

Strive hard to make Progress in the Present

In India, religious life forms the centre. Every improvement in India requires first of all an upheaval in religion, says Swami Vivekananda.

What Hinduism has got to offer Man?

First of all it gives a wonderful truth about Man. He is essentially Divine, the soul, the Atman which never dies and never is born, whom the sword cannot pierce, nor the fire burn, nor the air dry – immortal, without beginning or end, the all pure, Omnipotent and Omnipresent.

The Second truth revealed by our Upanishads is the solidarity of this universe. The whole universe is one mass, one ocean of matter; in which you and I, the sun and the moon, and everything else are but the names of different little whirlpools and nothing more. Mentally speaking, it is one universal ocean of thought in which you and I are similar little whirlpools and as spirit it moves not, it changes not. It is the One Unchangeable, Unbroken, Homogeneous Atman.

And what is the present status of Man?

Says Vivekananda, 'Centuries and centuries, a thousand years of crushing tyranny of castes and kings and foreigners and your own people have taken out all your strength, my brethren. Your backbone is broken, you are like downtrodden worms.. In spite of the greatness of the Upanishads, in spite of out boasted ancestry of sages, compared to many other races, I must tell you that we are weak, very weak. First of all is our physical weakness. Be strong, my young friends. What we want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel. You will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the Atman when your body stands firm upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men.'

So, friends, let us strive hard first of all to become physically very strong men and women.

And next comes faith in ourselves. Swami Vivekananda says, 'You have talked of reforms, of ideals, for the past hundred years; but when it comes to practice you are not to be found anywhere. And what is the cause? The only cause is that your body is weak, your mind is weak, you have no faith in yourselves!

Strength, strength is what we want. The first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe – ‘I am the Soul immortal, omnipotent, omniscient.’ Do not say we are weak; we can do anything and everything. Everything can be done by us; we all have the same glorious soul, let us believe in it. Feel that you are great and you become great.’

So, friends, let us strive hard to develop tremendous faith in ourselves. Let us believe we are great and we can do anything in the world. And that brings out the God within us. As our Prime Minister Modiji inspiring our Scientists on the event of Chandrayaan 2 said, “***Vayam Amritasya Putrah! We are the Children of Immortality!***”

And what happens if this message is spread among all in every occupation of life? Says Vivekananda, “Let everyone be taught that the divine is within. If the fisherman thinks that he is the Spirit, he will be a better fisherman; if the student thinks he is the Spirit, he will be a better student and so on. If you teach Vedanta to the fisherman, he will say, I am as good a man as you; I am a fisherman, you are a philosopher, but I have the same God in me as you have in you. And that is what we want.’

It is interesting to note what our PV Sindhu, who made us all proud recently by winning a Gold Medal and becoming a World Champion in Badminton said as her message to youngsters, ‘***Hard work is the key for success and you need to believe in yourself. You need to have that hope that you can do it and you can achieve anything in life...***’

So, friends, let us strive hard to spread the message of strength and faith among all, the rich and the poor, the ignorant and the educated.

And next, how do we look upon our fellow beings and what should be our attitude to life and work?

Swami Vivekananda says, ‘Look upon every man, woman and every one as God. If the Lord grants that you can help any one of His children, blessed you are. Do it 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!’

So, friends, let us strive hard to mould our life with the philosophy of Shiva Jnaner Jiva Seva, Seeing God in Man and Serving Him.

May Swami Vivekananda, the great lover of Mankind bless us with strength to strive hard to put into practice His commands for the progress of our nation in the present times!