

*Dharma* is not confined to temples or mosques. Worship of God is only a part of *Dharma*. *Dharma* is much wider. In the past, temples had served as an effective medium to educate people in their *Dharma*. However, just as schools themselves do not constitute knowledge, so also temples do not constitute *Dharma*. A child may attend school regularly and yet may remain uneducated. So also, it is possible that a person may visit a temple or mosque without a break, and yet he may not know his *Dharma*. To attend a temple or mosque constitutes a part of a religion, sect, creed, but not necessarily *Dharma*. Many misconceptions have originated from faulty English translations, and the most harmful of them is due to the confusion of *Dharma* with religion.

### ***Dharma* And Religion Are Different**

On the one hand, we used the word religion as synonymous with *Dharma*, and on the other hand, increasing ignorance, neglect of our society and *Dharma*, and greater acceptance of European life, became the outstanding features of our education. As a result, all the characteristics of a narrow religion, especially as practiced in the West, were attributed automatically to the concept of *Dharma* also. Since in the West, injustice and atrocities were perpetrated, and bitter conflicts and battles were fought in the name of religion, all these were listed *en bloc* on the debit side of *Dharma*. We felt that in the name of *Dharma* also, battles were fought. However, battles of religion and battles for *Dharma* are two different things. Religion means a creed or a sect; it does not mean *Dharma*. *Dharma* is a very wide concept. It is concerned with all aspects of life. It sustains Society. Even further, it sustains the whole world. That which sustains, is *Dharma*.

The fundamental principles of *Dharma* are eternal and universal. Yet, their implementation may differ according to time, place and circumstances. It is a fact that a human being requires food for maintaining his body. However, what a particular person should eat, in how much quantity, at what intervals, all these are decided according to circumstances. It is possible at times that even fasting is advisable. If a typhoid patient is given normal food, the consequences may be disastrous. For such a person, keeping away from food is necessary. Similarly, the principles of *Dharma* have to be adapted to changing times and place.

Some rules are temporary and others are valid for longer periods.