

Hindus Must Unite or Face Extinction

by Stephen Knapp

The typical Indian mentality and the path of Hinduism, or the Vedic path of spiritual progress, is one of great individuality and freedom for each person to decide what they want or what is best for their own spiritual development. Thus, it is typical for Hindus to work on their own, not necessarily as a group. There is nothing wrong in that. It is the last of the great cultures that promote the utmost freedom for the individual. But, yet, there is a great need that is not being met, and that is the need for Hindus / Dharmists / Devotees, especially in India, to unite and work together as a group, or even as a whole society, in order to continue to preserve and protect their own culture, traditions, and certainly the freedom of the individual.

This freedom is being threatened in many ways today, although there are those who either refuse to admit it, refuse to see it, or are hesitant to work together to save it. This blindness and hesitancy must be overcome.

Throughout India, for example, there are portions of the population that belong to particular religions, such as Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, etc., and they often work as a strong section of society to protect their rights, freedoms and traditions. Especially Christians and Muslims vote as a block to promote and vote into office particular politicians they favor, and who favor them. They also will create an uproar when something happens against them, or when someone desecrates their religious texts. They hold demonstrations or even riot when a mosque is threatened. Thus, they get their way, or at least people begin to hesitate before doing something that will make them upset.

However, it seems that the Hindus are the most apathetic in this regard. Though they are increasingly beginning to wake up to the importance of being heard and making themselves be noticed, they are still, for the most part, letting their influence and the power of numbers that they have as the majority of the Indian population simply slip through their fingers.

It is time we learn that apathy is a disservice to Dharma and society. It accomplishes nothing, if that is not obvious. It lets the needs of the Dharmic society go unnoticed. The point is, if we do not take care of ourselves, no one else will. And there are people counting on that apathy to get their way and do things against the well-being of the majority Hindu population. And we are letting them get away with it. This hurts those who follow Vedic Dharma, and takes away the confidence that people need to maintain their practice of the Dharma.

Those who say that Sanatana-dharma is eternal and, thus, there is no need to worry about the future, do a great injustice to the Vedic cause and to humanity. Those who say that Vedic culture has lasted for thousands of years and will continue to last for thousands more show a poor excuse for apathy. Though it is eternal, which is the meaning of *Sanatana*, this does not mean that it will always remain a prevalent force on the face of the earth. It can also decline into obscurity if we let it.

Those who feel that there is nothing to worry about need to understand why the *Bhagavad-gita* was spoken. Arjuna did not want to fight, and who does? No one wants war, at least if they are in their right mind. But how many people of particular religions cry for war, or *jihad*, toward anyone who is not a part of their religion? Arjuna wanted to leave the battlefield and go to the forest to meditate, as if that would solve all of his problems. But Lord Krishna said he was acting foolishly. Lord Krishna told Arjuna that he should indeed fight, but fight for what? He was to fight to uphold the Dharmic principles that the Kauravas were neglecting. Lord Krishna specifically went to the Kauravas to try and arrange a diplomatic means to keep everyone happy and prevent war, but they would not listen. Finally, there was no alternative but to fight. And so the sides were drawn against those who fought for Dharma and those who fought for their own agenda.

We could also say that we should simply let the good Lord take care of everything. If something is meant to be, then the Lord will take care of it. But that is not the result nor the premise of the *Bhagavad-gita*. Lord Krishna showed that everything may rest on Him as pearls are strung on a thread, but we all must do our part. It is up to us to protect Dharma if we are indeed expecting to continue to have the freedom to practice and follow it.

Vedic culture has been attacked for the last 1200 years. India's history can easily show that. And it was the heroes of India, and the millions of average everyday people of India, Hindus, who gave their lives and underwent severe torture that kept Vedic Dharma alive for future generations, and for the freedoms that we have today that allow us to continue these traditions. Are we now to let those freedoms die, after so many sacrificed their lives for us, for Vedic Dharma? This would be a great dishonor to their memory and for the cause they fought for. We cannot allow this to happen, but we also need to be aware of the warning signs of what is happening around us.

This is why, with a growing Muslim population in India, and all over the world for that matter, Hinduism in India could be dead in another 100 years. Just by their high birth rate alone Muslims are increasing their presence in India. Thus, one hundred years from now Vedic Dharma may only be practiced in small pockets here and there, such as in various holy places, as long as the majority Muslim population allows it. The fact is that history has shown that Muslims have a very low tolerance for anything that is non-Muslim. You can see this in the ever decreasing non-Muslim population in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Arabia, etc., etc. They have never allowed complete freedom for non-Muslims in any Islamic country, and have passed laws against them and persecuted them and destroyed their temples and monuments, kidnapped and raped their women, and killed thousands of Hindu or Christian men. So, why should we expect India to be an exception? They have already shown what they did in India.

A rising Muslim minority in India does not have to become a majority to begin changing laws in their favor, but simply by being a noisy and disturbing minority they will gain the upper hand. Increasing their political maneuvering will give them political clout and power. And when they do come closer to

being a majority, they will certainly increase the persecution of an infidel Hindu population until they are finally extinct.

Over 400,000 Hindu Pandits were chased out of Kashmir, and what was done about it? Take notice of how Assam is becoming the new Kashmir with nearly 80,000 people being displaced, having left their villages due to fear from the incoming and growing Muslims. And now the Muslim political party in Assam is demanding a separate and autonomous region in southern Assam just for Muslims. Is this not the same pattern we have seen time and time again? And is anyone doing anything about it? Is anyone speaking out that another chunk of India is threatened with being lost? In due course, what will be left of India if this keeps happening?

Even now the Muslims of India, though they have a Hindu ancestry, no longer identify themselves as Indians but as members of the house of Islam. Thus, they are only taking care of unfinished business from their previous invasions and war against Hindus. Hindus often do not conduct themselves in a powerful way. And when they do, the Indian media is completely against them. The secular media in India does not mean secular, it means to bend over backward showing preference for the minorities at the expense of the Hindu majority. Thus, secular media in India means to be anti-Hindu. But should that stop Hindus? They cannot afford to be overly considerate of what others think when their own future is at stake.

The next ten to 15 years will be a major turning point and show the deciding factor for the future of Vedic Dharma on the face of the planet, particularly in India. The thing is, even now we practically have more freedom to practice Vedic culture in America than we do in India, in its own homeland. Will America be one of the final strongholds for Vedic Dharma? Will we have to one day export it back to India from America?

Therefore, we have to ask ourselves, will our temples still be here in India in another 40 to 50 years? Or will they gradually disappear because of Christian conversion tactics, Muslim persecution against Hindus, or because corrupt politicians who care little about Vedic culture take over temples to possess and sell their assets for the money? Hindu temples are known for being income producers, for the most part. While the Indian government cares little about possessing churches and mosques because they need funds, they use more money than they bring in. It is the temples that are income producers because of the Hindu majority population that give to them.

Therefore, there is no doubt that Hindus must unite as a society while there is still time to make a difference.

CHANGES THAT NEED TO TAKE PLACE

The time to act is now. Some of the things Hindus / Dharmists / Devotees need to do include:

1. Hindus must unite and vote as a bank in all elections to oust those who disregard Hinduism and vote in those who do. They must never take an election for granted. They have done so in the past with terrible results.

2. Hindus must get involved in politics in various ways to help direct the actions of the government.

3. India must also change its politicians in order that it as a nation takes a stronger stance against those who try to bring India down, and to take a stronger stance to defend itself militarily. India cannot afford to be a wimp. There is a need for younger leaders who are more aware of how to fulfill the needs of India.

4. Hindus must work to unite all Hindus. They must wake up other Dharmists about the need to take action. This may be a daunting task, but let everyone become involved in the action plans that will make a difference for their future, for their culture, for preserving their tradition, for protecting the rights and freedoms of the individual, and certainly for the well-being of their children. Work for the freedom to continue to construct and manage their own temples without interference from the government.

5. The spiritual leaders and acharyas must reach out to the villagers and people of all classes in order for the people to feel cared for, and that they are a part of and belong to the Dharmic tradition and are welcome in the temples. They should feel that they are not neglected, but that they are wanted and needed in the greater cause for Vedic Dharma.

6. Indian Hindus must take care of their own people, those who are poor, destitute and disadvantaged, or others will. And those others are often quick to try to convince them of the shortcomings of Hinduism, and, thus, through the guise of welfare activities, try to convert the poor into leaving Vedic Dharma and become Christians or something else. It is true that those who convert for material facility are not strong converts because they could just as easily convert back to what they were once their financial status improves. However, if a child is converted and stays in that fold for 10 to 15 years, it is not likely they will ever want to reconvert back to Vedic Dharma after being a Christian for so long. Thus, from that generation forward, that family will likely continue to be non-Dharmists. Children of converted families who remain outside of the Dharmic fold for that length of time will have little impetus to change.

7. All Dharmists must be educated in their own culture, philosophy, and tradition to understand it clearly, and know how to explain it to their children and others. Thus, they can also be convinced of the deep and profound nature of what they already have, and be less likely to ever want to convert to something else.

8. When anything in the media appears to depict Vedic culture in a poor light, or when someone like a politician says something against one of the Vedic Divinities, there must be an immediate outrage or lawsuit established against such a person or incident. If people begin to see that an immediate and strong reaction takes place whenever Vedic Dharma is poorly or inaccurately

portrayed, or when someone denigrates the *Bhagavad-gita* or one of the Vedic texts, they will begin to hesitate or even stop before doing such things in the future.

9. There must be regular programs at temples for the education of all, and book distribution to help spread Vedic spiritual knowledge to everyone far and wide.

10. Everyone should engage in a cultural revolution in which we promote the true understanding of Vedic Dharma. This is one of the best ways to spread the beauty and freedom found in the lofty spiritual knowledge that can attract everyone. Westerners are especially and increasingly being drawn to the beauty of this spiritual path. So, Indians should have no doubt of its potency and work to maintain India as the homeland of a dynamic and thriving Vedic tradition.

11. Dharmists / Hindus must work to do service for their temples and community to take care of everyone and maintain what they have, namely their temples, their right to peacefully observe the Vedic ways, and care for the people who turn toward the Dharmic path.

Such changes can only take place if Hindus unite and stand strong for Dharma and work together. We have to drop the apathy, discard our ego, along with ethnic and class distinctions and join together under one identity and for a primary cause. We must act like Arjuna did after having received the instructions of Lord Krishna to stand and fight for Dharma rather than going off into the forest to get away from everything and meditate, as if that would solve his dislike to do battle against those who had chosen the side of adharma.

If Hindu Dharmists do not do this, and remain as they are, being apathetic and inactive, it is but a prescription for a slow extinction. They may lose it all, certainly the freedom to choose what they want to be. Only we can change the future by being pro-active and united in this way. Then Sanatana-dharma will remain on the face of the earth as a path that we have the freedom to follow. Do we want to see Vedic Dharma as the tradition of the majority population in India in another 100 years, or will it become a thing of the past, like a museum piece? This is what has happened to the Maya, Inca, Egyptian civilizations, and many others. The choice of what happens in the future is ours by how we act and work together now.

Dharma Rakshati Rakshitah. (Dharma protects those who protect it)

Jai Sri Krishna.

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