversity is a real beauty and it will manifest in all of us if we have this attitude."

Gandhiji said, "Justice that love gives is surrender; justice that law gives is punishment." Love according to Gandhiji is more powerful than law. He said that what a lover gives transcends justice. And if lover wants to give, he keeps on giving. Gandhiji said, "Despite how much lover gives to the beloved, lover still feels he has not given everything and that there is much more to be given. That is because he wants

to give until there is nothing left with him. Even then, when he is left with nothing, still he has the feeling within to give more. Therefore, Gandhiji said that 'Love' is the greatest force. He said, "The more efficient the force is, the more silent and the more subtle it is." Love is the subtlest force in the world, at the same time love is the strongest force in the world. A person who loves is really humble. Gandhiji said, "I love my country and its people. At the same time I love all of mankind. And I love all mankind as much as I love people of my country."

When the world war was going on people went to Gandhiji and said that England was in confusion and chaos as it was involved in the war. They said this is the time for us to take advantage of it and revolt. But Gandhiji said, "No!" He said, "We cannot take advantage of the difficult situation England is in. Instead we need to support them in this difficult situation. And there he was in England, organizing first aid treatment for the soldiers who were returning injured from the war. Think of Gandhiji's level of love, he was not hating the people! He wanted to settle all issues through discussion and by way of non-violent protest. He did not accept the suggestion of people who said, "Moukey ka fayada utao" (take advantage of this opportunity). Instead he said that they needed to serve them. He served them and that is how he won everyone's heart. He was fighting with them but, they could not fight back as he was fighting with them with

love. What could they do? When one loves but fights for a cause, people do understand.

According to Clement Tattley, 300 Million people were following Gandhiji. He told Winston Churchill, “One man is awakening the patriotic feelings of 300 million people and is leading them. I have never seen such a mass awakening of patriotic feeling.” So that is what Mahatma Gandhiji did! Gandhiji said, “Love is the strongest force in the world and it is humblest. God dwells in the heart of every human being and I aspire to realize the highest in life, through service of humanity. I serve everybody. I love to serve everyone as I see God in all of them.”

Gandhiji’s struggle for freedom as we are aware did not begin in India. He spent twenty- one years of his life in South Africa. In South Africa, he struggled for social justice and fought for the dignity of man against racism and also succeeded to a great extent. Once Gandhiji wrote, “I was born in India but was made in South Africa”. Meaning Satyagraha, ahimsa and all kinds of value systems which became an intrinsic part of him were experimented in South Africa. General Smuts sent Gandhiji many a times to rigorous imprisonment and each time Gandhiji went to jail he learned something, became wiser, and more skillful.

Once when Gandhiji was sent to jail in South Africa, he met a cobbler. Cobbler taught Gandhiji how to make

shoes and sandals. Gandhiji was a person of concentration and sharp focus. Whatever he undertook, he focused on it and involved himself completely. Whether the work to be done was worldly or improving within himself. After he spent a certain period of time in jail, one day General Smuts called him and said that there was a general pardon, amnesty would be given and he was being released. General Smuts, as we know a tough person, who promised something and did not deliver, when he released Gandhiji, he presented General Smuts something which was wrapped in paper. General Smuts looked at it and asked, "What is this? Is this a bomb?" See how he thinks! Gandhiji smiled and said, "It is my parting gift to you. You are releasing me from jail. Please keep it." When he opened that packet, he saw a pair of sandals personally made by Gandhiji for General Smuts.

Notice the heart of Gandhiji, no hatred, no ill will, no anger, no resentment, no revenge, hundred percent to the core he lived what he preached! Notice the sense of humor in Gandhiji, he said, 'It is my parting gift, take it!' Later General Smuts wrote a letter on the birthday of Gandhiji. In that letter, he wrote, "I have worn these sandals, for many a summer. Even though I feel I am not worthy to stand in the shoes made by such a great man like you." General Smuts appreciated Gandhiji! This is because Gandhiji always made it a point not to hate the sinner. He used to say, "Hate the sin but not the sinner." He might have committed mistakes and

wrongs but he never hated General Smuts. Later on when Gandhiji went to the round table conference in the 1930's to England, there also he met General Smuts. What General Smuts said is an open document. He said, "It was my fate to be an antagonist to this man but even then I had respect for him."

Even when General Smuts was sending Gandhiji to rigorous imprisonment deliberately to silent the movement he was aware of Gandhiji's greatness and respected him. He said Gandhiji never forgot the human nature the situation. He never lost his temper. Who is acknowledging Gandhiji's decency? One who tried his best to put him in jail and gave rigorous imprisonment, punishment! He recognizes that Gandhi never lost his temper and never succumbed to hatred. He said that Gandhiji preserved his gentle humor even in the most difficult situations and trying situations. He knew he was brutal, forceful and ruthless because he and his Government's behaviour was like that towards Indians. Despite that he said Gandhiji never lost his sense of humor or succumbed to hate. That is the glory of Gandhiji!

The people who punished him, troubled him, and gave harsh treatments to him also could not stop praising him. They knew what Gandhiji stood and lived for. Where can we find such an individual? In the battle front, he was following the values that Shri Krishna told Arjuna on the battleground as per Bhagwad Gita. It is easy to talk in a nice

hall, a nice place. It is easy to teach people in the meditation hall. It is easy to guide people in a bhajan session. But in a battle field where you are facing death and are succumbed to harsh treatment and where one has to sacrifice anything and everything even his life, it is not easy to follow values and principles with no anger, no hatred, no ill-will, no resentment, no revenge, no retaliation but project only love! Even during such time, imagine the state of Gandhiji's mind and note that he uplifted all the other people to that state.

His suffering and fighting continued in South Africa. After eight long years of strenuous effort, the Government decided to bring about changes in South Africa enhancing the dignity of the Indians there. And they also gave them the right to be consulted before making important decisions. This was the victory of Mahatma Gandhi! They gave him respect that he deserved. And not only that, the Government at the time vindicated Satyagraha. Meaning it removed all charges against that movement. And it proclaimed that it is legal and lawful to protest passively in a non-violent way. That gave strength to the Indian community in South Africa. Who made this possible? One person - Gandhiji!

Lord Mountbatten's statement also reflects the same when he said, "We have a force of 55000 in Punjab where rioting is happening and we are not able to control it and in Bengal, force is one man and all rioting has stopped. No rioting! And that one man is Gandhi." That was the presence

of Gandhiji, he was a real Mahatma! Even the title ‘Mahatma’ got glory because it was given to Gandhiji. Gandhiji got glory not because it was given to him, he was already that! But the fact is that it was recognized in him and the title Mahatma was given to him. Gandhiji felt at that time, because of his experience in South Africa, that Indians will neither deserve nor gain the respect of their European neighbors until they give firm signs of self-respect. So when he came to India, he already knew how to lead and take charge to take people ahead. That is why when he came to India very soon the leadership role was given to Gandhiji. Everything was handed over to him as he was inspiring everybody. Millions and millions of people followed Gandhiji’s advice. Because he lived what he preached, he demonstrated it to people that it is possible. That is why people trusted him, participated and got involved whole heartedly whenever he called.

Another very striking thing which Gandhiji started is the ‘Sarvodaya movement’. This word is coined by Gandhiji. Sarva means all, Udaya means awakening. Awakening of all the people in the world irrespective of their nationality! It is love for all mankind without distinction of caste, creed, color, class, nationality, and sex. Principle of the greatest good for all is Sarvodaya Movement. Gandhiji stated that everybody should have the full opportunity to strive for self-realization. Every person should be given an opportunity for the self upliftment and upliftment of the society. Self-realization

is first stage of 'Sarvodaya movement' and second stage is opportunity for self-upliftment and upliftment of the society. The economy of the Sarvodaya society should be service-based and not profit-based. The values: non-violence, non-possession, nonstealing were the characteristics of the social order, of the society based on the principles of Sarvodaya. Non-violence, non-possession, and non-stealing when followed, he said would be a perfect balance between the individual, the society, and also the state which helps them to play, the specific role. This was a great movement again that helped many people.

When Gandhiji went to London for attending round table conference, he stayed there for twelve weeks with poor people in London although, he was very popular by then because of leading the movements in India. Where ever Gandhiji went, hundreds and thousands of people came to see him. He expressed his love to all the people and saw God in everyone. In London, all the Englishmen also came to receive Gandhiji, as they too felt loved by him.

Gandhiji met many important people and on one occasion he also had a meeting with Charlie Chaplin who was also very famous. A request came from Charlie Chaplin that he wanted to meet Gandhiji. Initially, Gandhiji as he had no time to see the movies did not know who Charlie Chaplin was. He felt no need to meet him. Then people told him he plays a comic role and is very popular with the poor people,

then only Gandhiji met him. They discussed some important things. One of the person who stayed with Gandhiji at that time told that Gandhiji asked Charlie Chaplin, “Do you like to have a demonstration of our prayers?” Gandhiji used to have Universal prayers. Prayers selected from all religions and also of his choicest God, Shri. Ram Chandra ji. Charlie Chaplin said, “There is no room for all the people to come and sit.” Gandhiji told Charlie Chaplin, “You sit on the sofa, we will sit on the floor and pray.” So they had a prayer session. And Charlie Chaplin wrote afterwards, “Gandhi and his men did not feel embarrassed to sit on the floor in front of me but, I actually felt embarrassed to sit on the sofa and look down upon Gandhi and his colleagues.” Charlie Chaplin felt everybody should look up to Gandhiji and not look down upon him. Every life was touched and affected by Gandhiji.

After that, he went to France, Italy, Switzerland. Where ever he went, people flocked to receive him. By that time, everybody in Europe knew that he was a personification of love as he loved everybody. No doubt he fought for the cause in India but, he loved everybody and that love inspired everyone to come and receive him. What a way to connect to them?

Gandhiji had a very able secretary Mahadev Desai. He was lessening his burden by taking care of many things for him. After the struggle of 1930, on August 8,1942, the “Quit India Resolution” was passed. On August 9,1942, all

national leaders including Gandhiji were arrested because that is the only thing British Government could do. If leaders took any steps, they would try to stop them by arresting them and putting them in jail. They were not getting much success so they decided to take Gandhiji to Aga Khan Palace. Before all this happened, Gandhiji told Mahadev Desaiji that since Quit India Resolution is being passed they will try to arrest him. He told Mahadev that if they try to arrest him he will utilize the last weapon in his armor, that is he will undertake fast unto death. He said, "I will fast unto death and only one condition will be to free India. India has to be free, otherwise, I will give up my life by fasting unto death." Word spread that either India will be free otherwise, Gandhiji's dead body will come out of the prison. Mahadev Desai was so tuned to Gandhiji that he knew once Gandhiji takes a Sankalpa (decision), he will never go back on it. And then, on August 9th, news came to them that they were all being arrested. Son of Mahadev Desai told Mahadev Desaiji, "Pitaji because they are arresting, you will also have to go to jail now so should I pack your bag?" Do you know what Mahadev Desaiji said? He said, "No this time don't pack." Why did he say like that? Mahadev Desaiji said, "Gandhiji has taken the Sankalpa, that he will fast unto death. And I cannot prevent him from doing that and when he fasts unto death I will not be able to see this. I will not be able to stand this. I cannot see Gandhiji dying by fasting unto death." When this message went to many of the leaders, few of them

felt if Gandhiji does that there will be a total riot, a different kind of revolt in the whole Nation. Mahadev Desai told his son, “I don’t think I will be able to live there for more than seven days.” On August 9th, he went to jail along with Gandhiji. Gandhiji started fast unto death in the jail. On the 7th day, August 15th, 1942, Mahadev Desaiji left his body.

Followers of Gandhiji were so pure and sincere that when Desaiji got that feeling that he cannot see Gandhiji leaving the body, he left his own body on the seventh day. To what level Gandhiji had transformed them! When Gandhiji got the message, he went there to his place in the same jail and said, “Mahadev knows fully well that he could not persuade me to give up the fast while living and he died and through his death he has persuaded me to give up the fast.” And that day, Gandhiji gave up the fast and there afterward he planned the movement in many different ways and finally the day came when India was free. This is how Gandhiji was training and transforming people. How much of the value system is ingrained into them? Please think! This is possible only when the person is truthful. Gandhiji said, “A non-violent person has to be truthful.” How easily he took death. He made people also face death as if nothing has happened. Can we even imagine the teaching of Gandhiji wherein he said to the freedom fighters, “See that you yourself are there in the attacker, who is trying to attack you to put you off, to finish you up?” Who can say like that? How it is possible?

That was the level of teaching. That is why the entire British Empire could not face this one man because his value system was so powerful. The principles and values which Gandhiji followed, heightened his level of consciousness with which he was able to influence everybody. Don't we have values to learn from Gandhiji? If we remember, small things, simple things, from Gandhiji's life that would be enough to change the present-day society. What we need now to do is to come out of all social ills, all social unrest, and follow the teachings of Gandhiji. But we have put him in history, branded him and we read about him once in a while. Because some people remember him then only we remember him. That is why even now it is said 'essential values of Gandhi' (Gandhi ka values ka kya karana hai hamko' (means what will we do now with Gandhiji's values). But Gandhiji ka values hi sab kuch kar saktha hain, aaj bhi, abhi bhi (means Gandhiji's values alone can do everything today and now).



HARI OM

Chapter 5

UNITY

NAMASMARANA

*Gandhi vidhanam Gandhi vidhanam
Shanti shubhakaram Shanti shubhakaram*

Sarva manava Sarva manava

Samanathwam[2]

Sarva Vidhamatha[2] samarasayam[2]

Sarvakulajana[2] sowbhrathruthwam[2]

Gandhi vidhanam Gandhi vidhanam

Shanti shubhakaram Shanti shubhakaram

Sarva Manava Sarva Manava Samanathwam[2]

Sneha tatwam [2] sahayatwam[2]

Adwaya amritha[2] bhavugathwam[2]

Daiva bhakthi[2] Shraddha vishwasam[2]

Gandhi vidhanam[2] Shanti shubhakaram[2]

Sarva manava[2] samanathwam[2]

sarva vidhamatha[2] samarasyam [2]
Sarvakulajana[2] sowbhrathruthwam[2]
Atma dhrishti [2] Mangala veekshanam[2]
Daiva bhakti[2] shradha vishwasam[2]
Atma dhrishti [2] Mangala veekshanam[2]
Gandhi tathwam [2] vijaya jaya karam[2]
Gandhi tathwam [2] vijaya jaya karam[2]
Sarva manava[2] samanathwam[2]
Sarva vidhamatha[2] samarasyam[2]
Sarva kula jana[2] sowbhrathruthwam[2]
Gandhi vidhanam[2] shanthi shubakaram[3]

UNITY

Gandhiji as we all know loves the nation, the truth, the values, the vows, the people, and fought for the dignity of the people. His love extends to his chosen deity, ishta daivam, Shri Rama chandra ji also. He was constantly in the service of the people, mankind, and the humanity but, at the same time the way he viewed the universe was unique, ‘adwaitic.’ In his own words, Gandhiji said, “I believe in adwaita (nonduality) not for a scholastic discussion, not to prove anything, not for arguing, not for logical debate, but only for service. That optimum service can only manifest out of an individual when the oneness is recognized between the one who decides to serve and the other who is receptive to the service.” Gandhiji said, “I believe in adwaita as I believe in

the essential unity of man and for that matter essential unity among all life. How to be in union with all life? There are so many disparities, distinctions, differences starting from the physical structure onwards to the mind and the contents of the mind, the behavior, the expressions, the intellectual capabilities, and so on. There are so many differences and only one difference if it is highlighted is enough to create barriers, disparities, and divisions. Gandhiji was always for unity. Unity not only connected with one Nation but unity of humanity and everything that exists. Only because of that belief Gandhiji said, “I believe that if one man gains spiritually the whole world gains. And if one man falls the world also falls to that extent.”

We may believe that Gandhiji said something like this in a virtuous mood. But in this century, there was another great Master who did a lot of research on this topic.

If in a particular period of time one enlightened being personifies, all other beings especially human beings who are living in that period of time also have a rise in their consciousness level. It does not matter whether they are connected to each other or not or are in the same vicinity or not. It does not matter whether they know the enlightened being or not but, just because an enlightened being has reached that level of highest evolution of consciousness their conscious level also rises.

Therefore, in his research paper he concluded that if there is one enlightened being in a particular period of time, all human beings living during that time will have elevated level of consciousness.

This is not a fiction or an imagination; his theory is published as his research. One enlightened being is enough to raise the consciousness level of all human beings, may be not as much but it does have an influence. It is a great blessing to have a great Masters amidst us because the consciousness levels are influenced by the highest evolutionary state attained by these great masters. Time and again, especially in the Sanathan Bharath, Masters keep taking birth, by the will of God. So what Gandhiji said and what others researched, understood, and declared is the same.

Continuing further Mahatma Gandhiji said, “Span of life is like a passing shadow.” The statements of Gandhiji is no less than an Upanishad and no less than Bhagawadh Gita. When Gandhiji said the span of life is but a passing shadow, a fleeting thing, he was not talking about one moment, he was not talking about one incident, he was not talking about one happening. He was saying the whole life span of life is a fleeting thing, a passing shadow. Two things: ‘nothingness of all that exists’ before us and ‘nothingness of this material case’, if we realize and understand that it is ever-fleeting then, Gandhiji said that there are treasures waiting for us up above and peace waiting for us down here. A peace

that passeth all understanding and happiness to which we are strangers now, because we have not experienced that kind of happiness which one experiences while abiding in one's own self. When we get into this level of 'seeing' everything in front of us becomes 'nothing'. When we abide in that nothing, what awaits us are the treasures of peace and bliss-beatitude due to liberation or moksha. Up above is an indication, not of heaven. Up above means rising to the highest level of evolution. When we attain that bliss-beatitude that is moksha, we will experience that kind of peace which passeth all understanding. We will experience the kind of peace that is not dependent on anything external. That kind of joy to which we are strangers is waiting for us. His communication had lot of intensity! The whole world has recognized that state in him and millions of people follow him. Because Gandhiji not only believed it but understood it and lived it. Gandhiji said, "We need amazing faith to get into that state where we experience the happiness to which we are strangers and experience that peace that passeth all understanding. According to Gandhiji, it is a divine faith. In order to get into that state one should surrender to whatever is there before us and to do that we need to have that divine faith.

Continuing his thought further he said, "True love means transferring itself from the body to the dweller inside." True love therefore, consists of transferring itself from the

physical structure which is body to the dweller inside. And then from dweller inside us to that dweller in all living beings. This statement also reflects his adwaitic standpoint. But how Gandhiji presents it is totally different. Gandhiji was perceiving and experiencing that kind of oneness in all living beings. He was living in that state . That is why for him all were equal. All religions were the same to him that is why his prayers were from all religions. All castes and creeds were the same to him and so were all the countries.

When Gandhiji was fighting for freedom with the British, the King of England sent his son the Prince for a meeting. Gandhiji gave a call ‘boycott all his meetings, don’t attend them’ because he was clear that he wanted freedom only. So in the 1930’s when Gandhiji went to the Round table conference he was the guest of the King. The King then asked him, “Are you against my son? You gave a call to boycott him.” Gandhiji replied, “I am not against your son. I love him but I am against the Crown. We are against the rule because we want freedom; we are not against any person or individual.” For that reason, when the British were fighting the world war, Gandhiji was serving them in London. He infact, organized groups to serve them. His love was totally beyond measure. That is why the people with whom he was fighting actually respected and welcomed him. He was very popular in England. Many hundreds of people were waiting for having a glimpse of him. Such popularity was not there

even for the people who were in England. This was only because of Gandhiji living the values and holding onto the principles. He manifested that nobility and morality and because of that the whole world respected him.

Gandhiji had one of the most famous and powerful weapons (which actually is not a weapon) was the weapon of truth which proved to be a great success in South Africa. The rulers in charge of the British rule that sent Gandhiji repeatedly to rigorous imprisonment in fact praised him. General Smuts gave an open certificate that Gandhiji never succumbed to hatred or anger. Who made this remarkable statement? He who troubled him and annoyed him! That was the greatness of Gandhiji. The people who were totally against him, could not help but praise him. They recognized the greatness and glory of Gandhiji because he was friendly with them and never uttered one word against them. He never blamed them for anything. It is very rare to find such a personality. That is why it is called Satyagraha.

Satyagraha means, 'Firmness in the cause of the Truth.' There is 'aim' and there are 'techniques' and there are 'qualities' that are required to be a Satyagrahi. Gandhiji said, "Aim is to oppose any wrong in the society without opposing the individual in a non-violent manner". During Satyagraha that is what he did. Through that only he enhanced the levels of the dignity of Indians in South Africa. He made the Government accept that Indians will

participate in the decisions which the Government takes about the Indians. He brought them down to such a level. All because of Satyagraha and Ahimsa. The techniques of Satyagraha are: making petitions, going to court, holding the talks with responsible people, trying to work out for out of the court settlement, and if all this doesn't work, then community Satyagraha or individual Satyagraha, along with civil disobedience (meaning disobeying the law which is unjust), going on non-violent protest, procession, going to jail and fasting without opposing any-one. And qualification to be a Satyagrahi is to have firm belief in the power of 'Truth and Non-violence'. If there is no belief, then there is no qualification. Another requirement is the determination to face the hardships and in the process be ready to sacrifice even the life itself for the cause of Satyagraha. And there were certain disciplines and other regime to be followed. Satya according to the interpretation of Gandhiji is Truth. It implies Love and firmness. 'Satya' is equal to the Truth that means 'Love and firmness'. 'Agraha' serves as a synonym for force so then Satyagraha means 'force which is born out of Truth and Love or force which is born out of Truth and Non-violence'. Gandhiji said, "Nonviolence or ahimsa are the attributes of the soul-atman and therefore it is to be practiced by everyone in all affairs of life."

Gandhiji felt non-violence is much more superior to violence and forgiveness is more powerful than punishment.

So in the spirit of non-violence forgiveness is also very important. In other words, non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering, to be ready to accept the suffering and undergo the suffering. Just because one is holding on to his ideal and is protesting non-violently, the Government will not keep quiet. They will try to do whatever to harass and trouble satyagrahi. To go through that consciously is not mere meek submission to the will of the evil-doer but it means within one's own Atma hold up against the will of the tyrant by working under the law of our being. And Gandhiji said, "A single individual can define the whole Empire", and that's what happened! None other than Winston Churchill said to Clement Tattle, "No arms, no ammunition, no guns, no bullets you have surrendered the Kingdom, the whole Empire to Gandhi? You gave away India to Gandhi?"

Roman Rolland said, "One man was enough to shake the whole British Empire." Gandhiji once said that a single individual can define the whole might of an unjust empire. One person was truly enough to save his honor, his soul, and lay a firm foundation for that Empire to fall. He said that non-violence is infinitely more wonderful and subtler than electricity. It is a greater force than all arms and bombs invented by the man. If one person sincerely follows truth and non-violence (Sathya and ahimsa) it is enough to protest. Gandhiji said, "Strength of numbers is the delight of the timid, the valiant in spirit but not glory that is in fighting

alone.” And further he added, “Non-violence succeeds when we have absolute faith in Bhagawan otherwise, it will not.”

Gandhiji started the Satyagraha Ashram. Later on when it was shifted near Sabarmathi river, it was called ‘Sabarmathi Ashram’. The famous “Dandi March” or in other words called “Salt Satyagraha” of 1930 commenced from here. Within few months of Gandhiji starting the ashram with all his beautiful ideals, outlooks, vision, viewpoint he received a request to accommodate a needy family. That family was a Dalit family. In those days, Dalits were regarded as untouchables. Gandhiji decided to accommodate that family and they started living in that Satyagraha Ashram. Near the ashram, there was a well from where they used to fetch the water. So a person who was in charge of that well started scolding these Dalits, and the other inmates in the ashram because they were untouchables. It was the belief that Dalits were touching the water, drawing the water and so the water was becoming polluted. So all the inmates came and reported to Gandhiji about him. Gandhiji said,” Just be quiet, don’t revolt. Put up with it, slowly he will understand the truth and will recognize the importance of the value of treating everybody as equal.”

In England, when people came and hit Gandhiji with sticks to the extent of making him unconscious he just accepted the beating. In Durban, after he landed people started pelting stones, brickbats until he was unconscious.

And that was a life-death situation for him. That also he accepted. It is very easy to talk from the platform and to listen sitting on the chairs. To face the situation with courage and that kind of readiness to face any kind of situation is very difficult. So then Mahatma Gandhiji as usual said, “Be quiet, don’t revolt, put up with it. Slowly he will recognize his point.” He said to stop resisting mentally. As the days passed, gradually that person understood and then he felt sorry for what had happened.

Meanwhile, people who were financing that Ashram came to know that a Dalit family is living there they stopped giving donations. Donations were required to run the ashram. The days were passing by and resources of money were declining. The manager reported to Gandhiji that the situation was becoming very serious. Gandhiji said, “God is there, God will take care because it is Satyagraha Ashram and he had full faith in Bhagawan.” He was firm in his decisions; there was no question of any change. He said because they are not giving donations, he cannot change his view. Everybody is equal because all are the sparks of the same divinity and he saw that oneness in everyone.

Gandhiji told them, “We have to surrender to God, God will take care.” Suddenly one man came in his car and handed over a bunch of notes to Gandhiji and went away. These kinds of incidents have happened in so many Mahatmas lives. They just trust that divinity will look after

them. He received whatever amount was required for that ashram to be managed and maintained. That is why Gandhiji said, “Money comes seeking a man who wants to do public service. You need not go after money.” Therefore, those who are involved in public service money comes seeking those people and the progress of any public work or public service will not be held up for want of money. If it is held up or anything like that happens one should conclude that there is some deficiency in us and not in the public or public work. Gandhiji said, “I have had many experiences in life to illustrate this truth.” He was again referring to the incident to others, of manager Madanlal, and he said that they were greatly worried and were in urgent need of funds. Then they left it to God and suddenly a person came in a motor car and handed over a bunch of money and walked away. Gandhiji continued to say that fate of Narasimha Mehta was also taken care of by God. And then Gandhiji related to the Mahabharatha incident and said “Who saved Draupadi from that situation? It is again God.”

Gandhiji said, “God will save, God is there. If we place our trust in God and go on serving selflessly, with that selfless spirit, our work will never be held up for want of the money.” What an authoritative assurance! And Gandhiji further added, “a man who depends on God, ceases to fear human beings ceases to fear the situations.” Man who throws himself to God means, leaving total care of himself to God

has no fear. That was Gandhiji's resolute when he was in South Africa. Gandhiji said, "God takes care of myself, my wife, and my children that is why I stopped paying insurance policy." He lived life like that. He had told his brother that whatever money he had and was getting he would utilize it only for the service of society. So Gandhiji said "We have to surrender completely on to Bhagawan to get out of that fear of human beings and situations. Don't worry even the least about yourself and leave all the worry to God by surrendering to Him. And then God will start worrying about taking care of you. We need not worry." Who said this? Not a person who is sitting in a cave or sitting in the forest. This is the person who was in the midst of people and who was leading millions of people. According to Britishers and not Indian data, out of 350 million people more than 300 million people were following Gandhiji. Gandhiji felt that when we involve in selfless service it brings about greatest happiness. Gandhiji's opinion is that one gets the optimum level of happiness by selfless service alone.

Once a person went to see someone in the apartment which was like a tower. He was held up in the elevator. It got stuck in between floors. It was neither going up nor going down and there was no way to come out. He did not know what to do. And then he looked around in that elevator, there was one number written there. Using the phone in the elevator he called that number. Then he went on to explain

to the person about his situation. When the voice at the other end of the phone said hello he replied , “What is this? I am stuck in the elevator and I can’t come out. Please do something.” And after a long gap of silence the voice on the other side said, ‘I am not the person connected with that. I don’t know anything about it’.” Then the man in elevator asked, “Who are you?” That voice said, “I am a psychologist but I don’t know why my number is there. Who pasted it there? And now that you have called me what can I do for you?” And this man said, “You please help me to come out of this situation.” That voice replied,” I already told you, I am a psychologist”. This man said, “Yes, but please help me to come out of this situation”. So the psychologist started giving some instructions to this man and told him, “Okay, then listen carefully. How do you feel about getting stuck in the elevator?” This man was shocked. He said, “I am stuck in the elevator and you want to know how do I feel about being stuck in the elevator?” The psychologist said, “You asked me to help and I am helping you.” And the psychologist continued, “Now don’t feel that you are inside the elevator, now start feeling that you are already outside the elevator. When you feel like that, you don’t think about it.” The man in the elevator put the phone down because such psychological discussions were not going to help him. He desperately wanted to get out of the lift. Gandhiji’s statements are not for pleasing or impressing the mind, but

they are only for practical living. He lived practically and demonstrated to people what it is.

There was one person who was flying his helicopter over Seattle, U.S. Due to extreme haze that day nothing was visible so he did not know where he was going. There was some electrical connectivity failure also in the helicopter so that was also the reason for not having the clarity. Then he saw one building and wondered if anybody was there. It had glass windows so he saw people were there. So he decided to use the chart language. He wanted to get some help so wrote in the chart, "Where am I now?" And those people immediately replied and then displayed it, "You are in the helicopter!" He smiled and he landed safely. After he landed, other people who were worried about him and knew the helicopter had lost connection due to the malfunctioning of circuit and hazy weather said, "How did you land safely? How did you recognize where to land?" This man gave the details of what happened and smilingly said, 'So I understood'. They asked with astonishment, "What did you understand?" He said, the moment they responded to my query that way, I understood that it is Microsoft building in Seattle. Once I recognized that I knew where to land." "But how did you understand that it is Microsoft building?" they asked. Because of their reply he said, "Technically correct, practically useless". Technically correct that I am in a helicopter but practically useless. Then I understood this must be Microsoft and landed safely!" So

it all depends upon how we respond in a situation. In order to respond the right way, we need to use our mind, heart, and intellect. Gandhiji was not only a person of mind and heart but, a person of mind, intellect, and heart put together which is a rare combination. As he always responded from the level of the heart all the foreigners praised him that he understood the most humane conditions and recognized the human levels.

Once Indra and Yama got fascinated with computers. They are in charge of swarg (heaven) and naraka (hell). Both of them were fascinated probably because they also wanted to make their places wireless with internet facility. Suddenly there arose a thought to find out who has more skills in computers Indra or Yama? So Indra and yama wanted to compete and find out who is greater. So both of them decided that for three hours they will utilize the computers to make web design, web pages, and do chats, etc. After three hours they will print all the work done and then decide who is greater. So the competition started. After about two and a half hours power went off. As the power went off, the computer became blank. Yama started screaming, “Gone, all gone, everything gone!” Indira was not screaming, he was just smiling. After a while the power came back and printing started. Indra was printing by this time sheets and sheets of paper but Yama was just screaming, “Gone, power is gone, this is not right, this is not okay!” And then he demanded

that he should go to Vishnu and find out if there is something fishy going on. So Yama told Vishnu Bhagawan, “Whatever I worked on for two and half hours, the moment power went off everything vanished, but it didn’t happen to Indra.” Vishnu smiled and said, “Yama destroys, Indira saves!” Whatever work Indra did on the computer, he saved it. Yama didn’t save that because of his nature so everything vanished. So how much ever we may try to imitate in the competition our real nature does surface. That is why Gandhiji was more interested in moulding the inside (the real nature) than the outside. Only when that inside is connected with Sathya and Ahimsa then the force of Satyagraha is released from each individual. Then as General Smut himself admitted that they were using brutal force ruthlessly and Gandhiji was using only his principle of non-violence. They agreed that they could not stand it but then they accepted him. So the values and the principles are most important in our life.

Gandhiji said that both birth and death are great mysteries. If death is not a prelude to another life then the intermediate period is a cruel mockery. So he said, “We must learn not to grieve over death, no matter when and to whom it comes.” He had to inspire the people, with this teaching, who were fighting for the cause in a non-violent way and they needed to get the courage to face death. Gandhiji said, “You see yourself in the attacker who is coming to attack you.” That is the level of Adwaita, he was teaching. So then

where is the fear? Because God is present in all and you are in the midst of somebody who is a ‘being’ and that ‘being is God”. That fellow when is attacking you, see yourself in that ‘being’, was taught by Gandhiji. What a level of teaching! He taught to see oneself in somebody who is coming to put an end to him and have no anger, no ill-will, no hatred, no hostility, no resentment, no retaliation. Probably he was aiming to make 300 million saints at the same time! Thus he led the freedom struggle.

As long as Gandhiji’s guidance was there from the top most level, people were following values and principles. Gandhiji said, “When we remain utterly indifferent to our own death we will be able to face death and not worry about it and not grieve about it. And this awareness we will have when we are conscious every moment of having done the task for which we are called for.” When we are given any task our whole focus should be on it. There will be no more fear of death when we are completing the task which has been given to us with inner values of truth, ahimsa, and with the knowledge and understanding that God is present in all. Gandhiji further said, “I am a believer in previous births and rebirths. All our relationships are the results of the deeds we carry from previous births and God’s laws are inscrutable and difficult subject to research. Accept that Bhagawan takes care of all of us.” No one can measure Bhagawan’s law and no one can comprehend it. And Gandhiji says, “The purpose

of life is to know our Self, our inner true Self, and we cannot do that unless we identify ourselves with all those lives i.e. the total sum of all lives.” Only when we identify with that Self, which is in all beings, then only we will be able to know the purpose of our life. The total life that is ‘One’ and is God. “When we know that, we will involve ourselves in boundless selfless service”, Gandhiji said.

In March 1932, the struggle for freedom entered a new face because the British were always trying to create divisions. Creating disunity among the people who were fighting with unity. That’s what they did in the end! When they gave freedom, they split India into two because they were interested in “divide and rule policy”. Despite Gandhiji insisting that untouchables are Hindus, part of Hindu society, and must be treated as Hindus the British wanted to set up separate voting for untouchables. Meaning untouchables could not vote for any other people in Hindu society other than untouchables. British wanted to do that and Gandhiji sensed that they are aiming at the division so that Indians split. They tried to create disunity and then it is natural that the movement would lose strength. Gandhiji was a person who loved all the beings as One more than the movement. He was seeing the same Self in all. Therefore, Gandhiji regarded the Hindu religion as One indivisible Truth.

Gandhiji understood that the British were playing a game of dividing them as an attempt to weaken the Hindu

society so he tried to communicate and convey this to them. He told them that separate treatment of untouchables cannot be allowed. He knew that this was an attempt to make un-sociability a policy that will last forever and unless un-sociability is destroyed India can never have Self Governance. So Mahatma Gandhi said, "If they are not listening, I will resist the evil provision with my life." In the year 1932, he announced that unless their plan for separate electorates was changed he will soon start fast unto death. He said British must change their plans. There must be equality. When Gandhiji made this public announcement, it threw many people in India into panic. Most of all the important leaders were very worried. They could not understand why Gandhiji has to risk his life as he was the one who was motivating, inspiring and leading millions of people. He was the person influencing and impressing millions and millions so, if he departs from the scene because of this what will happen to the movement was their concern. There was no other leader who could inspire so many millions of people. He was very convincing so people started requesting Gandhiji not to go ahead but he did not listen.

Stream of visitors came to the Yerawada jail. Sri Rabindranath Tagore also sent a telegram saying, "Is it worth sacrificing your life for this? I know the cause is great but is it worth sacrificing for this? Because there is a bigger thing waiting, you have to lead all." B.R. Ambedkar

who was the champion of the causes of untouchables also came and met Gandhiji and said, "I will also strive my best in doing something to make them change their plan." But British were not ready to listen. On September 20, 1932, Gandhiji started 'fast unto death'. What he said he did ! So many people all around India started responding to it. That is what shook the British Empire. One man started fasting and in so many places Satyagraha also started. As a result, so many places and temples were thrown open to untouchables. Committees were formed that decided that they will allow all untouchables into the temples and there will be no segregation. And many committees were formed to promote that universality of Hinduism. All over India Satyagraha movements began because Gandhiji initiated, they also followed. Wherever one saw there were hundreds and hundreds, thousands following sathyagraha. That was the spirit of Gandhiji. Emerson says, "Politicians out of trickery and using various other methods can bring a large number of crowds but Gandhiji merely by his power of conviction and merely by his value system attracted millions of people."

And in those days the media was not like today, in seconds information reaches every-where. But he was so popular and his presence was so magnetic. Jawaharlal Nehru used to call him 'miracle man' because they didn't know how he managed to inspire. How he pulled people to come and join with all their hearts. When he gave a call people were

ready to risk their lives. They trusted him so much because of his values. Because of the values in him even the people who were fighting with him respected him. They knew he is a man of integrity and truthfulness. Many couldn't dare to see him eye to eye. They knew his stature and they knew their own stature so they all silently respected him and had great regard for him.

Rabindranath Tagore also came there. As the fast went on, by the third day Gandhiji was so weak, that he had to be carried on a stretcher to go to the washroom. Rabindranath Tagore could not stand the sight when he saw Gandhiji looking so weak. He placed his head on Bapu's chest and started weeping. He told Gandhiji weeping that, "Why are you doing all this? If you depart from freedom struggle, what will happen to everybody. Why are you doing this?" But when anybody came and requested Gandhiji to give up fasting, he said, "Nothing doing. They have to change their plan for me to give up." And he observed fast unto death because he was a man of truth. If Gandhiji contemplated and declared something then, he remained very firm and nobody could budge him from that. Finally, British announced that they were going to declare a change in plan of having separate polling booths and separate voting arrangements for untouchables. When this message came to Gandhiji, he said "It has to come to me directly in writing from the British Government until then I will not break the fast." They had

to compromise and send a written message to him and then Gandhiji broke his fast. All over India too, people withdrew their Satyagraha. British Government was watching this. One man, one call and everyone follows. That is why given a chance they used to send him to jail, to silence the movement. But that didn't work because of the way he inspired people.

The great Chandrashekhar Saraswatiji Maharaj of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam and Guru of Jayendra Saraswathiji, the great personality who lived for hundred years, said about Gandhiji, "He completely eschewed hatred, a more perfect ideal for ahimsa and love cannot be conceived." Think of who said this! Just see! Gandhiji utilized every evil happening to test his inner purity. He was the purest. Because Gandhiji was busy in putting out all the fires of rioting in Bengal, he could not attend the Independence function on August 15, 1947. Lord Mountbatten who was there to hand over the charge to India said, "Mahatma Gandhiji we miss you". He said, "All Indians must remember it is Mahatma Gandhi who made this possible." Then the statement he made is very unique. He said, "Mahatma Gandhi will go down in history on a par with Buddha and Jesus Christ". Lord Mountbatten was representing the British Empire who did his best not to give India freedom but finally had to. Such a person puts Gandhiji at par with Buddha and Jesus Christ!

In the previous chapter, we discussed how William Durett said, "After Buddha, this is the person who got so

much popularity and has so much following in India”. Martin Luther King said, “Nobody brought out the love ethic of Jesus into a mass and to the general public on such a large scale”. And we saw Romain Rolland making a statement, “People were seeing that Jesus has returned in the form of Gandhi.” All these beautiful statements were not mere statements. Actually they saw Gandhiji practically living such a saintly life as they moved in close circles with him. Lord Mountbatten and Gandhiji had many interactions. Otherwise why he who belongs to another faith and another country (of the ruthless brutal force that was ruling) should utter such a statement. Everybody respected Gandhiji, recognized his greatness was on par with Buddha and Jesus Christ!

Albert Einstein said, “Mahatma Gandhiji is a leader of his people. Unsupported only by the authorities and is a politician whose success does not rest upon crafts or mastery of technical devices but simply upon the convincing power of his personality.” He used no craftiness, no technical devices, it simply rested upon the convincing power of his personality. Einstein added, “Mahatma Gandhiji is a victorious fighter, who has the dignity of a simple human being and lives it at all times.” He rose victoriously above the brutality and confronted the brutality of Europeans with the dignity of a simple human being with the power of his values and the truthfulness, the principles which he stood for. And Einstein continued to say, “Generations to come will scarcely believe

that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth. With this belief in that principle that he held onto his heart and mind he has led the great Nation”. Einstein comments on India as a great Nation, moving towards its Liberation. He said, “Gandhiji demonstrated that a powerful human can assemble following not through cunning game of the usual political maneuvers and trickeries but through the convincing example of morally superior conduct of life.” What a great recognition to Gandhiji by Einstein a great scientist who gave us the ‘theory of relativity.’

The great people of those times like Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan understood the deepest spiritual strength in Gandhiji. He said this about Gandhiji: “when problems material and spiritual crowd upon him, when conflicting emotions shake him, when troubles oppress him Gandhiji retires into the recesses of the soul, the Atman.” Gandhiji goes deep into himself to the secret corridors of the spirit to gain strength and nourishment. Men like him who are filled with spiritual poise take upon themselves the task of shouldering the burden of suffering humanity.

Radhakrishnan-ji felt Gandhiji could have remained there in his spiritual poise. Mahatmas delve deep in atman and can as well remain there but, they come back rejuvenated with a renewed spirit and again get involved in the sufferings of the humanity. They want to relieve them out of their sufferings. Radha Krishnanji said, “People like Mahatma

Gandhiji are rarely born in humanity and are born at long intervals in the history of humanity for its progress.

Romain Roland of Switzerland said about Gandhiji, “On the surface, saints interact and mingle with humanity and work to rid of its manifold ills. If they have to get rid of all the ills of humanity, then to face such a situation calmly they need strength to withstand the forces and effects of such work. That strength they get by delving deeply into their chambers of spirit. And after they emerge from their frequent diving expedition, refreshed and rejuvenated, they only involve to get rid of this humanity of all the ills that are there in the society, community, nation, and world.” And Gandhiji is such a person, according to Romain Rolland. From where did he get all the strength? From his own inner Self. This is the lesson that Gandhiji taught us through his example. Everybody has problems, the followers as well as leaders. They are there not only for people who compromise with the truth but, also for the people who un-compromisingly hold on to the truth.

Like Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda ji said, “Problems are there. As long as a person lives problems will be there. If a person goes to the shore and stands there thinking that he will enter into the ocean only when the waves stop, he can never enter into the ocean because waves never stop.” Like the waves that are there in front of the shores there will be problems in life but, only when there are problems we

need to really find out and discover those strengths that we need to discover to face and overcome the problems. And we can get that strength only by going deep into our own Self. How can we go deep into ourselves? Only by developing the values and principles that are connected with the belief and faith in God. That is why Mahatma Gandhiji, time and again insisted and told we must have belief in God. Constantly and continuously he reminded everybody that one need to have belief in God, faith in God!

He believed in the presence of God so strongly that he was able to recognize the presence of God in all. Many a times, we see this level of understanding mentioned in the scriptures. Even in the Bhagavad-gita, Bhagawan Sri Krishna said, “Who sees the One in all, His presence in all, such a person He loves.” In Upanishads, time and again we come across such statements: One in the many and many in the One. One who has evolved himself to that spiritual level sees Himself in all the beings. So the troubles of all the beings become his troubles and that is why the compassion pours out. They are not like us. For us, only when the trouble visits us we feel the impact of the trouble. We feel the trouble only when the trouble visits the people with whom we are attached to. Our thinking always revolves around what will happen to me and not on others who are in trouble. But Gandhiji was not like that. If anybody was in trouble his compassionate

heart melted and he wanted to go and get involved and bring them out of their problems.

There were occasions in places in Bengal, where Britishers were forcing farmers to grow some plants connected with color dyes and they were all struggling. Gandhiji got involved with them and understood their core problem that these farmers were not educated. So he organized means to educate them. He personally interviewed thousands and thousands of farmers (almost 8000 farmers) and noted down every single point that they made. And the officers from Government office connected with the British at that time were shocked to see this. He submitted 8,000 reports. They tried to stop him and prevented him from submitting the reports. He said, "You cannot stop me. I will continue till you bring out measures to lessen farmers problems." Finally, they had to accept. Gandhiji was not one to make statements from the platform like the political leaders now. At present they only motivate other innocent people to die for the cause while they themselves never get out of their cozy offices. Gandhiji led people from the front. He went and sat with them, worked with them, faced the challenges with them and this way others used to join him. For him situations whether they were secured or unsecured was immaterial because he was always ready to sacrifice his life.

On another occasion, he wanted the women in Champaran to tell him about their issues they were facing.

They were not coming out of their houses. Gandhiji wanted to understand why they didn't want to come out of their houses? So instead of sending any male person or he himself going there he sent Kasturba Gandhi, his wife. His wife started participating in the movement which he led in South Africa. The day he started his brahmacharya and stopped getting involved with her, she started participating in all the movements. So he sent his wife to talk to the women with a woman to accompany her. When they went there and called the woman to come out, they didn't come out.

So then Kasturba Gandhi suddenly got an idea and she said, "I am thirsty, please give me some water." They knew she is connected to Gandhiji so one woman residing inside the house opened the door and only her hand came out! She stretched only her hand out of the door to give water. Kasturba said, "What is this? Why can't you come out?" There has to be some reason for it so she waited there outside the door. Slowly when she started interacting with them these women started coming out. They were so poor that they had only one worn out torn saree among themselves. And the women who had to go out to attend to some chores wore that saree and went out while others who were indoors had to stay naked. They could not come out. Gandhiji understood their plight and the level of poverty. He declared that such a situation of all women has to be improved and changed. He made Kasturba stand up for the issue and he also supported it.

After some time as time passed by the conditions of all the women improved. He used to regard women as no less than a man. In fact, there were occasions where Gandhiji said, “Women have those qualities of nature which are greater than man.” He had high regard for women. He was not afraid to do the groundwork required and tried to solve the issues of the people.

There was no need for him to involve himself with the sufferings of the humanity. But he went from place to place, sat there, studied the situations and did something which could bring them out of their grave situation. He approached not one group or one community or go to one place but went everywhere. That is what he said, “I believe in Adwaita’. He identified with ‘That’ in himself which is in All and that One-self which is in everybody. Then the sufferings and problems of everybody became his problems. He could not stand away as he had compassion and love for the people. Virtually he got into the situation and handled the issues. Where can we find such a great Master? We can find people who stay thousands of miles away in their own secured corridors and chambers and from there they gave instructions to people. They never go out themselves. Only time they go is when the media and the press is there, that also when the other people have done everything. They only touch the plant or project get photographs taken that are printed, relayed or telecasted as if they only did it!

Here we are remembering such a great compassionate being who went to the people to study their situations. Then he spoke to them and tried to relieve them of their problems, troubles and all their issues which they were facing. So compassionate, so energetic, so dynamic, continuously in the service of humanity! We are fortunate to be born in this era, we can understand that this all is real. There are people to tell us and there are proofs to show to us that all this really happened. Such a person did exist amidst us. Unlike some people who still think if Rama is real? Was Krishna real? That's what Einstein had said that after some years people will ask if Gandhi was real? Gandhiji was very much real. He lived an exemplary life, an active divine life. We are really blessed to know about Mahatma Gandhiji. Such souls are very rare in the history of mankind. Even one statement which he taught, one value which he lived and preached, if we do follow our whole life will get transformed.



HARI OM

Chapter 6

LIVE RIGHTLY

NAMASMARANA

*Stuthi mouni[3] ninda mouni[3]
Aruna kirana[2] dhyana mouni[2]
Sandhya tharuna[2] prarthana gyani[2]
Vachana pravachana[2] vishesha-gyani [2]
Stuthi mouni[2]ninda mouni[2]
Aruna kirana[2] dhyana mouni[2]
Sandhya tharuna[2] prarthana jnani[2]
Vachana pravachana[2] vishesh jnani [2]
Bandha mochana[2] jnana vigyani[2]
Janana marana[2] jnana vigyani [2]
Bandha mochana[2] jnana vigyani[2]
Janana marana[2] jnana vigyani[2]
Diva ratri [2]shri ram dhyani[2]
Ram charana[2] sharana sandhani[2]*

*Divā rātri[2] śhri rām dhyāni[2]
 Rām charan[2] śharaṇ sandhāni[2]
 Stūthi mouni [2]ninda mouni[2]
 Aruṇa kirāṇa[2] dhyāna mouni[2]
 Divā rātri[2] śhri rām dhyāni[2]
 Rām charan[2] śharaṇ sandhāni[2]*

LIVE RIGHTLY

The namasmarana depicts the beautiful principle based character of Gandhiji which he articulated in his day to day life.

“*Stūthi mouni ninda mouni*”, meaning whenever anybody criticized Gandhiji he remained quiet. He welcomed it. He never said, “Why are you saying this to me? Do you know how much following I have? Do you know how many people can vouch me?”. Never ever he said such a thing. He even smiled and welcomed it. All the people who fought with him, criticized him, troubled him themselves confessed that they were wrong after spending some time with him in discussion. Even otherwise, he was never bothered or became restless in any situation. Even with *Stūthi* (praise) also *mouni* (*silent*). He did not get elated or overjoyed if somebody praised him; he kept silent. You and I have an uncontrollable upsurge of emotions and feelings after listening to praise but Gandhiji never reacted like that. He was unaffected as a *stitha-pragna*.

Stuthi Mouni, Ninda Mouni, Aruna Kirana, Dhyana mouni:

The silence, the peacefulness which we experience in the early morning hours (*Brahma muhurtham*) and during meditation, Gandhiji experienced the same silence of the meditation and the same peacefulness in criticism as well as in praise.

Sandhya Tharuna, Prarthana Gyani:

Every day in the evening, Gandhiji used to conduct prayer meetings and in those prayer meetings he sang few selected bhajans, which he liked. In the satsangs he conducted, he also taught people how to sing bhajans. And whatever he taught uplifted people to a very high level of unity and oneness.

Sandhya tharuna, Prarthana Gyani:

From prayer meetings and when he spoke in the evening time, during satsangh, people came to know that he is a gyani (intellectual).

Vachan pravachan vishesha jnani:

At times when he had to teach people, uplift the masses, transport them to a higher dimension of understanding he was able to do it because he had vishesha-gyana (extraordinary intellect).

Bandha mochana, jnana vigyani:

There are two kinds of bandhan (bondage). People were already in bondage and slavery. One meaning is that Gandhiji was the one who knew how to lead people from bondage of the British rule. Another meaning is he also knew why people are tied down to the emotions, negativities, limitations and he trained them to transcend it. He taught people how to free themselves from British rule and also from the negativities and limitations within.

Bandha mochana jnana vigyani:

Gandhiji was specialized in the knowledge of bandha mochana. And not only that, he made people understand that whenever anybody attacked them during freedom fighting, how to look at them, how to accept the situation, how to face it, boldly, daringly, courageously, with no hatred, no ill will, no violence, and no anger.

Janana marana, jnana vigyani

Gandhiji knew by his practical knowledge and wisdom that birth and death are only a fleeting moment, a passing phase just like a passing shadow. So he made people understand this fact and instilled courage in them to face death during the freedom struggle as if it is a very unimportant and trivial matter.

Diva ratri, shri ram dhyani

He spent his time continuously (day and night) only in the contemplation of Shri Ram-Chandra. Without remaining focused on Shri Rama he never did anything.

Ram charan, sharan sandhani

Gandhiji completely surrendered himself at the feet of Sri Ramachandra.

How much ever we extol about Gandhiji, it actually is very less of what he really is and what he was discovered to be by the people of his time not only in India but all around the world. In every country, there were admirers of Gandhiji because of his service to humanity for decades. Not one year or two years but decades of continuous service! He was constantly in the service of the society and humanity from the time he started the movement in South Africa till he got freedom for India. He rendered service only through love and abiding in Truth. Very rarely you see such an individual.

We have seen in previous chapters, how great people expressed their views about Gandhiji. He said, “To me God is truth and love. To me God is ethics and morality. To me God is fearlessness and to me God is all things to all people.” If we examine the statements we can gauge to what level of progression he attained. He said, “God is very forgiving and he gives us a chance to repent.” Suppose unknowingly or

inadvertently we do something wrong Gandhiji said, “God gives us a chance to repent”.

Gandhiji said in his own unique style, “God is the greatest democrat of the world, the world knows.” Why does he say that? Because God leaves us unfettered, no chains, no bindings, no conditions. He leaves us free, in making our choice between good and evil. God gives us absolute freedom to allow us to do whatever we feel is right. Where can we find such a freedom? And that freedom alone really helps us to grow, to learn, to attain maturity and come out of our limitations to progress. What a great understanding Gandhiji conferred on us!

Gandhiji said, “I believe in the absolute Oneness of God, therefore in humanity, therefore of humanity.” That is oneness among individual and oneness expressing as various individuals. He believed God alone is everything in His expression. God alone has manifested as everything. Out of him only creation emerged. So that is why, Gandhiji believed that God alone is present in humanity and also in the oneness of humanity. There is no division, there is no separation, there is no demarcation, there is nothing higher, there is nothing lower, there is nothing great, nothing less from his highest viewpoint!

He continued to say that though we may have many bodies but there is one soul. Gandhiji illustrated this by

giving an example and said it is like refraction a beam of white light which splits into band of seven colours when it passes through transparent medium. Gandhiji felt, “We all belong to one source and there is only One Soul and that is GOD in all of us.” And that is why he said, “I cannot detach myself from the most wicked soul and at the same time I cannot prevent myself from identifying from the most virtuous one too”.

For him the most virtuous soul and the most wicked soul both are one. He is connected with both. Why? Because he doesn't restrict his view to the person. His way of looking at them is not confined to body, mind, intellect, memory, or ego. He sees through them. He sees beyond them. He recognizes the presence of the divine in them. He values the divine, he knows the divine, as One in all. So from his standpoint, the lowest of the lowliest also is the same, so he takes them close just as virtuous ones. But for others, all good, nice, noble, great are very close and others are not close. At least that is nobler but, for few others only those who are more favorable to them are close otherwise not. For Gandhiji, virtuous souls and wicked souls both are the same.

Gandhiji said, “I am endeavoring to see God through service of humanity.” He wanted to see God through the service of humanity and not by sitting, meditating, going into seclusion or retiring into the forest and caves. And he gave the reason, “For I know God is not in heaven nor

down below, but in everyone.” What a statement! According to Gandhiji, God is in all; all Upanishads speaks of this and when Gandhiji says this it only shows the level of his consciousness. From that raised level of consciousness he was communicating with people. Just think! Gandhiji had the highest possible knowledge and understanding and viewed the creation in the correct perspective.

He did not make the statement God is everywhere by seeing Him in himself by sitting in one place. He actually went to people, faced the situation whether they were good, bad, easy, rough or tough. He went and directly handled the situations regardless whether it was difficult, fearful or frightening. He didn't sit in one place and give instructions to others. He was the man to lead from the forefront. He never believed in numbers nor did he ever wait for anybody to join him. He just went and did whatever was required at that moment. And Gandhiji said that if he had to make a choice between counting the rosary (Japa mala) or spinning the wheel which he used to make the cotton threads, he said, “I will choose to spin the wheel, rather than turning the Japa mala or rosary. As long as poverty and starvation are stalking on the land, so long I will choose only spinning the wheel.” What a compassionate personality! What clarity in choice! If he was given the choice, to sit and do japa or to serve society, he wanted to serve the society and through that service, he wanted to see God. Truly a very rare personality. That is what

is required for the progress of a nation, for the development of the society, for the progress of the community and for the upliftment of each and everyone of us.

Once Gandhiji was raising funds in Orissa for the khadi project. He met many people, contacted them and communicated the importance of the khadi. He had a meeting one day with a lot of people and one old woman came to see him. Despite being a very old woman with a humpback, she had a very tough time with volunteers to get an opportunity to move closer to Gandhiji. Few of the volunteers who served Gandhiji probably also had their own likes and dislikes, so they did not allow this woman to go near him at all. But finally somehow she struggled and came close to Gandhiji. When she saw Gandhiji, she said, “Mahatmaji, I want to see you.” Gandhiji went closer to her, she took out one half anna coin (an anna is six naiya paise, so half anna means three naiya paise) from her waist and placed it at the feet of Gandhiji, did her prostrations. She then looked into the eyes of Gandhiji with reverence and left. That is all she did. The moment she did prostration, placed the coin and she left, Mahatma Gandhiji bent down, picked up that coin and kept it in his dhoti.

Chaman Lal Bajaj was there at that time along with Gandhiji. He was taking care of writing the cheques, collecting the cheques, giving receipts and collecting donations etc. He said, “Please give it to me”. Gandhiji said,

“No, this I will not give you”. Chaman Lal Bajaj said, “I am handling cheque worth thousands and thousands of rupees and you are not going to trust me, with this half an anna coin?” Gandhiji replied, “I cannot give it to you because this half anna coin is worth lakhs of rupees.”

If a person who has lakhs and crores of rupees, it is possible for him to give a few thousand as it is within his capacity. This woman with great difficulty earns and out of that she gave a half an anna. In those days one or two anna was a big amount for common people. For that lady in that poverty and penury, she was earning something in her old age and out of that, she gave half an anna to Gandhiji. Gandhiji said, “This is extraordinary. This coin of the lady is worth millions of rupees. Just imagine how generous she might be, that is why she came and gave.” Great people knew the feeling that is in the heart. It is not the amount that is given which is important to them, rather they relate to the feeling with which one gives.

There was a similar incident that happened when Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandaji returned from a foreign tour and was received in the Ashram. At that time among the sweepers an elderly lady went to Swamiji prostrated and handed over coins to Gurudev. And Gurudev also did the same. He took them and later on said they were more precious because they were given by this sweeper. Why? Because sweepers hardly earn anything but they want to

contribute. That feeling is very important. Gandhiji gave so much importance to the genuine feelings of the individual. It did not matter to what caste one belonged to or what their status was socially or economically. He treated them with a different heart and mind and not like others.

Once when Gandhiji was in Yerwada Jail, Kasturba Gandhi came to meet him as a visitor. Visitors were allowed to meet the prisoners for a while. So the jailer came and informed Gandhiji. He took him to the meeting place, and he stood there. Both of them started talking. They enquired about each other like how they were, how the situations are and so on. The jailer and others were all aware about the purity and piousness of Gandhiji and Kasturbaji. She was also very active in the movement. The jailor felt that two pious souls are talking so he stood at a distance to give them their space and started pacing from corner to corner of the room. After a while he came and then smiled at Gandhiji and said, "Hope you had a good discussion." Gandhiji said, "In your presence only we conversed with each other but the moment you left and you were walking there at a distance we kept mum and we did not speak." He asked, "Why?" Gandhiji said, "You know the rules very well that a prisoner can talk with a visitor only in the presence of the officer. How can we go against the rule? You were not there so we didn't talk and we just stopped talking." We have to note here the extent to which Gandhiji followed the rules and

laws. What he had to obey he obeyed; what he had to follow he followed. And when he defied the law, it was only for the sake of enhancing the dignity of the people and to free the people from slavery and bondage. That was the only reason for which he defied or disobeyed law. Gandhiji and his principles were in harmony absolutely perfect and clear.

Gandhiji said, “The main purpose of life is to live right, think right and act right.” He said, “There are times when we have to obey the call from above which is the higher consciousness and listen to the inner conscience. It may cost many a bitter tears and even more, may it be separation from friends, family, the dearest things and separation from many other things. You have to accept that call and leave to sacrifice and get involved. This is what is the law of our being.” This kind of obedience is what Gandhiji taught people. “A higher call must be obeyed,” he said. That is why, when he gave a call for the sake of the nation he and his people were ready to sacrifice everything. Not that they got any results immediately but eventually they did. They were so devoted to their ideals!

Gandhiji further said, “It is proper for us to attack the system which is not acceptable to and not really good for the people.” It is quite proper to resist and attack the system but, to resist and attack its author is tantamount to resisting and attacking oneself. Gandhiji never directed resistance and attack towards person. It was only directed towards the

system. Because Gandhiji said, “All of us are children of God. In all of us there is presence of divinity. So if we believe that in each one of us there are divine powers and have presence of divinity then, if we disregard, neglect, disdain or scorn at anybody it is doing the same to the divine powers and to the divinity that is residing within us.”

Thus we are not only neglecting the God in them. Because God alone is everything, we are neglecting the whole world. Make a note of the philosophy of Gandhiji. He said, “If you resist and attack one person it is attacking oneself. Why? Because same “presence” is there in everyone. There is God in both of us and that is divine. When we attack somebody we are attacking God and through that person we are attacking the whole world. So Gandhiji advised not to attack individuals. He never in thought, word or deed attack any individual or allowed through his teachings to his people to attack any individual. When with this higher realization he was guiding people they opened their hearts to receive his guidance and follow him.

Gandhiji said that service rendered without joy helps neither the servant nor the server. If any service that is rendered by us becomes heavy, burdensome, or gives us strain, causes stress or gives us a lot of trouble, it is mainly because we are not enjoying doing the service. Enjoy the service and don't feel it is a burden. Don't think why I have to do or how long will I have to do and wonder why others don't do. When

we enjoy doing the service no other possession, no other pleasure, can really attract us and fascinate us. Nothing can distract us and divert us or pull us and tie us down because we experience so much joy within. When the service is rendered with joy, the amount of happiness, contentment and satisfaction we derive, all pleasures and possessions fade into nothingness in front of that. That is how glorious, great and satisfying is the service that is done in joy. This joy can be derived by seeing the divine in everyone and by serving selflessly that divine residing in everyone.

Once in Nagpur inside one Cottage “All India conference” was going on. Gandhiji was at this conference with many people. Outside the cottage, with the volunteers, one Marwadi couple was having an argument and a scuffle for a chance to meet Gandhiji. The people who were there attending the conference heard it so did Gandhiji. In that meeting, Vallabhbhai Patelji was also present. He asked the volunteer to send them inside as Gandhiji would see them. At the same time, another volunteer came running into the cottage. The previous volunteer also led the Marwadi couple inside because Vallabhbhai Patelji had given the permission. The other volunteer who came running also directly went to Gandhiji and whispered about something that had happened. In Nagpur, there were so many camps at different places because they were planning for the non-cooperation movement. In one camp of Bengalis something

had happened, so he had come to inform Gandhiji. Before he could finish whatever he had to say, Gandhiji got up immediately. He was always in the loins cloth so he looked around and picked up one cloth sheet which was there and quickly started walking. While walking he was trying to wrap the cloth around him. This Marwadi couple had come inside after a lot of effort so the moment they saw Gandhiji was walking out of the cottage, the lady held on to the corner of the sheet of cloth which Gandhiji was trying to take and leave. She said, "I want to talk to you! I came inside after a long struggle so I want to talk to you." Gandhiji's focus was on going out so he left that cloth which he was trying to wrap around him and which this lady was holding on to and left. And Vallabhbhai Patelji said to the couple, "He is like that. When he comes to know about certain thing that has happened he leaves even if there is some greatest treasure with him at that time."

Someone said Gandhiji's rushing to Bengali Camp was like Gajendra moksha. When Gajendra was caught by the crocodile he offered prayers to Bhagawan Vishnu. Bhagawan Vishnu too suddenly got up and rushed to help Gajendra and did not even bother to wear anything. He did not pick up shanku, chakra or gada and he did not inform even Lakshmiiji that he was leaving and just left Vaikunta as He had to save his bhakta personally. Such was Gandhiji's reaction when he heard about Bengali Camp. He went straight to the camp in

that biting cold with nothing covering his body as that lady had pulled the cloth while he was leaving. When Gandhiji got to the Bengali Camp he addressed all those who had assembled there. He asked all those who are not Bengali and are in the camp to please leave the place for some time.

And then Gandhiji called Das Babu, discussed with him the situation for some time and gave him a detailed explanation about the movement. This was a great quality of Gandhiji. It did not matter to Gandhiji if anybody who did not understand him approached him to oppose, fight or finish him. He used to give them time and talk to them. No fear! He was not afraid of anybody and never said , why he needed to explain his stand or view point to those who came to oppose, fight or quarrel with him. There were occasions when people came to kill Gandhiji and even then he spoke to them. He discussed issues with them with compassion, love, understanding, and kindness. At the same time he had the boldness to stand firm for what he stood for while showing concern for the other person. Where can we find so many qualities all manifesting in one person? Very, very rare!

When he discussed with Das Babu his issue then after some time Das Babu who was opposed to the non-cooperation movement said, “I propose this!” That person who brought 250 people to the meeting to oppose Gandhiji after spending some time with Gandhiji proposed to join the movement. What a character and clarity Gandhiji had! He knew once

the people are given explanations, their understanding and behavior will be totally different. Gandhiji used to say during such situations, “I should bring clarity to their thinking. In this given point of time they are behaving like this because their understanding is blurred.”

He did same thing when he landed in Durban, South Africa where people came pelting stones, brickbats, and kicked him. They had believed that Gandhiji made false statements against them and defamed them. Gandhiji tolerated the beating. When other police officers, politicians, and powerful persons came and said, “Identify the persons, we will prosecute them.” Gandhiji said, “No, I will not prosecute any one of them because they misunderstood that I made false statements against them.” Bhagawan Shri Krishna we know was abused by people during his lifetime but he kept on smiling because nothing affected him. So Gandhiji was also like that. And he said, “I like critics a thousand times better than those who worship me and applaud me but at the same time disregard me.” Somebody asked him, how he was able to welcome everybody and let everybody get close to him. He said, “The knowledge of the omnipresence of God meaning presence of God everywhere. And that means respect for the lives of opponents and respect for the lives of gundas also.” When omnipresence of God is recognized, opponents, gundas, and others cannot be excluded because God is all-pervading and present in them

also. In words of Gandhiji, God is present in an opponent as well as in gundas. Their mind, intellect, memory, ego may be polluted, distracted and low that is different but in them the same divinity is present. According to Gandhiji, “The Truth is, God is the force and God is the essence of life. God is purity and God is undefined consciousness. God is eternal”. He saw the universal and all-pervading spirit of truth face to face. Gandhiji said, “We should be able to love, the meanest or lowliest of the creation of the universe and should be able to see the all-pervading love, truth, face to face.”

Gandhiji said, “God answers prayers.” Gandhiji believed that God answers prayers in his own way and not our way. God alone is Immortal, God alone is imperishable. We may not be God Gandhiji said clearly but, we are “of” God, just like little drops of water in the ocean is ocean only. That way, Gandhiji felt the sum total of all that lives is God, we may not be God but we are of God. That is how he recognizes the absolute oneness and understands Adwaita. Even the great masters of Adwaita made it very clear that we are not different from the consciousness meaning we are not that who created Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara. We are One with it, not different from it, not other than it. We can’t be anything other than That, and That we are. ‘That doesn’t mean THAT only you are, you are THAT.’ We cannot be different from THAT. THAT divinity which is present in us brought us into manifestation. The ocean is there and the

drop of water is not different from the ocean. Drop of water cannot be the ocean. Drop of water cannot replace the ocean. So remember that drop of water is not going to say I am the ocean. Drop of water is different from the ocean, it belongs to the ocean. But we are not different from the ocean. We belong to the ocean, we are the ocean, we are of the ocean, and that way we are of the God.

Gandhiji was conducting a meeting of Indian people in South Africa, Johannesburg. The policies of the British ruling were unjust, insulting and humiliating to the Indians in South Africa. Gandhiji encouraged the people to fight for their rights. He brought them to a level of dignity in their living in South Africa. That is why the supporters had arranged a meeting with him. The hall was overflowing with people. People were standing everywhere at the entrance, in the lobby, outside the door, and where ever they could find a place. Gandhiji was the main orator for that meeting. After the meeting Gandhi stepped down from the dais and spoke to few people who were around. He was slowly walking out of the hall as he had to leave the place. One side of the hall was very dark since it was evening time. As he was leaving, he saw one person standing in the darkness inside the hall. Millie Graham Polak was with Gandhiji at that time as he was the person accompanying Gandhiji. Millie Graham was the one who had organized this event. Gandhiji looked at that person in the dark and told Graham, "Let me see who

is that.” And then he went towards the man. Graham Polak noticed that the man looked like a youngster and he handed over something to Gandhiji. Gandhiji took it and then came back.

Millie Graham Polak asked, “What is it? Anything special? You left me here and went over there. What is it?” Mahatma Gandhi calmly replied, “Yes I did. He came to kill me.” Just imagine how Gandhiji interacts and deals with the situation. When Millie Graham Polak heard this he was shocked, “Trying to kill you? Was he mad? Out of his mind?” Gandhiji said, “No, he is not out of his mind. He thinks I am deceiving people by not teaming up with the Government in South Africa. He thinks I am going to harm the Indians and yet I call myself their leader. That is what he thinks of me.” Millie Graham Polak said, “You should have handed him over to the police”. Gandhiji again coolly replied, “He is neither mad nor out of mind. He has misunderstood. I put things in a proper perspective.” He was waiting in the dark to pounce and stab Gandhiji with a knife. He had brought a knife to kill Gandhiji. In such circumstances, Gandhiji goes alone and meets him to make him understand why he is conducting a meeting. He explained how he was going to help the Indians and why he is not teaming up with the Government. He clarified everything and the youngster felt sorry and gave the knife to Gandhiji. And it was the knife Gandhiji held and came back.

Millie Graham Polak was dumbfounded. He thought, “What is this person? Somebody is standing there to kill him instead he goes to that person to talk. Gandhiji told Polak that if he had called the police as per his advice he would have become his enemy whereas now he is his friend. Just think he took in everything even risking his life for the sake of principles. And because of these magnanimous pure personality, the vibrations were such that with his compassionate interaction the other person melts. And when he explains they understand and their mind becomes clear and they leave satisfied. Not once but many such incidents happened in his life. When Gandhiji spoke to people it just went straight to their heart. Always he approached them and dealt with them directly. Thus an inimical person who wanted to kill him became a friend because he transformed him. What a personality Gandhiji had!

Can the present day politicians think of doing something like this? Can they dare to do that? Just think. They are constantly busy only blaming others. If we listen to them, ninety percent of the time their talk is to prove that they are greater than others so they blame others. And Gandhiji never attacked or blamed any individual. What a difference in the character! And he led the movement that way and won. That is why the British against whom he was fighting all respected him and welcomed him. Because when he dealt with them individually he was very cordial and ordinary with them. He

respected and loved them and dealt with them as if they were his own. Because he believed God was in them also. They too understood that Gandhiji was a different personality. He fought only for the cause not against individuals.

It is the opinion of many great people that before Gandhiji the revolution was based on violence, hatred, revenge, and lies. People used to take to any means to achieve the aim. Nobody gave weight to the means. Because it was a violent revolution only the people who knew how to use weapons participated in it. But when Gandhiji arrived on the scene, the whole character of the revolution changed. Means were most important. Means to achieve aim were divine. Means were noble and pure. Means were truth, love, and ahimsa that is nonviolence and were uncompromised. How elevated were the means to achieve the goal! It gave the revolution totally different dimension. He conducted a movement of social change with pure means and based it on truth, love, and nonviolence. The force which he used is force from the soul atma-shakthi, not the arms shakthi, weapon shakti.

The Gandhian approach has transformed the face of the entire world and awakened the new consciousness with a desire for the liberation of mankind. John-Hans-Holmes said, "Gandhiji can be remembered with Saint Francis, Thoreau, and Tolstoy. He can be counted among the greatest Messiahs of all times with Louis, Buddha, Zarathustra, and Christ." General Smuts said, "He always maintained humor". It

did not matter how difficult the situation he was facing, he had an unbeatable sense of humor. He possessed alluring simplicity. John Hans Holmes said, “He is the lord of peace and his heart is as soft like a flower but, his body is as hard as a diamond and as tough as a diamond. That is why he took all lassis, stones, brick battings on himself. He possessed a transparent power of concentration as he was a worshiper of unwavering truth.” Many people outside India recognized Gandhiji’s principles, character, values, and what he stood for! They had to praise him and recognize him. They were thrilled that they had the opportunity to meet him, interact with him, or to at least know him enough to express their regard for him.

Even today there are many people who believe that they were blessed to be with him. There were many movements around the world, which were inspired by Gandhiji. In fact, even the people who led some movements in China said indirectly and directly that they were disciples of Gandhiji. People who led movements after Gandhiji were all in a different manner. The whole character of the movement changed after him. Starting with Martin Luther King of United States many other people from different countries, started the movement by understanding the importance of non-violence. They understood that they could fight and protest in a non- violent way.

Someone was telling about the study done by a person about how two males respond and react when they bump into each other and how two females respond when they bump into each other. He said, “The first male who sees the other male proceeding towards him and is about to bump into him will say, “Hey! watch out, you are going to bump on me.” The second fellow says, “You watch it.” And then both of them bump into each other. When it is a question of females, the first one it seems says, “Oh! I am sorry. I was about to bump into you. I am sorry”. The second one says, “No! no! It is my fault. I did not see properly”. Then the first one looks at the second one and says, “From where did you get these shoes?” And after that both of them go for shopping. This shows that it all depends upon the attitude with which we respond. It is only to give an example we say males and females but actually it is an attitude. What we make out of any interaction depends upon our inner attitude.

Once a love marriage broke up. The husband and wife wanted to find out what the reason could be for their breakup so, together they went to an astrologer and asked for his guidance. They said, “Why did the marriage break up? The astrologer calculated and said to the husband, “You belong to the water sign according to the horoscope and the wife belongs to the earth sign. And when water and earth are mixed we only get mud. He said, “If you really don’t have concern and value and regard for each other then any

relationship and friendship be it marriage breaks.” We need to value the other person and have regard for them. As Gandhiji said, “The One who is residing inside the person, that One common adwaitic principle we need to recognize, then automatically value happens.”

In one Maths and Science class, a teacher was trying to educate students about symbols. The shape of a Symbol “>” which we all know is like an English alphabet “v”. When we want to write greater than we place it horizontally and write it like this ‘>’. If it is less than, it is written like this ‘<’. When the teacher wrote with chalk piece like this > it is actually the symbol of greater than. If she write like this < it means less than. Then she looked at the students and said, “Come on students now I would like to ask you what does this symbol stand for?” There was silence in the class. One student got up after ten minutes and said, “Fast forward and rewind”. If we write like this >> it is fast forward and like this << it is rewind. That student didn’t know less than or greater than symbols. But because he was used to the music system he was aware of the signs. We look at the world through our limited knowledge and think that alone is real. That creates misunderstandings and conflicts. That is why we need to have the precise knowledge and correct knowledge as Gandhiji said. Correct knowledge leads to happiness. Sath plus Chith is equal to Ananda. Sath - truth, Chith - knowledge that is what Gandhiji interpreted. If we

have accurate knowledge we will experience happiness, if we have wrong knowledge then it leads to unhappiness, misunderstandings, and conflicts.

Once a person was in some legal tussle so he called a lawyer and asked him how much you charge for taking up the case. The lawyer said, “Actually I charge five thousand rupees for asking three questions”. Then the person who was seeking the lawyer said, “Hey! The amount for fees is very high. Isn’t it? The lawyer said, “Yes, now what is your final question?” He charged Rs. 5000 for three questions. The first question he asked was how much do you charge. Second question was isn’t it too high. The lawyer said, “Yes I know. What is your final question?” Conclusion is we do not know how others will behave and there is no guarantee about how others think or value the system. But irrespective of that we need to maintain a positive bent of mind. This will be possible only when we are charged up with positive values.

One supervisor in a company was given the responsibility of taking care of the attendance of the employees. He noticed that one woman every day for a whole month came late. The supervisor finally said, “This is enough! I thought you will improve. Every-day you come late, this is not acceptable. I am going to take action against you. If I recommend this you may lose everything. Mend your ways and change this lazy habit of coming late. All employees are watching and if they see that I am not taking any action against you they

will also start doing the same thing. I have to take action as it is unacceptable to me.” And then the woman responded, “I accept, I agree. But I also would like to offer a solution.” The supervisor asked, “What is the solution?” “ Can I enter the office through the back door?,” she told the supervisor. Meaning she does not want to come to the office on time but wants to come from another door or the back door where the others will not be there to watch her. Gandhiji always said, “When somebody points out some tendency of ours to us then we need to look and check.” That is why Gandhiji was never angry at anyone who pointed out to him. He always looked inside to observe what was going on within him. He always said if there is anything needed to be corrected, one should immediately correct it.

Gandhiji said once that there are seven social issues which do not allow “ahimsa” to be practiced. Stephen.R.Covey of the U.S, who teaches the Fortune -500 to so many other people in his institution took these seven points into his ‘seven habits’ book. Then he emphasized by teaching people, the principles and values through this. So Gandhiji highlights seven things, seven social issues, first one being “politics without principles”. It does not allow non-violence to be practiced.

Politics without principle:

It implies utter selfish mentality and petty desires in the political people. They have selfish desires, pettiness, no truth, no dependability, and no trustworthiness. Is there any need to say this? Are we not seeing this in this day and age? Is there anybody who is really reliable? Very rarely we find such people. There is no truth in them, no reliability, no dependability, no trustworthiness because there is selfishness and pettiness. When do such things happen? When politics are without principles! So according to Gandhiji politics must have principles. If not there then that is not going to allow ahimsa and not allow value system. Politicians must have principles. According to Gandhiji, ensuing principles is one of the duties of politicians. Suppose if in real life all politicians are really principle-based or at least they each practice one principle of Gandhiji that would be more than enough to purify the system. It will bring about transformation, bring about so much of change! Why only politicians? Political minds can be anywhere even in spiritual institutions. So politics without principles is meaningless and fruitless.

Wealth without work:

It means extracting work without pay. It is utilizing the ignorance of the people and extracting work by force. Many times we come across people being utilized because of this ignorance. Sometimes we see supervisors that are in

charge of giving payment to the laborers and workers, don't pay in full. They take away a portion of it for themselves. Why? They are the supervisors to supervise the work but they become "super wise". Very wise to take away their money. Then what happens? Getting something for nothing means manipulating. Manipulation will not allow ahimsa to be practiced. If any work is allotted to laborers proper dues should reach them.

Pleasure without conscience:

When there is "Pleasure without conscience" it implies animalistic tendencies, which bear no responsibility to have peace in oneself and in the family. Pleasure is obtained despite neglecting the family by doing their whims and fancies. To get pleasure as they like they neglect the children, spouse, wife or husband. Now-a-days both male or female are guilty of this. Neglecting responsibility, not letting the family members live their life properly by making them suffer and only indulging in selfish pleasures is pleasure without conscience. That means any pleasure enjoyed should be with conscience not for self indulgent. That will guide us to the right path.

Knowledge without character:

Knowledge without character is dangerous. Somebody said, "It is like an ultra-modern fastest sports car given to a fellow who is drunk and then driving." What will he do? He

will harm people. So knowledge without strong character and principled living is dangerous. So we need character along with knowledge.

Commerce without morality:

It implies money domination over workers, no fairness, and no mutual benefit. Business should be ethical. In other words commerce should be with morality.

Science without humanity:

We become victims of our own technocracy, if there is scientific advancement and progress without any concern for humanity. A man goes against humanity and becomes victim of his own scientific progress. Science has to have concern for human beings.

Worship without sacrifice:

Worship without sacrifice means no real sense of service or inner worship, only outer show. One pretends to worship but there is no real feeling of devotion towards God. There is pretension of worship as if worshipping mechanically. They are only active in rituals but in-active in spiritual teachings. It is being active in external rituals, outside show, pretension but teaching are not followed and absorbed internally. There is no connectivity with God, no heartfelt devotional link with God, just a mechanical routine. Gandhiji says, “This also is not going to help. Worship must be with sacrifice,

one should have that tyaga-bhava. One should have that connective heart-felt feelings”

So these are the seven social issues, the most important ones, which does not allow the values to be practiced by an individual. Westerners made a lot of money by teaching these to all corporations. The good part is that they taught values based on Gandhiji’s values. And Gandhian teachings are based on our scriptures. Think about it!

A very famous journalist Khushwant Singh has written a variety of articles, including joke books. He lived almost to the age hundred. He used to include in his prayer meetings a famous bhajan of Gandhiji which was written by Narsi Mehta around the year 1450. Khushwant Singh gives his own translation of that depicting Gandhiji in it. He said, “A God like man is one who feels another’s pain and shares another’s sorrow. Feelings of pride do disdain meaning anybody who has pride will only neglect others. One who regards himself as the lowliest of the low will speak not a word of evil against anyone. Blessed is the mother who gives birth to a soul who keeps himself steadfast, in words, body, and mind “manasa vacha karmana”. Who looks upon everyone as his equal and has renounced lust. God like man honours women as he honors his mother and whose tongue knows not the taste of falsehood. He does not desire worldly things nor covets other’s worldly goods for he treads the path of renunciation. All places of pilgrimage are within him as he

always has Rama's holy name on his lips. He is not greedy or deceitful and has conquered lust and anger. Saint Narsi says, such a man has a Godly vision. Generations to come of such a man, will attain salvation." In the whole interpretation, Khushwantji was aiming to depict the character and qualities of Gandhiji. He has tried to depict his vision and experience about Gandhiji! We are really blessed and very fortunate to know about the principles, values, and life incidents of Gandhiji.



HARI OM

Chapter 7

NAME OF GOD

NAMASMARANA

Ram smaranam[2] Shri Ram sharanam[2]

Rama namam[2] amrutha thulyam[2]

Rama mantram[2] parakaivalyam[2]

Rama dhyanam[2] brahmatmaikyam [2]

Rama smaranam[2] Shri Rama sharanam[2]

Rama namam[2] amrutha thulyam[2]

Rama mantram[2] para kaivalyam[2]

Rama dhyanam[2] brahmatmaikyam[2]

Kashta haranam[2] apadha haranam[2]

Ishta bharanam[2] sampad bharanam[2]

Santosh karam[2] sukh shanthy karam[2]

Shubha karanam[2] Mangala roopam[2]

Kashta haranam[2] apadha haranam[2]

Ishta bharanam[2] sampada bharanam[2]

Santosh karam[2] sukh shanthi karam[2]
Shubha karanam[2] Mangala roopam[2]
Kashta haranam[2] apadha haranam[2]
Ishta bharanam[2] sampada bharanam[2]
Ram smaranam[2] shri ram sharanam[2]
Rama namam[2] amrutha thulyam[2]
Rama mantram[2] parakaivalyam[2] Ram smaranam[2]
shri ram sharanam[2] shri rama sharanam

NAME OF GOD

Gandhiji once said that at times human beings have to go through illnesses as a result of violating the laws of nature. In other words, disease is a penalty for the sins committed against God. God and His laws are the same. If anyone sins against the laws of God, it is sinning against God. Not only this, Gandhiji taught us the way out also in the same manner. Gandhiji said, “As God and his laws are the same, if we get into Rama-nama, Rama mantra, Rama japa, to such an extent that Rama-nama holds the sway inside us, then the sins gets expiated and all illnesses will vanish.”

The shastras say that if we do prayashchitham (repentance) our sins gets cleared and we are freed from sins. Why? Because God and his laws are one and the same. When we go against the law, sin is committed. Nama is God. If we recite the name to such an extent that it fills us completely, the sins will be negated and illness will vanish. What a

beautiful remedy! That's what Gandhiji believed in and he demonstrated it too. Anything he said he first demonstrated it. If he preached truth, non- violence, he demonstrated it first. If he said love, he demonstrated and showed it to people by being kind and caring. Whatever he said we can see he lived it hundred percent. Very rarely we can find such souls. A saint in the politics- very rare! That too following values and principle to this extent. Gandhiji clearly said, "I am determined to practise it in my own life."

This he did not say when his state of health was normal. This he said when his health was affected. People who were around him: near and dear, sevaks they came and requested Gandhiji to take medicines, injections. Gandhiji did not accept anything. He said, "I have this Rama-nama. I just wish to live only to serve Him. Only due to His Grace I will continue to live. If He decides that his servant has to serve Him then He will save me." And then Gandhiji said, "When calamities happens to people and if they understood the importance of Bhagawan nama and Bhagawan Mahima, and if they did all the activities with Bhagawan nama on their minds and lips surrendering everything to God then such an individual will find something to learn even from the calamity.

Gandhiji said there are two ways of meeting calamities. One way is to get perturbed, get enraged and to get into the miserable situation. In general, many people try the above

mentioned way only. The moment they face the calamity they get perturbed then enraged and get into a miserable situation. Another way is to understand that for no fault of ours this calamity has happened to us. And then continue to have belief in God, and seek help from God only. Gandhiji said in the midst of calamities one can create happiness as God will certainly help and relieve them from the difficult situation. Gandhiji never said we can make the situation conducive to us or we can make it happen. He always said, "Trust God, God will make it happen." So we can meet calamity having complete Trust in God. Gandhiji himself met calamities in his life this way. That is why even the people who were against him and troubled him then imprisoned him said, "Gandhiji never lost the sense of humor even when he was facing a tough situation in his life."

Gandhiji held on to Bhagawan Rama's name, all through life. It all started in his childhood when his family nurse was attending him and serving his family. This nurse took care of Gandhiji whenever he was not well in his childhood. The name of the nurse was Rambha, an elderly woman. She noticed that Mahatma Gandhiji in his childhood was having some issues and was timid. Since he had small inhibitions and fear he did not have the courage to go into darkness.

To help Gandhiji, the nurse Rambha said hold on to Rama-nama chant Rama nama then all your fears will vanish. Nobody will be able to do anything to you. Nothing

can happen to you. You will be protected and saved. This penetrated deep inside Gandhiji's heart. Gandhiji at that time had no understanding of Rama and had no faith in Rama or anybody. But he had faith in Rambha because she was nursing and taking care of him. He believed her, accepted her, and later on as we all know that faith continued. And it was always there with him till the end. The seed sown by this elderly woman Rambha helped Gandhiji throughout his life and guided him. That shows how important it is for us to teach children about the higher values and ideals. Do not leave that iPad, iPhone and Android phone with them thinking who has the time and patience to take care of them? And then they spend their time only on touching, pushing, pulling, and then swiping these gadgets. It is important that values be inculcated at young age.

Because Gandhiji was refusing to take medicines, few people suggested that he take Ayurvedic medicine, Nature Cure medicine, earth treatment, or water treatment since Gandhiji himself was advocating these things to people.

Gandhiji's response was that this earth treatment and water treatment are un-necessary for the one who is possessed by the healing mantra of Rama-nama. Rama-nama alone will heal is the advice he gave to all. Gandhiji said, "I don't have a magic wand or sword but I have one weapon that is the name of God. If we do our work in the name of God

everything can be accomplished. By following this path hold onto the name of God since God can do miracles.

In 1940 Gandhiji said, “For the past 60 years, I have been fighting for freedom and many other things only with the help of truth and nonviolence.” He was tremendously successful. Gandhiji said, “My physician is Rama, the best and never failing remedy is Rama-nama.” For one who has Rama nama inscribed in his heart and raving on his lips has no need for any other treatment. Gandhiji was sure! Gandhiji emphasized to have firm faith in Rama. He said, “Rama is the savior. This body is a temporary thing, a transient thing. It may live in one moment and it may die in another moment but the one who has installed Rama in one’s own heart, is Rama-nama in himself, such a person will become immortal and his Self will never die.”

One of the close associates of Gandhiji was Vinobha Bhave, another very noble pious soul. The great “bhoodan movement” is very famous. It was inspired by Gandhiji only. Vinobha Bhave said, “Gandhiji was more like a mother even though he was called the father of the nation. He was an affectionate motherly Nobleman.” Vinoba Bhave said, Bapu ie Gandhiji, was, exactly a Karma-yogi as mentioned in Karma-Yoga of Bhagavad Gita. Gandhiji lived his life exactly like that. He was so indifferent to the world and worldly things. He said it was very rare to find such a soul. He said he has seen this great man as an embodiment of

saintly virtues. He had the privilege of staying with him. Every person who stayed with him felt their vices vanished. Whatever negativities were there, by staying with such pious Mahatma, their negativities vanished and pettiness was replaced by open-heartedness. According to Vinoba Bhave, Gandhiji helped so many people to uplift themselves and raise their levels of consciousness to enhance their self-importance.

As Gandhiji was always talking about God, higher values, oneness, equality, the only Truth, non-violence, love and that God is everywhere so many people used to tell him that he should not be here but should go to the Himalayas. They said “you are talking about such topics only so it would be better if he stayed in the Himalayas”. Gandhiji replied, “If you go to Himalaya then I will definitely follow you. But if you stay here, this humble man will stay here to serve you. The servant follows the master.” Then Gandhiji said that where-ever poverty and exploitation have to be eliminated and help is needed that is my Himalaya. It is very clear that his Himalaya is where people are being exploited and people are in poverty. Help is needed as poverty and exploitation has to be eliminated. Therefore, that is Himalaya for Mahatma Gandhi. What a person? What a definition he gave of Himalaya! In fact for Mahatma Gandhi what is the need to go to Himalaya? What people attain by going to Himalaya, he was already “There”!

Gandhiji said, “I am more and more inclined towards relying on Rama. One who relies on him can never be a careless person.” Such a careful person relying on him only becomes more and more indifferent to outward treatment and in doing so it can be tested whether Rama-nama has or has not reached his inner being. Rama-nama not only remains on the lips and the mind and in the outer levels but, whether it has reached the inner being is the test. If it has reached the inner being, then Rama-nama will take care. Rama-nama is the greatest medicine and is absolutely infallible like the arrow of Sri Rama. Like Rama-bana never fails, Rama-nama also never fails. When we take the name from the being and trust him, then all the illness will be removed by this medicine called Rama-nama. And then according to Gandhiji real help comes from God.

He said, “Whatever I am doing today, I do that in the name of God. I trust him completely. When I trust him completely then for the sake of petty illness why should I give up faith in Rama-nama. Trust in Rama-nama and then depend upon medicine?” He believed that if God wants something to be done by him God will keep him safe. If He doesn’t want anything to be done by him, He will take him and so he left everything unto Him. He also explained how one should repeat Rama-nama? He said that one should never forget Rama-nama and have faith. One should repeat Rama-

nama by forgetting desire, anger, attachment, infatuation, in fact forgetting everything of the world. Then that will sink into the individual, reach their being and there afterward Rama-nama takes care of everything.

When Gandhiji was in South Africa and was leading the movement against the British Government, people used to follow the non-violent movement the Satyagraha. Many Indians who followed were sent to jail. The Government used to put men who were participating in the jail so that the movement would subside. Gandhiji was also sent to jail. When men were in jail, all the women and children were left unattended. And if Gandhiji was released from the jail while his men were still there in jail, then Gandhiji used to find some time to meet these women and children. Many times he used to visit their families and would assure them about good things that are going to happen to the Nation and in turn how all their troubles will vanish soon. Gandhiji also used to help them personally. The people who were present at that time testified to this. A good number of women who were left with no one to look after them because their men were in jail, were given accommodation in Tolstoy Farm which was maintained by Gandhiji.

One day Gandhiji went to the nearby river to wash his clothes. He observed that the women were trying to attend to their little children and also trying to wash their clothes. They were unable to do both the jobs simultaneously. Gandhiji

looked at them and went to those women and said, “Please listen to me. Today let me wash your clothes, the river is very far. Do not attempt to go to the river. I will take care”. But all the women refused and didn’t allow Gandhiji to wash their clothes. But he kept on insisting and showering his love and affection on them. They were overpowered by that and couldn’t refuse. He was such a person, he could convince anyone to get what he wanted. But all for the sake of others only, not for his sake. So then finally it appears he collected all the clothes and stacked them up in a huge bundle to carry on his back. He went to the river and washed all the clothes. He dried and folded them. Brought them back and gave them to the women. What a person he was?

That is what Vinoba Bhave said about him, “Gandhiji is like a mother.” How much blessed they must feel that Gandhiji did all this for them. He was such a simple loving affectionate person. He never maintained any status and was down to earth. Everyone was touched by Gandhiji’s motherly compassion.

He always tried to discover God in people. Gandhiji said, “God cannot be found only in the temple or other places of worship created by man but, can also be found by observing austerities, fast, maintaining vows and so on. God can be found through love and that love should not be worldly but divine love.” Gandhiji referred to Mirabai and said, “Mirabai saw God in everything and lived constantly

in such divine love for her God. She saw divine in all". For Mahatma Gandhiji also it was the same.

Gandhiji said, "We cannot hold God in our hands nor can we perceive him with our limited eyes or hear him with our ears. He is beyond our physical senses but He alone is real. Whatever our physical senses see that is not real as senses themselves are not real. He who has the senses and a physical frame (that is us) are not real but God is real. Somebody asked him why he says that God is real and we are not real. He said, "We live in this moment. Is there a guarantee that the one who lives in this moment will remain in the next moment? No! Next moment that person who was here just before us can vanish and does not exist anymore. But God is not like that. God always exists. God is ever-present. That God is infinite presence and is everywhere at all times. He is beyond time, space and objectivity as per Vedantha."

You and I may not remain till next moment. We may die and exit the world. That is why we are all unreal. The one who remains forever and lives forever that alone is real. And that reality is God. That God is capable of doing anything and everything. So we have to rely upon God.

After Gandhiji came back to India from South Africa he decided to settle down in India for good. Gandhiji had Phoenix Ashram in South Africa for the service of the

people. Few of the members of Gandhiji's that ashram also came with him for some time. Kelkarji was one of them who narrated the following incident. They were all residing in Shanti Niketan for some time. And when they were in Shanti Niketan, on few occasions they spent evenings with Bapu. They would have discussions that used to continue till night. For a couple of weeks in the mornings leaving Gandhiji behind they all went to accomplish their tasks. They had their own plans. They were all taking care of their work to dig the hill and fill the pond nearby. So every day these people use to go and do this work. They went early in the morning and come back for breakfast. After having breakfast, they would again go for work until lunch.

One day when they all returned after doing the service, they saw their breakfast plates were very nicely arranged with breakfast served on them. Fruits also were placed on one side of the plate. Everything was neatly arranged. They were surprised and were wondering how this could happen? Because everybody went to work. They went to Gandhiji. Kelkarji then asked Gandhiji in front of everybody, "Who arranged the table? Gandhiji said, "I did this." Kelkarji said, "Why bapu?" Gandhiji said, "I had some time so I thought I can prepare breakfast for you and save your time. Otherwise, you would have to come here and then arrange your breakfast and eat. I saved your time as I had some time left." "How can you do this Bapu? How can we deserve such

things?, “Kelkarji responded. Gandhiji said, “You deserve this because you did laborious work. You did service. You all worked. One who does labor deserves to eat. You all work hard so I arranged plates for you”. It was all so meticulously planned and arranged, all by a person- Gandhiji! So that’s how the motherliness in Gandhiji could also be seen. Gandhiji was not only a father but a mother also.

According to history, the first person to address Gandhiji as the father of the nation is Subhas Chandra Bose. Opinions were different. Subhash Chandra Bose wanted to get freedom through fighting, violence and Gandhiji was against it. Gandhiji had made it very clear that even though ideologically they were different Gandhiji was never against any individual. Subhash Chandra Bose addressed Gandhiji during his radio broadcast as the father of the nation and since then it caught up and everybody addressed him that way.

Congress working committee did not accept his proposal to keep India united. The British played their game ‘to split and go’ before leaving. At that time, Jawaharlal Nehruji, and Sardar Patelji opted for partition as the situation went out of control. But Gandhiji kept saying, “Even now truth and non-violence will win if we are all ready to fight it out. But you are not prepared to listen to this old man. So before you take the final resolution, I will leave the Congress working committee meeting.” And Gandhiji left. At that time he said to few of the people who were there, “If Subhash Chandra

Bose was here he would never have allowed this to happen.” Gandhiji himself said this! This shows how much love and respect Netaji and Bapuji had for each- other.

So then finally we got Independence but Gandhiji was not there, when the flag was hoisted. He was busy putting out the fires of rioting between the communities. At that time on 15th August 1947, Babu Rajendra Prasad, the President of the constituent assembly said something very high about Gandhiji. He said “Mahatma Gandhiji represents that undying spirit of our culture which has kept India alive through all the changes of our history. He is the one who pulled us out of the slump of despondency and inspired us into the spirit which enabled us to stand up for justice to claim our birthright of freedom. He placed in our hands the matchless and unfailing weapon of truth and non-violence which without arms and armaments has won for us the invaluable price of Swaraj in a manner which when the history of these times comes to be written will be regarded as an incredible for a country of our size and the teeming millions of our population. Let us all prove to their faith.” Very implicitly Rajendra prasadji said it is only because of Gandhiji all the leaders were inspired from their passive state into that dynamism of Satyagraha and ahimsa (truth and nonviolence). It is he who inspired everybody. Lord Mount batten also was present when British were handing over the power and charges to India. At that time he said, “At this historic moment, let us not

forget that India owe's to Mahatma Gandhi, the architect of India.” What a statement! Who is saying this? Not an Indian but Lord Mountbatten, who was the representative of British rule. There were so many leaders no doubt but the architect of India's freedom through non-violence is him only. And he further said, “We miss his presence here today and would have him know, how much he is in our thoughts.” It is the same Lord Mountbatten who said, “Gandhiji is on par with Buddha and Jesus Christ.” They recognized, Mahatma Gandhi's level of evolution. Gandhiji always was very clear of what his goal is which was serving humanity and realizing God through service. Gandhiji said, “I do not want to attain Moksha but when people are in poverty and are in need they require help.”

He continued, “I do not want to be reborn and if I am reborn then I should be born as an untouchable so that I can share in their sorrows and sufferings because of the treatment other people give to them. Then, I can find a way to liberate myself and all of them.” He wants untouchables also to be free from their sorrow and suffering which they undergo from the miserable conditions that they face. He said, “It is sin to believe anyone is inferior or anyone else is superior to ourselves. We are all equal. No one is high or low in status. For the one who has devoted his life to service, all are equal.” And Gandhiji always gave importance to practice and not to prattling that is why Gandhiji said, “An ounce of

practice is worth more than tons of preaching.” Gandhiji was very clear about this.

During those days, Gandhiji came to know that a person was planning to build a temple for him. He had already started the work. Gandhiji felt very uncomfortable about this. Gandhiji said, “No man is said to be good when is alive.” Because people can see so many traits in him there will always be someone who will say he is not good. So no man can be said to be good before his death. After death too, he is good for those people who believe in him. He was against that personality worship. Hence the safest thing Gandhiji felt is not to worship any person alive or dead but worship “perfection” which resides only in God. And that is Truth !

Gandhiji said, “Worship only God as Truth, because only Truth is perfect. He told the owner he would be comfortable if he removed his statue or image or Idol and placed one spinning wheel there. Where poor people can come, sit inside the temple and spin the wheel, spin some thread and earn something from it. He said there will always be some people who will come, help, sacrifice and serve. And then it will be a real temple indeed. According to the teaching of Shri Krishna in Gita, a temple is “Temple of Gita in action”. [ie teaching taught in Gita implemented in action]. Gandhiji said, “That is a true worship place and that is the real worship.”

And then continuing further Gandhiji said, “It was his constant prayer that he never should have a feeling of anger against his traducers. Traducers means the people who defame, slander, make false and malicious statements. So there were people who were making false and malicious statements against Gandhiji because they didn’t understand him. Gandhiji expressed his concern and said, “May I not have a feeling of anger against my traducers even if I fall victim to an assassin’s bullet. I may deliver my soul with the remembrance of God unto my lips. I shall be content to be written down as an impostor if my lips utter a word of anger or abuse against the assailant at the last moment.”

Gandhiji knew beforehand about his departure so he made the above mentioned statement. And what happened in the end? He left his body uttering Rama-nama when he was shot dead. Gandhiji said, “I have this non-violence ingrained in me. This is what I was teaching and my death will show that. If someone killed me and if I died with a prayer for the assassin in my heart and God’s name on my lips and I am conscious of God’s presence in my heart, then alone would I be said to have had the non-violence of the brave.” This was a unique statement he had made. He further said, “If someone were to shoot me in the belief that he was getting rid of a rascal then he would kill not the real Gandhi but the one that appeared to him as a rascal.” Because that person has that perception of Gandhiji, he kills his perception and not the real Gandhi.

Rajoji Bhai Patel another associate of Gandhiji told this beautiful incident. One evening Gandhiji conducted a prayer meeting and also conducted Ramayan Path: a recitation of Ramayana. But few of the people including Rajoji bai Patel, Devdas were near kuteera (hut) where Gandhiji used to stay and from there were listening to Ramayan pat. At that time it was dark and Patel-ji was inside the kuteera, Devdas went outside in the darkness. Suddenly he came back to report to the people who were inside that he saw something in the darkness. So Rajoji Bhai Patel and others went out and they found a huge snake, almost 8 feet, hiding behind the water tank. To deal with snakes they had to have the skill. They used a stick with a silken noose to press the snake near the hood so that it would not sting anybody. It's movement is then arrested and they slowly then catch hold of it and leave it somewhere in the nature. So when this group saw the snake they held it with the stick with a silken noose and pressed the head near its hood. By then Gandhiji reached there. He looked at it and said, "Why are you pressing it like that? It will get hurt. Snake is a beautiful creature. Why are you doing this? Loosen it and don't let it get hurt." When Gandhiji said, since they were all followers of Gandhiji they released it although there was fear in them inside. They used to just implicitly obey Gandhiji. But they felt Ab thak tho pakad key rakha, hata dhein tho kya hoga (till now we were holding and now if we release it what will happen). They were afraid. Gandhiji told them to loosen it and they

loosened it to such an extent that it could escape and go away. Patelji narrated this incident and he said, “Gandhiji went near the snake, bent down and started expressing his love and affection to the snake by caressing it.” A live snake that too 8 feet long, he bent down and started caressing it! At the moment it was little agitated and disturbed. Patelji said ‘Gandhiji was treating it like a child and caressing it like a baby.’ The moment Gandhiji bent down and started touching it all the agitation of that snake vanished. All the disturbing levels of snake vanished and suddenly it became very quiet and calm. It experienced the compassionate divinely love of Gandhiji. Gandhiji caressed it three times while the snake was swaying and then it became still, silent, quiet, receiving all the love of Gandhiji.

We have heard in our scriptures and seen in the life of the Masters, who are highly evolved and attained, that all the animals lose their inimical tendencies when they come in front of the great Master. They lose their animal instincts and they behave as if they are full of love. We have witnessed this in lives of Rishis and Mahapurushas. Is Gandhi any lesser than a Rishi or Mahapurusha? He expressed his love for the snake. That day Patelji said, “Gandhiji is not only for human beings but also for all living beings. He loves everybody.” That’s what Gandhiji used to say, “God exists in all. And I love all because God exists in all.” That snake responded so lovingly when Gandhiji caressed it. It was quiet and it didn’t

want to move afterwards. Patelji said when Gandhiji got up and told the sevaks to take the snake and leave it far-away, the snake did not move. It was just frozen and didn't want to come out of that state. To what state Gandhiji had transported it by his love, touch, and divinity we do not know! Being an extraordinary person, he expressed love towards the snake without any fear. Where was that fright? Could he not see the venom and danger from the snake ? Instead, he called it a beautiful creature. Beauty in a snake! The man who sees God in all sees Godliness in all and sees only Godly beauty in all. Satyam Shivam Sundaram! Sees Sundaram only in all because he is Satyam Shivam Sundaram. Then the sevaks lifted the snake and left it in a faraway place. The moment they placed it on the ground, it started crawling and left.

That was the kind of love expressed by Gandhiji towards all beings. Who can give such love? Can anybody love like that? Even Kanchi Kama Koti Peetadhi Pathiji said that Gandhiji could never hate anybody. He went beyond that feeling of hatred. There is no other example that is inspiring like Gandhiji because he was always holding on to "God in all". That is why Gandhiji loved Adwaita because it preaches Oneness in all. And as Gandhiji experienced that Oneness he could love everybody. Gandhiji said once," It was impossible for me to hate anybody in this world. My firm belief in God helped me to lead a pious life." He said, "For the past 40 years it has been utterly impossible for me

to hate anyone or to strongly dislike anyone". For 40 years it was impossible for him to hate or dislike anybody! Then somebody asked, "Why are you against the British then?" Gandhiji replied, "Whenever a misdeed is committed, I shall be there to condemn it firmly. I really do as I say." Gandhiji was not a person who said one thing and did something else. He always did what he said. He didn't approve the tyranny, the reign of terror, and dictatorship of the British. He despised it. He not only disapproved it but he hated it. He strongly hated their heartless policy of exploiting Indians.

The same way he hated the practice of untouchability by Hindus which was followed by many. But he did not hate the British or the Hindu people. He hated the deed they did because it was affecting people. He was against the system, exploitation, misdeeds and hated it but he did not hate the people doing it. Gandhiji also gave the reason why he did not hate them. He said, because "I still believe that their attitude can be altered with love and by other means." Gandhiji believed in this method and it did happen in his life. We have seen in a few examples that whenever people came to fight with him or kill him, to hurt him or to kick him, he accepted it. He then by conversing with them transformed them.

There were also situations where Gandhiji allowed the truth to be revealed and that brought transformation. Even Nathuram Godsey was invited for a discussion because he was writing articles expressing his hatred for Gandhiji.

Gandhiji knew that there is some misunderstanding. So Gandhiji invited him to clear the misunderstanding but he did not come. That fellow didn't come for discussion. But during his life time Gandhiji cleared doubts of such people many times. And after that clarity dawned on these people, they all became his friends and started supporting and following him.

Kaka Kelkarji said, "Gandhiji learned Bhagavad Gita by heart like a child learns his lessons by heart." He initially tried to learn the entire Bhagavad Gita by himself. But then he saw Kakaji was teaching some slokas in Sanskrit to children. So Gandhiji called him and said, "Please correct my pronunciation if I am wrong. Don't look at me as Gandhi but feel free to correct me." And then Kelkarji says, "When Gandhiji was also sent to Yerwada jail, he got an opportunity to correct the pronunciation there. If there was a mispronunciation, Gandhiji immediately used to line the word with a pencil and repeat it continuously for a few times until he chanted it correctly. Kaka Kelkarji says that is how Gandhiji learnt and memorized the entire Bhagavad Gita. Like a child learns he learned the Gita, which shows his simplicity. He was such a humble person that anything he wanted to learn, he learnt like a child. He never pretended to be anything because he knew he is "nothing". He had very clearly told all the people who followed the non-violent movement to understand that they were nothing and God alone does everything.

Once it so happened that Gandhiji was advocating the entry of untouchables into Gujarat University. He said they can also be students to study and learn at the University. The important board members of the University who were Vaishnavites (followers of Vaishnavism) were opposing this. They had a meeting and decided that they will not allow them and if Gandhiji still insisted they will stop funding this college. Those days lakhs of rupees was a big amount. So a few of them went to Gandhiji to communicate this message and asked Gandhiji not to insist or they would lose the funds. Gandhiji told them, “If someone offers me freedom for India at the cost of accepting untouchability, I will not accept it. If I don’t accept that what are these few lakhs of rupees? God is there to take care, God will help the cause.” And God helped and the University continued. That is why Gandhiji always relied on God.

In the photos of his later part of life, we can see Gandhiji taking support of two young girls while walking. One of them is Manu Gandhi, his own grand-daughter. Once they went to this village where the streets were very narrow. Gandhiji could not take the help of the girls so was walking with the support of the stick. Manu was walking behind him. Another girl who was walking behind him was Abha and there were also a few others with them. As they were walking through a very narrow village streets, there was filth and excretion on the street from people eliminating their body waste. Gandhiji

then and there decided to clean the street. He got leaves of the trees and started cleaning the filth and fecal matter. Gandhiji picked it up on leaves and then disposed it. Nowadays when Modiji gives a call for Swachh Bharat, they politicize it. It is Gandhiji's model Swachh Bharath not Modiji's initiative. It is Mahatma Gandhiji's initiative and it is not political. It is Gandhian model in action to maintain everything neat and clean. He used to give so much importance to cleanliness. When Gandhiji finished cleaning the street, Manu Gandhi asked Gandhiji, "Bapu, why did you do that ?" He said, "Everybody will take it up if they see me doing it. They will remember this and this will remind them to keep streets clean everyday as we frequently visit the place." He was a practical person. He practised what he preached. Where can we find such a personality? Any value we see in him, he implemented it, practiced it, lived it, and then only he guided people to encompass it. Through his living, he was guiding everybody that is why Gandhiji is a unique person, par excellence and beyond all human comprehension. For the people who used to think of Gandhiji only as a political leader had a very narrow vision.

Gandhiji was way beyond this! Actually, he was a highly evolved Saint in the political field only to teach people by his living example. If somebody says that once upon a time Bhagawan Shri Krishna was always involved in all kinds of activities and yet remained detached then people may

say,” That was Dwapara yuga, kisko patha? Kaun Dekha?” Meaning Dwapara yuga who knows, who saw it? And if people say Ramachandraji was facing every single issue that human beings face but at a different level of consciousness. That is Thretha yuga, kaun dekha? Koun jana? Meaning Thretha yuga who saw it, who knows? There are always people who would say somebody might have fabricated it. That is why Einstein said after some time people will say this is also a story. That is why probably God wanted to show that it is possible for a human being to live with values. That is why he made Gandhiji Godly who lived it and proved that to us. When? In this very century! He was born in 1869 and in 1948 he left the body. In 1948, he was 79 years old and amidst us. There are photos and videos of Gandhiji, and there were also a few years ago with us people who saw and lived with Gandhiji.

Our Shastras proclaim that when one lives with such highly evolved saints then automatically because of the presence of divinely vibrations in them and their level of higher consciousness, one will be influenced and will be transformed. Merely being in the presence of Mahatmas and satsangh people will be transformed. This is what had happened to all the people who were near Gandhiji or who had met Gandhiji. They were the people with whom Gandhiji interacted. Whether they were opponents, tyrants or brutal people, all such people recognized divinity in Gandhiji.

They recognized divine love, divine compassion, divine truthfulness and that divine Godliness in Gandhiji. There is hardly anybody who interacted with Gandhiji and did not see these qualities or get affected by them. The title and the word 'Mahatma' became glorious because it was attached to Gandhiji.

There are innumerable number of incidents in Gandhi's life but we talked about only a few in the last seven days. That itself was so much for us to understand about what a great divine being Gandhiji was. We all should feel proud to be connected with the same country, the same land to which Gandhiji was connected. And we now live in a free country and he was the one who made it free. He was the one who inspired everyone to fight for freedom. Even today for all ills in society and for all issues in the society including the political field there is one solution, a remedy which is the way of Gandhi. If we follow in our life one quality or one value that Gandhiji practiced and advocated it would be enough to uplift us and take us to the heights of evolution. It would be enough if one puts into practice any one value of Gandhiji's life which appeals to oneself. If it is put into practice, that is enough.

For twenty-five years, Mahadev Desai was Secretary to Gandhiji. Everyday he wrote something about Gandhiji's life in his diary. And we know only because of his tuning to Gandhiji he left his body when Gandhiji declared fast unto

death during the Quit India Movement time. He was not prepared to see Gandhiji leaving his body. After Mahadev Desai passed away his teenager son Narayan Desai who was also associated with Gandhiji and used to trek with Gandhiji started writing the diary. These diaries are now in volumes and they delve into the depths of Gandhiji's real core of his being. The more we go deep into Gandhiji's life, the more Godliness and divineness we discover. Divinity in action, divinity in the field, divinity in the forefront is Gandhiji! It is very easy to talk about it in the meditation hall. It is easier to talk about it in a devotional place, where bhajans and satsangs are going on. It is easy to talk from the platforms but, it is impossible to live it in the field. Gandhiji was living it in the field, facing it, living it and showing it to people so they could emulate in their lives. A rare combination of such courage, fearlessness, truthfulness and compassion is very hard to find in an individual.

We are really blessed to be exposed to the Gandhiji's qualities, principles, values, and his absolute oneness which he was. May Bhagawan Ramchandraji's grace the most cherished Ishta Devatha of Gandhiji be upon us. May Gandhiji's spirit lead us, guide us, and help us to achieve his standards.

PRAYER AND SHANTHI PAT

Shri Ram Ram ramethi ramey raamey manoramey.

Sahasranama taththulyam ram naam varananey,

Shri ram nam varananey

Ram ram ram ram

Ram ram ram ram

Ram ram Raja ram

Ram ram Sita ram

Ram ram Gandhi Ram

Sarvey bhavanthu sukhinaha

Sarvey santhu niramaya

Sarvey bhadrani pashyanthu

Maa kashida dukha bhag bhavetha.

Asatho ma Sad gamaya

Tamasoma Jyotir gamaya

Mrityurma Amritham gamaya

Om Poorna madaha, Poorna midam,

Poornath Poorna mudhachyathey,

Poornasya, Poorana madaya,

Poorna mevadhi shisyathey

Om shanthy shanthy shanthy.

Harihi Om

Shri Gurubhyo Namaha

Sri Paramatmaney namaha

Sri Parabrahmaney namaha

Hari om.



