

HINDUISM

(FROM RIGVEDA TO RADHAKRISHNAN)

A SOUVENIR PUBLICATION

IN COMMEMORATION OF

THE AUTHOR'S SATHABHISHEKAM

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

1965.

A SOUVENIR PUBLICATION

HINDUISM

26

(FROM RIGVEDA TO RADHAKRISHNAN)

A Historical and Philosophical Survey)

BY

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI

(Retired District and Sessions Judge)

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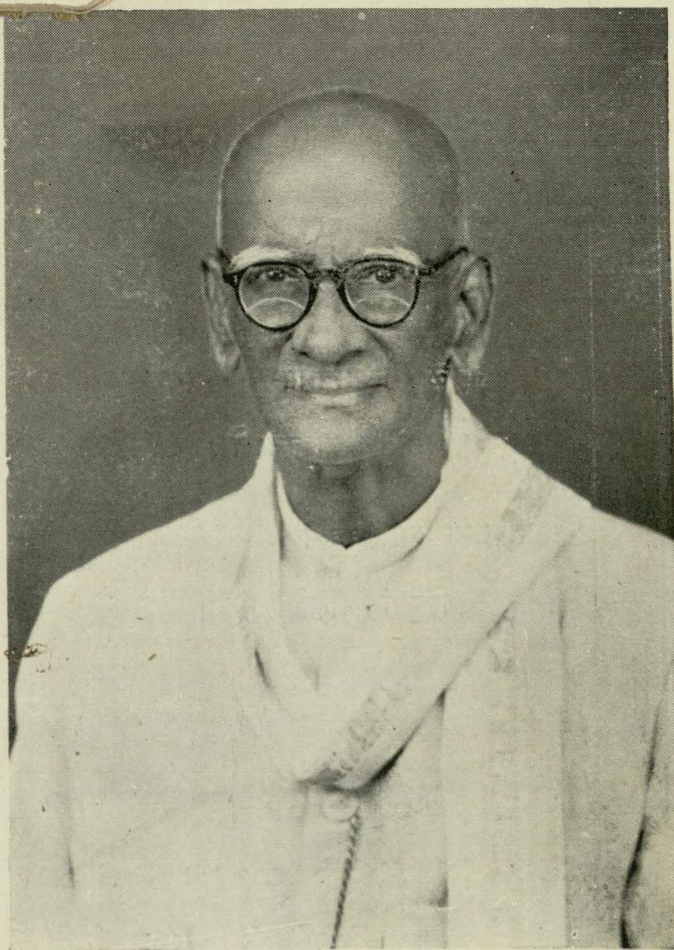
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मङ्गलं श्रीरामस्वामि-
शास्त्रिणे शास्त्रचक्षुषे ।

यस्य प्रयोगविज्ञानं
विदुषां परितोषणम् ॥

PUBLISHERS' HOMAGE

चरितं हिन्दुधर्मस्य
सर्वशास्त्रोपबृंहितम् ।
वर्ण्यते शास्त्रभिर्भद्रं
सूरिभिः स्वस्तये नृणाम् ॥
ऋग्वेदगिरिमारभ्य
राधाकृष्णसरोऽवधि ।
वर्धितं शास्त्रमध्यात्मं
ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन् संप्रकाश्यते ॥

The K. S. Ramaswami Sastri Institute of Gita Studies has great pleasure in publishing this Souvenir in commemoration of the Satabhishekam of its talented President and Progenitor whose monumental writings on Religion, Art and Literature have extended the frontiers of human knowledge and enriched the cultural heritage of the Indian Nation for the increasing glory of God, Scripture and Civilisation.

ओं सह नौ यशः । सह नौ ब्रह्मवर्चसम् ॥

FOREWORD

Gnana Bhaskara Sri K.S. Ramaswami Sastriar, - outstanding scholar, philosopher, literary critic and writer in English, Sanskrit, and Tamil-is by right, accorded a leading place in progressive Indian Literature.

During a life-time spanning two centuries of creative, political and spiritual renaissance in India, Sastriar has impacted on the rich cultural heritage of East and West and produced a little over a century of good, great works covering quite a vast field of Religion, Philosophy, Art and Literature. The present work is a fulfilment of Sastriar's spiritual aspirations to present the history and philosophy of Hinduism as a living force that has influenced the course and march of civilisation in this country for many thousands of years now.

As the title suggests, the book treats in *two* sections - Book I and Book II - of the historic evolution of Hindu Thought down the ages and of the steady process of its vital and integral transmission from age to age.

Book I consists of *four* Parts tracing the growth and development of Hinduism 'From Rig Veda to Radhakrishnan'.

Part I discusses the claims of Science in relation to human happiness and establishes the need for Religion to fulfil man's destiny.

Parts II, III and IV deal with the unfolding of the genius and genre of Hinduism under *three* heads, viz., Ancient Hinduism, Medieval Hinduism and Modern Hinduism corresponding to the three great epochs of its evolving history.

Under Ancient Hinduism, the author presents the heritage of the Vedas, the Puranas and the Agamas enshrining the spiritual adventures and experiences of the early Hindus.

Under Medieval Hinduism, he records the triumph of Vedantic Thought and refers to the creative writings of Sri Shankaracharya and other great Bashyakaras on Vedanta philosophy.

Under Modern Hinduism, he dwells on the cultural and spiritual renaissance headed by the Ramakrishna - Vivekananda movement and appraises the writings of great masters like Tagore, Aurobindo, Gandhiji and Radhakrishnan who have contributed to the efflorescence of Hindu Thought and Hindu Dharma in a sceptical and sophisticated age.

In Book II, the author delves into the philosophy of Hinduism and builds up the essentials in *four* succinct chapters round the central core of the scriptural teaching.

एकं सत् ; विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति ।

(Truth is one ; Sages call it by various names).

In Chapter I, he sounds the trumpet-call of the Upanishads in terms of the Swetaswataramantra,

‘एको देवः सर्वं भूतेषु गूढः’

which harmonises the Saguna and Nirguna aspects of Brahman, the Supreme Reality.

In Chapter II, he adopts the well-known method of *Samanvaya* (Synthesis) and *Avirodha* (Non-contradiction) to discover the common denominator of diverse systems and schools of thought affiliated to the Vedanta doctrine.

In Chapter III, he elaborates the fundamental propositions of an Integral Vedanta Philosophy which he expressively designates as *Poornadvaita* or Integral Hinduism.

In Chapter IV, he follows the classical example of the great Sutrakaras and distils the quintessence of the Poornadvaita Philosophy in *sixteen* Sanskrit aphorisms of sparkling beauty and suggestiveness.

He concludes on a deep, prayerful note calling the readers' attention to four *Mahavakyas* (Great Declarations) from the Bhagavad-Gita which he regards as the Scripture *par excellence* summing up the teachings of integral, dynamic Hinduism.

‘न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चित् दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति’

—is one of the great declarations referred to by him. The high-souled author belongs himself to this class of *Kalyanakriths* or Benefactors of Humanity who hold their God-given talents in trust for the collective spiritual welfare of mankind; and as long as there are men and women in this land who strive to know the facts and experiences of spiritual life and who preserve the youthful enthusiasm to widen the horizon of their knowledge this historic work may be assured of a neverfailing and ever increasing circle of readers.

K. PANCHAPAGESAN.

INTRODUCTION

एतावज्जन्मसाफल्यं देहिनामिह देहिषु ।

प्राणैरर्थैर्धित्वा वाचा श्रेय एवाचरेत्सदा ॥

(Sri Bhagavatha Canto X - Ch. XXII - 35)

(The real purpose of existence is to do the highest spiritual good to all by our energy and wealth and intellect and speech).

My aim in this work is to explore Hinduism in a constructive spirit and explain its teachings from an integral point of view.

I propose to give in these pages a history of the evolution and growth of Hinduism so as to reveal "the one increasing purpose" that runs through the ancient, medieval and modern periods of the development of Hindu Thought and Practice.

While certain religions are bent on the conversion of all human beings to their faith, Hinduism is in fraternal relation to them and has never aimed and will never aim at conversions. While certain religions denounce other faiths and deny Heaven to the followers of those faiths and even condemn them to hell, Hinduism holds that all human beings are eligible for salvation. While some religions deny forms and attributes to God, Hinduism says that God is above and beyond forms and attributes, and yet assumes forms and attributes out of grace. Hinduism is thus a truly universal religion by the common acceptance of mankind.

I have sought in this work to present the historical evolution of this universal religion with special reference to its catholicity of spirit and outlook.

I hope and wish and pray that this work may meet with the approval of all good and godly persons who believe in promoting harmony, peace and good will on earth.

I am very grateful to Professor K. Panchapagesa Iyer for the appreciative Foreword which he has contributed to this work.

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI.

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(History of Hinduism.)

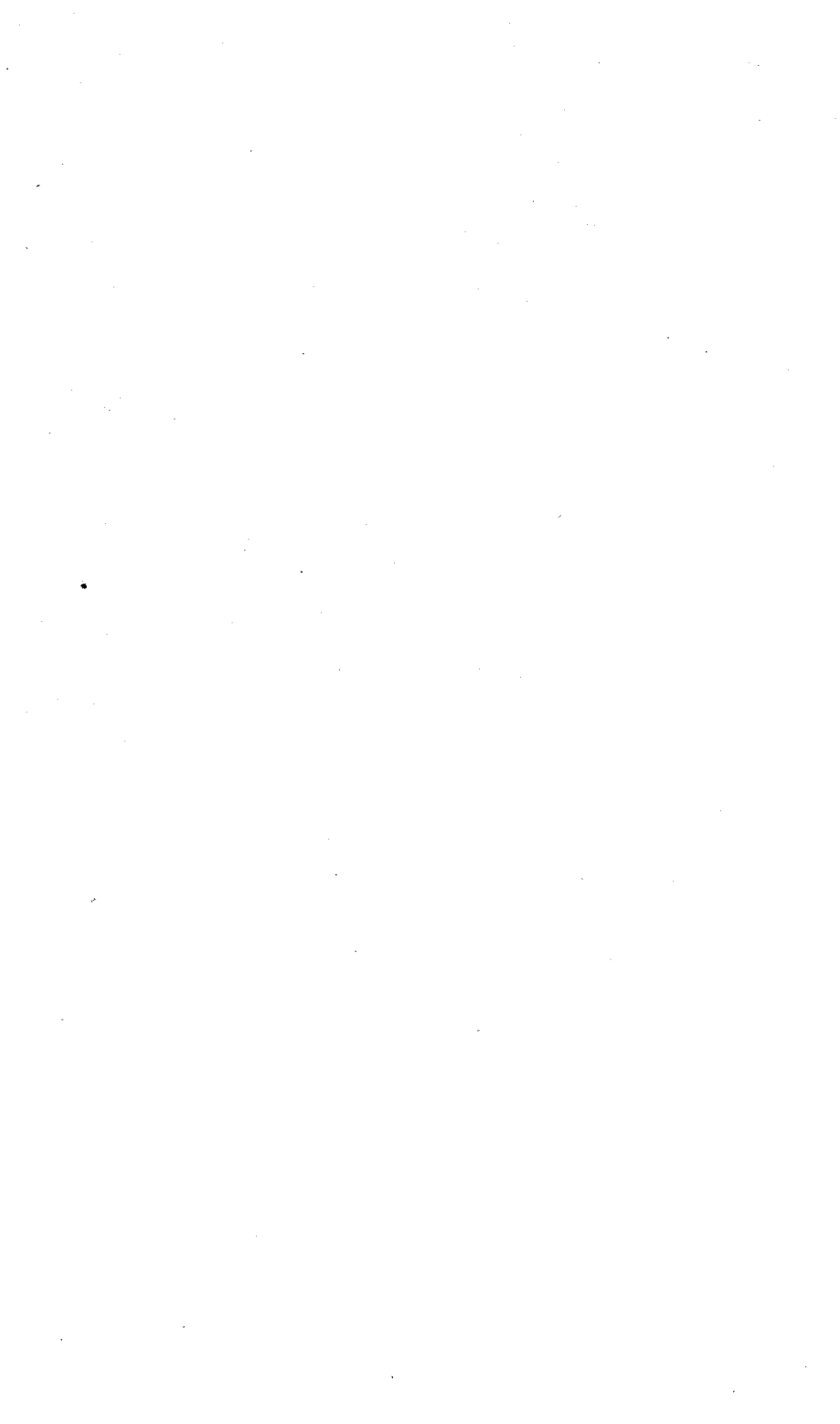
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BOOK I



PART I

HINDUISM AND ITS VISION OF MAN

AND

UNIVERSE AND GOD

In our jet and rocket age, when machines have attained an efficiency unknown before and astronauts hope to cruise among planets and stars, there is a likelihood and danger of man feeling dwarfed and humbled by the machine on the one hand, and of feeling vain and self-exalted and self-exultant, on the other, because he is doing something which his ancestors never did or could do, before. Further, this is an age in which the greed for money is in the ascendant and economic values threaten to overbear moral and spiritual values. Karl Marx propounded his new philosophy interpreting man in terms of economic and material values. But man's achievement of liberty and liberty of achievement consist in his free quest and realisation of this inner spiritual freedom. The new emphasis on science and technology and economics is good because it enables man to control nature's powers as well as maximise production and equalise distribution, but he will never find ultimate or complete satisfaction in such achievements. It is good to be a great technician, but it is not good to be that and nothing more. Nature is not an enemy to be conquered but a friend given by God for our help and self-realisation. We must achieve self-conquest leading to self-realisation if we are to enjoy the best things which Nature has in her hands and which Nature was meant by God to give to us.

of the spiritualisation of life, of the transmutation of Life Human into the Life Divine. While its superficial current is full of ripples of rituals and reflects the sky above and the trees on the banks, the undercurrent is a deep and full and calm and perennial philosophy. The Hindu mind has synthesised the diversity of forms and the unity of basic reality. (EKAM EVA ADVITIYAM; EKAM SATH; TATHVAMASI. It is one without a second; Truth is one; and Thou art That). Such is the vision and proclamation of Integral and essential Hinduism to Man and about Man.

CHAPTER I

ANCIENT HINDUISM

THE VEDAS

Science has speculated about the origin of life. It thinks that the earth was a ball of fire and cooled down by very very slow degrees in the course of millions of years. Then the oceans were formed and then the earth's crust came into being. How did life came into existence? Some Scientists say that life rose from non-life. Others say that life may have come from another planet. All this is only a confession of ignorance. A living body is a collection of cells. But what is a cell and when and how and whence did it originate? Science does not know.

The various philosophic systems of the world try to answer the questions of the origin and nature and destiny of Man. They are nihilistic or atheistic or agnostic or religious and specialise in realism or idealism or solipsism. They are at war with one another and speak with diverse and contradictory voices.

work of 555 sutras. They describe the cause and nature of the search for God (Brahman) and say that He is the Creator and Preserver and Destroyer of the Universe and that He is known by means of Scripture and that the synthesis of spiritual doctrine is contained in the knowledge and realisation of God by way of communion and union.

CHAPTER II

ANCIENT HINDUISM

(Prasthanatraya or the Supreme Trinity of Scriptures).

I referred briefly above to the Upanishads and the Bhagawad Gita and the Brahma Sutras which are compendiously called the Prasthana Traya or the Supreme Trinity of Scriptures. But they deserve and require a separate treatment by themselves as they are universally revered as the three summits of Divine Wisdom. All the other scriptures and all the later philosophies down to our day must be tested and weighed and evaluated in the light of these Summit Scriptures. I have written various works on these Summit Scriptures and shall give in this work only a brief description of them.

A. UPANISHADS

The Upanishads form the Crown and Summit of the Vedas. They are so called as they were taught by saintly teachers to saintly disciples sitting in front of them and also as they destroy nescience. The root SAD has both the meanings. The Upanishads contain the world's highest spiritual teachings. The great western philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer says: "In the whole world,

CHAPTER IV

THE ESSENCE OF THE AGAMAS

INTRODUCTORY: THE PLACE OF THE AGAMAS
IN HINDUISM

My aim in this series is to make an attempt to explain the basic ideas of the Hindu Agamic literature in general as well as the essential ideas of the Vaiṣṇava Śākta and Śaiva Āgamas and show also the evolution of the Vaiṣṇava, Śākta and Śaiva cults based on such Āgamas. Such an endeavour is necessary to comprehend the evolution of the living Hinduism of today because the ancient and eternal Hindu faith has gone through the rich dyeing process of the Āgamas and has taken on and assimilated new and rich colours. If anyone expects to see the simple white tints of the ancient white garment of Hinduism in the grand multitinted modern royal robe of modern Hinduism, his will be a vain search indeed. The garment is there but is today full of iridescent rainbow tints which charm and attract and even dazzle our vision.

The exact place of the Āgamas in the evolution of Hinduism is yet a doubtful and debated and debatable fact. The exact date of the various Āgamas is even more uncertain and wrapt in obscurity. Till a few of the Śākta Āgamas were published and explained by Mr. Arthur Avalon (Sir John Woodroffe) a few decades ago with the aid of Indian scholars, the modern world may be said not to have been cognizant of them. Since then a few of the Śaiva Āgamas and a few of the Vaiṣṇava Āgamas have been published, but no systematic attempt has been made to collect and collate and publish all the available Agamic and Tantric literature for a critical and

CHAPTER IV.

Ancient Hinduism

(Its later Evolution)

As the combined product of the Vedas and the Prasthanas Traya and the Puranas (the crown and the consummation of which is the Bhagawata, which is Vyasa's last and ripest work and is the fourth Prasthana, Chaturtha Prasthana) and the Agamas and the Tantras, Hinduism as a Religion took a definite shape as a ripe fruit, the seed of which was in the Vedas and especially in the Upanishads. While the concept of Unity as declared in the immortal Vedas and Upanishads:

(Ekam Sat Viprah bahudha Vadanthi, Ekamevadvitiam, Prajnanam Brahma, Tatwamasi, Ayam atma Brahma, Aham Brahmasmi.

i. e. The Reality is one, but the sages call it variously. There is only one without a second. Brahma is pure consciousness. Thou art That. This Atma is Brahman. and I am Brahman)

was accepted by all the later sages, these sages stressed also God with Name and Form.

Thus Brahman is not merely Satchidananda but is also Truth and Goodness and Beauty (Satyam, Sivam, Sundaram). The Mandukya Upanishad calls Him Peace and Goodness, the Infinite and the Supreme:

शान्तं शिवं अद्वैतं चतुर्थं ।

He is the Absolute Reality or Nirguna Brahman beyond names and forms and attributes (Nama-Rupa-Guna) but is also Infinite, Eternal Supreme Truth and Beauty and

PART III

MEDIAEVAL HINDUISM

The basic ideas were expanded and expounded in clear-cut systems of philosophic thought which were constructed in harmony with scripture and reason and spiritual experience. Shri Sankaracharya propounded the Advaita System of philosophy (i.e. the school of Monism) He took his stand on the transcendental aspect of Godhead and reconciled that doctrine with the existence of the Universe on the basis of the doctrine of *Māya*. The fact of Becoming can never be explained unless we accept the fact of Being. Sri Ramanujacharya who followed Shri Sankaracharya many centuries later took his stand on the combined immanence and transcendence of God and rejected the concept of the one formless and nameless Transcendental Brahman (Nirakara Nirguna Ekatman.) He accepted three fundamental entities (Tripadartha), viz, Chit (soul), Achit (matter) and Iswara (God), Chit and Achit being the body of God. While Shankara said that Gnana (knowledge) is the means of liberation and spiritual realisation, Ramanuja gave the place of honour among the *Sadhanas* (means of realisation) to Bhakti (devotion) and especially to Prapatti (self-surrender). Sri Ramanuja rejected the Maya doctrine.

Sri Madhwacharya who succeeded Sri Ramanujacharya went further in the direction of pluralistic realism and propounded the doctrine of five differences or Panchabheda (the separateness of God and Soul, God and Matter, of Soul and Matter, of Soul and Soul and, of Matter and Matter.) While Sri Shankara and Sri Ramanuja accepted God as the Efficient Cause and the Material cause of the Universe, Sri Madhwa propounded

PART IV

MODERN HINDUISM

The medieval Hindu Philosophy was based on the ancient Hindu Philosophy and its flowering went on even during India's political bondage during the Muslim and British periods. Great Saints and devotees appeared in an unbroken succession even after India's independence was lost and fanned the flame of devotion (bhakti) all over India. The entry of Islam and later on of Christianity did not affect such an efflorescence. They intensified the concept of the Unity of God and the ideas of the Father-hood of God and the Brother-hood of man and stressed the concepts of philanthropy and compassion and social service.

In the nineteenth century and in a vaster scale and in more intensified form in the twentieth century science and democracy and nationalism and internationalism profoundly influenced the Indian mind. These forces have been in even more intensive operation in India after India achieved independence on 15th August 1947 and framed her own Constitution on 26th January 1950.

It is in the light of these forces, that we must evaluate such movements as the Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society, the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement etc. It is not possible to go into a history of these movements in this work, whose main aim is to present a synthesised and integrated vision of the future of India's philosophic vision as enkindled by the thinkers of all ages till now. In this Chapter, I shall deal with some of the stalwarts of modern Indian philosophy during the last one-hundred years.

INTEGRAL HINDUISM
CHAPTER I
NEED FOR A SYNTHESIS

एको देवस्सर्वभूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ।
कर्माध्यक्षस्सर्वभूताधिवासः साक्षी चेताः केवलो निर्गुणश्च ॥

(God is one. He is hidden in all beings. He is omnipresent. He is the inner soul of all. He is the lord of all activities. He abides in all and is the abode of all. He is the all-seeing witness. He is the knower and energiser of all. He transcends all qualities).

(Svetasvatara Upanishad)

I regard this verse as the Supreme summation of all aspects of Hindu Philosophy and as the very soul of our philosophical and religious synthesis. God is the Absolute Reality, Eternal, Supreme, and Infinite. It does not matter whether we call him Brahman or Atman or Iswara or Bhagavan or Paramatma or Antaryami. The Bhagawata says :

“Brahmethi Paramathmethi Bhagawanithi Sabdyatae”.

The various systems of thought merely stress one or another aspect of such eternal, infinite, absolute Reality.

Equally basic is the affirmation of the reality of the soul (Atman). Whatever else we may be sure of or doubt, the reality of our self-consciousness and its uniform and unchanging content, despite the change and decline in bodily functions culminating in death, is a basic and unchallengeable and undeniable inner fact and

CHAPTER II
THE TEACHINGS OF INTEGRAL HINDUISM
(Poornadvaita)

The abovesaid discussion of fundamentals leads us to the basic and irrefragable conclusion that Truth is one, though thinkers see and affirm diverse aspects of it. It shows the Reality of Unity and the unity of Reality.

एकं सत्, विद्मः बहुधा वदन्ति ।

(Rig Veda)

Though the Vishistadvaita system of philosophy affirms Tripadartha (three entities) viz. Chit and Achit and Iswara and the Dvaita system of philosophy affirms Panchabheda (five dissimilars)-viz, (Iswara Jiva bheda, Iswara Jada bheda Jiva Jiva bheda, Jiva Jada bheda and Jada Jada bheda), these declarations belong to the realm of tentative and intermediate declarations and not to the realm of final and essential and ultimate declarations. The ultimate revelation about which the basic Hindu Scriptures never wavered and which is confirmed by Reason and Experience is the declaration of Oneness or Unity. The Universe being a self-manifestation of God is one with Him and is non-different from Him.

सदेव सौम्येदमग्र आसीत्, एकमेवाद्वितीयं ।

तदैक्षत बहुस्यां प्रजायेयेति ॥

(Chandogya Upanishad VII, 2, 1 & 3)

(The Eternal alone existed at first. It was one and non-diversed. It desired to become many). To take a clear analogy, rain is only aqueous vapour in another form. Aqueous vapour is a single entity and is non different from rain and ice. The Gita gives an even more striking and apposite analogy.

CHAPTER III

THE DIVINISATION OF LIFE
(INTEGRAL HINDUISM)

(Poornadwaita)

I have thus shown that Poornadwaita (Essential Inclusive Dynamic Integral Hinduism) is the religion of the transformation of the human life. Its eternal truths are simple and are summed up below. The various sects of Hinduism and the diverse systems of Hindu philosophic thought from the most ancient times till today contain only sectional and fragmentary aspects and variants of such integral Hinduism.

1. The Absolute Reality is One. It is Satchidananda in its nature and is called Brahman, Iswara, Paramatma, Bhagawan, etc.

2. God is beyond names and forms and attributes and yet has out of Grace assumed infinite eternal names and forms and attributes.

3. He and His Shakthi are one. He is eternal Dharma (Righteousness) and She is the eternal Daya (Grace).

4. God has become the All, is immanent in all, and transcends all.

5. He is the Trimurthi (Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.) in charge of the creation, preservation and redemption of the universe.

(Hinduism is not polytheism, but is a synthesis of monism and mono-theism.) The above said Gods form a unity in trinity and a trinity in unity. There is no question of a higher or lower among them. Each of them

CHAPTER XIV

SIXTEEN POORNA - ADVAITA SUTRAS

॥ प्रथमः ब्रह्मस्वरूपाध्यायः ॥

1. अथाऽतो भारतीयपूर्णाऽद्वैतजिज्ञासा ॥
2. अनन्ताखंडपरिपूर्ण निराकारनिर्गुण-सच्चिदानन्द-स्वरूपं ब्रह्म ॥
3. ब्रह्म स्वयं निराकारं निर्गुणमपि, साकारं सगुणं स्वेच्छया स्वसंकल्पेन ।
अन्तर्यामी परमात्मा ईश्वरः भगवान् इति ब्रह्मणो नामभेदाः ॥
4. एकमेव ब्रह्म त्रिमूर्तिरूपं । न तेषां स्वरूपभेदः, परावरत्वं वा ॥
5. ईश्वरशक्त्योः रूपभेदेऽपि स्वरूपैक्यमेव ॥
6. ईश्वरस्य बहवोऽवताराः ॥

॥ द्वितीयः जगज्जीवस्वरूपाध्यायः ॥

7. ब्रह्मणः अभिन्ननिमित्तोपादानकारणस्वरूपस्य,
अविकारिपरिणामिसत्यस्वरूपं जगत् ॥
8. ब्रह्म एकरूपं अपरिणामि स्वतन्त्रसत्यं कालदेशाऽपरिमितं ।
जगत् तदधीनं नानारूपपरिणामिसत्यस्वरूपं देशकालपरिमितं ॥
9. उपाधिसहितोऽणुर्जीवात्मा, उपधिरहितो विभुः परमात्मा ।
उभयोः स्वरूपतः ऐक्यमेव ॥

॥ तृतीयः साधनाध्यायः ॥

10. तत्त्वाज्ञानाद्बन्धः, तत्त्वज्ञानान्मोक्षः ॥
11. साधनाधीना सिद्धिः ॥
12. कर्मध्यानभक्तिप्रपत्तिज्ञानयोगादि-
साधनैः, एकेन वा संमिलितैर्वा मुक्तिसिद्धिः ॥

to God), Sayujya (fulness of divine bliss) and Kaivalya (identity with God and merger in God).

15. All are eligible for Liberation.

16. The liberation of all is the realisation of supreme bliss; It is the realisation of full, universal bliss.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I pray that we might all live in the light of the following gracious declarations of Sri Krishna in the Bhagawad Gita.

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।

स्वरूपमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहं ।

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मानुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

नहि कल्याणकृत् कश्चिद्दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ।

न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ।

In this path there is no loss of effort nor evil results. Even a little of this Dharma will save us from all fear.

Even as they seek me, I seek them.

Men come to me from all directions.

He who does an auspicious act will never come to grief.

My devotee will never perish.

Acc. No. B 35
Date 5/4/75
Resident S. B.

