

importance to our lives, because what we see conditions what we do. When we do something foolish, discordant, or cruel, we do it because we have failed to see correctly. If we see truth in the ultimate sense of the term — which is the same as realizing unity, and knowing the nature of love — then all our actions and relationships are bound to change qualitatively.

That fact has been emphasized in the Orient, where no difference exists between religion and philosophy. In the religio-philosophical schools, teachers point out that seeing rightly is essential because of the effect it has on actions. We may recall the well-known illustration of Vedanta: if you see a snake, you are afraid, you become aggressive, you may push others in order to get away quickly. But if you realize the snake is nothing more than a rope, your action becomes different. The emotions and thoughts that arose from seeing the snake cannot arise when it is realized to be a rope.

As mentioned previously, we live in a world of unreality that appears real. We must wake up into another level of reality. Even then, it will not be reality from a still deeper point of view, and there must be progressive awakenings. But for the moment, whatever we perceive is experienced as real: the solidity of objects, the separateness of all things. But these are like the reality experienced in a dream. Because of the unreality of our “reality,” we act as we do. When the possession of objects, of money, and so forth, is a reality, and they appear important for our safety and happiness, we act in a particular way. But if we see the unreality or the relative value of such possessions, then actions become different.

The search for truth is a search for a reality that cannot be contradicted at any time. The reality of a dream is contradicted by the reality of the waking state. The reality of an ambition to possess material objects gives place to a different reality if the person becomes more mature, less materialistic. So every reality makes way for a superior reality. We have to go on negating the lesser realities in life, by the use of *viveka*. But is there a reality which cannot be contradicted by anything else, because it is for ever? It is the eternal truth, which is the aim of religion, philosophy, and science. Although the methods and approach of religion, philosophy, and science are different, they all seek the truth.

Scientists started with the study of material nature, but they have