

THE NECESSITY OF SUDDHA DHARMA

By Sri T.M. Janardana - Former Director and Third Initiatory Authority of Suddha Dharma Mandalam - Originally published in September 1933 at *The Suddha Dharma*, A monthly magazine devoted to Suddha Philosophy and other topics of allied interest

The idea of a Universal Religion is always dreamt for by the thoughtful to combat the conflicting emotions the various faiths engender. Letting alone the feasibility or otherwise of this really happy idea, the fact that it is not through this or that faith alone that the **Supreme** manifests and is attainable requires to be still realized by the protagonists of Religions. The **Supreme** as an **Infinity** is **All and Unlimited**—"*Sarvam Kalu Idam Brahma*": **All is verily Brahman**—is a challenge to those faiths that limit this **Infinity** into watertight compartments. The English word "**God**" is inadequate to convey a correct idea of the vastness embodied in the Sanskrit expression "**Brahman.**" It is one huge sweep of all comprehensiveness and non-comprehensiveness too, if the latter expression were a possibility as a state. **Religion** is just a process to implement the faith of attaining this **all-consciousness**. It does not matter what faith it is, so long the universality of the all-completeness is ingrained in our systems. To assure and seal our faiths, religion is known to help; and as such its necessity is impressed on all. It is also correctly understood more as an individual affair than a collective functioning in so far as it is an endeavor to attain a state of mind that is free from any outside interference, leading to poise and peace. The collective working, if it be so called, of religions, is by virtue of its very nature, the cause of conflicts, and therefore, an impediment to the acquisition of the inner peace.

In this land of **Āryāvarta**, **Veda** which originally contained the **Supreme Dharma** was not a religion at all, but a knowledge **Par excellence** which treated about the One **Supreme** in all its manifold manifestations in the cosmic world process. The study of it, and an adherence to its tenets, gave man complete mastery over all the three regions: **Ādhyātmika** (spiritual), **Ādhibhautika** (material), and **Ādhidaivika** (divine). It was a **Dharma** for all **Āryas**, the men who, by their own culture and conduct, acquired mastery in the knowledge of **Veda**.

This **Dharma**—**Adhyātma Dharma** as it was called—was also known as **Sanātana Dharma**—the **Eternal Dharma**. But in the course of ages, this **Vedic knowledge** began to be interpreted by different schools in accordance with their own limited vision and understanding, and as a consequence, the universality of its appeal was slowly but surely lost. This loss was further intensified by the limiting injunctions of the **Smṛtis**, the **Dharma Śāstras**, and the **Puranas**, which laid down a very rigid and exclusive code of conduct and rituals to be observed in life, entirely contrary to the all-comprehensive and non-exclusive nature of the **Vedic** ideal.

The Problem of Limited Vision

The chief characteristic of the **Vedic** ideal was to help man to achieve **Parāgati**—the Highest goal in life—by an adherence to the doctrine of **Samatva**—**Equability** or **Equanimity** in all

conditions in life. It was this **Samatva** ideal which was completely forgotten, and as a result, the two ideals, **Pravṛtti**—objective functioning, and **Nivṛtti**—subjective withdrawal, came into prominence and were adopted as exclusive ends in themselves. The **Pravṛtti Mārga** advocated and led to the attainment of **Svarga** or **Heaven** as the highest **Puruṣhārtha** (aim of man), and the **Nivṛtti Mārga** to **Mokṣha** or **Liberation** from the necessity of birth and death, as the highest **Puruṣhārtha**. Both these ideals were adopted in an exclusive and dogmatic fashion, totally ignoring the fundamental ideal of **Samatva** which alone can generate the necessary spiritual power for the achievement of both these ends in a synthesized form. The **Samatva** doctrine, which held out **Brahmā-Prāpti**—attainment of **Brahman**—as the highest **Puruṣhārtha**, which includes both **Svarga** and **Mokṣha**, was completely lost to the knowledge of mankind.

It was this loss of the **Samatva** ideal, otherwise known as **Yoga**, which the **Gīta** sought to restore and recover to the knowledge of mankind. The **Gīta** teachings are a direct appeal for an adherence to the doctrine of **Samatva**—the synthesis of **Jñāna** (knowledge), **Bhakti** (devotion), and **Karma** (action) in a spirit of equanimity. The **Gīta** does not advocate either **Pravṛtti** or **Nivṛtti** as exclusive ends, but its teachings are based on the **Śuddha** ideal, which synthesizes both in an inseparable manner. The **Śuddha** ideal is that which holds out **Brahmā-Prāpti** as the highest **Puruṣhārtha**. The knowledge of this **Brahmā-Prāpti** as a possibility of achievement in life was completely lost to mankind. It was in the face of this widespread loss that the **Gīta's** teachings were given out. It is in this that the eternal freshness of the **Gīta's** appeal consists.

The Role of Śuddha Dharma

The teachings of the **Gīta** are designated **Yoga Brahma Vidyā** or **Śuddha Dharma**. The **Śuddha Dharma** is a restatement of the **Adhyātma Dharma** of the **Vedas**, with a clarity and precision suited to the understanding of all. It is the one **Dharma** that holds out the possibility of achieving **Brahmā-Prāpti** by all, without any exception, by a true adherence to the doctrine of **Samatva** in all conditions in life.

The **Śuddha Dharma** thus re-states that the whole of the **Cosmos** and all its varied life forms are a manifestation of the **One Supreme**, and that this manifestation is always in a state of balance and harmony, in spite of the apparent disorder and disharmony visible to the limited vision. It is this truth of the **Cosmic Harmony** that the **Śuddha Dharma** enjoins man to realize and live up to. This realization is achieved by an adherence to the doctrine of **Samatva** in all conditions, by the synthesis of **Jñāna**, **Bhakti**, and **Karma** in a spirit of dedication to the **Supreme**.

The **Śuddha Dharma** holds that all actions, whether mental, verbal, or bodily, are the necessary outcome of the **Supreme's** will, and as such, the individual man has no will of his own. All actions, therefore, are to be performed in a spirit of **Tyāga**—renunciation of the fruits thereof—and in a spirit of dedication to the **Supreme**. It is this attitude of **Tyāga** that frees man from the bondage of **Karma**—the results of action—and leads him to **Brahmā-Prāpti**.

The **Śuddha Dharma** thus provides the necessary spiritual and material basis for all actions in life. Actions done before the necessary spiritual light is gained are all materialistic, which, leading as they all do towards It, have the unconscious spiritual flavor in it, while those done subsequently are all spiritual, having a successful material effect. The former, where the personal element is dominant, leads man through a series of successes and failures to release himself from the hold of selfishness on the true basis of the existence of divinity in All; while the latter, wherein calmness of outlook is the result of knowledge, has no such personal motive alone, by virtue of which, the failures themselves are understood as preludes to the reaping richer harvests of success by which the general is benefited through the actions of the knower as a doer. It is then only **Niṣkāma Karma**—actions done without desire—as a possibility becomes an accomplished fact. Till then desire will always remain. And it is necessary that it should so exist, until knowledge and action are unified through a synthesis.

Such is the **Śuddha Dharma**, which this **Yoga Brahma Vidyā** teaches, the vital utility of whose tenets can hardly be ignored in view of the utter state of confusion prevailing generally now. No amount of philosophizing or any amount of sacrifice would adequately effect this necessary harmony. The tenets of **Śuddha Dharma** are such that everyone following the true **Dharma** attains not only a harmony but also the heart's true desire. For it holds out the spiritual and material benefits on a proper basis. The practice of it in life is very charming.