

A VIEW ON HINDUSIM

It's a frequently asked question; what is Hinduism? To the best of my knowledge, it is a way of life, developed over thousands of years. Our ancient rishis and spiritual leaders believed that in order for humans to live a happy and trouble-free life, a prescription was needed. They constantly sought an answer to the ultimate question, "What is the purpose of our existence?" This quest led them to see humanity at large as one big family on the planet Earth - "Vasudhaiv kutumbakam". As a result, although the word Hindu may have had a geographic connotation initially, the religion of Hinduism has been enriched by the basic principles, which are universal. This process of enrichment through contribution of thoughts is the pulse of Hinduism to keep Hinduism alive and vibrant this process must continue.

There are other religions that hold similar fundamental principles like; American Indians, Christianity, Judaism and Islam as in Hinduism. Here I am not talking about the superficial aspect or the ritualistic aspect of any religion. I am more interested in how it effects the human life and it's relationship with other human beings, creatures and the nature, which surrounds us. If this relationship is deteriorating, then we are not following the prescription. That means there has been stagnation. Free expression is very important for natural evolution of the human mind. I find the children being naturally analytical and asking questions while most adults do things in a dogmatic fashion without questioning or trying to find the purpose of a tradition or a custom. It's like filling a prescription without checking the expiry date. I believe that every generation has God's gift and power to take their religion to new heights provided we have faith and are open to new ideas and are ready to adopt them.

We must never forget the freedom awarded by our great religion. We rather should guard ourselves against the shackles we unknowingly wear in the name of our religion because of our own fear, ignorance and lack of courage. Religion's very purpose is to make human race courageous, kind, trustworthy, loving, wise and polite. By acquiring these qualities we come closer to God. It requires practicing the principles that our religion teaches us in our day to day life. That is hard and constant working on us throughout our lifetime.

Hinduism teaches us to experience and grow. It helps us in understanding our own evolution. Hence it has to grow too with time. The purpose of religion is totally opposite of superstition. Then why do we see them together so often? It's our own fear that gives birth to superstition and not our religion. When we can not cope with the hard and the practical part we take refuge in the rituals, which is the easy way out. We rest satisfied that we have done our duty towards God. On the contrary our religion tells us that God is within fellow human beings creatures and us. So service to them is service to God.

When we survey the age of Rama or Krishna or any other period we find that if truthfulness was there falsehood coexisted. True religion not only survives but also serves humans in three capacities. 1. Time (past, present and future) 2. Place (India, America or any other part of the world). 3. Person (no matter, What, race, creed or color). I feel that tenets of Hindu religion have passed this test with flying colors. There is need for Hindus all over the world to understand the basic principles provided to us by this great religion in our great scriptures e.g. vedas and Upanishads and pauranic stories etc. etc. Now the challenge of the present age is that after understanding apply these principles to our present circumstances according to the individual predisposition. The key is not to copy, but using an analytical mind to gain the understanding from the past as described in the great epics like Mahabharat and Ramayan. The knowledge combined with the wisdom gained from experience will help us solve our day to day problems. It will also help us guide our younger generation in God's way with love and confidence. The way to true happy life we all dream of.

In conclusion need of the hour is to adopt the teachings of Hinduism in our daily life, instead of worrying why the children or someone else is not following and trying to teach them. My children or yours will learn more from our behavior rather than our preaching.

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