This Suicide Got No One to Heaven
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MY TURN

This Suicide Got No One to Heaven

Blame the wrong-thinking philosophy of Heaven's Gate, not the Eastern faiths

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For the media to associate the lunacy of Heaven's Gate suicides with Eastern beliefs is the height of ignorance. The philosophy of Heaven's Gate members was man-made and not based on scriptures, whereas the Hindu philosophy is a timeless gift from God to mankind.

There are three kinds of proof: perceptional, inferential and scriptural. Perceptional evidence is a very weak form of proof. Basically, it says, "I see, therefore I believe." But this proof fails very easily. An inferential evidence is, "Where there is smoke, there is fire." Fire may not be visible, but we infer the existence of fire looking at smoke. Sometimes, both these proofs fail, and that is where the third, scriptural evidence comes in. This is the greatest proof. In the sad case involving the Heaven's Gate leader and members, we note that their philosophy was not based on scriptures.

According to Hindu scriptures, even contemplating suicide is a sin, what then to speak of actually committing it! Our scriptures highly praise the human form, which is considered to be the rarest and most precious of all lives. He who willingly gives up his body is punished by God. His soul is put into a lower form of life. It is made to wander around, and it knows no rest.

I think the Heaven's Gate group were meant to die when they did: they would not have even lived a moment longer, but still God will punish them for taking their lives. The reason being that although the time of death, right down to the exact moment, is determined even before birth, the method of death is not.

Other concepts which were completely misunderstood by this group are reincarnation and karma which are highly scientific and logical truths. The soul cannot exist on earth without the body, and when it leaves one body, it enters another, depending on the actions (karma) of the individual. Such simple and beautiful concepts were so twisted and contorted by a warped mind.

Heaven's Gate group members spoke about spacecraft and ascending in these to heaven. Their concept, in light of the seriousness of the Eternal Vedic Dharma known as Hinduism, is utterly silly. These people lived in a dream world, hoping for a better experience outside of this world. Hinduism, on the other hand, teaches one to live in the material world but to not allow the material world to live in the mind. It teaches the individual to see the Omnipresent Lord in all beings and

objects.

In all that has been said of the Heaven's Gate group, there seems to be no mention of God or praying to God. The fact is that this group was not guided by spirituality but by a misguided man. This is clearly the case of the blind leading the blind. He who associates these sorry individuals with the lofty teachings of Hinduism is clearly looking for a scapegoat, and, that too, a silent one.

In my opinion, Hindus should send letters to editors of newspapers, magazines and such to express their outrage. Hinduism is a tolerant religion, true, but we tend to remain quiet even as someone denounces our faith right in front of us. I am not by any means propagating violent or belligerent behaviors towards those who attack our faith. But I am saying that we should become more familiar with our own religion and defend it with a calm and rational voice.

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