



Voice of Jagadguru

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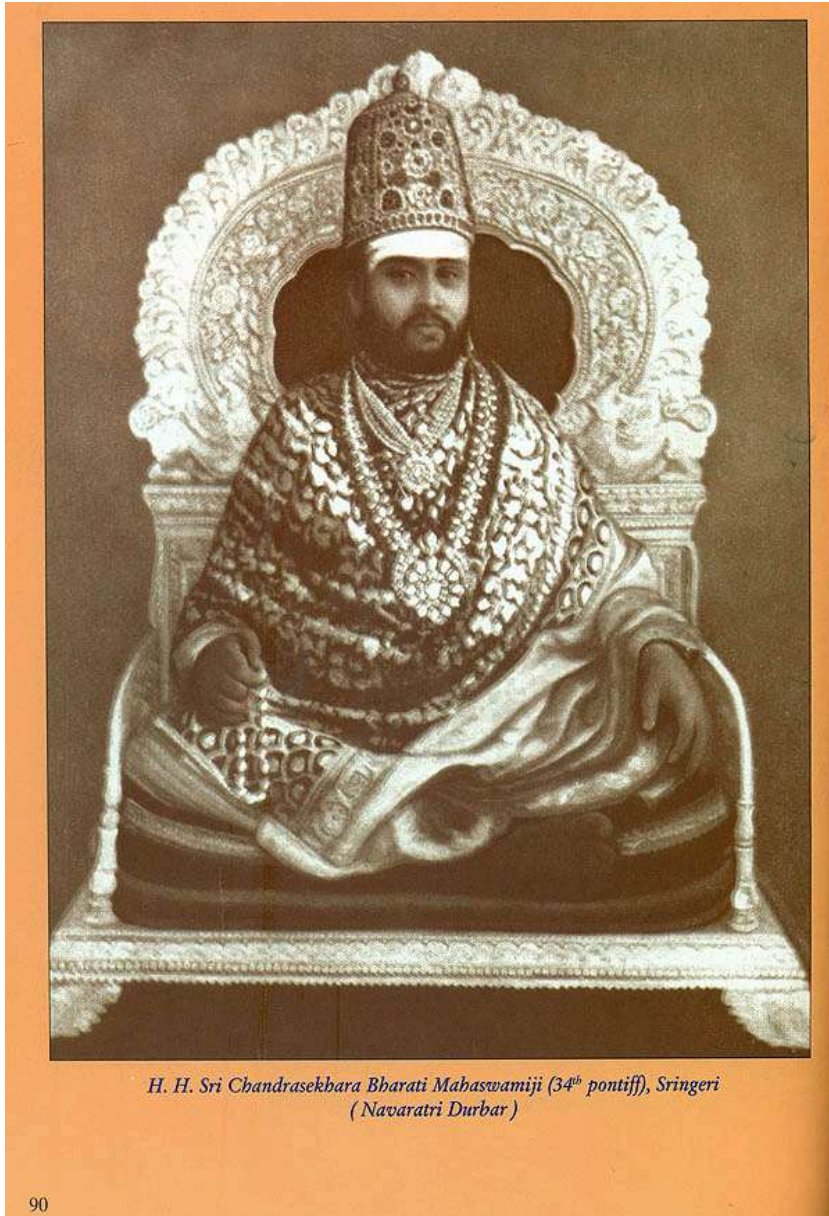


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65th Aradhana of 34th Peedathipathi of Śrī Sringeri Sharada Peetham Jagadguru Śrī Chandrashekara Bharati Mahāswāmi (September 28th 2019)

ACHARYAL SANDESH



*H. H. Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswami (34th pontiff), Sringeri
(Navaratri Durbar)*

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We submit our efforts at the Lotus feet of Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāswāmi-ji and Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Vidhusekhara Bhāratī Mahāswāmi-ji



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HINDUISM

THE UNIVERSAL LAW

When His Holiness the Jagadguru was campaign in a quiet village during the course of his tours, a European gentleman Mr.A came to see Acharyal. He seemed to have studied some popular books on Vedanta philosophy and felt attracted by its teachings.

A : Swamiji! May I know if you are prepared to take converts to your religion? Personally I find much worth in it and I have known many friends who so love your philosophy and religion that they would like to call themselves Hindus, if that were possible.



Acharyal : The Hindu system of philosophy and religion is bound to attract all thinking minds, but we do not take in converts.

A : If you think your system is an invaluable one and is bound to be useful to all mankind, does it not follow that you must be prepared to take in converts?

Acharyal : Not necessarily. Conversation is possible or necessary only when the person who desires to be a convert does not already belong to the religion to which he desires to be converted.

A : How is that? Do you mean to say that no formal conversion is necessary as those who desire to be Hindus are already Hindus by virtue of that desire itself?

Acharyal : No. I mean that all are Hindus, irrespective of their desire to be called Hindus.

Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Śrī Chandrashekhara Bhāratī Mahāswāmiji and Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Śrī Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahāswāmiji at Sringeri.

A : How can that be ?

Acharyal : Hinduism is the name which has now been given to our system, but its real name has always been Sanatana Dharma or the Eternal Law. It does not date from a particular point of time or begin from a particular founder. Being eternal, it is also universal. It knows no territorial jurisdiction. All beings born and to be born belong to it. They cannot escape this law, whether they concede its binding force or not. The eternal truth that fire burns does not depend for its validity upon our allegiance to it. If we accept that truth, so much the better for us. If we do not, so much the worse for us. In either case, the law is there, immutable, universal and eternal. Such is our Sanatana Dharma.

A : If then the entire world is Hindu according to you, how do you justify the restrictive caste system?

Acharyal : I only told you that all were Hindus and therefore entitled to seek guidance in the tenants of our religion. I did not say that the guidance will be the same for all. Countless are the varieties of temperament, training, environment, hereditary leanings, prenatal tendencies and so on, so that it will be impossible to expect any single, stereotyped system of conduct for all. Our Dharma, taking due notice of this undeniable fact, resolves itself into two parts: 1. Samanya

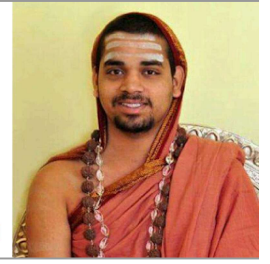


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Dharma or Ordinary Law and 2. Vishesha Dharma or Special Law. The former guides all mankind; the former and the latter both together guide those who come under the caste system.

A : If the rules of caste have any spiritual value, why not give the benefit of them to those also who are outside it?

Acharyal : If water is beneficial to a thirsty man, does it follow that it will be beneficial to a man who has a fever and therefore feels thirsty?

A : Your illustration is not fair. There is nothing to show that a special rule of conduct prescribed for a particular caste will be injurious to others, who do not belong to that caste or to any caste at all

Acharyal : On the other hand, you must realise that there is nothing to show that a special rule of conduct prescribed for a particular caste will be beneficial to others. For, the mere fact that it is prescribed for that caste makes it a special law and, therefore, not applicable to the generality of mankind. If the Sastras are our only guide for telling us that a particular line of conduct is beneficial, we

cannot throw them overboard when they tell us in the same breath for whom it is beneficial. Our system and, in fact, any system which aims at the regulations of conduct must be based on the principle of adhikara or competency. Those who belong to the castes are competent to pursue the Vishesha Dharma; the others are competent to pursue only Samanya Dharma. Further, the nature of the competency required can be learnt only from the Shastras which prescribed the Dharma.

A : If then the Hindu Sastras are to be taken as a guide for all humanity and if all persons born are, in your view, born in your religion, how do you account for the prevalence of other faiths?

Acharyal : It is their fault that they do not recognise that they are but aspects of the Sanatana Dharma. The highest teaching of any other religion do find a place in our religion and are but a phase of the ordinary law laid down there.

A : Don't you think, Swamiji, that your claim will sound somewhat different over-high and that the other religionists may not be disposed to concede it?

Acharyal : The disposition of others to concede the claim of Hinduism is quite beside the point, for the intrinsic worth of anything is always there whether one recognises it or not. As for the claim being high, I desire to point out to you that I cannot possibly put it lower.

A: How is that?

Acharyal: Please bear with me if I take Christianity as an example to illustrate my point. If belief in the personality of Christ is a necessary condition of salvation, we must be prepared to say that all those persons who have lived before the time of Jesus have been denied the benefit of salvation for no fault of theirs and simply because they happened to be born when Jesus was yet unborn. The same reasoning would deny salvation to those who have lived even at the same time as Jesus or since that time, but may not have even heard of him. Further, don't you think it very unfair on the part of God that He should suddenly wake up on a particular day and prescribed for all mankind a necessary condition for salvation? Did he forget that the people who had the misfortune to be born before Jesus, had souls to save? If He did not forget, did He take care to prescribe for them the means necessary to enable them to attain salvation? If He did so prescribed, His

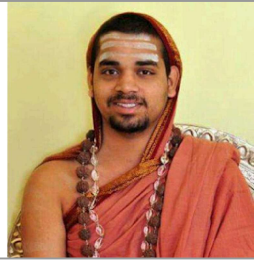


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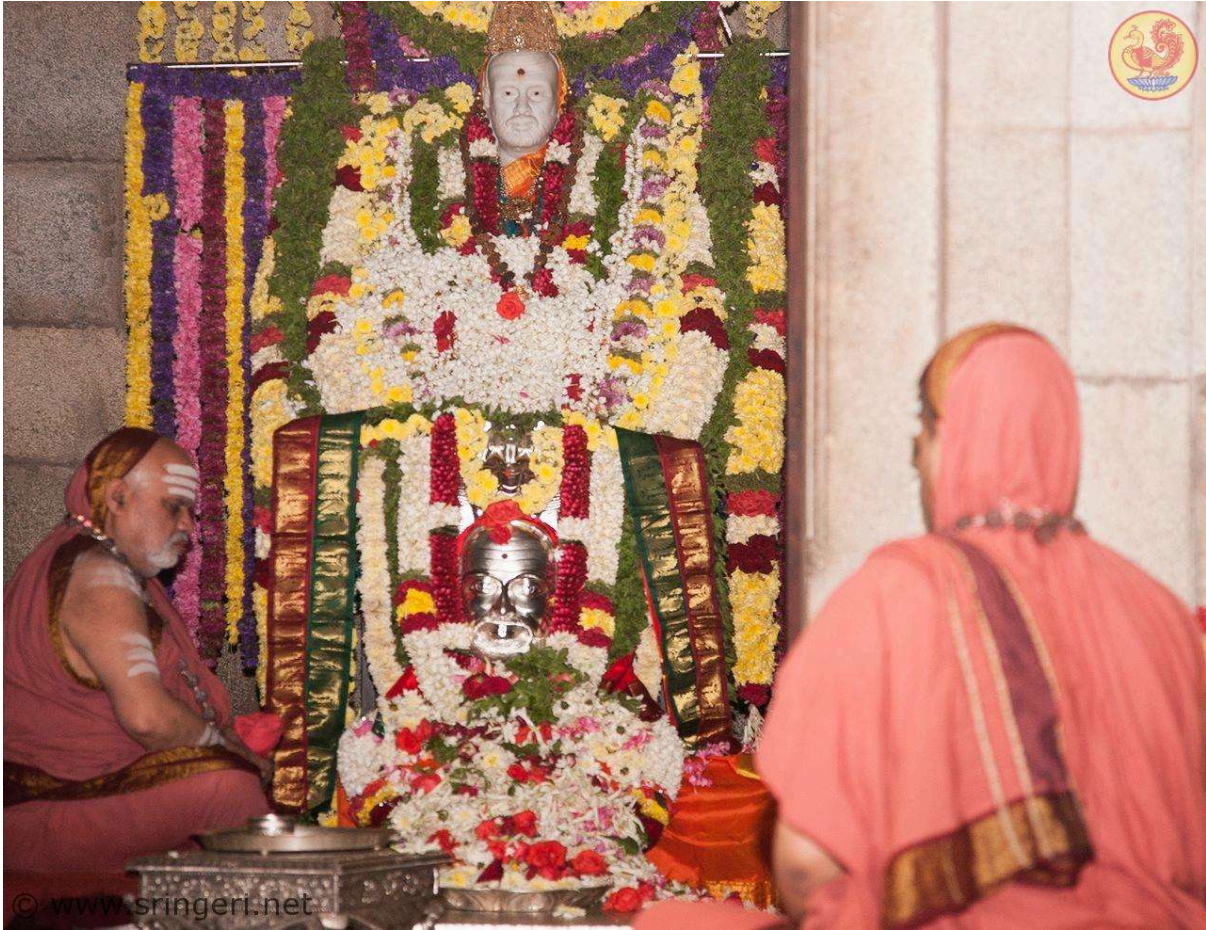
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prescription could not possibly have included a belief in Jesus to be born. Therefore, the only logical hypothesis, which a reasonable man can accept, is that God, even when He created the first man (if there was such a time), Himself simultaneously promulgated also the means for his salvation, for even the first man was certainly in need of salvation. We accordingly say of our Vedas that they were coeval with the first man (not in the sense that they were created together, for we believe that there was no first creation and that everything is beginningless, but in the sense that they were co-existing and that they are the revelations of God Himself. Any religion which traces its origin from a later time, any time after creation, and from any teacher other than God, is



bound to be imperfect and short-lived.

(Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāswāmiji and Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Vidhuśekhara Bhāratī Mahāswāmiji at Athistana mandir of Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Śrī Chandrashekhara Bhāratī Mahāswāmiji at Sringeri on September 20, 2017 :File Photo)

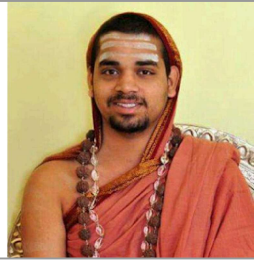


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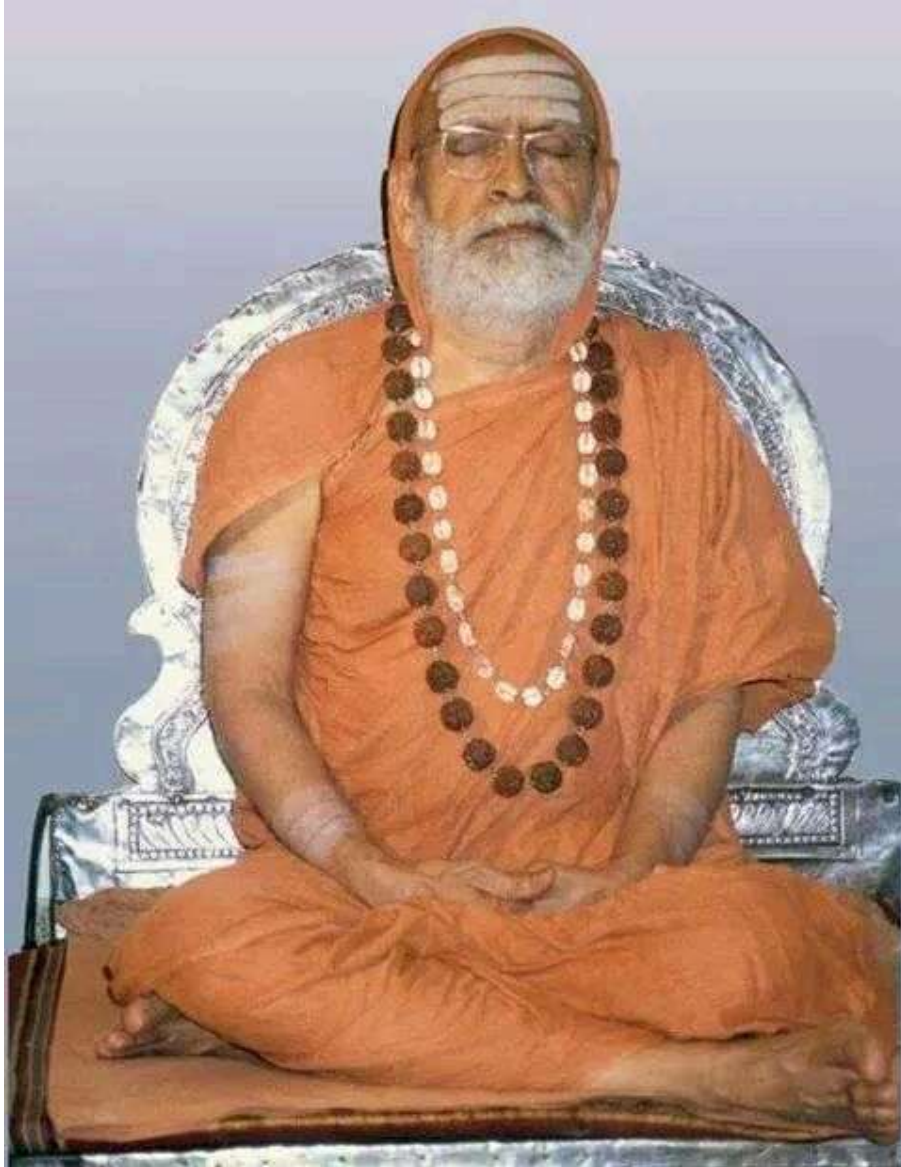
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30th Aradhana of of 35 th Peedathipathi of Śri Sringeri Sharada Peetham Jagadguru Śri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahāswāmiji (21st September 2019)





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DHARMA

"Dharma" is the name given to our code of moral and spiritual Law and the word is not translatable into any other language for they have no word conveying exactly the same significance. Etymologically, Dharma is that which sustains. It sustains the universe and all the things, animate and inanimate in it; but for it, they cannot exist or function. It is therefore a universal principle and necessarily therefore eternal also. To make this clear, it is very often called



Sanatana Dharma, "Eternal Sustainer".

Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness JeshtaMahāsannidhānam Śrī Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahāswāmiji and Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāswāmiji along with Śrī Jnanananda Bhāratī swāmiji. File Photo : At Mannadimangalam in 1975, Vijaya Yatra.

It is considered Eternal not because we do not know how it arose or when it came into existence but only because it is Eternal, has no beginning and knows no limitations of time. It is



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not a conventional Code brought into existence at any particular time or by any particular person or set of persons. It is eternal because it is true.

Nothing can be really true which is not true for all time or can admit of alternation. If fire scorches and water chills, it is not due to any convention brought about by the consensus of any set of individuals or enforced by any powerful ruler. It is in the nature of fire to scorch and of water to chill. The scorching and chilling are inherent characteristics of fire and water and cannot be divorced from them and are therefore their respective Dharmas.

If 50 people contribute Rs3/- each to honour a pandit, the total amount will come to only Rs 150/-, though they may all sincerely feel that this is not an adequate remuneration for the valuable discourses of the Pandit. Any amount of sincere feeling on their part will not affect the arithmetical truth that 50 multiplied by 3 is only 150. It is quite open to the Pandit also to say and feel that this 150 is a 1000 to him; but his saying or feeling so will not in any way swell the cash. So truth is one thing and concept is quite another. Our Dharma is Truth and therefore eternal; it is not a concept liable to variations.

The Dharma for the regulation of human behaviour is enunciated in the Vedas. Veda is knowledge. Knowledge is always dependent upon the thing known and not upto the will or feeling of the knower. Whether man is happy or unhappy, healthy or unwell, sober or angry, literate or illiterate, a pot is always a pot; it does not and cannot accommodate itself to the moods of anybody however eminent. Such is our Vaidika Dharma. It is Eternal.

We may be in our ignorance choose to ignore it or try to adjust it to our moods but, being eternal and ever true, it has its own way of asserting itself and we can never escape it or elude it except at great risk to ourselves. We must be wise enough to conform to it and profit by it as much as possible. May Lord help us to do it.

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