

**THE SCIENCE OF GANDHIAN SATYAGRAHA**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Mahatma Gandhi was one of history's great teachers, not only by what he preached but by his example of life. At the very outset Gandhi was not a systematic philosopher or a theologian but a practical man with practical sense. Therefore, the philosophy of Satyagraha, as evolved, developed and applied by Gandhi is not a lighthouse which exists somewhere far, but rather it is a lamp at hand that sheds light on our every step.

The success of Gandhian Satyagraha should not be counted by the achievements of Gandhi alone. But the very fact that is more relevant today and the days to come matters the success. The fundamental basis for Satyagraha is Truth and Non-violence.<sup>1</sup> Since it springs from these two eternal principles, Satyagraha also holds the eternal relevance. Gandhi himself has noted that Satyagraha is something "still in the making".<sup>2</sup> We witness this face even today through various movements that stand for the dignity of man, love over hatred, truth over untruth and non-violence over violence.

The fast campaign in Idinthakarai against 'Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project (KKNPP). Anna Hazare's protest against corruption, struggles undertaken by Metha Patkar in order to save nature, from Sharmila's Fast against AFSPA, Sasiperumal was an anti-liquor activist had been protesting for the enforcement of prohibition in TN, and strikes announced by the Marxists against Foreign Direct Investment in Retail, are some of the current examples for the relevance of Satyagraha. What is to be pointed out here is that Satyagraha does not limit itself to some part of human life but it embraces all walks of life individually and socially.

After all kinds of humiliation and sufferings what is the gain for a Satyagrahi? Not fame or name! Not money or power! But he gains the satisfaction of standing for Truth. In order to be a perfect Satyagrahi, one has to cultivate self-discipline, self-control and self-purification. Thus Satyagraha is not something to be taken for granted. Unfortunately today many have started to misuse the sacred name of Satyagraha for their personal motives or for some unjust causes.

Therefore in this article, I have tried to bring out the real essence of Satyagraha as it was intended by its pioneer Gandhi who even laid down his life with a smile on his lips for such a cause. This article begins with a very brief story of Gandhi's early years and enters into the second part which brings out the concept and evolution of Satyagraha. And most importantly the third part deals with the basic qualities, disciplines and various techniques of Satyagraha in detail and ends with the conclusion.

## **1.Life Journey of Gandhi : A Search for Truth**

### **1.1. In the Beginning**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869 at Porbandar, a small town in Gujarat in a deeply devout Vaishnavite family. At the time of his birth, the whole of India was under the British rule. There were many native princes and Maharajas with large, small, or tiny territory. They had some measure of autonomy but always under the British control. Porbandar was a tiny native territory and Gandhi's father Karamchand Gandhi was the prime-minister to the local Raja. His father and grandfather, serving as ministers in the native state of Kathiawad province, were known for honesty, loyalty and an uncompromising sense of honour. In Gandhi's words :

"My father never had any ambition to accumulate riches and left us very little property."<sup>3</sup>

Putilibai was the name of his mother who was extraordinarily a saintly lady. Going to the temple daily, taking food only after she finished her prayers in the morning, observing her vows even while ill were some of her religiously devout practices.<sup>4</sup> In 1886, Gandhi entered the primary school at Rajkot, and in the same year he was betrothed to Kasturibai, when he was barely 7 years old. And at the age of 12 he married Kasturibai who was of the similar age. Later on Gandhi in his autobiography noted about his child-marriage as follows :

"I can see no moral argument in support of such preposterously early marriage".<sup>5</sup>

From his auto-biographical data, it is clear that Gandhi's childhood was raised in a religious atmosphere. Although he was not given a formal training in religion, his surroundings were such that it promoted in him the taste of religion, meaning of self-realization, or "knowledge of self" and self-purification.

### **1.2. As a Lawyer**

In spite of the ostracism he faced due to his caste, he set sail for England and landed there on October, 28, 1888. His mother allowed him to go after obtaining from him a solemn promise to keep away from wine, women and meat. He also kept these promises despite many difficulties. On 10th of June, 1891, he passed the law exam: on the 11th, he enrolled his name in the High Court, and on the following day set sail for India. On arrival, he heard that his mother had passed away some time ago. This was a big shock for him. For two years he earned his bread by practicing law both at in Rajkot and Bombay. But he did not succeed due to his extreme shyness and inability to speak in public.<sup>6</sup> So when he got opportunity to go to South Africa, he took it up willingly and in April 1893 he arrived at Durban. He went there on a year's contract for some legal work with the firm of Dada Abdulla Company. In the course of his work he became actually aware of the many indignities suffered by Indians who were forbidden to walk on footpaths or travel in first class. He was even kicked off from the train by the railway officials. This was the key event that was needed to bring out the best in him. He narrates this experience in his Autobiography like this:

"I began to think of my duty. Should I fight for my rights or go back to India, or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults, and return to India after finishing the case? It would be cowardice to run back to India without fulfilling my obligation. The hardship to which I was subjected was superficial -only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process."<sup>7</sup>

Thus, the Satyagrahi is born.

## 2. Satyagraha- Concept and Evolution

### 2.1. Etymology

When Gandhi was in South Africa, in 1906, he wanted an Indian word for his non-violent movement. He announced in the Indian Opinion a small prize also. Maganlal Gandhi came forward with the word 'Sadagraha' which means 'firmness in a good cause'. Having much faith in truth, Gandhi changed the word Sadagraha to Satyagraha. The word Satyagraha is Sanskrit in origin. It is a compound word of Satya and Agraha. Satya means truth and Agraha means holding fast to the insistence on truth, or firm adherence to truth come what may.<sup>8</sup>

### 2.2 Definitions

In the words of Gandhi: "I am myself daily growing-in the knowledge of Satyagraha. I have no text-book to consult in time of need, not even Gita which I called my dictionary. Satyagraha, as conceived by me, is a science in the making. It may be that what I claim to be a science may prove to be no science at all, and may well prove to be the musings and doing of a fool, if not a mad man. It may be that what is true in *Satyagraha* is as ancient as the hills."<sup>9</sup>

K.S. Bharathi brings out the different definitions for Satyagraha in his book *Satyagraha of Mahatma Gandhi* by quoting some of the scholars in Gandhian studies. They are as follows:<sup>10</sup>

- i) According to Jeyaprakash Narayan, "any peaceful action is not Satyagraha. Satyagraha is based on the faith in the possibility of change of heart. Satya cannot be a partisan or a class struggle. Its appeal is to all partisan classes."
- ii) Gene Sharp says, "Satyagraha is the type of principled non-violence developed by Gandhi. The believer in Satyagraha - Satyagrahi seeks to improve his own life to combat social evils by non-violent action, and to build a better social order by constructive works."
- iii) R.B. Gregg says that after two thousand years of gap Gandhi came to take and improve the Jesus message of non-violence.

### 2.3. Influences

Gandhi derived Satyagraha from various influences. The major factors that shaped his thinking were parental influences. He was further inspired by the scriptures like *Gita*, 'sermon on the mount' in Bible, and Gujarati poem sung by Shamlal Bhatt. Individual persons like Ruskin, Thoreau, Tolstoy and Emerson also have influenced his way of thinking.<sup>11</sup>

Henri David Thoreau's essay on civil disobedience marked a significant transition in the development of non-violent action. Before Thoreau, civil disobedience was largely practiced by individuals and groups who desired simply to remain true to their beliefs in an evil world. There was little or no thought given to civil disobedience for producing social and political change. Sixty years after Thoreau, Gandhi gave a new face to civil disobedience as a means of mass action for social and political ends.<sup>12</sup>

Gandhi made a serious attempt to put some of Tolstoy's ideas into practice in the west. He developed Tolstoy's concept of non-violence into a full-fledged concept of Satyagraha resisting evil with non-violence.<sup>13</sup>

Gandhi's perfection of Satyagraha was influenced not only by Tolstoy and Thoreau but also by the continuous history of non-violent struggles especially the techniques of strike as used in England and elsewhere and the Russian, Chinese and Irish non-violent experiments of the early years of 1900. Strike as a weapon was put to use in England between 1830 and 1900 predominantly by the trade unions with measurable success. Gandhi followed them closely and this has led to his new vision of Satyagraha. He had the genius to observe the non-violent methods prevalent among the children and woman and drew inspiration. This is one of the major sources of Gandhi's concept of Satyagraha.<sup>14</sup>

### 3. Qualities of a Satyagrahi

Satyagraha is a way of life and a tool for social change. Hence it requires many qualities. In Satyagraha, it is never the numbers that count; it is always the quality, more so when the forces of violence are dominating. Without discipline, no Satyagrahi can succeed in attaining goals. Gandhi himself gives the following rules as the basic qualities of a Satyagrahi.

- i) He must have a living faith in God, for He is his only Rock.
- ii) He must believe in Truth and Non-violence as his creed and, therefore, have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which he expects to evoke by his suffering.
- iii) He must be leading a chaste life and be ready and willing for the sake of his cause to give up his life and his possessions.
- iv) He must be habitual Khadi-wearer and spinner.
- v) He must completely avoid alcohol or any other forms of intoxicants.
- vi) He must carry out with a willing heart all the rules of discipline as may be laid down from time to time.
- vii) He must carry out the jail rules, unless they are especially devised to hurt his self-respect.<sup>15</sup>

#### 3.1. Discipline for Satyagraha

Any individual or group in pursuing any goals requires basic disciplines as their path of life. Satyagraha also requires discipline in order to pursue its goal. According to K.S. Bharathi, "*Satyagraha* is a way of life which aims at self-realization. Self-realization requires self-purification and self-purification, in turn demands an ethical discipline."<sup>16</sup> Without discipline, no Satyagrahi can succeed in attaining any personal or social reformations. In order to make the Satyagrahis morally strong and spiritually strong Gandhi himself prescribed certain disciplines to be observed by them in their day to day life. They are explained in the coming passages.

##### 3.1.1. Truth

The word *Satya* is itself derived from the Sanskrit word *Sat* which means being, existing, living. Thus truth means 'that which exists'. To Gandhi truth is nothing but a law operating in the universe. The entire philosophy of Satyagraha is based on the fact that truth alone can be victorious. And truth can never be destroyed. In Gandhi's words:

"There is no such thing as defeat or despair in the dictionary of a man who bases his life on Truth and Non-violence".<sup>17</sup>

"Satyagraha is a relentless search for truth and a determination to reach truth."<sup>18</sup>

The ultimate goal of the Satyagraha is to convert his opponents to the truth, by insisting on the truth, love and suffering."<sup>19</sup> Terrence J. Rynne brings about five meanings for the word *Satya* as understood by Gandhi. They are,

- i) Satya is *sat* and *Sat* is reality itself, 'what is' real.
- ii) Satya is the source of the moral law running through the universe.
- iii) Truth (God) is one and so is humanity.
- iv) Truth is established not through thought, but through action.
- v) Truth is absolute and relative.<sup>20</sup>

Of the thousand names to God, Gandhi chose 'truth' as the most comprehensive description of God. For any person from any religious background can accept this description of God without difficulty. Later on, he went a step further and said that it was more correct to say "Truth is God" rather than to say "God is Truth".<sup>21</sup>

### 3.1.2. Non-violence

Gandhi's concept of non-violence is the outcome of his vast experiences in his life. But he cannot be considered as the originator of the doctrine of non-violence. India is a country, known for its ancient religious beliefs such as Buddhism, Jainism and Brahminism which strictly advise its followers not to indulge in any kind of violence against any living creatures. And as a spiritual heir of India, he must have inherited the concept of ahimsa from the teachings of the ancient philosophers and seers of India.

The word Satyagraha is often most loosely used and is misunderstood as veiled violence. But it excludes every form of violence, direct or indirect, veiled or unveiled and whether in thought, word or deed.<sup>22</sup>

The meaning of non-violence is not limited to non-killing and non-injury. Not hurting any living thing is no doubt a part of *ahimsa*. But it is the least expression. His non-violence aimed at liberating men and women from inner as well as outer violence. The positive meaning of non-violence is 'love'. Love gives a positive dimension to *chimsa*. Perfect non-violence can only mean progressive non-violence, because perfect non-violence is impossible as long as we exist physically. According to him, truth is the highest law, but ahimsa is the highest duty. Without ahimsa it is not possible to seek and find truth."<sup>23</sup>

### 3.1.3. Brahmacharya

The Root meaning of Brahmacharya is the 'conduct adapted to the search of Brahma'. It means, 'control of all the senses at all times and at all places in thought, word and deed'. But ordinarily it is understood to mean mere physical abstention from sexual indulgence. One who attempts to control only one sense and allows the others to be free is bound to end in failure.<sup>24</sup> Gandhi understood brahmacharya as a way to realize the brotherhood of all human. The concept that all are the children of one Father (God); discards the concept of marriage between them. Hence brahmacharya, in its strict sense disregards marriage. But he stands for marriage as deemed essential for procreation. He felt that it is ideal to avoid the physical union completely, but he did not consider physical union between married couples as violation of brahmacharya while the intention is procreation. He permitted this and called it a married brahmacharya. According to him one cannot see God without practicing the vow of brahmacharya. Prayer is the most powerful method for the observance of brahmacharya.<sup>25</sup>

With Kasturba's consent, Gandhi took the vow of brahmacharya in 1906. At the age of sixty-seven, he declared that in spite of thirty five years of successful self-control, the animal in him still needed watching. Therefore a brahmachari should always be conscious of his shortcomings and try to get rid of them.<sup>26</sup> In Gandhi's words:

“Let no one think that it is impossible because it is difficult. It is the highest goal, and it is no wonder that the highest effort should be necessary to attain it... I realized that such brahmacharya was impossible to attain by mere human effort... I had been laboring under the delusion that fruit diet alone would enable me to eradicate all passions, and I had flattered myself with the belief that I had nothing more to do.”<sup>27</sup>

#### **3.1.4. Control Over Food and Taste**

Gandhi was of the opinion that if one could overcome the pleasures of the taste primarily, it was easy to observe the other vows, especially the vow of brahmacharya. *Asvada* means to eat only as much as the body needs for the sustenance. We have to cultivate the feeling that the food we eat is to sustain the body, never to satisfy the palate. Gandhi conducted experiments in controlling taste and found them to be completely successful. So he felt that one who desires to serve the country must daily regulate and purify his diet and gradually abstain from food which would stimulate animal passion. We should be extremely simple in our food, eating not to please our tongue but to keep the body in proper working condition. The body is injured every time when one over-eats, and the injury can be partially repaired only by fasting.<sup>28</sup>

#### **3.1.5. Non-stealing**

The vow of non-stealing also deals with self-restraint. Non-stealing means not to commit theft. The importance of non-stealing is stealth and not mere abstention from theft of other's property. To Gandhi non-stealing means much more than what it does in common understanding. Not-only-taking another and appropriating-something in the belief that it is nobody's property, but also receiving something which one does not need. Gandhi's economy is the economy of needs and welfare and not that of acquisitiveness which is the characteristic of capitalism. Gandhi wanted human wants to be reduced to the minimum. He was of the opinion that all storing up of wealth, beyond one's legitimate need is theft.<sup>29</sup>

#### **3.1.6. Non-possession**

Non-stealing leads to non-possession. Possession is one of the greatest obstacles to the pursuit of truth. All that exists belongs to God; it is given to man only for his daily use and not for hoarding it.<sup>30</sup> Possession involves the use of violence in defending it. The ideal of non-possession requires a Satyagrahi to renounce the possession of things not required for use. Gandhi considered possession as a crime. The only thing that can be possessed by all is non-possession, not to have anything. Those who practice the principle of voluntary poverty really possess all the treasures of the world. Non-possession means non-dependence on material things. It implies in total abolition of private property in all kinds of belongings.<sup>31</sup>

#### **3.1.7. Fearlessness**

Fearlessness is indispensable for the growth of truth and non-violence. Gandhi considered fear to be so evil that he rather advised violence than cowardice submission, if there were no other alternatives. For fear comes from lack of faith in God and ignorance of his presence.<sup>32</sup> Truth and non-violence can be cultivated only by the strong and strength lies in absence of fear. A seeker after truth must conquer all kinds of fears like bodily injury, dispossession, losing one's nearest and dearest, losing reputation and even the fear of death. He should be ready to sacrifice all that he has in the quest of truth. Gandhi emphasized the need of cultivating self-confidence as necessary part of the practice of fearlessness. Truth and fearlessness are closely linked with each other.<sup>33</sup>

### 3.1.8. Bread Labour

Gandhi believed that to live, man must work. According to him, God created man to work for his food and those who eat without work were thieves. If all labored at least for food, then there would be enough food and enough rest for all. There will then be no rich and no poor, none high and none low, no touchable and no untouchable. Non-possession and bread labour would lead to economic equality. Gandhi advocated work as the only solution to eradicate poverty. Bread labour is essential for a Satyagrahi.<sup>34</sup>

### 3.1.9. *Swadeshi*

*Swadeshi* is a key concept in Gandhi's philosophy. It is closely related to truth and non-violence. *Swadeshi* means 'belonging to' or 'made in one's own country. In its ultimate meaning, *Swadeshi* stands for the liberation of the soul from its earthly bondage. Through this we can understand that the object of *Swadeshi* is not political but spiritual. "The broad definition of *Swadeshi* is the use of all home-made articles to the exclusion of foreign things, in so far as such use is necessary for the protection of home industries, more specially those industries without which India will become dependent or poor. Gandhi stands for the self sufficiency of the country and even of villages except for such foreign things that are needed for the growth of the people".<sup>35</sup> A votary of *Swadeshi* will carefully study his environment and try to help his neighbours wherever possible, by giving preference to local manufactures even if they are of an inferior grade or little higher in price than things manufactured elsewhere.<sup>36</sup>

### 3.1.10. Removal of Untouchability

Gandhi maintained untouchability as the sin of the Hindus. Untouchability stands for the idea that a man is polluted if he touches someone who is born in a so called "low" family or does some menial work. The removal of untouchability vow follows from the principle of spiritual unity of all life.<sup>37</sup> To Gandhi the removal of untouchability is a bigger problem than that of gaining Indian independence. All life springs from God, so that the barriers existing between man and man are unnatural and harmful to the whole of humanity. He wanted every Indian to take a vow to work for the removal of untouchability. Removal of untouchability spells the breaking down of barriers between man and man and between the various orders of being."<sup>38</sup>

### 3.1.11. Toleration of All Religion

A Satyagrahi should honour and study all religions and should cultivate "equaimindedness" towards all. Gandhi believes in equality of the principal religions of the world. He prefers to call it as equality of religions rather than 'tolerance of religions'. We should not consider other religious beliefs as inferior to our own. We have to give respect to all religions. According to Gandhi, the different religions were 'beautiful flowers from the same garden' or 'the branches of the same majestic tree'. Gandhi not only enjoins equality of respect for all religions, but pleads for the incorporation of the good features of other faiths into one's own.<sup>39</sup> Gandhi's ability to feel with the faith of another religion was so spectacular that followers of other religions could feel at-home in his company and establish a communion with his faith formation. Gandhi's trans-religious understanding of God was such that Christians as well as Muslims were in tune with Gandhi's faith.<sup>40</sup>

## 3.2. Techniques of Satyagraha

Satyagraha as we have already mentioned is not only a theory to meditate, but it is highly practical principle that aims at a concrete solution to the problem. Therefore it takes different forms as required by the situation. Only thing that never changes in Satyagraha is Truth and Non-violence.

Satyagraha can never fight for any cause which is not just and true. There are number of powerful-techniques that can be tested according to the issues and win over what is not true and just. They are explained in -the coming passages.

### **3.2.1. Constructive Work**

The constructive programme is the embodiment of the active principle of ahimsa and the permanent part of the non-violent effort. Constructive work makes the Satyagrahi steady and calm, industrious and independent, and awakens his organizing spirit. Training for military revolt means learning the use of arms and weapons. For Satyagraha it means constructive programme. Therefore training in constructive work is necessary. The constructive programme with its emphasis on constant constructive manual works has a sound biological and psychological basis. Habitual voluntary manual activities build self-respect, self-confidence, self-reliance, courage, hope, sound and independent judgment, patience and endurance. Constructive manual work gives an immediate sense of accomplishment and satisfaction and the encouragement to do it again and again for greater and greater achievements.<sup>41</sup> Gandhi himself proposed some eighteen kinds of constructive programmes, such as, communal unity, prohibition, national language, service of Adivasis, uplift of women, removal of untouchability, khadi, other village industries, village sanitation, organization of kisans, organization of labour, training of students, working for economic equality, nature cure etc. He did not regard them as something rigid or inviolable. They can be changed according to the varying needs, temperaments, traditions, and social, economic and political backgrounds of the people concerned.<sup>42</sup>

### **3.2.2. Conversion through Persuasive Argumentation**

In order to bring any social change in the society, first we have to change the attachment of individuals and groups to certain ideas, sentiments and assumptions. This is done by conversion through rational and gentle persuasion. To make people adopt new ideas, what is needed is to make them want and relish such ideas and this can be done through persuasion. Persuasion means 'sweetening'. The new ideas have to be sweetened by means of rational and loving persuasion. Persuasion takes two forms in Sataygraha. The first stage is rational argumentation. The enemy is to be convinced by reason. According to Gandhi one should not follow anything that is not appealing to his or her reason. Secondly the Satyagrahi has to convince the opponent and then mobilize public opinion. When public opinion is roused against evil the strongest will not dare to practice or openly lend support to it. An awakened and intelligent public opinion is the most potent weapon of a Satyagrahi.<sup>43</sup>

### **3.2.3. Conversion through Self-Suffering**

If words fail to convince the opponent, the next step is to appeal to his heart by patient self-suffering, sympathy, sincerity, and humility. If a Satyagrahi wants something really important to be done, he cannot merely satisfy the reason; he must move to-the heart also. The appeal of reason is more to the head but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in man. A Satyagrahi has to appeal continuously to the evil doer's head and heart combined. If reason fails then the Satyagrahi seeks self-suffering.<sup>44</sup> Mother suffers so that her child may live. The condition of wheat growing is that the seed grain perishes. Life comes out of death. Self-suffering is an active weapon of the brave who voluntarily refrain from violence out of their conviction of its futility and harmfulness."<sup>45</sup>



### 3.2.4. Non-Cooperation

When an evil-doer fails to respond to the appeal to his reason and heart, Satyagrahis have to resort to non-cooperation. Non-cooperation is a protest when someone is compelled to participate in evil without his or her will. Non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as cooperation with good. For, non-cooperation, in its essence, does not imply the refusal to cooperate with persons but with their attitudes that are responsible for the oppressive system and the evil caused by it. Non-cooperation successfully reaches its end as soon as the opponents correct their attitudes.<sup>46</sup>

### 3.2.5. Fasting

Fasting is a potent weapon in the Satyagraha campaign. Fasting unto death is the last-and the most powerful weapon in Satyagraha. It is an integral part of Satyagraha programme. Everyone is not qualified for undertaking it without a proper course of training. But if he or she once undertakes a fast from conviction, he must stick to his resolve whether there is a chance of his action ending in success or failure.<sup>47</sup> Gandhi laid down the following rules for anybody who wishes to fast on any account.

- i) Conserve your energy both physical and mental from the very beginning.
- ii) You must cease to think of food while-fasting.
- iii) Drink as much cold water as you can, with or without soda and salt, but in small quantities at a time.
- iv) Have a warm sponge daily.
- v) Take an enema regularly during fast.
- vi) Sleep as much as possible in the open air.
- vii) Bath in the morning sun.
- viii) Think of anything else but the fast.
- ix) No matter from what motive you are fasting, during the precious time, think of God, and your relation to Him.<sup>48</sup>

### 3.2.6. Strike

Non-violent strike implies cessation of work and undertaking of voluntary and self-purificatory suffering by those who suffer from the wrong with a view to correcting or converting the mistaken opponent. The non-violent strikers harbor no ill-will or hatred against the opponent.<sup>49</sup> Generally strikes are taken up for the direct betterment of the labourers. Labour strikes for political purpose are not prescribed till the labourers have become politically conscious of what they really stand for. Gandhi laid down some conditions for a successful strike. They are,

- i. The cause of the strike must be real and just.
- ii. There should be practical unanimity among the strikers.
- iii. Strikers must fix an unalterable minimum demand and declare it before embarking upon their strike. Their demands must be clear, feasible and just.
- iv. Strikers should never resort to violence in any shape or form against the opponents or any others.
- v. A strike should not be risked if there is enough other labour to replace strikers.
- vi. Strikers should be able to maintain themselves during the period of strike, however prolonged, without spending the union funds or public charity.<sup>50</sup>

### **3.2.7. Hartal**

Hartal is yet another technique of Satyagraha. It is a voluntary suspension of business in protest against some evil authority. It is a temporary strike of work or stopping of business, usually for a day (24 hours). It is a method of showing protest and the duration can be extended according to the severity of the problem. But hartals should not be frequent; otherwise they would cease to be effective. Gandhi strongly disapproved interference with those who do not suspend their business. The hartal should not be a forced effort but should be voluntary.<sup>51</sup>

### **3.2.5. Hijrat or Voluntary Migration**

Hijrat is also a technique of Satyagraha that can be used against the inhuman oppression of the government. It means voluntary exile and is recommended to those, who on the one hand, feel so oppressed that they cannot live at a place without losing self-respect. It is a physical withdrawal from the state at the sacrifice of all interests. According to Gandhi, it is wisdom to vacate houses or places that are plague infected. Tyranny is a kind of plague and when it is likely to make us angry or weak, it is wisdom to leave the scene of such temptation. He recommends voluntary migration only to those who feel oppressed and cannot live without loss of self-respect in a particular place and lack one's own strength.<sup>52</sup>

### **3.2.9. Peace Marches**

To arouse public awareness and to develop a positive public opinion, peace marches could be effectively made use of. It means a non-violent procession or march. But care has to be taken to make it absolutely open and non-violent. Gandhi himself undertook a number of peace marches which were very much effective in mobilizing the people against many problems like unjust industrialism, religious violence, undue taxation, etc. The long march of 241 miles from the Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi, which is also known as Sail Saiyagraha, is one of the best examples of Gandhi's marches.<sup>53</sup>

### **3.2.10. Picketing**

According to oxford dictionary, picketing means "one or more persons stationed outside a place of work to persuade others not to enter during a strike etc". It is a peaceful persuasion to do or not to do a certain thing. For example, picketing at a liquor shop means appealing to every buyer not to buy and this has to be carried out in non-violent way. Gandhi considered picketing as the quickest way of educating the people concerned. But it must never be a matter of coercion but conversion. In picketing Gandhi expected the role of the women to be much greater than the men's. Picketing excludes sitting dharna which blocks the passage of those who do not intend to abide by non-cooperation movement. Dharna is a coercive method of compelling others to lend their support to the movement. Non-violent picketing does not aim at blocking one's passage but at warning the evil doers.<sup>54</sup>

### **3.2.11. Boycott**

Boycott according to the Oxford dictionary means, "refuse to have social or commercial relations with a person or country, etc". Satyagraha techniques include boycott of economic, social, political, educational, legal and other institutions. In the economic sphere, boycott implies the boycott of foreign and indigenous products of such industries which thrive on exploitation and which can be produced locally by cottage industries. The boycott of educational, legal and other institutions means setting up of such parallel institutions on the non-violent model in the light of the ideal. Denying the supply of essential goods and services to a man who does not know about the Satyagraha movement is

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a sheer act of inhumanity and violence. Gandhi therefore warned non-cooperators against the snares of social boycott.<sup>55</sup>

### 3.2.12. Civil disobedience

Civil disobedience is the last stage of non-cooperation. It is a direct disobeying of particular laws with the willingness to accept the punishment that may come with the contravention of the laws.<sup>56</sup> It is a rebellion, but completely free from the violence. That is why it is called 'civil'. Complete civil disobedience is a state of peaceful rebellion. It is a necessary part of non-cooperation. The pre-condition necessary for civil disobedience is the habit of willing obedience to the law. To be civil, such disobedience must be public. Despite the fact that it does not involve physical violence, it proves effective because it arouses public opinion. Civil disobedience becomes sacred duty when the State becomes lawless, that is, corrupt. It is a complete, effective and bloodless substitute of armed revolt. It is more effective than an armed revolt.<sup>57</sup>

### Conclusion

Whatever we have seen in the above pages under the title of 'The Science of Satyagraha' are not some theories, or ideas which originated in some great thinker or philosopher. But Gandhi was purely an activist. The concept and the techniques of Satyagraha were tested not in an air-conditioned room or laboratory, but in the sweat and blood; not in a holy land, but in a place of corruption and injustice the concept of Satyagraha was proved to be effective; not by a single man called Gandhi, but his soul force which believed in his God which he named as Truth.

From the day he first witnessed the vulnerability of being an Indian at Martizburg, a South African railway station in 1893, wherein he was pushed out from the first class compartment, the Satyagraha was conceived in the womb of a great soul Gandhi. The Satyagraha movement in South Africa launched by Gandhi to fight against racial discrimination as well as the unjust laws of the government attracted world-wide publicity and attention. Champaran Satyagraha (April, 1917), Ahamadabad Textile workers movement (August, 1917), Kheda Satyagraha (July, 1918), Rowlatt act Satyagraha (April, 1919), Vykom Satyagraha (April, 1924), and Salt Satyagrah (March 1930) etc. are some of the field examples for the remarkable success of Satyagraha.<sup>58</sup> For the battle for Satyagraha, Gandhi had to pay a price of spending 2089 days behind the bars in Indian prisons and 249 days in South African prison.<sup>59</sup> The last and costliest price was his martyrdom; he was shot dead on January 30, 1948 in New Delhi, on the way to a prayer meeting. Nehru, in a choked voice announced it All-India Radio, "The light has gone out of our lives!... and a thousand years later that light will still be seen in this country and the world will see it. For that light represented the living truth."<sup>60</sup>

A fine Christian expression of the esteem for Gandhi is contained in Pope Paul VI's message to the Indian nation on the occasion of the centenary celebration of the birth of the Mahatma. A few words go like this: "He strove to make his countrymen conscious of the injustices in their social system and to spread among them a spirit of equality and brotherhood.... One cannot forget Gandhi's profound admiration and the esteem for the person of Jesus Christ whose sermon on the mount greatly influenced his own thought and action."<sup>61</sup> The science of Gandhian Satyagraha calls us to love in a time of indifference, hope in a time of despair, non-violence in a time of violence, justice in a time of injustice, and life in a time of death.

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