Are You Worthy of Yourself?
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FROM THE THE VEDAS

Are You Worthy of Yourself?

Swami Chinmayananda on pursuing the Ultimate Truth

It is indeed a well-accepted fact in all the Indian schools of philosophy that the higher themes of transcendental contemplation are prescribed only for a select few who have come up to the required evolutionary progress in the finer instruments of thought and feeling. The Eternal Law provides each one of us with a circumstance in life and an occasion to enjoy or suffer strictly according to and in continuation of our past. Nothing happens in fits and starts. There are no accidents in the Eternal Law. Moment-to-moment life is progressive, continual and logical. There are strict mathematics about it all. Therefore it is not the lot of everyone even to hear of a greater and immanent Truth that pervades and penetrates the fleeting panorama of life. It is only the rarest few who have come to earn this privilege in past lives.

When Vedanta is taught, the fittest alone will hear the message. Translate the Upanishads into any language you like, distribute them freely around the globe, and yet only the fittest shall ever even peep into it. The secrecy of this secret document need not be guarded by man-made protections. Brahma Vidya is the Science of Truth not born of human mind and intellect, and it is not maintained for purposes of asserting

the lower animal urges in us. As such, this science has a secret potency to guard itself against all undeserving intruders.

Even when heard, the theme of Brahma Vidya is not easy to understand. Even to understand the right import of the words heard in all their deepest significances, the student needs an inordinate inner purity and the consequent intellectual sharpness.

The steadiness of our minds and the acuteness of our intellects are not accidental happenings, but are the products of continued and conscious living in the Life Divine. It is with this principle in mind that our sastras prescribe worship and meditation. These are the most important techniques by which a "lesser one" is purified, ennobled and cultured to a greater degree of competency. It is only when the great ideas of Truth and Immortality are heard and digested through intellectual reflection that they can leave a strong impression.

Wonderful is the man who is able to teach. Indeed, if fit students are rare, real masters are also rare. The pundits are well-versed in the sastras but lack the supreme experience of a direct perception of Truth.

Wonderful is he who comprehends that such a rare percentage of the whole can in each generation come to live the voiceless joy of life's fulfillment. The chance to hear is rare. Even when heard, the ability to digest and understand is rarer. A master, who is efficient enough to initiate a student into the pursuit of the Absolute and, satisfying all his doubts, guide him further into the realms beyond, is rarer still. Even when an individual is lucky enough to enjoy the blessings of all the above three,

only the luckiest comes to experience Godhood in this very birth. Yet we should not conclude that if it is so rare and difficult that none of us shall ever succeed.

No true seeker has a right to be pessimistic. He should be ever consciously optimistic. Remember, behind each one of you there stand a million who can, at their best, grace only the lower rungs of the ladder of evolution. Be optimistic; and if you cannot, take heed in this:

"Thou art fit. With a little self-effort thou shalt reach, in this very birth, the supreme success and the Godly achievement. Never hesitate, never doubt, but sincerely strive and achieve."

Swami Chinmayananda (1917-1993), Vedantist writer,lecturer, translator, dynamic spiritual leader and Hindu renaissance founder of Chinmaya Mission International

The Vedas are the divinely revealed and most revered scriptures, sruti, of Hinduism, likened to the Torah (1,200 bce), Bible New Testament (100 ce), Koran (630 ce) or Zend Avesta (600 bce). Four in number, Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva, the Vedas include over 100,000 verses. Oldest portions may date back as far as 6,000 bce.

Who Is a Hindu?

"Acceptance of the Vedas with reverence; recognition of the fact that the means or ways to salvation are diverse; and the realization of the truth that the number of gods to be worshiped is large, that indeed is the distinguishing feature of the Hindu religion." B.G. Tilak's definition of what makes one a basic Hindu, as quoted by India's Supreme Court. On July 2,

1995 the Court referred to it as an "adequate and satisfactory formula."