

JOY: The Journal of Yoga

September 2003, Volume 2, Number 9

The Fourfold Yoga - Union via Universal Love

G. Kumar

*Love is a glory from Eternity's spheres
He is still the Godhead that can make all change
Love should never cease to be upon the earth
Love is the bright link betwixt earth and heaven
Love is the far Transcendent's angel here
Love is man's lien on the Absolute
-Sri Aurobindo*

The noblest Union is Union via Love. Love is an outpouring of the heart and Love is Love's reward.

All other yogas are difficult to practice. Raja Yoga (Union via psychic control) is difficult because we have to keep up Brahmacharya (continence), Jnana Yoga is difficult because of the philosophic subtlety of the concepts involved and Karma Yoga is difficult because its end is often far, far away. On the other hand, Bhakti Yoga or Union via Love is simple to practice because there are no restrictions in this noblest blessed Union via Love.

Having a Tutelary Deity is the first step. This Deity should be worshipped in thought, word and deed.

"By giving thyself up in heart and soul to Me, thou shalt overcome all difficulties by My Grace " says He in the Gita.

Only Universal Love can redeem the world. The salvation of the world is in love and through love.

"Take away Love and the whole world becomes a tomb," says Byron.

Humans are endowed with many positive qualities. Truth, Ethics, Peace, the Discriminative intellect and Love are the five most positive. Of these, Love is the greatest.

If we incorporate love, we can see that our lives become peaceful and spiritually resplendent. We are asked to incorporate this supreme quality, which is a prerequisite for Liberation or Self-Realisation.

Freud identified *Thanatos* (the Death Instinct) as the destructive element in Humankind. Contrary to *Thanatos* is *Eros* or the Life Instinct. *Thanatos* or the Vedantic *Thamas* is the villain of peace. The Mr. Hyde syndrome in man is very powerful. There is an eternal fight going on between Conscience and Expedience, between Eros and Thanatos! We have not yet defined the Life instinct. This anti-Thanatos principle is Love!

So the preserving quality is Love. Love alone is the Saviour, Love alone is the Redeemer. He who embraces Love is blessed and he alone can save the world.

*His light and life is given to balance here
The dark account of mortal ignorance!
It is this quality which is highly favoured by Heaven!
Love rules the court, the camp and the grove,
All men below and saints above
For Love is Heaven and Heaven is Love!*

As one Great One said,

*Love all beings
That is enough!*

Or Alexander Pope,

*He prayeth best who loveth best
Both bird and man and beast*

When it comes to Jnana and Bhakti Yogas, it is said that He, before whom even the Vedas remain mute, prefers Union via Love to Union via Wisdom.

It is like the wife and lady love. Jnana Yoga is the wife and Bhakthi Yoga is the lady love.

Jnana Yoga is like the wife. It asks "Why didn't you actualise the Self?"

Bhakti Yoga is like the lady love. It says, "No problem; there is still time for you to actualise."

In the Divina Commedia, Beatrice criticizes Dante for following Philosophy and not Religion. Under Beatrice's compulsion, Dante changes over to Bhakti Yoga, away from Being and Becoming!

*I wake amaze and in the windows blaze
The forms of saints & holy men who died
Hereafter martyred and hereafter crucified
And the Great Rose upon its leaves displays
Love's triumph and the angelic roundelays*

*With splendour upon splendour multiplied
And Beatrice again at Dante's side!
No more rebuking but smiling her words of praise
-Longfellow*

The strict restrictions in other Yogas make it difficult to practise them. On the other hand, there are no restrictions in Bhakthi Yoga. The process of spiritual evolution is automatic and all blocks will be removed by Divine Grace.

In the Geetha, He hath declared that Bhakthi is the greatest of all yogas. The bliss that accrues from sheer devotion is ineffable!

The basic dictums of Bhakthi Yoga are simple. They are:

- Love All
- Serve All
- Help Ever
- Hurt Never
- Hate None
- Nurture All
- Educate All

If we can do this spontaneously, we have reached Universal Love.

"I shall deliver thee from all sin and evil" says He in the Geetha. The debit in our Karmic balance sheet will be exhausted and we become eligible for Self-Actualisation.

As Robert Bach said, "At the end of our terrestrial journey, one question will be asked. How much did we love and what is the quality of our love? "

Love your neighbour because he is like you; and love your enemy because enmity is a misunderstanding.

*Start the day with Love
End the day with Love
Spend the day with Love
Fill the day with Love
That is the way to the Divine
-Sai*

The simple wisdom which is Love can redeem us & this world!

Economists say that Money makes the world go around. While this statement is true superficially, when we go deeply, we find that some other emotion makes the world go around. It is Love that makes the world go around!

When we ask one thing, God gives that one thing, but when we ask nothing, He gives everything, He gives Himself and also the spontaneous boons of His love! Our prayer should be like the prayer of the poet who prayed, "I desire nothing from Thee, I desire only Thee!".

The Fourfold Dharma and the Fifth Dharma

The Law asks us to practice the Fourfold Dharma

They are:

- 1) *Brahmacharya* - During pre-marriage dating, one should steadfastly follow Dharma.
- 2) *Garhastya* - Once married, one should attend to duties both worldly and Divine.
- 3) *Vanaprastha* - Once worldly responsibilities are over, one should seek the Divine alone.
- 4) *Sanyasa* - To walk in the Self; to embrace none but Him.

There is a fifth Dharma. It is called Prajna Dharma, the Highest Wisdom is Love!

The Four Purusharthas (objectives) and the Fifth Purushartha

There are four purusharthas. They are Artha (Wealth), Dharma (Ethics and Morality), Kama (Desires) and Moksha (Self-Realisation).

There is a fifth Purushartha. It is Prema, Love!

Premam Brahma - Love is He ! The highest knowledge is Love !

The equation of Jnana Yoga - Prajnanam Anandam Brahma (The Self is Consciousness and Bliss) is replaced by the more powerful equation of Bhakthi Yoga - Premam Anandam Brahma (Self is Love and Bliss)! Love alone can confer Bliss!

Love is a manna sent from Heaven, a spark of the Immortal Fire, sent by the Lord to elevate our lowly desires!

The heart is 60 times more powerful than the brain. There is only one language and it is the language of the heart!

"Only via Love can anybody reach me " says Lord Krishna in the Gita. A similar statement is attributed to Jesus, "No one cometh to the Father, but via Me ". All of the great sages of history place high importance upon the supreme quality of Bhakthi or Universal Love!

All wisdom is contained in Love and love alone can heal this sin-sick world, as love is divine medicine!

It is said that the Lord is playing hide and seek! Himself the play, Himself the player, Himself the playground!

*The Universal Governor of life lies in us
He is playing hide and seek with his own force
Eternal, He assents to Fate and chance
Immortal, He dallies with mortality
Divine, he wears the form of animal and man
He whose transcendence rules the pregnant vasts
Prescient lay in our subliminal depths
A luminous individual power, alone
-Sri Aurobindo*

And His mantra is LOVE !

© 2003 JOY: The Journal of Yoga
www.journalofyoga.org