

The Main Frame of Integral *Bhakti* Yoga

When unity is won, when strife is lost
And all is known and all is clasped by Love
Who would turn back to ignorance and pain?

Savitri-633

Wherever love and light and largeness lack,
These crooked fashioners take up their task.

Savitri-153

Wrong could not come where all was light and love.

Savitri-314

1, All Life is Yoga of Nature through Love. All life turned into this cult of love, all actions done in the love of the Divine and in the love of the world and its creatures seen and felt as the Divine manifested in many disguises become by that very fact part of an integral Yoga. The three stages through which all life is transformed are; firstly the Integral *Bhakti* Yoga turns all transient worldly normal emotional relation of human life into the joy of the All-Loving, the All-Beautiful and All-Blissful. Worship, prayer and meditation are used only for the preparation and increase of intensity of the divine relationship. Integral *Bhakti* Yoga is catholic in its use of all emotional relations, so that even enmity and opposition to God, considered as an intense, impatient and perverse form of Love, is conceived as a possible means of realization and salvation. It is for this reason that the worship of god, the worship of idol, the human magnet or ideal are not to be despised; for these are steps through which the human race moves towards that blissful passion and ecstasy of the Infinite which, even in limiting it, they yet represent for our imperfect vision when we have still to use the inferior steps Nature has hewn for our feet and admit the stages of our progress. Certain idolatries are even indispensable for development of our emotional being; the man who knows be hasty at any time to shatter the images unless he can replace it in the heart of the worshipper by the Reality it figures. Secondly, Integral *Bhakti* Yoga recommends development of seven fold Divine personalities during its contact and active personal relation with the Divine as All Friend and All Master of Integral Karma Yoga, All *Guru* of Integral *Jnana* Yoga, All Father or *Paramatma* or *Prajapati Brahma* of Integral Vedantic teaching, All Mother or Para-Shakti of Integral Tantric Yoga, All Playmate and All Lover of Integral *Bhakti* Yoga. Thirdly, All Love, Human and Divine have spiritual force veiled and revealed respectively. It is an adoration offered initially to limited and ignorant object and form and culminates in all-inclusive and all-embracing Integral Divine. Human love is defined as the entry into exclusive enjoyment by entire separation from World, Self and God. This love begins with the craving of the flesh and when it tries to

become Divine through complete self giving culminates with the realization of one soul in two bodies and rapturous fusing of two souls into one body. The Divine love is defined as entry into same exclusive enjoyment without separation from World, Self and God. It begins with the realization where human love ends and culminates with the realization of all souls in one body and realization of all bodies in one soul. The former is realized through *Vedic* sacrifice of adoration and consecration of all as the becoming of the Divine and the latter is realized through Vedantic sacrifice of adoration and consecration of all as the Being of the Divine. In Supramental consciousness the object of all emotion would be fully satisfied by embracing all contact of human relation in a purified flame force.

2, *Bhaktya mamvijanati jaban jaschasmi tatwatah*, by devotion he comes to know Me, who and how much I am in all reality and principles of My being. *Bhakti* is that which regards, adores, loves the Divine alone in all things, by that *Bhakti* He can be known, seen, and ever entered in to. *The Gita* further confirms that of all Yogin he who with all his inner self given up to Me, for Me has love and faith, him I hold to be the most united with Me in Yoga. Integral *Bhakti* is considered as highest element of Integral Yoga which is the crown of Integral *Karma* Yoga and flowering of the Integral *Jnana* Yoga.

3, The traditional *Bhakti* Yoga leads away from world-existence to an absorption, in the Transcendent and Supra-cosmic. The path of Integral *Bhakti* Yoga aims at the enjoyment of the supreme Love and Bliss and utilizes normally the conception of the supreme Lord in His personality as the divine Lover and enjoyer of the universe. The world is then realized as a play of the Lord, with our human life as its final stage, pursued through the different phases of self-concealment and self-revelation. This larger application of Yoga of Devotion may be so used as to lead to the elevation of the whole range of human emotion, sensation and aesthetic perception to the divine level, its spiritualization and the justification of the cosmic labour towards love and joy in our humanity. As in the other Yogas, so in Integral Yoga, one comes to see divine everywhere and in all and to pour out the realization of the Divine in all one's inner activities and outward actions. But all is supported by the primary force of emotional union: for it is by love that the entire self-consecration and the entire possession is accomplished, and thought and action become shapes and figures of the divine love which possesses the spirit and its members.

4, So the method with which *Bhakti* Yoga can begin is simple and straight which is always a seeking after the Divine, a longing after some kind of touch, closeness or possession. When this comes on us, the adoration becomes always primarily an inner worship; we begin to make ourselves a temple of the Divine, our thoughts and feelings a constant prayer of aspiration and a seeking, our whole life an external service and worship. It is as this change, this new soul tendency grows, that the religion of the devotee becomes Yoga, a growing contact and union. It does not follow that out ward worship will necessarily be dispensed with, but it will increasingly become only a physical expression or outflowing of the inner

devotion and adoration, the wave of the soul throwing itself out in speech and symbolic act. Therefore that there may be at all any possibility of a Yoga of devotion, we must assume first (first method of Yoga of Integral *Bhakti*) that the supreme Existence is not an abstraction or a state of existence, but a conscious Being; secondly, that he meets us in the universe and is in some way immanent in it as well as its source,--otherwise, we should have to go out of cosmic life to meet him; thirdly, he is capable of personal relations with us and must therefore be not incapable of personality; finally, that when we approach him by our human emotions, we receive a response in kind. The more intimate yoga of *Bhakti* resolves itself simply into these four movements, (first) the desire of the Soul when it turns towards God and the straining of its emotion towards him, (second) the pain of love and the divine return of love, (third) the delight of love possessed and the play of that delight, (fourth) and the eternal enjoyment of the divine Lover which is the heart of celestial bliss. There are supposed by those who systematize to be three stages of seeking through the devotion of the mind, first, the constant hearing of the divine name, qualities and all that has been attached to them, secondly, the constant thinking on them or on the divine being or personality, thirdly, the settling and fixing of the mind on the object; and by this comes the full realization.

5, The way of the integral Yoga of *Bhakti* will be to universalise this conception of the Deity, to personalise him intimately by a multiple and an all-embracing relation, to make Him constantly present to all the being and to devote, give up, surrender the whole being to Him, so that He shall dwell near to us and in us and we with Him and in Him. *Manana* and *darsana*, a constant thinking of Him in all things and seeing of Him always and everywhere is essential to this way of devotion. On the contrary, the sadhaka of the integral Yoga will not be satisfied until he has included all other names and forms of Deity in his own conception, seen his own *Ishta Devata* in all others, unified all Avatars in the unity of Him who descends in the *Avatara*, welded the truth in all teachings into the harmony of the Eternal Wisdom. We may keep even our relation with the personal Deity in His forms and names; if for instance, our work is predominantly a work of Love it is as the Lord of Love that we can seek to serve and express Him, but we shall have at the same time an integral realization of Him in all His names and forms and qualities and not mistake the front of Him which is prominent in our attitude to the world for all the infinite Godhead.

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