

Chapter 21 The ultimate reality

What is the bottom line about the truth of yoga? Is it the way to become one with God as it claims to be? Yoga declares that this is its ultimate goal. As mentioned earlier, the word "yoga" is derived from the Sanskrit root, meaning to yoke (or connect) with God. Practitioners in the West, who have secularized yoga, all too often overlook this.

First we need to acknowledge that if we aspire to become one with God, then we obviously fall short of who God is: his qualities and attributes etc. are not our qualities and attributes. We are not God. We are frail human beings who aspire to be God; and God is perfect. To achieve this is the goal of yoga. This is what yoga claims to make possible for the aspirant.

Therefore the central question that demands an answer is this:

How do we become worthy enough to become one with God and live with him for eternity?

The teachings of genuine, traditional yoga were directed at overcoming human weakness in order to become one with a perfect God. The teaching consists of disciplines, practices and the cultivation of right thinking to be performed over a lifetime at great personal sacrifice. Therefore yoga answers this central question with the words: **through human effort.**

Having considered how Yoga answers the question, how do all the world religions answer the same question? Knowing the answer then is the key to the ultimate reality. It is beholden upon each human being concerned for his eternal future, to investigate how each religion answers this question. This includes yoga.

In doing so, an unmistakable pattern or common theme emerges, a striking uniformity to the answers. Over and over again, yoga and the religions /philosophies of the world, offer the same answer. And that answer is: *We become worthy by perfecting ourselves through our own efforts, performing good works, rituals and practices.* That's it! That's the message and method of all religion including yoga.

However one religion and one religion only, gives a different answer. In this it stands alone. It is so radically and utterly different in its answer, that it offends many. Its answer is the exact opposite to that provided by all the other ways to "god". The answer:

Through our own efforts it will never be possible to be worthy enough to live with God, not even for a split-second let alone for all eternity.

Where does this leave us? If relying on ourselves, then we are to be pitied because we live without hope. But there is hope because this exceptional religion has the answer no other has. This religion, (which actually isn't a

religion because God, not man, designed it), reveals that it is God Himself who has made us worthy to live with Him forever. For this, He has an ingenious plan. The plan pre-existed our creation by God, such was His foreknowledge. This plan is a free gift from God; this demonstrates His eagerness to have us with Him for eternity, rather than being eternally separated. What proof of His love for us!

And what is this plan? Because man was, is, and will always be unworthy, only a perfect God could cancel our unworthiness. Imperfect man has been perfected by a perfect God. God has taken action; He has performed a sacrificial act. He has paid the price which we should have paid (but never could).

To say that this plan deserves your attention would be the greatest understatement of all time! There is much more to God's plan than I can even begin to outline in this book. Read the good news about God's plan in the Bible. Discover the sheer daring of God's plan. What a joy to know that God is fully aware of our dilemma; no amount of striving (through yoga for example) will achieve salvation. We need not be condemned to a life of eternal hopelessness, but can confidently look forward to achieving the ultimate purpose for our earthly existence, to live with God forever.

Jesus Christ is the ultimate reality.