

THE CONSECRATION OF ETERNAL VALUES

by

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA

The Divine Life Society
Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, India

Website: swami-krishnananda.org

The modern man in search of Truth has come across many a wonder of creation which he has been rejecting day by day upon what he calls his newer and newer discoveries. Centuries of human investigation on scientific and logical lines, which are the proud achievements of man's herculean efforts and the results of the employment of his best powers of understanding and work, have created the present-day world. And what a world! The man of today himself is a great commentary on these strenuous efforts of science and philosophy, and, as we know the tree by the fruits it yields, the prevailing conditions of mankind are a standing attestation of the labours of centuries of past history.

Today we are in a world of the general complaint that no one is happy, because no one is doing the right. This, because no one has the right knowledge, and all the sweating that man has been subjecting himself to has been in the wrong direction. There has been a great advancement in the world of the senses, in the field of matter and force, in industry and in technological horizons. But why, with all this, is man restless and does not seem to have achieved anything, and appears to be at daggers drawn even with those whom he should consider as his nearest in kind? The reason is not far to seek. Man is enmeshed in a snare of illusions created by

his own misdirected thoughts, illusions which he has mistaken for facts. It has all along been believed that the reality of life can be unearthed by probing into the sense-world. Yes; this has been done, and man today is finding himself in an impasse which is threatening him like the Frankenstein monster.

But there have been rare souls, whom we regard as the sages of ancient history, who were blessed with the vision with which to realise that a fact which has an eternal meaning in itself cannot be an object that can be handled by someone else as a tool or an instrument of observation and action. The minimum that one can expect of a fact in itself that it is true to itself and does not hang on something else for assuming a meaning. It has to exist by itself in order that it may be permanent. When it is not permanent, it ceases to be a fact but only a tendency to something else which should be the fact. The world of objects in order to be a fact has therefore to be something by itself and not merely an object of man's experiment and enjoyment. The test of reality is independence, and what is the world in itself when it is envisaged as a fact not dependent on man's observation of it or assessment of it? This is difficult for man to conceive, because the moment it is conceived it becomes an object and gets charged with the processes of perception by the subject, and the object as it is in itself is never known. The fact *as such* eludes the grasp of the senses and understanding, because it refuses to stand outside of the subject and be judged through the instrumentality of the subject's cognition and perception. We do not seem to be living in a world of reality.

The discovery of the ancient sages is usually regarded as the great revelation—the Scripture. In India, the Vedas have been held as the sacred lore of divine knowledge of supersensible realities. The Vedas are regarded as *Apaurusheya*—with no human author. It is believed that the sages in their deep meditations and in communion with Reality had its impress on their souls which they endeavoured to express in purified language, so that the knowledge is not their invention or creation but a true

reflection, in their minds, of the eternal Fact of existence. It is thus the voice of God manifesting itself as Word. Another view is that the Word is eternal and it never perishes even at the time of the dissolution of the world, the process being that the Word is not merely the written letters but a force, a potency which is usually known as *Sphota*. This is the energy behind the Word, just as we may say a permanent form of electrical energy is the stuff and substance behind the atoms and molecules of matter. The Word of the Veda is thus not a group of letters in Sanskrit language but a permanent energy-compound which lies in a seed form even at the time of the dissolution of the world and manifests itself again in the next cycle of creation. This is akin to the concept of Jivas or souls lying potential in Ishvara on the dissolution of the cosmos. Knowledge is eternal though it may be manifest in many a concept and spoken through different tongues.

The essential significance of the Vedas is that it reveals superphysical facts of life which are inaccessible to the mind of man. The Vedas, especially the Mantras, are not merely indicative of the nature of truth by means of connotation and denotation but also suggestive by way of the vibration they produce when they are recited with their proper intonation (*Svara*). The Mantras of the Vedas have a Rishi or a sage of realisation to whom they were revealed, whose thought-force is behind the Mantras. They have a Chandas or a metre in which they are composed—a way of juxtaposing words in a sentence by which they produce a kind of chemical reaction, as it were, when chanted with the proper modulation of voice, which charge the Mantras with a novel force. They have also a Devata or a deity to whom the Mantras are directed, the form of whose presence is implied in the shape of the vibrations which the Mantras produce when chanted. With these means the Vedas take the mind of the seeker of Truth from the objective material world gradually to the Universal Being hidden beneath the names and forms of sense-perception. Western orientalisks have done yeoman's service in discovering the historical, archaeological and sociological background of the Vedas and

bringing out critical editions of the Vedas by way of arduous research for many years. But all these efforts have not made man better because this is something like describing a human being in his relation to his family, to the society, his country etc., without touching the essential aspect of what he is by himself when all these relations are cast away. The knowledge of the inner meaning of the Veda is more important than an assessment of its historical value or an appreciation of its philological structure. This inner meaning of the Veda is being lost today, slowly, due to the impact of mechanised forms of education in the fields of science and psychology, which has made man think that he knows much while he is empty within. The inner meaning of the Veda is not its language, its word or its verbal form. The inner meaning of the Veda is spiritual in a very broad sense of the term, in the sense that it is a way of living in contact with Reality in all its grades of manifestation—physical, social, psychological and universal—which comprise the objectives of life which are usually known as Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Recent researches in the 'inner circle' have revealed that the Vedas contain in themselves surprising knowledge of the science such as mathematics and many other mysteries whose knowledge is hidden within them—all methods which man can employ for his blessedness, both here and hereafter.

It is also held by many that the Vedas believe in many gods and uphold a kind of polytheism. This is definitely the outcome of a superficial view of their contents, for the manifold accostations to divinities one sees in the Veda-Mantras are but the many forms of the admiration of the human soul for the One Reality behind phenomena. Historians forget to take note of the famous Mantra in the very first Mandala of the Rig-Veda which proclaims the One Being that the sages call by various names (*Ekam, sat viprah bahudha vadanti*). It is the great glory of the Vedas that they take a twofold view, of the cosmic (Saprapancha) and the acosmic (Nishprapancha) view of Reality. The cosmic view accepts the multiformed universe as a veritable vision of the

many faces of the One Supreme Being (Sahasrasirsha purushah) as the Purusha-Sukta declares. The many gods are thus the one form of the one Purusha. The a cosmic view is to be seen mainly in some of the Upanishads which form the concluding portion of the Vedas wherein the glory of the majestic Absolute is sung in ecstatic terms. The four sections of the Vedas—Samhita, Brahmana, Aranyaka and Upanishad represent a composite whole of an integrated view of life (Veda-Darshana). The Vedas are not merely an incomparable source of the divine knowledge of God and Creation but also a standard text of human morals and an exhortation to goodness in conduct and mutual cooperation in life, with which stirring note the Rig-Veda concludes (*Samgacchadhvam sam vadadhvam sam vo manaamasi, jaanataam*).