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Be Your Own Lamp

'Be a light unto yourself' was the last message of Lord Buddha to his disciples. And perhaps this message summarises all messages which Buddha gave to his disciples and the world and which other knowledgeable persons and saints and seers who rode the immeasurable expanse of knowledge and wisdom bequeathed to the entire humanity. The outer light may vanish with the passage of time, but the inner light that dwells inside our spirit lives for ever. As a matter of fact, the inner light is the beacon light that shows us the path in our sojourn on this planet. We should be self-reliant and self dependent in the battles of our lives. For this we should explore our inner being and our spiritual side to guide through our lives. All great rishis and incarnations exhorted us to be our own lamp. Jesus Christ, Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, and rishi Valmiki in the remote past and sages like Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekanand and a whole galaxy of spiritual personages that adorned the firmament of human history in the recent past enjoined on us the duty to peep into the inside of our spiritual being and seek help for our progress. Every human being has unlimited potential for greatness, if only he would rivet his attention to his inner strength which lies dormant inside. We have to awaken that source of power and potential with our constant endeavour by moving on the spiritual path. Rishi Valmiki was earlier a robber, but once he was guided to explore his hidden potential, and he moved in that direction, he came out as the greatest poet of the world. Similar was the case with Kalidas who became a man of literature par excellence when he was advised to understand his potential that was lying within him. Examples of such great personalities induce us to chart our search for our inner light since that alone will bring true bliss and usher in true progress which life has to offer. 'Be your own lamp' should thus be the eternal guiding principle for everyone of us.

We have entered a new century and are anxious to bring about a new age of civilization, culture, progress and evolution.

The question is how to bring about this new era. Some say that we have to make material progress and make new scientific inventions but this will be a continuity of material progress only. To bring about a new age there should be something new in our life which is not possible by physical progress and scientific inventions. For this we will have to develop a new consciousness. Consciousness is not something to get or to be imbibed from outside. It is concerned with inner development. Our self centered consciousness when it becomes **collective** consciousness, can be said to have acquired a new form.

The level of consciousness denotes development of our soul and is an indication of our relationship with the world—both human and non-human including the objects of nature; expansion of our consciousness and our relationship with them ultimately becomes universal consciousness. We have imagined this universal consciousness in our great personalities and incarnations. Our Lord Shree Ram is supposed to live and vibrate in every atom. Likewise Lord Krishna is the centre of attraction of every particle. In short, both are incarnations of universal consciousness. Their

devotees have seen them as incarnations of universal consciousness. For them universal consciousness and incarnation of God are one and the same thing.

For this the effective medium is a proper educational system, which includes physical, mental and spiritual development. Therefore, for the establishment of a new society and human order we will have to build a new human being and bring about regeneration of man. The new man of our imagination, in keeping with our new hopes of the new century, will be a human being having intimate relationship with the outside world and will be a man having new sight and new point of view. That man should not be satisfied by only admiring persons and things, but ought to be a human being feeling bonds of intimate relationship with them. He should neither be like the devil who achieves monopoly over material means nor a God head enjoying supernatural powers and having abode in some higher world.