

Vivekananda's relevance in modern Era

Poonam Rathee

Research Scholar, Department of English & Foreign Languages, M.D. University Rohtak, Haryana, India

Abstract

Swami Vivekananda is the name popular in Indian history as a spiritual saint. He ascribes the spiritual strength of Vedas and advocates the journey of inner faculties. Vivekananda not only delineates the faith in capabilities of youth but also shows the path of enlightened future. He strongly favours exercising and providing equal rights to women and disapproves the false religious and social concentions. His manifestation of truth and wisdom acknowledge his true strength. He takes education as an eminent tool to bring forth Hindu philosophy in the scenario of colonized India. He modernizes the Indian thoughts and successfully aim at the social reforms significantly required to strengthen the youth. His motto of self-realization and self-confidence enable people in character-building. Vivekananda rejects geographical boundaries and popularized the idea of universal brotherhood. His faith in inner strength, character building, natural growth and meditation reflect in his each and every work. His educational concept concentrates on moral ethics and meditation. His modern educational thoughts paves the path of democratic India, assigns equality, brotherhood and cultural strength as the prominent tools of new education system. This powerful weapon of cultural strength seems relevant in this time of cultural and moral collapse. Vivekananda's unforgettable ideas are the real treasure of Indian history.

Keywords: salvation, spiritualism, self-realization

Introduction

India has earned a little amount of notoriety as a national fraught with stories of Sadhus and snakes. We have also our imagination of a beggar in guise of Sadhu – orange coloured clothes. No importance is assigned to orange clad beggars but no hatred is also shown to them, at least food and necessary items they easily grab because of their deceptive guise. Educated people ascribe no value to such sadhus because i think they know their reality and also helpless to show their incapability. In present scenario, saint and sadhus move in luxury cars, mislead people, charge them exhorbitantly and extract money from them.

In backdrop of all these facts if we consider Vivekananda, how will we introduce him? - A spiritual solider, a multi disciplinary scholar, a wandering monk, and orator par excellence who spent his life in search of truth and god. Well-versed in the Vedas and other spiritual texts he is credited for popularizing the Vedanta philosophy and yoga across the world. His books on the four yogas are considered the most definitive text for anyone interested in understanding its philosophy and practice. His genius and appeal is timeless and works like a guiding torch for generations to come. Vivekananda is noted for his pride and confidence for 'self'. He stresses always, upon the inner capabilities of an individual. He writes:

We reap that we sow
 We are the makers of our own fate
 None else has the blame
 None has the praise. (Vivekananda)

Here, he advocates the inbred strength of an individual who is basically, the maker of his destiny, both credit and blame go to his share, no body else is responsible. He invokes the dormant energy of individual and propels his inner faculties to realize

his potential. Prolonged observation and association with variety of people enables Vivekananda a to realize that fear is the biggest enemy of mankind. Regarding fear, he suggests:

Fear is death
 Fear is sin
 Fear is hell
 Fear is unrighteousness
 All the negative thoughts and ideas
 Proceed from this
 Evil spirit of ear. (web)

He expresses bitterness about fear and rejects it as the most evil and debase feeling gnawing at the heart of an individual. Expressing the similar views about bondage, he ponders over the roots of bondage.

Desire, ignorance and inequality this is the trinity of bandage.(web)

With in three words he beautifully delineates the epicenter of bondage. Vivekananda has been very favourite of youngsters as he mostly writes for them. Addressing youth he writes:

Don't look back
 Only forward!
 Infinite energy Infinite enthusiasm
 Infinite daring and infinite patience... (qtd. in Sharma n.p.)

He believes in the infinite capabilities of youth and expresses his utmost trust in their talent and of course, the zeal. Teaching the lesson of duty to youngsters, he confirms:

Who do their duty
 Putting their shoulder

To the wheel
Will see the light and higher and higher duties.
Will fall to their share. (qtd. in Kumar 195)

He commands strict duty from youth and if contributed so, he assures them of light and accomplishment. Commenting upon perfection obtained through religious practices he opines:

Perfection doesnot come
From belief or faith
Perfection comes through selfless work.(web)

He rejects the idea of religious rituals of obtain salvation rather he endorses selfless work which can enable us obtain perfection. When we move on an errand and work selflessly rejecting social or religious conventions, we come across horde of difficulties. What Vivekananda says about it?

Each work has to pass
Through these stages
Ridicule
Opposition
And then acceptance.
Those who think ahead of their time are
.....misunderstood. (qtd. in Sinhal 100)

He favours foresight and assures reader that creativity in first place is misunderstood but ultimately, accepted. In a patriarchal set up, women's rights are tailors or curtailed as per convenience of their male counterparts; but to our surprise and appreciation, Vivekananda strongly advocates women rights and also invokes them to exercise their right and assume the consequent responsibility. He disapproves male dominance in these words:

Women will work out their destinies
Much better than men can
Ever do for them
All the mischief to women has
Come
Because men under took to
Shape the destiny of women. (qtd. in Mohapatra70)

His suggestion to woman folk, here, is to shoulder her responsibility themselves and not to look upto man for favour, appreciation or any favourable gesture. He, with full throat, comes in favour and defence of women saying that independence means dependence only on oneself. Realizing the importance of women in man's life, he says:

No bird can fly on one wing (web)

He reaffirms woman as an integral part of man's life – an indispensable identity which deserve respect from him. Talking about religion, he assets that religion is neither in religious places nor lies with priest. He finds it, 'Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man' (web). For him religion is the amount of pious and sacred ideas which an individuals imbibes in him due to his inbred goodness. No rituals, religious or spiritual can change the inner most being of anyone.

In short, I mean to say that Vivekananda still impinge upon our psyche by his gems of wisdom and remain a constant source of inspiration for time to come.

References

1. Fireflies by Rabindranath Tagore, Terebess Asia Online (TAO), 2016.
2. Kumar Vikash. Guiding Words for ForeZoraba of Swami Vivekananda. Nugget on Wings. New Delhi: Educreation Pub. 2015, 191-204.
3. Mohapatra Kalpana. Vivekananda: As a Political Philosopher. Political Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda. New Delhi: Northern Book Centre. 1996, 55-110.
4. Sharma Birister. The Timeless Thoughts of Swami Vivekananda. Self Help, 2015.
5. Sinhal Sacina. Wisdom of Vivekananda. New Delhi, India: Ocean, 2009.
6. Swami Vivekananda Quote. Swami Vivekananda Quote: "Fear Is Death, Fear Is Sin, Fear Is Hell, Fear Is Unrighteousness, and Fear Is Wrong Life. All the Negative Thoughts and... (12 Wallpapers) – Quotefancy, 2015.
7. Swami Vivekananda's Quotes on Perfection. Swami Vivekananda's Quotes on Perfection, 2013-2016.
8. Swamy Vivekananda Quote on Women." One Billion Rising Revolution, 2014.
9. Vivekananda. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda. Calcutta. Advaita Ashrama, 1970.