

Peace Statement from Hindu Dharma (Faith)

Hinduism is the cumulative wisdom of the philosophical thoughts and spiritual insights of a long line of thinkers and sages who meditated over the creation and mysteries of the universe thousands of years ago. It is the world's oldest religion with a history of more than 3000 years. The tenets of Hinduism aim at the evolution of human beings to a higher level of consciousness and the sustenance of human society.

Hindu dharma is a universal religion based on principles applicable to not only Hindus but to entire humanity. The *Vedas*, Hinduism's oldest scriptures describe the eternal principles of life such as 'non-violence', 'truth', cleanliness', 'non-stealing', and 'control of the senses'. The *Vedic* hymns and prayers seek the wellbeing and happiness of all living beings without distinction of race or religion. Here are a couple of examples of such invocations:

Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah
Sarve Santu Niramayah
Sarve Bhadrani Pasyantu
Ma Kashid-Duhkha-Bhag-Bhavet

May all be happy;
May all be free from disabilities;
May all behold what is auspicious;
May none suffer from sorrow.

Asato Ma Sadgamaya
Tamaso Ma Jyotir-Gamaya
Mrityor-Ma Amritam Gamaya
Om Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!

Lead me from unreal to the Real;
Lead me from darkness to Light;
Lead me from mortality to Immortality
Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

Peace is the oft-recurring refrain of many an invocation and ritual. We chant 'Shanti' thrice to emphasize our intense desire for peace.

Sant Dnyaneshwar, a great 13th- century saint-poet, wrote *Dnyaneshwari*, a commentary on *Bhagavad Gita*, one of Hinduism's widely studied scriptures. At the end of that tome, the saint prayed for a benediction, in which he asked that those who forswore the evil of villainy may engage more ardently in doing good and may human beings treat one another as soul-mates. The world may be relieved of the darkness of evil and may the people perceive their bounden duty clear as daylight. May everyone get what he desires and may all the living beings be totally happy." Innumerable examples can be found in the literature of Hindu faith.

The world is aware of Hinduism's modern-day saint, Mahatma Gandhi, who gave to oppressed people everywhere the tool of non-violent non-cooperation to fight injustice. His political heirs have brought into focus the concepts of non-violence, non-alignment and disarmament on the world stage in order to banish war and violence of all kinds for all time.

Eknath Easwaran. *Bhagavad Gita for Daily Living*. Mumbai: Jaico Publishing House, 2008. Print.

Balgokulam: *Hindu Dharma for Kids, Teachers and Parents, Syllabus*. Hindu Swayamsevak Sangha. 10 Sept. 2009.

<http://www.balagokulam.org/teach/syllabus/index.php> 14 Sept. 2009

Complete *Dnyaneshwari*. Sanskrit Documents. 9 Sept. 2009. <http://sanskritdocuments.org/marathi/documents/pasAyadAn.pdf> 14 Sept. 2009