

## Chapter 14. Vedas, the Authentic Voice of God

The difference in teachings about the name or form of God (Iswara) are not very important. We need not quarrel over those distinctions and differences. Instruction on God is service enough.

Indians (*Bharathiyas*) do not accept the view held by others that the world and the universe of which it is a part came into being some thousands of years ago and will meet with dissolution sometime in the future. Nor do they accept the statement that the universe was born out of the void (*sunya*). They believe that the projection (nature or *prakriti*) is not born of vacuity but has always been full and complete (*purnam*). It has no beginning or end; it has only gross and subtle forms. It is no sign of enlightenment to infer that, since there is no evidence of the full and complete, there must be a void in the beginning. There are other levels of existence to consider.

For example, you are not entirely the body; in the gross body there is a subtle body, the mind, and also another body, which is more subtle than the mind, namely, the individualised *Atma* or Self (*jivatma*). This last has neither beginning nor end; nor does it have any trace of death or decay. This is the truth that Indians (*Bharathiyas*) believe in. This faith is based on the declaration of the *Vedas* themselves.

We close our eyes when we worship God. We do not try to discover God outside us by raising our faces and looking upward. Others accept that their scriptures were written by divinely inspired persons, but Indians believe that the *Vedas* are the authentic voice of God, emerging from the hearts of sages.

### As you feel, so you become

Students! One who condemns himself day and night as petty and weak can never accomplish anything. One who thinks that one is luckless and low thereby becomes luckless and low. Instead, when you cultivate the awareness that you are a spark of God, that you have as your reality Divinity Itself, you can become really divine, and you can have command over all powers.

As you feel, so you become.

*Yadbhaavam, thadbhavathi.*

It is how you feel that matters most. That is the basis for all that you are.

Have faith in the *Atma*, the Self. This is a must for man. In its absence, man is reduced to a monster, reveling in vice and wickedness. Your forefathers achieved prosperity, peace, and joy and succeeded in attaining their goals through that faith alone. When people lose that faith, they are certain to fall, for that faith is the very breath of life. When there is no breath, one becomes a corpse (*savam*). With the breath of that faith, one becomes divine (*siva*), the same as Siva Himself. Faith in the Self is the expression of the Siva principle in a person; that faith can endow one with all forms of power and render one full and complete (*purna*). For, the *Atma*, by its very nature, is self-sufficient and full. No other spiritual discipline is needed to realise that state.

Purity is also our nature; self-sufficiency (*paripur-natha*) is also the nature of the Self. Impurity and insufficiency are alien to people. Students should not ignore or forget this fact. Real education must arouse this faith and infuse the awareness of this fullness in every activity. This is the essential aim, the core of the right type of education.

## Religion means experience

One other truth has to be kept in mind, more than every other. For Indians (*Bharathiyas*), religion means experience, nothing less. Our position is that no achievement is worthwhile unless one earns it by one's own efforts. Everything valuable must be cultivated by oneself. Divine grace awaits individual striving and spiritual practice (*sadhana*). The doctrines and directives of religion have to be assimilated by means of actual experience. It is not enough to learn to repeat them parrot-like.

The truth has to be identified; this is the very first step. The sooner we understand the truth, the sooner religious conflicts and credal dissensions will disappear. The Beyond the Beyond (*Paraath-para*), the Omniself, is nearer than the nearest; though near, all other entities are really far away. Become aware of this fact. Only then can the knots in which the heart is entangled be loosened.

## Give up life or give up body?

In the vocabulary of the West, a person gives up "life", but in the language of Indians, a person gives up the "body". Westerners profess that they have bodies and that the bodies have souls. Indians don't declare so. They proclaim that a person has a soul and that the soul is enclosed temporarily in a body. Therefore, they feel that the civilisations and cultures seeking sensual pleasures and secular glory are built on a foundation of sand, and they can shine only for a brief period of time before they collapse.

## Imbibe only the good from others

Students! Imitation can never become culture. You may wear royal robes and act the role, but as a result of this imitation, can you become a king? A donkey clothed in tiger skin does not become a tiger.

Imitation is a sign of cowardice. It cannot further one's progress. In fact the tendency to imitate leads one down, step by step, into frightful shape. You must endeavour to uplift yourselves, as yourselves. You must be proud that you are Indians (*Bharathiyas*), children of India (Bharath), you must be proud of your ancestors. Your commendable heroism lies in your joyous assertion that you are an Indian. You should not imitate others and copy their attitudes, though you may imbibe the good in them.

We have to learn good things from others. We sow seeds in the ground. We provide it with soil, manure, and water. The seed sprouts, becomes a sapling, and grows into a huge tree. It does not become soil when placed therein, nor manure when it feeds thereon, nor water when it partakes thereof. It only imbibes from each of them whatever it can benefit from them. It grows into what is essentially IT, namely, a huge tree!

May you grow likewise. You have to learn much from others. Learn about the Supreme and the means of attaining it from even the lowest; learn from others how to practise progressive spiritual discipline (*sadhana*) and saturate yourselves with it. But do not be transformed into those others. This is the normal teaching for people, the code of law (*smriti*) of Manu. This is the lesson that students have to understand. This is the first and foremost lesson, the crucial lesson.