

# Doorway to the Higher Life

What then must be the qualities of character, what mental and spiritual powers, what inner energies and what type of expanded consciousness is necessary for man to transcend his every day level and progress onward. Where is that key which will help us to turn the lock sealing the doorway to a higher life?

All great philosophies, all great teachers the world over have generally agreed on the main qualities which had to be developed by man, if he were to advance and reach a higher stage, either in this or next life. It is most interesting to follow up the various advices given, the various methods and various practices. <sup>advocated</sup> However different at first glance the methods may appear, they have one great unifying principle in common and that is that they deal with man's development and strive to produce a better type, a higher type of individual.

An individuality to pass on after the dissolution of our physical self to a higher state, a higher plane and either not to return to this particular physical sphere or return in a higher state.

The usual assertion that Buddha does not believe in the ultimate survival of the individuality cannot be but treated as superficial interpretation of the particular tenets of His Teachings. The more careful

analysis would show that he preached the emancipation and freedom from earthly bonds as a stepping stone to a higher existence. His last words:

"Bhikhus, I now impress <sup>it</sup> upon you, human parts and powers must be dissolved, but the Truth will remain for ever; work out your salvation with diligence."

These are three important statements:-

- (1) Human parts and powers must be dissolved.
- (2) But the Truth will remain for ever.
- (3) Work out your salvation with diligence.

It is obvious that the perfect human refers to our physical personality and the powers that go with it which must be dissolved at death since human parts and their powers must disintegrate and the powers that generate in the parts that must dissolve, cannot survive. But the Truth will remain for ever. This is the central point, the Truth will remain for ever. And to this end all the arduous life of a Bhikhu is undertaken to gain this Truth. If there is no survival at all of any and all components of man, there cannot be the element of Truth in man and there is no point in trying to work out one's salvation, as this would be a negative attitude to escape something for no other purpose, but to avoid pain. If the whole universe is nothing, but pain, one cannot escape it, as the Truth would be pain also. Unless one could so to say

change the natural course of things and escape infinity, or at least this "infinity" which produces pain. And could one logically assume even for a moment that the state of an arhat as described in the various Buddhist texts exhaust this universe and there is no higher state here or anywhere else, if we do accept the tenets of re-incarnation as asserted in the Buddhist texts.

"Work out your salvation with diligence" are the great words of the Master. Surely these must be an advice that would lead his followers to a higher life. And if at the end of all there is no survival of any component part or principle of the Arhat, what does his salvation mean to him, the complete loss and annihilation of his individuality - the central point of this manifested universe - consciousness.

What is the Truth that will remain, we may pertinently ask. If arahats go to the land of Sukhavati or Devachan, is the post-arahatic state complete annihilation? And if we have a reward in Karma, pain is not the only measure - it must have its component part which must be a state of felicitude. Truly if we analyse the teachings of the Buddha in the light of other philosophies, we shall see that all great philosophies agree in a large measure and one of the most important points is the evolution of a more perfect man.