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Quotes & Quips

Ahimsa

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902)

He who befriends a man whose conduct is vicious, whose vision impure, and who is notoriously crooked, is rapidly ruined.

Chanakya (350-275 bce), Indian politician, strategist and writer

In the Vedas I have found eternal compensation, unfathomable power, unbroken peace. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), American philosopher, lecturer and writer

If swimming is so good for your figure, how do you explain whales? Anonymous

I am one with the universe--on a scale from one to ten. Anonymous

India has so far demonstrated the capacity to weave together two threads, one an

original, primeval, timeless and almost immutable line, and the other a thread of dynamism and change. In India nothing is static. Tradition pulsates with life, while change dances with the ancient.

Kapila Vatsyayan, Indian scholar of classical dance, art and architecture, founder of the Indian National Centre of the Arts

Ex oriente lux (Light from the East) may still be the motto of scholars, for the Western world has not yet derived from the East all the light it freely gives. Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), American poet, philosopher and writer

One should go beyond relative knowledge and abide in the Self. Your own Self-realization is the greatest service you can render the world. Seek the seeker. Ramana Maharishi (1879-1950), South Indian mystic

There is not a fellow under the sun who is my disciple. On the contrary, I am everybody's disciple. All are the children of God. All are His servants. As for me, I consider myself as a speck of the dust of the devotee's feet. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836-1886)

I felt great need of a holy pilgrimage, so I sat still for three days and God came to me. Saint Kabir (1440-1518)

Hey! Who are you? Chellapaswami (1840-1915), Natha siddha guru of Sri Lanka, who with these words propelled his young disciple on an irresistible quest for his formless True Self. The disciple would later become Satguru Yogaswami.

In thinking 'This is I' and 'That is mine' one binds himself with himself, as does a bird with a snare. Krishna Yajur Veda, Maitreya Upanishad 3.2

Heaven on Earth is a choice you must make, not a place you must find. Wayne Dyer, American author and humanist

Speaking cruel words is like sharpening a boomerang. Anonymous

When I came out of the spacecraft (Discovery) for a space walk, I had this feeling that Ganesha was looking over me. Sunita Williams, astronaut, the second Indian-American to orbit the Earth

The whole world is your school. See that all are you. You are the commander. You are the Commander-in-Chief! All are commanders; there is no greater or lesser. All are God. God sees God, God talks to God. Satguru Yogaswami (1872-1964), Sri Lanka's most revered contemporary mystic

Hinduism is the most skeptical and the most believing of all religions. The most skeptical because it has questioned and experimented the most and the deepest, rejecting nothing but insisting on testing and experiencing everything. From this comes our scriptures and our beliefs: the Vedas, the Vedanta, the Gita, the Upanishads... But the most authoritative scripture is in the heart, where the Eternal has His dwelling. Sri Aurobindo Ghose (1872-1950), Indian mystic and philosopher

In democracy it's your vote that counts. In feudalism, it's your count that votes.
Anonymous

Originality is the fine art of remembering what you hear but forgetting where you heard it. Laurence J. Peter (1919-1990), American educator

I was gratified to be able to answer promptly, and I did. I said I didn't know. Mark Twain (1835-1910), American writer, humorist and humanist

You must not let your life run in the ordinary way; do something that nobody else has done, something that will dazzle the world. Show that God's creative principle works in you. Paramahansa Yogananda (1893-1952), founder of Self Realization Fellowship

BASICS OF HINDUISM

The rishis who revealed the principles of dharma in Hindu scripture knew full well the potential of human life for entangling itself in suffering and the path which could avert it. They explained that one spiritual force flows in and through all things in this universe, conferring existence by its power. According to their ancient wisdom, life is a coherent process leading all souls without exception to enlightenment, and no violence will be carried to that ascent. Sages taught a philosophy of non-difference of self and other, asserting that in the final analysis we are not separate from the world nor from the Divine which shines forth in all things and all peoples. From this understanding of oneness arose the philosophical basis for the practice of ahimsa, noninjury, and Hinduism's ancient commitment to it.

Sage Vyasa defines ahimsa as "the absence of injuriousness toward all living beings in all respects and for all times." He said that a person engaged in the true practice of ahimsa would be freed from all enmity. Rishi Patanjali, revered author of the Yoga Sutras, regarded ahimsa as the yogi's mahavrata, the great vow and foremost spiritual discipline of those seeking Truth.

The Truth of the Mystics

Mystics are those who dive deeply in search of the Divine, seeking personal experience, realization and insight. In Hinduism, they are looked upon as our greatest living leaders--the gurus, saints and sadhus of Sanatana Dharma. Other religions also have such illumined individuals, often as members of small, peripheral denominations, such as the Muslim Sufis or the Jewish Kabbalists. Some of their discoveries are astoundingly akin to Hindu ancient wisdom.

The Jewish Neo-Hasidic mystical movement recently concluded that God used God's Self to form the universe, a view called panentheism. Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi wrote in his 2003 book, *Wrapped In a Holy Flame*:

"We are mostly in a shift to the conclusion that everything is God. It is only from the human perspective that we see a difference between holy bread and dirt. On the sub molecular level, on the atomic level, they all look the same. And if you look from a galactic perspective, what difference is there? We are not so far advanced yet that we can explain all these things, but deep down, the deepest level is that God is everything."