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VIVEKANANDA KENDRA PRAKASHAN



***samaanee va aakootih  
samaanaa hridayaani vah  
samaanamastu vo mano  
yathaa vah susahaasati***

Common be your inclinations. Be your hearts of one accord. May you all be of one mind. May all live well together.

**- Rigveda X 191-4.**



## **Vivekananda in the Global Millennium**

### **I**

Sixty years after independence, India is still in the twilight zone of political turmoil, economic imbalance, social turbulence and ideological confusion. Though we claim to be the largest democracy in the world, more often than not our democracy in practice turns out to be acrimonious monocacy. Economically, statistics are

trotted out to prove that we made enviable progress. But, in effect, the divide between the rich and the poor has increased enormously. Society is fast disintegrating into organized caste and communal groups reducing nationalism to a meaningless slogan. All the universities together along with various other specialized educational and training institutions have produced possibly the largest contingent of intelligentsia in the world but in terms of awareness and enlightenment about our country, its history, its culture and its due role in the international arena, they are a confused and directionless lot. Consequently, we as a nation have not been able to play our part in the national and

international affairs despite our invaluable culture, enormous population and immense and diverse natural resources.

What is most unfortunate is that there has been a rapid decline in the moral and ethical values both at the individual and collective levels. For a country whose unique strength is rooted in spirituality which is the basis of all values, this is a fatal lapse which undermines the very rationale of our existence. Before we could settle down as a stable and vibrant socio-economic and political power, globalization at a furious pace has engulfed us with its enormous demands and pressures. Our political leadership at the helm of affairs has proved unequal to the task of leading the nation into its rightful place among the comity of nations.

This is in sharp contrast with the unshakable confidence, the tremendous will power and the clarity of vision which were our assets during our freedom struggle. Unless this widening gulf is bridged and we regain the national self-confidence and the glorious

sense of mission, the confusion cannot be cleared and the sense of direction retrieved. These unhappy if not gloomy thoughts stare us on the face with deep poignancy as we celebrate another birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, whose life and mission were the inspiration for almost all our stalwarts of the freedom movement. Every one of them has gratefully acknowledged in unmistakable terms their indebtedness to Swamiji for their commitment to the nation and its freedom. Mahatma Gandhi's tribute is brief but eloquent. "I have gone through his works very thoroughly, and after having gone through them, the love that I had for my country became a thousand-fold ". What greater encomium could be paid to the Swamiji by a person of Gandhiji's stature?

Chakravarthy Rajagopalachari, a man of razor-sharp intelligence has defined Swamiji contribution in a most befitting manner: - "Swami Vivekananda saved Hinduism and saved India. But for him we would have lost our religion and would not have gained our freedom. We therefore owe everything to Swami Vivekananda. May his faith, his

courage and his wisdom ever inspire us so that we may keep safe the treasure we have received from him”.

But here one is naturally tempted to ask a question. If their commitment was genuine and if they had stuck to those great ideals, would the country have come to such a pass? We have to dispassionately analyze with due respect to all those stalwarts the real causes of this divergence between the promise and the practice, between the commitment and the achievement. If we do so, we will definitely come to the conclusion that their commitment to Swamiji’s ideals was not strong enough to stand the test of the challenges they faced. It was exactly sixty years before our independence - and the partition of India - that Swamiji gave the clarion call to his countrymen in an inspiring speech delivered at Chennai - “ For the next fifty years this alone shall be our key-note, - this our great Mother India. Let all other vain Gods disappear for that time from our minds. This is the only God that is awake, our own race, everywhere His hands, everywhere His feet, everywhere His

ears, He covers everything. All other Gods are sleeping. What vain Gods shall we go after and yet cannot worship the God that we see all around us, the Virat? When we have worshipped this, we shall be able to worship all other Gods “. Had our devotion to the Motherland been as intense as Swamiji wanted it to be, could it ever be imagined that our leadership would have surrendered to the bullying tactics of a section of our population and agreed to partition our country? Was it not the biggest folly which the leaders of our freedom movement committed with tragic consequences haunting us even to this date? Was it not a shameful climb down from the firm declaration that India will not be vivisected before they themselves were vivisected? Was it not a case of abdicating a solemn national commitment for the sake of immediate authority and power? It will not be far from truth to say that all the subsequent lapses and failures, clashes and conflicts, doubts and dilemmas are directly traceable to that one major failure to follow Swamiji’s exhortation. In one stroke, the concept of Bharat as our Beloved

Mother, the holy land, was thrown to the winds! Dedication to the Motherland which is the sheet anchor of patriotism – the highest value which all our freedom fighters cherished, - was abandoned and along with that every other value became negotiable. Cheerful and robust optimism gave way to sterile cynicism. That continues even after sixty years.

## I I

During this period of six decades, new generations have come up. The world has changed a lot. India is no exception. New ideas and ideologies have swept across the country, most of them foreign. The stirring words and the glowing example of Swami Vivekananda, who can rightly be called the 'Mantra Drashta' of Modern India, have increasingly been marginalized from our mainstream thought-currents while nothing else could even be thought of as a fairly viable substitute. A huge void remained which petty ideas and cheap slogans from outside tried to occupy. The result is all-around selfishness, corruption, power politics, communal conflicts, etc. No wonder,

at one point of time, our leadership could not help thinking of restoring Swamiji to the center-stage by declaring his birthday as 'National Youth Day'. But what can a mere governmental fiat achieve in the absence of enthusiastic social response inspired by credible role models with a genuine understanding and deep conviction of Swamiji and his ideals? Like every other government order, the celebration of Swamiji's birthday as the "National Youth Day" became a secular ritual devoid of its spiritual and patriotic content. With hindsight, it can be stated that it only made the prevailing confusion worse confounded. The response has been half-hearted and hazy.

Swamiji was a staunch nationalist. He spoke passionately about our nation and its greatness. He imparted to us a profound vision of our role in forging a new world order. But with the present craze for globalization, our youth find it difficult even to accept the concept of Nation. National pride appears to them anachronistic, in the rapidly changing world situation. The vision of India's

role is now confined to certain areas of technological innovations and professional expertise. There is no philosophy of patriotism to guide them and hence there is no depth in their approach. At present they are citizens of a world dominated by momentary 'Throw away every thing—including inviolable family ties – culture', India is the land with the largest and brightest population of promising youths. But how to equip and inspire them with a sense of mission, a true spirit of conviction and unreserved commitment for the sake of a noble ideal? How to clear the confusion that clouds their vision? It is precisely here that Swami Vivekananda becomes really relevant.

Swamiji has given us a perfectly tenable, logical and comprehensive answer to all the doubts and questions that the present situation has thrown up. Globalization or internationalism does not invalidate nationalism, says Swamiji. In fact without nationalism there can be no internationalism. Internationalism, ideally, is but the happy and peaceful co-existence of all the

nations big or small. Nationalism is an essential stage of human evolution which cannot be abolished for any foreseeable future. It has to play a very vital role in the march of humanity towards its final goal of a Commonwealth of Nations. Nationalism in India is a positive concept unlike in the western countries. Swamiji made it clear that every nation is a living entity with a soul, a distinct mission of its own. " Each nation has a destiny to fulfil, each nation has a message to deliver, each nation has a mission to accomplish. Therefore, from the very start, we must have to understand the mission of our own race, the destiny it has to fulfil, the place it has to occupy in the march of nations, the note which it has to contribute to the harmony of races". The fulfilment of that mission is the purpose of its existence. This is true of every nation and each one is naturally expected to cooperate and coordinate with other nations. All together constitute the harmonious human family. That was the ancient Hindu concept of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*'. Coordination among and not

domination over other nations is the ideal.

### III

*To the superficial observers, globalization is going to be the final word in man's civilizational march. It is sometimes believed that the whole world and all countries and cultures are going to be steam rolled into one homogenous totality. But history tells us that this cannot be. Human nature is so complex that it will not accept homogeneity as its ideal. All such attempts have failed and failed miserably. Imperialism, Communism, Socialism, etc. have shared the same fate of temporary success and ultimate collapse. There was a time when it was claimed that the "sun will never set on the British Empire". Communism during its heydays proclaimed that it is going to bring the whole humanity under its red banner. So claimed Socialism also. But all these have proved false and history is still on the march. Swamiji's prediction that no social philosophy or social order however lofty or noble, can sustain itself unless it has the Vedantic philosophy of Advaita as*

*its foundation. That is how socialism and communism have collapsed, in spite of their objective of equality and social justice. Globalization is another milestone which will also be over-passed. It will leave its imprint, no doubt, but only like earlier civilizational phases. One thing is clear. Whether it is Imperialism or Communism, Socialism or Globalism, none of these can overturn or nullify nationalism. That will remain the cornerstone for the future human civilization. It will ensure human unity with cultural diversity which is nature's - or call it God's - Design!*

What is India's role in all these? Swami Vivekananda stated unambiguously that India's soul lies in its spirituality and its world mission is to evolve spiritually and help humanity with its spiritual - Vedantic ideals. But Swamiji hastened to assure that spirituality does not mean either a cluster of rituals or mere otherworldliness. Spirituality is a way of life here and now. It includes 'Samutkarsha and Nishreyasa' - material development

and spiritual enlightenment. He envisaged future India as a spiritually enlightened nation, firmly standing as on economically prosperous, socially harmonious and technologically well-equipped, national foundation in total harmony with the rest of the world.

#### IV

Swamiji believed that India has a dual role to play - imparting spirituality to the materially advanced countries of the West while learning from them the techniques of organization, mutual cooperation and technological advancement, in order to make India's development balanced and total. India should go to the West, he said, as a teacher, as a Guru and not as a supplicant with a begging bowl. That will bring us respect. Swamiji himself was a shining example. We must uncompromisingly adhere to our cultural way of life. We may accept and assimilate certain useful ideas from others, and still be ourselves in all essentials. In his famous Chicago speech he proclaimed why the whole world needs India's unique teaching. There are lessons

which the world needs which India alone can teach. They are more relevant today than they were at the time he delivered the historical message. Making a special reference to the Parliament of Religions he said:- "The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world, of the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gita: 'Whosoever comes to Me, through whatever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to Me.' Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilisation, and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But their time is come; and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honour of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions



with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal". There is no room for religious conflicts or intolerance, much less for the haunting specter of terrorism. Swamiji's words were prophetic and its relevance continues with greater urgency.

He accepted all religions as valid and all scriptures as valuable up to a point. But he pointed out that man in his spiritual evolution has to go beyond sectarian religions and written or printed texts. He says " We want to lead mankind to the place where there is neither the Vedas, nor the Bible, nor the Koran; yet this has to be done by harmonizing the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran. Mankind ought to be taught that religions are but the varied expressions of THE RELIGION, which is Oneness, so that each may choose the path that suits him best". Swami Vivekananda unhesitatingly asserted that Vedanta alone fits the role of a universal religion because it is beyond sectarianism and absolutely scientific and fully verifiable.

## V

A great disservice has been done to Swami Vivekananda by the post-independence intellectuals of India by creating the impression that to call oneself a Hindu is something to be ashamed about. There had been a systematic campaign at the highest levels to propagate that the Swamiji was not in favour of calling India a Hindu nation. The implication was that the Hindu was a narrow and communal nomenclature and as such the name is better kept out of vogue. Coming as it did from very high and respectable quarters this propaganda made deep impact. It was a very calculated and dishonest attempt to pit Swami Vivekananda against whatever was Hindu in name and content. There was an ideological underpinning to the vicious propaganda with a deep political motivation. It was the objective of the "leftist, secular and so-called progressive" intelligentsia to destroy the genuine cultural nationalism of this country and to tare apart the fabric of our national unity. By this clever ploy, backed by the ruling elite, they succeeded to a

large extent in weakening the pride in Hindu nationalism. In fact this was totally against Swamiji's perception. Swamiji was one of the first and foremost exponents of Hindu nationalism. Even at that time there were people, among them some sections of Hindus, who considered Hindu, a bad word having notorious connotation. Swamiji had openly declared that he was one of the proudest of Hindus. Great savants like Mahayogi Sri Aurobindo, following the footsteps of Swami Vivekananda were fully convinced that ours is a Hindu nation and Sanatana Dharma was its very soul. Sanatana Dharma and Hindu Dharma had identical connotations, according to them. He had consistently used the term Hindu nationalism in his lectures and writings. Even his definition of nationalism that "National union in India must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces. A Nation in India must be a union of those whose hearts-beat to the same spiritual tune" makes it clear. Needless to say, it had nothing negative or reactionary about it. But unfortunately politically biased propaganda against the

word has resulted in weakening the nation's pride in its history, culture, tradition and worldview. This has done immense harm to the noble cause which Swamiji held in high esteem and weakened our national integrity and identity. The modern educated intelligentsia began to internalize the demeaning idea that they are a rootless people who were never a nation and thus fell victims to the false propaganda that India is only a "Nation in the making". This is one of the major reasons for the moral and cultural decline in post-independence India. Swamiji's birthday is an occasion for the Hindus to initiate a legitimate self-assertion.

## VI

Swami Vivekananda would have gladly welcomed the beneficial aspects of Globalization to the best advantage of India and the rest of the world, as it could provide India with abundant channels of communication to transmit the treasures of spiritual wisdom to the western world which is deeply engrossed in mindless materialism and vulgar consumerism. In many of

his lectures he has reminded us as to how this has happened many a time in the past. Whenever nations of the world have been brought closer together by imperial adventurers or religious missionaries or trading companies, Swamiji has pointed out, that India had made use of such occasions for pouring out her own quota of spiritual and cultural blessings to the world at large. Such an ideal situation has presented itself today. As a natural consequence, India's spiritual message is, no doubt, reaching out into all corners of the world, slowly but steadily, creating its firm and positive impact. But a more self-confident and assertive India could have contributed much more effectively and successfully and could have influenced the trend of global policies in a more specific manner. But it is an unfortunate fact that while the world is prepared and even eager to embrace India for her rich gift of spirituality and our spiritual leaders are making their appeal in their own way, the official India appears to be fighting shy of publicly owning up our innate spiritual and cultural identity. A

totally misconceived concept of secular politics seems to be compelling them to adopt a hypocritical stand of distancing themselves from this unique legacy.

Globalisation has brought about another dimension in the East-West relationships. They represent two different kinds of civilisations. Swamiji had stated in one of his lectures that the West created a model of civilisation that measured its success in terms of how much a man can possess and how much one can enjoy. The Eastern civilisation measured its success in terms of how little a man need to possess and still happily live. America represented the Western civilisation and India the Eastern. The Indian civilisation centered round the concept of "*Aparigraha*" or non-acquisition and renunciation, whereas the Western had "*Upabhoga*"- consumerism as its fulcrum. In puranic terminology, it could be said that the East and the West had the '*Dadheechi*' and '*Yayathi*' syndromes respectively. In the globalised society, the East and the West have closely come together into a global village—forget for the moment with the

fiercely competitive global market in which these two types come into conflict, yet have to co-exist. It is clear that India has to play a vital role to impart its unique culture of '*Aparigraha*' to temper the consumeristic mania of the West and enable the world to strike a healthy balance.

Another aspect which Swamiji has pointed out is that the Hindu civilisation has no problem with the modern science. He said, "the Hindu is only glad that what he has been cherishing in his bosom for ages is going to be taught in more forcible language, and with further light from the latest conclusions of science.". But it is not so easy for other religion to accept the findings of science and still be believers in the tenets of their religion. As Swami Ranganathananda puts it: "But in the West the Christian theology never allowed science to proceed deeper and deeper. They tried to stop it and even killed a few scientists. So a few well-tested truths of science could demolish the whole dogmas of Christian religion in the modern West". Indian spirituality and modern

science will fulfil each other and lay down the foundation for the future civilisation of mankind.

We shall now conclude with a thought-provoking statement by the world renowned historian A.L.Basham regarding Swamiji "Even now a hundred years after the birth of Narendranath Dutta, who later became Swami Vivekananda, it is very difficult to evaluate his importance in the scale of world's history. It is certainly far greater than any Western historian or most Indian historians would have suggested at the time of his death. The passing of years and the many stupendous and unexpected events which have occurred since then suggests that in centuries to come he will be remembered as one of the main moulders of the modern world ".

As we celebrate the Birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, it is time for India to stand up and respond to the various challenges thrown up by a globalised world the way Swamiji wanted us to do.

—P.Parameswaran

# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA – A GLANCE AT HIS POWER EQUATIONS

Dr. M. Lakshmi Kumari

Power, pelf, promotion, prospects these are some of the ideas which haunt the modern youth draining of their vital energy. Everybody wants to acquire power so that he/she can exercise it over others. Everybody wants pelf – lots of money so that they can enjoy life to the maximum. Similarly before starting on any job they are concerned about the promotion, prospects and perks. Truly speaking these are universal traits of the evolving minds of the youth. How these ideas can be directed for their maximum advantage in life is of great importance. Did Swami Vivekananda also go through such mental turbulence? And if so how did he manage to keep them under control.

In Swamiji's talks and writings he has repeatedly used the words, power, strength, courage, fearlessness, manliness and so on. When he used these words they were not part of his obsessions but were like fiery arrows aimed at awakening the dormant spirit of his audience. How he could impart so much of spiritual energy in and through his utterances, which often transformed the mental attitude and perceptions of the listeners, not only of those who listened to his live words, but of those who read his words even

today. To quote Romain Rolland, "His words are great music, phrases in the style of Beethoven, stirring rhythms like the march of Handel choruses. I cannot touch these sayings of his, scattered as they are through the pages of the books, at thirty years' distance without receiving a thrill through my body like an electric shock. And what shocks, what transports, must have been produced when in burning words they issued from the lips of the hero".

It would be an enlightening experience to find out when and how he could charge his faculties to produce such fiery sparks loaded with boundless spiritual energy. This is the unique power which we find hidden in Vivekananda literature even when we read it today.

As a young student Narendra was also keen to develop his muscular strength and he attended gymnasia regularly and attained much proficiency in wrestling and other activities. He was equally interested in developing his mental and intellectual faculties with the result those who knew him found in him a wholesome person. But to him these were not enough. Of course these helped him to remain rooted

in truth and righteousness and keep away from all frailties and evil tendencies. Concentration was something which came naturally to him and the result was, unknown to him his spiritual self was unfolding. This awakening, the world noticed in his eagerness to know the Truth. As his yearnings for Truth became more and more intense he was left with only two options – either to realise the very source of the Truth himself or approach someone who had really experienced Truth. It is this search that took him to various great men of religion, philosophers and pundits of Calcutta. But none of them could quench his thirst for Truth. At last in 1881 he came to the Kali Temple at Dakshineswar to meet Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. What he saw there was the Great Master holding in his hand the “amrita kalasha of love and knowledge [nectar of immortality]” and waiting for him as though he was fully aware that his future disciple was soon to appear before him. Naren unceremoniously put at his feet the bundle of doubts and uncertainties and spontaneously shot out what was uppermost in his mind – “Sir, have you seen God?” Sri Ramakrishna immediately recognised the young man’s thirst for Truth and his mental turbulence and once for ever putting him at ease the Master said, “Yes, I see Him just as I see you here, only in a much intense sense”.



The river of Naren’s life which was meandering without direction at last reached the ocean. In front of the sparkling innocence of that divine personality Naren’s self importance, based on his physical prowess, acquired knowledge and manliness simply melted away. All the power that he had been accumulating at the physical, mental, and intellectual levels simply merged in that Source of Infinite Strength and Power that was Sri Ramakrishna. The confidence, compassion, love and above all the eager invitation to him to be his companion in his Godward journey made Naren absolutely wonderstruck, still and silent. Suddenly he realised that here was the reenactment of an unbroken relationship. The nectar of Advaita which bubbled deep within drew him to the Master again and again, culminating in the making of the great universal teacher Swami Vivekananda whose power and strength shook the World Parliament of Religions on that memorable day 11<sup>th</sup> September 1893.

In Sri Ramakrishna, Swamiji witnessed the validity of the Universal Truth of Unity in Diversity which has been the hallmark of Indian spiritual heritage. He saw in the Master the consolidation of all the scattered vital forces that operate in Man, Nature and Godhood. The quiet and subtle but powerful all embracing power of the spirit which he experienced took him by surprise.

Slowly but steadily he could feel within himself the surging of his own inner forces and the realisation dawned on him that all the varied forces and vital powers have their origin in the Atman within each being. This realisation was the unsurpassed gift – awareness of the unity of existence that Naren received from the Great Master. Swami Vivekananda's message is therefore replete with this vision of one truth, its omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence.

Narendranath replenished himself with this new found spiritual power in two ways. One was through total surrender to his Guru as a result of this he became a faultless instrument for the incessant flow of Guru's love and grace which naturally broke open all the man-made barriers in his mind-intellect. The second was equally important and specially relevant with reference to the Mother's work which he was asked to execute by his Master. To enable him to do this he critically examined and evaluated each and every word of his Master in the light of the immaculate Truth presented by the Vedas and Upanishads as well as in the strict logical reasoning of the modern scientific conclusions. And the result was that extraordinary power, authority, grandeur, universality and the practical relevance that we find in the message of Swami Vivekananda.

Extending his revelation to encompass the whole of humanity Swami Vivekananda emphasised the importance of the human effort in achieving self-realisation as the

ultimate goal of life. He took upon himself this mission of making each individual aware of this innate divinity so that the rare Indian spiritual fragrance is not lost for the humanity. His now world famous addresses in the West and the East and the great many service activities for which he gave the key mantras – all that and more were his offering to the great mission he undertook. He offered every breath of his life at the altar of this great spiritual mission which was ordained by the Master.

Here lies also Swamiji's ultimate message to every Indian who has understood the universality of Sanatana Dharma. This is the mother's work which every one of us has to undertake whatever may be his/her vocation, occupation, or preoccupation, to consolidate their pay, promotion and prospects. Material yearnings are not everything. They are transitory. They never bring real lasting happiness, sense of achievement nor peace. Hence every youth should learn to take his/her materialistic yearnings to a deeper level and find within them the source of all that they seek and then link it to one's life's dharma. What will happen then? Mark Swamiji's words, "Teach yourselves, teach everyone his real nature. Call upon this sleeping soul and see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come, and everything that is excellent will come when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity".

To enable this deeper penetration we have only to 'browse' through the Vivekananda literature and 'download' some of his fiery sparks. For the convenience of the seekers Swamiji has classified his observations under the four of the major human aspirations of Karma, Bhakti, Jnana and Raja yogas. The youth should, however, start their pilgrimage from Swamiji's first address at the inauguration of the World Parliament of Religions where he demonstrated the real power of Indian spirituality through his memorable address "Sisters and Brothers of America".

Swamiji's address was not meant for the parliament alone but for the entire humanity. Though uttered on that memorable afternoon of 11<sup>th</sup> September 1893 it continues to echo sans time and place, inspiring men and women everywhere to focus their lives on the Eternal Truth which alone emphasises the solidarity of the whole universe the interconnectedness and interrelatedness and interdependence of all that exist therein. In that recognition lies one's true power, self, perks and promotion.

*...The Vedas being eternal, will be one and the same throughout all ages, but the Smritis will have an end. As time rolls on, more and more of the Smritis will go, sages will come, and they will change and direct society into better channels, into duties and into paths according to the necessity of the age, and without which it is impossible that society can live.*

*--Swami Vivekananda*



# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA — THE PATRIOT “HINDOO MONK” AND HIS MESSAGE TO THE YOUTH AT CROSS-ROADS

Sadhu Prof. V. Rangarajan

September 11, 1893, is a red-letter day in the history of religions of the world. The great patriot “Hindoo Monk of India”, Swami Vivekananda, proclaimed to the world the glory of the most ancient spiritual heritage of Bharatavarsha and the Mother of all religions—Hinduism—in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago. Swami Vivekananda’s heart swayed with pride and joy when he declared that he was a child of Mother Bharat and a “Hindu”. The Immortal Song, *Vande Mataram*, which was written by Rishi Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and later incorporated in his famous novel, *Ananda Math*, burst upon the nation as a power-packed *mantra* driving people to perform incomparable sacrifices for the liberation of the Motherland from foreign yoke. Swami Vivekananda was a contemporary of Rishi Bankim Chandra and he was deeply influenced by the latter. His Master, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, who rose from the position of a poor, unknown and illiterate temple priest to that of a world teacher, was the manifestation in human form, of the quintessence of all religions. Narendra, the representative of the educated intelligentsia of his time and a versatile genius, who sat at the feet of the master and imbibed the spirit of universal religion and

humanism from him, emerged as a messiah of the *avatarapurusha*. It was this spirit that made him thunder at Chicago, addressing the audience gathered at the Parliament of Religions in 1893, as “Sisters and Brothers of America”, and proclaim to them the glory of Hinduism as a universal religion, not merely tolerant of other faiths, but accepting all creeds as different paths to the Supreme Goal. However, Swamiji did not belong to that class of people who often pay lip service to the ideals of universal religion and humanism and forget their duty to their own Motherland and fellow citizens. Swami Vivekananda was a patriot and one who preached the religion of service to fellow human beings as a path to eternal liberation. His message to the youth at cross-roads today and the mission that he has set before them is two-fold—Love and adoration of the Motherland as the Supreme Deity and service to Her children, the highest form of worship.



**Prophet of Patriotism**

*Vande Mataram*, the *mantra* of patriotism, brought under its spell, great prophets and patriots who preached the worship of the Motherland as the path for final liberation. They delineated the task before the children of Bharat as the fight for the emancipation of the Motherland from foreign yoke and service to the poor and downtrodden brethren. Swami Vivekananda stands as first and foremost among them. "The primary object of Swami Vivekananda was nationalism. To arouse the sleeping lion of India and to put it on its proper pedestal was his life's mission. His national ideal was the ideal of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya as depicted in the revolutionary novel, *Ananda Math*. Future Mother India, to both of them, was Durga, the Goddess with resplendent face, wearing all sorts of weapons of force in Her hands, and in the left hand, seizing the hair of the Asura, Her enemy, and in the right hand, assuring all not to be afraid (*Baravaya*)", says Bhupendranath Datta, the illustrious younger brother of Swami Vivekananda and a renowned revolutionary. Swamiji wanted to raise all over the country a corps of militant youth known for integrity and character and ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of the Motherland. "Liberty is the possession of the brave", the Swamiji proclaimed. "Conquer your enemies and achieve happiness in this world, by appropriately employing *saama*, *daana*, *bheda* and *danda*, the four weapons of diplomacy", he advised the youth of the nation. He had, in the language of Sister Nivedita, "a loathing for bondage and a horror

of those who cover chains with flowers." To him, "Freedom, physical freedom, mental freedom and spiritual freedom are watchwords of the *Upanishads*."

"Ay, this is one scripture in the world, of all others, that does not talk of salvation, but of freedom", the Swamiji taught his disciples. Even as a student, he was profoundly inspired by Bankim Chandra's *Ananda Math*. Sri Ramakrishna used to get it read out by his disciples and once he sent Narendra and two other disciples to the renowned poet. *Vande Mataram* gave Narendra the "Vision of Mother India" and turned him into Swami Vivekananda, the patriot monk.

According to J.H. Brownfield, Vivekananda had a profound influence on the development of the twentieth century Indian political and social thought, and particularly his gospel of national self-assertion found a rich soil in his native Bengal where the ground had already been prepared by the writings of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. Swamiji advised his famed disciple, Sister Nivedita, to dedicate herself to the task of emancipating the whole country. "I remember very well, Swamiji asked me to forge a mighty weapon out of the bones of Bengali youths which can free India", said Sister Nivedita in a conversation with the famous patriots, Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya and Ashwinikumar Dutta, in 1906. "The task is going on. The twin precepts which he often repeated for us, Karma Yoga and Akhand Bharat, have become our daily *mantra*. They are our inspiration in all that we do", she continued.

While in Europe, Swami Vivekananda tried to seek the help of Kropotkin, the renowned Russian revolutionary, and H. Maxim, the inventor of machine gun, for the revolutionaries in India. No wonder that the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi, remarked after the passing away of the great patriot monk: "Had Naren been living now, he would have been in the Company's jail". Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose has rightly proclaimed: "So far at least as Bengal is concerned, Swami Vivekananda may be regarded as the spiritual father of the modern nationalist movement."

Sister Nivedita, the embodiment of the ideal of spiritual nationalism propounded by Swami Vivekananda, had taken up, at the behest of the Swami, the task of liberating the country from the thralldom of alien rule. She resigned from the Ramakrishna Order to dedicate herself completely to the cause of the country's political freedom. If at all it may be said that Swami Vivekananda had not directly participated in the freedom struggle, here is Sister Nivedita, the right hand of the patriot-monk, who accomplished greater things than what he himself had envisaged.

### **Serve Man, Serve God**

Swami Vivekananda is the preacher of a unique creed which considers service to man as worship of God. Though this has been the message of all the founding fathers of great religions of the world, the followers of those religions have forgotten in the course of time, the fundamental ideal placed before them

by their preceptors and have attached themselves more and more to the less important tenets and outward manifestations like rituals and ceremonies. Swami Vivekananda brought out of oblivion that supreme message and placed it once again before all those who were groping in darkness in their bid to attain realization.

Na kaamaye aham gatim  
ishwaraatparam  
Ashtariddhiryukraam  
apunarbhavam vaa  
Aartim prapadye akhiladeha  
bhaajaam  
Antasthito yena bhavantya  
dukhaa

"I do not desire from God that great state which is attended by the eight supernatural powers or even deliverance from rebirth. Dwelling in the hearts of all creatures, I would bear their suffering that they may be freed from misery."

These words of Rantideva in the *Sreemad Bhaagavata* represent the *summum bonum* of the philosophy of life propounded by the Vedic seers and handed down to us through generations. Their fervent prayers, *Sarve bhavantu sukhinah* and *Lokaa samastaa sukhino bhavantu*—"Let all the living beings in the whole world be happy"—have echoed and re-echoed in the sayings of thousands of great men who have come in their trail and whose actions have been exemplary manifestations of what they preached to the world. It is this same message which, in modern times, resounded in the words of the great patriot-saint, Swami Vivekananda, when he said: "May I be born again and again,

and suffer thousands of miseries, so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls—and above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races, of all species, is the special object of my worship.”

From the snow-clad Himalayan ranges which form the crown of our Motherland, to the southern tip, Kanyakumari, where the three seas wash Her sacred feet, Swami Vivekananda wandered day and night for months together in search of inner peace. But this *parivrajaka* life brought him face to face with the poverty, ignorance and sufferings of the poor and downtrodden millions in the country and made him realize that his mission in life was not to seek personal salvation, nor to preach religion to the masses, but to serve—serve these children of immortality who were smothering in the abyss of slavery and social decay. Sitting on the *Shripada Shila* off the shore of Kanyakumari, he meditated for three days towards the end of 1892 and during these intense hours that he spent there, he discovered the mission in life. And from then, this was the only religion that he preached—Service to Humanity.

Once, Pandit Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar, the late revered editor of *Hitavadi*, came to see Swamiji with two of his friends. Though they wanted to discuss religion with Swamiji, the latter entered into conversation with them about the people of their province, their material needs and social conditions. At the end of the long

conversation, Panditji remarked that he had come to discuss religion, but unfortunately the day was wasted in conversation on commonplace matters. Swamiji became at once grave and solemn and said, “Sir, so long as even a dog of my country remains without food, to feed and take care of him is my religion and anything else is non-religion or false religion!”

Swamiji’s heart bled when he saw the sufferings of the poor. One day, during his evening walk on the seashore of Madras, he saw the wretched and half-starved children of the fishermen working with their mothers, waist deep in water. Tears filled his eyes and he cried out, “O Lord, why dost thou create these miserable creatures! I cannot bear the sight of them. How long, O Lord, How long!” Those who were in his company were overcome and burst into tears.

Swamiji’s spirit of compassion is far different from the idea of charity which arises in one’s mind pregnant with ego and vanity when one looks down upon others who are supposedly in the lower rungs of society. His was the product of his realization of that central vision of *Sanatana Dharma*, namely, the divinity of man. Sri Ramakrishna, who embodied in himself the entire theme of *Sanatana Dharma*, expressed this central vision in a very simple and beautiful equation:

“Every *Jiva* or soul is *Shiva*; Service of the *Jiva* is the worship of *Shiva*.”

Coming from the mouth of a poor, illiterate Brahmin priest of Dakshineswar, who rose to the pinnacle of spiritual ecstasy through *sadhana* and sacrifice of the self, and who spoke from the realm of Supreme Realization, this eternal message was received by his worthy and illustrious disciple, Swami Vivekananda, and broadcast to the world in the following words:

“Look upon every man, woman and everyone as God. You cannot help any one; you can only serve; serve the children of the Lord, serve the Lord Himself, if you have the privilege. If the Lord grants that you can help any one of his children, blessed you are; do not think too much of yourselves. Blessed you are that the privilege was given to you when others had it not. Do it only as a worship. The poor and the miserable are for our salvation, so that we may serve the Lord coming in the shape of the diseased, coming in the shape of the lunatic, the leper and the sinner.”

Swamiji never considered doing good to a fellow being as an act of charity. He thundered, “Do you think even an ant will die for want of your help? Most arrant blasphemy! The world does not need you at all. Blessed are we that we are given the privilege of working for Him, not of helping Him. Cut out this word ‘help’ from your mind. You cannot help; it is blaspheming. You worship. Stand in that reverent attitude to the whole universe and then will come perfect non-attachment.”

### **Precept in Practice**

Swamiji set an example before others by living up to what he preached. While in America, he shunned every comfort and pleasure offered to him by his rich and devout disciples, for he felt that he had no right to enjoy them as long as his fellowmen in his Motherland lacked even the basic necessities of life. Refusing to make use of the luxurious cot and bedding, he slept on the bare floor, all the time pondering in his mind over the condition of his own countrymen. When plague and famine rocked Bengal in the last years of the last century, Swami Vivekananda not only set relief centres whose management was placed in the hands of Sister Nivedita as Secretary, but he himself went to live in the slums to inspire courage in the minds of the people and cheer up his workers. He found immense happiness in living with the poor and serving them. While in their midst, he was one among them. In the latter part of the year 1901, a number of Santal labourers used to work in the Belur Math grounds. Swamiji would be talking to them and listening to their tales of woe. One day he asked one of them, Keshta by name, “Would you all like to have a feast here?” The man replied, “Dear father, if we eat food cooked by you with salt, we shall lose our caste!” After a long persuasion, he agreed to Swamiji’s suggestion that food might be cooked without salt and salt served separately. Under Swamiji’s personal supervision, a feast with choice delicacies was served to them. The Santals ate

joyously, exclaiming from time to time: "O Swami, where did you get such fine things? We have never tasted such dishes before." When the meal was over, Swamiji told them, "You are Narayanas. Today I have entertained the Lord Himself by feeding you!" Later, to a disciple he remarked, "I actually saw the Lord Himself in them! How simple hearted and guileless they are!"

Shortly after, to the Sannyasins and Brahmacharins of the Math, he said, "See how simple hearted these poor, illiterate people are! Can you mitigate their misery a little? If not, what use is your wearing the Gerua? Sacrificing everything for the good of others—this is true Sannyasa. Sometimes I think within myself, 'What is the good of building monasteries and so forth! Why not sell them and distribute the money among the poor. What should we care for homes, we who have made the tree our shelter? Alas! How can we have the heart to put a morsel to our mouths when our countrymen have not enough wherewith to feed or clothe themselves!' Let us, throwing away all the pride of learning and study of the *Shastras* and all *Sadhanas* for the attainment of personal *Mukti*, go from village to village, devoting our lives to the service of the poor."

### **Missionary of Patriotism**

Swamiji wanted every educated youth in the country to feel for the poor. Surcharged with the apostolic fire of his own personality, Swamiji wrote, "I am poor, I love the poor.... Who feels in India for the two hundred millions of men and women sunken for ever in poverty and ignorance?

.... Him I call a *Mahaatman*, whose heart bleeds for the poor, otherwise, he is a *Duraatman*.... So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them!"

According to Swamiji, the first step to become a patriotic citizen is to feel from the heart. "Feel, therefore, my would-be reformers, my would-be patriots! Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of Gods and of sages have become next door neighbours to brutes? Do you feel that millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Does it make you restless? Does it make you sleepless? Has it gone into your blood, coursing through your veins, becoming consonant with your heartbeats? Has it made you almost mad? Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin, and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies? Have you done that? That is the first step to become a patriot, the very first step."

Then the next step, according to Swamiji, is, instead of spending one's energies in frothy talk, to find a way out, a practical solution, to bring the suffering masses out of the living death. Yet that is not all, there is a third thing that is required—the will to surmount mountain-high obstructions. "If the whole world stands against you sword in hand, would you still dare to do

what you think is right? If your wives and children are against you, if all your money goes, your name dies, your wealth vanishes, would you still stick to it? Would you still pursue it and go on steadily towards your goal?", he asked.

Once the determination comes, one must be prepared to make any amount of sacrifice. "No great work can be done without sacrifice. The Purusha Himself sacrificed Himself to create this world. Lay down your comforts, your pleasures, your name, fame or position, nay, even your lives and make a bridge of human chains over which millions will cross the ocean of life."

It is this goal of making a bridge of human chains which inspired him to bring into existence the Sri Ramakrishna Order of Sannyasins. "A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising up—the gospel of equality." He gave them as the ideal and motto—the great *mantra*,

*Aatmano mokshaartham jagat hitaaya  
cha*

—'for one's own spiritual liberation and for the welfare of humanity'. He commanded his followers: "And go to the untouchables, the cobblers, the sweepers and others of their kind,

and tell them, 'You are the soul of the nation, and in you lies infinite energy which can revolutionize the world. Stand up, shake off your shackles, and the whole world shall wonder at you!' Go and found schools among them, and invest them with the 'Sacred thread'."

Swamiji had immense faith and confidence in the success of his mission. He proclaimed: "Glory unto the Lord, we will succeed. Hundreds will fall in the struggle—hundreds will be ready to take it up.... Faith—sympathy, fiery faith and fiery sympathy. Life is nothing, death is nothing. Glory unto the Lord—March on; the Lord is our General. Do not look back to see who falls—forward—onward! Thus and thus we shall go on, brethren. One falls and another takes up the work."

Swamiji's outpourings, saturated with the spirit of patriotism and service to humanity, were nothing but the echoes of the voice of the great sages and seers of Bharatavarsha who proclaimed, "*Jananee janmabhoomischa swargaadapi gareeyasi*"—"Mother and Motherland are greater than heaven." In "*Our Master and His Message*", which is an introduction written in 1907 to the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Sister Nivedita sums up the message and mission of her great master in the following words:

"In the four volumes of the works of Swami Vivekananda which are to compose the present edition, we have what is not only a gospel to the world at large, but also to its own children, the Charter of Hindu Faith.

What Hinduism needed, amidst the general disintegration of the modern era, was a rock where she could lie at anchor, and authoritative utterance in which she might recognize herself. And this was given to her, in these words and writings of Swami Vivekananda.

“For the first time in History, as has been said elsewhere, Hinduism itself forms here the subject of generalization of a Hindu mind of the highest order. For ages to come the Hindu man would verify, the Hindu mother who would teach her children, what was the faith of their ancestors will turn to the pages of these books for assurance and light. Long after the English language has disappeared from India, the gift that has here been made, through that language, to the world, will remain and bear its fruit in East and West alike. What Hinduism had needed, was the organizing and consolidating of its own idea. What the world had needed was a faith that had no fear of truth. Both these are found here. Nor could any greater proof have been given of the eternal vigour of the *Sanaatana Dharma*, of the fact that India is as great in the present as ever in the past, than this rise of the individual who, at the critical moment, gathers up and voices the communal consciousness.”

As long as the heaven and earth, and the mountains and seas exist,

as long as the holy rivers flow on the sacred soil of Motherland nourishing and nurturing the lives of our people, as long as *Sanaatana Dharma* sustains human values in the world, the eternal message of the Upanishads—*Uttishthata, jaagrata, praapyavaraan nibodhata*—“Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached”—passed on to us by the great patriot-monk would goad us to action and to march on from success to success. May the great Swamiji’s life and work be the beacon light to guide our younger generation at cross-roads to realize the meaning and purpose of their life and to march on to immortality through service to Motherland and humanity.

*Tam desikendram paramam pavitram*

*Vishwasya paalam madhuram yateendram*

*Hitaaya nrinaam naramoortimantam*

*Vivekanandam aham namaami*

—“My obeisance unto Swami Vivekananda, the chief of preceptors, the holiest of the holy, the protector of the world, the sweet-tongued king among monks, who took to human form for the welfare of mankind!”

*Vande Mataram!*



***Save yourself by yourself! There is none to help you —never was.  
To think that there is, is a sweet delusion.***

***--Swami Vivekananda***



# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA TO YOUTH

Mannava Gangadhara Prasad

Swami Vivekananda had great confidence on youth. He ignited the minds of youth with his sparkling words. He worked to inspire youth around the world. He has tremendous belief in youth. Once he said, 'if I had ten youth of steel nerves and iron muscles, I can shake the whole world.' That is the confidence of Vivekananda on youth.

Today unrest, hopelessness, physical provocations in and out are confusing the youth around the world. We can see the unrest and extremism in youth all over the globe. Lack of right direction, lack of right education, characterless information is penetrating into the youth. This results in militancy, fanaticism. Why youth are not treated properly? Is it not our (elders) mistake?

That inborn thought provoked me to write this... the answer to the above question is Swami Vivekananda. His teachings, his leadership to the youth can be adaptive even in today's environment.

So many young people were diverted into danger due to lack of proper direction, education and motivation in their early days. Right advice in right time should help one to build his future.

Youth life is the most precious life. 'Youth' is the best time in an individual's life. The way in which you utilize this period will decide your future. Your happiness, your achievement, your reputation and all depend upon the way in which you work now. You can wisely mould your life, your character, your health and mental strength.

"We are responsible for what we are, and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves. If what we are now has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in future can be produced by our present actions; so we have to know how to act".

O youth, be aware of this great duty. Feel this wonderful privilege. Take up this adventure. The world has put its faith in you. Your elders keep their hopes in you. Now youth means to place your firm confidence in yourself and exercise your hopeful determination and resolution and willing good intentions in this beautiful task of self-culture. This will truly bring supreme satisfaction and fulfilment not only to you, but also to the nation. The shaping of your life is indeed in your own hands.

“Death is better than a vegetating ignorant life; it is better to die on the battlefield than to live a life of defeat”.

Youth is dynamite. It signifies the creation of noble personality. Please try to understand the correct implication of the term successful life. When you talk of success with reference to life, it does not merely mean succeeding in everything that you undertake or do; it does not merely mean succeeding in fulfilling all wants or getting whatever you desire; it does not just mean acquiring a name or attaining a position or imitating fashionable ways appearing modern or up-to-date. The essence of true success is what you make of yourself. It is the conduct of life that you develop, it is the character that you cultivate and it is the type of person you become. This is the central meaning of successful living. Such successful life is one that succeeds in producing an ideal individual, a noble man. Your success is not measured in terms of what all you obtained but in terms of what you become, how you live and what actions you do. Upon this point reflect well and attain great happiness.

In this context, we can use two words from our Sanskrit or Hindi: *vyaktitva*, for individuality and *vikasita vyaktitva*, for personality. A child is first a *vyakti*; then he or she grows into a *vikasita vyakti*. Sociologically speaking also, when any of our children, especially from rural and backward areas, first comes to school, he or she has no

clear-cut *vyaktitva*, in most cases, due to the undeveloped feudal social background.

This transcendence of mere organic individuality into personality, through conscious social participation, is the only way to happy family life and to full national integration. (Swami Ranganathananda).

“The remedy for weakness is not brooding over weakness, but thinking of strength. Teach men of the strength that is already within them”.



Swami Vivekananda has lived his life to uplift the mankind; he wanted us to shine and prosper! What great importance is of the youth when the foundation is built for the life! Difficulties will come but so what; Swamiji said, “Struggle, Struggle, Struggle is the sine qua non of life and stagnation is death; Vedas proclaim this as “*Charaivaiti, Charaivaiti, Charaivaiti...*”

May you all shine and prosper! May you all live and lead the life of purity, character and virtues. Be vigilant and diligent with your actions, sincere in your efforts and regular in your spiritual practices. May you all achieve this and uplift the nation, which was the desire of Swami Vivekananda.



# PURPOSE OF LIFE IN THE LIGHT OF VIVEKANANDA'S TEACHINGS

P.Gupta

According to a tale told by Anatole France, the history of mankind has been summarized in seven words – men are born, they suffer, they die. A man may be sitting on a mountain of wealth and prosperity but he still lives a life of worry, anxiety and dissatisfaction. The paradox of our time is—

We have bigger houses but nuclear families,  
we have more degrees but less sense,  
more experts but less solutions,  
more medicines but less wellness  
we have multiplied our possessions  
but reduced our values,  
we have learned how to make a living  
but not a life,  
we have added years to life, not  
life to years  
we have conquered outer space but  
not inner space.

We are always getting ready to live but never living. The above paradox is mainly due to the fact that in an uncertain and chaotic world it appears that for many people values are dead.

How to get over the situation? Swamiji's teachings will guide us as he integrated Religion and Karma.

Each soul is potentially divine. Religion is the manifestation of Divinity already in man. The best

karma is service to humanity. Throw away everything, even your own salvation and to help others. The nation is sinking the curse of the unnumbered millions is on our heads.



Sage Veda Vyasa was given a unique assignment. He was asked to study all the philosophies and spiritual literature and sum it up in short. After intense study with the help of his yogic power, he issued a one-liner the act of greatest merit is to help others and the greatest act of sin is to cause intentional pain to others. Therefore, the first principle that we have to remember is that devotion to duty is the highest form of worship to God and the most sacred duty is service to mankind.

The second important aspect to remember is that there is ocean of infinite powers and blessedness within you. Swamiji exhorted, 'Do you know how much energy, how many powers, how many forces are still lurking behind that frame of yours? What scientist has known all that is in man? Millions of years have passed since man first came here,

yet only an infinitesimal part of his power has been manifested’.

The third aspect to remember is the great need for building character. Swamiji said, “the basis of all systems social or political rests on the goodness of man. No nation is great or good because parliament enacts this or that but because its men are great and good”. Swamiji’s hope for the future lies in the youths of character, intelligent, obedient, renouncing all for the service of others.

The fourth aspect is national reconstruction. Swamiji’s dream of the future of our country was an India, spiritually united, economically strong, socially stable and imbued with ethical passion. India has to become *Jagatguru* again.

All this depends on how we live and how we act. There has never been nor will ever be a gift greater than the gift of life. Life is likened to a bridge between birth and death. We have got this life to become perfect and to go back to our real abode and get liberation from birth. But Moksha is not freedom from action but freedom in action. We have to keep our face always towards the sunshine and the shadow will fall behind. One is a sad and unproductive person when he sees difficulties in every opportunity. But he is successful and creative only when he sees opportunities in every difficulty. Let not the seeds in the grape spoil the enjoyment, spit them out one-by-one.



# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AS A TRUE NATIONALIST

Dr.A.R.Mohapatra

Swami Vivekananda was a true nationalist in heart and spirit. He was at the same time an idealist, a rationalist and a spiritualist. He was a social reformer and a social activist. He was also democrat of the first order. He proudly proclaimed 'I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother, say, the ignorant Indian, the poor and destitute Indian is my brother. The Indian is my brother, the Indian is my life, India's gods and goddesses are my God. The soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good. O Thou Mother of strength, take away my weakness, take away my unmanliness and make me a Man.

Swami Vivekananda was an idealist social philosopher. Swamiji once declared that he was a socialist. He did not think socialism was perfect, but he said 'half a loaf is better than no bread. He has been described as patriot-saint of India, an Indian nation-builder, or the father of Indian nationalism. Swami Vivekananda's approach to nationalism was more cultural and spiritual than political and economical. According to Swami Vivekananda "Each nation has its own past, peculiarity, and individuality with which it is born. Each represents, as it were, one peculiar

note in this harmony of nations, and this is its very life, its vitality. In it is the backbone, the foundation and the bedrock of national life."



The renowned philosopher, Dr.T.M.P.Mahadevan says, "The reawakening of India which began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and of which Swami Vivekananda was the most stalwart leader, has infused into the people of this country a new life and a new hope. Imbued with a new strength, leaders in all walks of life emerged; and Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, made us achieve our goal of independence. The foundations of this, let us remember, were surely laid by Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-monk of India. Though Swamiji's mission was a spiritual one, the spirit of Nationalism that he aroused in the country made agents of British power terribly afraid of him. The fire he helped to light in this ancient land of ours was responsible for scorching the bonds which had kept India a slave. So we must remember that Swami

Vivekananda was a pioneer in politics”.

After hearing Swami Vivekananda’s fiery message of Vedantic nationalism, thousands of enslaved Indians were inspired and became bold enough to challenge the mighty British Empire. Mahatma Gandhi has acknowledged that his patriotism became a thousand-fold after he read Swamiji’s lectures. Rajaji writes, Vivekananda saved Hinduism and saved India. Nethaji Subhas Chandra Bose says, Vivekananda may be regarded as the spiritual father of the modern national movement.

Swami Vivekananda’s contributions towards Indian nationalism were the following:

1. “I am Indian, every Indian is my brother”.
2. “Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached.”
3. “The essence of my religion is strength. Strength is greater than religion and nothing is greater than strength.”
4. “Avoid weakness and slavery”.
5. “Be and make”.
6. “Be bold and fear not”.
7. “Be strong, and stand on your own feet.”
8. “The goal of the soul is freedom”.

Swami Vivekananda loved his motherland and its people. He used to say frequently that “I am the worshipper of Daridranarayana, of the Narayana who is located in all the poor people of the world. So long as they are there, how can I content myself with my own salvation....It is my duty to look

after them all. The best way to reach God is by the service of man.”

He also said ‘after so much austerity, I have understood this as real truth—God is present in every Jiva, there is no other God besides that. Who serve Jiva, serves God indeed.’ Swami Vivekananda’s love for India was the product of his love for man. To awaken men and women everywhere to their divine nature was his life mission. His conception of nationalism was expressed through his love for humanity. His worship of God becomes identified with the service of the masses. His love for Indian masses and worship of God became the service of Mother India.

To Swami Vivekananda the purpose of religion and education is man-making. Men are the living God and to serve these poor illiterate and afflicted person alone is the highest religion. He said “I do not believe in a religion which cannot wipe the widow’s tears or stop the orphan’s wails. It is an insult to starving people to offer them religion, it is an insult to a starving man to teach him metaphysics.” In the words of his Master (Guru) Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa ‘Religion is not for empty bellies.’ Thus as a patriot nationalist, Swamiji loved India very much and he believed that it has a message for the world and can give spiritual help to the world.

Swami Vivekananda’s conception of India’s nationhood and national vitality is very comprehensive. For him nationalism did not mean merely love of our motherland but also means that we should love our religion

and culture, our spiritual heritage and scriptures, and should feel proud of them. It also means that we should have love and reverence for all the great men and women in our history and revere their memory. At the same time we should love the poor, the downtrodden, the helpless and miserable who are with us.

Swami Vivekananda has been described as the patriot-saint of India, an Indian nation-builder. He emphasized in almost all his lectures and discussions that 'Religion and religion alone is the life of India, and when that goes, India will die, in spite of politics, in spite of social reforms, in spite of Kubera's wealth proud upon the head of every one of her children'.

As a nationalist and lover of India, Swamiji has few noble ideas.

He said, India will be raised not with the power of the flesh but with the power of the spirit, not with the flag of destruction but with the flag of peace and love....He loved India not because it was the land of his birth, but because it was a great country, a country which had produced the loftiest possible truths. He wanted India to live on more for the sake of the world than for her own sake.

In foreign tour to America Swamiji could not sleep for pondering over India's plight. He said with tears 'O Mother what do I care for name and fame when my motherland remains sunk in utmost poverty! Who will raise the masses in India? Who will give them bread? Show me, O Mother, how I can help them.'



# VK Samachar

## KODUNGALLUR

### AUNIQUEWORKSHOPATANANDADHAM

After conducting regular monthly satsanghs a feeling was creeping in that something should be done to cement these ideas in the day today lives of our listeners more firmly. The very sad state of family life, the absolute lacklustre homes and negligence of one's dharmic duty have started eroding into the vitals of Hindu faith. It was therefore felt that something should be done to expand the individual's awareness and make him see the divine play in and around in which everyone has his or her role to play.

To bring this fact of interdependence home, our great teachers have introduced the beautiful concept of Pancha Maha Yagnas. Unfortunately nobody is practising this with proper awareness. If this could be popularized in a scientific way it can enliven the individual and the family in a beautiful harmonious way. A workshop was therefore arranged on 25<sup>th</sup> November '07 with the participation of some sixty men and women. The workshop started with Vedic chanting, lighting of the lamp and a simple, Ganapati Homa where everyone made their offerings to Lord

Ganesha. This was part of the yagna which every mother should start her day with. A small piece of coconut dipped in ghee was offered in the burning embers of the Homa kunda with prayer to Lord Ganesha for prosperity and right conduct. The significance of this was explained as this is a simple ritual of Deva yagna. This was followed by an hour talk on the relevance of Pancha mahayagnas in upholding Sanatana dharma. Sri L. Girish Kumar, Director, School of Tantric Studies explained in detail the theory and practice of all the five Yagnas, Brahma yagna, Deva yagna, Pitru yagna, Bhoota yagna and Nara yagna. The importance of daily prayer and meditation on the Supreme was emphasised as it denotes Brahma Yagna. To take care of the infinite number of visible and invisible living forms around us, it is necessary to feed them with grains, rice powder, water and so on. Planting trees and caring for them are also part of Bhoota yagna which has great relevance in today's day today life. Equally important is Pitru yagna which is symbolically done by feeding crows with cooked food before we partake of it. In practical life it should manifest as the care and concern we show to the elderly members in the family



and the society. Last but not the least comes the Nara Yagna through which we extend our heartfelt hospitality to the guest and other human beings who are in need of help and attention.

Every yajna was symbolically carried out by each member with great reverence and cordiality which left every participant with a deep sense of satisfaction arising out of the expansion of mind.

Due to popular demand the workshop was again repeated on 16<sup>th</sup> December. This gave us an opportunity to introduce our long cherished dream

of popularizing amrita surabhi programme among our well-wishers. It is intended to take up such workshops in different parts of Kerala in collaboration with the School of Tantric Studies.

### **Nagpur**

A Sadhana Divas was observed on 19<sup>th</sup> November '07. Sri Anand Bagedia, Nagar Pramukh, spoke on the importance of the day. Sri Suresh Patil, Vibhag Sanghatak, narrated some incidents from the life of Ma.Eknathji. 46 Karyakartas including 24 sisters attended the function.





Sri S.K.Jain (IPS), S.P.West Siang, Aalo, inaugurates the sports meet on 7<sup>th</sup> December '07.



"Nayi dagar, Gaya safar"... song by the tiny-tots of VKV Jirdin.



Volleyball Tournament.



Traditional Galo reception to Chief Guest and other guests on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2007 – Inaugural function of 25<sup>th</sup> year celebration.



Galo Traditional Mantra chanting by Sri Mogi Ori.



Mananeeya Sri A.Balakrishnanji, Vice-President, VK, KK releases – VKVs School Magazine 'Arohi'. Dr.Joram Begi, Pranta Pramukh, VK Arunachal Pradesh, is near..

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**Editor: P Parameswaran.**



Pyramid by students of VKV Jirdin.



Sri Boken Ete releases 'Ome Lou' Souvenir of VKV Jirdin.



VKV Jirdin receives Mandakini Memorial Kho-Kho Tournament Winner Trophy from Susri Rekha Davey.



Winner & Runner (Jirdin & Nivedita Vihar), team of Mandakini Memorial Kho-Kho Tournament 2007 with Kendra elders & teachers.



Band display on inaugural function by VKVs Jirdin, Nirjuli and Balijan.



Procession on concluding day of 25<sup>th</sup> year Celebration.

# ***Please Bear With Us***

## *An Appeal*

*With the goodwill and patronage of all our readers and well-wishers, Vivekananda Kendra Prakashan Trust, has been able to bring out two periodicals, Yuva Bharati, a monthly, and Vivekananda Kendra Patrika, a half-yearly.*

*Without the unstinted support and co-operation of our subscriber-friends and well-wishers, many of whom have been helping the cause of the periodicals through their valuable advertisements, it would have been well-nigh impossible for us to run these periodicals, when the general climate and the commercial trends are not congenial to the sustenance of such publications.*

*The cost of paper and the printing of books and periodicals is soaring beyond manageable limits. But then, the cause for which the publications stand, should continue to be served.*

*After much deliberation, we are constrained to revise the rate of subscription as given below with effect from 1.2.2008.*

*We are confident that we will continue to receive the same co-operation and support from our friends and well-wishers in our efforts to publish and propagate the value-based ideals of Swami Vivekananda aimed at Man-making and Nation-building.*

*(D.Bhanudas)  
Secretary,  
Vivekananda Kendra Prakashan Trust,  
Chennai – 600 005*

<b>Revised Subscription Rates for YUVA BHARATI (With effect from February 2008 issue)</b>		
	<b>Current Rate</b>	<b>New Rate (Inland)</b>
	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>Rs.</b>
Single Copy	7.00	10.00
Annual Subscription	75.00	100.00
For 3 Years	200.00	275.00
Life Subscription (10 Years)	800.00	900.00

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