

[Hindu Mysticism](#)

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Duraiswamy, Sivanandini Man, from the very dawn of time, has been endeavoring to understand and establish a connection with the unseen power behind nature. There is an unconscious urge in him to transcend his finite existence. The quest towards the external nature has led to the discoveries of modern science, while the introspective analysis to the problems of Reality behind nature and the urge to know this Reality has developed into religion, philosophical doctrines, dogmas and ritualism.

Religion transcends the finite conditions in order that the Absolute could be realized and the self of man is cut off-the ego being killed to become one with the Supreme. Religion reinforces man's faith that he is no more than a tiny instrument of God. How true are the statements: "Even the tiniest particle, the atom, does not move except according to His will" and "Not even a blade of grass moves except according to His will."

It is clear that the wonders of creation tell us of the presence of God. They manifest the sensitive harmony and power of a Cosmic Intelligence-from the tiny, delicate petal to the mighty galaxies of the universe. Like a divine fragrance, the unseen Power lured man, from time immemorial, to discover the Spirit that lives in the heart of all.

Ours is the Sanatana Dharma, the eternal religion symbolized by the immortal Vedas, the Upanishads and, above all, the bhakti movement built up and carried forward by the galaxy of mystic poets. Thanks to the eternal procession of the messiahs of God, Hinduism from ancient days to the present times has continued the record of ceaseless, selfless, creative teachings for the welfare of all beings. These minstrels sang the same eternal truths and gave and continued to give meaning and purpose to the lives of our people. Their inspiring works and sanctifying lives have given people in their own language the ancient wisdom and traditions enshrined in our sacred literature. They have instilled love and reverence

for our temples and holy places of pilgrimage spread throughout the Hindu world. These saints were the votaries of the Universal Religion-the Sanatana Dharma-instilling the highest love, a love for the Almighty, a pure, self-giving and self-surrendering love asking for no consolation and making no covenants. These saints or mystics speak of God through their personal experience and unshakable faith in Him and express the divine love of the Almighty through the language of human love.

What is mysticism? It is the quest for a hidden truth or wisdom, or is it the quest for the treasure that is hidden in the center of our soul? Life is a mystery and life after death is still more mysterious. The quest after the highest Reality which is indeed the Ultimate Reality and the effort to gain experience of that Reality are the paths that lead toward mysticism. Mysticism is the result of a vast experience where the devotee, the bhakta, has pursued his individualistic method of attaining ecstatic communion with God. This mystical faculty of perceiving the transcendental Reality belongs to all as Tagore says, "Man has a feeling that he is truly represented in something which exceeds himself," but only a few realize this. The goal of mysticism is the union with Ultimate Reality. In this life of struggle and strife it is interesting to read in our Hindu literature, whether it be Nachiketas of the Upanishads, Appar of the Saiva Bhakti movement. Thirumular, Thayumanavar, Ramalinga Swamigal or Yogaswamigal, how our sages realized the quest after Truth as being far more important than the life of fleeting enjoyments.

The path to this God-Realization or the path of mysticism is a spiritual discipline based on self-sacrifice, self-control, renunciation and, finally, universal love, which leads the bhakta to Moksha. Unification with God. The discipline of prayer, purification and contemplation culminates in the highest wordless union with the Divine. As the process unfolds itself, the devotee's personality is altered. A change takes place as one moves from the unreal to the Real. As the Upanishadic prayer says, "O Lord, lead us from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to Light and from death to Immortality."

Thus, we could conclude that mysticism is a state of religious feeling marked by the supreme efforts of the bhakta to attain direct communion with the Lord. It is through the unceasing process of deep spiritual insight and ripe spiritual experience that he is able to understand things Divine.