

Philosophy of Dharma in Views of “Sri Sri Thakur Anukul Chandra”

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Dharma is an important term in Indian view of religions. In Hinduism it means duty, virtue, morality and it refers to the power which upholds the universe and society. Hindu generally believes that dharma was revealed in Vedas although a common word there for universal law or righteousness is “rita”. Dharma is the power that maintains society, it makes the grass grow, the sun shine and makes us moral people or rather gives humans that opportunity to act virtuously, but acting virtuously does not means precisely the same for everyone, different people have different obligations.¹

The objective of Dharma is fulfilled through the Ideal. He demonstrates the laws and principles of existence in each and every step of his life. He also provides the mankind with various messages which exemplify the essence of existential nurture. Lord Krishna says “Arjuna whenever there is decline of righteousness and unrighteousness is in the assent then I body myself forth for the destruction of evil doers and for establishing Dharma that is righteousness on a firm footing. I am born from age to age”.² The ideal plays the role in enabling the people to observe the laws and principles of existence, suiting the age. When it is found that the people deviate from the laws and principles of existence that the Dharma the human society suffers from chaos and disorder. At this chaotic condition of human society, the supreme existence manifests Himself in the form of ‘Ideal’ in order to streamline the conduct and behavior of the people towards the observance of the laws and principles for being and becoming of life.³

The stay of all existence is Dharma, and He is the supreme fulfiller. Dharma never becomes many. It is always one. There is no variety of it. Views may be many even as many as there are people. Still, Dharma cannot be many. In His opinion “ to speak of Hindu Dharma, Mohammedan Dharma, Buddhist Dharma etc is wrong, rather they are so many views. In fact, there is no opposition in the views- different views, the same way feeling one in many forms. Each faith is for the expansion of avowed activity. That can be in many forms and as much as is gained by the expansion, so much the realization- wisdom. So Dharma is based upon realization to be real in nature.⁴

“Religion installs life and becoming of existence.”⁵

“Dharma induces one to evolve out of order to a particular oneness.”⁶

The Dharma’s concept given by Sri Sri Thakur is different from the traditional concept. Dharm derived from the root ‘dhri’ has a very wide connotation and includes everything that maintains and sustains individual as well as collective existence. It is in this sense that Dharma has been defined by seers like Vyasa, philosopher like Kanada and law givers like Manu, Yajnyavalkya and a host of others. It should always be remembered that dharma and religion are not the same. A lot of misunderstanding crops up because most people tend to regard

them as synonyms. Sri Sri Thakur very aptly brings out their difference.⁷ He says-

“Dharma is to uphold every
existential evolution to life and
grow
while religion
is nothing but to assemble round
the one.”⁸

He again says

“To uphold the life and growth
of self as well as of others is dharma to bind
oneself unrepellingly
with the love lord—
to seer of life and growth the
adjusted personality
and to follow him accordingly is
religion
and to be initiated is to be born again.”⁹

According to Him ‘Dharma nurtures religion’. The law and activities which uphold existence are Dharma; whereas ‘Religion relays psycho-physical coordinating strength of the people and makes them inter-interested’. Dharma is very much is akin to duty. It has nothing to do with rituals. Rituals are only a preparatory stage for comprehending the real essence of Dharma. According to Him Dharma is to live and grow along with the environment. Those who take rituals to be Dharma are called fools in Upanishada. But the tragedy is that in every society rituals have come to occupy the place that belongs to Dharma.¹⁰

Dharma has many ramifications because duties vary according to one’s nature, temperament, age, vocation, sex etc. Dharma assumes various forms e.g. Sanatana Dharma, Samanya Dharma, Vishesa Dharma, Yuga Dharma, Kula Dharma, Varnasharma Dharma, Raja Dharma, Praja Dharma and so on and forth. It is clear that Dharma is not a creed or a dogma or a rite but a balance, rational, catholic way of life.¹¹ Sri Sri Thakur says “whats makes us live and grow to achieve existential bliss in conduct and character through the service is Dharma”.

He further says:-

“The object of Dharma is- to
attain truth
in all its perfection
and to enlighten existence
with the effulging radiant realization of all the
mechanism
of existential enlightened

penetrating intelligence-
which can serve the
existential properties through
psycho-physical exalting
upliftment
by
which one can
achieve
conscientious immortal elixir of life with every
devout adherence
to Beloved the Great the Emblem of Love¹²

Thakur starts His philosophy of life on the basis of three extremely simple formulas. These are Jajan or self-culture, Jaajan or imparting the ideal and Istabhriti, devout obligations to the Ideal. These three formulae appear to be so simple, but they are very effective in moulding man's life and bringing adjustment of complexes in his character. Without adjustment of complexes, all talk of religious philosophy become futile and meaningless. The result is what we see all around us. While on the one hand, each one of us is practicing religion of his own choice, there is growing hatred between different sects and even individuals. By religious adherence we, in fact mean only observation of certain rites, rituals and visit to temples, mosques, churches and pagodas or worshipping a deity or image of God or relic of any past prophet. It also sometimes mean to committed to a particular way of life that renders man different from the normal run of general people in custom, costumes or manner. It matters little approach to life. We have divided ourselves in the narrow faith and sects of our own liking. Obviously, such compartmentalism is leading to disastrous results.¹³ According to Him the very intrinsic significance of practicing Dharma lies in observing the laws and principles for upholding existence and accelerates its becoming.¹⁴

In order to materialize Dharma in life, the first step is to take initiation, which simply means to accept the Ideal and follow Him for achievement of knowledge and efficiency that fulfils life and growth. In His view, life is not to be considered part by part. To Him 'Being' means the total 'being' of man and 'Becoming' implies the all round growth of that being. There are no such compartment as secular and sacred and material and spiritual. Thus, service to environment is as essential to the spiritual development of a man, as it is indispensable to his material growth. Involvement with environment cannot be therefore ignored, if realization is desired.

Thakur had immense love for all beings irrespective of caste, creed religion and social or political status. His depth of love was always apparent on his glowing face and his eyes, which were always eager to embrace even the evil-doers¹⁵

A casual glance at his complete life- philosophy will amply demonstrate how deep and penetrating was his foresight in unraveling the mystery of things. He explained 'Sat' as existence', cit as receptive capacity and 'anand' as increasing momentum. 'Religion' to him implies that which holds together one's own and others' life and intellect. And a Guru or preceptor is he in whom this ideal of religion takes or manifests in a lovely form. Diksa or consecration to some ideal or principles is necessary for attaining salvation. One must have to follow

rigidly the routine of performances or observances in order to remain steadfast to one's Ideal. Sadhana or practice constant is necessary prior to enlightenment proper. Whatever may be one's caste, creed, sex or social status, if one performs one's religious duties with a devotion of single-mindedness; one crosses the efficiency bar in the way to progress onward to the path of true realization.¹⁶

Respect for superiors like parents, the teachers, the preceptors etc. as had been advocated in the gospel of the Upanisads, was also one of the main teachings of the Great Thakur. He insisted on keeping one's conscience alive and follows the path of conscience, as that track is the surest path and guide, the beacon-light in the march of life. Dharma must be made part and parcel of one's life. It never deceives anybody; on the contrary, that saves one from many pitfalls, many disgraces and humiliation.

Sri Sri Thakur urges people to be sincere, modest and to have a broad vision. He asks. "What is the use of rising high in life if your eyes are set downwards like a vulture?" It is an echo of message of Sri Ramkrishna. In another place he says, "If someone does injustice to you, and you are really keen on avenging it, you must behave with him in such a way that he must feel repentant. There is no sweeter revenge. It is good for both." Here, one finds a reiteration of the message of Jesus and the essence of Gandhiji's philosophy of Satyagraha. Sri Sri Thakur says "If your desire is not fulfilled, that is sorrow. Do not desire anything. Be contented with any situation-how can sorrow affect you?" this conveys the fundamental teaching of the Buddha. Sri Sri Thakurji put great emphasis on the philosophy of doing one's work without attachment and without caring for reward, propounded in Gita.¹⁷

He gave a unique definition of religion, far from being a divisive factor. Religion as expounded by him would work as a cementing force. According to him, whatever makes one eager to see to others' welfare and progress as much as his own, is true religion. Such religion provides the foundation of life. There is only one religion. There may be various beliefs- as many as there are people. There is Hindu religion, Muslim religion, Christian religion, Buddhist religion etc. to his mind this is wrong. They are all different beliefs. They are all different form and variations of one religion.¹⁸

References:-

- ¹ BBC Article on Dharma
- ² Bhagwat Gita
- ³ Ligate page 6-7
- ⁴ Satyanusaran page-13
- ⁵ Quotes of Sri Sri Thakur
- ⁶ Ibdi
- ⁷ Centenary volume on Sri Sri Thakur Page-22
- ⁸ Quotes of Sri Sri Thakur
- ⁹ Ibdi
- ¹⁰ Centenary volume of satsang Deogarh page 22-23
- ¹¹ Ibdi page 23
- ¹² Quotes by Sri Sri Thakur Anukul Chandar
- ¹³ Centenary Volume of Sri Sri Thakur page-133
- ¹⁴ Ibid page- 133
- ¹⁵ Ibid page-134
- ¹⁶ Ibid page-150
- ¹⁷ Ibid page- 8
- ¹⁸ Ib