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VEDIC EDUCATION-THE ONLY MEANS TO REALISE
‘SARVAM KHALU IDAM BRAHMAN’

BY

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Abstract:

*Today we live in constant fear of being victims or witnessing someone being a victim. Such is the condition of our society. Constant inhumanity, insensitivity and crimes against animals, fellow beings and nature leave us in a lull with a haunting question ‘**Where are we heading?**’ As we progress in the scientific arena of astonishing and remarkable discoveries, we also confront the devil of inhumanity, diminished ethics and dipping morals before us. With a wide range of social evils from crime against women, animals and children to dowry deaths, terrorism and environmental haphazard mushrooming before us, it’s the need of the hour that we stop and seek guidance from our great texts and Rishis. The ideas and thoughts of the great Vedas and Upanishads are bound to be beneficial for one and all because one indeed is all and all indeed is one- **Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahman!!** Thus, across races, nationalities and religions this knowledge will only act as a unifying force. It will bring about mutual respect and elevate us mentally, emotionally, spiritually and ethically. Without biases of religion, nationality and race it’s time to revamp our education system and imbibe the Vedic knowledge which alone has the acumen to fight against the horrors of the society and once again put India on the pedestal of being the **Universal Teacher-Vishwaguru!***

Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahman:

India has been fortunate in being bestowed by the eternal and precious gift of knowledge of the great seers, the infallible Vedas and the philosophical Upanishads. This land has been cultivated with timeless thoughts, teachings and philosophies left behind by divine beings like **Buddha, Shankracharya, Mahavira, Guru Nanak**

Dev, Maharishi Patanjali and many more. India’s *Darshana* is firmly rooted in its holistic view of reality which is not merely a philosophy that one follows but is a way of life. This unifying philosophy that advocates oneness of all till date remains the heart and soul of India’s Identity. From

a snail that crawls to the saint that preaches are indeed united in their very essence and hence, all that exists, all that ever existed, all that will one day cease to exist and all that will never exist in the womb of time is nothing but the non-dual *Brahman* from which everything originates, within which everything breathes and into which everything merges. From a child that plays with joy to the dog that howls in the street and the scholars that write the most impeccable articles are all fruits of the same source- *Tajjalan* announce the *Purusa Sukta of the Rigveda*. The *Nasadiya Sukta of the Rigveda* declares this principle as *Tadekam* which manifests itself variedly and the *Taittiriya Upanishad*,¹ maintains- *Ekoham Bahusyam (I am one and I shall become many)*.

According to the Vedas the entire cosmos operates as per the *cosmic law of 'Rta'* and we all are bound in a well linked chain. Humans-animals-mountains-tree-insects, we all are a part of the same cosmos. None exists independent from the other. Our survival is in our unity and our interdependence. This is what *Lord Buddha* expounded in *Prañīyasamutpāda, The Theory of Dependent origination* This is also what *Adi-Shankaracharya* said time and again in his texts and *Bhashyas* that were impregnated with the idea of

Advaitvād or Non-dualism, which professes that behind varied names and forms exists one non-dual principle- '*The Brahman*'.

Smearred in dark colours of *Avidyā*, we consider the numerousness and multiplicity of this universe as the only reality. In our deepest contemplations and meditative modes we ought to realize that all of that which appears to be distinct is in fact non-dual at its root. The discrepancy of varied names and forms arises due to the veils of *Mayā, Avidyā or the cosmic illusion*. It is due to the clutches of *Mayā* that we see distinction. It thus becomes imperative to respect the variedness of names and forms realizing that the essence of all is non-dual and that we are the truth that we seek for all is divine, *all is the Brhman says the Chandogya Upanisha*² '*Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahman*'.

It is of paramount importance to understand that multiplicity has its locus in unity and unity remains the base of diversity. Since the entire cosmos is a whole of wholesome parts, bothering even an iota of existence will bring about a huge variation in the entire cosmos. Indian Philosophy in general and *Advaita-Vedanta* in particular refuses to see any distinction at the core of all and hence women, animals, children and nature have

¹ *Taittiriya Upanishad*, 3.1.1, Geeta Press, Gorakhpur

² *Chandogya Upanishad*, 3.14, Geeta Press, Gorakhpur

never been seen as objects that are meant to be dominated or exploited in any way. *Brahman* the supreme reality is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient; it logically cannot be exclusive to humans alone. The omnipotent and omnipresent *Brahman* thus can never have its exclusivity to humans alone and this out rightly discards the concept of human supremacy and refutes the theory of domination. This may explain why in India rivers, mountains, animals, human and even that what science calls as non-living are worshiped for they are seen as the manifestations of the non-dual *Brahman*. Not just *Advaita-Vedanta* but also a philosophy like *Charvaka* which has been condemned for its materialistic approach shows definite signs of sensitivity which can be known from *Charvaka Shashthi*,²

*If animal slain as an offering to the dead
will itself go to heaven,*

*Why does the one who sacrifice not
straightway offer his father?*

*Hence for kindness to the mass of living
beings we must fly for refuge in the
doctrine of Carvaka.*

Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahman also professes that everything that exists in this scheme of cosmos with varying names and forms underlined by non-duality is certainly supposed to work in accordance to *Dharma* which involves an urgent sense of duty, right, responsibility, virtues,

ethics, conduct and a general norm of discipline which is needed to exist harmoniously and harmlessly.

Before it is too late and before we lose out on the glories of mother earth, it is the need of the hour to realize that everything from the rivers that have been reduced to dirt washing arenas and filth dumping bodies, the woman that has been reduced to a mere sexual object, the tiger which has become an object of hunting addiction and political conspiracy and the environment in general which has become an object of undying greed have their own individuality, their own right and their own duty in this cosmos for they are non-different from us and must be approached with gratitude, sense of oneness and respect. When you consider each life as non-different from you, you never will try to extract joy, pleasure and gains out of it for you will always be more concerned about the joys, pleasures and needs of it. Thus, *Vedic* and *Upanishadic* prayers have never been of specific nature instead they have always been general, holistic and all embracing; an example of one such prayer is quoted from the *Brihdarnayak Upanishad*:

ॐ सर्वशां स्वस्तिर्भवतु ।
(May all be healthy)

सर्वशां शान्तिर्भवतु ।
(May all be at peace)

¹ *Charvaka Shashthi V- 57*, Geeta Press, Gorakhpur

सर्वेषां पुर्णभवतु ।

(May there be fulfillment all around)

सर्वेषां मङ्गलंभवतु ।

(May there be auspiciousness all around)

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

(May peace be within, without & in the entire Brahman)

Today we exist in a very sad state of affairs where inhumanity, infidelity, hate, insensitivity, intolerance, cruelty and irresponsible acts of all kinds are on the rise. Somewhere down the line we have lost touch with ourselves and have become self-obsessed, self-centered and self contained. Gone are the days when we were offered practical lessons of unity and kindness at *Gurukulas* and were supposed to offer food to the mother cow before we ate ourselves. It's a matter of yesteryears when one prayed to plants and trees and drew permission to pluck even a single tiny leaf that was used for medicinal purpose. No more we teach our children the values of *Karuna and maitri*, instead we inculcate within them a spirit of competition and rivalry. Schools and colleges are engrossed in producing management gurus, technically sound engineers, doctors and professionals but have failed to develop morally and ethically sound human beings. If we want to put an end to the current chaos that is sweeping the globe, it is advisable that one

should go back to the *Upanishads* in order to understand them in the right light and focus on holistic development. It's important to inculcate the teachings of our Great Beings, *Rishis* and *Shastras* at an early age for a 360 degree development of a child. It's important to not only encourage a kid physically, intellectually and emotionally but it is also important to encourage the child spiritually. It is time that the entire education system is revamped and is free from the shackles of western influences. Indian Philosophy should become a compulsory subject in schools and colleges. Only when a child from his tender years will go through the process of *Shravana-Manana-Nididhyasana* will he realize the essence of

*Prajnanam Brahman,
Ayam Atman Brahman,
Tat Tvam Asi,
Aham Brahmasmi and
Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahman.*

Let our society be a society where we develop seekers of knowledge instead of aspirants of educational degrees, let us free ourselves from the clutches of rote learning in order to imbibe techniques that lead to realization of self, let our society be one where concentration should be on developing great beings and not just great doctors, engineers and management wonders because being a good human is

the base of being a good professional. It is important for parents to go back to the *Vedas* and *Upanishad* to give their children the lessons of *Ekamavada*, *Maitri*, *Kruna*, *Ahimsa*, *Samdrishti* and *Sarvabhutahit* instead of teaching them to be competitive with their friends and kick a street animal or pampering them to the limits. Thus, all microcosmic existence should exist in harmony so that harmony pervades all. The only way harmony will pervade the entire world is when the world is free from the evils of discrimination, distinction, dominations, inequality and sense of supremacy. It is time that we see the self in all and all in the self to co-exist in harmony, respect and peace.

All of this will not be possible with mere talks and discussions but will be feasible only with practical application of Vedic system of education that practically teaches us the concept and essence of '*Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahman*' and further allows us to see the entire world as one family '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam*'. Education must not merely prepare us to be a professional of great value but should lead us to be a human of great value. It should guide us to liberating wisdom and allow us to lead a life smeared in wisdom. The important question is that how fulfilling and complete is the system of education that we have today? Is this

system of education leading us to wisdom? Is it inculcating in us a sense of seeing the entire universe as one family? Or is this system promoting within us a sense of rivalry, a sense of supremacy and merely reducing success to grades and numbers? In no way is this education system touching the core of who we are and allowing an individual to understand that at the core all are but the same non-dual *Brahman*. If we look deep, we will come to the conclusion that education system to a great extent is responsible for all the havocs of the society and it alone can be the liberating factor from all the chaos.

Conclusion:

The rise in violence against humans, animals and nature in general, the dipping values, morals and ethics on a social, political and individual level and the greed for scientific development and technology are indeed ruining the peace and balance of this world. It is important to understand that individual peace is not separate from world peace, it is essential to know that when each human, animal, tree or the smallest spec in the universe operates as per cosmic law and is in harmony only then will there be universal harmony. Education indeed plays an important role in the holistic development of an individual, society and the world. In order to understand and apply the essence of

‘Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahman’, it is imperative to revamp, redesign and revise our entire education system. The Vedic system of education which concentrates upon overall development of an individual focuses on understanding the self and **‘he who knows the self, knows the Brahman’¹**. Without further ado, it’s time to go back to the Vedas and realize that disparity has its locus in unity and unity remains the base of diversity. It is time to not merely preach the unifying philosophy of **Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahman** but also realize it within ourselves and within all that exists by going back to the age old Vedas and Upanishads and exploring their knowledge in the right light and applying their essence to have a world that exists in unity, love and peace!

Om Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!

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