Quotes & Quips
Category : July/August/September 2004
Published by Anonymous on Jul. 01, 2004

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Tamil Saivite Temple Singers

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), modern Hindu renaissance inspiration and disciple of Sri Ramakrishna

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You shine, all living things emerge. You disappear, they go to rest. Recognizing our innocence, O golden-haired Sun, arise; let each day be better than the last. Rig Veda (X, 37, 9)

Hindu Dharma is like a boundless ocean teeming with priceless gems. The deeper you dive, the more treasures you find. Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

What is the best vitamin for a Hindu? B1 ("Be One ").

Once upon a time a sadhu acquired great occult powers. He was vain about them, but he was a good man and had some austerities to his credit. One day God,

disguised as a holy man, came to him and said, "Revered sir, I have heard that you have great occult powers. The sadhu received God cordially and offered Him a seat. Just then an elephant passed by. God asked the sadhu, "Revered sir, could you kill this elephant if you wished? The sadhu said, "Yes, I can. So saying, he took a pinch of dust, muttered some mantras and threw it at the elephant. The beast struggled a while in pain and then dropped dead. God said, "What power you have! You have killed the elephant! The sadhu laughed. Again God spoke, "Now, can you revive the elephant? "Yes, I can do that, too, replied the sadhu. He threw another pinch of charmed dust at the beast. The elephant writhed about a little and came back to life. Then God said, "Wonderful is your power. But may I ask you one thing? You have killed the elephant and you have revived it, but what has that done for you? Do you feel uplifted by it? Has it enabled you to realize God? Saying this, God vanished.

Learn to be happy alone. If we do not enjoy our own company, why inflict it on others? Swami Chinmayananda (1916-1993), founder of Chinmaya Mission

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If it seems strange to you that the old Indian philosophers should have known more about the soul than Greek or medieval or modern philosophers, let us remember that however much the telescopes for observing the stars of heaven have been improved, the observatories of the soul have remained much the same. Friedrich Maximilian Mueller (1823-1900), German philologist and Orientalist

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Time is nature's way of keeping everything from happening at once.

The average man of the world goes about his daily life not knowing that subconsciously he is seeking the Absolute Truth, the Beloved in the jiva. The mind-body equipment of man contains this Beloved, yet he seeks for it everywhere else but within. The musk deer attracted by its own scent searches for it in the woods. Little does it know that in its body is the source of this fragrance. Saint Kabir

(1440-1518)

Like treasure hidden in the ground, like flavor in the fruit, like gold in the rock, and oil in the seed, the Absolute is hidden in the heart. Akka Mahadevi, twelfth-century Vira Saiva saint

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Hindu society has been the meeting point as well as the melting pot of as many spiritual visions as the human psyche is capable of springing up spontaneously. It has been a willing and welcoming platform for as many seers, sages, saints and mystics as have responded to the deeper stirrings in the human soul. It has been a repository of as many metaphysical points of view as human reason can render in human language. Sita Ram Goel (1921-2003), Hindu renaissance thinker and writer, founder of Voice of India

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Parents must teach children to appreciate those who are different, those who believe differently; teach them the openness that they need to live in a pluralistic world where others have their unique ways, their life and culture; teach them the value of human diversity and the narrow-mindedness of a provincial outlook; give them the tools to live in a world of differences without feeling threatened, without forcing their ways or their will on others; teach them that it never helps to hurt another of our brothers or sisters. Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami (1927-2001), founder of Hinduism Today

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Did You Know?

Anyone who has been to the ancient South Indian abodes of God Siva and His two sons, Ganesha and Murugan, has surely been spellbound by the poignant songs sung before the Deity in the middle of the puja. Who is that man who sings with

such sweet devotion? He is an odhuvar. The word odhuvar comes from the verb odhu, meaning to chant. These often humble, quiet men memorize astonishing numbers of verses from the Tirumurai, a twelve-book collection of the hymns and writings of 24 South Indian Saivite saints. This collection was compiled a millennium ago by Saint Nambiandar. Nambi at the behest of Rajaraja Chola, one of the foremost rulers of South India's Chola dynasty, after which the king arranged to have the songs hymned in Saiva shrines. Rajaraja Chola was said to have supported more than 3,000 odhuvars. Now, after a long decline, the tradition is being revived and several schools for training young men in the ancient art of temple singing are springing up in South India.

Austerity

Tirukural 261: It is the nature of asceticism to patiently endure hardship and to not harm living creatures.

Tirukural 267: As the intense fire of the furnace refines gold to brilliance, so does the burning suffering of austerity purify the soul to resplendence.

Tirukural 268: One who has realized by himself his soul's Self will be worshiped by all other souls.

Tirukural 269: So potent is the power acquired through disciplined self-denial that those who attain it may even delay the moment of death.