

Hindu TODAY



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Dear Hindu Today Reader,

India is the world's most ancient civilization. Nowhere on earth can one find such a rich and multi-layered tradition that has remained unbroken and largely unchanged for at least five thousand years. The essential basis of Indian culture is Religion in the widest and most general sense of the world. **'As flowing rivers disappear in the sea, losing their name and form, thus a wise man, freed from name and form, goes to the Divine who is beyond all,' is the philosophy that satisfies the philosophical Hindu mind with astonishing continuity.**

According to Swami Vivekananda, "From the high spiritual flights of the Vedanta philosophy, of which the latest discoveries of science seem like echoes, to the low ideas of idolatry with its multifarious mythology, the agnosticism of the Buddhists, and the atheism of the Jains, each and all have a place in the Hindu religion."

Unlike other religions, Hinduism has no founder. It does not depend for its authority on the personality of any man. Its authority is the eternal Truth which revealed itself through the minds of great rishis who perfected themselves by long penances and are said to have heard in their hearts the eternal truth as Shruti, recorded later as the Vedas.

Religious faith of the Hindus has never been allowed to run counter to scientific laws. The Hindus always take into consideration the possibility that by reason both the agnostic and atheist may attain truth in their own way. Such tolerance may be surprising to religious believers in the West, but it is an integral part of Vedantic belief. The goal is not to find God, a god, the heaven, a kingdom of God on earth, permanent youthfulness, or eternal life, but it is the abolishment of individual identity for merger into the Ultimate.

Every shade of opinion, every mode of thought, and every school of philosophy has found its expression in the philosophical writings of the Hindus. Not only philosophy, but Indian civilization has also enriched every art and science known to man. Science and philosophy were always very highly developed disciplines in ancient India. However, traditions persist that any early scientific contribution came solely from the West, Greece in particular. Because of this erroneous belief, which is perpetuated by a wide variety of scholars, it is necessary to briefly examine the history of Indian scientific thought. From the very earliest times, India had made its contribution to the texture of Western thought and living. Throughout the literature of Europe, tales of Indian origin can be discovered. European mathematics, and through it, the full range of European technical achievement, could hardly have existed without Indian numerals. But until the beginning of European colonisation in Asia, India's contribution always got filtered through other cultures.

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