

Ancient Indian Values

Presented by

Dr. Prabhakar Pandey

HoD, Alternative Education and Holistic Development

Sanchi University of Buddhist Indic Studies

- The human soul never dies; it can never remain without doing 'actions' and can never claim exemptions from reaping the fruits of its deeds. It reaps as it sows. Any man ultimately looks for happiness which is the fruit of Karma and so he should necessarily know what is good and what is bad.

Primary source of morality

- Vedas (Srutis) and the Smrtis (Dharmasastras or Vyvaharshastra) taken together, have been regarded as the source of morality. Of these two (Vedas and Smrtis), the Vedas are regarded as superior. In the event of a conflict between the two, the verdict of the Vedas prevails. Besides Srutis, Smrtis and practices of good people conscience and reason also play a role in the matters of morality. The inner conscience also is the source and test of morality.

Dharma

- The Indian term for morality and ethics is 'dharma'. Dharma comes from the root 'dhr', which means to hold together. And thus the function of dharma is to hold the human society together for its stability and growth.
- Dharma in the Vedas refers to the highest truth and power and it is very much understood as the performance of Vedic sacrifices and other rituals in the Vedas and Dharmasastras. So Dharma is understood in Vedas as duty par-excellence. Dharma is also generally understood as the duties of humans according to one's own Varna and stage of life (Varnasrama Dharma).

Vedic rita

When we speak of Indian ethics, its early beginnings have to be traced from the Vedas, particularly the Rig Veda. One of the central ethical concepts of the Rig Veda is 'rita', a conception of unifying order or moral law, pervading all things.

Universal dharma (Sadharana Dharma)

- Man's duties are accepted to be relative to time (Yuga) and place (Desa). The duties of a person are also strictly relative to his Varna (class) and the stage of Life (Asrama).
- Contentment (dhairya), forgiveness (kshama), selfcontrol (dhama), non-stealing (asteya), cleanliness (sauca), coercion of the senses (indriya nigraha), wisdom (dhi), knowledge of the Supreme Atman (vidhya), truthfulness (sathya) and abstention from anger (akrodha). These virtues are common, universal dharma (Sadharana Dharma).

Apaddharma

"Apaddharma" is appropriate at the time of calamity

Thanks

