

DHARMA

ALL THE WAV

by
Professor S L N Simha

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TRANSACTIONS

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Professor Seshadriyengar Lakshmi Nara Simha, is a person of varied experience -- University teacher; Director of Research and Adviser, Reserve Bank of India; staff member and later member of the Board of Executive Directors, International Monetary Fund, Washington, D.C.; Delegate to several United Nation Conferences, including the General Assembly; Founder-Director and Professor of the Institute for Financial Management and Research, Madras; also acted as a director of several companies. Prof. Simha is an economist by profession but has also much interest in philosophy, religion and ethics. He has authored numerous books and articles, all in English; on economics, finance and management as well as on The Ramayana, The Mahabharata, The Bhagavad-Gita, and Tiruppavai - a Tamil devotional classic. This lecture was delivered by him on our Institute's FOUNDER'S DAY on August 20, 1992.

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DHARMA

ALL THE WAY

I am delighted to be here this evening to participate in the Founder's Day celebrations at the Institute. While I cannot call Mr. B. P. Wadia a friend, or even an acquaintance, I have met him on several occasions in India and abroad, especially at the meetings of the United Lodge of Theosophists in Bombay. He was a towering personality. His calm and benign face, always, made one feel that he was a realized soul.

On this occasion, I am reminded of what Shri D. V. Gundappa, said, 30 - 40 years ago while presiding over a Karnataka Association function at the Central College. He characterized the day in a three-fold way, namely, an auspicious day, a day of remembrance with gratitude and a day of taking a pledge for further good work in the years to come. In the same way, we should all be most grateful to Mr. Wadia for having founded this great institution, very broadly conceived. The object of the Institute is the synthesis, among other things, of Indian culture with other cultures of the world. During the forty-four years it has been in existence, the Institute has rendered excellent service to the citizens of Bangalore, and to outsiders too through its numerous publications. The wide variety of literary, philosophical, religious and cultural programmes which the Institute has been organising, with great care and punctuality, is a tribute to the organizers of the Institute, who are fulfilling the objectives of the Founder so well. It is a great force for Sarvadharmā Samanvaya, the synthesis of various systems of thought and life in these areas. Yet, no one can rest on one's oars. There is much to do and we must all, young and not so young, take a pledge to further the noble ideals of Mr. Wadia.

The subject of today's talk, "Dharma, All The Way," is something which the President and I jointly selected. Dharma is a grand and complex concept; in fact, it has been called a "tantalizer." I am no scholar. In fact, I am not even sure I deserve the honour of delivering the Founder's Day address. I owe this to the courtesy of your President, who has been a very dear friend of mine for over fifty-five years. I ventured to speak on the subject of Dharma because for many years now I have been a student of the subject and I have found this most fascinating, not merely from the point of view of academic interest but also from that of practical use, for everybody and in every situation and, for all time. In Indian daily life no two words are in greater use than Dharma, and its sister/companion, Karma. Everyone from the highest to the lowest, the highly educated and the so-called uneducated, have numerous occasions to refer to the principle of Dharma and the working of the Karma phenomena. We often talk of Dharmasankata, or moral dilemma. The highest compliment one can be paid is to be called a man of Pharma. It is interesting that the Lord of death, why, the great Lord Himself, is called Dharmaraja, for he is the dispenser of justice, without fear or favour.

Our epics, puranas and scriptural works like The Bhagavad-Gita, are essentially didactic, expounding the nuances and the great strength of the path of Pharma and the dangers of deviating from it. The primary interest in The Mahabharata, for instance, is the many discourses on Pharma, rather than the quarrels and the ultimate war between two branches of a royal family. The Bhagavad-Gita is nothing but a discourse on Pharma. The great Lord says more than once that He is born whenever Adharma is on the ascendant, to protect the weak and the meek, destroy the unrighteous and reestablish Dharma.

The importance of Pharma can be seen by the voluminous literature in India on the subject, of truly astronomical dimensions, produced over the centuries. In the result, we have a very elaborate Dharmasastra, the science of Pharma. A very comprehensive modern treatise on the subject is by Mahamahopadhyaya P. V. Kane, whose 7-8 volumes, running into about

4500 pages, royal size, is a monument of scholarship, dedication and faith. The first volume is practically nothing but an enumeration' of the Dharmasastra works existing in India.

Many of these works may be in the nature of a stage army but it shows the extraordinary importance which our ancient seers, law-givers and scholars gave to the subject of Pharma, and apparently there was widespread public attention to the subject. I am no scholar. Moreover, I am essentially an economist, and my interest in the subject is that of a humble student, yet in the primary school. I am placing before you the little knowledge on the subject that I have gathered, drawing mainly on the advantage of my being many years old.

Both Indian philosophy and religion are known as Sanathana-Pharma, or eternal or perennial religion. It is supposed to be based on the Vedas, that is, our great "Book of Knowledge," but it really transcends the Vedas. The concept of Pharma has parallels in other religious and philosophical systems. In The Mahabharata, Pharma is defined as "that which holds together the peoples of the Universe." Perhaps the most comprehensive definition of Pharma, is given by Pr. Bhagavan Pas, the eminent philosopher, educationist and theosophist, in his great work the "Laws of Manu." Manu is the most famous and authoritative exponent of the Pharma concept in India, closely followed by Yajnavalkya.

That which holds a thing together, makes it what it is, prevents it from breaking up and changing into something else, its characteristic function, its peculiar property, its fundamental attribute, its essential nature, is its Dharma, the law of its primary being. That which makes the world process what it is and holds all its parts together as One Whole, in an unbroken all-binding chain of causes-and-effects, is the Law (or totality of laws) of Nature or Nature's God. Dharma in the largest sense, the world order.... That scheme or code of laws which bind together human beings, in the bonds of mutual rights and duties, of causes and consequences of actions arising out of their temperamental characters, in relation to each other and thus maintains society, is human law, manavadharma. Yet again, the code of life based on Veda (all-science of the laws of nature in all her departments), the due observance of which leads to happiness here and hereafter is Dharma. Briefly Dharma is characteristically: property; scientifically duly; morality and legality; religion with all its proper implications, psychologically and spiritually; and righteousness. Generally law, but Duty above all.

The words "duty above all" should be repeated a thousand and eight times like the sacred names of the Lord; for, the most important aspect of Dharma is the performance of one's duty, appropriate to the situation, as an individual, as a member of society, as a citizen of a nation and as member of the international community. The duty is not merely towards fellow human beings but also to all creatures, and to nature herself. There are obligations to the living as well as the dead, and to God too. If Dharma is followed, then there is orderly and enduring growth and prosperity. It contributes to the integrated personality of the human being and the community. Failure to observe the code of Dharma leads to disintegration and eventually destruction. The main function of Dharma is unification, integration, conservation and harmonization.

The above-mentioned various meanings of the word Dharma, which have grown over the centuries from, the simple beginning in the Vedas, are complementary, all flowing from the etymological meaning of Dharma, to support, unify, blend and harmonies. All this is required both for individual perfection and the good of the community in an enduring manner. However, the three fundamental aspects of Dharma, are duty, virtue and religion. I would say that duty and virtue are the two solid pillars or legs of Dharma and these two themselves stand on the foundation of religion, which is, etymologically, another meaning of Dharma. Duty refers mainly to individual perfection and virtue refers to man in relation to

society and the rest of God's creation -- that is to say flora, fauna and the world of rivers, mountains and the like. Unless duty is linked to the Supreme Being, it may tend to become a matter of expediency, by and large; rather than one of enduring values and importance. Relative Dharma becomes absolute Dharma when it is linked to HIM as the ultimate source and goal of all endeavours, attitudes and doings. Hence, Dharma is triadic, comprising duty, virtue and religion.

It is interesting to note that there is an ancient concept in the Vedas, namely, Rta, which may be regarded as the forerunner of the concept of Dharma. Rta means Law or cosmic order, the 4 regulating and supremely transcendental principle of the universe. The word Rta in its simplest form, it is stated by scholars, indicates a straight or direct line, or the universal laws of nature, of an impersonal nature. When applied to the world of living beings, Rta denotes a straight conduct, that is to say based on truth or Satya.

It is not difficult to appreciate that Dharma is synonymous with Rta, if its above-mentioned three elements of duty, virtue and religion are combined, as they must always be.

Religion is one of the potent forces that binds men closely. Actually, religion is a force that must lead to universal integration. If one were to remove all the external features or non-essentials, such as rites, rituals, dogmas and mythologies, and concentrate on the essentials or the spirit of each religion, it will be seen that every religion is universal in character. The nature of the Supreme Being, His omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience, His easy accessibility, His characteristics of justice and mercy, His universal message of love, compassion, charity, truth and non-injury for all creation and the benefits of the simple act of total and unconditional surrender to Him rather than the performance of rituals and ceremonies, which are nothing but showy pieces, are the features of all religions.

All religions also preach the need for all work and actions to be done in His name and as offerings to Him. Looked at in this way, there would naturally be an Endeavour not only to attain perfection in all work but also to aim all the time for the happiness and welfare of all creatures, His children.

In short, apart from securing individual salvation, religion has the merit of being a great social force, promoting unity, amity and mutual co-operation on an universal basis, transcending climate, colour and language. Hence the need to consider religion as an important aspect of Dharma, and as one which guides the other aspects, namely duty and virtue. Without the guidance of religion, duty and virtue may tend to be wholly relative, in infinite pattern, tending to become just form and shadow rather than substance.

Let us now turn to the aspect of duty, about which the Dharmasastra books speak mostly. In this connection, it should be mentioned that the Indian tradition lays much greater emphasis on duties rather than rights. It may be recalled that when, during the early years of World War II, the famous English author, H. G. Wells, consulted Gandhiji about compiling a charter of rights, Gandhiji told him he was beginning at the wrong end. He must first compile a charter of duties which, if adopted faithfully, would ensure automatically the rights of one another.

Duty was conceived in the widest possible sense, covering all people, in all situations, in all positions and for all time, that is to say from the cradle to the grave. The duties were conceived in one's self interest as well as in the larger interests of family, community, and so on. Much of this involved ceremonies and rituals of various sorts, many of which sought favours from the invisible powers that be, or the elements, for well-being in various ways. One suspects the hand of priests in much of this, as they stood to benefit from an elaborate

system of rituals!

Broadly, duties were conceived within the comers of the four goals of life, termed Purusarthas, which comprised two parts, namely Abhyudaya or worldly joy and Nishreyasa or supreme happiness. The former is said to comprise three elements (trivarga), namely, Dharma, Artha, and Kama; and the latter just one element, though of enduring importance, namely, Moksha or Mukti, deliverance or release from worldly life and the cycle of birth and death. The Indian system attempted a harmonious blending of the material and the spiritual. Contrary to general belief, the Indian attitude to life is not one of asceticism. The good things of life have to be enjoyed, but justly and moderately, so as not to be an impediment to the goal of attaining supreme bliss.

In my view, the goals for earthly life are only two, namely Artha (wealth, income and useful possessions) and Kama (the pleasure of the senses and the fine arts); but it is most important that these goals are pursued within the ambit of Dharma or righteousness. The acquisition of wealth and its enjoyment must be one hundred per cent consistent with the tenets of Dharma -- under no circumstances ill-gotten wealth or illicit love. So, Dharma has to be the paramount guiding principle or beacon light in all activity and endeavours. Otherwise, there will be growing darkness, confusion, chaos, a breakdown of the fabric of society and eventual destruction, — the kind of situation to which the world seems to be moving slowly as the "marvellous" twentieth century is coming to a close.

For achieving the Purusarthas, duties were prescribed in an elaborate manner. The duties were generally set in terms of rituals and ceremonies, but it must be noted that their essential purpose was individual perfection and social benefit. It was a mixture of what may be called of personal benefit and community welfare, without conflict of any sort. Divine authority was invoked for all this not only as an end in itself, but as a means of ensuring faithful observance of customs, ceremonies and rituals of immense practical good to the individual concerned and the community. In most cases, it was mandatory to chant some verses from the Vedas, the ancient "Book of Knowledge," of Hinduism.

To mention the various categories of duties, there were first Samskaras, or ordained ceremonies to be performed by and for the individual, the object being to guard the individual from conception to cremation. Among the numerous Samskaras, ten were regarded as important, beginning with the procreation act and culminating in the marriage. The two most important Samskaras were Upanayanam and Vivaha. The former represented the initiation into a life of study and discipline, the outward symbol of the ceremony being the investiture with the sacred thread, comprising three strands, signifying various triads which exist in the universe, such as the triple nature of the Spirit, namely, Sat, Cit and Ananda, and the triple nature of matter, namely, Tam as, Rajas and Sattva. Vivaha is the ceremony of marriage. The hymns chanted at the wedding ceremonies and the various rituals are intended to promote in the couple mutual love, trust, support and faithfulness, and confer on them long life and off-spring. The very elaborateness of the marriage ceremonies is intended to impress on the young man and his bride the sacred character of marriage rather than its being regarded as a contract. In our immortal epic, The Ramayana of Valmiki, Janaka, father of Sita, referred on the occasion of the marriage, to their being partners in the pursuit of Dharma.

Elaborate rules were laid down for bodily purity. It was clearly recognized, however, that physical purity was not enough; mental purity was essential, in fact of much greater importance, namely; austerity, wisdom, truth and charity.

Among the duties prescribed were five daily sacrifices -- Pancha Yajna — to the Brahman or Supreme Being, the various deities, the ancestors, to the birds and beasts and to men. Yajna is an offering, as a token of remembrance and gratitude, really a process of recycling, of giving back what one was privileged to receive. Besides the chanting, of hymns, offerings of food were to be made, reverentially, to birds, beasts, wanderers and guests, expected and unexpected. Guests were to be looked upon as God, but lest this should induce guests to hang on indefinitely, they were enjoined to depart early. It has been said that a guest is he who does not stay more than a night! Manusya- Yajna, that is to say sacrifice for men, covered offerings of every type of help that goes to make fellow human beings happy, — food, clothing, shelter and money, for satisfying legitimate wants.

Everyone must go out of his way to observe the prescribed Yajnas, not as a residual item after all his and his family's wants and needs have been met very generously, but as true sacrifice. He must deliberately restrict the expenditure on himself, with some wants and needs unfulfilled, so that he can serve others. The Yajna concept is a very beautiful and noble one, based on the idea that man has no separate individual existence, but is indissolubly linked with the universe, and his whole life must be a life of sacrifice and duties, if he is to fulfill the very law of his being.

Now we come to the very important and most publicised set of duties' covered by the phrase Vama-Asrama-Dharma: the Dharma according to one's class or group or caste (to put it in terms of what emerged before long) and one's stage in life, as part of an extremely systematic and orderly arrangement of life, as our ancient people visualised it.

Let us first consider the Asrama Dharma, according to which life was divided broadly into four stages: namely, Brahmacharya, the student life, Grahasthya, the householder's life, Vanaprastha, the forest dweller's life or the life of retirement and Sannyasa, the life of an ascetic or the controlled life. The duties for each stage were set out elaborately, in the various treatises on Dharma, the duties also varying with the group or caste of the individual.

Each stage was both an entity in itself, as also, an intense preparation for the next stage, leading finally to the stage of release from worldly bonds. The student's life, which begins with the Upanayanam ceremony, already referred to, is one of study, mental and physical discipline, chastity, austerity and worship.

With the completion of student hood, a person must marry and enter the householder's life, considered to be the very heart of life. Procreation is considered important, as a matter of sacred duty; however, great temperance in sexual relations was enjoined. Promiscuity in sex was condemned, as it meant Kama sans Dharma. The householder must also accumulate reasonable wealth for the simple needs of himself and the family. The householder must observe the various Samskaras, depending upon his caste and class. There were also obligations on the householder towards hospitality and charity.

The forest life, to be entered "when the householder sees the wrinkles (on his skin) and whiteness (in his hair) and the son of his son," was a transitional stage to becoming an ascetic, a wanderer, having abandoned all attachments, leading to release from the cycle of births and deaths. One was required to pass through the stage of the householder as it meant maturity and stability to the personality, but in rare cases a student was allowed to become an ascetic, though he did not quite enjoy the status of a regular sannyasin.

Thus, two stages related to temporal life and two to spiritual life, representing respectively, the positive or the outgoing way, Pravriti-Marga; and the other two the path of withdrawal or the Nivriti-Marga. In respect of the latter, what was considered as important

was not so much retiring to the forest or wearing saffron-coloured clothes, with the hair shaven off, as real non-attachment to men and things, which can be practiced in the busiest metropolis.

Now we turn to the four classes or groups or castes, the four Varnas. In a broad sense, this is occupational specialization which has prevailed in all countries and in most periods of time. Plato talks about it in his "Republic." Such specialization has many economic and social benefits, if the rules are observed sincerely, though this may lead to rigid compartmentalization of society and lack of mobility so essential for progress. Unfortunately, although many of the economic features of the caste system are gone, we are facing the unhappy social and political consequences of the caste system in an independent India far more than during the long British regime, which was rather neutral to the system, though it suited its general policy of divide and rule.

The Brahmana was the spiritual and religious leader and he had the duty to study the scriptures and keep alive the religious traditions. He was to be physically and mentally pure all the time, upright, austere and a source of inspiration and guidance to the rest of the community, which had the responsibility to look after the austere needs of the Brahmana and his family. The Ksatriya was the ruler and the administrator, charged with the duty of protecting the people from enemies and maintaining peace and order in society. He should have the qualities of valour, prowess, firmness and generosity.

The Vaisya formed the general and important class, with duties mainly in the areas of agriculture, manufacturing, commerce and banking, or really with responsibility for wealth creation. The last class, the Sudra, represented that of service and manual labour.

There has been considerable discussion on the origin of the caste system and much material available to indicate that it was one based on one's Gunas, that is to say one's qualities or forms of energy, and the environment, than by the accident of birth. It came to be identified with birth mainly because in the same life it was nearly impossible to change one's innate characteristics and this had to await another birth, according to the Karma doctrine, which will be discussed briefly later. There is a saying that by birth everyone is a Sudra and he should try to acquire Brahmin hood through his thoughts and conduct.

The main object of the Varna or the caste system seems to be that one's work and living must be harmonious with one's Gunas. This is the concept of Svadharmā, of being enjoined to live according to one's own Dharma. It is one's duty to make the best of one's talents and opportunities, and do a good job of it, wherever he may be and in whatever capacity. This contributes to efficiency, stability and order. To engage in something different from one's Dharma, may not only be non-beneficial but even harmful.

With Svadharmā as the base, the appropriate duty has to be performed in every walk of life and in every situation, personal, family, institution, community, nation and the world at large. Parents have a Dharma of their own to observe, and so also the children. The husband and the wife have each their respective Dharma to follow. The President, the Prime Minister, individual Cabinet Ministers, the legislators, citizens, judges, the army and the police, the U. N. General Assembly and the Security Council have each an obligation to perform their respective duties, with efficiency, dedication and fearlessness, all imbued with a sense of trusteeship. Performance of one's duties is thus raised to the level of a moral and spiritual obligation, as part of an integrated system, good for the individuals concerned and for the community.

Duty has to be accompanied by virtue, which is the other important element of Dharma,

the two being really inseparable twins. The mission of virtue is to unite and integrate, and it is complementary to the duty laid down for Asrama and Varna in that it has a certain universality, transcending the divisions of class and stage in life. It has been rightly said that virtue is the quality which dictates the fulfillment of duty:

Our epics and scriptural works like The Bhagavad-Gita catalogue the virtues which should be cultivated and the vices to be avoided. To put it in another way, virtue itself can be regarded as having a positive as well as negative side. Truth, purity, freedom, forgiveness, charity and, above all, love should be practiced. Anger, greed, lust, jealousy, injury, hatred and arrogance have to be avoided.

The virtues have been elaborated a great deal in our epics and treatises on Dharma. Thus, how Dana, that is to say charity, for instance, should be done indicates the nobility of the ideals of the Hindu system of religion and ethics. Charity was conceived, as in other religions too, as a sacred duty. Charity should be done spontaneously, without expecting anything in return and very important, to the deserving, at the right time and the right place. Charity must not encourage indolence and vagrancy. Charity must be done with great respect to the recipient, who must in fact be made to feel that he is giving rather than receiving.

What is the basis for virtue and duties ? The injunctions of the Vedas, the many treatises on Dharma, the epics and the ancient lore (Puranas), advice and the living example of elders, are all there to guide us in this regard. The real motivation is, however, a religious one, the realization of the Unity of all selves, the one Self or the Supreme Being pervading all individual lives, and all so called inanimate things. This realization leads to love for all, the best form of duty and virtue; love for all and love for oneself become the same, a kind of noble selfishness as it were. Love unites and integrates effortlessly and in an enduring manner.

When one is in serious doubt as to what is right and what is wrong, the sure way is to seek the guidance of one's conscience, which is none other than the divine voice, and therefore always correct. The cynicism regarding conscience being elastic is not justified. Conscience is never flexible; it is always dead straight.

Besides, in the Hindu system of religion and ethics, there is another very important sure compulsion for practicing virtue and performing duties, and this is the doctrine of Karma. This word has several meanings, but basically it is the theory of sequence of events and of cause and effect; you reap what you sow. Karma literally means action which, it is very important to note, belongs partly to the past, partly to the present and partly to the future. It is also well to remember that cause and consequences, in the Hindu system, are not regarded as separate things; consequence is a part of action.

Thus, none can escape the consequences of one's action and we have everyday proof of the working of the principle of Karma, if only we keep our eyes, ears and minds open. This should restrain us from thinking, talking and doing evil; this should lead us on to the path of good.

The scriptures are all one in the view that when Dharma declines and Adharma (unrighteousness) ascends to a dangerous extent, the Lord deals with it Himself in various ways, including reincarnating Himself.

From the foregoing rather brief account of a vast subject, even by a layman like this author, it should be clear that Dharma is required everywhere, for everyone and all the time and all the way. Without the pursuit of duty and practice of virtue, conceived as a religion, the individual, the family, the community, the country and the world will

disintegrate.

We have abundant proof of this disintegration everywhere: poverty, unemployment, huge budgetary deficits of government, inflation, drug abuse, divorce, sexual promiscuity, growing percentage of unwed mothers, accidents, murders, suicides, terrorism, scandals in games like football, cricket and athletics; political instability, dictatorships, coups, border clashes between countries, territorial aggression, wars, instability of governments, walkouts in parliaments, scams; landgrabbing by Ministers, bureaucrats and the like; violence everywhere in word and deed, are all the reflection of a sharp decline of duty and virtue, and of the rapid ascendance of vice -- selfishness, greed, lust, arrogance, jealousy and hatred, and, utter neglect of duty.

It is every one's responsibility to protect and promote Dharma, so that everyone benefits from it. It is the rule of law without requiring, happily, courts and judges. Dharmo eva hato hanti, "Dharma being destroyed destroys everything." Dharma raksati raksitah: "Dharma protected protects." It is a co-operative Endeavour for mutual benefit, mainly through performance of mutual duties. Thus, everyone must play his part in this process; there is no question of givers only or of takers only. All are at the same time givers and takers.

The wonder is that people are not pursuing Dharma the way they should, what with its very obvious benefit to the individual and the public. At the conclusion of his marvellous work, The Mahabharata, the great Vyasa lamented this fact in four verses, called Bharata Savitri, as under;

"With uplifted hands I am crying aloud but nobody hears me. From Dharma is secured Artha and Kama. Why should not Dharma, therefore, be courted ? For the sake of neither pleasure nor fear, nor cupidity, should anyone cast off Dharma. Indeed, for the sake of even life one should not cast off Dharma. Dharma is eternal. Pleasure and pain are not eternal. The soul is eternal. The cause, however, of the soul's being invested with a body is not so.

The question as to why people commit sin or engage in unrighteous activity remains open. In the Bhagavad-Gita, Arjuna asks the Lord, "by what is a man impelled to commit sin, as if by force, even against his will." I am afraid the Lord's answer is not decisive. He says it depends upon the person's nature, of passion, which leads to craving and wrath, wisdom is enveloped in delusion. But why that is so, is not answered; one will have to explain it in terms of the infinite regression of Karma.

An answer is given by Duryodhana, the so-called villain of The Mahabharata, he says, "I know what is Dharma, but I have no inclination to follow it. I know what is Adharma, but I cannot desist from it. I do everything as thou, seated in my heart, maketh me do !" But this extreme position cannot be accepted, since it in effect charges God with partiality. Nor is man totally free.

The consensus seems to be that man is both free and controlled. The freedom is a limited one but he should exercise it with care, and reap the consequences.' This is the rational and practical approach. It may be said of Dharma what is said of honesty, namely, Dharma is the best policy !

It is all right for God to intervene when unrighteousness gets to dangerous dimensions, but why should we allow it to go that far. There is enough by way of resources in the world for everybody to be reasonably happy, if only there is righteous management of our affairs, national and international. There are lots of wise people in all walks of life and in all countries and they must act, individually as well as collectively, to check the forces of unrighteousness and help preserve and promote Dharma. Pessimism and cynicism must be

eschewed and the goal pursued with missionary zeal.

To conclude, as the tide of this lecture indicates, Dharma, is required all the way in personal life and in every field of activity - business, politics, social service, sports, culture and humanitarian work, in national and international spheres. Even as there is One Self, the ultimate goal of man must be one country, one people, one economy and one government. The marvellous progress in science and technology, the spectacular progress in transportation and communication, the urgency of eradicating poverty and providing employment and finally the need to protect the earth against environmental hazards, all point to the imperative need for co-operative endeavours, on the solid foundation of Dharma.

In this task, a body like the Indian Institute of World Culture has an even more important role to play in the years to come and deserves support, in various forms, from the citizens of Bangalore in particular.